

# COMPENDIUM

## CULTURAL POLICIES AND TRENDS IN EUROPE

### COUNTRY PROFILE

# ARMENIA

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It is based on official and non-official sources addressing current cultural policy issues.

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# REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA<sup>1</sup>

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## **1. Historical perspective: cultural policies and instruments**

During the last two decades, Armenia has survived significant changes in the cultural policy situation. The Soviet Union collapse resulted in the destruction of a centralised, ideologised and state-financed system of cultural development and cultural policies. From the first days of its existence as an independent state, the Republic of Armenia had to develop and adopt new policies and mechanisms of cultural management as the old ones did not work under new conditions. The old Soviet system of cultural management and cultural policies were extremely politicised and ideologised as culture was considered as a tool for ideology and propaganda. Therefore, culture was controlled from the top. It can be characterised as a "paternalistic" model according to Abraham Mole's definition. One of the realities of the Soviet period was various "unions" of professionals in the spheres of art, literature, music, etc, controlled by authorities and responsive to them. Most of the unions have been preserved and display a very weak level of adaptability to the new market economy and cultural development trends. Their current existence is explained by difficulties in the understanding the transition to new forms of marketing the arts. "Unions" of that kind also keep alive the mechanism of centralised distribution of state money aimed at supporting culture and cultural events.

One of the most remarkable tools of cultural policy of the Soviet period was popularisation of cultural activities and accessibility of cultural events to large layers of the population. Thousands of art and music schools were created throughout the country. Theatres, music halls, libraries and exhibitions existed in every small town and were financially available to even low-paid employees. Secondary, professional and higher education was free of charge. The specialised music and art education was also freely accessible. The comprehension of culture as the most effective method of influencing and governing the masses was inherited by the authorities of independent Armenia. At the same time, a significant shift in values, ideological categories, goals and objectives of national development as well as adoption of the principles of the new market economy and democracy made them seek how to unite previous and current approaches to cultural management and policy development. The current model of cultural policy and management includes both approaches and seems to oscillate between them. However, in the last decade cultural policy has become more structured, more defined and overwhelming. It tries to combine centralised methods of supporting culture with encouragement of public and private mechanisms of development of particular spheres of culture, public regulation of cultural demands and offers, and attraction of private investment into the cultural sphere, etc.

## 2. General objectives and principles of cultural policy

### 2.1 Main features of the current cultural policy model

In Armenia cultural policy was mainly directed to the preservation and presentation of material cultural heritage, and spreading of the national traditional system of values; at the development of citizens in the newly independent state and the cultural environment; at the enhancement of the social-psychological atmosphere of society; and is also aimed at ensuring the national security of the state. The main goal of the state in this field is to ensure the rights of its citizens to carry out cultural activities, to enjoy cultural services and cultural fruits, to ensure their availability, as well as the recreation and development of the cultural potential of the society. Today, cultural policy in Armenia is being adjusted to consider new economic relations; a culture management model, a balance of market mechanisms and state guarantees is being formed. However, cultural policy still remains fairly centralised even though in 1995, after the adoption of the Constitution, the process of decentralisation in the cultural field was started (see chapter 7.1 for more details).

During the first decades of independence, the state cultural policy of RA was mainly aimed at the physical preservation and presentation of the tangible cultural heritage, which was considered a priority. The legislative field has been more or less regulated and fixed (based on the *Law on the Basis of Cultural Legislation*, the *Law on the Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments and the Protection and Use of Historical Environment*, the *Law on Archives*, and the *Law on Export and Import of Cultural Property*). There has since been a cultural policy shifts toward the intangible cultural heritage, its protection, development and promotion, which has become one of the most important areas of the cultural politics of Armenia.

As a result of decentralisation, 1 586 cultural organisations (cultural houses, libraries, music and art schools, and theatre and concert organisations) have fallen under the jurisdiction of local-self-government bodies. To fill a number of gaps in the decentralisation policy, such as incomplete legislative field, poor management system, lack of internal policies (the laws that defined them – the *Laws on Cultural Legislation and Law on Local Self-Government* – were adopted in 2002), the Ministry of Culture implemented a number of programmes providing state assistance to the Marzes and communities and conducted a number of activities that were aimed at, by continuing the decentralisation policy, ensuring the necessary legislative framework and at providing organisational assistance. The *Government Programme on Culture Development* in the Marzes aimed to provide solutions for the main concerns (improvement of the management system, the availability of cultural services, the possibility to carry out cultural activities, the ability to receive a cultural education etc.). Today's main issue is to help the local self-government authorities to implement their plans in the cultural field, bearing in mind the importance of direct participation of communities in the organisation process of cultural life. Major changes in the cultural policy of the Marzes are not envisaged.

According to the report of the Ministry of Culture of RA the legal sector of cultural sphere is regulated on an annual basis. The cultural policy of RA is based on the principle of continuous improvement of the legal framework.

## 2.2 National definition of culture

According to *Article 6 of the Law on the Principles of Cultural Legislation (2002)*, the culture is considered to be "a set of modes of activities, perceptions and thinking in the material and spiritual fields of the society and their expression representing a stated value".

Since 2009, when the conference on Cultural Policy supported by UNESCO was held in Armenia, another broader definition of culture included in the *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* has been introduced. It states that culture "should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or social groups, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs".

## 2.3 Cultural policy objectives

The *Law on the Principles of Cultural Legislation*, adopted in 2002, defines the main principles of the state cultural policy:

- secure and protect the constitutional right of RA citizens to participate in the cultural life of society;
- provide cooperation among cultural entities;
- develop the objectives and the legal basis for the state policies supporting cultural spheres; and
- provide a legal framework for preservation, presentation and development of the RA cultural values.

According to the *Law on the Principles of Cultural Legislation*, the main objectives of the state cultural policy are:

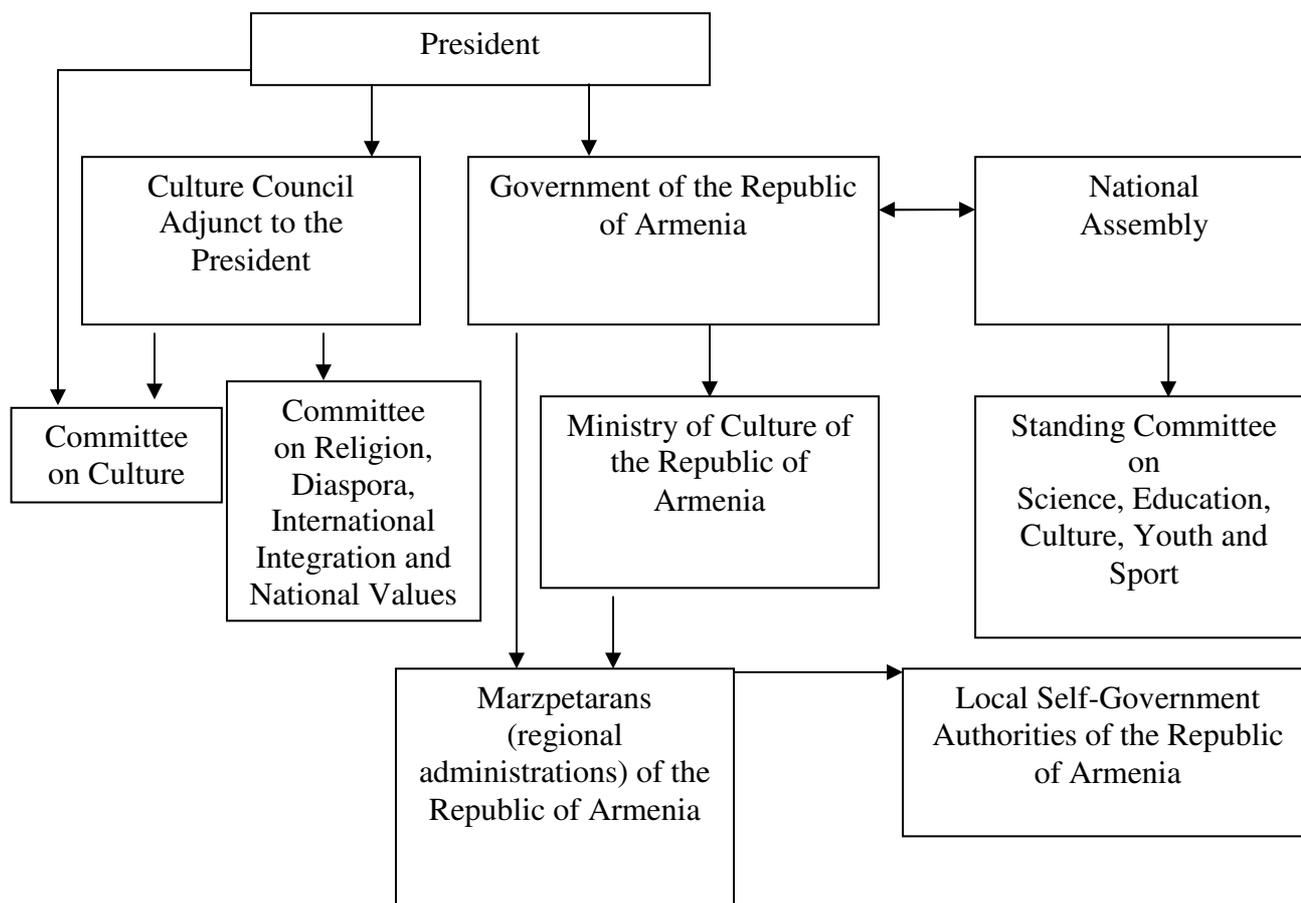
- making society realise that culture is a means of development;
- seeking new values and ideas;
- creating conditions for the recreation and development of society's creative potential; and
- developing a civil society.

At present, the cultural policy of the Republic of Armenia is guided by the following principles:

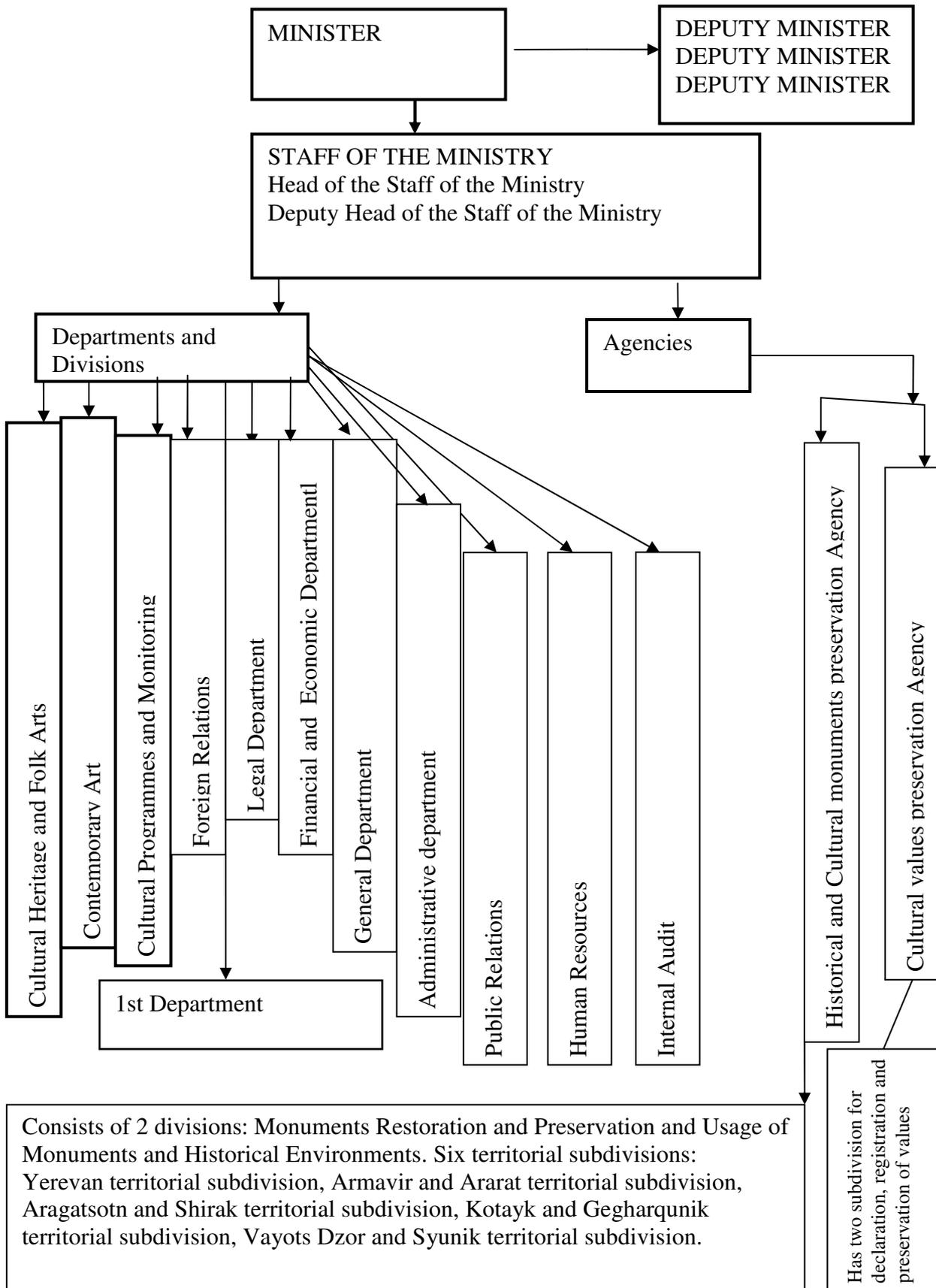
- the state, public and democratic character of management in the field of culture;
- the freedom of cultural and creative activities;
- the possibility to encounter cultural values;
- preference towards the national cultural values of international significance; and
- the self-dependence of cultural organisations.

### 3. Competence, decision making and administration

#### 3.1 Organisational structure (organigram)



The Structure of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia



### 3.2 Overall description of the system

The authorities responsible for cultural policy in the Republic of Armenia are at two levels – state (regional ones included) and local authorities; each has a definite role in the implementation of cultural policy.

According to *Article 88.1 of the Constitution*, state policy in the field of culture is implemented by the government, and the corresponding departments of marzpetarans (regional administrations) implement the regional policy of the government and coordinate the activities of regional services of the executive bodies.

The National Assembly passes laws concerning the cultural area and ratifies the state budget where there is a separate part on the state financing of the cultural field. There is a Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Affairs operating in the Parliament, which passes opinions on the draft laws of the cultural sector.

The government ensures the implementation of the state cultural policy, for the purpose of drawing additional financial means for the preservation, promotion and development of culture. It also establishes a cultural development foundation and ratifies its statute and defines by law, for some levels of the population (preschool children, schoolchildren, students, pensioners, disabled people and compulsory duty servicemen), the benefits of using the paid services of cultural organisations; and implements other powers defined by law.

The state competent authority in the cultural field is the Ministry of Culture. The main functions of the ministry are as follows:

- the elaboration of the cultural development strategy;
- the definition of cultural policy priorities;
- the promotion of modern cultural processes – financial assistance to separate programmes and funding of cultural organisations;
- the coordination of cultural activities with the local self-government bodies and formation of a common cultural area;
- the promotion of preservation and development processes of the major organisations of national significance and basic values; and
- the creation of cultural policy implementation mechanisms.

In association with the Minister of Culture, councils on cultural policy and planning for art forms (cinematography, dramatic art, classical music, folk music, book-publishing) function mainly in an advisory capacity.

According to the *Law on Cultural Legislation Principles (2002)*, the marzpetaran (bodies for ensuring the implementation of state programmes and programmes on cooperation between the local self-government and the government) ensure the cultural state policy in the marz areas. At present, the subdivisions responsible for culture in the structure of marzpetarans are affiliated with the directorates on education, youth and sports affairs, thus complicating the implementation of cultural policy. In order to solve this problem, in 2007 the government launched the Programme on Cultural Development in Marzes, to separate the culture departments and to specify their functions.

The head of the community ensures the implementation of the state cultural policy in the community area.

The *Law on Local Self-Government (2002)* authorises Armenia's cities and 10 Marzes to regulate the activities of cultural establishments that are under their jurisdiction.

The biggest funds of state significance are the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund and the Social Investments' Fund, which makes large investments in the cultural area. The Social

Investments' Fund renovates cultural organisations that are under community jurisdiction, while the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund assists cultural and social programmes. Every two years, the "One Nation, One Culture" Fund organises the Pan Armenian Cultural Festival, as well as assists different cultural activities.

The activities of all the agencies and national authorities dealing with cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social solidarity are coordinated by the Coordination Council Adjunct to the President and by the Directorate on National Minorities and Religion of the government and by the Culture Ministry.

### **3.3 Inter-ministerial or intergovernmental co-operation**

Besides the Ministry of Culture, inter-ministerial co-operation in the cultural field is handled by the Ministries of Diaspora, Foreign Affairs, Education and Science, Urban Development, Trade and Economic Development, Finance and Economy, and Justice. The Ministry of Culture cooperates with these ministries, in the form of discussions and solving of current issues and organisation of joint activities. The Ministry's Directorate on International Relations and Diaspora works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Financial-Economic Directorate – with the Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Legal Department – the Ministry of Justice, etc.

All the programmes on the ratification of the budget of the Ministry of Culture are coordinated with the Ministry of Finance. Every draft law drawn up by the Ministry is firstly introduced to the Ministry of Finance and Economy. If there are no comments, the draft law is submitted to the Ministry of Justice; only then it is submitted to the government.

Some structures that are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture have similar functions with other ministries. Thus, six artistic education establishments functioning under the Culture Ministry jurisdiction have common functions with the Education and Science Ministry. The museums that are under the jurisdiction of the Culture Ministry, which are partly scientific establishments, cooperate with the Ministry of Education and Science.

In the sphere of intercultural cooperation and pan-Armenian cultural development, the closest cooperation is established with the Ministry of Diaspora (created in 2008). Both ministries are jointly implementing projects designed within the framework of the global initiative "One nation, one culture". Besides, the Ministry of Diaspora promotes the Armenian cultural values abroad, in the countries where representatives of the Armenian Diaspora live through publications, research projects, cultural, educational events, creation of electronic resources of Armenian culture (libraries, periodicals, etc), and increasing cultural contacts among Armenians at home and in other countries. Since 2010, one of the main strategic trends is the creation of a space for pan-Armenian cultural exchange. Due to the close collaboration of the Ministries of Culture and Diaspora, the cultural actors of the Armenian Diaspora have participated in Armenian festivals, concerts, exhibitions, tours, etc.

In the artistic education area, the Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of Justice and with the RA Police. Particularly, the Special Creative Centre of Juvenile Offenders, a state non-profit organisation under the jurisdiction of the Ministry, organises arts and craft education in reformatories (the Justice Ministry jurisdiction). Similar education is organised outside the reformatories, in cooperation with the RA Police. There is also the Children's Special Creative Centre, a state non-profit organisation operating under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture, which organises arts education for the socially insecure and disabled children in special boarding schools and facilities (the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and Education and Science).

The Ministry of Culture also cooperates: in the information technology field – with the Ministry on Transport and Communication; in the area of the protection of children's rights and the improvement of women's rights and their role in society – with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; in the area of craft development issues – with the Ministry of Trade and Economic Development; and in the area of preservation of historical-cultural monuments, the Ministry of Culture also cooperates with the Ministry of Urban Development.

The Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Relations when carrying out any interstate activity. The formal process of getting of invitations for Armenian artists and producing invitations for foreign guests is handled by the the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

For the purpose of implementation of specific programmes, interagency committees are set up with the involvement of representatives of different ministries or local self-government bodies.

The marzpetarans elaborate social-economic programmes in their jurisdiction, with a separate section for programmes in the cultural field. In these programmes, the issues of the community in the cultural field are taken into account as well. The programmes serve as a basis for submission of applications for triennial state medium-term programmes.

According to the legislation, in particular the *Law on Local Self-Government Bodies*, the local self-government bodies themselves form the community budgets and ensure their implementation, including expenditure for the preservation of cultural organisations and for the organisation of cultural life. However, some communities have difficulty in carrying out these functions due to a shortage of funds and therefore the state budget offers programmes to enable communities to provide the necessary cultural services and to enable their citizens to participate in cultural life.

## **3.4 International cultural co-operation**

### **3.4.1 Overview of main structures and trends**

After gaining independence, one of the most important components of Armenian foreign policy in the cultural area became the formation of new relations aimed at the strengthening of cooperation and mutual understanding, as well as the establishment and development of equal and mutually beneficial partnership relations with other states. It was in the area of those relations where the first results of the democratisation and decentralisation processes in the field of the culture were reflected. The main principles of international cooperation in the sphere of culture might be generally characterised as those providing diversification and modernisation of cultural processes in Armenia; promotion of Armenian culture abroad and for the Diaspora; and bringing local cultural policies into line with the principles of democracy, human rights and international cooperation.

The relations with a number of countries considerably improved, gradually involving deeper (regional, marz and inter-city) levels (with Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur, Vendee regions and Marcel City in France, with Saxony-Anhalt Land in Germany, with different cities in the USA, and with Rostov, Komi and Astrakhan Oblasts in the Russian Federation, etc.).

During recent years, a major priority of the international activity by the Ministry of Culture is integration in the European and CIS structures, the extension of the cooperation to other areas, the promotion of Armenian culture, and the extension of the Armenia-Diaspora relations.

Since gaining independence, the Republic of Armenia has established *bilateral relations* y with state and non-state structures and organisations of different countries. In the area of culture, international activities are carried out within the framework of signed interstate, intergovernmental and interagency agreements on cultural cooperation, memoranda and exchange programmes, according to the main directions and priorities of Armenian cultural policy.

At present, cooperation is conducted with nearly 50 countries, in particular, with the Russian Federation, Georgia, Kirghizia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, Finland, Hungary, Greece, Korea, India, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Great Britain, Croatia, Estonia, Romania, Slovenia, France, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, the USA, Canada, China, Germany, Kuwait, Qatar, Cyprus and Japan.

One of the fruitful forms of international cooperation is the establishment of *multilateral relations*. Since 1991, Armenia has established cooperation in the area of culture with international organisations and structures such as UNESCO, CoE, different structures of CIS, UNO, EU, INCP, BSEC etc.

According to the strategy in the cultural field, all forms of culture and art are considered as elements of international dialogue. For the purpose of developing this dialogue, Armenia has signed a number of international documents during recent years, which substantially furthers large-scale exchanges with different countries. In particular, in October 2000, Armenia joined the Bern Convention on WIPO Literature and Art Works; in 2005 – the European Convention on Joint Cinematography Production, the European Convention on Ancient Heritage Preservation and, by the Faro Declaration – the European Cultural Convention; in 2006 – the UNSECO Conventions on the Protection and Encouragement of Diversity of Cultural Expressions and on the Protection of Non-Material Cultural Heritage; in November 2006, the government ratified the Convention on Non-Material Cultural Heritage Preservation. The CoE framework Convention on Cultural Heritage Importance to Society is in the process of ratification by Armenia. As a logical continuation of the processes on joining the international instruments, Armenia has participated in international cultural events such as Days of European Heritage, Museums' Night, Music Day annual events, and the implementation of the programme on the Armenian Duduk Music supported by UNESCO and the Japanese government. The Ministry of Culture is holding negotiations on the possibility of joining Eurimage.

Armenia has ratified an International Convention on the Preservation of European Architectural Heritage, and joined a number of important declarations and conventions such as the Agreement for facilitating the international circulation of visual and auditory materials of an educational, scientific, and cultural character and protocols on the importance of materials of educational, scientific and cultural character (Lake Success, New York, Nov. 22 1950) and (Nov. 26, 1976, Nairobi).

In 2008 Armenia joined IFACCA (International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture and UNIMA, international congress of puppet-makers).

### **3.4.2 Public actors and cultural diplomacy**

The Ministry of Culture is the main actor in international cultural cooperation, ensuring the participation of Armenia in different international cultural programmes. This cooperation is executed by the Ministry's Staff Directorate on Foreign Relations and Cooperation with the Diaspora. It is the Ministry of Culture that develops and carries out the state cultural policy in Armenia. The international cultural policy is a part of the country's foreign policy. In this area, cooperation is executed according to procedures that are coordinated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In Armenia, culture and education are important and efficient instruments that broaden interstate relations. Cultural centres of various countries operate in Armenia, including the British Council (established in 2001) and the Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Goethe Institute functioning in the region. These centres, besides presenting their national culture in Armenia, promote also Armenian culture in their countries. They also provide educational and technical assistance, carry out joint programmes, seminars, and cooperate with other international organisations. At present, the Treaty between the Republic of Armenia and the Kingdom of Spain on the Establishment of Cultural Centres and Implementation of Activities is under consideration, which envisages the opening of a Cervantes Institute in Yerevan.

The issues of joint film production with different countries and international structures are in the negotiation process.

The conditions for organising exhibitions are included in the documents that are being signed in the specially designed interstate agreements.

The Ministry of Culture attaches importance to education issues in the sphere of culture that are reflected in the Ministry's strategic instruments. On the basis of instruments signed in this sector, specialists and students of different fields in the cultural sector are training in Italy, France, Great Britain, the Russian Federation, and Egypt.

During recent years, foreign students from Syria, Iran, and China were trained in the different departments of culture-specific higher education institutions of Armenia, such as the Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and the Cinema and Yerevan State Conservatorium.

Financial support for international cooperation in the cultural area is provided on a programmatic basis by state and private sources. Co-financed and privately sponsored programmes are encouraged.

In recent years, the diplomatic missions of different countries in Armenia have activated their cultural cooperation with local organisations and institutions. Thus, through partial financial support of the Chinese embassy in Armenia and cooperation with local public organisations and institutions, two student competitions on Chinese culture and history were held. The Chinese embassy also supported the organisation of an exhibition of traditional costumes of ethnic minorities of China in the State Gallery. The Embassy of France has been very active in promoting European and, in particular, French cultural values through francophone initiatives in Armenia such as the organisation of Francophonie Days in Armenia, poetry, prose and photo competitions, music festivals, etc. The embassies of Germany, France, Italy, and Poland have actively cooperated with local organisations in the frameworks of the international film festival "Golden Apricot".

In 2009 and 2010, Armenia signed four interdepartmental agreements with ministries of culture of other countries on initiation of collaborative projects. A number of such projects have been implemented in 2009 (events representing Armenian culture abroad like days of Armenian culture in other countries (Russian Federation, Slovakia, France, USA), or events representing other ethnic and national cultures in Armenia, like days of German, Georgian, Bulgarian culture, performances of Korean, Indian, Argentinean folk and dance bands. In 2010, different levels of agreements on cultural cooperation were signed with Slovenia, Czech Republic, France, Iran, Turkmenistan, India and Italy.

Intercultural cooperation is also made possible through structures founded or headed by Armenians, such as Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal), which has signed an agreement on collaboration in the sphere of culture with the Ministry of Culture of RA in 2010.

### **3.4.3 European / international actors and programmes**

Collaboration with European and international agencies, programmes and initiatives have recently become more intensive. Armenia actively participates, or at least is represented, in many pan-European initiatives and programmes, meetings and congresses, exhibitions and competitions. Provision of active representation of Armenian culture, cultural achievements or agents of cultural spheres is becoming a necessary part of Armenian cultural policy trends.

#### **European Union**

EU cooperation is conducted on the basis of partnership and cooperation agreements between the EU and the Republic of Armenia that were signed in 1996 and entered into force in 1999. Since June 2004, Armenia, along with Azerbaijan and Georgia, has been participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy, which is an important step for the region towards European integration. Cultural cooperation and promotion of the Armenian cultural heritage are priorities of the cultural policy in the EU-Armenia joint actions programme. Armenia is involved in the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme that was launched in 2010 and aims to strengthen regional cultural links and dialogue between the EU and Eastern countries. In this framework, the Ministry of Culture has implemented a number of programmes; in particular, in 1999, Armenia joined the European Heritage Days programme initiated by the CoE and the European Commission, in 2006 within the framework of the European Commission's "Culture 2000" programme, a programme on the restoration of musical instruments was implemented jointly with the French Culture and Cooperation Association and the Ministry of Culture.

Since 2013, Armenia is participating in the European Commission's "Twinning Instrument" programme, which operates in the countries of European Neighbourhood Policy, giving opportunities to develop administrative skills and to ensure the efficiency of state management.

Armenia continues to participate in different pan-European jointly funded programmes such as Days of European Heritage, Museum Night, Music festivals, Francophonie programmes, etc). A couple of new initiatives were added in 2010: Puppet Nomad Academy project, Transkaukazja 2011, and the "Armeniaca" project which aims to count and list Armenian cultural heritage based in other European countries. Special attention is paid to the individual professional development of actors (Artist in Residence programme).

#### **UNESCO**

The Ministry of Culture actively cooperates with UNESCO. In this framework, the Ministry of Culture regularly submits nominations for inclusion in the UNESCO calendar of prominent people and historical events.

In the framework of the Convention on Non-Material Cultural Heritage Preservation, the Ministry of Culture organised annual symposia entitled: "Knowledge and Symbol, Belief and Customs" (2005) and "Dialogues of Cultures" (2006).

One of the trends of Armenia and UNESCO cooperation is having the most important Armenian cultural values and achievements integrated into the world cultural heritage.

The list of World Material Cultural Heritage currently includes three Armenian monuments of material (tangible) heritage such as: 1) Temple complexes of Haghpat and Sanahin (as one monument); 2) Cathedral of Etchmiadzin, the churches Hripsimeh, Gayane, Shoghakat and the ruins of the temple of Zvartnots; 3) Gegard monastery and the upper valley of Azat river.

Since 2005, pieces of intangible heritage started to be included on the UNESCO list. In 2005, the music of the Armenian duduk was declared a masterpiece on the UNESCO list of

"Humanity's Oral and Non-Material Heritage". In 2009, in the framework of a programme on "Masterpieces of Humanity's Intangible Heritage" a website devoted to the duduk (a traditional woodwind instrument of Armenian origin) was launched. In 2010, another outstanding cultural and religious identity symbol of Armenia, the khachkar ("cross-stone", the medieval religious and cultural monument) was incorporated in the list of World Cultural Heritage as "The Armenian cross-stones art. Symbolism and craftsmanship of **Khachkars**". Following this event, an exhibition of the Armenian khachkars was organised at the UNESCO headquarters. In 2011, three more cultural phenomena were submitted for inclusion on the World Cultural Heritage List: the traditional festival of Vardavar, romances of "ashughs" (Armenian bards), and the Armenian epos "The daredevils of Sasoun". The latter was included on the UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2012. In 2014, the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage was enriched with one more Armenian cultural value, namely the Armenian traditional bread "lavash", its preparation, cultural meaning and appearance.

Another initiative that was submitted to UNESCO is a list of anniversary dates of famous people of Armenian origin or linked to Armenia and Armenian culture, to be incorporated into the official list of UNESCO.

As a result of close cooperation with UNESCO structures, Yerevan was announced World Book Capital 2012.

The cooperation with UNESCO in the cultural heritage sphere is also focused on improvement of preservation and management processes through training of specialists. Thus, in 2009, training of museum specialists was organised and conducted.

Within the framework of UNESCO initiatives, a conference entitled "Cultural policies. Policies for Culture. New ways for cultural policy", held in Yerevan on 5 November 2009. The conference addressed important issues that might affect the ways in which participating countries develop their cultural policies. The conference resulted in developing resolutions and methodologies.

### **Council of Europe**

Cultural cooperation with the Council of Europe is one of the main directions of Armenian cultural relations. Prior to joining the CoE, Armenia participated in its cultural programmes such as "Stage" (up to 2005), which was aimed at establishing cooperation and exchange mechanisms between the Southern Caucasus countries and to assist them in implementing their own cultural policies.

The National Report on Armenia's State Cultural Policy was elaborated in the framework of the above programme, which, however, because of controversies in the historical part of Armenia, was not published in the framework of the CoE.

Since September 2005, the Ministry of Culture has been participating in the Kiev Initiative Programme initiated by the European Council for 2006-09 and implemented with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Initiative is aimed at the development of cultural policies and strategies for the benefit of strengthening democracy, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity in the region. As the practical result of the Kiev Initiative Programme and the Slovenian meeting of ministers of culture, Armenia has resumed its participation in the programme of "Rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of historical cities". The recent activities of the programme included exchange of experts' visits, seminars and development of a "Report on the cultural heritage".

### **INCP (International Network of Cultural Policy)**

Since the establishment of INCP (1998), Armenia has been a full member of the network and has been participating at the ministerial level. This cooperation gives the opportunity

to study and exchange views on cultural policy issues together with the culture ministers of other countries. One example of this co-operation is the recent action directed at the ratification and implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Encouragement of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, as well as intercultural dialogue.

### **BSEC (Black Sea Economic Cooperation)**

Armenia actively participates at the sessions of the BSEC organisation's working group on cultural issues. In the framework of BSEC, Armenia attaches particular importance to cooperation on the implementation of programmes in the field of monument preservation jointly with other countries, as well as conducting intercultural dialogue with the countries of the region. In 2008, a cultural programme consisting of two exhibitions ("Cultural mosaic" and "Sunny sky to the Black sea") was implemented in Armenia.

### **CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)**

Cultural contacts with CIS countries are inescapable because of similarities of cultural systems, mentalities and values of countries that have lived together in the same cultural and political space for more than 70 years. The significant part of world cultural production (films, music recordings, books, fashion, new cultural and scientific tendencies and theories, etc) still reaches Armenia through Russia and Russian-speaking segments of CIS countries. The flows of cultural production and information are mainly covered by the private sector or individual contacts and initiatives. However, official cultural contacts and institutional collaboration do not reflect real volumes of cultural exchange and the impact among countries of CIS, though they are becoming more active and more organised.

The Ministry of Culture participates in the CIS Cultural Cooperation Council, as well as in the Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCO). With the support of the latter in October 2007, the symposium of CIS and Baltic countries' publishers on "Translation as a Cultural Interaction Attraction Field" was held in Armenia. The Ministry of Culture participated in a number of projects and activity programmes of the Cultural Cooperation Council, for example, the "*Kupola Sodrujestva*" programme, the programme on "The main activities in the culture field of the CIS member states till 2010" etc. Activities are being carried out as part of the Interstate Council for Book-Publishing, Book-Distribution and Periodicals and the Expert Group for the Inter-library Exchange System. Within the framework of cooperation with CIS member states, Armenia signed a number of agreements including the *Model Law on Culture* and *Agreements on Cooperation of State Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Book-Publishing, Book-Distribution and Polygraphy*. Work has been carried out on a number of draft agreements and projects ("On Joint Film Production", "On Creating Favourable Conditions for Mutual Exchange of Printed Products", "Interregional and cross-border cooperation" agenda and etc.).

Collaboration between the CIS countries envisages promotion of cultural exchange and promotion of national cultures in participating countries. Annual International forums of translators and publishers held in Yerevan have actively supported various activities aimed at the development of policies and cooperation programmes between CIS and Baltic countries in the spheres of translation and publishing. As a result of the forums' activities, a virtual cooperation platform, the official site of the translators and publishers of SIC and Baltic countries has been created (<http://twunion.com/>).

In a context of political and cultural relationships between Armenia and the Russian Federation, special attention is drawn to preservation and promotion of the Russian language in Armenia through increased capacities for learning Russian, competitions, performances, etc. Armenia has also participated in events aimed at promotion of the Russian language in the CIS (e.g. International Festival of Russian Language Radio).

### **British council**

In April 2008 a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, Yerevan Municipality and Armenian representation of the British Council was signed. The memorandum provides the implementation of activities aimed at the development and improvement of library and information system of Armenia. Ongoing projects in the framework of the memorandum will contribute to the replenishment of library resources, as well as the advanced training of library staff. The British Council's initiatives are also aimed to bring to Armenia innovative art works through festivals, performances and exhibitions, in addition to a range of projects, programmes, workshops and seminars. Yearly festivals of British films, many exhibitions and other events have been held in Armenia so far. The British Council collaborates with local partners, both institutional and public. A series of seminars, entitled Dialogues of Cultures, Literary Bridges, and Dialogues of Civilisations, took place in Yerevan on the initiative of the IRI Culture House.

### **The Open Society Institute**

Since the beginning of its activities in 1997, the Armenian branch of the OSI Assistance Foundation has provided strong support to the initiatives in the field of art and culture, using the capabilities of the Art and Culture networking program. In Armenia the program operates in two directions: firstly, it provides vocational training in the field of art; secondly, it supports the formation of a socio-cultural environment and development of potential cultural trends. The program supports the organisation of cultural events, festivals, performances, panel discussions, lectures, discussions and other such cultural activities that will involve the wider society. In particular, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia received various grants from OSI for a number of cultural events such as the "Golden Apricot" International Film Festival, the "Nazar" International Theatre Festival, the "Tumanyan Fairy Tale Day" International Theatre Festival, the International Youth Film Festival, and the International Festival "Woman".

#### **3.4.4 Direct professional cooperation**

Direct professional relations operate in different fields (cinematography, dramatic art, exhibition exchanges, exchanges of students and experts in the culture field), both at the level of state, non-governmental organisations and creative unions. Annually, Armenia hosts a number of internationally recognised festivals in different areas of art, with a large geographic inclusion: conceptual art (Gyumri biennale); dramatic art ("Armmmono", "Shakespeare Festival", "Hay Fest"); cinematography and animation ("Golden Apricot", "Woman", "Reanimania", "It's Me"); musical art (Aram Khachaturyan International Competition of Cellists and Violinists, "National Gallery Festival", "XXI Perspectives" Festival), etc. In 2010 and 2011, the number of professional cooperation and joint programmes increased. The Armenian regions have started to become actively involved in those programmes and initiatives, thus marking implementation of important strategic priorities regarding regional cultural development.

Direct cultural and professional cooperation is becoming more active through different projects initiated within the Pan-Armenian cultural initiatives (see chapter 3.4.6).

#### **3.4.5 Cross-border intercultural dialogue and co-operation**

Intercultural dialogue is one of the priorities of Armenia's state cultural policy. According to the Armenian cultural strategy, all types of culture and art are considered as elements of intercultural dialogue. For the purpose of developing and strengthening intercultural dialogue in recent years, the Republic of Armenia has joined a number of major international instruments (see chapter 3.4.1).

Within the framework of principles and norms of international law, Armenia promotes: the preservation of Armenian historical and cultural values that are in other states and the preservation of historical and national values of other nations that are on the territory of Armenia; the development of educational and cultural life; as well as the implementation of articles of the *Law on Preservation and Use of Immobile Monuments of History and Culture and of the Historical Environment*, according to which "political, ideological, religious, race and national discrimination is prohibited".

The Republic of Armenia conducts active cultural dialogue with those countries that have elements of Christian and Islamic culture in its own territory, as well as protecting them at state level. According to *Article 5 of the European Cultural Convention* (provision on the preservation and availability of cultural values that are on the territories of different countries and that are a part of the European cultural heritage), the Republic of Armenia has proposed more than once to discuss the opening of a cultural corridor, on the one part, in the direction of Ani (in Turkey, including the Armenian historical-cultural monuments and historical places that are of Armenian interest – numerous ancient and medieval structures, Urartian fortresses and tombs, medieval Armenian churches, sites of ancient and medieval Armenian cities and palaces and temporal structures). On the other hand, the cultural corridor could be extended in the direction of the Islamic historical-cultural values that may interest the Turkish people, particularly, the Muslim mosques and mausoleums, but also other medieval monuments like caravanserais, bridges, and bath-houses that can be found in different regions of Republic of Armenia and Artsakh (NKR).

A vivid example of intercultural dialogue at the regional level is the Caucasian Chamber Orchestra, including the best musicians from Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia (<http://www.caucasianco.com/>).

Armenia has different levels of cross-border cultural cooperation with neighbouring countries. The highest level of cooperation is with Georgia and Iran. There is a Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran functioning in Armenia and promoting Iranian culture. Georgian and Iranian artists are constant participants of most international cultural events in Armenia (festivals, master-classes, concerts, exhibitions, etc). Days of Iranian Culture in Armenia were organised in 2005 and 2009. Days of Armenian Culture were hosted in Iran in September 2011. In 2009, Days of Georgian Culture were held in Armenia, and in 2010 Georgia responded with Days of Armenian Culture in Georgia. Besides, the Ministry of Culture supports cultural initiatives of the Armenian Diaspora in Georgia.

The most difficult cultural relations are with Azerbaijan and Turkey. The absence of official relationships excludes official cultural contacts or development of strategies of cultural cooperation. The Azerbaijan government officially prevents any intercultural contacts with Armenia at all levels because of existing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (the official position of RA regarding the conflict can be seen at Nagorno-Karabakh page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RA, <http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/>).

However, contacts on an individual or organisational level happen from time to time. Peace-making organisations (mostly international and very few local ones) are interested in establishing a sort of intercultural dialogue in peace-making goals; however separate efforts are not successful. Thus, in 2011 and 2012 festivals of Azeri films planned by the Centre for Peace-making Initiatives were cancelled because public sentiment in the Armenian society is not currently prepared for such activities, due to the apparent unilateralism of recent peace-making initiatives, the absence of mirror activities and the intimidating rhetoric of some Azeri representatives.

Armenian-Turkish cultural contacts are somewhat more successful than those with Azerbaijan. Turkish artists participate in some festivals in Armenia ("Golden Apricot").

There are a couple of Armenian-Turkish cultural projects being implemented, mostly aimed at reaching mutual understanding regarding the tragic events of what is seen in Armenia as the "Genocide of 1915", when 1.5 millions of Armenians lost their lives in Turkey ([http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/armenian\\_genocide.php](http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/armenian_genocide.php)). Nevertheless, the Armenian-Turkish dialogue-related initiatives are not very welcome by both the Armenian and Turkish societies because of the current political situation.

Though there is no diplomatic relationship between Turkey and Armenia, some constructive ideas on collaboration in the area of restoration or the study of cultural heritage were announced during 2010 and 2011. Nonetheless, their implementation still seems to be difficult.

In the sphere of Armenian-Turkish relations, the non-governmental sector develops and implements some programmes aimed at building relationships, mostly with the support of international donors. A number of initiatives have been implemented during 2010 and 2011, such as the programme of Support to Armenia-Turkey Rapprochement, funded by USAID and implemented by the Eurasia Partnership Foundation – Armenia. The cultural component is one of the most important in this particular initiative. Thus, so far it includes policy and media dialogue, training for media specialists, and dialogue between Armenian-Turkish animators within the framework of the "Re-Animania" cartoon-makers' festival in Armenia (2011).

### **3.4.6 Other relevant issues**

#### **Pan-Armenian cultural cooperation and networking**

Pan-Armenian cultural cooperation involves cultural and professional contacts between the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, and countries of the Armenian Diaspora. One of the priority directions of Armenia's cultural policy is the preservation and development of relations with the Diaspora, which is carried out through cultural unions, NGOs and centres operating for the Diaspora. Armenian cultural centres function in Italy, France, Austria, the USA, Russia, Lebanon, Syria, Jerusalem, Iran and in other places. The Mkhitarists Order in Vienna and Venice, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the "Hamazgayin" Educational-Cultural Union, the Tekeyan Cultural Union, the Cafesjyan Foundation, the Armenian Relief Fund, the Haigazian University of Beirut, as well as many other foundations, are involved in the preservation of Armenian culture. To promote Armenia-Diaspora relations, performances of Armenian ensembles, individual performers, and art exhibitions are organised abroad under state sponsorship.

Aimed at further broadening of Armenia-Diaspora relations, the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia was established in 2008. Since its establishment, the Ministry of Diaspora has conceived and implemented a number of programmes in the cultural sphere. They include projects aimed at studying and preservation of cultural heritage in countries of the Armenian Diaspora, building pan-Armenian cultural networks and conducting pan-Armenian cultural events. The Ministry continued previous joint efforts of ministries in development and implementation of educational programmes, directed at the preservation of Armenian culture: teaching of the Armenian language and literature and Armenian culture. The biennial "One Nation, One Culture" Festival, previously conducted under the aegis of the President, and so far involving nearly 5 000 Armenians from 12 countries, has turned out to become one of the biggest initiatives of the newly created Ministry. Another programme, "Ari tun" (Come home), has been launched since 2009. Within the programme's framework hundreds of representatives of the Armenian Diaspora youth have already visited Armenia to learn about the country's traditions, culture, and public and

daily life. One of the aims of the programme is to establish strong cultural ties between the Diaspora and the Homeland.

Creation of pan-Armenian cultural and professional networks is an important step towards significant enlargement of the Armenian cultural and intellectual resources and better cultural integration of Armenia with countries of the European Union. For example, the pan-Armenian professional network of architects has played a significant role in the preparation and promotion of the Armenian exhibition at Shanghai Expo 2010. Recently, a competition on the Armenian computer fonts "Granshan" was held. Since 2011, the Ministry of Culture supports active involvement of artists and cultural activists of the Armenian Diaspora in the cultural life in Armenia. Thus, many representatives of the Diaspora have participated in different cultural events in Armenia. Four books by Diaspora writers were published in Armenia during 2011.

Some programmes of the Ministries of Culture and the Diaspora are aimed at establishment of better intercultural dialogue between Armenians of Armenia and Armenians of the Diaspora through forums, discussions, festivals, etc.

### **Yerevan – World Book Capital City programme**

Based on the positive experience of World Book and Copyright Day, launched in 1996, UNESCO initiated the concept of World Book Capital City and established the yearly nomination of the Book Capital City. For a period of April 2012 to April 2013 Yerevan was declared a World Book Capital City. It was chosen for the quality and variety of its programme, but also to celebrate the 500-th anniversary of Armenian printing. The programme included a variety of public events and initiatives related to books, book printing, copyright issues, reading and promotion of national and international literary traditions and modern literature. A number of festivals, exhibitions (ArtBook expo, e.g.), concerts, conferences, joint projects (Book Platform project) have been conducted during this period. A special website has been created to represent the developments of the program: <http://www.yerevan2012.org/index.php?lang=en>.

The programme entailed a number of local initiatives related to book production and promotion of reading. In particular, numerous activities on renovation of book fund and promotion of reading were conducted in local libraries.

## **4. Current issues in cultural policy development and debate**

### **4.1 Main cultural policy issues and priorities**

In the past, the priority of the Armenian cultural policy was mainly directed at the preservation of cultural structures and major trends, but now cultural development and promoting Armenian culture are emphasised more.

The priority directions of the cultural policy today are:

#### **1. The formation of the legislative framework in the field:**

- compatibility of cultural and relevant legislation with European standards and requirements; and
- regulation of the legislative framework directed at the development of specific fields of culture.

#### **2. Development of strategies for cultural development**

The Cultural Development Strategy for 2008-2012 has the following priorities:

*The preservation of cultural heritage:*

- elaboration and implementation of a comprehensive programme on preservation of cultural values (mobile and immobile, tangible and intangible);
- creation of mechanisms for identification, registration, monitoring and preservation of cultural values in the Republic of Armenia and abroad; and
- promoting the cultural heritage internationally and increasing its availability to the public.

*The development of a new model on decentralisation of cultural management and financing:*

- increasing public participation in the management of cultural structures and establishments;
- specification, separation of powers and eradication of double management by authorities in the cultural field;
- introduction of a multi-source financing system, development and introduction of a programme financing system, and introduction of a co-financing system through a participative mechanism; and
- establishment of supporting cultural organisations.

*The development of modern art and cultural infrastructures and the promotion of cultural processes:*

- promotion of the formation of an Institute of Cultural Managers;
- promotion of new processes; and
- assistance to highly valuable cultural activities.

*The use of information technologies in the cultural area:*

- introduction of new informative-communicative technologies and electronic management systems into the cultural area; and
- promotion of the digitisation of data on cultural values – formation of a digital treasury.

*The provision of training and education for specialists in the cultural field:*

- a review and improvement of training of specialists in the cultural area; and

- provision of continuing education for cultural specialists, with the involvement of the interested parties in the development of educational programmes, according to market demands.

*The development of cultural links inside Armenia and with foreign countries:*

- promotion of inter-marz cultural cooperation;
- support to the broadening of cultural dialogue with foreign countries;
- engagement of the Diaspora in the cultural field of Armenia; and
- a promotion programme on Armenian culture abroad.

*Among the priorities of the Cultural Development Strategy for 2008-2012 are:*

- effective coordination of cultural policy;
- cultural heritage;
- international cooperation;
- digitisation of non-material culture; and
- popular culture.

Currently, the encouragement of projects by talented artists, youth cultural groups, broadening the outlook of young people by educational establishments and by the programmes of education on national culture, history, and civic education are among the priorities in the cultural field.

Currently the achievements of the Cultural Development Strategy for 2008-2012 are being finalised and analysed.

## **4.2 Specific policy issues and recent debates**

### **4.2.1 Conceptual issues of art policies**

#### **Art education**

In 2004, a Concept on Art Education, developed by the Ministry of Culture, was accepted by the government of Armenia. It comprises the following main principles:

- formation and development of aesthetic needs and demands of all social and age groups of population;
- creation of aesthetically sophisticated and interested audiences;
- preparation of professionals in arts and culture for creative and pedagogical activities;
- identification of talented children and youth and supplying them with corresponding facilities for education and creativity development;
- involvement of all social groups in the creativity processes starting from basic pre-school and school levels;
- active promotion and introduction of art education;
- using art education as a tool for social and cultural adaptation and socialisation processes.; and
- providing access to national and foreign cultural values.

To bring this concept to life, a complex programme for preparation and training of professionals in the art and culture spheres was developed and approved by the Government of RA on 14 January 2010.

State policy in the art education sphere is being developed and implemented by two main agencies, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Science. It is aimed at

improvement of the legal environment for development of art education and creation of facilities for the growth of talented children and youth creativity.

In 2008, a Foundation for Support of Art Education was established.

One of the important parts of art education policy is publication of art books and music pieces of Armenian composers (70 have been published).

Currently, the state policy development process is focused on the following tasks and unresolved issues:

- creation of resources for stable financial and technical support for art education;
- regulation of education fees;
- support to traditional arts and performances; and
- development of effective mechanisms of art education for children with disabilities or from socially vulnerable layers of the population.

### **Visual art**

The visual arts include painting, sculpture, graphics, and photography. There are more than 1 000 professionals in the sphere of visual arts in Armenia. After the collapse of the Soviet system of state protectionism of arts, many artists and artisans found themselves in a rather difficult situation being bereft of state support and unfamiliar with the new ways of marketing their art. "Marketisation" of art resulted in drastic changes for the whole sphere. A comparatively favourable situation was created for artisanry and handicrafts which quickly found their niche in the tourism consumption market. The most negative impact was imposed by the rupture of all old links and connections of institutions and individuals representing the Armenian Art with their foreign colleagues and counterparts, caused by the lack of financial capacities and lack of higher professionals. Armenian artists lost their privileged status and state support. Currently, arts are promoted and marketed through private galleries (10) and interested individuals, which nevertheless have rather limited capacities. In the absence of targeted state support in technical, financial and other issues, very few of the Armenian artists are able to reach international recognition, though many of them are really talented and deserve to be represented at the highest levels of the international art market. Another issue is preservation and continuity of the Armenian traditions of visual art from the Middle-Ages, and 19-20th centuries. The State Strategy plan for 2007-2011 in the sphere of visual arts was focused on the following issues:

- development of art education improvement programmes (see Art education);
- development or rehabilitation of art infrastructures (galleries, art schools, art centres, etc);
- activation of cultural dialogue with the outer world through the organisation of exhibitions and festivals;
- promotion of arts through access to art education and art pieces by all layers of the population;
- promotion and marketing of works of contemporary Armenian artists and artisans abroad;
- increase in publishing activities;
- targeted support and encouragement of artists living in regions, organisations of their exhibitions in the capital;
- promotion of Armenia as an art promoting country through organisation of art events, exhibitions, biennale, festivals, and symposia in Armenia with participation of foreign artists and art businesses;
- restoration of mobile art studios;
- individual or institutional support of creative activities; and

- resuming practices of honouring artists.

In 2008-2009, a number of policies and procedures were established in support of proportional development of all types of arts, which emphasised support of young artists.

### **Music**

The main policy trends in the sphere of music developed in a framework of the general strategy 2007-2011 are as follows:

- Rehabilitation of technical capacities for development of music art in Armenia through renovation and equipping of concert halls, institutions of music education, and provision of musical instruments of high quality.
- Improvement of standards of music education through an increase in the number of music schools and better supply of methodological and musical literature. In the framework of this policy goal, a "Fund for Music Education" was established to support students and teachers of music schools and methodological centres. More than 30 items of methodological and musical literature were published by means of this Fund.
- Development of audiences for high culture, and cultural demands and needs of the population through promotion and provision of better access to high quality music and music education to all social layers of the population, with a focus on disabled people and socially vulnerable families. More than 100 disabled people and socially vulnerable children were offered financial and other types of assistance in this field.
- Decentralised access to music is being promoted through organisation of master classes, concerts, festivals, and establishing basic schools of music education (33 schools) in regions. Special focus is placed on supporting talented children from regions that have no access to high quality music education and performances (currently more than 485 children have benefited from this programme).
- Promotion of traditional Armenian music instruments through prioritising their development in terms of subsidising music education and provision of guaranteed music places, and promotion and advertising of Armenian music instruments at world-wide level. One of the recent achievements in this field is the inclusion of the Armenian duduk in the UNESCO list of masterpieces of human intangible heritage.

### **Theatre and performances**

There are 34 theatres in Armenia, 21 of which are state managed and operated under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture; 3 belong to the Yerevan municipality; 2 are of regional subordination; 7 are supported by municipalities; and 6 belong to other organisations.

Theatres in Armenia are only able to cover 15-25% of their expenses. The rest is obtained from state, municipal or other sources. Currently, theatres are in a rather critical institutional situation and so far, there are no real solutions. Theatres are not self-sustainable and will not become so the near future. In the absence of any mechanisms of critique and other feedback from society, theatres seem to have lost their vivid connection with the audience. Besides, most regional populations have no access to theatres in their areas. Within the framework of Culture Development Strategy for 2007-2011 the following tasks are prioritised for theatres in Armenia:

- improving the quality of repertoire and performances;
- attracting larger audiences;
- developing new, more effective mechanisms of financial support for theatres; and
- improving managerial skills and practices for theatre professionals.

In view of these tasks, the Ministry of Culture of RA has worked out some principles of theatre related policy development:

- classifying all theatres according to their functional, financial and property status (national theatres, genre theatres, state, municipal, and private theatres);
- each type is to benefit from particular privileges, limitations and opportunities, and will have different access to state funds and will be controlled differently by the state; and
- development of funding and monitoring principles that would be based on a parity approach for financial support to theatres (competitions, orders, etc.)

Within the strategy of development for theatres for 2007-2011 the government of Armenia also prioritises the improvement of technical facilities (renovation of theatres, providing them with contemporary technical facilities, etc); decentralisation of access to theatres (organisations of theatre programmes in regions, regional festivals and competitions); and support for group and individual creativity through grants and individual support programmes. Particular attention is drawn to the improvement of the legal field relating to theatre development. The draft *Law on Theatres* was prepared and submitted to the National Assembly in 2010. Other priorities are more active involvement of youth in the creativity processes and creation of more competitive art production. The overall number of state-supported theatrical productions is increasing annually. In 2011, 20 performances and theatre projects were supported.

Particular attention is paid to seeking more opportunities for creativeness, international exchange of ideas and skills, partnership projects and promotion of theatre art through the organisation of festivals and other events. Some festivals have already become periodical and internationally recognised ("Highfest", "Pomegranate seed", "Shakespeare festival", "Armmono").

## **Cinema**

In Armenia, currently there are four state-governed cinema related institutions - the National Cinema Centre of Armenia, "Hayk" Film Studio, Armenian Public TV 1 and the Armenian National Cinema Centre, and nine independent film studios ("Haifilm" (Armenfilm) film studio, "Aysor Plus Film Productions", Armenia film studios CJSC, Bars Media Documentary Film Studio, Paradise Ltd, Sharm Holding, Karen Gevorgyan Studio, Internews Armenia, KassArt Studio). However, the cinematography sphere is mostly unself-sustainable in Armenia and there is still a strong need for state support. Therefore appropriate policies have been developed to support and stimulate cinematography development in Armenia for 2007-2011. One of the ways in which this is done is to encourage the film industry and art by the organisation of film and animation festivals ("Golden Apricot", "I am", "Kin", "Kinoashun", "Animania"), which promote Armenian and foreign cinematography. Another way is to make Armenia attractive for foreign film production through the creation of an appropriate business environment, professional resources and infrastructures.

The Armenian film-making industry still strongly relies on state support. Film-making and distribution / screening have significantly changed since the Soviet Union collapsed. Since then the industry has been privatised and has drastically reduced its capacity. Within the period 1991-2006, only about 30 live-action movies were made in Armenia. Some of these films were presented at festivals and were even awarded prizes, but almost none reached an Armenian audience. Currently, state financial support and volumes of film-making are increasing. Thus, in 2011, 9 full-length, 5 short-length, 5 animation and 14 documentary films were shot in Armenia.

Therefore, the policy development process in the cinematography sphere is based on the following principles:

- improvement of legal and taxation fields for cinema related industries;
- enlargement of the network of cinema theatres in regions;

- working out a flexible system of financial support allotted to state and private companies;
- emphasis on low budget films;
- development of contacts and cooperation with foreign companies;
- training and re-training of professionals in the field;
- special support to youth through the grant-making system;
- introduction of the project of "mobile cinema theatres" in the regions of Armenia;
- continuous support to film festivals;
- digitalisation of the Armenian cinema heritage;
- familiarising audiences with the Armenian cinema industry through TV; and
- presentation of the Armenian cinema heritage to a wider audience.

During recent two years, 10 films have been supported by the state and this figure is going to increase.

Cinema theatres recently became a subject of public debate. Privatisation of cinema theatres and poor strategic thinking by state officials responsible for cultural issues have resulted in a situation where only two cinema theatres are currently operating in Yerevan (one of them was reopened just recently, in 2012) and one in Gyumri, the second city of Armenia. The seriousness of the problem was magnified in the summers of 2011 and 2012 when the lack of venues jeopardised the success of the "Golden Apricot" annual film festival. Organisers of the festival activities publicised the issue and called on the Armenian authorities to find a solution. Due to this, the second cinema hall "Nairi" was rented back by the National Cinema Centre of Armenia and transformed into a National Cinema Centre. However, this cannot be considered a final solution to the problem and further development of appropriate policies and government intermediation are expected.

Another issue of public discussions and discontent is insufficient support provided to the young generation of cinematographers. Protectionism and nepotism, obsolete structures of Unions, unequal distribution of financial resources and the poorly developed market of the elitist cultural production all hinder the development of the film-making sphere and challenge cultural policy makers in Armenia.

#### **4.2.2 Heritage issues and policies**

The key law that regulates this sphere is the *Law on Preservation and Utilisation of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture and of the Historic Environment (1999)*, which defines historical and cultural monuments and the responsibilities of state governing and local self-governing authorities in the field of monument protection, usage and so on.

From 2002-2007, the government has approved the state lists of historical and cultural monuments in 10 Marzes of Armenia and in Yerevan city, where 24 152 monuments are included, as well as the list of "immovable monuments that are state property and are not subject to amortisation", which includes 18 935 monuments.

The monuments registered on the territory of the Republic are grouped in approximately 4 500 territorial protection units; 700 of them are historic, ancient and medieval capitals of Armenia, strongholds and habitations, while another 1 200 are monastic complexes, churches and temples. There are hundreds of tomb fields, historical cemeteries, secular buildings, memorials and monuments registered also.

The cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and the EU in the heritage field continues. Since 1998, the Haghpat and Sanahin monastic complexes, Geghard monastery and the Valley of River Azat, Echmiadzin Cathedral and the archaeological place of Zvartnots have been included in "World Heritage List" of UNESCO.

Since 2004, the state has been allocating funding for the protection of historical monuments. However, the heritage works, particularly the excavation-designing-protection stages, still need to be regulated.

Following the independence of the Republic of Armenia, the communist ideology museums, devoted to party figures, were closed. In 1997, about 18 museums in the state system were passed to regional jurisdictions, while preserving the state property right for the collections. Currently, there are 22 museums under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture of RA.

As a result of decentralisation policy, financing of museums within the regional and community jurisdictions was reduced. The museums of distant, bordering, high mountainous communities are in need of methodical and professional information and consultations.

In 2004-2006, new permanent exhibitions were organised in 11 museums, exhibiting more than 4 000 museum items that were not displayed previously. More frequently organised exhibitions and diverse undertakings have increased interest in museums among Armenian and foreign visitors. In 2005, the number of visitors was 275 031, which exceeded the 2004 figure by 35.5%. In 2010, the number of visitors was 1 644 936 and it constantly grows.

Since 2006, the "Museum on Wheels" programme has been operating, which aims to familiarise the distant and bordering population of the Republic with their museum heritage.

The "Union of Armenian Libraries" was created to improve international cooperation, ensure innovation, compare the work of Armenian libraries, and to exchange best practice. There are currently 25 Armenian libraries that are members of this union. In 2006, the Union became a member of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations).

The Armenian National Archive (SNPO) was established on the basis of the archive department attached to the government and the central and marz state archives. In 2005, the national film library also joined this SNPO. The same year, the Armenian archive system transferred to the Ministry of Territorial Administration. In 2004, the National Assembly adopted the *Law on Archives Business*, which regulates the most important key issues of the archives sector, particularly the issues connected with the replenishment, finances, reservation and usage of archive documents by state governing bodies, state institutions and organisations. During 2005, archives were established in many bodies of state governance and the improvement process is ongoing.

One of the main directions of state cultural policies is the preservation of non-material (spiritual) cultural heritage, which includes preserved, implemented and verbally transferred traditional cultural values in three areas: folklore, ethnography, and national art and handicrafts. In 2006, the government approved the "conception on preservation of non-material cultural heritage and improving its viability". The adoption of a law in this area is in the development stage.

In the field of cultural heritage, the main disputes concern the protection of cultural values. The most recent example is the broad public discussions concerning the digitalisation of cultural values and, particularly, of Armenian manuscripts. The problem is that the digitalisation of those manuscripts was to be realised by a private foreign organisation, with a loss of copyright, to which the majority of society objected. The public demanded that the work should be carried out by the state even though it would take a longer period and that the copyright should be reserved by the state in cases where manuscripts are recognised as national cultural items of particular importance.

In 2008-2013, the main cultural heritage policy issues were:

- Development of state policies and the legal environment in the sphere of preservation and development of intangible cultural heritage through: improvement of the legal environment in this sphere, research, database creation, promotion of traditional arts and handicrafts, publication of books, making films, etc. A conference on intangible heritage was held in 2008. Following the results of collaboration with the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, a database on intangible heritage is being created, and a web-presentation launched (<http://www.icha.mincult.am/index.php?lang=arm>). The *Law on Intangible Heritage* was developed and accepted by the National Assembly of RA on 7 October 2009. Improvements were made in the legal and policy field for further preservation and rehabilitation of immobile cultural heritage. A number of policy and procedural documentation on mechanisms of preservation, expertise, utilisation, and an inventory of the Armenian mobile and immobile cultural heritage were accepted during 2008-2010.
- Some monuments of a religious character were transferred to the Armenian Apostolic Church.
- Development of an advanced legal platform for museum management and preservation.
- Creation of mechanisms for periodic monitoring and timely restoration of historical and cultural monuments. It includes an inventory of the most endangered monuments, zoning and mapping of historical and cultural landscapes, creation of a database of the cultural heritage (more than 714 objects were studied and entered into the database), development of programmes aimed at rehabilitation of monuments. More than 12 projects of rehabilitation of historical and cultural monuments are completed and about 5 are in progress (out of 24 planned projects). Gradual enlargement of geographical territories involved in the programme is being pursued. Some procedural policies have been accepted with regard to the mentioned activities.
- Promotion of the Armenian cultural heritage through organisation of exhibitions. The focus was placed on recent archaeological research results (excavations of settlements from the early Bronze Age, archaeological research in Tigranakert of Artsakh, etc).
- Improvement of representation of the Armenian cultural heritage through enrichment of museum funds, improvement of technical facilities for preservation and presentation of cultural artefacts. Thus, a project on installation of security and preservation systems in museums has been implemented. The Gallery of Art of the city of Gyumri was renovated with support from the Italian government.
- Looking for alternative ways of enriching collections of museum artefacts and books through encouragement of donations, community participation in the purchasing process, etc.
- Emphasising development of regional museums and libraries that have not been completed, with books and artefacts. In 2008, regional libraries were provided with computer equipment (3-4 computers per library). A number of regional museums were renovated.
- Introduction of IT technologies in the cultural heritage preservation and presentation spheres. It includes digitisation of Armenian culture (literature, manuscripts, archives, databases, descriptions and photo archives of museum collections, etc),
- Improvement of professional capacities of specialists employed in the sphere of cultural heritage through improved professional education and training. In 2008-2009 more than 20 specialists were retrained in Armenia or abroad.
- World-wide promotion of Armenian Cultural Heritage through active participation in international cultural events, collaboration with UNESCO Cultural Heritage related activities and lobbying for inclusion of Armenian cultural objects of both tangible and intangible culture in the UNESCO lists.

- Major promotion and utilisation of Armenian historical and cultural heritage for the purpose of increasing tourism. The most valuable monuments form part of the newly developed tourist routes.
- Recent Public debates on issues of preservation of cultural heritage addressed some contradictions and inconsistency in the activities of the Ministry of Culture and state authorities. During the reconstruction of the centre of the city of Yerevan historical buildings that were registered as cultural monuments were destroyed. The reaction of the Ministry of Culture, which is primarily responsible for the monitoring and preservation of cultural monuments, was very poor and late.

#### **4.2.3 Cultural / creative industries: policies and programmes**

In accordance with the *Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation (2002)*, cultural services and cultural products (goods) that meet the cultural demands of the population are considered to be cultural welfare.

When considering state budget programme applications (including applications relating to the cultural industry), they must first comply with the major tasks of the cultural policy.

The illegal usage of audio-video production (piracy) has reached major scales (about 90%). This is an economic crime that causes damage not only to the development of cultural, scientific and educational potential, but also to the organisations of the cultural industry sector. The Ministry of Interior Affairs has formed a specialised unit which investigates the production and circulation of illegal audio and video production. As a result of several raids among underground recording studios and shops, the volume of pirated content has significantly decreased. However, these measures are sporadic and systematic solutions need to be implemented.

Cultural policy is organised through programmes where private and public organisations, local self-government authorities and individuals on contractual stipulations can act as partners. They can produce programme applications which can receive partial assistance from the state e.g. every three years, the Ministry of Culture organises a contest of young piano players (named after A. Babajanyan), where the public organisations are co-organisers (the Union of composers and musicologists, A. Babajanyan Foundation, all-Armenians youth foundation), including the regional administrations and the authorities of self-government.

No detailed observation was carried out yet for receiving information on independent cultural industries.

#### **4.2.4 Cultural diversity and inclusion policies**

In 2007 the Armenian government ratified the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. According to the Convention, each participant country “ensures artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own.” The Convention attracts special attention to cultural expressions of minorities and various social groups.

According to the last census (2011), the national minorities in Armenia make up 1.9% of the country's population; Yezidis prevail (62%).

According to this census, the national composition of the population of the Republic of Armenia is as follows:

**Table 1: Population of the Republic of Armenia by Ethnicity, 2011**

Nationality	Number
Armenians	2 961 801
Assyrians	2 769
Yezidis	35 308
Greeks	900
Russians	11 911
Ukrainians	1 176
Kurds	2 162
Georgians	617
Persians	476
Others	1 634
No response	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 018 854</b>

Source: <http://www.armstat.am>

In line with the Constitution, citizens of Armenia who belong to national minorities have the right to preserve and develop their own customs, language, culture and religious liberties. These rights are reflected in a number of laws, which are being strengthened. The policy on national minorities is based on three fundamental principles:

- to promote the preservation of ethnical identity and development of ethnical culture;
- to prevent any ethnical discrimination; and
- to promote the full integration of the non-Armenian population into the society of Armenia.

The adoption of international agreements, the necessary amendments and insertions made to the laws of Armenia, as well as the operation of programmes promoting integration, are directed at the implementation of the above three principles.

Under the *Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation* passed in 2002, Armenia supports the cultural identity protection and development of national minorities residing on its territory.

Armenia has joined a number of international and intergovernmental treaties that ensure and protect the multicultural environment of national and language minorities, including the *Framework Convention on the Rights of National Minorities* and the *European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages*. They are implemented in Armenia both by national legislation and by including them in cultural, educational, informational and other programmes. Armenia has also passed the *Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations*. A number of non-governmental organisations operate initiatives to benefit national and religious communities.

At present, state support is provided for education in national (mother) languages, for the following minorities: Russians, Yazidis, Kurds, Assyrians, partially Greeks, Poles, Germans, and Ukrainians – in the programmes of Armenian higher educational institutions. There are regular radio programmes in Kurdish, Yazidi, Russian, Assyrian, and Georgian languages, which are realised with state support. In the cultural sphere, organisations that function in the educational-cultural development sphere also receive financial and organisational support. The legislative amendments for the protection and development of ethnic identity of non-Armenian residents are ongoing.

In recent years, a number of cultural institutions and cultural centres for national minorities were opened in Armenia. Priorities in this sphere include support for ethnic media (about 12 newspapers and magazines are being published in Armenia through communities of

ethnic minorities), preservation and promotion of ethnic cultures through publication of books, making films, organisation of art festivals and rehabilitation of historical and cultural monuments (cemeteries, religious worship sites, etc).

Cultural diversity in Armenia is also represented by the religious diversity. The Constitution provides freedom of religion (article 23). Currently there are 14 different denominations and churches in Armenia, each having its own religious culture, mentality, specifics of everyday life, and centres of social and cultural life.

#### **4.2.5 Language issues and policies**

The *Law of the Republic of Armenia on Language* was adopted on 3 March 1993, under which the state language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian and the official language is literary Armenian. The second language is Russian, which the majority of the population still speak, though the number of people having a good command of Russian has significantly decreased. Among the new generation, the number of people with knowledge of other foreign languages, particularly English, French and German, is gradually increasing.

The Language State Inspectorate, attached to the Ministry of Science and Education, manages the language policy, decides the criteria and controls the execution of the *Language Law*.

Compared with the Soviet period, the usage of the Russian language has noticeably declined, although Russian is still taught in secondary and higher education institutions, the Russian press and literature is published, Russian radio programmes are broadcast, and some private TV channels broadcast Russian-speaking films without Armenian subtitles. In Armenia, which is described as being a language homogenous country, many foreign language papers and magazines are published, such as the Russian "Respublica Armenia", "Urartu", "Golos Armenii", "Novoye Vremya", Delovoy Express, and other newspapers, "Literaturnaya Armenia", "Yerevan", "Afisha", "Armyanka" magazines, Yazidi "Lalesh", "Ezdikhana" ("The voice of Yazidis" in Armenian), Kurdish "Rya Taza" (New way), "Mijagetq" (Armenian-Kurdish), Ukrainian "Dnipro", "Magen David" ("The star of David" in Russian) of the Jewish community and the Greek "Byzantine inheritance".

Currently, there are no major issues in Armenia relating to foreign languages and other cultures. During the Soviet period and, especially, following 1988 there was a struggle against the use of the Russian language although, following independence, this struggle ceased (at present, the Russian press in Armenia is even stronger than it was during Soviet years). Besides the English language, a number of other foreign languages are taught in the institutes of higher education and the centres operate for teaching French, Spanish, German and Italian, and cultural unions operate.

The existing legislation does not prohibit the language usage of minorities; the state language supremacy is in harmony with the language preservation of national minorities, the international right of mutual respect towards all cultures and the language-political norms of the European Union. In general, each non-Armenian resident of Armenia freely enjoys the entire international and national rights provided for national minorities, but the state offers additional financial support only to the national minorities that meet certain guidelines. These guidelines are developed on the basis of the main principle that if a national minority in any settlement is 15% or more of the population and, if in any small settlement with a population of 2 000 people, the national minority is represented by at least 300 people, then this minority will receive financial support from the state budget to realise their educational, identity protection and other programmes. In Armenia, the Russian, Yazidi and Assyrian ethnic communities meet these guidelines.

In early 2010, an attempt to change the language related legislation was made by the Ministry of Education. The new draft *Law on Language* addresses the legal justification for opening secondary schools with teaching in foreign languages. The draft *Law* faced unexpectedly negative reaction of the intellectual circles of society and its discussion process is currently being accompanied by public protests and actions largely advertised in the electronic social networks and mass media. The Armenian civil society is mostly preoccupied by the possible fast growth in number of schools with teaching in foreign languages, which, in turn, will threaten development and status of the Armenian-language schools. It seems to recall a situation of the Soviet times, when the Russian-language schools were much more prestigious and better maintained by the authorities than the Armenian-language ones. Opening foreign-language schools would mean damaging national culture and identity. The initiative group fighting the draft *Law* refers the Constitution, which declares Armenian the only official language of Armenia, and therefore the only allowed language of secondary education. Public debates on this issue are still in progress.

#### 4.2.6 Media pluralism and content diversity

In the mid-1990s, private radio and television broadcasting began to develop. However, the regulation of this field began only following the adoption of the *Law on Television and Radio (2000)* and the formation of the National Committee for Television and Radio on 19 March 2001. Today, in Armenia, there is one Public TV Company and one Public Radio Company. There are more than 40 private broadcasters, 20 Radio companies (9 in Yerevan, 11 in the regions), and 61 TV companies (23 in Yerevan, 38 in the regions). Unlike the printed press, the advertisement incomes of radio and TV companies are very large. The correlation between the Armenian programmes in television broadcasts (including the Armenian translation of foreign programmes) and foreign ones varies, depending on the TV channel, but averages about 55%-45% (see also chapter 5.3.7).

According to the *Law on Television and Radio*, the same legal entity may not obtain a broadcasting license for the same geographic location for both radio and television. The same Law also stipulates broadcasters to guarantee a certain proportion of local content – 65% of air time for all broadcasters and no less than two thirds for Public Television.

The process of digitalisation of broadcasting is currently taking place in Armenia. According to amendments to the *RA Law on Television and Radio*, approved on 20 May 2010, Armenia is to move to digital broadcasting. In connection with this transition, a new competition for frequencies was conducted in July – December 2010. Only 18 TV companies were appointed. The competition was claimed to be unfair by the TV companies that were unsuccessful.

There are press agencies in Armenia that cooperate with CIS member countries and similar world major agencies disseminate everyday information. "Armenpress" is the oldest press agency in Armenia, operating since 1921. Two other agencies that have been formed since 1991 are "Noyan Tapan" and "Arminfo", a private agency. There are also news agencies: "Mediamax", "De Facto", "Arka", "Regnum" and photoagencies: "Photolur" and "Patker".

There are 5 daily newspapers, including "Aravot" (Morning), "Azg" (Nation), "Haykakan jamanak" (Armenian Times), and "Hayots Ashkharh" (Armenian World). All of them are private. The former official newspaper of the Parliament, "Republic of Armenia", has special state status and the publisher is "Hanrapetutyun" (Republic), a closed joint-stock company, with the state as stockholder. The Russian "Respublika Armeniya" is published twice a week and the publisher is again a state company. There are Russian private newspapers "Novoye Vremya" and "Golos Armenii" (published three times per week). Among the political weekly newspapers are the official weekly newspaper of ARD "Erkir"

and UCR official newspaper "Iravunq", as well as the private "Ayb-Fe", the founder of which is the "Melteqs" company - the founder of "A1+" TV company.

Since Soviet times, there have been publications of children's and youth periodicals ("Kanch" and "Akhbyur"). After independence, a number of new periodicals emerged - "Khatutik", "Manana", "Lolo", "Urakh Gnatsk" ("Merry Train"). However, currently some of them do not exist anymore and the general decrease in number of children oriented media may be noticed. Instead, a number of leisure, fashion, sports, youth and Diaspora oriented magazines increased in number ("Hayuhi" (The Armenian women), "Zaruhi", "Es", "Sports planet", "Football Plus", "Ne", the Armenian version of "Comsmopolitan", "Yerevan", etc).

There are also social, political, literary and cultural newspapers - "Yerevani Hamaynapatker", "Noyan Tapan" in English, the newspapers "Grakan tert", "Grqeri Ashkharh", as well as the magazines "Garun", "Nor Dar", "Norq", and "Literaturnaya Armenia". There are also specialist periodicals (comic, scientific, philosophical and so on). The newspaper "Qristonya Hayastan" is published by the church. Russian commercial and social-political periodicals have a great number of readers in Armenia also.

Academic periodicals include those published by the universities ("Banber Yerevani Hamalsarani", "Vestnik RAU", etc), and by Academia of Sciences ("Lraber Hasarakakan gitutiunneri", "Hayastani bzhshkagitutyun", "Hayastani qimiakan hands", etc.). Totally, currently the Academia of Sciences of RA has 16 periodicals in different spheres of science and humanities.

In 1995, "Aragil" (in English) information electronic agency was established (by Internet). Two information agencies also specialise in the area of the economy - "Arka" and "Mediamax"(in Russian).

In 1991, together with the adoption of the *Law on other Means of Press and Mass Media*, censorship officially disappeared in Armenia and freedom of the media was declared.

When becoming an EC member, Armenia stated that it would pass a new *Law on Mass Media* within a year and reorganise the TV national channel into a Public channel, with an independent administrative council management. Both of the plans have been accomplished. In 2000, the Public Television and Public Radio Company were established and, in the same year, the *Law on Television and Radio* was passed. In 2003, following a number of discussions and decisions of experts (including the experts of Armenia, EC and *Article 19* organisation) a new *Law on Mass Media* was passed, which came into force in February 2004. Compared with the previous Law, this one is more progressive and complies with international standards. The most important part is that the compulsory registration of mass media has disappeared and the principle of legal protection of the mass media was confirmed.

*The Law on Freedom of Information* was passed in September 2003 and came into force in November 2003. The Law guarantees the transparency and promotion of state and local self-governmental bodies and the transparency and promotion of private company activities that implement public functions, as well as the protection of the right for everyone to be informed, including the legal mechanisms of ensuring the information availability.

Subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals are low, due to the high prices related to expenses for publication and dissemination and a weak market for advertising. The lack of financial investments for the control of media groups and the small salaries of the journalists also hinder progress in this field.

Network (Internet) media was initiated in Armenia in 2000 by the Pan Armenian Network. Today, there are a number of similar newspapers, such as "Antsudarz", "Hetq", "Armenia now" and "Taregir". Parallel to the dissemination of these periodicals, the information from various media also flows to the Internet. There are a number of popular news sites such as "7or", "Panorama.am", "News.am", "Armenia Today", etc. All the radio channels, 55% of the printed media and 26% of TV companies have web pages. In 2002, the state role in information provision disappeared though, until now, the financing of state and non-state media, "Armenpress" agency and "Mir" TV company, is realised by the Ministry. According to the Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications in Armenia, the number of Internet users has dramatically (6 times) increased in Armenia in 2009-2011, and now makes involves one third of the whole population.

The cultural media has a limited circulation and are published in the form of separate publications (e.g. Armenian-English magazine "Hay Arvest") and supplements to newspapers ("Azg", "Golos Armenii"). There are also web pages devoted to Armenian culture and its separate administrations (e.g. <http://www.arvest.am>, <http://icha.armenianculture.am>). The radio channel "Vem" has a cultural theme. Previously there was a specific TV channel "Ararat", supported by the Ministry of Culture, that addressed different spheres of art and culture. It does not exist any more. Some of its functions were transferred to another cultural channel "Shoghakat" (supported by the Armenian Apostolic Church). The children's channel "Hayrenik" that was mainly focused on elucidation of culture related topics for children has also stopped broadcasting since the beginning of 2012. As well as having many art, music and spiritual education programmes, Armenians also have access to the Russian "Cultura" TV channel which is very popular in the sphere of culture. In the sphere of literature, electronic periodicals Inqagir (<http://www.inknagir.org/>) and Granish (<http://www.granish.org/>) are well-known in Armenia.

There are no serious debates in the country over EU competition policies.

The Media Diversity Institute Armenian office has conducted several training programmes and has published guidebooks on diversity reporting, which highlights cultural diversity issues among other sensitive issues.

In the sphere of freedom of speech, the situation is better served with printed and electronic media, which do not encounter serious obstacles for their activities, though separate cases of violation of journalists' and citizens' information rights may happen. However, in the case of the broadcasting media, more serious violations such as lack of access to the TV and radio waves for broadcasting may take place. These and other developments on freedom of speech are covered by the Freedom House Armenia 2011 report: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2011/armenia> (Freedom House is an independent watchdog organisation dedicated to the expansion of freedom around the world). The violations in the media sphere can be exemplified in the case of A1+ TV channel which has been denied a license for 8 years for political reasons and just recently has got several hours of broadcasting on the Armnews TV channel.

#### **4.2.7 Intercultural dialogue: actors, strategies, programmes**

The government pays attention and takes appropriate measures in the local communities and regions to support cultural variety, intercultural dialogue and the issues of social unity. This support is confirmed by the *Law on the State Budget*. According to this Law, special lines of the State Budget are envisaged to support activities of national minorities at the community and NGO levels.

#### 4.2.8 Social cohesion and cultural policies

The state has the key role in ensuring the right to create and to make available its citizens' cultural activity, ensuring access to cultural services and benefits, and encouraging society's cultural potential. Put differently, the principle of cultural animation is part of the state cultural politics. However, this principle does not work equally for all citizens of Armenia for a number of reasons. A socially polarised society and uneven regional development hamper the formation of coherent and culturally involved communities.

According to the National Statistical Service of Armenia, the average monthly wage in Armenia in 2012 was 115 000 AMD, which equals 213 EUR. In the meantime, the average monthly fee for art classes is between 5 000 and 10 000 AMD (about 9.2-20 EUR) excluding expenses for the purchase of materials or tools.

**Table 2: Average monthly nominal wages, in AMD and in EUR**

Year	Absolute Value in AMD	Absolute Value in EUR
2014	-	-
2013	146 524.0 AMD	271 EUR
2012	113 163.0 AMD	213 EUR
2011	108 092.0 AMD	200 EUR
2010	102 652.0 AMD	190 EUR

Source: <http://armstat.am>

To ensure social unity, one of the main tasks of the cultural policy is the link between the provision and availability of cultural services. To ensure the availability of cultural education for socially disadvantaged families, since 2007, the music and art schools receive extra payments from the state budget (in the form of refunds). The refund system was applied initially in the education of folk music instruments; it is anticipated to extend this benefit to other professions as well. In order to expand access to museum, library and theatrical-concert services, a new tariff policy and reduction system for socially disadvantaged groups is being developed. Today there are fixed days to visit museums free of charge. Concert tours of state theatrical-concert organisations are presented in the regions, financed by the state budget.

Another main direction of cultural policy is the enhancement and development of the cultural potential of society. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Culture carries out the training of specialists at medium and highly specialised educational institutions with the goal to ensure the necessary quantity of specialists. There is state support for educating young people from socially disadvantaged families and there is also support to ensure that the cultural organisations functioning in the regions are replenished with necessary specialists.

The officials responsible for ensuring social cohesion at all the levels of power are the bodies that control the cultural policy (see chapter 3.2).

The Armenian legislation ensures social and cultural rights of people with disabilities. In 2010, Armenia ratified the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. However, the problem of physical accessibility of cultural institutions remains acute. A number of non-governmental organisations (like "Unison" NGO) cooperate with state agencies in the development of corresponding by-laws and regulations to have the problem resolved.

#### 4.2.9 Employment policies for the cultural sector

In the cultural sphere, those employed work for state and community non-commercial organisations, private cultural organisations, and cultural foundations and are self-employed. In 2006, the total number of cultural employees and artists of state non-commercial cultural organisations, within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture, was 5 231.

There are 34 theatres in Armenia, 16 within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture, 11 are within the community jurisdiction and 4 are private theatres. There are 22 music organisations in Armenia: 11 within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture, 4 within the community jurisdiction and 7 are private organisations. There are 16 dance organisations in Armenia: 3 under the Ministry of Culture, 1 under community jurisdiction and 11 are private organisations.

The number of employees in the cultural sphere, according to the various sectors, is listed below. The figures were obtained in 2006, and the statistical data have not been refreshed, or at least, the newest data are not available from the public sources.

- library activity: total number employed is 2 511, 2 249 of whom work in the libraries under community jurisdiction;
- museum activity: total number employed is 1 507, 394 of whom work in regional museums;
- theatrical / concert activity: 443 employees;
- music schools – 1 611 employees;
- art schools – 735 employees;
- drawing schools – 202 employees;
- cultural houses and centres – 1 618 employees; and
- other cultural organisations – 266 employees.

There is no statistical data yet relating to independent cultural workers. Some of these workers are calculable via their membership of creative unions; in 2006 there were 2 478 (Union of Composers and musicologists – 125 members, Union of Theatre Workers – 708 members, Union of Painters – 1 092 members, Union of Art of Dance Workers – 50 members, Union of Cinematographers – 171 members, Writers' Union – 332 members).

The average salary of workers in cultural organisations under Ministry of Culture jurisdiction is about 65 000 AMD; within community jurisdiction, it is even lower (the exact data is unavailable). Salaries in the cultural sector though still remain the lowest in comparison with other social spheres. In the education sector, a teacher's salary is 72 100 AMD, while in the healthcare sector the average salary is 68 196 AMD.

Today, cultural management skills are being obtained indirectly, rather than institutionally in Armenia. Several current cultural managers obtained their knowledge either independently or through different international organisations. Currently, cultural management is taught only in the Komitas Conservatory and in the Institute of Theatre and Cinema, whereas other cultural spheres are also in need of managers.

In accordance with the Culture Development Strategy of 2008-2012, the goals for personnel policy in the culture sphere are:

- to re-staff the cultural sphere with highly qualified specialists;
- to provide opportunities for the training and retraining of creative workers in order to ensure their competitive capacity in market relations;
- to ensure the balanced distribution of specialists in the Republic; and
- to involve new and modern professions (art managers, art producers etc.) in the culture sphere.

The following actions are stipulated to enhance the personnel strategy:

- research into manpower needs and other services in the cultural sphere aiming to make an impact on market formation and specialist training;
- to increase the income level of artists by means of state remunerations and the presentation of Armenian culture abroad;
- equalisation of salaries for cultural sector public workers (libraries, museums, exhibitions, music and art schools, archives and clubs and culture centres) with similar professions, particularly to bring them into line with the average salary in the education sector;
- to make administrative changes to support cultural centres of distant, bordering, high mountainous communities via the system of free education in higher educational institutes and schools (full compensation of tuition payment in the form of student grants provided by the state);
- irrespective of the institute, staff in cultural organisations must be trained professionally, and their appointment must be made via competition; and
- the establishment of a National Culture Institute attached to the Ministry of Culture whose key task must be the development of standards in cultural sector management, methods, methodologies, personnel training and raising the level of professional skills.

#### **4.2.10 Gender equality and cultural policies**

Armenia has joined the UN Convention on "Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women".

In accordance with the Constitution, all people are equal before the law and gender discrimination is forbidden. The National Statistical Service lists the average number of women working in culture and science in 1999 as 111 800; in 2000 – 117 400; in 2001 – 116 600; in 2002 – 105 300; and in 2003 – 98 600 people. The present Culture Minister and Deputy-minister, Deputy-speaker of the National Assembly, Chairperson of the Permanent Commission on Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Sports are women, as are 62% of ministerial employees (5 231 people, 1 975 of whom are men and 3 228 are women). The number of women in cultural NGOs and in institutions engaged in cultural production is also high.

The Republic of Armenia adopted the "National Programme for 2004-2010 on Improvement of the Situation of Women and the Elevation of their Role in Society". The programme envisaged a number of objectives and activities most of which were implemented, however a proper evaluation of results of the programme have never been made. Since 2011, The Ministry of Culture has been applying the new gender policy, aimed at:

- overcoming gender discrimination and achieving equality between women and men;
- ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men to realise their cultural needs and to promote the development of social, legal and political culture;
- overcoming women's under-representation in the decision-making of legislative and executive branches of power and to strengthen social cohesion. Ensuring 30% female representation in the legislative and executive branches of government decision-making levels;
- making periodic assessments of the gender situation in the country; and
- increasing gender sensitivity among public employees.

#### **4.2.11 New technologies and digitalisation in the arts and culture**

A major direction of Armenian cultural policy is investment of modern informational-communicative technologies and systems of electronic management in the cultural sector,

as well as stimulation of digitalisation of cultural objects. The provision of electronic information equipment is still far from satisfactory in Armenia.

With the purpose of creating an electronic depository of museum objects under the patronage of the World Bank "Museum", a computer programme was developed, which is used in 7 museums. Multiple programs on training of museum specialists have been implemented by the government in collaboration with NGOs and international partners.

In 2000, the technical re-equipment process for libraries began. With finance from the state budget and remunerations, the automation process of collections has started in all state libraries; 7 libraries carry out an electronic service and currently 12 libraries are included in the project of creating the joint automated network of Armenian libraries, which is currently in the process of implementation. The production of a combined electronic catalogue programme has started, with the participation of the Armenian National Chamber of books. Library collections are enriched annually with 16 000 units of information material to meet current reading demands. The effectiveness of the library-informational services needs to be improved in order to meet modern reading demands and to provide an adequate electronic service level. The Armenian Higher Technological Centre and the Information Technologies Foundation are working on cultural initiatives.

The automation of the informational-search system for archive collections was initiated in 2001. Since 2004, work on digitalisation of the photo collection and, since 2006, the cinema collection has got underway. A special fund was established to carry out this work.

To date, the digital data catalogue includes about 400 000 documents, 11 900 photos and 40 film pictures. In 2011 the process of digitilisation of objects of cultural heritage was continued by launching the renovated web-site of the National Gallery (<http://www.nga.am> or <http://www.gallery.am>).

The digitisation of museum collections has been launched by two virtual exhibitions of Armenian carpets (<http://carpets.iworldarmenia.com>). Also, the first 3D model of Tatev, the monastic complex of the 9th century has been made and is currently sold in tourist shops.

## **4.3 Other relevant issues and debates**

### **4.3.1 Religion and Church as cultural policy development factors**

Religion is one of the most important factors of cultural specificity and cultural development of nations and countries. Armenia is a secular country which means the religious institutions de-jure does not intervene in the state policy development process, but a de-facto religious factor definitely impacts on the decision-making process in some spheres, such as cultural heritage, education, and cultural tourism. The Armenian Apostolic Church is a dominant religious institution in Armenia, and about 94.7% of citizens belong to it. Its role and functions are much more than those of just a religious institution. The Armenian Apostolic Church implemented functions identical to those of a state since the last Armenian state collapsed in 14 c. So far, it has been playing a central role in the organisation, management and protection of the Armenian Communities of Diaspora. For the vast number of Armenians, the Armenian Apostolic Church is a symbol of national and ethnic identity rather than that of a religion.

Since the declaration of independence in 1991, the Armenian Apostolic Church has significantly enlarged the scope of its activities in many spheres of culture.

- In many communities the Armenian Apostolic Church has taken over the functions of cultural centres and cultural houses. Local church communities fulfil different projects

on religious and cultural education of children, adolescents, youth and the elderly. The Church officials and activists organise excursions, lectures and cultural events for the locals. Typically, they maintain and support choirs, youth organisations, arts and crafts (see Hayordyats Tner, in chapter 8.4.1). Some of the most active church communities are involved in environmental protection and charitable activities. It should be noted that similar activities are organised by other religious movements in Armenia for their own communities.

- The Armenian Apostolic Church has also succeeded in its efforts to make religion a part of secular education. The course on "History of the Armenian Apostolic Church" is delivered in secondary schools and, in fact, fully addresses Christian dogmatism, mythology and values. This course has become an issue of public debates among the secular part of the population. Secular intelligentsia criticise the introduction of the subject and the content of the textbooks, considering it a step backward from the idea of a secular state.
- The Armenian Apostolic Church tends to be one of the central players in cultural heritage related activities. Most of the historical monuments in Armenia that are preserved from antiquity and the Middle Ages are of religious nature. There are approximately 1 300 officially registered historical and architectural monuments, mostly related to early and medieval Christianity. Since 1997 (*State resolution N274, 1997*), the state has started the process of restitution of Christian monuments (churches, monasteries, chapels) to the Armenian Apostolic Church. Activation of churches and monasteries highlights the necessity for renovation and modernisation so that religious services can be facilitated. The Armenian Apostolic Church raises money from private donors and Diaspora organisations for this renovation. Some restoration projects are carried out along with the Ministry of Culture. However, some cases of inaccurate restoration and / or modernisation of ancient churches and monasteries irritate the local and pan-Armenian community of architects, historians and cultural studies specialists and have become an issue for public debates and political activities.

#### **4.3.2 Sustainable Development**

Cultural sustainability constitutes one of the four domains of the concept of sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Strategy of Armenia (October, 2008) considers cultural sustainability among its priorities. In particular, the Program prioritises:

- Preservation and promotion of the Armenian Cultural Heritage;
- Stimulation of modern cultural processes and promotion of modern art;
- Cultural education;
- Development of international cultural cooperation and ties.

In June of 2012 the Armenian delegation participated in Rio de Janeiro summit "Rio +20", devoted to sustainable development. The RA Ministry of Culture developed a report entitled "Cultural policy in 2000-2012 in the context of sustainable development" that had been presented in the summit.

#### **4.3.3 Sports**

Some sports may be considered as a factor strongly impacting culture and development. Unprecedented success of the Armenian chess-players in the World Chess Olympiads 2006, 2008, and 2012 promoted national interest in chess and stimulated the introduction of chess into secondary schools as a part of the national education programme (2011). Chess has also become an additional means for international recognition of Armenia, the Armenian people and culture.

The discipline of "Sport and Physical culture" is taught in the Institute of physical culture (since 2013). It includes history and cultural evolution of sports and its sociocultural role.

### **Transparency of Culture related State Institutions**

Criticism of the activities of the Ministry of Culture that periodically appear in the mass media sometimes stem from the lack of transparency of ministerial activities, appropriate information on cultural projects, awareness about decision-making and selection processes, etc. Public debates on this issue often do not get immediate and adequate feedback from government officials, so people do not feel their opinion is valued by the state.

During 2011, there have been several positive changes in the situation. The Minister of Culture tried to be more open to the public and obtain feedback on some important issues that were emerging (the issue of restoration and displacement of frescos of Minas Avetissyan, the famous Armenian painter, the gradual removal of book stores, etc.) through various mass media outlets. A meeting with the Armenian blogging community was organised in August 2011, where all these and other issues were discussed and at least addressed. The official website of the Ministry (<http://www.mincult.am>) also plays an important role in the provision of public awareness, but the question of transparency still remains open. Since 2013 the website of the Ministry has been restructured and significantly improved. It has become more informative, more transparent and more user-friendly.

## 5. Main legal provisions in the cultural field

### 5.1 General legislation

#### 5.1.1 Constitution

Under the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia (*Articles 8.1, 11, 31, 40, 41*):

- historical and cultural monuments and other cultural values are under the care and protection of the state;
- within the framework of the principles and norms of international law, the Republic of Armenia contributes to fostering relations with the Armenian Diaspora, protecting Armenian historical and cultural values located in other countries, and promotes Armenian education and culture;
- the Republic of Armenia recognises the exclusive historical mission of the Apostolic Church as a national church in the spiritual life and development of the national identity of the people of Armenia;
- the state guarantees the existence and activity of an independent and public radio and television service offering a variety of information, cultural and entertainment programmes;
- intellectual property is protected by law;
- everyone has the right to freedom of literary, aesthetic, scientific and technical creation, to make use of scientific advancement and to participate in cultural life;
- everyone has the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity. Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to preservation and development of their traditions, religion, language and culture.

#### 5.1.2 Division of jurisdiction

In the field of culture, state policy is carried out by the government. According to the Constitution, the marz (regional) governors realise the territorial policy of the government and regulate the activity of the territorial services of executive bodies. In the cultural sphere, state governance is realised by the state body authorised by the government which is the Ministry of Culture. The responsibilities of this body are determined by the *Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation (2002)*.

In the cultural sphere, the authority of institutions for local governance, the legal, economic, financial bases and guarantees for their realisation, as well as the relations between state and local government bodies are regulated by the *Law on Local Self-Government (2002)*. In the cultural sphere, the responsibilities that are authorised by the state body are determined by *Article 22 of the Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation (2002)*. The Ministry of Culture implements the state policy on culture, participates in the development of educational criteria, produces manuals and programmes in the cultural sphere, creates a unified information system, keeps statistical records for the cultural sphere and the registration of cultural organisations, as well as organises professional training and retraining of workers in this sector.

In the organisation of cultural life in the Marzes, the authorities of Marz governors and community leaders are determined by the *Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation. Articles 23 and 24* of this *Law* ensure that the Marz governor and the community leader ensure the state cultural policy in the territory of Marzes and communities. The Marz governor organises the construction of cultural facilities in the Marz, their preservation and exploitation, and contributes to the restoration and dissemination of folk ceremonies. The Marz governor also has responsibilities determined by the Constitution in the field of heritage protection and use of historical-cultural monuments located in the Marz territory.

The funding for the realisation of these responsibilities is mainly provided by the state budget. The community leader, as a mandatory authority, organises the activity of the cultural organisations created by the community (community and non-profit organisations), including their reconstruction and exploitation of the work of the cultural facilities. As a voluntary authority, the community leader contributes to the development of folk handicrafts, folk arts and amateur art activities. It is anticipated that the financial means for this activity will be allocated from the community budgets however the communities still have no real capabilities for full and effective realisation of the tasks outlined above.

### **5.1.3 Allocation of public funds**

The allocation of public funds is carried out in accordance with the annual *State Budget Law*. Funds are allocated to the Ministry of Culture in the form of mid-term programme expenditure and in the form of current year expenditure. The funds in the ministry budget are distributed in accordance with the infra-legislative acts. Amendments to the Law are regulated by government resolutions and by orders of the Finance and Economy Minister.

The Ministry of Culture announces annual tenders for the various cultural fields (e.g. theatre, cinema) and carries out fund allocation programmes. The purchase of capital outlays, devices and equipment for cultural facilities is carried out through tenders announced by the State Agency of Purchases, which is attached to the government.

The Minister of Culture distributes funds in accordance with supremacy defined by the State Council. Deputy Ministers of Culture and heads of departments are members of the Council.

### **5.1.4 Social security frameworks**

In 2005, the official unemployment level in the Republic of Armenia was 8.2%, however there is no separate data concerning cultural workers.

The social welfare criterion in the Republic of Armenia applies to the cultural sphere as well. No legislative changes have been made in the sphere of social welfare.

See also chapter 8.1.2 for information on pensions.

### **5.1.5 Tax laws**

There are no legal tax benefits in the Republic of Armenia relating to cultural patronage. The VAT for cultural services and goods is 20%.

There is not yet any privilege to free cultural workers or facilities from income taxes or from any other taxes. There is no tax-free system in the Republic of Armenia; only international organisations functioning in the Republic (including the organisations realising cultural activity) are released from paying VAT during the performance of their programmes, under agreement with the government.

Although there is no law fixed in Armenia, creative workers do not pay value added taxes on the sales of their art work.

Despite the fact that during the last decade a number of cultural undertakings have been realised under private patronage, there are no tax laws to stimulate these kinds of activities by freeing donors from paying taxes or by applying a reduction system. There are no special privileges defined by the *Laws on Income and Profit* to benefit cultural institutions or individuals.

At the same time, there is a commission attached to the government which allows some benevolent programmes, once recognised, to be freed from paying taxes. A number of programmes are carried out by donors in Armenia in the sphere of arts and culture (e.g.

"Armenia" All-Armenian Foundation, Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation, Gafesjian Foundation, Izmirlian Foundation).

### **5.1.6 Labour laws**

Institutions, including cultural ones, are guided by the *Labour Code (2004)*. Labour relations between individual art workers and cultural organisations are regulated both by law and by the provisions of agreements signed between them, in the form of typical labour or service agreements. Regarding the regulation of payments, cultural workers do not differ from other workers.

The *Labour Code* does not provide any separate provision for voluntary work and unintentionally considers it as a job too. Volunteers work in different fields, but without any legislative protection.

### **5.1.7 Copyright provisions**

Implementation and preservation of copyright provisions are ongoing in the Republic of Armenia. The formation of the newly independent Armenia gave rise to new institutes in the field of intellectual property, particularly in the copyright sphere, along with the necessity for compliance with international legal acts. In the sphere of video-audio production, piracy is a major issue. The *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* and the *Civil Code* regulate the issues of intellectual property and copyright, including copyright relating to works of literature, science and the arts.

The *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* was adopted on 15 January 2006. The main goal of the Law is to define copyright works and subjects, to regulate more productively legal interrelations, and to ensure guarantees for the implementation of provisions in the Law. Particularly, the works' list in the cultural sphere was filled up and developed, including new directions connected with the use of information technologies (calligraphy, electronic cultural products and so on).

Recently, there was a dispute with regard to the preservation of copyright and related rights for computer typefaces, involving the creators, publishers and designers, the organisations acting in the IT sector and representatives of scientific organisations, as well as the Armenian representative of Microsoft. More efficient mechanisms for the use of documents in the legislative field were proposed, as well as standardisation and authorisation issues.

The *Armenian Copyright Law* is based on the European model, though it has specific local approaches. There are policies for "fair use" of copyright material, particularly for educational purposes, which is reflected in the Law.

### **5.1.8 Data protection laws**

In accordance with the Constitution, the state guarantees the existence and activity of an independent and public radio and television service offering a variety of information, cultural and entertainment programmes.

### **5.1.9 Language laws**

Under the Constitution, Armenian is confirmed as the state language of the Republic of Armenia. Regulation of language use is carried out by the state Language Inspectorate of the Ministry of Education and Science.

The language used in broadcasting radio and television programmes in Armenia depends on the status of the broadcaster (state or private) and the nature of the programme, although programme language is mainly Armenian. TV programmes in foreign languages, foreign

language episodes of Armenian programmes, as well as the films of the Public TV Company are broadcasted in simultaneous Armenian translation. This does not include the TV programmes that are broadcasted for foreign countries and for national minorities. Since there are no state cinemas in Armenia, films are mainly shown in Russian, because the majority of the Armenian population speaks Russian and the films are distributed mainly through Russian companies, which avoid extra costs on dubbing. This practice is not in line with the requirements of the legislation on the state language. The exceptions are only the films shown during Yerevan international film fest "Golden Apricot" and within the frameworks of different cultural days, when films are presented with Armenian oral or written translation.

There is a Russian Dramatic Theatre in Yerevan and its performances are in Russian. The performances during the "Hayfest" international annual festival of theatrical troupes are performed in the languages of participating countries.

Books in foreign languages are published in Armenia under state patronage including books in the languages of national minorities.

#### **5.1.10 Other areas of general legislation**

*The Law on freedom of conscience and religious organisations* was accepted on 14 June 1991. It declares freedom of religion and belief. All citizens of Armenia, according to the Law, are free to practice any religion, or none.

## **5.2 Legislation on culture**

The key normative-legal Act regulating the cultural sphere is the *Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation (2002)*, which determines the tasks of the Republic of Armenia's cultural legislation, principles of the state cultural policy, goals, approaches to the cultures of national minorities, fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms in the cultural sphere, cultural wealth of the Republic of Armenia, relations between the state and the creative workers' unions, state activities in the cultural sphere, powers of the state and local self-government bodies, financing of culture and cultural activities, types of activities of cultural non-profit organisations, and the main directions of international cooperation in this sphere.

Analysis of the *Law on Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation* shows a necessity to adopt legislation to regulate the separate cultural sectors (protection of cultural heritage, cinematography, works of amateur art, museums, libraries, archives, publishing businesses, artistic education, folk culture, etc).

Some of the drafts regulating the cultural sphere are at the discussion stage in the National Assembly for several years. Work on drafting of some laws is under way at the Ministry of Culture. It is anticipated to develop and submit, for adoption to the National Assembly, the following legal acts: *Draft Laws on Theatre and Theatrical Activity, on Museum Collection and Museums, on Library Activity, on Non-Material Cultural Heritage* and new editions of old laws such as *Documents and Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation*. It is also anticipated to develop and present the draft *Law on National Film*.

The cultural sphere is also regulated by other laws and by-laws, including *Laws on Preservation and Utilisation of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture and of the Historic Environment, Immovable Monuments of History and Culture Considered State Ownership of RA and Not Subject to Alienation, Archives Activity*, as well as *Regulations on the State Registration, Study, Protection, Mounting, Repair, Restoration, Utilisation of*

*Immovable Monuments of History and Culture and Transportation of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture.*

The fundamental rights and freedoms of artists are prescribed by the *Law on the Fundamentals of Cultural Legislation* (2002). The fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms in the cultural sector are envisaged in *Chapter 2 of the Law*, by which every person has a right to participate in cultural life and carry out cultural and creative activity, participate in cultural values, receive appropriate education, as well as the right to export the results of their creative activity. The creators have a right to establish cultural organisations. The same Law determines that the state supports the activities of the creative workers' unions, giving them an opportunity to participate in cultural policy development and takes into consideration their proposals in the course of elaboration of programmes in the spheres of creative workers' employment, professional training, job guarantees and social security. According to *Article 3 of the Law*, the principle of freedom of cultural and creative activity is envisaged.

### **5.3 Sector specific legislation**

#### **5.3.1 Visual and applied arts**

Legal acts relating to these art forms have not been adopted yet.

#### **5.3.2 Performing arts and music**

In 2010 the draft *Law on Theatres and Theatre Activities* has been developed and submitted to the National Assembly for review. It will regulate forms and mechanisms of state support to theatres and create a legal base for theatrical performances. The review process is not finished yet. The Law will be enforced as soon as it is accepted by the National Assembly.

#### **5.3.3 Cultural heritage**

The *Law on Preservation and Utilisation of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture and of the Historic Environment* (adopted on the 11 November 1998) determines the concept of monuments of history and culture, objects of preservation and utilisation of monuments, subjects, classification of monuments, powers of the state and local self-government bodies in the sphere of preservation and utilisation of monuments and the procedure on the state registration of monuments. It also ensures preservation of monuments and the historic environment and supports the study of monuments and archaeological digs. The Law determines the repair and restoration of monuments, ownership of monuments, utilisation of monuments, financing of monument preservation and utilisation, and responsibility in the sphere of monuments preservation and utilisation.

The *Law on Immovable Monuments of History and Culture Considered State Ownership of RA and Not Subject to Alienation* (adopted on the 11 April 2003) regulates the types of immovable monuments of history and culture considered to be in state ownership, as well as determines the forms of use of these monuments and the areas they occupy. On this basis, the *Government Decree approved The List of Immovable Monuments Considered as State Ownership and Not Subject to Alienation*.

The Regulations on the State Registration, Study, Protection, Mounting, Repair, Restoration, Utilisation of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture, and Transportation of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture regulate the cultural heritage sector.

The *Law on Archives Activity* (adopted on 08 June 2004) regulates legal relations concerning the stocking, registration, preservation, and use of the archives collection and other archival documents (despite the right of ownership), as well as relating to the archives sector. This sector is regulated also by the *Government Decrees on Exemplary List of Archival Documents with Preservation Dates* (N351-N of 9 March 2006) and the *Procedure of Financing of Preservation of the Republic of Armenia Archives Collection* (N33-N of 17 February 2005).

The *Law on Export and Import of Cultural Values* regulates the processes of export and import of cultural items, determining precisely the conditions and order of exporting cultural items that are considered personal and state property. This field is regulated by the *Government Decrees on Procedure of Registration on a Voluntary Basis of Non-State Cultural Values Included in the Protective List of Cultural Values and Criteria Setting* (N631-N of 19 May 2005), *Approval of Expertise Licensing Procedure of Movable Cultural Values and the License Type* (21 July 2005 N1115-N), and *Establishment of the List of Especially Valuable Cultural Values Considered to be the Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Armenia* (13 October 2005 N1643-N).

The *Law on Intangible Cultural Heritage* regulates legal issues related to the preservation, protection and development of intangible cultural values which includes their identification, documentation, study, application, rehabilitation, and dissemination processes, as well as copyright, international cooperation and communication issues and procedures. The Law also provides a definition of the intangible cultural heritage and counts spheres circumscribed in this notion. The Law was accepted on 07 October 2009.

### **Pending legislative acts**

The draft *Law on Museums and Museum Collections of RA*, regulating issues of museum management, rehabilitation, preservation, study, completion and use of museum collections as well as copy right, international cooperation, exchange and communication issues and procedures was submitted to the National Assembly for discussion and further development in 2007. Since, it has been undergoing the development and refinement process and likely to be put on the Parliament's schedule in the nearest future.

### **5.3.4 Literature and libraries**

The *Law on Mandatory Copying of Documents*, adopted on the 04 October 2005, regulates the legal and financial-economic relations concerning the delivery, permanent preservation, registration of editions, electronic publications and unpublished material of all types, preparation of a bibliography and public use of the national heritage.

According to some *Decrees* adopted by the government in 1997, central libraries of the library system were reorganised as regional libraries, and other libraries under community ownership.

The coordinating link of works between the state and book-publishing sphere is the Agency on Publishing of the Ministry of Culture, which is responsible for the organisation and assistance to the book-publishing sphere, as well as for providing state assistance to the non-state press and regional TV companies. The Agency works out plans and programmes for sector development, renders assistance to the activities organised by NGOs, promotes the presentation of Armenian books at the international exhibitions, fairs, etc.

The priorities in the literature sector to receive state assistance are determined by the government as advised by the authorised body on cultural issues (the Ministry of Culture). The Ministry of Culture extends financing by evaluating and choosing applications-proposals with a group of experts.

On 1 November 2007, the government adopted *Decree N1285 on Approval of the Procedure of Free Distribution and Realisation of Literature Published by the State Order*. The Ministry of Culture carries out free distribution and realisation of the literature published by the state order through the "Book" fund, concluding a commission agreement with it. The Ministry determines which organisations receive free literature from the "Book" fund.

On 21 March 2012 the government adopted the *Law on Libraries and Library Science*, regulating issues and procedures of library management, preservation, completion and use of library collections.

### **5.3.5 Architecture and spatial planning**

The project of the *Law on Architectural Activities* has been developed by the Union of Architects of RA in 2012 and currently is undergoing the process of public discussions and further improvements prior to being sent to the National Assembly.

### **5.3.6 Film, video and photography**

In 2002, the government adopted *Fundamentals on Preservation, Distribution and Development of Cinematography*, with the purpose of policy development in the cinematography sphere. This document approved the forms of organisation of state policy, fundamental principles and procedure for rendering state assistance, and the main activities and main directions of the strategy.

The main strategic directions in the cinematography sphere are film production, presentation and distribution, technology policy, international activities, and personnel training and retraining. The basic principles of the policy are the independence of cinema organisations, creation of available conditions for joining the cinematography sector, and rendering state assistance for the development of the sector.

The main purpose of the document is to ensure transition from the budget financing form of film production, distribution and presentation to the alternative financing system, which will give an opportunity to combine state assistance with different contributions from other organisations, the private sector and bank loans, under the obligatory condition to reimburse the funds given for film production, distribution and presentation by the state.

Separate legislation for regulation of the photography sphere is not envisaged.

### **5.3.7 Mass media**

In 1991, after the adoption of the *Law on Press and Other Mass Media* in Armenia, censorship was abolished officially and freedom of the press was declared. This is a key document in the broadcasting sphere as well.

On 9 October 2000, the President signed the *Law on Television and Radio* adopted by the National Assembly. On 13 December 2003, the *Law on Mass Information* was adopted. It contains several articles relating to the protection of national heritage during broadcasting. Broadcasting companies should provide 55% of airtime on average to "native programmes", including programmes on foreign languages translated into Armenian.

### **5.3.8 Other areas of culture specific legislation**

Information is currently not available.

## 6. Financing of culture

### 6.1 Short overview

Currently, financing of culture by the state is seeing a period of growth in comparison with previous years. The main source of cultural sector financing is the state budget, from the section on "Culture, information, sport and religion". The financing is realised on 2 administrative levels: ministry and marz administrations. The basis of the financing structure is annual programmes on preservation, distribution and development of culture, which are still limited in number and addressed to concrete organisations.

The financing of legal entities from the state budget is realised in 2 ways: via grants and subsidies through providing state orders (*Decree of the Government N 1937- of 24 December 2003*). According to the procedures, a subsidy is a reimbursement of the losses, or some part of them, sustained by the organisation as a result of the production, export and import of goods, execution of works and rendering of services by fixed prices (the lowest price as compared with a profitable price) from a given organisation.

At present, budgetary financing of cultural organisations is realised in the form of applications on the basis of the established cultural programmes. However, there is no precise division between the realised financing, grants awarded and expected results. On the other hand, this assistance has a targeted character and is directed to concrete state non-profit organisations functioning under the jurisdiction of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Culture is included in the Programmed Budgeting for approximately 3 years, which has been undertaken by the Ministry of International Development of Great Britain. According to this programme, the Ministry presents its programme in accordance with the conducted cultural policy.

The programme is a DFID project entitled "Support to the Roll-out of Programme Budgeting in Armenia" which is the continuation of the DFID project "Armenia: Assistance with MTEF". This is the second project in Armenia implemented by Atos Consulting (UK) in collaboration with the Armenian partner, International Centre of Human Development and Southern Cross International Inc. (New Zealand).

The goal of the project is to support the development and implementation of a strategy of introducing programme budgeting on a whole government basis. The programme budgeting project is also aimed at continuation and deepening of improvements to state agency budget classifications, specification of non-financial performance indicators, as well as at institutionalising performance planning, reporting and monitoring systems and practices. As a result of these improvements, integration of government policies and budgets, as well as of different processes of the government strategies, is anticipated.

At present, the project works directly with 32 budget agencies, including the Ministry of Culture. Programme budgeting work with the ministry started in 2005 with a primary focus on improving the budget classifications of the ministry in line with PB principles and development of volume indicators for services provided. Activities with the Ministry have included assistance for the preparation of MTEF submissions, performance specifications, as well as development of integrated financial and non-financial performance reports. As a result, a system of quarterly reporting has been introduced. In 2007, the ministry's *annual integrated financial and non-financial report* for 2006 budget programmes was prepared and submitted to the RA MFE and the National Assembly for the first time.

Support was also provided to the MoC in refining and finalising its revised budget classifications and in the preparation of their annual budget plan (which includes the ministry's strategy and performance indicators (quantity, quality, timeliness) for all budget

programmes) for inclusion in the 2008 budget documentation. The aim of this work is to have better focus on services provided and performances achieved.

## 6.2 Public cultural expenditure

### 6.2.1 Aggregated indicators

It is impossible so far to present public cultural expenditure per capita in the cultural sphere, as the data from local self-government bodies is still unavailable. The data from the state budget is shown below.

### 6.2.2 Public cultural expenditure broken down by level of government

Subdivision of spheres

The Ministry of Culture carries out financial transfers directly to cultural institutions. Appropriations to other levels of the government are not carried out.

The total cultural expenditure of the Ministry of Culture amounted to 10 960 746 000 AMD in 2013, which demonstrates a decline compared to 2012 when the figure was 13 506 180 100 AMD (see Table 3). (1 EUR = 518 AMD). In 2010, the total amount allocated for culture significantly fell due to the economic crisis affecting Armenia. Currently, the financing of culture takes up 1% of the state budget.

Total state expenditure for culture, relaxation and religion as fixed in the state budget were, correspondingly, 19 831 794.4 thousand AMD in 2009, 16 349 584 200 AMD in 2010, 17 981 896 500 AMD in 2011, 22 652 559 600 AMD in 2012 and 10 960 746 000 AMD in 2013.

### 6.2.3 Sector breakdown

**Table 3: State cultural expenditure: by sector, in thousand AMD, 2009-2013**

Field / Domain / Sub-domain	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Libraries	946 273.8	892 037.2	821 053.6	788 677.2	953 457.2
Museums and exhibitions	1 169 617.9	1 166 220.1	1 158 366.5	1 098 892.6	1 303 083.0
Cultural houses, clubs, centers	28 237.9	28 069.4	28 069.4	25 430.1	32 556.7
Other cultural institutions	31 432.8	32 723.3	112 314.8	103 488.4	123 032.6
Art	4 705 252.9	8 968 124.0	4 169 333.8	3 399 854.7	4 009 115.7
Cinematography	635 194.9	630 448.3	630 448.3	612 753.1	725 181.1
Restoration and preservation of monuments and cultural values	351 678.7	351 251.2	351 251.2	335 153.3	598 545.7
TV programmes	108 971.6	99 065.1	90 059.2	81 872.0	81 872.0
Publishing houses, editorial offices	284 274.6	268 699.8	249 038.8	245 938.8	282 038.8
Information	744 458.3	73 904.0	73 904.0	68 728.0	68 985.0
Relaxation, culture, religion	328 803.3	317 014.0	301 951.5	261 424.7	292 946.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 960 746.0</b>	<b>13 506 180.1</b>	<b>7 360 893.0</b>	<b>7 022 212.8</b>	<b>8 470 814.0</b>

Source: Ministry of Culture of RA.

### **6.3 Trends and indicators for private cultural financing**

The volume of private funding of culture in Armenia has significantly increased within the last decade. Though it is not possible to list all players in the field, some major companies and foundations are notable:

AGBU (the Armenian General Benevolent Union) sponsors cultural programmes in Armenia and the Diaspora in the sphere of dance, music, and theatre. It has a number of cultural committees covering different spheres.

Cafesjian Family Foundation operates in Armenia through the Cafesjian Centre for the Arts and implements various cultural and art development programmes, including exhibitions, concerts, etc.

Viva-Cell-MTS, one of the most successful private communication companies in Armenia, which is very active in supporting various social and cultural programmes on arts, education, cultural heritage, etc. In 2010, its funding of cultural events and developments amounted to about 1.86 billion AMD. "Orange", another private mobile and Internet company that launched its activities in Armenia in 2009, is also actively involved in cultural projects such as sponsoring cultural and educational events, literary competitions, etc.

Eurasia Partnership Foundation supports a number of media projects and projects on Armenia-Turkey cross-border cooperation that also includes cultural initiatives.

Information on the exact financial contributions of the private sector in the field of culture is not available yet.

## 7. Public institutions in cultural infrastructure

### 7.1 Cultural infrastructure: tendencies & strategies

One of the steps taken since independence has been decentralisation of the cultural sphere, which was realised in 1995, just after the adoption of the Constitution. With the establishment of the new structure of regional governance and local self-governance, cultural organisations were passed to the jurisdiction of the community and regional governing bodies.

Strategically, this administrative decentralisation gave an opportunity to separate the role and place of the different authority levels in the cultural sphere. However, the policy carried out by the authorised body on culture (the Ministry of Culture), and financing, were not directed to the recovery of cultural life in the Marzes (regions) and communities. As a result of the policy decentralisation, financing of cultural institutions under the jurisdiction of the Marzes and communities decreased. Organisations located in the remote, border, high mountainous communities are also in need of methodical and professional information and advice.

The processes of governance of decentralisation in the cultural sphere caused several problems. In the relations between the Ministry of Culture and the marz administration (the Yerevan city administration) the main issues are:

- There is no distinct division between powers and functions of the state authorised body, Marz administrations and communities. The corresponding departments of the given structures do not operate in coordination. The corresponding data communication between the capital and Marzes is not fully operational;
- Departments on culture in community administrations and community cultural organisations do not submit enough programme proposals on cooperation in the cultural development sphere to the Marz administrations and state authorised body. As a result, issues on the development of cultural life are not reflected adequately in the development programmes of the Marzes;
- The departments on cultural issues in the Marz administrations were united with the directorates on education and the number of specialists on cultural issues were reduced; and
- There is a lack of specialists in the Marz administrations necessary for the organisation of studies and monitoring in the cultural sphere. Information on cultural activities received from the Marzes is also unsatisfactory and contradictory.

Funds provided from the state budget to the organisation of cultural activities in Marzes in 2009-2011 increased by more than 14%.

**Table 4: Funds provided from the state budget to the renovation and restoration of Monuments in Marzes in 2013, in AMD and in EUR**

<b>Marz(Region)</b>	<b>AMD</b>	<b>EUR</b>
Aragatsotn	33 390.0	62
Ararat	990.0	1.8
Armavir	20 500.0	38
Lori	60 150.0	112
Tavush	24 490.0	45
Kotayq	30 300.0	56
Vayots Dzor	14 560.0	30
Syuniq	12 620.0	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21 550.0</b>	<b>5400</b>

Source: Ministry of Culture of RA.

Privatisation of cultural organisations has not become a source for attracting investment. Thus, among 70 cinemas functioning before gaining independence (out of which 50 operated in the Marzes), only 3 of them are functioning currently - 2 in Yerevan and 1 in Gyumri. As a result, serious obstacles in the process of distribution and development of cinematography have emerged. Similar problems arose after the privatisation of the bookselling network that existed previously. Before privatisation, the network included 38 bookshops in Yerevan and 10 units of 33 bookshops in the Marzes. At present, 7 private bookshops operate in Yerevan, and 3 in the Marzes (one in Hrazdan, Gyumri and Vanadzor). The study reveals that cultural organisations are in poor condition in the Marzes: 44.7% of buildings are in a satisfactory condition, 43.8% are in an unsatisfactory condition, while 11.5% are unusable. As regards repair, 60.3% of the buildings need capital repair, 27.8% need running repairs and 11.9% do not require repairs. On examination, it has been revealed that 5.3% of the cultural organisations don't function now and 8.7% of them are located in other buildings, in particular in the village administration buildings because of a lack of suitable alternatives. On the other hand, since 2003, programmes on the capital repair of the cultural houses were implemented with state funds.

## 7.2 Basic data about selected public institutions in the cultural sector

**Table 5: Cultural institutions financed by public authorities, by domain**

Domain	Cultural institutions (subdomains)	2010	2011	2012	2013	Trend (++ to --)
Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage sites (recognised)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Museums and galleries (organisations)	99	99	94	94	+-
	Archives (of public authorities)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Arts (visual and performing)						
	Art academies (or universities)	2	2	2	2	
	Symphonic orchestras	3	3	3	3	
	Music schools	102	99	101	102	+
	Music / theatre academies (or universities)	2	2	2	2	
	Dramatic theatre, music theatres	20	20	20	20	
	opera houses	1	1	1	1	
	Dance and ballet companies	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Books and Libraries	Libraries	960	948	944	948	+
Audiovisual	Broadcasting organisations					
Interdisciplinary	Cultural houses, Cultural centres*	854	854	850	852	+

Source: Armenian National Statistical Service, <http://www.armstat.am>.

\* This figure is formal, since approximately half of cultural houses do not function.

### **7.3 Status and partnerships of public cultural institutions**

In Armenia, as in other former Soviet Republics, most of the cultural institutions underwent changes in structure and legal status. Under the authority of the Ministry of Culture, part of these institutions made changes in their internal regulations, while others conferred the right to make those changes to the Ministry of Culture as an authorised body. Since 2002, museums, libraries, and theatrical-concert organisations have been reorganised into state non-profit organisations. Large cultural organisations were awarded "National" status (National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, National Gallery of Armenia, National Library, National Television, National Book Chamber). The State Academic Theatre, named after Sundukyan, was not awarded national status, although it continues to be at the forefront in comparison with the other theatres. There have not been any budgetary reductions in the state organisations; on the contrary, there is a tendency for growth. In some institutions, separate projects access programme grants from different funds, as well as using the incomes received from their own services.

The Ministry of Culture continues to finance the state cultural institutions, which, in their turn, are free to cooperate with any local and foreign donor organisations.

The Armenian Diaspora institutionalised structures (traditional parties, cultural unions, etc) and individuals are a financial source for cultural institutions. The local sponsors contribute mainly to popular culture and show business.

A number of NGOs, CJSCs and funds established in recent years have begun regional and international cooperation in the cultural sphere. They obtain assistance from the state and international organisations. In Armenia, NGOs were and still remain active participants in cultural life. Approximately 900 NGOs are registered in the cultural sphere, which makes up 33% of all registered NGOs. In the Marzes, there is 1 cultural organisation per 1 334 residents (the total population in the Marzes is 2 116 300, while the total number of cultural organisations is 1 586).

## **8. Promoting creativity and participation**

### **8.1 Support to artists and other creative workers**

#### **8.1.1 Overview of strategies, programmes and direct or indirect forms of support**

The Ministry of Culture supports creators by placing orders and purchasing their works. The Department of Art and Works of Folk Art of the Ministry coordinates this activity. Artists from abroad, who have invitations, can receive grants for travelling expenses from the Ministry for participation in professional activities.

A special grant programme of the Ministry for individual artists, institutions and art unions will start in 2008, the budget of which is 15 000 000 AMD (about 31 500 EUR ).

Artists who have been awarded the "People's" honorary title receive monthly payments from the state budget (the annual fund amounts to 35 433.2 AMD) (about 74 EUR).

#### **8.1.2 Special artist's funds**

The Literary Fund of the Writers' Union of Armenia supports book publication and the organisation of literary activities.

Legal guarantees on pension coverage for artists in the cultural sphere and conditions for pension entitlement, types of state pensions, procedures for awarding pensions and payment methods are determined by the *Law on State Pensions (2002)*. A right to a partial pension is given to some categories of cultural workers upon reaching the age of 55 and having at least 12 years of professional insurance and to some categories of actors of theatrical and theatrical-concert organisations upon reaching the age of 50 and having at least 12-years professional insurance. A list of posts, conferring a right to some category of workers in the education and cultural spheres, to receive partial pensions for long-term service and of types of working activities has also been approved.

#### **8.1.3 Grants, awards, scholarships**

An institute for awarding titles to honoured and people's artists of the Republic is still in operation. In 2002, a title of "Honoured Worker of Culture of the Republic of Armenia" was approved. The Republic of Armenia President's Award, which is financed by Diaspora benefactors each year, is awarded also to individuals distinguished in the cultural sphere.

Separate cultural funds announce competitions for the most prominent works of art in a given year (e.g. Tekeyan Cultural Union or the Armenian Fund for Art Development).

Programmes for loans and travel grants do not function in Armenia; however the Ministry of Culture often provides travelling expenses for individual artists to ensure their participation at international events.

#### **8.1.4 Support to professional artists associations or unions**

The government supports and promotes music and theatre arts through the purchase of works of art and social-creative orders (started in 2001), which mainly pursues two aims: the first aim is to include works by modern artists in the repertoire of theatrical-concert organisations and the second aim is to improve the social conditions of the workers. However, these funds are not sufficient yet to implement the above mentioned goals and there is a need to expand the framework of the state purchase of works involving other fields of art, such as fine arts, choreography and photography.

**Table 6: Indices of the social-creative orders, 2006-2009 state support**

	2006		2007		2008		2009	
	N.	Price (AMD)	N.	Price (AMD)	N.	Price (AMD)	N.	Price (AMD)
Music works	2	2 000 000	4	6 300 000		13 147 000		10 855 000
Drama works	16	39 200 000	18	3 720 000		81 910 000		73 529 500
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41 200 000</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>43 500 000</b>		<b>95 057 000</b>		<b>84 384 500</b>

Source: Ministry of Culture of RA.

**Table 7: Indices on purchase of musical and dramatic works, 2006-2009**

	2006		2007		2008		2009	
	N.	Price (AMD)						
Purchase of dramatic works	2	500 000	2	500 000	2	600 000	14	1 684 003
Purchase of musical works	11	3 000 000	10	5 000 000	17	5 900 000	12	3 000 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3 500 000</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5 500 000</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6 500 000</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4 684 003</b>

Source: Ministry of Culture of RA.

Taking into account the significant number of artists involved in the creative unions (Union of Composers and Musicologists – 125 members, Theatrical Workers' Union – 708 members, Artists' Union – 1 092 members, Choreographers' Union – 50 members, Cinematographers' Union – 171 members), as well as those working in the 40 state theatrical-concert organisations, the present number of social-creative orders are not adequate yet to fulfil their mission.

At present, the following creative unions operate in the Republic of Armenia:

- Writers' Union of Armenia;
- Artists' Union of Armenia;
- Composers' Union of Armenia;
- Architects' Union of Armenia;
- Theatre Workers' Union of Armenia;
- Cinematographers' Union of Armenia;
- Designers' Union of Armenia; and the
- Journalists' Union of Armenia.

The total number of members in the unions is more than 4 750.

The Ministry of Culture does not subsidise these unions annually; instead, state support is carried out only by full or partial financing of applications.

The Ministry of Culture also funds the replenishment of museum and library collections. In 2010, libraries in Armenia received about 67 502 books, and museum collections received 34 797 objects.

## 8.2 Cultural consumption and participation

### 8.2.1 Trends and figures

Analysis of statistics between 2010 and 2013 shows a growth in the number of those who participate in cultural activities and who use cultural services. The temporary decrease in figures in some directions (especially in some libraries and theatres) is due to the major

repair works in certain cultural institutions, being carried out by the government and other funds. The growth in figures is due also to the change in the tariff policy implemented in recent years, which was aimed at making cultural consumption more available to some strata of society, such as free entrance days, as well as considerable discounts for children and youth. The growth in the number of visitors to cultural institutions is due to the arrangement of theatre-concert tours to the Marzes, with state support.

**Table 8: Number of cultural institutions, 2010-2013**

Cultural institution	2010	2011	2012	2013
Theatres	263 916	313 755	308 153	
Museums	312 600	444 451	472 709	537 922
Libraries (number of readers)	110 344	111 120	94 175	113 441
National Academy theatre performances	21 111	38 375	22 888	
Opera and ballet performances	11 972	24 924	9 979	

Source: Department of Art and Folk Art of the Ministry of Culture of RA, 2013.

The small number of visitors to the Opera and ballet performances is explained by reconstruction works at the Opera House, which caused it to close for much of the year.

**Table 9: Number of museum visitors, 2010-2013**

No	Museums	2010	2011	2012	2013
1.	History Museum of Armenia	34 126	38 127	40 527	41 552
2.	National Gallery of Armenia (including 12 branches)	35 288	74 300	52 758	69 436
3.	Charents Museum of Literature and Arts (including 5 branches)	19 966	17 607	15 603	16 672
4.	Museum of Folk Art of Armenia (including 1 branch)	4 358	6 115	10 286	7 657
5.	House-Museum of Martiros Saryan	10 500	12 356	13 066	7 249
6.	House-Museum of Yervand Kochar	8 692	4 230	3 350	5 731
7.	Museum of Russian Art	4 984	4 540	4 610	5 269
8.	Wood Carving Museum	2 908	4 005	4 118	4 380
9.	House-Museum of Hovhannes Tumanyan	22 926	24 984	39 604	44 377
10.	House-Museum of Yeghishe Charents	18 000	15 000	19 850	18 000
11.	House-Museum of Avetik Isahakyan	7 866	6 226	6 707	8 576
12.	House-Museum of Alexander Spendaryan	2 921	1 505	200	2 852
13.	House-Museum of Aram Khachaturian	14 160	13 850	12 100	19 380
14.	House-Museum of Khachatur Abovian	2 746	522	1 092	
15.	House Museum of Orbeli Brothers	2 251	2 706	4 171	4 478
16.	Sergei Parajanov Museum	13 375	15 000	16 597	15 235
17.	Museum of "Armenian and Russian People's Friendship"	1 600	1 682	1 801	1 780
18.	N. Adonc museum of Sisian history	2 386	1 733	2 114	2 233
19.	Geological museum of Hrazdan	1 509	2 383	2 367	2 315
20.	Erebuni Fortress / Erebuni Museum	15 697	12 698	14 752	
21.	Archeological and cultural preservation-museums of "Zvartnots", "Garni" and "Metsamor"	171 972	178 882	205 312	267 046
22.	House-museum of Stepan Shahumyan in Stepanavan	1 196	2 000	1 724	1 361
	<b>Total</b>	<b>399 427</b>	<b>444 451</b>	<b>472 709</b>	<b>537 922</b>

Source: Department of Art and Folk Art of the Ministry of Culture of RA, 2013.

## **8.2.2 Policies and programmes**

Taking into account social conditions of the population, some mechanisms operate to involve all strata of the society in cultural life. Thus, entrance to museums is free for war veterans, participants of the liberation movement and schoolchildren. The Ministry of Culture sometimes provides free concert and theatre tickets. Once a month, museums have "open doors days"; moreover, once a year, a "museum night" programme operates, when visitors can visit a museum at no cost and museums stay open until midnight. In the museums, "open doors days" also operate during the "Days of the European Cultural Heritage" monthly event, which has taken place for several years.

In 2007, the "Philharmonic for schoolchildren" has been reopened. One of its main goals is to implement educational and scientific programmes for children and youth, presenting to them the works of both world classical art and Armenian folk art. The Philharmonic also organises meetings with famous artists, as well as concert programmes in the Marzes. It is anticipated to include schoolchildren in performances, concerts and other activities organised by the cultural organisations, using a subscription system.

## **8.3 Arts and cultural education**

### **8.3.1 Institutional overview**

In Soviet times, children's art education in Armenia was prioritised and considered one of the most advanced in the Soviet area. Hundreds of music and art schools, clubs, and groups provided art education to children. In the 1970s an unprecedented Centre of Children's Aesthetic Education was founded by J. Agamiryan and H. Igityan. It was unique because of its advanced art education methodologies and the Gallery of Children's Art, the first of its kind in the world. The Centre and the Gallery still exist in Armenia and carry out the same functions.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union the art education infrastructure survived difficult times and lost many of its constituents. Currently the system of institutions responsible for children's art education is largely restored throughout the country.

Currently in the sphere of art education there are six state non-profit organisations. Two state non-profit organisations function under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science – the National Centre of Aesthetics and the Centre on Aesthetic Education and Culture for Children and Youth. The rest of the art educational institutions fall under the jurisdiction of, and are financed by, the communities. In total, there are more than 400 out of school centres of art education. 71 of them are branches of state organisations and 269 are municipal; there are also 34 creativity centres for children and youth, 3 private schools specialising in the arts, and 12 art colleges. Besides, there are a number of initiatives that support art education in the regions such as mobile libraries, mobile museums and a "School Philharmonic Project" that has branches in Gyumri, Kapan, and Yeghegnadzor. During 2007-2009 this project organised more than 160 concerts and lectures for schoolchildren interested in the arts. In 2008, the "Arev" (Sun) programme of book-reading for children, with limited capacities, was launched.

The main bodies responsible for arts education in Armenia are the Ministry of Culture, via the Department of State Programmes, Cultural Cooperation, Education and Science, and the Ministry of Education.

During the past 5 years, the status of institutions providing arts education and additional education was specified. By their transformation to state non-profit organisations, separate regulations were elaborated and the state out-of-school educational institutions were

renamed. These transformations are regulated by the *Law on Education of RA* (1999), *Law on Basics of Cultural Legislation* (2002), and *Statement of RA on Concept of Art Education* (2004)

The latest important initiative in this field, on the basis of the *Decree of the Ministry of Culture* (2007) is to ensure the teaching of 2 062 students of folk musical instruments, funded by the state budget from 2007. The programme was continued in 2009 and the number of students reached 2 443.

The priorities in the field of arts education are as follows:

- to promote the international integration process and formation of cultural dialogue, while preserving the national cultural values;
- to involve socially vulnerable groups and, at the same time, by means of arts education, to prevent people from getting involved in socially vulnerable groups; and
- to introduce new technologies into the system.

### **8.3.2 Arts in schools**

In secondary schools teaching of the arts is an obligatory part of the curriculum. There are 456 hours of art lessons in the 1st to 7th years, including music, art, and so called "technologies" i.e. handicrafts. For the third and fourth years of education, special textbooks on the basics of music, art and handicrafts are provided. In high schools; schoolchildren also study ethics, aesthetics, and the history of art.

### **8.3.3 Intercultural education**

There is no perceived requirement for intercultural education in the timetables of Armenian schools. Schools are mostly Armenian although, in the regions inhabited by national minorities, Assyrian, Yezidi, Kurdish, and Greek classes operate. There are also two Russian schools for the Russian-speaking population. The first international English-language school opened in Dilijan, in September, 2014.

In the 2007 academic year, the Department of "Linguistics and Intercultural Relations" was opened at Yerevan State University, which focuses on general national values, cultural and language diversity, world culture, religion, tolerance etc.

### **8.3.4 Higher arts education and professional training**

Seven of 91 institutions of higher education (both state and private) specialise in the arts. Four arts institutes of higher education in Yerevan (the State Institute of Cinematography and Theatre, Yerevan National Conservatory, Yerevan Art Academy, Yerevan Pedagogical University) had 931 entries on state scholarships. In 2005-2006, the number of post-graduate students with an arts specialism was 41, which comprises 2.6% of the total number (1 528).

In May 2005, Armenia joined the Bologna process, which has resulted in some changes to educational programmes and curricula. In May 2007, following a monitoring process, a positive evaluation was given to Armenia's activities in this field. Since September 2007, all Armenian institutes of higher education, including the arts sector, changed to a credit transfer system. In some institutes of higher education, the list of specialties was revised to bring it into line with the demands of the European market. There are mandatory alternative programmes in the cultural institutes and penetration of new technologies into educational programmes can be observed. In particular, a course on computer art design has been introduced in the Yerevan Art Institute.

### **8.3.5 Basic out-of school arts and cultural education (music schools, heritage, etc.)**

See chapter 8.3.1 above.

Seventy-eight music schools provide music education to children of Yerevan and Marzes. Music is also taught in cultural houses and clubs for children and youth (see chapter 8.4.1 and chapter 8.4.2).

## **8.4 Amateur arts, cultural associations and civil initiatives**

### **8.4.1 Amateur arts and folk culture**

Of 200 formerly existing handicrafts in Armenia, only 14 are practiced today, increasing to 50 when their subtypes are considered. Groups studying folk art attend separate schools and centres under the jurisdiction of communities ("Hayordyats" houses - centres for intellectual development, and cultural clubs). However, there is no special policy relating to folk art education and there are no funds to support workers in this field either. The Yerevan Museum on Folk Art maintains interactive communication with craftspeople, stimulating continuity of handicrafts and supporting the emergence and development of new forms of amateur arts. The priority task in this field is to ensure a large market and connecting link with the world market.

Aesthetic centres and cultural houses functioning in Armenia contribute to the development of amateur arts. There are hobby groups of singing and dancing, handicrafts, theatre, circus, fine arts, arts and crafts, music, etc. However, most of attendees of those groups are children and youth, except for traditional "women's" crafts like embroidery, carpet-making, knitting, etc. There are some objective reasons for the reduction of adults involved in the amateur arts. Firstly, strong traditions of children's art education in Armenia is rooted back to the Soviet times when a commonly-shared perception of amateur arts existed (especially performances: music, theatre) as children's and youth sphere and part of their cultural education. Secondly, low salaries force people to look for additional sources of income, which means a heavy daily workloads and a lack of leisure time that might be used for amateur arts. There is also no state strategy for the involvement of adults in amateur arts; no municipality actually thinks about it. Unlike the Soviet times, there is no need to control people's leisure, therefore no need to have mechanisms to organise and manage it. A poorly developed tourism industry in the regions also fails to support more active participation of adults in amateur arts. All these issues should be considered when planning in this particular sphere.

However, since 2011 amateur, but de-facto professional folk dance and music groups have made remarkable efforts to popularise Armenian folk dances among the population and tourists. Free public lessons in Armenian Dance are delivered to all interested persons at one of the central squares of Yerevan from time to time. This might be considered as a first step toward the new perception of amateur arts' functional role in the cultural sector.

Many individuals have made crafts an additional, if not main, source of income. The samples of amateur arts and folk crafts are exhibited and sold at fairs and craft shops in Yerevan and in souvenir shops at the tourist sites throughout Armenia, where the works of individual creators are displayed. The "Vernissage", a fair of folk crafts has become one of the prominent touristic and cultural places of Yerevan. Besides, the municipalities of Yerevan and other cities of Armenia try to promote crafts and amateur arts during celebrations of national holidays or local feasts through exhibitions, street concerts, theatrical shows, and festival fairs. The overwhelming majority of participants are children and youth.

According to the *Law on Export of Cultural Values*, there is no prohibition for export of cultural values created during the past 50 years.

#### **8.4.2 Cultural houses and community cultural clubs**

Cultural houses and clubs, inherited from Soviet times, continue their activities, with some restrictions. Cultural houses and centres function mainly under the jurisdiction of communities. Their functions and activities depend on the individual communities and vary from just being a venue for community events to multi-functional cultural centres. Typically, the cultural centres include different hobby groups for music, dance, visual arts, crafts, some sports, chess, children's theatre, poetry etc. In villages, they also host libraries. Most of groups are not free of charge, but the fee is moderate (from 3 000 to 10 000 AMD (USD 7-26 a month). However, not all cultural houses inherited from the Soviet times are in use because of poor conditions or lack of professionals. Unfortunately, there is no statistical data on how many culture houses remain out of use or are using a minimum of their capacity.

Preservation and reconstruction of cultural houses is considered to be a priority task among the cultural organisations of the Marzes, because in the rural communities they have different functions (i.e. library, leisure centres etc), and, in general, they are the main places for organising cultural and public activities. There is an urgent need to reconstruct cultural houses of the frontier villages, because they will contribute to the resolution of some tasks, i.e. opening of new workplaces, reduction of the population flow, and promotion of national-traditional cultural values among the youth.

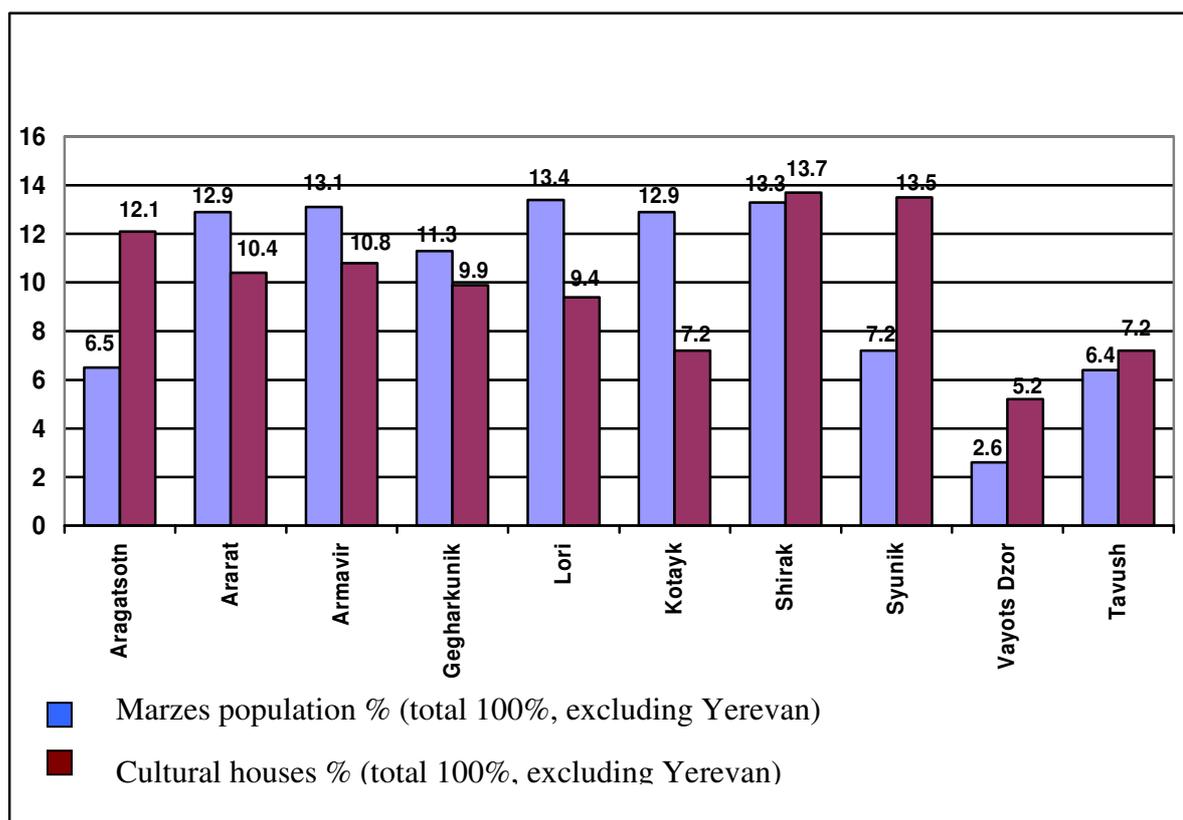
By order of the Ministry of Urban Development in 2003-2006, repairs to 21 cultural organisations was carried out (14 of them in the Marzes), totalling 1 456 300 000 AMD (3 066 000 EUR). In 2008 the total budget for renovation of cultural institutions was 1 525 569 000 AMD (3 100 750 EUR). In the last two years, the budget for cultural houses and clubs was significantly decreased (by 342 959 in 2010, and 603 972 in 2011), due to the financial crisis and diminished renovation needs.

Under the Social Investments Fund of Armenia, from 2003-2006, 17 cultural organisations in the Marzes were repaired or constructed, totalling 600 675 000 AMD (1 265 000 EUR), and in 2007-2008, it is anticipated to reconstruct and repair 9 cultural organisations, with a total budget of 748 664 100 AMD (1 576 000 EUR).

The existence of cultural houses in the Marzes remains important, because they are a conduit for implementation of cultural policy. On 5 April 2007, by *Decree N589*, a programme on cultural development in the Marzes was approved, by which it is anticipated not only to establish cultural centres, but also to establish basic centres for art education.

The allocation of cultural houses in the Marzes and by population is shown in the Figure below.

**Figure 1: Allocation of cultural houses, % of Marzes and population, 2012**



Source: Department of Art and Folk Art of the Ministry of Culture of RA, 2011.

There is no data relating to Yerevan in the above-mentioned table as the cultural houses in Yerevan have been closed or privatised. Some of them were transformed into the "Hayordyats Tner" (cultural centres acting under the protection and control of the Armenian Apostolic Church), and many of them still function as before. Instead, numerous private organisations provide art education services for children and youth and are available to the large layers of the population.

The Centre of Children's Aesthetic Education, which involves visual arts and crafts groups, children's theatre, and a Children's Art Gallery, has been functioning in Yerevan since Soviet times. Currently, it has reduced its space and capacities but still does a good job in the promotion and development of amateur arts among children and adolescents.

As a whole, the attendance at amateur art groups and cultural centres has been increasing since the early 1900s when it had experienced a drastic collapse. The tradition of providing out-of-school art education to children seems to be rising.

### 8.4.3 Associations of citizens, advocacy groups, NGOs, and advisory panels

#### NGOs

Activities of the many culture-oriented NGOs (e.g. "Research on Armenian Architecture", "Akos", "Zard", "The future is yours", "Zharang", "Khazer", etc.) address cultural development of youth and children, rehabilitation of the Armenian ethnic culture and cultural heritage, development of particular spheres of art, and advocacy in the cultural sphere. NGOs are organising learning processes in the spheres of art, music, foreign languages for children and youth, conducting specific events like contests, concerts, festivals, and advocating for the endangered cultural heritage.

***Citizens' initiatives and advocacy groups***

Civil society in Armenia has been actively developing through citizens' initiatives and public advocacy groups. In general, initiatives can be grouped by spheres and goals:

- Initiatives on preservation of cultural heritage include activities in social networks, rallies and demonstrations of group of citizens in support of preservation architectural values of old Yerevan planned to be removed or transformed in the course of new urban construction processes. The Summer Hall of the "Moscow" cinema theatre, the "Covered market", the Mashtots park and other constructions have been objects of citizens' initiatives during the last four years (2010-2013).
- Initiatives defending or prioritising cultural values such as mother tongue. A campaign against changes in the *Law on the Language* resulted in establishment of an initiative group "We are against schools in foreign languages" which is actively protesting against opening schools in foreign languages.
- Ecological initiatives that defend ecological and cultural sustainability and protest against industrial projects jeopardising eco-cultural balance of the Armenian villages and towns. The most outstanding was the initiative on preservation of the waterfall of Trchkan, one of the touristic places of Armenia (2011).
- Anti-globalisation initiatives protesting against "western" innovations in information, gender, economics, political and religious spheres. One of the last outbursts of this movement has become the creation of a public group of parental control (All Armenian Parents' Committee, 2013), which is aimed at controlling information flows, legislation changes and other processes related to education, gender, culture and information spheres.

## 9. Sources and links

### 9.1 Key documents on cultural policy

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Khurshudyan A., Amirjanyan P. *The comparative analysis of compliance of the Armenian state strategy policies and the 2011 state budget*, Yerevan 2012

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<http://www.religions.am>

The 2010, 2011 State Budget, <http://www.gov.am/am/budget/>

The UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/2005-convention>

Художественное образование в Армении (Art Education in Armenia), 2009, research report of the Armenian Sociological Association  
[http://www.asa.am/downloads/news\\_pdf/Armenian%20Report%20UNESCO\\_%20Rus\\_FI\\_NAL.pdf](http://www.asa.am/downloads/news_pdf/Armenian%20Report%20UNESCO_%20Rus_FI_NAL.pdf)

## **9.2 Key organisations and portals**

### **Cultural policy making bodies**

The Ministry of Culture of RA

<http://www.mincult.am>

The Ministry of Diaspora of RA

<http://www.mindiaspora.am>

The Government of Armenia

<http://www.gov.am>

National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

<http://www.armstat.am>

### **Professional associations**

Writers' Union of Armenia

<http://www.wua.am>

Architects' Union of Armenia

<http://spyur.am/archunion.htm>

Artists' Union of Armenia

<http://armenianartists.com>

National Cultural Union

<http://www.hamazg.am>

Armenian General Benevolent Union

<http://www.agbu.am>

Yerevan Press Club

<http://www.ypc.am>

### **Cultural research and statistics**

Armenian Association of Film Critics and Cinema Journalists

<http://www.arm-cinema.am/>

National Statistical Service of RA

<http://www.armstat.am/>

## **Culture / arts portals**

Arvest (Art)

<http://www.arvest.am>

Museums of Armenia

<http://www.museum.am>

The Armenian Centre for Contemporary Experimental Art: ACCEA

<http://www.accea.info>

Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra

<http://www.apo.am>

The Armenian National Gallery

<http://www.gallery.am>

## **Private companies and international organisations**

AGBU (the Armenian General Benevolent Fund)

<http://www.agbu.org>

Cafesjian Centre for the Arts

<http://www.cmf.am>

Eurasia Partnership Foundation –Armenia

<http://epfound.am>