

FOUR-YEAR PERIODIC REPORT
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF
CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

Brief description

The preparation of this Report included the phases of organising and monitoring surveys, studying policies, collecting data, conducting analyses and forming conclusions.

This Report is a comprehensive study on the legal, social-economic, political and institutional opportunities for ensuring cultural diversity in the Republic of Armenia. The Report analyses state policies, measures and civil society developments, which contribute to the cultural expression of the individual, social group or community, as well as their realisation of the role of culture for the perception of diversity.

In cultural policies aimed at the implementation of the Convention, the Republic of Armenia has enshrined the protection, development and dissemination of modern art and cultural heritage of the Armenian and other nations by applying designated strategies for ensuring cultural diversity, such as the synthesis of formal and informal education about culture, implementation of language policies ensuring language diversity, support to the culture of national minorities, active and balanced international cooperation based on cultural dialogue, ensuring availability, access to and mobility of cultural products and services, designated support to those who create and disseminate cultural products.

For the realisation of the aforementioned strategies, within its competencies, sub-structures and financial capabilities, the State has implemented actions, programmes, measures, acting as an equal partner to those who create, disseminate and consume culture.

The Report describes examples of activities, measures and programmes, numerical and content analyses, which help ensure cultural diversity.

As a result of the work done during the reporting period, the achievements and challenges of the state policy have been identified in the Report, providing the opportunity for revision of the development policies through the adoption of new principles and approaches.

1. General information

Name of the State: Republic of Armenia

Date of ratification: 27 January 2007

Ratification process: On 18 July 2006, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia examined the compliance of the provisions of the Convention to the Constitution. On 23 October 2006, the National Assembly ratified the Convention, which entered into force for the Republic of Armenia on 27 May 2007.

Work within the inter-governmental Committee: Armenia became a member of the inter-governmental Committee of the Convention in 2011; in 2012 it became a main rapporteur, and in 2013 it assumed the presidency of the bureau of the Committee.

Total amount of contributions made to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (up to now): in Armenian drams equivalent to USD854.70

Responsible body for the preparation of the Report is the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia (Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 2011 No 1793-A, 22.12.2011)

Officially appointed contact persons:

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Year of preparing the Report: 2013

Person appointed to sign the Report is Hasmik Poghosyan — Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia

For the purpose of preparing the Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, an inter-departmental working group was created by the decision of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, which comprises representatives from 6 departments (Ministries of Economy, Culture, Diaspora, Foreign Affairs, Finances, Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia), as well as from the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography and the Institute of Arts. In order to ensure the participation of the civil society, the aforementioned inter-departmental working group also included representatives from the Unions of Writers, Painters, Composers and Musicologists, Cinematographers and ten NGOs, as well as independent experts Garegin Chugaszyan, Marine Haroyan, Ara Khzmalyan and Davit Muradyan.

2. Means

2.1. Cultural policy and measures

Bases for the implementation of the cultural policy aimed at the application of the Convention are the Articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia on the freedom of speech (Article 27), freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 26), right to education (Article 39), freedom of creation (Article 40), right to preserve national traditions. Introducing below the main directions of cultural policy and, meanwhile, attaching importance to the role of the International Fund in assisting the organisation of measures ensuring cultural diversity, at present 3 programmes have been selected to be presented to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity. The first one is about conducting research in underdeveloped village communities of marzes (regions) and, based on the results of the needs assessment, about the elaboration of models of creative capabilities of cultural workers and models of policies for cultural development of the communities. The second one is about the re-establishment of traditions of pottery in Armenia, through which it is planned to establish an active network with the participation of other countries. The number of programme beneficiaries reaches 300. The third programme was elaborated together with Gyumri Development Foundation and envisages the establishment of a stonemasonry academy. Within the framework of the programme, in collaboration with specialists of the field, training courses will be organised for stonemasons, who will later be employed by 4 stone-producing enterprises (souvenirs, jewellery, sculpted items, mosaics, etc.).

So, within the reporting period, the directions of the cultural policy were:

2.1.1 Support to individual artists

The support provided to individual artists during the recent years is related to:

In the sphere of cinema art: supporting the script-writing projects of individual film producers, ensuring the participation of Armenian production films and individual artists in international film festivals and film markets.

During the reporting period, support was provided to 9 script-writing projects of individual film producers, and participation was ensured for 172 Armenian production films and individual artists in a total of 114 international film festivals and film markets.

In the sphere of theatre art: conducting plays through orders for creating work and by obtaining dramaturgic works, ensuring the participation of theatre companies and individuals in international theatre festivals. During the reporting period, 115 orders for creating work were fulfilled, 16 dramaturgic works were obtained, participation was ensured for 50 Armenian theatre companies and 52 individuals in international theatre festivals.

In the sphere of music: acquisition of works of music, new adaptations and instrumentations, ensuring the participation of Armenian music and dance groups and individual performers in

international music festivals. During the same period, 121 works of 107 authors were obtained, new adaptations and instrumentations of 74 works were conducted, participation was ensured for 79 Armenian music bands, dance groups and individual performers in 102 international music festivals and projects. 343 talented children and youth from Armenia took part in 106 international festivals.

In the sphere of book publication: publication of the works of modern writers, including young and beginning writers, ensuring participation in international book exhibitions, book festivals and awards ceremonies by creating modern, competitive book products. During the reporting period, 308 works of modern writers and young and beginning writers were published, participation was ensured in 146 international book exhibitions, book festivals and awards ceremonies.

In the sphere of fine arts: organisation of individual exhibitions, participation of young artists in international biennales and exhibitions, support to innovative projects. Support was provided for the organisation of 46 individual exhibitions, for the participation of young artists in 56 international biennales, exhibitions and innovative projects, 14 works of fine arts were obtained.

In the sphere of dance: fulfilment of orders for creating work, increase in the quality of modern and ethno dance, in the collection of exceptional samples of Armenian rituals found in movies and video clips, as well as manuscripts related to Armenian dance that have been preserved to this day, increase in the quality of the knowledge and preferences of the dance creator and the performer, implementation of programmes promoting the re-establishment of the tradition to present Armenian rituals as a whole or partially, organisation of international and republican festivals and competitions.

During the reporting period, 52 new dances were performed, 21 national and folk ensembles were supported, 4 ensembles took part in international festivals and competitions, 3 republican festivals were held.

2.1.2. Support to the creation of cultural products

In the sphere of theatre art, donations from the State Budget shall be directed towards the creation of modern theatre products through the fulfilment of orders for creative work, promotion of Armenian and foreign theatre art in Armenia by organising international and republican theatre festivals, and towards securing the regular activities of 16 creative SNCOs (subsidisation) for technical re-equipment and renovation.

One of the most important factors for ensuring intercultural diversity is carrying out cultural activities that meet the requirements of consumers that are speakers of foreign languages. Nowadays theatres of 32 different genres (drama, opera, ballet, musical, comedy, circus, marionette, puppet, pantomime, short story, youth, etc.) are operating within the Republic of Armenia, providing diverse theatrical performances in foreign languages. For example, in 2007 and 2008, together with Italian "Versilidansa" cultural organisation, the "Small Theatre" of the National Centre for Fine Arts staged "Diary of a Madman" by N. V. Gogol and "Seventh Sense" (in accordance with "Matean Voghbergutyun" ("Book of Tragedy") by Gr. Narekatsi) plays, which were also performed in Florence, Italy. In 2009 the Theatre staged the German "Ophelia's Shadow Theatre" play (from the tale of M. Ende under the same title), which also took part in festivals in Germany and Austria. In 2011 "Heirs" by P. Eser was staged at "Hamazgayin" State Theatre in four languages (French, German, English and Turkish). During these years, the Russian State Dramatic Theatre after K. Stanislavski included in its repertoire around 25 performances in Russian for people of different ages and with different preferences. In 2007-2011 the repertoire of the National Opera and Ballet Academic Theatre after Al. Spendiaryan included 8 performances, which present the Italian, French and Russian opera art.

A number of events held in the sphere concerned involved **ASSITEJ** and **IETM** international organisations, and they were also recognised as the best theatre festivals in the Caucasus region.

In the sphere of musical art donations from the State Budget shall be directed towards the acquisition of musical works, towards new developments and instrumentations of works by

supporting individual artists, towards ensuring the participation of Armenian music, dance groups and individual performers in international music festivals, towards the preservation and improvement of the creative potential, towards creating concert programmes by supporting orders for creative works, towards organising international and republican music festivals, towards securing the regular activities of 12 creative SNCOs (subsidisation), towards technical rearmament and renovation.

In the sphere of cinema art, donations from the State Budget shall be directed towards the preservation and improvement of the creative potential by supporting the script-writing projects of individual film producers, towards ensuring the participation of Armenian production films and individual works in international film festivals and markets, towards creating feature, documentary, animation films, including support to debuted and student films, towards securing the regular activities of 2 creative SNCOs (subsidisation), towards technical rearmament and renovation, towards providing maintenance services for cine-, photo-, phono-collections by digitising films and making copies.

In the sphere of fine arts, donations from the State Budget shall be directed towards supporting the creative potential by organising individual exhibitions, towards supporting innovative projects and the participation of young artists in international biennales, exhibitions, towards the acquisition of the works of modern artists.

In the sphere of publishing literature, donations from the State Budget shall be directed towards supporting the literary potential by supporting modern works, young and beginning writers, by publishing their works, ensuring their participation in republican and international book exhibitions, festivals and awards ceremonies, by creating modern competitive book products; towards preserving the cultural heritage of the Armenian people through book products, towards promoting classic and modern literature, towards securing the regular activities of “Centre for books and publications” SNCO and “Book” Foundation.

2.1.3. Promotion of cultural education as paramount for ensuring cultural diversity

In Armenia, cultural education is carried out at all educational levels (kindergarten, school, higher education institution), at extracurricular establishments (youth centres, music school, etc.), and through informal education.

In the Republic of Armenia, out of 204 art and fine arts schools, 100 are music schools, 77 are art schools and 26 are fine art schools.

The people who like art and are aesthetically educated can be more perceiving and demanding towards establishing and disseminating cultural diversity. In this regard, Armenia pays great attention to formal and informal methods and programmes for aesthetic education and aesthetic upbringing. Recently the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved the programme for **“Fine arts education and aesthetic upbringing of children and the youth”**, which is targeted at the diverse and mental development of individuals, and creates grounds for multi-cultural education promoting the formation of future citizens of the Republic of Armenia. In line with one of the provisions of this programme, the **“History of World Culture”** subject, as a separate course, will be incorporated into the curriculum of the humanities division of high schools.

Around **40 children’s creative centres** operate within the Republic of Armenia, the main purpose of the operation whereof is to ensure the extra-curricular cultural, fine arts, spiritual, physical education, development of abilities and capabilities of children, taking their preferences into consideration. Every year, 23500 children and youngsters attend the creative centres, who study in groups of decorative-applied arts, fine arts, song and music, sports, computers, journalism and foreign languages, theatre, dance, circus, etc.

In 2007, the **“Philharmony of Schoolchildren”** programme, which is a programme of designated purpose and is sponsored by the State, was launched.. During the lesson-concerts, the lives and careers of world-famous composers and writers and the times they lived in are presented. Clarifications are given about musical instruments, different music genres, their

structural peculiarities, folk dances, etc. Young participants are given an opportunity to express their true impressions and feelings about the lesson-concerts. In 2007-2011, within the “Philharmony of Schoolchildren” programme 156 lesson-concerts were organised, 60 out of which were in marzes.

With a positive opinion from the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the draft Law of the Republic of Armenia “**On adult education**” was submitted to the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia.

In 2010, the General Assembly of the European Association for the Education of Adults and the international conference on “Vocational Education and Youth and Adult Learning” were held

2.1.4. Creating favourable conditions for importing culture

With the purpose of promoting products and services (including cultural ones), a commission for coordinating charitable programmes is operating in Armenia, which implements the state policy in the sphere of humanitarian aid and charity. In fact, the State provides funding for all charitable programmes implemented within Armenia in the amount of 20 or more percentage of the cost, freeing the implemented programmes from certain taxes and duties. This policy creates favourable conditions for the introduction of cultural products and services as charity. During the reporting period, the number of charitable programmes for cultural orientation has increased dramatically, as a result whereof there has been an addition in the overall basket of cultural diversity products and services.

In the context of the policy on securing stable economic growth in the Republic of Armenia, the development of small and medium enterprises (SME) is aimed at ensuring the stability of economic growth in the country, giving an innovative direction and elasticity to the economy.

Each year, the Government of the Republic of Armenia discusses and adopts a “Recommendation to subjects of small and medium enterprises”, the grounds for the development and implementation whereof is the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On state support to small and medium entrepreneurship”. The programmes are based on the fundamental principles of economic policy adopted by the Government of the Republic of Armenia and promote the economic development of the country, particularly its remote and bordering dwellings, and the overcoming of disproportionalities. In this regard, with the opportunities created by its peculiarities and development, SME has a substantial impact on the economic development of the country in general and particularly on the cultural sphere, where SME secure 95 percent of production.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia promotes the circulation of materials of cultural nature, which essentially increases the level of securing and disseminating cultural diversity in the country.

In 2010, Armenia joined Florence Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials and its Nairobi Protocol, which promote the free dissemination of books, cultural, educational and scientific materials and the simplicity of customs and administrative procedures related to the importation of those materials, their free circulation. The implementation of the Agreement has created favourable conditions in Armenia for the establishment and promotion of forms of cultural expression.

2.1.5 Implementation of designated programmes for the purpose of promoting the diversity of the forms of cultural expression. The promotion of the forms of cultural expression in Armenia was realised through more than **28 international and about the same amount of republican festivals, checks and contests.**

2.1.5.1 So, in 2007-2011, **cinema weeks** of 12 countries were held in cinema halls and cultural houses of Armenia in the original language — Russian, German, French, Khazakhi language, Italian, English and other films.

For the purpose of intercultural dialogue, a number of joint projects were implemented, particularly the development of joint film production contributed to the identification of new

markets for film products and the ensuring of accessibility of those markets. Particularly during these years, more than 4 countries were involved in the production of 5 films (“Confused Parallels” (2008), “Paradjanov” (2011-2012), “Alaverdi” (2011-2012), “Chnchik” (2011-2012), “Janna and Voices” (2010-2011)).

On 16 March 2012 the National Cinema Centre of Armenia signed a cooperation contract with **CNC (the National Center of Cinematography and the moving image)**, in the frameworks whereof on 21-31 December 2012 “The shortest day” film festival for short films was held in Armenia.

On 6-10 November 2012, the National Cinema Centre of Armenia took part in the Strasbourg symposium devoted to the **20th anniversary of Video-audio audience of Europe** where, during the sitting of the executive council, the membership of Armenia in the Video-audio audience of Europe was ratified (as an observer). Membership suggests performance of special work in the sphere of international film industry, in the process of using films of film production and the art of dance.

“Golden Apricot” International Film Festival of Yerevan is the largest international film festival that receives state support, and is held under the slogan **“Crossroads of Civilisations and Cultures”**. During the reporting period, more than 800 films were screened within the framework of the Festival. During the Festival, directors and films of different ethnic, national, religious, aesthetic belonging meet, tell about the daily life, problems and pleasures, lifestyle and traditions, beliefs and desperations of casual people from their own perspectives. Since 2009, **“Golden Apricot” regional cinema school** has been operating, and training courses have been held for young filmmakers from Turkey, Iran, Georgia, Russia by world-famous filmmakers such as Marco Bellocchio, Wim Wenders, Tonino Guerra, Alexander Sokurov, Nikita Mikhalkov, Krzysztof Zanussi, Claudia Cardinale, Fanny Ardant, Abbas Kiarostami, Béla Tarr, Jos Stelling, Atom Egoyan, Rob Nilsson, Pavel Finn and others.

“Directors Across Borders” programme, which was established in 2007 within the “Golden Apricot” film festival, is of particular importance for exchanging experience and promoting film production. In the framework of the Programme, young directors from Eastern Partnership and CIS countries are given a chance to develop their projects, scripts and business packages through joint work with advanced specialists from Europe. The Programme aims to promote the increase of joint production. In 2009, the “Directors Across Borders” programme gave rise to a new “Armenian-Turkish Cinema Platform”, which is aimed at developing short and full-length film projects. In 2009-2011, within the **“Armenia-Turkey Cinema Platform”**, 8 short and documentary films were made.

“Cinema Journalism without Borders” programme (since 2007) is a joint empirical course of “Golden Apricot”, “Directors Across Borders” programme and the Armenian Association of Film-Critics and Cinema-Journalists (branch of FIPRESCI). It is a platform for film specialists and cinema-journalists from the regional and the Eastern Partnership countries to communicate with the modern trends of global cinema. The Programme addresses isolation and information “vacuum” issues. It aims to re-establish the role of cinema-journalism in the region, to develop professional exchange and cooperation with neighbouring countries. “Cinema Journalism without Borders” programme aims to develop and ensure a professional network, thus, creating strong cooperation between the mass media and film production of partner states. This Programme is also addressed to the needs and demands of the public, creating specialised “product” (i.e. quality information) regarding the procedure, films and other matters of local and regional film production.

In order to provide coverage for the “Golden Apricot” Film Festival, every year a number of important and worldwide journalists arrive in Armenia, such as “EuroNews”, “Arte”, “Kultura” (“Culture”), etc. The video materials prepared by the latter also contribute to the dissemination of Armenian cinema, as well as to the propagation of Armenia as a country with cinema culture.

In 2011, together with webtv.am online television, **“WEBTSIRAN” (“Web Apricot”) first pan-Armenian online film festival** was launched, which gives an exceptional opportunity for young Armenian filmmakers to present and disseminate their films.

“Reanimania” international animation film festival of Yerevan, which was launched in 2009, is devoted to the art of animation. During the three years, around 900 films from 114 countries have participated in the festival.

From the angle of **gender self-expression**, of importance is **“Woman”** international film festival, which was launched in 2008 and in which around 250 films from 63 countries have participated during the past five years.

“I am” international youth film festival is among the measures for supporting young artists.

The main purpose of the **Pan-Armenian Film Festival of Independent Films** (established in 2011) is the re-establishment and development of the production of amateur, non-commercial and independent films, as well as the promotion of non-commercial cinema clubs in all the marzes of Armenia, in Artsakh and within the Diaspora, which seeks to find new names in the sphere of film production and to guide them towards the international cinema sphere.

2.1.5.2 Within the 22 international theatre festivals carried out in 2007-2011 the modern global theatre art was presented at **“Hayfest”, “Armono”, Pantomime, Shakespearian festival and UNIMA-ARMENIA puppet theatre international festivals.**

The importance of programmes implemented for children’s groups and youth beneficiaries was particularly underlined by the “Tumanyan Fairy Tale Day” and Children’s films after Rolan Bikov international film festivals, “Nran Hatik” children’s theatre festival, “Guest to Fairy Tale” programme, republican contests of “Singing Armenia” children’s choirs and Young Pianists after A. Babajanyan, etc. In 2007, “Veratsnund” (“Renaissance”) international youth festival was launched in Gyumri. As a result of designated programmes, dozens of children took part in different international contests.

2.1.5.3. During the last four years in the sphere of music, around 243 concert programmes were carried out through the cooperation between foreign and Armenian concert bands, music performers, directors, where a diversity of genres and traditions is incorporated — classic, folk, ethnographic, jazz, fusion, avant-garde, etc.

Genre and participatory diversity in the sphere of musical art are also ensured by **“Prospects of XXI”, “National Gallery”, “Yerevanian”, “Return” classic music festivals** held in the sphere of music, which during the last four years offer the Armenian audience a wide variety of music genres (classic, folk, ethnographic, jazz, fusion and avant-garde). World-famous people such as Placido Domingo, Valery Gergiev, Krzysztof Penderecki, Vladimir Spivakov, Pavel Kogan, Giya Kancheli, Evgeny Kissin, Gidon Kremer, Rodion Shchedrin, Maxim Vengerov, George Benson, Nino Katamadze, David Geringas, Denis Matsuev, Charles Aznavour, Joe Cocker, Sergey Khachatryan, Michel Legrand, Iosiv Kobzon, Julio Iglesias, Al Jeron, Sofia Gubaidulina, Emir Kusturica, Yuri Bashmet and others have participated in these programmes. The annual Aram Khachatryan international competition has been held since 2003, and the annual “Renaissance” International Competition of Musicians and Performers has been held in Gyumri since 2007. Out of 235 performers who took part in republican contests, the best ones were recruited not only by national, but also by leading foreign opera art creative groups.

2.1.5.4. In the sphere of literature, a number of international projects aimed at developing intercultural dialogue have been carried out. For example, since 2007, by the initiative of **CIS Interstate Fund for Humanitarian Cooperation and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia a conference of translators and publishers** of CIS and Baltic states has been held in Armenia with the participation of 40-50 reputable publishing houses. In 2012, the conference called “Theory and Application: Overcoming Barriers” substantially broadened its geography — in addition to 70 CIS and Baltic states, there were also participants from other continents, including Europe and Latin America. As a result of the cooperation established due to the conference, each year the Armenian society learns about books published in other countries, about their authors, publishers, translators, about the joint translation-publishing initiatives that were carried out, and new prospects open for professionals of the sector.

The Armenian people have always been greatly interested in the spiritual and cultural values created by other people, and they have carried out the work of translation with devotion and skill. A proof thereof is “Tarkmanchats Ton” (“Translation Fest”) that has been celebrated since old times and which is transformed into a massive popular celebration devoted to books and literature. Translations are mainly done from the original. The number of works translated from other languages into Armenian is more than the creative translations of Armenian authors into other languages. Parallel to State support, foreign embassies in Armenia also promote the creation of translation literature. In the sphere of publishing, in 2007-2011 810 titles were translated from Armenian into other languages and from other languages into Armenian, including 219 books, which were translated with state support.

Since 2008, with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, “**Granshan**” **annual international contest of typography** has been held, the purpose whereof is to promote the development of Armenian typography. However, taking into consideration that contests and exhibitions about typography throughout the world are mainly about Latin typography, and that nowadays issues on typography are mostly present in all non-Latin alphabetic systems, the organising committee of “**Granshan**” took a decision to make the programme a contest of non-Latin typography, promoting the development of non-Latin alphabetic systems: Meanwhile, it was decided to hold “**Granshan**” within the annual conference of International Typography Association (AtypI). The contest committees of “**Granshan**” include famous typographers from the sphere of typography of different countries. Awards are given only to those who meet the international quality standards. The results of the contest are posted on www.granshan.org webpage. Each year, the geography of “**Granshan**” is broadened in terms of participants and state parties, as well as categories. Besides, the Armenian and English publications of the catalogues of award-winning works at “**Granshan**” contests and organising of international exhibitions also promote the development and recognition of non-Latin typography. As a result, “**Granshan**” has now become the most reputable contest about non-Latin typography in the world. The international conference under the same title took place in 2012 and was devoted to the issues of non-Latin typography.

Since 2009, each year the international festival called “**Dardz ar Girk**” (“**Return to Books**”) has been held with the purpose of appreciating once again books and reading to bridge the art and culture of different nations through cultural dialogue and diversity. The Programme provides for diverse events and promotions such as exhibition-sales of books, seminar-discussions, series of lectures, round-table discussions with the participation of Armenian and foreign writers, book presentations, series of fairy tale reading called “Ambassadors of Fairy Tales” (with the participation of ambassadors to the Republic of Armenia), open-air actions for graffiti, illustration, nightly screenings of art films, spiritual music concerts, painting contest-exhibitions, theatrical shows, etc.

Recently a number of new bookstores opened in Armenia (“Bookinist”, “Edit print”, “Zangak”, “Nor Girk”, etc.), the official website of “Yerevan World Book Capital” programme (www.yerevan2012.org) and literature websites (www.twuinion.com, ceca12.icom-armenia.org/en, www.armbookexpo.am, www.granish.org, www.arteria.am, www.lyumos.com, www.hrantmatevossian.org, www.litark.am, www.granish.org, www.twuinion.com, www.bookplatform.org, www.narcis-handes.am, www.inknagir.org, www.wua.am/serund, www.lit-bridge.com, www.gir.am, www.writers.am, www.varandbooks.blogspot.com, www.litopedia.org), magazines (including “foreign literature”) and television programmes about literature (including “My Library” television programme — www.armnews.am) were launched. Each of the aforementioned, within its dimensions, promotes the availability of Armenian and global literature for readers.

2.1.5.5 Support has been provided to cultural figures for participation in international biennales and festivals in the sphere of fine arts, participation of youth is especially encouraged. There is a solid perspective for innovative and youth programmes to become a tradition. For instance, **Gyumri International Biennale**, which was established in **1998**, gathers art critics from various countries around the world and covers almost all directions of contemporary art, starting from painting and ending with video art, and with that it leads to new spheres and opens new opportunities.

The Union of Artists of Armenia non-governmental organisation also actively participates in this act. In 2008, it organised an international forum of contemporary art. In 2009, it organised an exhibition of Iranian painting and applied art. It established international fine art and comic strip festivals.

Exhibitions of works of artists-art critics (especially young artists-art critics) have been held in the framework of the days of culture of different countries (Egypt, Russia, the USA, Germany, Japan and others) organised in Armenia.

2.1.5.6. Ballet and dance performances with participation of specialists invited from abroad were covered in the sphere of choreography, including Spartak ballet performance, joint performances of National Ballet of Armenia and Bad Boys of Dance group in Yerevan, Gyumri and Vanadzor cities.

2.1.5.7. Intercultural communication between the Armenian Diaspora and the society in Armenia under conditions of political, economic and cultural interaction between Armenia and other states is one of Armenia's priority goals which, in its turn, is one of the priorities of the cultural policy. The factor that Armenians residing in various countries bear both Armenian culture and the culture of the respective country and that their involvement in Armenia's cultural life greatly contributes to securing diversity of forms of cultural self-expression is taken into consideration. The state promotes and actively uses this factor.

In this regard, the “**Armenian Panorama**” of Golden Apricot Film Festival is important as it served as yet another important opportunity to present and synthesise the works of Diaspora Armenian and local Armenian film makers.

“**My Armenia**” festival has been held in the recent years with the participation of Diaspora creative groups and individual performers.

Tours of Diaspora Armenian cultural figures and groups are organised, and participation of the latter in festivals and other events organised in Armenia and abroad is ensured; the publishing of over 20 books by Diaspora Armenian writers has been carried out; exhibitions of the works of artists and photographers, reciting events and dance performances have been organised. **Annual pan-Armenian forums of writers** provide the opportunity for Armenian writers bearing both foreign and Armenian cultures at the same time and Armenian writers living in Armenia to discuss links between Armenian and foreign literature, and to observe those links from the perspective of global processes in literature. **To this day, 347** people from abroad have participated in this programme.

Exhibitions of works of world-renowned photographers are organised in Armenia, of which the exhibitions of works by **Yousuf Karsh** and **Ara Guler** should be mentioned. The organising of exhibitions is aimed to introduce world-renowned Armenian artists and cultural figures to the public at large, and this has received big response from the public.

2.1.6 Ensuring access to culture

Ensuring access to culture is one of the priorities of Armenia's state cultural policy, in particular:

2.1.6.1 A special creative centre has been established for children from boarding schools and orphanages in Armenia with state support for the purpose of ensuring “**physical**” **access to culture**; AREV programme for communicating information to visually impaired persons has been installed in libraries and information panels of the Brail system have been placed on historical and cultural monuments; newly constructed buildings of cultural centres are by all means provided with entrances for persons with reduced mobility. On the other hand, the problem with old buildings remains unsolved, and the Ombudsman has also mentioned that in his 2013 report.

2.1.6.2 Ensuring information access to culture – electronic governance functions on the basis of the principle of absolute transparency and processing, transfer and dissemination of electronic resources, and interactive state budget is one of the components of electronic

governance. A user has the opportunity to obtain data online with the help of electronic governance, starting from the total amount of expenses and the balance at the given moment, and ending with specific state expenses related to relevant programmes.

The programme is linked to the Ministry of Finance and the Treasury of the Republic of Armenia, which allows presenting the situation at the given moment. A system of electronic applications for registration of intellectual property with the respective search function also functions as a part of electronic governance, as well as an example of access to culture, meaning the modern website of the National Gallery that provides the opportunity to become acquainted with the samples of the museum.

2.1.6.3 Ensuring geographic access to culture - at the expense of decentralisation, as a result of the application of mobile programmes, in particular Museum on Wheels, KINOASHUN (FILM AUTUMN) mobile library, Family Librarian, **Golden Apricot on Wheels** and others.

2.1.6.4. Encouraging access to languages and, as a result, ensuring perception of cultural diversity is one of the important components of language policy.

Teaching foreign languages. *Sixty five percent of children in Armenia go to kindergarten.* Based on the parent's preference and selection, all kindergartens of the republic have foreign language clubs (Russian, English, Assyrian and Kurdish) through the means of additional curricula.

General education is one of the most important elements of the language and education policy, and teaching foreign languages is an indispensable part of the national education programme-mandatory instruction of one foreign language is envisaged at the elementary level of the curriculum, and mandatory instruction of two foreign languages is envisaged at the basic and secondary levels of the curriculum. Instruction of a third foreign language is possible at the secondary level as an optional subject.

According to state education standards for *intermediate vocational education*, a graduate of that educational programme shall be able to communicate **in at least two languages.**

Eleven foreign languages are taught at six state higher educational institutions in the framework of the **system of higher education of the Republic of Armenia**, including Russian, German, French, Spanish, Italian, English, Arabic, Turkish, Farsi, Greek and Bulgarian. Instruction is carried out in 27 departments. Four foreign languages - Russian, German, French and English-are taught at 23 non-state higher educational institutions and higher educational institutions established under interstate agreements and operating in the Republic of Armenia. Instruction is carried out at 33 departments.

Establishment of centres of language and culture of various peoples in Armenia is yet another expression of cultural diversity in the Reporting Period- a number of centres, including the rooms for Farsi, Hindu, Korean language and culture, have been opened at Yerevan State Linguistic University; the main mission of these centres is to represent culture of those countries in Armenia: **Confucius Institute** opened in 2009, the **Centre for the Implementation of Council of Europe Language Education Programmes** -in 2010, the **Centre for Greek Language and Culture** - in 2012, and so on.

Association of Francophone Universities (AFU) opened the **Centre for Academic Achievement** in Yerevan in 2012 the framework of the Francophonie month in 2012; the centre complies with AFU requirements and is equipped with up-to-date digital equipment, scientific literature, academic materials and textbooks.

German Language Studies Centre of the Goethe University Frankfurt opened at the same university lately; the centre has a library and reading room filled with contemporary literature.

2.1.7 Promoting development of culture of national minorities

According to statistics of 2011 census national minorities represent 2.2 % of Armenia's population. Regardless of their small number, Armenia's national minorities (Yezidis, Kurdish,

Russians Ukrainians, Greek, Assyrians, Jews, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Georgians and others) have peculiar culture profile and their culture is a part of Armenia's cultural diversity.

National minority languages are under state protection in the Republic of Armenia and have special recognition. The linguistic right of national minorities is enshrined by Article 41 of the Constitution. Article 1 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On language" ensures free use of languages of national minorities and dissemination of one's own culture in the national language.

2.1.7.1 Article 2 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Language" and Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education" prescribed that **instruction** and upbringing **in the framework of general education in communities** of national **minorities** of the Republic of Armenia may be organised in the mother tongue of national minorities – under a state programme and with state support – with mandatory instruction of Armenian language.

Elementary education in mother tongues is accessible to communities of national minorities registered in the Republic of Armenia; it is an indispensable part of the curriculum, and instruction is organised even if the number of pupils is insufficient.

2.1.7.2 Numerous culture centres of national minorities opened in Armenia in the recent years. For instance – Arbela Armenian-Russian-Assyrian science and culture centre opened in the secondary school of Verin Dvin village in Ararat marz of the Republic of Armenia. The centre's operation is aimed at formation of national identity starting from school age, and ensuring bases of knowledge of mother tongue, literature, history and culture. Also, Arbela dance group functions in Verin Dvin village.

Criteria of state support provided to press of national minorities have been facilities by legal acts (in comparison to local press). A total of 13 news papers and two magazines of national minorities receive state support in the Republic of Armenia.

Ten items of literature in national minority languages, as well as a literary almanac comprising literary heritage of various nations were published with state support in 2007-2011.

There are radio broadcasts and radio programmes in national minority languages (in particular in the Public Radio of Armenia and the Armenian Public TV).

Special attention is paid to expansion of a network of kindergartens in areas populated with national minorities in **2008-2015 strategic programme of pre-school education reforms of the Republic of Armenia approved by a decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia** in 2008.

The culture of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia in Armenian cultural mosaic is represented by a traditional exhibition of applied art, which has been held since 2007 and by "**Armenia is my home**" march and a music festival – since 2010.

"Assyrians in Armenia" film was made in Armenia in 2010, and its English version was screened at international entities.

Much attention has been paid to issues of **restoration** and preservation of **cultural heritage** of national minorities in the reporting period. In particular - **Jewish graveyard of the 13th century of Yeghegis community (Vayots Dzor marz of the Republic of Armenia)** was restored with state funds in 2008.

2.2. International cooperation and priorities

2.2.1. Promotion of mobility of experts and creative people in the sphere of culture, and mobility are an efficient means of the culture policy of the Republic of Armenia, being aimed at development of international cooperation. Opportunities to ensure mobility are created for participation of Armenian art critics and culture figures in particular in culture events, festivals, tour performances, joint creative programmes, exhibitions, fairs and other events held abroad. Creative people and art critics of the Republic of Armenia took part in about 180 international programmes with support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia in 2007-2011.

Over 2,200 culture figures and young art critics came to Armenia on a business trip and visited the country in the mentioned period annually. So, about 26 young stage directors and producers (17 of whom - with debut performances) of theatrical art sphere visited in 2007-2011; 153 beginner actors were provided opportunity to perform on different stages and theatre programmes. Eighty two performing musicians and about eight youth music bands took part in 57 international projects.

Mobility is ensured by means of the opportunity for young staff to study or improve their skills at vocational higher education institutions and attend master classes abroad. Fifty five gifted children and youth took part in prestigious international contests and master classes in 2008 with support of the Ministry and by means of choice of specialists, **59- in 2009, 96 – in 2010; 41 – in 2011.**

2.2.2. Expansion of international ties greatly contributed to dissemination of culture products and services. Favourable environment of *bilateral cooperation* provides opportunity for bilaterally comprehensive presentation of culture of Armenia and foreign countries. Forty six bilateral agreements were signed with different countries in the reporting period, about 60 programmes were organised in the framework of these agreements – **including culture years, days; cinema weeks; exhibitions; concerts of renown art figures; presentations of books; master classes; theatre performances; poetry recitals and other culture events.**

2.2.3. Expansion of cooperation of the Republic of Armenia with international organisations (UN, UNSECO, European Union, Council of Europe, BSEC, CIS, International Organisation of Francophonie and others).

Over 50 co-financed and joint programmes have been implemented; the programmes covered almost all directions of culture within the scope of their content and focus – ensuring the right to free mobility and direct cooperation of art critics, the right to communicate with culture of Armenia and of peoples of the world.

“**Culture policy and policy for Culture**” traditional forums were held in Armenia in 2009, 2012 in the framework of cooperation with UNESCO.

International Mother Language Day, International Day of Poetry, World Day of Book and Copyright, International Jazz Day, World Day for Culture Diversity for Dialogue and Development, International Literature Day, Audiovisual Heritage International Day declared by UNESCO are widely celebrated in Armenia and contribute to development of intercultural dialogue greatly.

Conferral of “**Yerevan World Book Capital 2012**” **honorary title by UNESCO** may be mentioned as the best example of ensuring literary diversity. The programme started in April 2012, when city-wide events were organised in Yerevan, ArmBookExpo and Eternity of Writing exhibitions, monuments devoted to writing and books were opened – one of the monuments was “**Man of the World**” – **consisting of one letter of all living alphabets of the world** and so on. The exhibition of hero-books’ sculptures by sculptor Davit Minasyan was devoted to **jubilee books** nominated by UNESCO. Forums, symposiums and exhibitions organised were devoted to issues of copyright, translation, freedom of speech, contemporary literature and application of new technologies.

Eastern Partnership programme started in 2009 the framework of **culture cooperation between Armenia and the European Union**. The series of the programme’s 2011-2014 events included “*Caucult*”, “*Directors across borders*”, “*Caucadoc*”, “*RCCHD Sharing History*”, “*Sos Culture*” programmes, in which Armenia takes active part. Since 2009 Armenia is also involved in “European piano”, “I Culture”, “Artiste in Residence”, “European” projects.

Armenia has been carrying out Literary Arc (visit of European writers to Armenia) programme annually starting from 2011 in the framework “**Contacts between People**” platform. The programme has already become a platform for writers, literary critics, journalists and readers to discuss professional, as well as culture, and social-political issues. Fourteen foreign writers from nine countries and over 20 Armenian participants took part in the programme in October 2011;

they toured Armenia for 12 days (mainly in Yerevan and southern marzes). The programme expanded its geographic coverage in 2012 – including 26 foreign writers from 17 countries. A bilingual collection of literary works representing impressions of the participants was published in the result of the project's implementation. The programme was enriched with recitals by writers, literary discussions in the format of talk shows, "literary gallery" with participation of artists. Presentation of Literary Arc 2011 book was held and same-name film was first screened, the web-site (www.litark.am) of the festival was developed.

The Book Platform programme started in 2012 in the framework of the European Partnership Culture Programme of the European Union, and Armenia took part in this programme. The programme promotes building of open regional and international culture communication and contributes to growth of professional trans-border contacts by means of translation.

*Armenia is also actively involved in **EU grant projects**. In 2007-2011, out of the grant projects approved for the Eastern Partnership countries, 8 projects were implemented with the participation of Armenia.*

Within the framework of the co-operation with the **European Council**, Armenia participates in STAGE, Compendium, Kiev Initiative projects. In the reporting year, Armenia ratified the Convention for the Protection of Architectural Heritage of Europe, which entered into force in 2009. Armenia was the first to translate "*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*" book into Armenian.

Attaching importance to the mobilisation of diversity of cultural self-expressions represented by different countries and individuals in one single project, 65 young musician-performers from **Armenia, USA, Latin America, Europe and other countries** participated within the framework of the "**Travelling Notes**" project.

Armenia always participates in significant humanitarian and cultural events of **Commonwealth of Independent States**, particularly Youth Delphian Games of CIS countries, Forum of *Creative and Scientific Intellectuals* of CIS countries, etc. In 2010, the Youth Delphian Games of CIS countries took place in Armenia in an open format, which enabled the representatives from Baltic countries, Georgia, Bulgaria, France to take part in the Games. In total, there were around 650 participants.

One of the best examples of the co-operation with CIS and Interstate Fund for Humanitarian Co-operation is the **Commonwealth Youth Orchestra**, which was established in 2007. The Orchestra is composed of young musicians from CIS member states (including Armenians from Armenia), which have given concerts on the best stages in not only CIS countries, but also Europe. The Orchestra has also given concerts at the UNESCO headquarters.

Armenia, as an associated member in 2009, and as a full-fledged member in 2012, participated in **Francophone international organisation projects**. Thus, in 2009, the 25-member Armenian delegation participated in the 6th Francophone games organised in Lebanon. "Francophone days" are organised annually jointly with the Embassy of France to the Republic of Armenia, within the framework of which in 2010-2011 Garu, Lara Fabian gave concerts, the "*L'histoire du soldat rose*" musical was presented, and Armenian stars participated in the gala concert of French chanson Francophone movement currently expands to the Armenian regions – Shirak, Vayots Dzor and Tavush.

Within the framework of cooperation with BSEC, specifically active co-operation was noticed in 2007 when an international conference, round table, screening of films were organised on conservation and restoration of historical and cultural monuments in the Black Sea region, exhibition titled "*Cultural Mosaic of Black Sea Countries*" and child exhibition of the countries of the region entitled "Sunny Sky of the Black Sea" were held. Within the framework of the project, a journal entitled "Cultural News of Black Sea Region" was created. In 2009, Armenia participated in the "Silk Road" project, and in 2010, it participated in the "Wine Routes of Armenia" project.

2.2.4. Enhancement of cooperation with international networks of NGOs aimed at enhancement of institutional and administrative potential (ICOM, ICOMOS, ICCROM, IFACCA, IFLA, etc.) For example, in the reporting period, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), staff of the museums of Yerevan and marzes of Armenia, as well as the students of higher educational institutions participated in the master classes conducted by the specialists of advanced museums.

A number of international projects implemented in Armenia in 2011-2012 were dedicated to the new technologies in the field of culture. The 41st scientific conference of the International Committee of Cultural and Educational Activity (CECA) of the International Council of Museums titled "**Museum and written communication. Tradition and Innovation**" was held in Yerevan in 2012 with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia and Open Society Institute (OSI). 140 people from 35 countries participated in the conference, the aim of which was to discuss the issues relating to written communication. The experience of international leading museums (Louvre, Smithsonian American, European and other museums) was presented.

In 2012, international conference "**From Gutenberg to Internet: Unfinished Story for Librarians**" was organised in co-operation with the International consortium "*Electronic Information for Libraries*" (EIFL), the aim of which was to strengthen the co-operation between electronic libraries. The conference was held with the participation of 71 participants from 43 countries, as well as representatives from the libraries of Armenia. The participants of a three-day conference were introduced to 15 publishing houses, which are specialised exclusively in preparing **high-value scientific contents in electronic format**.

In 2012, conference entitled "**Music and music libraries in the 21st century**" was organised in Armenia in co-operation with the International Association of Music Libraries (IAML).

2.3. Promotion of integration of culture in the sustainable development policies Armenia has undertaken significant steps in the reporting period for the appreciation and evaluation of culture as a sustainable development potential. The role of culture was studied in the economic sustainability, preservation of national identity, formation of civil society and formation of social capital in the country, peacekeeping and preservation of cultural diversity. On 30 October 2008, the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved "**Sustainable Development Programme**", which includes provisions relating to economy, urban development, healthcare, environment, **culture** and other fields and is aimed at tax policy and administration, the country's institutional modernisation and infrastructure development. The 2008-2013 Strategy of Development of Culture was developed with the active participation of the general public and specialists. **In the Perspective Plan for Strategic Development of the Republic of Armenia**, the field of culture is also one of preconditions of state sustainable development in the field of culture. The positive economic indicators growth rates of the culture sector in the structure of economic indicators of the state have had their impact on the economic development since 2012. The state organisations in the field of culture contributed to 11.2 percent growth of their income in 2012.

The successful implementation of the cultural policy first of all relies on the principle of forming the state budget (**Annex 1**). As a pilot project, funding for the field of culture has been provided on the basis of planned budgeting for several years already, the priority areas of which flow from the acting laws of the Republic of Armenia, the decisions of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the system of measures provided for by the sustainable development programme. The complete chain "formation-planning-budgeting" of these policies is ensured by the three-year Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks, the development, financing, organising, monitoring stages of which involve the representatives of civil society in the 12 sector-specific professional councils of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia.

Revenues aimed at the potential of the economic growth in the field of culture are the **revenues generated from the cultural services** provided to the population, which are mainly generated from the sale of tickets for theatrical performances, concerts and exhibitions, lease of halls,

premises, deposit of paintings, bibliographical and indexation services, sale of books, leaflets, etc.

Organisations within the system of the Ministry analyse their performances, develop the estimates of incomes generated from the cultural services and approve the monthly reporting schedule.

Non-financial indicators are developed for each cultural programme, which enables to measure the efficiency of the use of financial resources, including the number and volume **by the following fields:**

Field of theatre arts: conduct of theatrical performances, services for the audience, creation of new theatrical performances;

Field of music arts: conduct of concerts, services for the audience, creation of new concert programmes;

Field of museums: preservation, popularisation of museum items, collections and monuments, services for museum visitors;

Field of libraries: preservation of library collections, replenishment, number of books served (including electronic services), library-informative and professional services for the library users;

Field of cinema art: production of fiction, documentary, animated films, preservation of film, photo and phono collections;

Publishing field: preservation, dissemination and development of literary heritage, organising of and participation in the presentations, national and international exhibitions, fairs for print books and other publications.

One of the important components of the country's social and economic development is the **cultural industry**, which includes the creation and dissemination of cultural products in the form of providing cultural services. Increase in the quality and volumes of the services by cultural organisations through the use of publicising means of services, including the electronic means, contributes to the economic growth. For example, in the reporting period, 2000-2200 titles were published every year, 500-700 copies on the average, including 1474 titles under the code "the Publishing of Literature". The lists of literature published with state support are compiled through public tender by the council comprised of the best specialists from academic institutions and creative unions. With the view to increasing the interest in books, knowledge and reading, the literature published through state funding, namely children's literature, is sold at a price lower than the prime cost upon the decision of the special inter-departmental commission. "**The procedure for free distribution and sale of literature published by the state funds and support**" approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia in 2009 significantly contributed to the reading, popularisation and dissemination of books. According to this procedure, central and regional, as well as community libraries are replenished free of charge with the literature published through state funding.

In 2009, jointly with Public Radio, digitalisation programme of records preserved in "Voske Fondum" (Golden Fund), within the framework of which around 65 CDs and DVDs were digitalised and published, together with "Sony" (Austria) company in 2011, the anthology of the best musical samples in 10 CDs was released.

Digitalisation process of old Armenian films was initiated, as a result of which around 460 films have been digitalised. As a result of implementation of the activities, around 350 films of Hayfilm cinema studio, which are considered best examples of cinema, have been digitalised.

As a result of introducing and operating electronic information systems, databases, websites and virtual exhibitions in the field of cultural services, virtual museums have been created, sensor screens and other new electronic technologies have been used at new permanent exhibitions, interactive games and virtual exhibitions have been created.

As a result of state policy pursued in the Republic of Armenia, in recent years, state-private sector-Diaspora co-operation in the field of tourism has grown quantitatively and qualitatively. This is evidenced by the ongoing processes in recent years, aimed at the development of legislative, tax and infrastructure development in the field of tourism.

A successful story of state-private sector co-operation aimed at popularising cultural diversity may be considered the **Armenian Center for Contemporary Experimental Art (NPAK) and the Cafesjian Center for the Arts**, which contribute to the creation and presentation of experimental art and serve as a platform for contemporary artists to express themselves.

NPAK organises different international exhibitions, which are dedicated to innovative manifestations of contemporary art.

Cafesjian Center for the Arts also has a **Gafesjian museum** displaying Gerard L. Cafesjian's private collection, such as the crystal chandeliers exhibition, which presents works by famous world designers and artists.

In recent years, Armenia inbound tourism is characterized by a steady annual increase in the number of tourists, which amounted to **24.3%**.

To encourage creative work, as well as to present works of national artists to the public and international guests, there is "**Vernisazh**" **free market of creative works**, which is considered a tourism and cultural area and is a source of income for many. This area is provided to the creators of artistic works, souvenirs and a variety of other forms of self-expression under special conditions.

Each country's **tourism industry** is one of the most dynamically developing branches, which includes a component of mutual appreciation/recognition of cultural values, especially in the case of cultural tourism. From the **social aspect**, tourism in various ways contributes to the development of communities. In 2008-2011, two stages of "**Roads of Culture and Tourism for Development and Dialogue**" project aimed at disseminating information on tangible and intangible cultural values of Armenia listed in UNESCO's World Heritage List, raising awareness and knowledge of the local communities and engaging the local population in community development and tourism activities.

Based on the UN WTO recommendation of 21 September 2011 on "*Strengthening the role of tourism in the communication between the cultures*", the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved the recognition criteria in the areas of culture and the list of areas of culture of the Republic of Armenia. The purpose of the process is to form ethno-ecological culture in the society, which is a unique fusion of ecology and traditional, folk culture in certain natural and historical areas/environments focusing on the cultural features of the residences/areas, the involvement of the communities and groups as much as possible in the protection of cultural diversity, activation of viability, as well as their access for wide layers of the society.

Annual festivals and festivities are organised in the framework of the annual Tourism Support Services programmes, which are of national and cultural nature and attract tourists and promote Armenia's integration into the international market.

To completely present the **historical and cultural heritage** to the public, since 2005, state budget funds have been allocated for the reinforcement, rehabilitation and improvement of religious and secular monuments. At the same time, the chosen direction of cultural tourism in the Armenian Highlands is the historically shaped direction of the southern axis or corridor. It is not by chance that the Government of the Republic of Armenia attaches high importance to the development of tourism in the country, has adopted a number of programmes targeted at the development of the southern direction.

Under "**Tatev Revival**" program, it is envisaged to develop new tourism products and infrastructures, which will turn the Tatev area into the Southern Armenia Tourism Center. In the villages surrounding Tatev, new products for eco-tourism and "culinary tourism" will be developed. Already the **world's longest ropeway** takes tourists to Tatev monastery, allowing

them to admire beautiful scenes of nature on the way. A hotel complex was built near the ropeway station in the village of Holidzor.

In 2008-2011, the Armenian Monuments Awareness Project (AMAP) NGO started installing 658 information panels for cultural and historical and natural monuments in five languages; disseminating 750 guides in six other languages; placing 750 road signs on the highways and roads to monuments; placing of 1650 signs, 89 boards in 2247 sightseeing, 8 roads in nature and 2 museums. One website was created. Within the framework of "green monuments" campaign, more than 400 trees and plants have been planted near monuments. The Braille alphabet panels have been prepared for visitors with poor eyesight.

2.4. Ensuring protection of endangered cultural expressions

The negative impacts of the processes of globalisation are most evident in the case of traditional cultural expressions. Modernisation processes accelerate the process of forcing many traditional and national values to be out of use; many phenomena naturally get replaced by new and more dynamic manifestations. As a result of those processes, **the sectors of folk handicraft and making of folk musical instruments** are in a particularly vulnerable situation, and the Republic of Armenia has undertaken a number of complex programmes to increase the viability of the situation and promote craftsman involved in the sectors.

Currently, 25 vocational educational establishments operate in the Republic, where in 2011-2013, around 5600 people received free training according to specialisations.

Non-governmental organisations and private entities initiate activities to promote the diversity of handicraft expressions. Thus, in 2007, within the framework of the UN Global Compact Armenia Network of corporate social responsibility, "Arts and crafts centres for the disabled" were set up in the cities of Yerevan and Gyumri where the disabled acquire skills in pottery, painting, embroidery, woodcarving and stone carving. The products created in the centres are sold at retail souvenir shops and various charity events, allowing to create new sources of income for disabled persons. The number of students and clubs of craftsmen in the centre increases every year.

For the transmission of inherited traditional cultural expressions, in 2008-2012 twenty-one non-formal education programmes for rug weaving, carpet weaving, embroidery, and felting were organized, particularly in Yerevan, the Lori, Gegharkunik, Shirak marzes with the participation of around 83 people ranging from the ages of 7 to 40.

In 2009-2012, a non-formal education programme of instruction on making folk musical instruments and traditional ways of their use was implemented.

Availability and accessibility of cultural educational programmes are an important prerequisite for the protection of the viability of cultural expressions. Since 2007, an instruction course on national, string and wind instruments in music and art schools has been successfully conducted; out of the approved list of 27 musical instruments, 26 are currently instructed at schools.

3. Ensuring increase of the level of public awareness and participation of civil society.

In order to raise the level of public awareness and ensure transparency and accountability of the state bodies, legislative and institutional grounds have been set up in Armenia, which also ensure participation of civil society in these processes.

The policy (legal and institutional) of transparency and regular reporting is adopted in the sphere of culture to achieve the objectives laid down in the Convention and to raise the level of public awareness, which allows to keep the implementation principles of the Convention and the problems that have risen in those processes in the focus of both the state and the society. This policy promotes the increase of public awareness and triggers its involvement in those processes.

The right to receive information is declared as a constitutional right in Armenia. **The law of the Republic of Armenia "On Freedom of Information"** regulates the relations pertaining to

freedom of information, defines the competence of its holders in the field of provision of information, as well as the procedure, forms and conditions of receiving information. Every individual or organization can make a request to any state body of the Republic of Armenia and receive information or reply on a matter of interest in writing.

In order to make people have more trust in state bodies and to ensure their accountability, the Government of the Republic of Armenia took measures aimed at ensuring the transparency of the work of the state bodies. In 2008, Mulberry electronic document management system was successfully introduced at state administration agencies. Today, it is successfully operational in 35 state agencies. As a result, the performance is efficient and easy to oversee; meanwhile, administrative costs have been reduced. **The e-government system was introduced in the Government and state agencies of the Republic of Armenia in 2010**, allowing citizens to follow their applications sent to the state bodies online. The decisions of the Government, the Prime Minister, and the heads of public agencies are open and accessible in the online system. Moreover, any person can familiarise themselves with all the issues and drafts that the Government is going to discuss in the upcoming session.

Official websites play an essential role in providing information and ensuring transparency of activities. All the state agencies, including the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, are provided with operating websites which provide daily information on the programmes that have been implemented, as well as upcoming programmes and events. Information on the most important matters is disseminated through press conferences and relevant press releases (www.e-gov.am; www.mincult.am). The main cultural establishments of Armenia are also provided with such websites (e.g. National Gallery of Armenia www.nga.am). Meanwhile, the national executive bodies include **information and public relations subdivisions** within their structure, ensuring provision of information to the public on the activities of the ministries, communication with the mass media, provision of information materials on topics of public interest etc. Thus, in 2012 the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia received 151 electronic inquiries only from organisations. "Investigative journalists", Freedom of Information Centre, "Asbarez Journalists' Club", "Chamber of Advocates of the RA" NGOs, as well as "Hetq", "168 zham", "Iravunk", "Yerkir" newspapers and others are among the frequent enquirers.

Since 2010, the **procedure of organising the meetings of officials with citizens** has also been established in the RA state bodies, envisaging the recording of the raised issues, complex study of the issues of public concern, their recommendations, requests, complaints, as well as ensuring the possibility of making them be aware of information, documents and other materials rapidly and easily.

With the purpose of summarising the achievements of the activity of each year, analysing the omissions and identifying the future steps, hearings and discussions of reports are organised in the state bodies, the results of which are also posted on official websites. The hearings of the annual reports on the results of the activity of the Government of the Republic of Armenia are organised in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia also makes use of the possibilities and potential of social networks to expand the information realm on the events and steps implemented towards popularisation of its activity and protection of the diversity of cultural expressions. For instance, there are several information pages on Facebook social network. There are arrangements with mobile service providers for the dissemination of SMS messages regarding various cultural events. Social advertisements also cover information about diverse cultural manifestations. In general, there are over 20 websites in the Armenian Internet domain which impart diverse culture-related information and via which **open announcements** on different projects and participation in them are provided.

The goal of the state-initiated "**Computer for Everyone**" project is to enhance the level of computer literacy, promote the spread of the Internet by increasing the number of Internet users and contribute to the formation of information society in Armenia by creating grounds for it, etc.

In the reporting period, collaboration with the NGOs of this sphere became more active (**Annex 2**). In 2007-2011, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia provided support to projects initiated by 120 non-governmental organisations in the spheres of theatre, cinematography, all genres of music, dancing arts, fine arts, protection of cultural heritage, etc.

4. Achievements and challenges recoded as a result of the implementation of the Convention

Achievements

4.1 The key principles of the cultural policy of Armenia are stipulated in the mentioned programme as priorities and are in-line with the provisions of this Convention and contribute to the solution of the main problems:

4.1.1 As a result of the policy adopted for project budgeting, the state has provided funding for the sphere of culture with a tendency of increase compared to previous years (giving percentage growth to budgetary allocations), including the element of ensuring cultural diversity as a mandatory condition for cultural expression in all directions.

4.1.2 For the aesthetic upbringing of the coming generations, formation of their aesthetic taste, “perception” of culture, an important role has been reserved for the inclusion of knowledge about cultural diversity in the educational system, and a number of fundamental documents and targeted programmes have been elaborated for the development of that. This resulted in the integration of all age and social groups in the educational system, leading to a qualitative change in the life of the latter.

4.1.3 As a result of targeted language policy, the integrated approach in the field of language diversity has ensured instruction of foreign languages at all educational levels from pre-school to higher education and non-formal education. Language and culture centres of foreign countries have been established where new ways of involving people are being developed and applied.

4.1.4 The possibility of cultural expression of national minorities is ensured by means of monuments and protection of national traditions, radio programme broadcasts in 4 of the minority languages (Russian, Assyrian, Yezidi language, Kurdish) and publication of national periodicals.

4.1.5 The intercultural dialogue has been ensured through **targeted programmes** implemented in Armenia – the Armenian society has a possibility to get acquainted with the cultures and history, traditions, various manifestations of modern art of different countries, and at the same time to mutually present its own tangible and intangible rich cultural heritage. During those years, the art of translation has been the best means of expression for communication with other cultures.

4.1.6 The audience of Armenian and foreign language speakers became familiar with the masterpieces of world dramaturgy and new directions, and in the field of cinematography – with the films that have been produced in recent years and are very popular. Armenian cinema was widely presented at international film festivals. Movie and theatre weeks were held mutually in Armenia and abroad.

4.1.7 The level of involvement of foreign participants in Armenian projects has increased, as a result of which the penetration of cultural diversity into contemporary Armenian arts has expanded.

4.1.8 The involvement of individuals bearing the culture of the given country of the Armenian Diaspora in the process of creating conditions for cultural diversity has been ensured.

4.1.9 Participation of cultural workers and art critics of Armenia in international events organised in different countries and vice versa have been ensured, new grounds and opportunities for the establishment of direct contacts between creators of works of art have been established.

4.1.10 Due to international contracts, practical projects and establishment of direct links between institutions, the geography of collaboration has expanded, the number of implemented reciprocal projects has increased, the format of programmes has undergone changes and has been updated.

4.1.11 In the reporting period, due to involvement in international projects, Armenia became a member of a number of international organisations and networks (International association of theaters for children and young people (**ASSITEJ**), Informal European Theatre Meeting (**IETM**) [now: International Network for Contemporary Performing Artists], Association of Music Libraries, International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (**IFACCA**), **Europa Nostra**, International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Folk Arts /**C.I.O.F.F.**/, UNESCO Library Assembly of Eurasia (**BAE**), National Centre of *International Standard Serial Number* (**ISSN**), National Agency of International Standard Book Number (**ISBN**), European Choral Association - Europa Cantat (**ECA**), European Audiovisual Observatory (**EAVO**), etc.), which enables to demonstrate integrated approach to separate spheres of implementation of cultural policy.

4.2 Challenges

The present and future challenges of the strategy of ensuring cultural diversity have already been addressed in the context of the theory of ethno-cultural separation of civilisations. In the 21st century, the main conflicts will not be so much based on economic or ideological, but rather on cultural and national differences. In the near future, the progress of internationalisation and globalisation, which will bring nations and states, cultures and civilisations closer, will reveal new motives for conflicts and tension around the world. However, when addressing the current state of the implementation of the Convention on cultural diversity, the following issues and challenges can be stipulated:

4.2.1 As a result of global geopolitical processes, the distortion of forms of expressions of various cultures, even up to assimilation, occurs. As a challenge, this can jeopardise cultural diversity.

4.2.2 Expansion of mass culture jeopardises the forms of cultural expression and discredits the idea of cultural diversity.

4.2.3 Centralisation of cultural establishments and infrastructure in Yerevan has a negative effect on ensuring accessibility of the diversity of means of cultural expression for the population of the marzes of the Republic of Armenia.

4.2.4 The domination of any foreign language as a means of dissemination of culture jeopardises cultural diversity in intercultural relations.

4.2.5 Unsatisfactory level of knowledge of foreign languages among the population impedes the establishment of cultural diversity in the society and its perception by an individual.

4.2.6 Unsatisfactory level of public awareness of the Convention on both national and international levels causes diverse and frequently mutually exclusive interpretations of the Articles of the Convention.

4.2.7 Insufficient social advertising about policies, programmes and events which ensure the diversity in the sphere of culture does not ensure full public participation and consumption of cultural products and services.

4.2.8 Programmes covering the diversity of forms of cultural expression are not sufficiently exposed on television.

4.2.9 There is no special knowledge and experience for the collection of data on cultural diversity and management of the administrative register of statistics, as well as information on the leading experience in the field.

4.2.10 The Convention on cultural diversity should promote viability and perception of traditional cultures, recognition and popularization of other cultures, which will result in the decrease of

factors contributing to nationalist feelings and psychological obstacles inhibiting the perception of other cultural impulses. It should also be realised that cultural policy is not directed merely to the regulation of the artistic reality. In this regard, ensuring cultural diversity can expand the framework of the functions of cultural policy by involving various spheres (social, health, educational, etc.) of the life of a nation.