



Annual Report 2022

 CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN
FOUNDATION

Armenian Communities



Zarmanazan summer camp in France.
Photograph: Kostas Fountas

Revitalising Armenian Language and Culture

The revitalisation of the Western Armenian language in the Diaspora is a core priority. Using a holistic approach, the Department supports various projects, including the development of pedagogical tools and materials, teacher development, publications and the use of IT for the advancement of the language. Western Armenian has been declared an “endangered language” by UNESCO. The Foundation is the principal organisation in the Armenian world that supports its revitalisation.

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, Zarmanazan returned to its usual in-person summer immersion programme in Western Armenian, bringing 65 children and young adults from 10 countries to its “camp” in France. Always striking a fine balance between devoted returning participants and newcomers to enlarge the programme, Zarmanazan spawned new initiatives and ongoing contacts between participants throughout the year.



Opening Chapter. Photograph: D.R.



Activities at the Zarmazan summer camp in France.
Photograph: D.R.

The Yerik online educational video programme continued its bi-weekly screenings, with a regular following of 4000 viewers.

The teacher training initiative in Lebanon, with the Lebanese American University, continued for the second year, with 25 teachers. The OosHartag Armenian language online teacher development programme also continued unabated, with 100 participants on a biweekly basis. This global initiative not only links teachers from Australia to California but provides them with invaluable materials and training in preparing for their language classes. In the words of one participant, “The professional staff running the workshop [offer] detailed and innovative approaches, opening new horizons for the participating teacher/companions, and pushing and encouraging them to think and try to take a non-traditional approach to teaching. According to the teachers testing this innovative method, the result is positive and the growth of students’ interest in the Armenian language is significant, especially in everyday schools... A wonderful initiative, for which we are grateful to the organising body and to each staff member running the workshop.”

Nayiri.com released a new version of its Armenian spell-checker programme for Android smartphones, following up on the

iOS release. By the end of the year, the number of downloads was close to 15.000. The Mekhitarist periodical digitisation initiative was completed, making 546.727 pages of hard-to-find materials available to researchers. Pakine, the premier Western Armenian literary magazine since the 1960s, also began to be digitised and made available free of charge.

The In View cultural creativity programme launched last year produced its first crop of materials in Western Armenian. Nine prizes were given to innovative and contemporary cultural productions.

Support to Armenian language media continued, enabling them to produce content in Western Armenian. NorHaratch, CivilNet, Public Radio of Armenia, and various websites, social media platforms and apps received assistance.

Finally, the Armenian Diaspora Survey concluded its public opinion survey with the last four cities: Los Angeles, New York, Detroit and Toronto, reaching over 6000 participants. The next phase of the project is to analyse the data collected since 2018 and publish it in various formats.

101

Grants provided in support of projects related to the revitalization of the Armenian language (Western Armenian) and culture in the Diaspora (N.^o)

SDGs

- 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.
- 4.c By 2030, substantially increase (...) teacher training in developing countries (...).
- 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.
- 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

Scholarships for Higher Education Students

The University Scholarship programme has two objectives: first, to promote research on key issues relating to Armenians and to support students specialising in Armenian Studies. Second, to support Armenian students in developing countries to obtain university degrees (in subject areas of their own choosing) and as such contribute to the education of future leaders, especially in the Diaspora.

A total of 212 new scholarships were granted to Armenian and Armenian studies students from 19 countries, and 104 scholarships were renewed. Scholarships are granted in several categories and the amounts vary considerably based on the type of scholarship.

In Armenian Studies, 17 new scholarships were provided for Masters, PhD and Post-Doc projects, and 15 were renewed. A total of 462.000 euros was granted to these 32 students and early-career researchers, representing a considerable investment in the field of Armenian Studies.

Fifty-eight Short Term Armenian Studies grants were also awarded to researchers from around the world. These smaller amounts (less than 5000 euros each) aim to enable specific research projects that are not part of a degree course.

Short Term Conference and Travel grants of between 1000 and 1200 euros were awarded to 60 students and young researchers in Armenia (in all subjects).

Finally, 65 new awardees were selected from the 191 applications received in the category of Higher Education Scholarships for Armenian Students in Developing Countries (mostly the Middle East), and 84 were renewed. These scholarships are principally for undergraduate students studying any subject in their own country of residence. This year, the subjects included biology, business, computer science, engineering, finance, law, management,

medicine, musicology, pharmacy, physiotherapy, political science, psychology and social work, among others. A total of 327,000 euros was granted in this category. Most of the scholarships were of approximately 2500 euros.

Eight Armenian students studying in Portugal also received support.

329

Scholarships for Higher Education students (No.)

SDGs

- 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access (...) to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.
- 4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries (...) for enrolment in higher education (...).
- 4.c By 2030, substantially increase (...) teacher training in developing countries (...).
- 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Civil Society and Democratisation in Armenia

Programming in Armenia focuses on support for civil society, research and translations. The programmes are adjusted to meet ongoing needs due to the current realities of the country. While some humanitarian or developmental aid is provided, the core of the programming continues to target the ongoing intellectual needs of the country.

Part of the Foundation’s assistance to Armenia targets development projects, with a particular emphasis placed on regions this year. The “Waste to Warmth” initiative led to the production of eco-brickettes in a border village, enabling it to become more energy self-sufficient, while an IT skills enrichment project targeting youth generated employment in various regions. Cultural projects such as “Sunrise Stepanakert” were also supported, as was a civil society expo.

Among other initiatives, grants were given to NGOs to support war amputees, strengthen the country’s response to domestic violence, encourage youth in business development, and inspire girls to enter the flourishing IT sector, with 573 girls receiving training in the use of IT for community improvement through the Technovation initiative.



Sunrise Stepanakert.
Photograph: Sunrise Stepanakert

On the academic front, support went to the Matenadaran Ancient Manuscript library to install interactive maps of Armenian scriptoria, to the National Library of Armenia to house new digitised materials, to the Johannissyan Institute for its “Armenian Modernities” research project, to the institute of Archaeology and Ethnography for a conference on cities and urban development, to Digilib.am for the digitisation of 62 important historiographic and ethnographic books (29.000 pages), and to a project in collaboration with the University of Southern California to develop critical social sciences in Armenia.

Cultural heritage was addressed by two initiatives, including an international conference organised by Yerevan State University, and the work of Monument Watch to track the possible destruction of Armenian heritage in the region.

Finally, a grant to Boon Scientific and Cultural Foundation enabled the production of a series of 20 in-depth episodes on the Diaspora aimed at promoting knowledge of Armenians in Armenia about the Diaspora.

57

Grants provided in support of projects in Armenia- civil society and consolidating a democratic culture (N.º)

SDGs

- 1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations (...).
- 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.
- 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.
- 16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

TURKEY – ARMENIAN DIALOGUE

With the aim of raising public awareness towards Armenian heritage in Turkey, the Foundation supports projects that investigate or highlight the cultural heritage common to both communities.

The production and touring of an important theatrical play on the life of Gomidas (or Komitas) has been sponsored in Turkey since 2021. Considered the greatest Armenian musician, Gomidas systematically collected and preserved folk music from hundreds of villages in historic Armenia before the Genocide. Witnessing the horror of the mass killings in 1915, he suffered a mental breakdown from which he never recovered, dying in a mental asylum in France in 1936. Produced by Yolcu Theatre in Turkish, the play traces his life and work. It continues to tour all over Turkey, bringing Gomidas' story and the history of Armenians to thousands of theatregoers. It has won five prizes in Turkey, including Best Production of the Year (2022).

The fellowship programme on Armenian-Turkish relations continued with Cambridge University, with five new fellows being selected to research current issues relating to the two peoples and relations between them.

Support to civil society organisations working on Armenian heritage in Turkey also continued, including to the Hrant Dink Foundation for language classes and the KarDes app, to Anadolu Kultur for an exhibition and pod-theatre, and to Bogazici University for a research and lecture initiative on Armenian photography in the Ottoman Empire.

7

Grants provided in support of projects in Turkey- Dialogue and Armenian Culture

16

Publications and research papers supported in Turkey