

Annex
to Protocol Decision No 47 of the sitting
of the Government of the Republic of Armenia
of 24 November 2016

**FOUR-YEAR PERIODIC REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNESCO CONVENTION ON THE
PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL
EXPRESSIONS**

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1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Technical information

(a) name of the State: Republic of Armenia

(b) date of ratification: 23 October 2006

(c) organisation/s or subdivision/s responsible for preparation of the report

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia (Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1793-A of 22 December 2011)

(d) Officially appointed contact person:

Nerses Ter-Vardanyan, Arthur Poghosyan — Deputy Ministers of Culture of the Republic of Armenia

(e) Date of preparing the report: 2016

(f) Person appointed to sign the report: Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia Armen Amiryan

(g) Description of the process of consultations carried out with various beneficiaries for the preparation of the report

An inter-agency working group which comprises representatives of 7 agencies — the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Diaspora, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, of the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia and of 2 scientific institutions — the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography and the Institute of Arts, has been created upon the decision of the Prime Minister, aimed at preparation of the 2nd periodic report (includes 2012-2015) on the implementation of the “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions”.

(h) Interested parties involved in the preparation of the report, including civil society organisations

Representatives and independent experts of the Union of Writers, Artists’ Union, the Composers Union and 3 Musicologists, Cinematographers’ Union, a dozen of NGOs of the Republic of Armenia have been involved in the mentioned inter-agency working group, aimed at ensuring the participation of the civil society.

2. MEANS

2.1. Cultural policy and measures

The Relevant Articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia enshrining the rights to promotion of culture, education and science, preservation of the Armenian language and cultural heritage, ties with the Armenian Diaspora, gender equality, to preserve national and ethnic identity, the non-discrimination, the right of a human being to act freely, freedom to express an opinion, freedom to form creative associations, and the priority directions in the field of culture approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia serve as basis for the cultural policy aimed at the implementation of the Convention.

In this context, during the reporting period, the cultural policy was aimed at forming a unified cultural environment anchored on rich spiritual, moral, national traditions, commonality of system of values, preserving historical and cultural heritage, creating favourable conditions for the reproduction and development of cultural values and traditions, full participation of the state and the public in the up-to-date cultural developments, promoting and forming creative abilities of an individual, ensuring the processes of development of the national identity and of the society endowed with a high civic consciousness and patriotism, implementing the programmes for modernisation of cultural infrastructures, disclosing and promoting the creative potential, improving the legislative framework in the field.

In the cultural policy of the Republic of Armenia, importance is given to preserving the cultural heritage of the Armenian and other nations, developing and spreading of new forms and directions of world art, ensuring the linguistic diversity, expanding the international cultural cooperation, ensuring the accessibility of cultural communication, creating favourable conditions for development of the culture of national minorities, engagement of the civil society, improving the legislative framework in the field of culture and creating legal grounds for cultural activities, as well as developing the institutional capacities and the cultural infrastructures, ensuring the cultural education.

To regulate the field of culture and to create a relevant environment for the diversity of manifestations of culture, 1 law (“On libraries and library science”), 9 Decisions of

the Government and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, regulating the field of culture, as well as 14 legal acts regulating the internal legal relationships were adopted in the Republic of Armenia during the reporting period.

Several directions — aimed at general development of the fields of theatre arts, music art, dance art, fine arts, folk art, cinema art, museums, libraries, publishing and translation, cultural educational and scientific-research services, artistic education, ensuring the accessibility of using the services of the mentioned fields, promoting new means of expression, raising the awareness and communication level of the civil society — were outlined, aimed at ensuring cultural diversity and creating favourable conditions therefor within the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

The selection of target groups and beneficiaries played an important role in the effective implementation of the above-mentioned programmes and directions. Targets and beneficiaries of programmes with a cultural diversity promotion element are the representatives of all age groups (children, young people, the elderly), national minorities, persons with limited capacities, as well as the vulnerable groups of the society and other representatives, those providing creative works — individuals and professional organisations, those circulating the works — individuals, state and non-governmental organisations, the mass media. The programme is directly implemented by the NGOs, funds, professional structures, communities and unions of national minorities.

2.1.1. Support to individual artists according to fields

The support provided to individual artists is first of all related to ensuring their participation in international festivals, competitions, teaching and training courses. During 2013-2015, more than 50 professionals of the field of culture, in total, underwent trainings abroad (Italy, Poland, Romania, India, China, England, Russian Federation, Japan, Georgia, Iran, Belarus). In particular:

In the field of theatre arts: during the reporting period, **4 young directors underwent training** abroad — **in Germany** (Berlin, within the scope of the seminar for theatre professors) and **in the Russian Federation (in Moscow)**, within the scope of Moscow International Film Festival and at the Armenian Theatre of Moscow), **participation of 295 individuals** in an international theatre festival was ensured.

In the field of music arts: participation of 113 individual performers in 145 international music festivals and projects was ensured, support was provided to improvement of the professional abilities of young musicians through master classes organised abroad and in Armenia. Thus, for instance, in just 2013, 22 young professionals underwent training abroad. With the aim to continue with the vocational education, each year, 1-2 gifted musicians from Armenia leave for the Russian Federation to continue education at the conservatories of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Participation was ensured in the **“I Culture” project**, within the scope of which **each year 6 young performers** from Armenia **took master classes from renowned European musicians. 126 gifted children and teenagers** from Armenia **participated in 52 international festivals and competitions.**

In the field of cinema art: support was provided to the scriptwriting projects of individual cinematographers, to ensuring the participation of films of Armenian production and individual artists in international film festivals and film markets. With the aim to continue with the vocational education, each year, 3-4 students or Masters leave for the Russian Federation to continue education at the All-Russian State University of Cinematography named after Gerasimov and at the St. Petersburg State University of Film and Television.

During the reporting period, **support was provided to 7 scriptwriting projects of individual cinematographers**, as well as to the participation of films of Armenian production and individual artists in **36 international film festivals and film markets**, in total.

In the field of fine arts: support was provided to organisation of 17 individual exhibitions, to participation of young artists in 35 international biennials, exhibitions and innovative projects. During the last 2 years, 1-2 students or Masters leave for the Russian Federation to continue education at the academies of fine arts of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In the field of dance art: support was provided to the implementation of orders for creative work, to raising the quality of knowledge of modern, ethnographic and folk dance art, of the dance creator and performer, re-establishment of choreographic staging, renovation of folk costumes, organisation and review of international and republican festivals.

During the reporting period, 2 young and promising dance art alumni from Yerevan left for the Russian Federation to continue their vocational education at the dance academies of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Vocational trainings were held in **Armenia** as well. Thus for instance:

In the field of music art: master classes were organised in Armenia as well — by renowned musician performers arriving from abroad, for the students of Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan, gifted children of Armenia. Master classes were implemented within the scope of both the **“I Culture” project** and of other targeted programmes, particularly the programmes **“Arts Education Week”** and **“Organising of master classes by foreign professionals in Armenia and support to the participation of gifted musician performers in master classes and creative camps organised abroad”**.

In the field of cinema art: trainings and master classes were organised within the scope of the regional centre of the international film festival “Golden Apricot”, the students of Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography took master classes from renowned cinema and theatre figures arriving from the Russian Federation and Europe (Emir Kusturica, Roman Balayan, Artavazd Peleshyan, Sergei Solovyov, Krzysztof Zanussi). **For the replenishment of specialists in the field of cinema art, the activities of the fund “Hay Art Cinema” were ensured, including:** four professionals — Pavel Finn, Sergei Solovyov, Krzysztof Zanussi, Roman Balayan arrived in Armenia, who trained **10 students** of “High school of Film Directing”, and around **90 students** of various higher vocational institutions as class auditors.

In the field of book publishing: during the reporting period support was provided — under the programmes “Publication of Literature”, “Support to Publication of Literature”, “Elaboration and Publication of new syllabi, textbooks, methodological manuals for music, art and artistic schools” — to 407 individual artists — writers, literary critics, translators, musicians, music critics; the participation of around 20 writers, translators or literary critics in international literary festivals, competitions or book fairs was ensured each year, various presentations were held.

Under the training programme in the field of preservation of cultural values, in just 2013, training of **57 museum workers** was held by the History Museum of Armenia. **In 2014, 39** more workers underwent training under the mentioned programme. **In 2015**, the number of trainees reached **68**.

In the field of libraries, during the reporting period, **277 librarians** underwent training within the scope of the Training Programme for Community Librarians held by the National Library of Armenia.

2.1.2. Support to the creation of cultural products

In the field of theatre arts, allocations envisaged from the State Budget shall be directed towards creating modern competitive theatre products, making Armenian and foreign theatre arts popular in Armenia through the implementation of orders for creative work, organising international and republican theatre festivals in Armenia, ensuring the participation of theatrical groups and individuals from Armenia in foreign international theatre festivals, and the regular activities, technical re-equipment and repairing of 18 SNCOs implementing creative-oriented activities.

During the reporting period, 60 orders for creative work were implemented, 4 dramatic works were acquired, 9 international and republican theatre festivals were organised in Armenia, the participation of 31 Armenian theatre groups and of 295 individuals in international theatre festivals was ensured.

In 2015, 33 theatrical entertainment organisations operated in the Republic of Armenia, which staged 2 885 performances, increasing in number by 4.4 % compared to 2012. The number of spectators comprised 512.7 thousand people, which had increased by 16.4 % compared to 2012. In 2015, 65 new performances were staged by theatrical entertainment organisations, 11 of which were fundamentally renewed.

In 2012-2015, re-equipment and capital repair of a number of theatrical stages were carried out. Thus, for instance: in 2013, **the technical re-equipment of the National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet named after A.I. Spendiaryan and of Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall**, implemented by the Austrian company **“Waagner-Biro Stage Systems”**, completed. To ensure the regular activities of the **National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet named after A.I. Spendiaryan**, structural modifications, vocational qualification examinations for the creative personnel, etc., were implemented as well.

In 2015, the technical (sound and light modernisation) re-equipment of the National Academic Theatre named after G. Sundukyan started, which will be completed in September 2016.

State support was provided for sound and lighting equipment, cooling system, as well as the implementation of partial repair works of the small stage of **H. Paronyan State Musical Comedy Theatre**.

Activities for thermal isolation, partial repair, replenishment of lighting equipment were implemented in **Yerevan State Musical Chamber Theatre**.

Upon the decisions of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, financial means were allocated from the State Budget for the construction of the new block of **Yerevan State Musical Chamber Theatre** and for the acquisition of lighting and sound appliances (the activities will be completed in 2016).

The Small Hall after Mher Mkrtchyan was repaired and reopened with the means of **Gyumri State Drama Theatre after Vardan Adjemyan**. To acquire lighting appliances for the hall, financial means were allocated from the State Budget upon the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (the activities will be completed in 2016).

Due to the consistent and targeted state cultural policy in the field of theatre arts, the idea of “free stage” was introduced and is effectively applied, which gives an opportunity to individual artists — directors, stage directors and private theatre groups to implement their theatre programmes, to become creators of cultural products.

In the field, **4 non-governmental organisations closely co-operating with the State, carry out** remarkably active professional activities. These are as follows:

1. Theatre Workers Union of Armenia,
2. Armenian Actors Union,
3. National Theatrical Creative Union,
4. Armenian National Center of the International Union of Puppeteers (UNIMA-ARMENIA).

Today, 41 theatres and theatre groups from the theatres of various genre orientations (drama, opera, ballet, music, comedy, circus, marionette, puppet, pantomime, sketch, teenagers', etc.) function, of which 18 are under the subordination of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, 3 — of Yerevan Municipality, 2 — of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, 12 — of community, 3 — of Marzpetarans (regional governor's offices), 1 — of Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography, 1 — of Yerevan State University.

During the reporting period, staging of theatre plays envisaged for the population speaking a foreign language, living in the Republic of Armenia, continued to be one of the main directions of state policy, which is aimed at ensuring inter-cultural diversity and implementing cultural activities complying with the demands of the consumer speaking a foreign language. The works of renowned French, Russian, German, Italian, English, Polish, Czech playwrights are included in the repertoire of theatres under the state subordination. Part of the plays are staged and presented to the spectators in the mother tongue of the author. From this point of view, it is worth emphasising the Russian Drama Theatre named after K. Stanislavsky, in the repertoire of which around 25 plays in Russian, envisaged for various preferences and ages, are constantly included. Each year, the repertoire of the theatre is enriched with 3-4 new best works of the world classical drama.

The Small Theatre of the National Center of Aesthetics stages plays for spectators speaking a foreign language in German, English and Italian.

In the 2012-2015 repertoire of the National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet named after Al. Spendiaryan, 8 performances in Italian, French and Russian were included.

In the field of music art, allocations envisaged from the State Budget shall be directed towards acquiring musical works, new elaborations and arrangements of compositions, maintaining and developing of the creative potential, creating concert programmes through orders for creative works, organising of international and republican music festivals in Armenia, ensuring the participation of Armenian music groups and individual performers in international music festivals, the regular activities of organisations, technical re-equipment and repairing.

In 2012-2015, in the field concerned, 58 works of 46 authors were acquired, new elaborations and arrangements of 40 compositions were carried out, the participation of 47 Armenian music groups and 113 individual performers in 145 international music festivals and projects was ensured. 126 gifted children and teenagers from Armenia, as well as 3 children and youth bands participated in 52 international festivals and competitions.

In 2015, 19 concert organisations functioned in the Republic of Armenia. 182.9 thousand people were present at 563 concerts organised in concert halls compared to that of 191.2 and 553, correspondingly, of 2012.

In 2013, the activities dedicated **to the 110th anniversary** of the most renowned composer of the 21st century **Aram Khachaturian**, were the most prominent and significant programme implemented in the field of music art, being unique with both their geographical coverage and the conceptual exuberance. **74 concerts and events** were organised in **57 cities of 24 countries** (USA, Canada, China, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Italy, France, Switzerland, Japan, Germany, Latvia, etc.).

An international festival dedicated to renowned Armenian composer Komitas was first held, which turned into a significant event in the Armenian cultural life.

In 2013, **the activities dedicated to Sayat-Nova's 300th anniversary** also continued. Within the scope of the large-scale anniversary activities, concert programmes in Russia and Georgia, **10** literary-musical soirees and matinees, **1** international scientific session, 1 international conference of music libraries, 5 republican and international festivals and competitions, publications of books and musical notes (**3**), release of CDs (**2**) were implemented, the musical "Bridge of Love" was staged, one of the editions of magazine "Orer" of Prague was also dedicated to the great lyricist.

Festivals "The times of Terteryan", "Khachaturian and our times" and "Days of Komitas" were of the significant projects implemented in 2014-2015.

In 2013, **12 musical projects** were implemented (of which — **6 international and 6 republican competition-festivals**), whereas **15 projects** were implemented in 2015, **including 8 international** (7 festivals and 1 competition) and **7 republican festivals**.

To ensure the regular activities of SNCOs functioning in the field of music art, **new musical instruments were acquired for Gyumri State Symphonic Orchestra, and stage costumes for Yerevan State Chamber Choir.**

The programme for digitalisation of musical notes launched in 2014. In 2015, **6** works (2 operas, 2 ballets, 1 symphonic picture, 1 Armenian chant [sharakan]) **were digitalised.**

In the field of cinema art, allocations envisaged from the State Budget shall be directed towards maintaining and developing the creative potential through supporting script-writing projects of individual cinematographers, ensuring the participation of films of Armenian production and individual artists in international film festivals and film markets, creating feature, documentary, animation films, including through support to debut and student films, towards ensuring the regular activities of the two creative-oriented SNCOs, implementing services of preservation of cine-, photo-, phono-collections through digitalisation of films and making copies.

In 2015, production of 37 films out of the 49, having been under production since 2012 in the 3 film-making organisations of the republic, was completed. Production of 12 films in those organisations continues, the completion of which is envisaged in 2016-2019.

In 2013, the activities of shooting **14 full-length and 12 short feature** (including **4 student, 6 debut**, 1 children's comic film series "Gzhuk" [Crazy] — **4 editions**), **5 animated cartoons** (including 1 debut programme — **4 animated cartoon-debuts**), **15 documentary** (including **2 debut**) films, as well as those of **developing 1 scriptwriting bid** were implemented, whereas **15 feature film projects** (of which 3 continue), including **11 full-length and 1 short films** (6 works), **1 debut** films programme (4 works), 1 student films programme (4 works), children's comic film series "Gzhuk" (4 editions), **10 documentary** film projects (of which 2 continue), including **1 debut** programme (2 works) and **1 film chronicle, 5 animated cartoon film** projects, including **1 debut programme** (3 works), as well as the development of **2 scriptwriting** bids were implemented in 2015.

In 2015, **21 films** were digitalised (**instead of 6 in 2013**) and **2 films** were restored (**as in 2013**).

During the reporting period, the films of domestic production, produced with the support of the Ministry, and the creative staffs participated in a number of international **film festivals and film markets** (Cannes, Moscow, Prague, Annecy, Tallinn, Lisbon, Guangzhou, Zielona Gora, Targu Mures). Support was provided to 5-

6 international film festivals held in Yerevan (“Golden Apricot”, “ReAnimania” animation, “Rolan” for children and youth, “KIN”, “Fresco” of modern art and spiritual films and “Cinema Express: Armenia-Georgia” travelling film festival), to “Hayak” **national films annual awards**, to the implementation of “Kinoashun” [Cinema Autumn] held by the National Cinema Center of Armenia in Yerevan, in marzes and military units of the Republic of Armenia, which, in 2013, was dedicated to the 90th anniversary of foundation of the Armenian film and the 75th anniversary of the Armenian animation, to the implementation of television programmes and television series dedicated to **culture**.

In the field of fine arts, allocations envisaged from the State Budget shall be directed towards supporting the creative potential through organising individual exhibitions, supporting the participation of young artists in international biennials, exhibitions, and supporting innovative programmes, and the acquisition of works by contemporary artists.

During 2013-2015, 12 works were acquired. At the same time, the participation of Armenian artists and sculptors in **prestigious international biennials, exhibitions, plein air paintings and other projects** was ensured.

In 2012-2015, participation was ensured also in the 21st International Biennial of Humour and Satire in the Arts, **Gabrovo** (Bulgaria), under the motto “**The World Lasts Because It Laughs**”, in the **3rd International Plein Air Painting Festival, Visaginas** (Lithuania), in the Artistic Plein Air Painting Festival, Elbong (Poland), in the Contemporary Textile Art International Biennial, Guimarães (Portugal). Contemporary Armenian artists participated also in the All-Union Art Exhibition of young artists held in the Central House of Artist, Moscow (Russian Federation), in the exhibition entitled “**Modern Art of Armenia**” organised in **Sopot National Gallery** (Poland).

During the reporting period, around 24 anniversary and individual exhibitions were organised in Armenia. **The International Symposium of Sculpture “Vital Source”, the festival “Armenian Palette”** are among the significant activities implemented in Armenia.

In 2013-2015, the National Gallery of Armenia was presented at the exhibition “**Orientalism: Delacroix to Klee**” opened in **Saint-Tropez**, and then, with 43 works by Hovhannes Aivazovsky, presented the exhibition “**Hovhannes Aivazovsky: Time and Eternity**” at **Sopot National Gallery (Poland)**. 7 paintings by Minas Avetisyan, pertaining to the collection of the National Gallery of Armenia, were presented also **at the Moritzburg Museum of Halle (Germany)**, at the exhibition “**Minas and Narek Avetisyan. Modernism and Avant-Garde in Armenia**”. The exhibition of works by Sergei Parajanov, entitled “**The Colour of Pomegranate**” was held at **Solyanka State Gallery, Moscow**.

Allocations envisaged by the State Budget in the field of dance art are directed towards implementation of orders for creative work, acquisition of folk costumes, participation of young authors in the international dance projects with the aim to preserve and circulate ethnographic and folk dance.

To ensure participation in the international dance projects, state and non-governmental bands participated in **18** international festivals and cultural conferences **in 5 European cities, 7 projects were implemented**, including **1 international, 3 republican and 3 regional tours, 6 anniversary events dedicated to choreographers and dance bands were arranged**.

In 2015 based on an order for the creative work, ballet performance “**Meghapart krqer**” [“Culpable passions”] was staged, **2 dance performances were renewed**

(“Loretsi Sako” [“Sako from Lori”] performance and “Zartonk” [“Revival”] staging).

Allocations envisaged by the State Budget in the field of book publishing are directed to publication of writings of modern writers, including young and beginning writers, translations, publication of literature representing the cultural heritage of the country, participation in international book fairs, book art festivals and award ceremonies by creating modern, competitive book products. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia provided support to publication of 149 books and 70 newspapers and journals in 2013, 136 books and 67 newspapers and journals in 2014, 122 books and 62 newspapers and journals in 2015. The books published in Armenian and other languages were exhibited in the international book fairs in New York (USA), Paris (France), Moscow (Russia), Frankfurt (Germany), Tehran (Iran), Minsk (Belarus).

2.1.3. Promotion of cultural education as a pledge of cultural diversity

In Armenia, cultural education is implemented at all the levels of education (kindergarten, school, specialised school, college, higher education institution), in extracurricular institutions (children and youth centres, music schools, etc.) and under non-formal education.

Promotion of not only spiritual but also material culture and preservation of cultural diversity is highlighted in the field of education, which is reflected in sustainable development of education — in the fields of both formal (general education, higher education, postgraduate education) and non-formal education.

As of April 2015, 227 music, art, fine art and dance art schools operate in the Republic of Armenia, 96 of which are music, 71 are art, 19 are fine art, 4 are dance art schools, in addition to 37 children and youth creative centres. Some 45 605 pupils study in such schools and 4 487 pedagogues teach there.

Since 2007 the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia has been implementing **project “Tuition on national, wind and string instruments in the music and art schools of the Republic of Armenia”**, due to which the departments of national, wind and string instruments have been reopened in schools of several communities of the republic, where some 2 400 pupils study music free of charge.

The study conducted by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia in 2013 revealed that the lack and depreciation of musical instruments in schools affect negatively on the process of education. To improve the situation **programme “Acquisition of musical instruments for music and art schools of the Republic”** was launched in the same year. Within the framework of this programme, musical instruments are provided to gifted young musicians studying in music and art schools, pupils of newly established profession-oriented classes and to children from socially disadvantaged families. The distribution of musical instruments is carried out based on findings of hearings by several leading specialists in music and art schools of the republic, as well as on the principle of ensuring the proportionality of cultural education in marzes. Within the framework of **2013-2015** programme, 271 **musical instruments** were provided to 271 pupils of 101 music and art schools.

The music literature publication programme having been implemented since 2008 by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia on state a sponsored basis, has been assessed by specialists as a highly effective programme. It has been implemented with the assistance of a specialised task force adjunct to the ministry, set up specifically to that end. In 2013-2015, 72 music books were published under the programme **“Elaboration and publication of new curricula, textbooks,**

methodological manuals for music, art and fine art schools", most of which were supplied to all the education institutions of the republic free of charge.

Several manuals ("Dignity and tolerance", "Teaching tolerance", "Teaching through films", "How to prevent violence in a school") were elaborated and introduced, in the preparation whereof civil society representatives and international organisations (UN Development Programme), as well as different countries (The Kingdom of Netherlands, Czech Republic) were involved. The manuals are targeted to raising tolerance and co-operation, shaping proper attitude towards different religions and beliefs, different social groups (including different sex groups).

Teaching materials dedicated to culture and cultural diversity are included also in the professional development trainings for teachers. Trainings, workshops for foreign language teachers were held where effective methods for introducing cultural values to students, highlighting the importance of cultural diversity were discussed.

"Support to Cultural Education" Foundation has been functioning aimed at raising the teaching quality of pedagogues of educational institutions engaged in cultural education in the republic, introduction of new methods, distribution of new education and methodological manuals published in Armenia and abroad, analysis of teaching peculiarities for unveiling and developing the skills of gifted children. The foundation keeps on implementing various targeted programmes and events **in 33 basic schools established** in marzes and the capital of the Republic of Armenia (3 in each marz).

Some **25 090** pupils and **4 370** pedagogues from music, art, fine art and dance art schools of the republic participated in programme **"Teaching and methodological and practical assistance"** implemented with the help of teaching methodology experts-pedagogues of the foundation and leading visiting specialists, and **2 565** pedagogues participated in programme **"Training lesson assessments"** in 2013-2015.

In **2014-2015** within the framework of the programme, master classes were arranged in Armenia with the help of **12** leading specialists **from abroad**, where **229 gifted young musician-performers and 149 pedagogues** participated, and **28 gifted young musician-performers** participated in author's master classes held abroad.

To ensure functioning of the cultural education field, **information banks were set up, template curricula and syllabi** for specialisations **taught** in music, art, fine art and dance art schools were drawn up.

Programme for development and advancement of talented young musician-performers launched in 2013 aims to unveil and support talented musician-performers of the age of 11-20 for the "piano", "violin" and "violoncello" specialisations. It includes series of complex events the implementation of which will contribute to ensuring competitiveness of the Armenian performing arts school in the international arena and laying of the cornerstones for natural generation shift in classical performing arts. Professional consultations are held with the help of consultants and visiting specialists for all participants of the programme — in individual class and master class format. Some **15 young musicians** have been enrolled in about **100 different** events: contests, festivals, concerts. Most of them have been awarded with the title of a prizewinner of republican and international contests.

Within the framework of project **"Pupils Philharmonic"** implemented since 2007, renowned musicians (speakers) make presentations on the structure, origin of musical instruments, creative life of renowned artists, the time period they lived and the peculiarities of music they created, different musical styles and genres, ethnographic song and dance, etc. Within the framework of the programme, 147

lesson-aimed concerts were arranged in 2013-2015, where 39 600 pupils participated.

It is beyond possibility to outline the field of cultural education without international contest-festival for young musician-performers “**Renaissance**” and international **festival** for young musician-performers “**New names**”, which create the best platform for presentation of performance skills by gifted young people.

In 2013 some 2 415 musician-performers from 30 countries worldwide and Armenia participated in the international contest-festival for young musician-performers “**Renaissance**”, and in 2015 this number totalled 2 800 (represented by 36 countries). The contests are held in 5 age groups and 18 nominations.

International **festival** for young musician-performers “**New names**” **has been held since 2010. It attracts about 5 dozens of gifted young musician-performers from more than 10 countries to Armenia each year. The festival of 2015, celebrating its 5th anniversary**, was dedicated to the 100th commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, running under the slogan “I remember and demand...”. More **than 4 dozens** of gifted young musician-performers under the age of **18** from **8** countries (Armenia, Russia, USA, Germany, Japan, China, Australia and Georgia) participated in the festival.

2.1.4. Creation of favourable conditions for introducing culture

With the purpose of promoting introduction of products and services (including the cultural ones), the commission for coordinating the charity programmes, operating in Armenia continued creating favourable conditions for introduction of cultural products and services for charity in 2012-2015; as a result, 22 programmes relating to the field of culture were recognised as charity. By relieving the implemented programmes from some taxes and duties, the general basket of cultural diversity products and services has been replenished.

In the reporting period, the arrangement of exhibitions of works of world-renowned authors of Armenian origin in Armenia may be considered as a key policy for introducing the culture, of which the exhibitions of photographer Ara Guler, sculptors Nokoghayos Nikoghosyan, Sargis Baghdasaryan, collection of carpets of collector Mushegh Chaloyan, painters Jan Kazanchyan, Hakob Hakobyan, Eduard Isabekyan, Sedrak Arakelyan are worth mentioning. The exhibitions provide an opportunity to communicate with the activities of artists and figures of culture of Armenian origin, enjoying worldwide recognition, and their creative work heritage.

2.1.5. Implementation of target programmes aimed at promoting diversity of forms of cultural expressions

A number of target programmes were implemented in the reporting period, which were in line with the prevailing directions established by the Government of the Republic of Armenia in the sphere of culture and were of both republican and international significance.

2.1.5.1. Target programmes of republican significance

In 2013, “**Target Programme of Development and Improvement of Talented Young Music Performers of the Republic of Armenia**” launched, which was aimed at the development and improvement of **15** talented young music performers (**classic musical instruments: piano, violin, violoncello**) with the consideration of future presentation of the Armenian performing school on an international arena, as well as formation of grounds for natural generation change in the field of classical

performing art. Young music performers involved in **2014** programme, took part in nearly **40 projects** and **master classes of 10 leading foreign specialists**.

By means of the newly-established revolving fund of musical instruments, more talented young musicians and children from socially vulnerable families, as well as newly formed professional classes were provided with musical instruments (**20 types of 102 musical instruments**).

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia supported the implementation of “**Armenian State Symbols**” programme.

The information banks related to the **gifted children** of the Republic of Armenia (established in 2008), **gifted children with disabilities** (established in 2010) and **choirs operating in the Republic of Armenia** (established in 2011) continued to be replenished.

2.1.5.2. Significant international programmes

From among the target programmes of international significance the following should be highlighted: “Yerevan World Book Capital”, “500th Anniversary of Armenian Book Printing” (2012) and “Gyumri - CIS Cultural Capital” (2013).

❖ “500th Anniversary of Armenian Book Printing” and “Yerevan World Book Capital 2012” programme:

The events within the framework of “Yerevan World Book Capital 2012” programme were launched on 21 April at the M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts “Matenadaran” with UNESCO’s “Cultural Policy: Policy for Culture. The Role of Culture in Sustainable Development” regional conference, exhibition entitled “ArmBookExpo” (nearly 1 400 books on Armenia and Armenians published in over 40 countries of the world were presented at Cafesjian Center for the Arts, later being donated to the National Library of Armenia), 3rd Imagery Festival and exhibition of Armenian Genocide Museum of Valence entitled “Never Forget” (opened in Tumo Center of Creative Technologies), as well as exhibition entitled “Vernatun” (opened in the National Gallery of Armenia).

On 22 April, festive events were held in the yards of Yerevan schools named after Armenian and world-renowned writers; a children’s painting programme launched in the Republic Square; the photo exhibition of Argentinian Armenian Dicran Sirinian entitled “Buenos Aires” opened in the Municipality of Yerevan; the concert of Andrea Bocelli entitled “Musical welcome from Italy, the cradle of Armenian book printing” took place in the Freedom Square; in the evening the grand ceremony of the UNESCO’s “World Book Capital” title bestowment took place in the area adjacent to the M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts “Matenadaran”.

The Mayor of Buenos Aires, Book Capital 2011, handed the symbolic title of “World Book Capital” over to the Mayor of Yerevan. Among many honorary guests were the representatives of Bangkok, which was named World Book Capital in 2013. Argentinian, Thai and Armenian dance groups gave performances. A three-dimensional graphic projection show was displayed on the front wall of Matenadaran monumental building.

On 23 April, the photo exhibition of Jorge Borges entitled “Atlas of Borges” took place, which was followed by the opening of “An Act for Eternity” statue of Davit Yerevantsi. The exhibition entitled “The Eternity of Writing...” opened, which presented the history of the Armenian writing development starting from the ancient times to electronic books.

Within the framework of the programme, **14 books were presented at the international book fairs in Minsk, Paris, Bologna, Buenos Aires, Saint**

Petersburg, Geneva, Tehran, Los Angeles, Warsaw, Thessaloniki, Moscow, Ashgabat, Frankfurt and Hague.

❖ **12 exhibitions dedicated to Armenian book printing held abroad**

Exhibition entitled “Armenia: Imprints of a Civilization” in Venice (The exhibition launched on 14 December 2011 in Museo Correr, National Archaeological Museums and Marciana National Library of Venice. Within the framework of the exhibition **over 200 unique manuscripts, antique books, miniature paintings, cross-stones, monument models, carpets, maps, etc.** brought to Venice from the museums and libraries of Armenia and Europe were presented. The exhibition was followed by an **Armenian spiritual music concert** in the Cathedral Basilica of St. Mark. The closing of the exhibition took place on 10 April 2012).

Exhibition entitled “Remembering William Saroyan” in Athens (The exhibition opened on 19 March at the National Library of Greece. Books, pictures, photos and documents representing the prolific activity of William Saroyan were exhibited, Greek writer, academician Tanasi Valtinos and Athens University professor Photios Dimitrakopoulos gave public lectures.

Exhibition entitled “Armenian book culture: Ahead of the 500th anniversary of the first printed Armenian book” in Saint Petersburg (The exhibition opened on 10 April at Saint Petersburg Library. The exhibition presents the history of Armenian book printing: the book “Alphabetum Armenum” (“Armenian Alphabet”) printed in Rome in 1623 and testaments printed in Amsterdam in 1668, books printed in Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Astrakhan, Shushi, Baku and European capitals in the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as publications of the Soviet and modern period).

Exhibition of antique Armenian books in Tbilisi (On 11 April, an exhibition of antique Armenian books opened at the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia through the joint efforts of “Hayartun” Cultural Centre of Tbilisi, National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia and the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia in Georgia. Over 50 books were presented at the exhibition).

Exhibition entitled “Type design and miracle of image: 500th anniversary of Armenian Book Printing” in Halle (The exhibition opened on 15 April at Kunstforum hall. The exhibition presented antique books kept in libraries and museums of Germany, as well as exhibits from the M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts “Matenadaran”, National Library of Armenia and Yerevan Museum of Folk Art after Hovhannes Sharambeyan. The exhibition closed on 21 May).

Exhibition of ancient Armenian books entitled “Armenia... A Road of Books” in Denmark (the exhibition ran from 17 April to 5 May at the Royal Library of Copenhagen (The Black Diamond).

Exhibition entitled “To Know Wisdom and Instruction: The Armenian Literary Tradition at the Library of Congress” (The exhibition opened on 18 April. It was accompanied by a lecture and a concert of talented cellist **N. Hakhnazaryan**).

Exhibition dedicated to the 500th anniversary of Armenian book printing in Antelias (The exhibition opened on 8 June in Cilicia Museum of Antelias Mayravank. The exhibition ran until 18 June).

Exhibition entitled “The Diaspora of the Armenian Book 1512-2012” at the National Library of Amsterdam (The exhibition opened on 11 June. Antique Armenian books kept in Amsterdam, as well as antique books of the National Library of Armenia and 2 exhibits from Y. Kochar Museum were presented. **The**

presentation of the book “Diaspora of Armenian Book Printing” was held during the exhibition).

Exhibition entitled “The Antique Armenian Book” in Bulgaria (The exhibition opened on 4 September at SS. Cyril and Methodius National Library of Sofia. The exhibition presented the collection of antique Armenian books from the national libraries of Armenia and Sofia. The exhibition was followed by the presentations of the Armenian translation of “Krali Marko” Bulgarian epic poem published in the recent two years, the Bulgarian translation of “The Emperor” drama by L. Shant and “David of Sassoun” epic poem, which were published as a result of the Armenian-Bulgarian literary translation projects).

Events entitled “500th anniversary of Armenian book printing” in Romania (In the period from 14 to 30 September, exhibitions and presentations were held in Constanța and Cluj cities, the Armenian Cultural Centre of Bucharest and Carol I Central Library within the framework of the one-week Strada cu Cărți book festival.)

Exhibition of antique Armenian books in British Library of London (The exhibition opened on 22 November in the “Treasury” (Gandzaton) Hall of the British Library. The exhibition ran until 31 January 2013).

Exhibition entitled “Typographic Art and Enchanting Illustrations: 500th anniversary of Armenian book printing” in Gutenberg Museum of Mainz (The exhibition ran from 7 December 2012 to 17 March 2013. The exhibition presented exhibits from the National Library of Armenia and collections kept in the renowned museums and libraries of Germany).

Participation in 2 international literary festivals was ensured: Berlin Poetry Festival (held on 1-7 June 2012) and Genoa Poetry Festival (held on 8-17 June 2012)

Presentations of joint literary translation projects were held. In particular, the presentation of the Armenian issue of Ukrainian “Vsesvit” (“Всесвіт”) magazine dedicated to the modern Armenian literature was held on 21-28 March within the framework of the Days of Ukrainian Culture in Armenia and in the context of the 500th anniversary of Armenian book printing and “Yerevan World Book Capital” programme; **in June the presentation of the Georgian Anthology entitled “Modern Armenian Prose” was held; on 15 September, the presentation of the book “Selected” by L. Brutyan (in Russian) was held at Moscow House (Dom Moskvyy) in Yerevan; on 15 September, the presentation of the Armenian translation of the Dutch writer Frank Westerman’s book “Ararat” was held at the M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts “Matenadaran”. In September, the presentations of the Armenian issue of the German ODA magazine, book “Money, Pushkin, Money” (“Деньги, Пушкин, деньги”), French books “Modern Armenian Prose” and “Modern Armenian Poetry” and Persian book “Modern Armenian Poetry” were held. Within the framework of the 500th anniversary of Armenian book printing, the presentation of “Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Armenian Culture in Ukraine” by Ukrainian scientist Irina Gayuk was held in Kiev on 2 October, the presentation of “Nobel Laureates and Other Modern Poets” (Armenian translation of the anthology of Polish poets) was held at A. Khachaturian Museum in Yerevan on 8 October.**

20 literary conferences, festivals, exhibitions and contests were organized in Armenia. In particular: Exhibitions entitled “The Eternity of Writing” and “When the Book Finds the Painter”, ICOM-CECA 2012 annual conference, “International Conference of Librarians”, “6th International Conference of Translators and Publishers”, “Granshan 2012” International Type Design

Competition for non-Latin typefaces, the international conference of musical libraries entitled **“Music and Musical Libraries in the 21st Century”** international literary festival entitled **“Literary Ark 2012”**, seminar entitled **“Images of Memory”** (**“Лики памяти”**), **“Open-air Reading Festival”**, **Reading Olympiad**, **“Entrance with a Book”** action, **“I am Creating a Book”** project, programme entitled **“The Meeting Place is the Library”**.

❖ **“Gyumri as the CIS Cultural Capital” programme (2013)**

The programme officially launched on 30 June 2013 in Gyumri with a big gala concert and ceremony of handing “Gyumri_CIS Cultural Capital” certificate. 48 events were carried out within the framework of the programme. In particular: International contest and festival of music performers “Renaissance”, 1st International Poetry Festival “In the beginning was the Word”, 1st International Theatre Festival “Duet”, “Film Festival of CIS states”, “Cultural Gyumri” Festival, 2nd International Folk Festival “Armenia at the crossroads of peace”, international sculpture symposium “Life-giving spring”, international exhibition of CIS states “Art Expo”, Gyumri craft traditions festival, conference entitled “Culture and Information Technologies”, traditional/folk music festival and Ashugh Song Festival, Bread Festival, Literary Ark Festival, international scientific conference entitled “Historical and Cultural Heritage of Shirak”, international theatre festival for youth “Pomegranate Seed”, media forum of CIS states’ mass media entitled “At the Foot of Mount Ararat,” First Integrative Republican Festival of Youth Art, First Navasard Games, Japanese Film Festival, events dedicated to Children’s Day and environmental topics, opening of “Octet” music school named after Azat Shishyan in Gyumri and concert dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Gyumri State Symphony Orchestra, mutual visits of delegations of sister cities, archaeological exhibition entitled “Shirak: Cradle of Culture” at Shirak Geological Museum. The closing of “Gyumri as the CIS Cultural Capital 2013” programme took place on 11 November 2013 with the concert of the Russian National Orchestra conducted by V. Spivakov and photo exhibition of CIS states dedicated to Armenian heritage entitled “Armenian Trace.” The closing event was followed by the grand ceremony of cancellation of the “Gyumri as the CIS Cultural Capital 2013” postage stamp.

2.1.5.4. Targeted programmes in the film sector

A number of targeted programmes are implemented for the purpose of boosting diversification of the forms of cultural self-expression in the film sector. Namely, **international festivals and film weeks are organised, conditions are created for joining international institutions, signing international treaties and implementing joint film production for the purpose of co-operation in the sector of film production and the film sector.**

In the Republic a number of republican and international festivals take place, ensuring the communication of citizens with multinational, multi-genre and diverse film art.

“Golden Apricot” International Film Festival of Yerevan continues to be the largest regional international film festival receiving state assistance, and is held under the **“Crossroads of Civilisations and Cultures”** slogan. During the festival, one can find directors and films of various ethnic, national and religious affiliation that create aesthetic sense by introducing from a special viewpoint the everyday life, troubles, joys, household activities and lifestyles of ordinary people. In the reporting period, more than 400 films have been screened within the framework of the festival. In the reporting period, Charles Aznavour, István Szabó, Artavazd Peleshyan, Atom Egoyan, Jos Stelling, Godfrey Reggio, Robert Gedikyan, Serj

Avedikyan, Margarethe von Trotta, Ulrich Seidl, Ornella Muti, Nastassja Kinski, Jacqueline Bisset were among the prominent guests of the festival.

Since 2009, world famous filmmakers having arrived from different countries **have been delivering master classes** to young filmmakers at the **regional film school** operating within the framework **of the “Golden Apricot” film festival**.

“WebApricot” pan-Armenian on-line film festival continues to be held, during which the films are featured exclusively on Webtv.am (virtual cultural TV Company). Presentation of short films produced through new means of technology (mobile phones, tablets, smartphones) is encouraged.

The other significant festivals of the film sector are the **ReAnimania International Animation & Comics Art Festival of Yerevan**, **“Fresco” Annual Festival of Modern Art and Spiritual and Moral Films** and the **Apricot Tree International Ethnographic Film Festival**, which make film art diverse.

From the perspective **of gender expression**, importance is attached to the **“Woman”** international film festival launched in 2008.

The **“I am”** youth festival and the **“Rolan”** International Film Festival for Children and Young People are among the festivals supporting youth and children’s authors.

In addition to international and republican festivals, every year, national cinema months **entitled “Cinema Autumn”** are organised. Old and new Armenian feature, documentary and animated films, as well as releases of different years of the **“Gzhuk”** [Crazy] children’s satirical TV series are screened throughout the whole month in the volumes of the film magazine issued in Yerevan and marzes.

Through the assistance of the Ministry, films of domestic production and creative teams have been shown at a number of international **film festivals** and in **film markets** (Cannes, Moscow, Prague, Annesi, Tallinn, Berlin, Lisbon, Guanchzhui, Zelena Gora, Turgu Muresh).

Through the Movie Production Programmes, assistance was provided for the production of 17 films, including — 4 feature films, 12 documentary films and 1 animation film (currently undergoing production), and short and full-length films entitled **“Never Again”** have been screened in 9 countries (Belarus, Germany, France, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Turkey, Switzerland, Russian Federation, Georgia).

2.1.5.5. International performing arts festivals organised in Armenia

Within the framework of international performing arts festivals held between 2013 and 2015, contemporary world performing arts were introduced, *i.e.* **“High Fest” International Performing Arts Festival**, **“Armmono” International Festival of Mono Performances**, **Leonid Yengibaryan International Mime Festival**, **Yerevan International Shakespeare Theatre Festival** and **“Duet” International Festival**.

Special importance was attached to the programmes implemented **for children and youth groups, as well as for young beneficiaries** — **“Tumanyan Fairy Tale Day”**, **“Pomegranate Seed”** Children and Youth Performing Arts Festivals.

As a result of implementation of the targeted programmes, dozens of children have taken part in various international competitions.

Through the assistance of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, the 34th World Congress of UNESCO’s International Theatre Institute was held in Yerevan from 17-22 November 2014 (it unites the centres of more than 100 countries and appears to be the largest Performing Arts Network in the world) — under the **“New voices, new audience. Time for dialogue”** slogan.

On 8 October 2015, under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia and through co-operation of HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival, Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre performed **“Hamlet”** at the State Russian Drama Theatre

After K. Stanislavsky of Yerevan within the framework of the “Globe to Globe Hamlet” world tour project dedicated to the 450th birth anniversary of William Shakespeare.

Within the framework of the executive order for creations, two ballet performances were financed and introduced to audiences — **“Pair of Solar”** (director: R. Kharatian) and **“Arshile Gorky”** (director: A. Mehrabyan), as well as 7 performances were held — **“Museum of Senses”** (director: V. Badalyan), **“Paris Judgment”** (director: A. Khandikyan), **“The Trial of Soghomon Tehlirian”** (director: N. Santoyan), **“Henri Verneuil”** (director: D. Harutyunyan) **“Sunrise of the Century and Sunset of the Century”** (director: S. Stepanyan), **“Investigation”** (director: A. Elbakyan), **“One-Hour Memory”** (director: V. Shahverdyan).

With the “Red Blue” installation, Armenia was represented at the reputable Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space.

2.1.5.6. Concerts and festivals held in the field of music

In the field of music, during the last 4 years, 143 concerts have been held through the co-operation between foreign and Armenian bands, musician-performers and conductors, engaging a diversity of genres and traditions — classic, folk, ethnographic, jazz, avant-garde, etc.

The diversity of genres in the field of music is also ensured through the **“Yerevan Perspectives” International Music Festival**, the **Aram Khachaturian International Music Festival** (held since 2013), the **“National Gallery” International Music Festival**, the **“Yerevanian” Festival**, **“Return” Festival of Classical Music**, as well as **Henrik and Geronty Talalyan Viola and Cello Festival**, the **“Komitas”** and **Sayat Nova Republican Festivals**, four out of which appear to be festivals of Armenian and foreign contemporary composing art (Armenian contemporary music, Armenian composing art, **“Debut” Armenian young composers**, **“Arevner” children and youth songs**), as well as joint festivals — **Armenian-Russian, Armenian-Georgian**, suggesting diversity of musical genres to listeners (classic, folk, ethnographic, jazz, avant-garde). World famous musicians and soloists such as Krzysztof Penderecki; Evgeny Kissin; Maria Guleghina; Pinchas Zukerman; Zakhar Bron; Dmitri Hvorostovsky; Andres Mustonen; Viktor Eliseev; Joshua Bell; Alexei Lubimov; Maxim Vengerov; Sergey Khachatryan; Hayk Kazazyan; Narek Hakhnazaryan; Yefim Bronfman; Konstantin Lifschitz; Elena Bashkirova; Alexander Romanovsky; the Kronos Quartet; Vienna Philharmonic; Berlin State Opera Orchestra (conductor Daniel Barenboim); Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (conductor Zubin Mehta); conductor, 12-time Grammy Award winner Michael Tilson Thomas; Hortus Musicus Ensemble; Grammy Award-winning Estonian National Male Choir; Moscow Soloists Chamber Orchestra (under the direction of viola player, conductor, teacher and public figure Yuri Bashmet); Shanghai Quartet; senior and junior Konstantin Orbelyans; Stefan Willich (conductor, doctor, founder of the World Doctors Orchestra) and the Camerata Salzburg Orchestra took part in the Festival.

The annual international competition named **after Aram Khachaturian** has been held since 2003, and the **“Renaissance”** Annual International Competition of Musicians and Performers has been held in Gyumri since 2007. The Armenian song competition-festival entitled **“Zvartnots”**, the **competition for Chamber Ensembles — Performing Arts, National Competition of Young Concertmasters named after Haghine Ter-Ghevondyan and the Soloists** (classical singing) republican competition are also held. The best young musician-performers having taken part in the competitions in the Republic have been recruited by the creative groups of not only national, but also leading foreign opera theatres and orchestras.

The most significant programme implemented in the field of music in 2013 proved to be the events dedicated **to the 110th anniversary of Aram Khachaturian** — prominent composer of 20th century. The events stood out with both their geographical coverage and content. **Seventy-four concerts and events** have been organised in **57 cities of 24 countries** (USA, Canada, China, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Italy, France, Switzerland, Japan, Germany, Latvia, etc.). A number of international and republican competition-festivals, including **three dozens** of concerts in Yerevan, in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia and an international scientific conference, have been organised in Armenia. **A collection** of vocal compositions with musical notes, a photo album and an anthology of works (**9 CDs, 1 DVD**), **4 video reports, 4 video clips, more than dozens of** popularisation programmes have been released, and republican and foreign media and presses provided wide coverage. An international festival dedicated to a composer was held for the first time, becoming a significant cultural event in Armenia.

The Arno Babajanyan International Junior and Youth Piano Competition-Festivals were held in Yerevan in 2013 and 2015. They are called for revealing talented musician-performers and propagandising classic music.

In 2014, targeted programmes were implemented for the purpose of developing choral art, namely, the “Singing Armenia” republican competition for youth and children’s choirs (within the framework of the “Komitas; children’s group-songs” contest, a collection was published), an international scientific conference and festival of choral art dedicated to the 145th birth anniversary of Komitas, as well as new programmes for group songs.

In 2015, within the framework of the “100 concerts” concert series, 26 music bands and artists gave 88 concerts in 32 countries (including Armenia), 68 of which — abroad, and 20 — in Armenia, within the framework of the “With You, Armenia” concert series, outstanding international music bands, choirs and world famous soloists gave concerts in 7 countries (Israel, Estonia, Belgium, USA, Great Britain, Italy, Austria), and within the framework of the Yerevan Perspectives International Music Festival, 6 concerts were held in Armenia with the participation of outstanding international music bands and soloists. As country of honour, Armenia participated in the “Midem-2015” cultural products tradeshow in Cannes where 14 Armenian music and dance groups and individual performers gave 6 concerts. There were also lectures, book presentations and other events devoted to music. This was a qualitatively new manifestation of public-private partnership, thanks to which a part of the Armenian music industry was introduced.

On 21 April 2015, **the concert entitled “Memory of One Hundred Years”** took place at Châtelet Concert Hall in Paris with the participation of 50 musicians of Armenian origin performing with the best music bands of different countries around the world, including France, Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland, England, Spain, the Netherlands, Mexico, the USA, Lebanon, Russia and Armenia; they are part of the Pan-Armenian Orchestra, which is under the direction of world famous Armenian conductor Alain Altinoglu.

The “Spivakov Invites” Festival was organised in Armenia from 14-16 April 2015 at the National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet named after Alexander Spendiaryan where the National Philharmonic of Russia performed Mozart’s Concerto No 17 for the Piano and Orchestra (soloist: Varvara Kutuzova) and Requiem. The State Academic Choir of Armenia also took part in the concert.

The “Renaissance” concert/action was organised on 24 April 2015, gathering musicians from Israel, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Spain, Belgium, China, Belarus, Austria, Malaysia, Poland, Russia and other countries and forming the 24/04

World Orchestra. Some 123 musicians of 43 countries performed as Peace Ambassadors with world famous conductors Mikhail Jurowski, Gianluca Marciànò, as well as Ohannes Chekidjian, Sergey Smbatyan and jointly with world famous Soprano Maria Guleghina, Baritone Gevorg Hakobyan, duduk player Jivan Gasparyan, cellist Narek Hakhnazaryan and violinist Sergey Khachatryan.

2.1.5.7. International and republican projects implemented in the field of literature

“Literary Ark 2014” hosted writers and poets from 11 countries, including famous and eminent American writer Meg Rozof from Great Britain. During “Literary Ark 2014” Festival, the book entitled “Grand” by Janusz Leon Wiśniewski was translated into Armenian, and the book presentation was also held within the framework of the festival with the participation of the author.

In the second half of September 2015 (from 21-30), “Literary Ark 2015” festival was held with the participation of 20 writers from 17 countries, including the author of numerous bestsellers, American-Armenian novelist Chris Bohjalian, as well as Romanian-Armenian politician and writer Varujan Vosganian. The festival was entitled “The writer and disaster challenges of the 21st century”. Thematic round table discussions were organised with the participation of Armenian writers and foreign guests.

“Granshan” annual international contest of typography was held. It is now the most reputable contest of non-Latin typography in the world. Its aim is to boost the development of Armenian calligraphy. Year after year, the geography of the event expands both in terms of participants and participating countries, as well as competition categories. The Armenian and English publications of the catalogues of award-winning works under “Granshan” contests and the conduct of international exhibitions also contribute to the development and recognition of non-Latin typography.

The international festival (launched in 2009) entitled **“Dardz ar Girk” [“Return to Books”]** was held with the purpose of appreciating books and reading. The Festival features diverse events and actions 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 entitled “Ambassadors of Fairy Tales” (with the participation of accredited ambassadors in the Republic of Armenia), open-air actions for graffiti, illustration, nightly screenings of art films, spiritual music concerts, painting contest-exhibitions, theatrical shows, etc.

In 2015, the **“ArmbookExpo”** was held for the second time. It is exceptional for the reason that all the books of the world published and devoted to Armenia and the Armenians are introduced altogether. Within the framework of the exhibition, 5 400 units of literature published in 27 languages in 49 countries were introduced — including from USA (641 units), France (390 units), Lebanon (365 units), Russia (298 units), Turkey (265 units), Great Britain (139 units), Romania (131 units), Iran (108 units). About 2 800 books have been published in Armenia. Books devoted to the Armenian Genocide made up a total of 2 275 units. A catalogue was prepared in the context of the exhibition, including the books published between 2012 and 2015.

In the field of publishing, 73 books were translated and published from Armenian into other languages and from other languages into Armenian between 2013 and 2015.

Recently, a number of new bookstores and bookstalls opened in Armenia. Particularly, the bookstalls opened in large trade centres may be considered as a great achievement. Already famous literary magazines continue to be published

(including “Foreign literature”, “Spring” “Литературная Армения” [Literary Armenia]), as well as literature websites and television programmes about literature continue to run and be broadcast (including “My Library” television programme at www.armnews.am and the programme entitled “Theme” on “Shoghakat” TV). Online programmes about literature and culture having been created in the reporting period may be considered as a new direction — “High literature”, “Boon TV”, etc.

2.1.5.8. International and republican projects implemented in the field of fine arts

Assistance has been provided to cultural figures for participation in international biennales and festivals **in the field of fine arts**, especially in respect of participation of youth. There is a solid perspective for innovative and youth programmes to become a tradition. For instance, the **Gyumri International Biennale**, which was established **in 1998** and covers almost all directions of contemporary art by opening new fields and opportunities for research. It gathers artists having arrived from various countries of the world, in Gyumri once every two years.

It has ensured the presentation of Armenian contemporary art in reputable international **Expos and art Biennales**, namely, in international contemporary textile art Biennales of **Venice, Beijing, Florence** and **International Biennial of Humour and Satire** entitled “**The world exists because it laughs**” organised in the city of Gabrovo in Bulgaria, in festivals of International Plein Air Painting in the city of Visaginas in **Lithuania** and Art — Plein Air Painting in the city of Elbong in **Poland**.

Within the framework of the Armenian-Russian intercultural co-operation, the All-Union Exhibition of Artists is organised every year at the “Central House of Artists” in Moscow with the participation of Armenian young artists.

The Artists’ Union of Armenia non-governmental organisation also actively participates in the programmes of the Ministry of Culture. “**The Sunny Dragon**” International Graphic Humour Festival and the painting festivals of “**Armenian Palette**” programme entitled “**Renascence**” have been held since 2013.

Twelve exhibitions have been held in Armenia, a number of international and republican projects have been implemented within the framework whereof the history of Armenian people and the Armenian civilization have been introduced.

2.1.5.9. Projects implemented in the field of dance art

“Yerevan Tango” international festival is among the festivals held in the field of dance art. Geographically speaking, it covers the marzes of Armenia as well. The festival is held from 20 April to 21 June, and each time, it covers new marzes, in addition to Yerevan. The participants of the Festival are both from Armenia and from the homeland of Tango, including Walter Rios — an Argentinian composer and bandoneon player, and tango singer Mariel Dyupet. Works of Armenian and Argentine composers were performed at the festival. Pupils’ competition of Argentinean tango was held at general education schools of the Republic of Armenia. Prior to the commencement of the competition, free of charge tango lessons were organised for the pupils. Twenty-eight pupils constituting 14 dance couples, selected from different high schools of Yerevan, participated in the competition.

2.1.5.10. Armenian Diaspora

Within the framework of the state policy on the Armenia-Diaspora partnership development, assistance was provided in respect of preservation of Armenian identity — export of culture to communities, maintenance, development and proliferation of cultural heritage, establishment and development of contacts between

cultural organisations of the Armenian Diaspora, separate individuals acting in these fields, respective organisations and individuals in Armenia, strengthening the role and place of Armenian culture in the world civilization.

The efforts aimed at introducing the creative potential of the Armenian Diaspora are of special importance, the best expression whereof appeared to be the 56th Biennale of Venice. As a result, on 9 May 2015, the Armenian pavilion was awarded the “Golden Lion” grand prize at the 56th Biennale of Venice (53 participating countries). On this reputable platform, Armenia held the exhibition entitled “Hayutyun” [Armenians]. The pavilion was located in the territory of the Mekhitarist Congregation on Saint Lazarus Island. Eighteen artists creating in large and small cities of Europe, Asia and America participated in the exhibition at the Armenian pavilion, and what had brought them together was their nationality.

Within the framework of the Armenia-Diaspora partnership, films and programmes devoted to the Armenian language, the history of Armenian people, Armenian studies, cultural themes, repatriates, Armenians who are self-determined, those practising another religion or concealed, have been prepared and broadcast (“Diaspora Hour”, “Merong [Ours]” television programmes — on Armenian Public Television Company since 2011, “Ashkharhaspyur” [Spread around the world] — on “Armnews” TV company since 2012]. One of the best manifestations of the Armenia-Diaspora partnership is the assistance provided to Armenian periodicals published abroad, namely to special series of **“Days Magazine” (“Sayat Nova and Armenian contemporary music art”, series on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide and the cultural ties between Armenia and the Czech Republic).**

2.1.6. Ensuring access to culture

2.1.6.1. Ensuring “physical” access to culture

The list of educational institutions (Yerevan State Technical College No 10 and Gyumri State Technical College No 1) in need of replenishment of amenities required for persons with limited capabilities, has been drawn up and submitted to the Ministry of Urban Development of the Republic of Armenia. Adjustments (ladders, ramps, handrails, elevators) have been made. The works have been carried out by the Ministry of Urban Development of the Republic of Armenia. The guideline for “Adjustments at educational institutions for students with limited capabilities” has been developed and was approved during the session of the National Council for Vocational Education and Training held on 23 December 2014. The guideline presents instructions on how to make an educational institution more accessible and comfortable for persons with limited mobility, difficulty with mobility and persons with disabilities. At the same time, the programme for adjustments at educational institutions for the needs of persons with limited mobility, difficulties with mobility and persons with disabilities for 2015-2020 has been drawn up, including music, art and artistic educational institutions as well. Thus, for example, adjustments have already been made in the 5th-9th buildings of the State Engineering University of Armenia; a software programme turning books into audio books for visually impaired visitors and visitors with vision problems is downloaded on one of the computers in the reading hall of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan. The faculty for special education provides a sign language interpreter for hearing impaired students during oral exams. The First floors of the buildings of Yerevan State University of Languages and Social Sciences after V. Brusov are adjusted for students with mobility issues; for that reason, the classes for students with mobility issues are held

on the first floor. In the nearest future, the University is planning to obtain special devices for disabled students with vision and hearing problems.

It is planned to make a transition from general education to universal inclusive education by 2025. For that purpose, an Action Plan for Introduction of the System of Universal Inclusive Education has been developed, according to which the conditions within the buildings and the conditions for education at all general education schools in Armenia will gradually be adjusted for children in need of special education as well. For the purpose of ensuring accessibility of library services for persons with limited mobility, difficulties with mobility and persons with disabilities, the Family Librarian Programme has been implemented, within the framework of which 27 419 books have been provided through the libraries of the Lori and Shirak Marzes between 2013 and 2015.

Every year, the “Mobile Library” (Bibliobus) visits the marzes (regions) of Armenia, and nearly 10 000 books have been transferred to community libraries; a number of community libraries have been provided with books published by state order.

The “**Sun**” software programme was introduced in 2008 and has been applied at the National Library of Armenia, National Children’s Library after Khnko-Aper and ten regional libraries of Armenia ever since. The programme was developed at Yerevan Computer Research and Development Institute and is designed for people with poor eyesight. “Sun” is a special self-learning computer programme that allows visually impaired persons and **persons with poor eyesight** to “read” by listening. Disabled elders and pensioners are also beneficiaries of the programme. The reading halls of the above-mentioned libraries are provided with Braille script and audio books. In the reporting period, the mentioned programme has served nearly 200 readers (mainly elders) a year.

Between 2013 and 2015, the branches of the “Special Creative Centre for Children” SNCO in Yerevan, Vanadzor, Gyumri, Spitak, Stepanavan and Gavar have held extracurricular aesthetic and handicraft educational programmes for 614 disabled children, children with special needs and socially disabled children at special boarding schools and orphanages.

In 2013, the First Integrative Republican Festival of Youth Art was held in the city of Gyumri city of Shirak Marz with the purpose of identifying the artistic potential of children with disabilities, as well as of socially disabled children and those deprived of parental care and helping these children become fully integrated into the modern world. There were 427 participants from 22 institutions.

In 2014, within the framework of HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival, the “Do not leave me” dance performance was performed by the first professional inclusive dance group. The group was established within the framework of the “Dance without borders” project of the British Council and operates under the Small Theatre of the National Centre of Aesthetics. The project was launched in 2013 when four Armenian dance instructors took part in the training courses conducted by Candoco Dance Company of the United Kingdom. Later, the Candoco Dance Company selected members of the first professional inclusive dance group after the five courses conducted in Armenia. Out of the eight dancers included in the performance, four dancers are actors with disabilities, and the other four are professional dancers.

The First Integrative Republican Festival of Youth Art was held in Gyumri with the participation of 427 participants from 22 institutions in 2013. A scientific-practical conference was held within the framework of the festival, and over 70 field experts took part in the conference.

In the same year, the first Navasard Games were held in the republic for the first time. There were 310 participants nominated in 12 categories.

2.1.6.2. Ensuring access to information about culture

With the purpose of ensuring access to information about culture, a number of programmes have been carried out in order to popularise the cultural heritage of Armenia (historical and cultural monuments, elements of intangible cultural heritage, museum collections) and present it to the international community.

Virtual museums, interactive games and virtual exhibitions have been created, and touch-screens and other advanced technologies are used at new permanent exhibitions as a result of the introduction and implementation of electronic information systems, websites and virtual exhibitions..

Different databases including **information on cultural values in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and Armenia and cultural heritage abroad** have been created with the purpose of organising museum exhibitions and possessing comprehensive information. **The electronic information database on cultural values** can be set aside from among the databases. Based on a unified format, it forms an integrated digitised image of the entire mobile cultural heritage and ensures the quick and facilitated use of information about the heritage for different purposes. It includes data on the above-mentioned heritage that is available for the public, irrespective of the form of ownership of collections and separate values, time of creation and place of storage. The database includes data on the collections and values that are the property of the state and on a voluntary basis, the property of legal and natural persons. **The database will be replenished in phases between 2015 and 2020.**

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, in cooperation with “**360yerevan.com**”, has implemented a project for taping virtual travels within the whole territory of the Republic of Armenia. Thanks to the project the whole cultural heritage of Armenia (more than 100 historical and cultural monuments) is presented to the world through virtual travels (**360armenia.com**). It was a complement to the already launched **www.360yerevan.com**, which featured museums in Yerevan, becoming a new platform for virtual visits and the presentation of stories.. As a result of implementation of the programme, visitors of the web site can find themselves on the streets, in the museums and near the historical and cultural monuments of Yerevan and share their impressions, stories and memories.

In addition to the website of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, there are also websites of the major cultural institutions of Armenia (e.g. website of the National Gallery of Armenia: **www.gallery.am**, History Museum of Armenia: **www.historymuseum.am**, etc.), which, in their turn, provide data on past and upcoming programmes and events.

Works for updating the website of the National Gallery of Armenia are underway (there will be data on 27 780 museum values). Works for the creation of databases of Armenian photography and cinematography have been launched.

Since 2013, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia has been creating virtual museum tours within 19 museums of its system (History Museum of Armenia, “Zvartnots” Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museum, House-Museum of Aram Khachaturian, House-Museum of Alexander Spendiaryan, etc.), allowing visitors to go through museum halls and have a picture of the exhibition of the given museum.

A new and interesting idea was the creation of the **Virtual Carpet Museum**, which is aimed at preserving this element of intangible cultural heritage and popularising the collections of carpets at six museums of the republic (History Museum of Armenia,

National Gallery of Armenia, Yerevan History Museum, Hovhannes Sharambeyan Folk Arts and Crafts Centre, State Ethnographic Museum “Sardarapat”, and the Treasury of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin). The launch of the website also laid the foundation for scientific studies — different research studies, as well as books and articles devoted to Armenian carpet art will be posted on the website, allowing foreign scientists to deepen their knowledge in this sphere, as well as reconsider their opinions and scientific claims in regard to the origins and sources of carpets.

A hall equipped with 3D technology was created within the **Hovhannes Tumanyan House-Museum** where child visitors can watch the fairy tale “**Unlucky Panos**” by the great writer and actually take part in the actions. This was the first animated film, and there will be other fairy-tale-like “worlds” over time.

The collections of the libraries of Armenia have been digitised since 2012. As a result, the books, journals, magazines, newspapers, maps, posters, theses, dissertations, musical notes, postcards, stamps, calendars, book-plates, banknotes, archive and other materials of the National Library of Armenia and the main scientific library of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia have been digitalised. They are available at www.nla.am and <http://www.flib.sci.am/arm/index.php>. The “Armenian periodical” and “Armenian book” consolidated electronic databases have been set up.

2.1.6.3. Ensuring geographical accessibility of culture

The pilot programme for introduction of the “**Cultural Organisation-School**” permanent ticket system was launched in 2015. It is envisaged to be implemented for 2 700 pupils studying in the middle classes of 49 basic schools of 47 bordering communities of the Syunik, Tavush, Ararat, Vayots Dzor and Gegharkunik Marzes of the Republic of Armenia. The programme ensures the participation of children in three events, including one performance, one concert and one visit to a museum in Yerevan.

The “**Travelling Exhibition**” Programme is aimed at introducing culture to residents of remote settlements and ensuring accessibility of cultural services for them. Nineteen events have been organised in 6 marzes of Armenia, including Syunik (city of Sisian, city of Kapan, city of Meghri, city of Goris), Vayots Dzor (city of Yeghegnadzor, city of Jermuk), Tavush (city of Dilijan, Tsaghkavan village, city of Ijevan city), Shirak (city of Ashotsk city), Gegharkunik (city of Sevan, city of Vardenis, Karmir village, city of Gavar, city of Martuni, Shorja village), Lori (Karkop village, city of Tashir, city of Stepanavan).

Within the scope of the “**Cinema Autumn-2015: National Cinema Month**” Programme, old and new Armenian feature films, documentaries, animated films are shown, and the releases of “Gzhuk” children’s satirical film journals are issued in the marzes of Armenia throughout the month.

2.1.6.4. Encouraging language accessibility, and, as a result, ensuring perception of cultural diversity

Foreign language clubs (Russian, English languages, etc.) continue to operate within pre-school educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia (according to parents’ preferences and choice) through additional education programmes.

A number of measures aimed at disseminating and promoting the German language are implemented by the Republic of Armenia and the Federal Republic of Germany. The measures include trips, opportunities to receive university and Masters’ degrees, mutual visits organised for pupils, teachers and directors, training courses organised by German specialists, as well as and other measures.

From 6 to 8 April 2015, at the initiative of the Armenian Association of Germanologists and German Language Teachers, through cooperation between the International Union of German Language Teachers and the Armenian State Pedagogical University, an international scientific conference entitled “Multilingualism in the Institutional Context: German as a Second Foreign Language” took place. Scholars and experts from Germany, Georgia and countries of Central Asia — Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan — and Marzes of the Republic of Armenia participated in the scientific conference.

The co-operation between Armenia and China is being expanded in the sphere of education. Construction of a high school with advanced teaching of the Chinese language, which is going to be a unique educational institution, have been launched in Armenia. Currently, steps are being taken to include Chinese as a foreign language in general education schools of Armenia. Student exchange programmes, training courses for Chinese language tutors, principals and pupils are actively growing; educational trips to China are being organised. In this context, importance is attached to the role of the Confucius Institute operating at Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences in the dissemination of the Chinese language and culture in Armenia. The Institute closely co-operates with different schools., The 2nd international sinological conference entitled “History and Perspectives of Co-operation between Armenia and China”, the “Spring Fest” event and the forum entitled “21st Century Silk Road: Perspectives and Co-operation” were organised, and the Centre for Chinese Studies was opened in the reporting period.

The Chair of Slavonic Linguistics also operates at Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences and always organises Days of Slavonic Writing a; The Centre/Chair of Indian Studies, the Chairs of Arab Studies and Persian Studies operate at Yerevan State University. The Caucasus Centre for Persian Studies, the Goethe Institute, the “Alliance Française” and others also function.

During the past three years after becoming a full-fledged member of the International Organisation of La Francophonie, the number of pupils learning French has increased by 14 percent. The most successful project for educational co-operation between France and Armenia is the establishment of the French University in Armenia. It is envisaged to continue the development of the above-mentioned higher educational institution with the perspective of turning it into a regional educational and cultural centre, ensuring new conditions in buildings, establishing new faculties, increasing the number of students and introducing the scientific research component. Another major project was the foundation of the French lyceum designed for advanced teaching of French starting from the 5th grade. It is planned to hold the International Academic Olympics in French language in 2017.

The Pan-Armenian Olympiad in Armenian Studies and the contest for history teachers of the Armenian Apostolic Church are held every year. Particularly, in 2015, 100 participants from 9 countries (Spain, Iran, Russia, Syria, Georgia, Estonia, France and Armenia) took part in the Pan-Armenian Olympiad in Armenian Studies for pupils. The children competed to test their knowledge of Armenian language, literature, history, culture, as well as history of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

From 2006 the subjects “Greek Language” and “History of Greek Culture” were included in the educational programmes of all courses for the specialisations “Tourism” and “Service in hotels and tourist complexes” of “Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of Tourism, Service and Food” SNCO

Nearly 230 students study Greek language and literature and Greek grammar at the College, and according to the curriculum, students are introduced to Greek history, culture, Greek mythology, Greek traditions and customs.

The foundation of language and culture centres of different nations in Armenia is also a manifestation of cultural diversity. During the past years, the Armenian-Indian Centre of Excellence, which carries out activities in the three main directions (education, research and exchange of professionals), was opened at YSU.

Foreign applicants admitted to state higher vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, with no command of Armenian language, are admitted to the preparatory faculty (departments) of higher educational institutions for a period of one year. In those departments, they learn Armenian and study the examination subjects for admission.

Foreign, including Diasporan Armenian students from 33 countries mainly study at state universities of the Republic of Armenia, as well as at the following universities: Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University and the European Regional Educational Academy. The specified students are mainly citizens of Iran, India, Syria, Georgia, Russia and the USA.

2.1.7. Promoting development of the cultures of national minorities

Eleven ethnic communities (**Assyrian, Yezidi, Kurdish, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Jewish, Polish, Greek and German**), as well as more than 30 non-governmental organisations of the 11 ethnic communities continue to operate in a self-organised manner within the Republic of Armenia, and their activities are mainly targeted at the preservation and development of the native language and culture.

Pursuant to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (the Charter entered into force on the part of the Republic of Armenia from 1 May 2002), Assyrian, Yezidi, Greek, Russian and Kurdish languages have been recognised as regional languages or as languages of national minorities.

The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia is the main axis for implementation of the state policy on the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia enshrines: “Everyone shall have the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity. Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture.”

The rights of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia are protected both by the respective Agreement of the Council of Europe, the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The establishment of the Co-ordinating Council for National and Cultural Organisations of National Minorities of the Republic of Armenia under the Staff to the President of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the Division for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia are a major step for the protection of national minorities.

Generally, the newspapers, as well as the journals and magazines of national minorities receive state aid in the Republic of Armenia. In 2015, 8 newspapers were published in Russian (in 2012 — 8), the number of issues was 582 (in 2012 — 617), the single print run — 32.8 thousand units (in 2012 — 37.3), the annual print run — 2 408.9 thousand units (in 2012 — 2 677.3), 1 unit in English, respectively (in 2012 — 1), 48 units (in 2012 — 31), 1.5 thousand units (in 2012 — 1.0), 72.0 thousand units (in 2012 — 31.0). In 2015, 287 books and booklets were published in Russian, English, German, French, Italian, Turkish, Kurdish, Yezidi and simultaneously in several languages (in 2012 — 332) the print run comprised 157.1 thousand copies

(in 2012 — 109.3). In 2015, 55 books and booklets were translated into Russian, English, German, French, Arabic, Turkish and simultaneously in several languages (in 2012 — 90), the print run comprised 18.0 thousand copies (in 2012 — 32.0).

The cultures of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia in the Armenian cultural mosaic are represented by an exhibition of applied arts which has been held since 2007 and has already become a tradition. Since 2010, a creative festival entitled “Armenia is My Home” has been held every year, and in 2015, the festival was dedicated to the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide and was entitled “National Minorities of Armenia against Genocides”.

Radio programmes are broadcast in the languages of national minorities.

The Yezidis and Assyrians residing in Armenia have created an educational and methodical base within the general education system with the support of state institutions. There are Commissions on “Iranian Studies” and “Semitology”, which perform expertise of syllabuses, textbooks and manuals in the native languages of the Yezidis, Kurds and Assyrians.

The syllabus for the 1st-9th grader Yezidis, the textbooks for the 1st-9th graders and those for the 11th grade (in an electronic form), are posted on <http://lib.armedu.am>, i.e. on the “Database of Resources” sub-site of the “Armenian Educational Environment” portal operated by the National Institute of Educational Technologies. The electronic Kurdish language textbooks for the 2nd-7th grades are also posted here.

The Yezidi and Kurdish languages are taught in the elementary grades of the schools of rural areas of residence of Yezidis and Kurds, if there is a relevant specialist, irrespective of the number of children.

Concurrently, there are 60 general education schools in the Republic, which provide advanced instruction of the Russian language. Textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, as well as syllabuses recommended and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia are used at schools (grades) where instruction is in the Russian language.

With the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, the Fund for Humanitarian Co-operation of CIS member states, Yerevan Office of “Rossotrudnichestvo” and Russian organisations in the Republic of Armenia, joint training courses for Russian language teachers, seminar-consultations, annual contests for Best Teacher of the Russian language and other events are organised. Training courses for Russian language teachers are also organised at the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University. The list of subjects of the annual school Olympiads in the Republic also includes the Russian language (school, district, municipal, marz [regional] and republican stages). The schoolchildren of Armenia participate in the distance Olympiad of the Russian language. Every year, educational and methodical books are imported into Armenia from the Russian Federation. The “Russian Language in Armenia” magazine is published in the Republic of Armenia and is provided to all schools free of charge.

Greek language Sunday courses are held by the Union of Greek Non-Governmental Organisations. The courses are open to everyone, without restrictions on age and nationality. If necessary, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia provides assistance through the provision of areas to open centres and Sunday schools for national minorities within schools. For instance, a lecture hall was provided in the Basic High School of Gyumri Pedagogical University to the “Polonia”

Alliance of the Poles of Armenia Charitable Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and the Sunday school.

The “Arbela” Armenian-Russian-Assyrian Scientific and Cultural Centre was established in 1995 in the secondary school of Verin Dvin and has been operating to this day. Events entitled “My native language”, “Our language is the guarantee of our existence” (the Assyrian language day — on 21 April) have been held and are being held at the school.

Taking into consideration the military situation in Syria, all children having immigrated to Armenia have been provided with the opportunity to continue their education in the corresponding grades of a general education school, irrespective of the availability of documents certifying previous education (grade).

The engagement of children of Russian, Yezidi, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Assyrian, Arab, Jewish, Greek and Chinese origin in extracurricular clubs, in events devoted to arts and literature, to native studies and in all other school events contribute to the development of the respective cultures of national minorities.

Exhibitions showcasing handicrafts of national minority representatives have been organised in a number of schools of the capital. On the occasion of International Day of Solidarity, events entitled “Let’s Recognise Greece”, “I am a Georgian, and you are an Armenian” and “Russia, My Brother”, etc. were organised at schools. The third festival of Russian song entitled “Song is a bridge of friendship” was organised. National songs and dances were performed during the Day of Yezidis — a spring awakening event, which was organised through the co-operation of the Yezidi community at schools that have schoolchildren of Yezidi origin.

Classic Assyrian is taught as a subject included in the Master’s Programme of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University, and the Yezidi language is taught at the same Faculty, if the instruction of this language corresponds to the narrow profession chosen by the student.

The Yerevan branch of Ternopil National Economic University (state higher education institution of Ukraine), as well as the branches of state and non-state higher education institutions of the Russian Federation also operate in the Republic of Armenia.

The applicants belonging to national minorities of the Republic of Armenia are enrolled at higher education institutions both on general basis and based on the applications submitted by the heads of national minority communities.

The applicants belonging to national minorities, who are enrolled at state higher education institutions, enjoy the privileges prescribed by the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”, including participation in the rotation process organised at higher education institutions. They also enjoy the right to discount of the tuition fee in the prescribed manner, are granted state scholarships according to their preferences, participate, in the prescribed manner, in inter-university and university-wide transfer process, participate in the admissions process for Master’s Degree studies, etc.

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, within the scope of co-operation with international and non-governmental organisations, has also carried out a number of educational and cultural programmes targeted at the cultural adaptation of children and youth of Iraqi-Armenian migrants having taken shelter in Armenia and the parents thereof, as well as the improvement of their conditions. Within the scope of the Target Initiative for Armenia Programme funded by the EU, instruction of the Armenian language is carried out at the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan for migrants, refugees and other vulnerable groups lacking knowledge of Armenian.

2.1.7.1. General education within the communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia

Pursuant to Article 1 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On language”, “The Republic of Armenia shall guarantee the free use by national minorities of their languages within its territory”. Article 2 of the same Law prescribes that “In communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, the general education and upbringing may be organised in their native languages by compulsory instruction of the Armenian language, in compliance with the state programme and under the state patronage”. A similar provision is also stipulated in point 10 of Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On general education”.

The Strategy Programme for Pre-School Education Reforms of the Republic of Armenia for 2008-2015 is aimed at improving pre-school education services, and priority is given to poor families and to communities where there are no pre-school institutions. Special focus is on the engagement of children of national minorities, refugees and migrants in pre-school education. The institutions engaged in the Programme have been provided with programme and methodical books, as well as educational and visual materials and accessories. Within the scope of the Programme, school-based pre-school services have been created within communities, or those services are provided at kindergartens. Particularly, within the scope of the Education Quality and Relevance Credit Project of the World Bank, pre-school children of Assyrian origin from the communities of Dvin and Dimitrov of Ararat Marz of the Republic of Armenia, and pre-school children of Yezidi origin from the community of Shamiram of Aragatsotn Marz have also been included in pre-school groups receiving pre-school education; repair and finishing works, as well as works with regard to the provision of property have been carried out. Pre-school education centres have been established within the buildings of schools of a number of rural communities of Shirak, Aragatsotn, Armavir and Ararat Marzes of the Republic of Armenia where there are classes for children of national minorities between the ages of 4 and 5 during the first half of the day. Overall, in the 2014-2015 School Year, 473 children of families of national minorities were enrolled at pre-school education institutions of the Republic of Armenia.

Every year, an exemplary curriculum for a general education school (grade) of a particular national minority is approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia; in the 1st-12th grades, a certain amount of hours is allotted for the study of the native language, literature, culture and history of a particular national minority (41 class hours per week).

A programme and a timetable for development of education of national minorities have been drafted, pursuant to which, every year, school textbooks devoted to the language, literature and culture of a national minority in the Republic of Armenia are published or republished, and regular training courses are conducted for teachers of the schools of national minorities. Training courses for 21 teachers teaching in the national language of Yezidis (2013), 16 teachers teaching Kurdish (2014), 7 teachers teaching Assyrian (2015) have been organised.

Between 2009 and 2015, Kurdish “ABC book”, “Native Language” textbooks for the 2nd-5th grades, “Native Language and Literature” textbooks for the 6th-9th grades were published at the expense of the funds of the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia. Textbooks for the classes of elementary, secondary and high schools were published in the national language of the Yezidis for the Yezidi community. Textbooks entitled “Speak Assyrian” (1st grade), “Write and speak Assyrian” for the 1st-2nd grades were published. To develop elementary education in Assyrian, the authors of the textbooks were suggested to create relevant study materials. The standard and the syllabus for

the 1st-12th grades of Kurdish and Assyrian languages have been approved. The textbook “Native Studies-5” and textbooks for Mathematics for upper grades have been translated from Armenian into Russian, provided to the pupils of the schools of national minorities by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.

2.1.7.2. Cultural centres of national minorities

Numerous non-governmental organisations and cultural centres of national minorities operate in Armenia, the purpose of which is to develop national consciousness, as well as to preserve and develop the native language, literature, history and culture (in particular, “Rossotrudnichestvo”, “Harmony” National Centre for Russian Culture, “Oda” Armenian-Russian Cultural Union, “Arbela” Armenian-Russian-Assyrian Scientific and Cultural Centre, “National Union of Yezidis” NGO, “Iveria” Georgian Charitable Community NGO, “Sinjar” National Union of Yezidis NGO, “Ilios” Greek Community of Yerevan NGO, “Menora” Jewish Cultural Centre NGO and “Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Cultural Collaborations Centre” NGO).

Days of culture of specific nationalities periodically held in Armenia also contribute to the representation of the culture of national minorities. In particular, Days of Culture of Russia, Belarus and Israel were held in Armenia in 2012-2015, and Russian, Belarusian and Jewish communities living in Armenia actively engaged therein. During the reporting period, literary translation projects were also implemented (for instance, “**Silver Thread**” poem by Aleksandr Poryadochny was published with state funding), book presentations were held with the participation of the authors (in particular, the presentation of the book “Grand” by Janusz Wisniewski in 2014), exhibition programmes (in particular, exhibition of the works of renowned Polish artist Teodor Axentowicz at the National Gallery of Armenia), concert programmes, film projects were implemented (including the implementation in 2015 of the translation into Armenian of the documentary film “In the Footsteps of the Argonauts”, which tells about the Greek Genocide), and film weeks (Russian, Belarusian) were held.

National minorities of Armenia take part in **republican shows and contests**. They actively participated in the storytelling and dialect festival “**Three apples fell from heaven**” in 2013.

3. International cultural co-operation

3.1. Promotion of the mobility of specialists and creators in the field of culture

The implementation of the policy of the promotion of the mobility of specialists and creators in the field of culture has been ongoing, due to which the participation of Armenian artists and cultural figures in cultural events, festivals, guest tours, joint creative projects, exhibitions, fairs and other events held abroad was ensured with state and private support.

In particular, in 2014, 35 authors and 21 musical bands took part in 58 international festivals, contests held in 27 countries, 44 of which received state support.

For the purpose of promoting the achievements of contemporary dramatic art on international arena, 6 theatre groups and about 139 theatrical figures took part, with state support, in 12 international festivals, conferences and other international theatrical programmes held in about 12 countries.

3.2. Development of international ties with the purpose of spreading cultural products and services

At present, like in the previous reporting period, bilateral treaties of co-operation have been consistently improved and updated, due to which legal grounds for strengthening the international cultural co-operation have been created. 15 international treaties were signed during the reporting period, 4 of which — with new countries (Ethiopia, Vietnam, Madagascar, Korea). As a result of the expansion of the geographic coverage, at present co-operation is maintained with 54 countries of the world (covering almost all the continents). Steps were taken to increase the number of mutual, joint and co-financed cultural programmes, enrich the content thereof and apply new formats in regard thereof within the framework of the effective and signed international treaties.

As a result, about 100 programme events were held in Armenia and abroad each year, including mutual “days of culture” or large-scale cultural programmes: exhibitions, conferences, biennials, concert tours; reciprocal visits of official delegations envisaged by the programme were carried out, various meetings were organised with the heads and representatives of diplomatic missions accredited in the Republic of Armenia.

One of the most successful outcomes of the joint and co-financed programmes is the co-operation shaped between the Writers’ Union of Armenia and unions of writers of foreign countries (Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Iran, Belarus and others): books have been published, presentations have been held. So, for instance, the book “A Handful of Ash” (Oschersleben, Dr. Ziethen Verlag), consisting of works of Armenian writers killed in the Armenian Genocide, in German, the book “Red News from My Friend” by Siamanto in Armenian and German, as well as the book “Denied-Forgotten?”, consisting of compositions of Armenian and German schoolchildren, were translated and printed in collaboration with writers from the state of Saxony-Anhalt of Germany.

“The Soil Will Speak” collection of works of Armenian writers killed in the Armenian Genocide was published in English, German, Russian and French in collaboration with the Writers’ Union of Armenia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia.

“Contemporary Armenian Poetry” collection of works of 28 Armenian poets in Serbian was published in collaboration with the Association of Writers of Serbia.

“Flight with a Crane” works of 65 contemporary Armenian poets (“Nashre Sales” publishing house) in Persian was published in Iran in collaboration with the Iranian-Armenian writers.

The traditional Sayat-Nova Vardaton (Feast of Roses) in Tbilisi and Days of Teryan in Gandza were held in collaboration with the Union of Writers of Georgia.

Joint and co-financed programmes have been implemented also in the field of cinema. 16 live action films were shot during the reporting period, “Parajanov” (Armenia-Ukraine-France-Georgia), “Moskvich, My Love” (Armenia-France-Russia), “A Story of a Madman” (Armenia-France), “Karvachar” (Armenia-Iran), “The Imprisoned Souls” (Armenia-Canada), films represented at international film festival platforms (Berlin, Cannes, Venice), among them.

3.3. Expansion of Armenia’s co-operation with international organisations (UN, UNESCO, European Union, Council of Europe, CIS, International Organisation of La Francophonie, ICOM and others)

Numerous joint programmes have been implemented with the mentioned international organisations, comprising almost all spheres, and ensuring the right of artists to move freely, carry out direct co-operation, and get familiarised with the cultures of Armenia and the peoples of the world.

3.3.1. Cultural co-operation with UN

“New Names” concert of Armenia’s young music performers was held at the newly opened UN City in Copenhagen on 25 September 2013, which was jointly organised by the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia to the Kingdom of Denmark and the UN City in Copenhagen. Pianists Dmitry Ishkhanov, Hripsime Aghakhanyan, violinist Sona Arzumanyan, cellist Hakob Atyan, canon player Eteri Hovhannisyan, duduk player Sargis Davtyan and opera singer Mane Galoyan (soprano) performed at the concert. Renowned Armenian pianist Marianna Shirinyan also took part in the concert as a special guest.

Film director Artak Avdalyan, representing Armenia, took part in the international annual Millennium I Documentary Film Festival held in Brussels with his “From Ararat to Europe” film on 3-11 April 2014 with the support of the UN, including of the UN Development programme (UNDP) Office in Brussels.

The Permanent Mission of Armenia to the UN jointly with the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) organised an exhibition of handicrafts of Armenian women entitled “Embroidery for Survival” at the UN Headquarters on 5 March 2015, where exhibit items of handicraft textile products made by Armenian women, dating from the end of the 19th century up to the present day, brought from the Armenian Museum of America were presented.

3.3.2. Cultural co-operation with UNESCO

An exhibition devoted to International Women’s Day was held at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 8-20 March 2013 within the framework of which sculptor Nina Khemchyan represented Armenia.

A concert was held at the Great Hall of the UNESCO Headquarters on 18 March 2013 at the initiative of the group of francophone countries of the Organisation, during which Armenia, Lithuania and Bulgaria presented their national cultural values included in the List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Armenia was represented by renowned Armenian French musician, duduk player Levon Minassian.

“The World of Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends of My Motherland” drawing competition for children and youth was held under the auspices of UNESCO at the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Sofia on 10 October 2014. 126 works from 6 countries were presented at the competition. Participants from Armenia, 12-year-old Lili Manyan took the second place with her “Ara the Beautiful and Shamiram” drawing, 8-year-old Monika Melkonyan took the third place with her “David of Sassoun”, and 13-year-old Zaruhi Gevorgyan received a recognition award for her work “Time”. Children, who took the first, second and third places participated in a separate exhibition held in Sofia on 1 December 2014.

“Puppets for Peace” programme

Under the auspices of the First Lady of Armenia Rita Sargsyan and on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of UNESCO, Armenia initiated the World March “Puppets for Peace and Intercultural Dialogue” in 2015, which launched in Yerevan on 1 June, the International Day for the Protection of Children, and continued until 7 June. During those days the International Festival of Puppet Theatre was also held in the capital of Armenia, where representatives of 11 countries (Iran, Israel, Italy, Georgia, Russia, the Netherlands, Bulgaria and others) took part, and a peace tree was planted in a piece of soil brought from 5 continents. The Secretary General of UNIMA, Jacques Trudeau and UNESCO representatives

arrived in Armenia. UNIMA national centres of 95 countries joined Armenia's initiative. The World March ended on 21 September, the International Day of Peace and the Independence Day of Armenia, near the Headquarters of UNESCO in Paris.

“Youth for Peace” concert programme and campaign

The State Youth Orchestra of Armenia presented the concert programme entitled “Youth for Peace” in the Ségur hall of UNESCO on 3 June 2015. Using the power of music, young artists sent messages of peace to the world. The State Youth Orchestra of Armenia, Armenian renowned young performers presented pieces from the works of Aram Khachaturian, Sayat-Nova, Aleksandr Harutyunyan, Mikael Tariverdiev and others.

Conference on “Cultural Policy. Policy for Culture. The role of culture in the Post-2015 Development Agenda”

From 10 to 13 July 2015, the Third International Conference entitled “Cultural Policy. Policy for Culture. The role of culture in sustainable development after 2015” and implemented through the combined efforts of the Armenian National Commission for UNESCO and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, was held in Yerevan, after which the Yerevan Declaration was adopted. The Conference, which was attended by **85 people from 30 countries**, was held in the format of thematic discussions (3) and plenary sessions (2). It was dedicated to the 70th anniversary of UNESCO.

Armenia is consistently carrying out activities aimed at complementing the UNESCO Calendar of Celebrities and Major Events. The 150th birth anniversary of T. Toramanyan and the 400th birth anniversary of Voskan Yerevantsi (2014) and the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages (2015) were included in the calendar for 2014-2015. Within this context, from 4 to 6 June, the international scientific conference entitled “Preservation of Historical and Cultural Heritage” dedicated to the 150th birth anniversary of famous architect T. Toramanyan was held in Yerevan. It was held within the framework of the Armenian-Italian technical agreement on “Support to Armenian Institutions for the Preservation and Reinforcement of the Local Cultural Heritage”.

In October 2015, within the framework of the Third International Forum of Graduates of Moscow State Institute of International Relations, the ceremony of cancellation of the stamp dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the Lazarev Institute, the presentation of the publications dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the Lazarev Institute and to the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies and of the illustrated book of the reserve fund of the museum of books of the MSIIR were held, the exhibition dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the Lazarev Institute of Eastern Languages was opened at Karen Demirchyan Sports and Concerts Complex in Yerevan.

In December 2015, a seminar entitled “Voskan Yerevantsi: A Journey through the History of Armenian Typography” and dedicated to the 400th birth anniversary of Voskan Yerevantsi was held at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Matenadaran).

3.3.3. Cultural co-operation with the European Union

The last of the four platforms working within the framework of the multilateral co-operation of the Eastern Partnership is devoted to contacts between people and, among other fields it also includes the field of cultural co-operation.

Within the EP framework, the Cultural Programme of the Eastern Partnership was in effect for the years 2011-2015, the main purpose of which was to enhance cultural

relations and networks in the EP region and with EU countries. The Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit, located in Kharkov, was operating during this period, and it developed the Analytical base-line Report on the Culture Sector and Cultural Policy of the Republic of Armenia.

Creative Europe Programme

In 2014, at the invitation of the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission, Armenia started implementing a consistent policy aimed at joining the “Creative Europe” framework programme, which came to replace the EU’s Culture Programme. Armenia has declared its intention to join the Culture sector of the programme. The non-governmental organisations and cultural associations in Armenia are already participating in a number of initiatives of the “Creative Europe” programme as “a third country”.

Culture and Creativity Programme

Armenia is actively participating in the EU-Eastern Partnership Culture and Creativity Programme (from 2015 to 2018), the purpose of which is to ensure the support of the cultural and creative sectors. The programme was officially launched in Armenia on 4 December 2015 at the Cafesjian Center for the Arts. The Armenian coordinator of the programme is the British Council Armenia.

EU grant programmes

Armenia continues to be actively engaged in the EU grant programmes. Implementation of previously launched programmes has continued and new programmes have been carried out in the reporting period. The series of events includes the following: “Caucult”, “Directors across borders”, “Caucadoc”, “RCCHD Sharing History”, “South Caucasus Heritage Crafts”, SPACES, South Caucasus Heritage Crafts, “I Culture”, “Artiste in Residence”, “Ուշադրանքը ինձ պիտի” (“Attention, smile”), “The book platform”, “Գին և քարտեզ. Հայաստան-Վրաստան” (“Film express; Armenia-Georgia”), “Երգենք և պարենք հանուն խաղաղության” (“Let us sing and dance for peace”) and other programmes.

3.3.4. Co-operation with the Council of Europe

Assuming the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of **the Council of Europe** for six months on 16 May 2013, Armenia has declared the promotion of inter-cultural dialogue and the combination of the efforts of the member states of the Council of Europe for the preservation of the cultural heritage as the key issues among the priorities for its chairmanship.

At the invitation of Armenia, the meeting for 2013 devoted to the religious platform of the inter-cultural dialogue of the Council of Europe was held in Yerevan from 2 to 3 September 2013.

On 30 August, the European Heritage Days Programme for 2013 and the Communication Platform were officially launched in Armenia with a solemn ceremony. In 2013, Armenia placed the stained glass work of young painter/designer Arevik Petrosyan at the PACE headquarters.

Joining the Eurimages organisation

Armenia launched the process of joining the organisation in 2006. As a result of the activities carried out between 2013 and 2014, on 16 October 2014, the Eurimages Board Management made a decision to process the application of Armenia to join

Eurimages, and Armenia became a full-fledged member of the Eurimages Fund of the Council of Europe starting from January 2016.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, jointly with the Council of Europe Office in Armenia, held a press conference during which the policy implemented by the state and the advantages of joining the programme were presented.

Joining the Cultural Routes Programme

In April 2015, Armenia became a full-fledged member of this Agreement and Programme. Participation in the Programme will promote the strengthening of inter-cultural dialogue and the establishment of new networks for co-operation. The appropriate routes to be set forth for implementation within the framework of the Programme are currently being developed.

COMUS Programme

One of the directions for co-operation with the Council of Europe is the Community-led Urban Strategies in Historic Towns (COMUS) Programme, which was launched on 18 September 2013. With the aim for effective development of urban development strategies with the active participation of local communities and the civil society, the representatives of the authorised bodies of Armenia, within the framework of the COMUS Programme, organised meetings/discussions with the local beneficiaries in the pilot cities of Gyumri and Goris. During the implementation of the Programme, the beneficiaries and coordinators in Armenia also participated in the meetings/discussions abroad.

3.3.5. Co-operation with the Commonwealth of Independent States and IHCF

As in previous years, from 2013 to 2015, the humanitarian and cultural co-operation being implemented within the framework of the **CIS** continued to grow on a regular basis as well. Armenia participated in the significant humanitarian and cultural events of the **Commonwealth of Independent States**, particularly in the Youth Delphic Games of CIS countries, in the Forums of Creative and Scientific Intelligentsia of CIS countries, etc. Since 2002, Armenia has always participated in the Delphic Games. In 2015, the Youth Delphic Games, which were dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War, were held in the Russian city of Oryol from where the delegation of the Republic of Armenia returned with 7 gold, 3 silver, 3 bronze medals and diplomas.

Since 2012, Armenia has chaired the CIS Council for Cultural Cooperation; within this context, **the 30th anniversary session** of the mentioned Council was convened in Yerevan in 2015.

One of the significant achievements of the co-operation with the CIS is the granting of the status of the CIS base organisation in the field of preservation and restoration of written heritage to the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Matenadaran).

3.3.6. International Organisation of La Francophonie

In March and April of each year, between 2013 and 2015, the events of La Francophonie have been held in Armenia, particularly in Yerevan and the marzes. Armenian state ensembles participated in the events, and days of storytelling were organised.

In 2013, within the framework of the Month of La Francophonie, evenings devoted to French music were held in Yerevan (Arno Babajanyan Concert Hall) and in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia; urban poems were presented by “Toute en Slam-

slam en Arménie” Slam Tribu group at H. Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre; a concert featuring performances of contemporary dances was held at H. Paronyan State Musical Comedy Theatre; the exhibition of French-language books was organised at the National Library of Armenia, and the “L’Apéroésie” literary play was performed at H. Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre. At the end of the Month of La Francophonie, the joint “Anoush” Armenian-French project staged by Serge Avedikian was presented, and it was also presented in France in May.

In 2014, during the two-month Francophonie season, about 400 events were held in Yerevan and in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia, including the exhibition entitled “The 20th-century French artists of Armenian origin” (“HayArt” online art and auction centre), “Eastern girls” at Y. Kochar Museum, a large exhibition devoted to France and Frenchmen and performances of French songs, an exhibition entitled “French literature in Armenian and Armenian literature in French” at Y. Charents Museum, screenings of French films at A. Isahakyan Museum and other events which were held in Yerevan and in all the marzes of Armenia. The two-month season was launched with the concert that Patricia Kaas gave at the small concert hall of Karen Demirchyan Sports and Concerts Complex.

From 3 March to 30 April 2015, within the framework of the two-month Francophonie season, 550 francophone cultural, artistic, university and general educational events, including “The Mountain Week” events organised upon the initiative of the Embassy of France and the Embassy of Switzerland in Armenia, were held in Yerevan and in the marzes of Armenia. The Pokemon Crew French hip-hop dance group and the BIC Haitian ethno-jazz group gave concerts at H. Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre.

In 2013, for the second time, Armenia participated in the Francophone Games held in Nice, France. The 7th Francophone Games were held with the participation of 56 countries. Armenia won 12th place with 3 gold (wrestling) and 3 bronze medals (1 for wrestling, 2 for judo), which was qualitative progress in comparison with the previous games. The participating Armenian artists were also cordially received. The novel of Shushanik Tamazyan (literature) was the only book to be published in a newspaper after having been read, and photographer Piruza Khalapyan won a special prize.

It has already been a few years since Armenia started participating in the GAUDEAMUS International Book Fair in Bucharest as a part of the group of Francophone countries presenting the works of Armenian writers published in French. Armenia has also been participating in the screenings of Francophone films traditionally held in Romania and China. Thus, for instance, at the screening of the Francophone films held in China in 2013, Armenia presented the film “Im Poqrik Ishkhane” (My little prince) by Armen Ronov and “Vana Tsovi Arshaluyse” (Sunrise over Lake Van) by Artak Igityan and Vahan Stepanyan; in 2015 — “Matenadaran” by Hrant Movsisyan and “Hrashagortsi ashune” (The Autumn of the Magician) by Ruben Gevorgyants, and in 2016, Armenia will present the film called “Parajanov” (2013, directed by Serge Avedikian, Olena Fetisova).

3.3.7. Co-operation with the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

Subject to the 2013-2015 Action Plan of BSEC Economic Agenda, the Working Group on Culture included in the Agenda the implementation of the programmes aimed at the protection and promotion of historical national and cultural heritage in the territories of the Member States, promotion of co-operation in combating illicit trafficking of cultural heritage, including by developing a network for the exchange of information.

The co-operation in this field continues also with regard to cultural tourism programmes, as well as the BSEC Project Development Fund many of which Armenia has expressed the willingness to participate in. Within the framework of about ten such programmes overall, specific co-operation is maintained. In particular, within the framework of the “Wine Routes of Armenia” Programme, annual festivals are organised in Areni and Akhtala.

The Drafts of the Memorandums of Understanding entitled the “**Memorandum** of Understanding on Cooperation in Combating Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property belonging to the Archaeological, Historical, Ethnographical Heritage and Arts among the BSEC Member States” and the “**Memorandum** of Understanding on the Protection of Cultural Heritage of the BSEC Member States” which have been proposed in different years are currently included in the Agenda of the BSEC Working Group on Culture and Armenia is actively engaged in the discussion thereof. There is also participation in the process of compiling the BSEC Annual Calendars.

3.3.8. Co-operation with ICOM

The enhancement of co-operation with public institutions and international networks is aimed at strengthening the institutional and management potential, as a result of which **the annual conference of ICOM International Committee for Marketing and Public Relations (MPR)** was organised in the Republic of Armenia in 2015.

The purpose of the conference was to enhance the role of museums in the field of cultural tourism, promote the activities of museums, arrange visits of the top specialists of the field of public relations and information technologies of the world’s leading museums to Armenia, identify the main issues museums face in the 21st century by way of exchange of international experience, professional discussions and practical steps. 130 specialists from more than 40 countries of the world participated in the conference entitled “New Technologies, New Opportunities and New Marketing Approaches”.

4. Culture and Sustainable Development

With a view to assessing and evaluating the role of culture as a potential for sustainable development, a number of discussions have been held in Armenia with the participation of the representatives of the interested state agencies and the civil society, based on the results of which proposals were submitted for the approval of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The Government of the Republic of Armenia approved the “Prospective Development Strategic Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2014-2025” where the cultural sector is presented in a separate section covering the issues of protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, promotion of cultural infrastructure in the field of modern art and management development.

The improvement of the social standing of the cultural figures and the provision of favourable conditions for their creative activities are being implemented through the purchase of works of music and dramatic art and social and artistic commissions. This initiative mainly pursues two goals: firstly, to replenish the repertoire of theatre and concert organisations with the works of modern artists, and secondly, to improve the social standing of the employees.

At the same time, special attention is given to the recruitment policy in the field of culture by developing a comprehensive programme for training and re-qualification which is aimed at the establishment of efficient distribution mechanisms of specialists based on the results of research and analyses of the available workers in the field of

culture in marzes of the Republic of Armenia and the improvement of state programme for the training of workers in the field of culture.

Non-financial indicators continue to be applied for each cultural programme which allows to measure the efficiency (including the quantity or the number) of the use of financial resources according to the fields.

The framework of the cultural services being provided to the public has been expanded. The basic income is derived from theatrical performances, concerts, tickets sold to the spectators and exhibition visitors, lease of halls and premises, bailment of paintings, bibliographical and indexation services, sales of books and newspapers, etc. and is directed at the implementation of statutory objectives of organisations and the development of infrastructures.

The introduction and operation of electronic information systems, databases, websites and virtual exhibitions have created favourable conditions for the creation and distribution of cultural products, improvement of the quality and increase in the volume of services by promoting economic growth.

During the reporting period, such works of worldwide music art as the operas “Davit Bek” by A. Tigranyan, “Almast” by A. Spendaryan, ballets “Gayane”, “Masquerade” by A. Khachaturian, ballets “Don Quixote” by L. Minkus, “Giselle” by Adan have been digitised. The “ProLighting” company, supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, prepared and released the exclusive collection of Aram Khachaturian’s works which comprises 9 CDs and 1 DVD. The same company, in collaboration with the SONY Company, released the multimedia and album comprising 8 compact discs of Komitas’ works.

The process of digitisation and restoration of the old films with the use of modern technologies has been ongoing as a result of which 36 documentaries and live action films of Armenian production have been restored from 2013 to 2015.

Within the framework of wine festivals (Vayots Dzor Marz of the Republic of Armenia, Areni), the festivals of “Art and craft” (Shirak Marz, Gyumri), “Traditional Armenian holiday and ritual dishes competition” (Lori Marz, Akhtala), “Treasures of Odzun” (Lori Marz, Odzun) and other festivals traditionally held in different marzes of Armenia, the works of local craftsmen, carpet-makers, potters, woodworkers, blacksmiths, jewellers, carpenters, etc. are presented. The introduction of national cuisine and traditional dishes to the local and foreign visitors is of principal importance.

Meanwhile, activities aimed at representing Armenia’s touristic charm on foreign television have been undertaken, as a result of which a 52-minute film on Armenia was produced to be shown on French TV channels “TV 5” and “Ushuaia”.

During the reporting period, for the purpose of representing Armenia and the Armenian culture and historical and cultural heritage from the perspective of touristic charm, footages have been taken by the public television of Greece, as well as Russian “4 формата” [4 Formata] production centre (“Armenian Sketches” film), “Багаж на двоих” [“Luggage for Two”] and “Поедем, поедим!” [Let’s Travel and Eat!] Armenian programme series by the Russian “НТВ” [“NTV”] TV channel, “WMG production studio” organisation and “СТС” [“STS”] TV channel (about Yerevan and attractions in Armenia).

The participation of the Armenian delegation and the representation of national culture are always ensured in the prestigious International Tourism Exhibition (held in France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Russian Federation, Japan, etc.).

5. Public Awareness and Participation of Civil Society

With a view to giving solutions to the issues prescribed by the Convention and raising public awareness, the policy of transparency and regular reporting (legal and institutional) has been adopted in the field of culture which allows to keep the principles of implementation of the Convention and the issues arising from those processes in the focus of attention of both the state and the society. This policy facilitates also raising public awareness and the promotion of public involvement in those processes.

All state agencies, including the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, are provided with functioning websites where information on the implemented, as well as the future projects and events is uploaded every day. Information about more important projects and events is spread through press conferences and respective press releases (www.e-gov.am; www.mincult.am). At the same time, within the structure of state executive bodies, there are information and public relations subdivisions which ensure public awareness of the activities of the ministries, contact with mass media, provision of information materials on the topics of public interest, etc.

6. Promotion of the goals of the Convention through public awareness and other means

Several round-table discussions and consultations have been held with the representatives of the agencies of the Republic of Armenia and the civil society during which the goals, objectives and benefits of the Convention, as well as the correlation between the competent authorities were presented. The fields which need a coordinated approach have been highlighted for the purpose of ensuring the continuity of the process and guaranteeing the participation of the civil society.

The announcements by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia contain references to the official websites of the Convention and UNESCO where additional information on the ongoing processes is available.

6.1. Collection, transfer and exchange of information on the methods for the purpose of protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions within the country and on international level

The relevant state and private organisations of the Republic of Armenia provide information on the diversity of cultural expressions, including cultural services, industries and products which are finally summarised and published by the National Statistics Service of the Republic of Armenia. Such information is provided and discussed also during the conferences organised at international and national levels where the high-rating experts present the models of strategic planning, cultural industry, the best practice and cultural product consumption. Such an initiative was undertaken in 2015 during the conference entitled “The Role of Culture in Sustainable Development after the 2015 Agenda: A new Reality and Perspectives” where the officials empowered to adopt decisions, international experts, local professionals and analysts presented their vision of culture and its role in sustainable development. In 2012, a similar initiative was also proposed during the international conference entitled “Culture and Development” held in Yerevan where the role of cultural, including written heritage in sustainable development was presented.

6.2. Development of policies to make it possible for the ideas of the civil society to be heard and discussed

The Republic of Armenia, represented by the Ministry of Culture, has been actively engaged in the organisation of events aimed at raising the level of public awareness of the importance of cultural industry as a cornerstone of sustainable development. In this regard, numerous inter-agency discussions and public hearings have been organised during which the representatives of different social groups were given the opportunity to express their opinions and positions. When developing target programmes, discussions are held with the representatives of the Armenian communities.

Representatives of various target groups present their vision regarding matters of interest and directly engage in the discussion thereof in 12 councils under the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia and through social networks.

Such discussions are held while drafting and further amending the laws of the field, preparing and implementing strategies, concepts and perspective development programmes, organising the selection process of the applications to be submitted to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity when the principles, the goals of the Convention, as well as the cornerstones of cultural industry are being presented.

7. Overarching Provisions and UNESCO Priorities

7.1. UNESCO Global Priority: Gender Equality

On 20 May 2013, the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men” entered into force which prescribes the guarantees for ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities of women and men in political, social, economic, cultural and other fields of social life and regulates the relations arising with regard thereto.

The purpose of the mentioned Law is to ensure gender equality in all fields of social life, provide legal protection of men and women against gender-based discrimination, encourage the formation of civil society and foster democratic relations in the society. For the purpose of promoting gender equality and preventing gender-based discrimination, state agencies of the Republic of Armenia, in co-operation with international organisations (OSCE Office in Yerevan, UN Population Fund, etc.), implement programmes aimed at capacity-building of female politicians, assist the authorities and the civil society in improving the legislation on gender equality, support women resource centres, manage the work with mass media with a view to improving the coverage of gender issues and breaking the stereotypes.

Resource centres help women start their own business and support them in becoming more independent and active.

Within the framework of the “Strategic Gender Policy Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2011-2015”, various events have been organised in the field of culture in the context of cinematography and protection of intangible heritage, namely the “KIN” Women’s International Film Festival (which brings together about 80 women directors from 25 countries every year), the “Reminiscence of the Taste of the Country”, “Lavash” and national food festivals (which brings together 100-140 women every year), the “Bread Festival”. In different fields of art, works of women actively engaged in cultural activities are presented. Besides, the opportunity to engage in state cultural institutions is now equally accessible to both women and men. The ideas of gender equality in the field of culture are presented through individual events, i.e. in the form round-table discussions, interviews, and discussions with public organisations.

7.2. UNESCO Operational Strategy for Youth

Due to the policy pursued with regard to youth, young people were given the opportunity to present their approaches, be directly involved in the development of the policy with regard to their field, presenting their vision and creative potential.

The Youth Foundation operating in Armenia promotes the protection of the interests and rights of the youth by establishing the relevant legislation and implementing target programmes. The “Support to political parties, non-governmental organisations, trade unions” programme funded by the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia provides for allocations by non-governmental organisations for the implementation of events and educational programmes for the youth which are provided on a competitive basis, in accordance with Decree No NH-118-N of the President of the Republic of Armenia of 19 May 2008 “On establishing the procedure for allocating the financial means allotted to the Office to the President of the Republic of Armenia from the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia to non-governmental organisations as grants”.

With a view to developing the creative potential of the youth, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia provides support to the “I am” Youth Film Festival, ensures the participation of creative young Armenians in the prestigious international festivals, competitions, shows and trainings abroad (Italy, Czech Republic, USA, Germany, Austria, Russia, Poland).

Attaching great importance to the preservation of the Armenian classical music, as well as the traditions of performing art, in 2005 the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia was founded in Armenia where young and talented musicians came together, ensuring the acceptance of the music-loving public and a world-wide recognition.

A number of target programmes have been implemented on international and state levels. For the purpose of ensuring the development and an adequate succession of the opera, the state competition for soloists was held and 47 young male and female singers participated in it.

In the field of dramatic art, the programmes have been implemented having regard to the proportionality and involvement of the creative development of the field (youth, anniversary, classical Armenian and modern dramaturgy, marz theatres). The process of funding and expanding the implementation of festivals which were held in previous years and have become traditional, has been ongoing, in particular, a few festivals have also been held, namely “Art-Fest” 1st Youth Open Festival and “Young Directors” 8th Festival.

8. Achievements, Challenges

8.1. Main achievements

8.1. The core principles of the cultural policy of the Republic of Armenia which are in line with the provisions of this Convention, continue to remain priorities and to promote the solution of the main issues.

8.1.1. The policy of programme funding has been ongoing, as a result of which the funding of the field of culture by the state has shown an upward tendency as compared to the previous years comprising in all the fields the element of ensuring cultural diversity as a mandatory condition for cultural expressions.

8.1.2. The engagement of all the age and social groups in the education system, regardless of ethnic origin and nationality has been ensured which has brought about a change in the quality of their lives.

8.1.3. The implementation of the targeted language policy has been ongoing, as a result of which an integrated approach at all educational levels of foreign language

teaching starting from pre-school to university and non-formal education was ensured. The normal operation of different foreign cultural centres where new formats of engagement of people are being developed and applied, has also been ensured.

8.1.4. Preservation of national identity and traditions of national minorities has been continuously supported by the State through radio broadcasts (in the language of 4 national minorities (in Russian, Assyrian, Yezidi, Kurdish)) and publishing of national print media.

8.1.5. Intercultural dialogue has been ensured as a result of which the Armenian population became familiar with the culture, history and traditions of different countries, various manifestations of modern art, including the masterpieces and new movements of world dramaturgy, in the field of cinematography — with the films that have been produced in recent years and are widely recognised, meanwhile, the rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage has been mutually presented. In the course of these years, translation has been the best mode of expression for the interaction with other cultures.

8.1.6. Favourable conditions have been created to present Armenian films and music on international platform. Reciprocal film and theatre weeks have been held in Armenia and abroad.

8.1.7. The number of foreign participants engaged in Armenian programmes has increased and due to this cultural diversity has widely penetrated into the modern Armenian art.

8.1.8. New grounds and opportunities have been created for establishing direct communication links among cultural figures and artists in Armenia and abroad.

8.1.10. Due to the establishment of direct communication links between international treaties, practical programmes and institutions, the geography of co-operation has expanded, the number of programmes implemented on the principle of mutuality has increased and the format of the programmes has been changed and updated.

8.1.11. During the reporting period, Armenia continued to actively co-operate with international organisations and networks, as well as with the representatives of the civil society which allowed to adopt an integrated approach in pursuing a cultural policy.

8.2. Challenges

The current and future challenges for the strategy of ensuring cultural diversity have already been touched upon in the context of theory of ethno-cultural separation of civilisations. The main conflicts of the 21st century will arise from not economic and ideological but rather cultural and national differences. In the nearest future, the process of internationalisation and globalisation which will bring together nations and states, cultures and civilisations, will also trigger new inducements for conflicts and global tensions. Thus, as regards the current situation of implementation of the Convention on Cultural Diversity, the following issues and challenges can be identified:

8.2.1. Global geographic and political processes result in the distortion and even alienation of the forms of expressions of different cultures. This can be detrimental to cultural diversity.

8.2.2. In the Armenian communities within and outside the country, the main challenge for preserving cultural diversity is conditioned by the policy pursued with regard to the national minorities of the given country. The Republic of Armenia has undertaken the commitment of protecting and promoting human rights and cultural

diversity. Both cultural diversity and protection of monuments are of particular importance for those nations which have monuments outside their national borders, around the world and particularly in their vicinity. Primarily, destruction of civilisations of peoples by any country is condemnable and unacceptable especially when the country is a member to an organisation like UNESCO. It is necessary for the mentioned organisations to be able to face those challenges and thus contribute to the strengthening of intercultural dialogue and tolerance throughout the world.

8.2.3. Despite all the efforts made, the concentration of cultural institutions and infrastructures in Yerevan continues to have a negative effect on the population of marzes of the Republic of Armenia in terms of accessibility of diversity of means of cultural expressions.

8.2.4. The dominance of a foreign language as a means for the expansion of culture is detrimental to cultural diversity in intercultural interrelations, and the insufficient level of competence in foreign languages among the population prevents the establishment of cultural diversity among the society and the understanding thereof by an individual.

8.2.5. The insufficient social advertising of the policies, programmes and events ensuring the diversity in the field of culture does not create necessary conditions for complete consumption of cultural products and services by the public.

8.2.6. There is no information on leading practice for the implementation of the Convention on Cultural Diversity and interrelation with other UNESCO Conventions.

8.2.7. The insufficient level of public awareness of the Convention at both national and international levels gives rise to various and often contradicting interpretations of the articles of the Convention.

8.2.8. The Convention on Cultural Diversity should promote the ensuring of vitality and understanding of traditional cultures, the recognition and promotion of other cultures which will result in the decrease of factors triggering nationalistic sentiments and psychological obstacles preventing the understanding of other cultural incentives. It should also be realised that the cultural policy is not aimed at the mere regulation of artistic reality. In this regard, the ensuring of cultural diversity can expand the frameworks of the functions of cultural policy, comprising different fields of national life (e.g. social, healthcare, education, etc.).