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**ANALYTICAL BASE-LINE REPORT ON THE CULTURE SECTOR  
AND CULTURAL POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

**Studies and Diagnostics on Cultural Policies  
of the Eastern Partnership Countries**

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## List of abbreviations

<b>AZN</b>	Azerbaijani manat (national monetary unit)
<b>Base-line Reports</b>	Analytical Base-line Reports on the Culture Sector and Cultural Policy of the six Eastern Partnership Countries
<b>CB</b>	Capacity Building
<b>CCC</b>	<i>Creating Cultural Capital</i> pilot project of the Council of Europe
<b>CIDA</b>	Creative Industries Development Agency, UK
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>EaP</b>	Eastern Partnership
<b>EaP countries</b>	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine
<b>EaP region</b>	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>ENPI</b>	European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person (a refugee within his/her own country)
<b>Regional Research Report</b>	Regional Research Report on Cultural Policies and Trends of the Eastern Partnership Countries
<b>ICESCR</b>	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>ISESCO</b>	Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>Member States</b>	Member States of the European Union
<b>MoC</b>	Ministry of (responsible for) Culture (applicable to any EaP country)
<b>MoCT</b>	Ministry of Culture and Tourism
<b>NASA</b>	National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan
<b>OIC</b>	Organization of Islamic Conference
<b>OSIAF</b>	Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation
<b>the Programme</b>	Eastern Partnership Culture Programme
<b>the Project</b>	Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme
<b>the Compendium</b>	<i>Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe</i> of the Council of Europe
<b>RMCBU</b>	Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme
<b>Seminar</b>	Capacity building/training format based on lectures/presentations
<b>SWOT</b>	Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
<b>Workshop</b>	Capacity building/training format based on interactive and case/project related group work
<b>Needs Assessment 2008</b>	Report on Support to the ENPI East Regional Cooperation on Culture (Contract number 2007/146264) Needs Assessment submitted to the EC in September 2008

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## **Preface**

The content of this report is the sole responsibility of the Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and reflects the opinion of contributing experts. It should not be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

The report is intended for a broad range of audiences including all cultural stakeholders in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and European Union.. The report is a result of the *Studies and Diagnostics on Cultural Policies of the Eastern Partnership Countries* carried out by the Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme from October 2011 to March 2012 in the six Eastern Partnership countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The studies focus on the national cultural policies of these countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and are practically oriented to provide strategic guidance to the entire Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and to all activities of the Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit (RMCBU).

The results of the research have been presented in the form of a “comprehensive report” comprising:

- *Analytical Base-line Reports on the Culture Sector and Cultural Policy* for each of the six countries;
- *A Regional Research Report on Cultural Policies and Trends of the Eastern Partnership Countries* covering all six countries and identifying priority areas for development in their cultural domains for the period till March 2015.

The country Base-Line Reports elaborated by the RMCBU are subject to further analysis, debate and exchange. By capturing the current situation in the cultural sectors of each country, the six country Base-line Reports will facilitate the tracking of future developments and of the progress of the EaP Culture Programme in general. These reports are primarily based on analysis of country-specific policies and practices against existing international best standards and practices. We will reuse the same indicators from time to time in the course of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme to assess developments and change in the cultural sector. We hope these indicators and country reports will be of value also for the authorities in the Eastern Partnership countries as a tool to evaluate changes in their respective national cultural sectors.

The six Base-line Reports were shared with the national authorities and other stakeholders of the EaP countries at the draft stage and the main conclusions of the Regional Report were presented in Brussels in September 2012 at the Expert Seminar on the Cultural Policy of the Eastern Partnership (Platform 4) and at the First Regional Conference of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme held in Tbilisi, Georgia in October 2012. National authorities have been invited to comment on or contribute with complementary information. Some of the Base-line Reports have been updated based on the information provided by the national authorities during September – November 2012.

The six Base-line Reports in English and national languages and the Regional Research Report in English and Russian are published electronically on the Programme’s website ([www.euroeastculture.eu](http://www.euroeastculture.eu)) along with contributions from national authorities, where contributions were addressed to the RMCBU. All stakeholders with interest in cultural matters are invited to use the Programme’s website as a platform for dialogue and to contribute with their feedback and comment to the reports.

It was felt that traditional cultural sector categorisation, for example into sub-sectors, would not be the most appropriate approach for the EaP Programme where a practical focus on results and outcomes is needed. These results and outcomes are going to be related to their contribution to areas such as democratisation, modernisation and reform in the EaP countries rather than in relation to culture/art forms, the research has therefore focused on the following five areas:

- The context/climate for culture in each of the countries;
- Creation and production;
- Provision, transmission and dissemination of culture.
- Issues related to access to culture;
- Cultural participation.

Implicit in this categorisation are questions of democratization and modernization; the degree to which a positive climate for culture and cultural production has – or has not been - achieved; the extent of “openness” in the cultural system; countries’ relative ability to capitalize on current revolutionary developments affecting culture, including digitization, the Internet and changes in how culture is ‘consumed’; how the producers and the consumers of culture relate to each other within the system; and finally, what needs with regard to development, capacity-building and training in the light of these elements there might be.

More information on the context of the regional policy of the European Commission and on current trends in the participating countries relevant for the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme as well as on the analytical criteria applied in the studies, the sources of definition of European and international standards of culture-related policies and on the methodology applied to define main elements and working procedures of the research can be found in the Regional Research Report.

The studies were initiated by six research visits of the Regional Capacity Building and Monitoring Unit to the Eastern Partnership countries in November – December 2011. The results of the visit to Azerbaijan have been presented in Section 4 of this report. It is necessary to mention that, while the *Research Survey* (section 3) presents an overview of the situation in the cultural domain at the national level and within the broader regional EaP context and is based on comparison to international standards and criteria, the RMCBU’s analytical summary on *Main Outcomes of the Research Visit to the Country* (section 4) and especially the *SWOT Assessment by National Stakeholders of Cultural Policy and Priority Needs of the Cultural Sector* (Annex 1) reflect the vision of a wide range of national stakeholders in the Programme.

As the number of respondents who contributed to the *National Stakeholders’ SWOT Assessment on Cultural Policy and Priority Needs of the Sector* was not sufficient to serve as a scientifically reliable basis for analytical research, the resulting SWOT assessment has been attached to the report for information purposes only. It should be nevertheless noted that the SWOT assessment results are in line with the analysis conclusions.

Section 3: *The Research Survey* of the country reports is intended to summarise findings based on factual evidence and published sources. Answers to the questions in the survey have not always been comprehensive, nevertheless we have decided to keep related sections of the survey report intact to preserve coherence across the six reports. Where data and evidence were missing, generally the reports mention, “*No data/information found*” while sometimes it has been necessary to resort to estimates. The number of such cases has been kept to a minimum. In some other cases when searches for information could not be gathered within the timetable for the research, the reports mention, “*No data/information collected*”. It is expected and hoped that improved availability of appropriate information will be more easily available in the future.

This research was led by Mr. Luciano Gloor, RMCBU Team Leader and Ms. Tetiana Biletska, RMCBU Capacity Building Expert. Ms. T. Biletska was also responsible for all stages of practical implementation of the studies and diagnostics, including the collection and analysis of the outcomes of the research visits to the partner countries and final consolidation and editing of the seven reports.

Mr. Terry Sandell, RMCBU Expert, provided methodological guidance for the studies, including the development of a system for analysis of the status of cultural sectors in the participating countries, its analytical categories and indicators as well as the structuring of the analytical research based on country reports, instructions to other Experts and drafting or editing Sections 1-3 and Annex 2 of the country reports.

Mr. Jahangir Selimkhanov, RMCBU Expert, was responsible for preparing the analytical research survey presented in Section 3, collecting descriptive and statistical data and carrying out a comparative analysis of criteria and standards.

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## **1. Background to the Cultural Situation in the Eastern Partnership Countries**

A separate regional report, an adjunct to this country report, places the individual countries in context and outlines wider trends and common issues within the Eastern Partnership region. It will be helpful however to give a little context here as to what was trying to be achieved through the research on Azerbaijan and the approach taken.

Since independence the six Eastern Partnership countries have had to face enormous challenges and problems. As in many European countries, while culture is seen as important, political realities often mean that culture is not given priority for funding. For Azerbaijan and the other countries this has more often than not meant in the area of culture a desperate, reactive, short-term struggle for survival rather than visionary, forward-looking plans. Clinging on to the past, preserving what one can, trying to make the systems and processes work because they are the only ones in place (as well as being familiar) and simply compromising in the hope that one day things will be better has been a natural course to take. It has not been a question of the 'better as an alternative of the good' so much as of the 'bad at least being better than the worst'. The status quo has been less dangerous than the unknown.

Culture and cultural development does not develop in a vacuum and the environment in all the Eastern Partnership countries, quite apart from the economic and funding aspect alluded to above, has in general not been conducive to positive development and change. Inherited political problems and challenges which directly impact on culture, such as the legacy of Soviet linguistic, demographic, territorial and ethnic policies, have created enormous distortions and barriers to peaceful, sustainable development in the cultural area. Diversity, to take one example, is an extremely important factor that needs to be taken fully into account in at least five of the six countries when developing cultural policy. Diversity may well be a cultural blessing but in certain circumstances it can unfortunately be a political curse. Conflict, tensions, lack of trust, the tricks and injustices of history all have slowed up and greatly complicated positive change in these countries.

In addition to this, there have been a myriad of other challenges in all the countries including weak institutional infrastructure, corruption that poisons a society and its values, instability, and sometimes even loss of confidence about the future. Against such a background being a Minister of Culture or the Chair of a Parliamentary Culture and Heritage Committee or a Presidential Adviser on Culture has probably been as frustrating as being a struggling artist, museum curator or librarian.

In recent times though, as far as culture, cultural policy and cultural development are concerned some green shoots are beginning to appear in the region while with the benefit of hindsight one can see that in fact progress really has been made, albeit not as much, nor as fast, as everyone wanted.

Particularly in the last decade one can see, for example, the countries treading a path towards recognised international standards appropriate to their new statehood while their young people, in particular, are beginning to recognize the benefits of modernization, the exciting new opportunities offered by the communications and digital revolutions currently unfolding, internationalism and globalization, exploration of multiple identities and personal self-actualization and the role and contribution of culture and creativity, in a modern definition, to social, economic and humanitarian agendas and to national, regional and individual development.

Azerbaijan's path towards modernization, new standards and international engagement has included joining UNESCO (1993), ratifying the European Cultural Convention (1994), membership of the Council of Europe (1995), ratifying the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Protection of National Minorities (1996), ratifying the Charter on Regional and Minorities Languages (2002), ratifying the UNESCO Convention on Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (2002), ratifying the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2006), ratifying the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2006) as well as participation in international, European and regional programmes, such as the Council of Europe MOSAIC, STAGE and 'Kyiv Initiative' Programmes.

Involvement in the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme is the latest stage, an engagement as important and as potentially fulfilling for the European Union and its member states as it is for Azerbaijan and the other Eastern Partnership countries, collectively and individually. This engagement is particularly timely as Azerbaijan and the other partner countries in the region are all, as far as the cultural sector is concerned, beginning to see both the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel and the green shoots which are appearing, even though challenges still exist both in the cultural arena itself and in the wider political and economic environment within which culture and cultural development operates, survives or thrives. In the case of Azerbaijan, its economic progress means that it has fewer constraints than some other countries, especially as there has been very clear commitment to invest in cultural development and infrastructure during the past decade.

Economic self-confidence has allowed Azerbaijan not only to make available generous resources for culture, but its economic strength combined with top-down political management has facilitated the elaboration of longer-term strategic plans, including in the area of culture. This is most noticeable with regard to physical infrastructure in the capital and also to Azerbaijan's adroit positioning of itself at an international level in the last few years as cultural cross-roads. In connection with the latter it has been successfully pursuing a strategy that uses its triple identity – Turkic, Islamic and European – to position itself as a cultural crossroads, including between Europe and the Islamic world and as a facilitator of diplomatic intercultural dialogue. Another example of use of its resources for ambitious cultural development includes the setting up of a television channel entirely devoted to culture and which has been operating since 2011.

These green shoots, while being specific to Azerbaijan, are worthy of wider interest, and although predicated on availability of resources, possibly have wider applicability within the region. It is hoped that this research and the wider Eastern Partnership Cultural Programme can harness both the Azerbaijan experiences and 'green shoots' and those of the other five countries in a way that will facilitate both regional and wider European cultural engagement, generally, multilaterally, bilaterally and at the level of individual initiatives.

This in fact brings into focus what this research was trying to achieve and the approach taken. Green shoots, cultivation, planting ideas, sowing seeds are more than simply appropriate gardening metaphors when talking about culture and cultural development. In fact, culture and gardening terminology effortlessly and directly translates from the one to the other and back again: 'culture' and 'cultures', diversity (bio/cultural), 'climate', 'organic growth', 'fertile soil', 'cross-fertilization', even, dare one include it, 'pruning'. The research survey implicitly uses these gardening metaphors to try to examine the environment in which culture is being nurtured and grown in the countries and in the region as a whole. It seeks to identify a general baseline of the factors which might be inhibiting cultural development and which are not simply matters that are related to funding which is always going to be a problem.

Important improvements can always be made and do not always depend on budgets but more often simply depend on knowledge, leadership, system improvement, experimentation or fresh approaches. Certain aspects of modernization in areas such as museums or libraries are an example - customer-focused services and customer care may be as much to do with updating staff attitudes and perceptions as budgets.

One cannot expect any state young or old, neither the maturing recent 'teenagers' of the Eastern Partnership still in the early period of their independence, nor the mature and sometimes old EU member states now in a time of economic and financial upheaval, to guarantee ever-increasing budgets for culture nor to support every artist and worthwhile cultural initiative, nor even to understand totally the creativity and cultural complexity of their societies. What one can expect of all states that value a European identity, however, and this is the thrust of the research and its implicit expectations for the future, is that like a good 19<sup>th</sup> century gardener - French, German, Azerbaijanian or whatever - they still know how to grow things. That where culture and cultural development are concerned, they know how to take account of the climate, to take actions in relation to the weather, to nurture but not interfere unnecessarily, to deal with 'weeds' if they really do threaten to strangle generally healthy growth and individual plants. One can reasonably expect that they metaphorically water the garden while making best use of the rain and they make provision for times of drought. Last but not least they should give real attention to the



question of access to culture with the state, the independent and the commercial sectors helping everybody to enter and enjoy the 'garden'.

Rich or poor, big or small, the challenge then is for governments to be the 'grower' and 'facilitator' of culture. Measuring by that yardstick significantly creates a more level 'playing field' where real achievement and comparisons can be made across Europe and not depend solely on GDP or the amount allocated to cultural budgets. In terms of the state sector, this can be neatly summarized in English as having Ministries *for* Culture rather than traditional Ministries *of* Culture.

The research survey and related work aims also to identify needs especially those that may be particularly relevant for the development of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and the work of the Regional Monitoring and Capacity Building Unit.

Certain themes and needs are emerging from the research including:

- (i) Identifying who can produce the 'green shoots' and how these individuals, groups and organizations can be better supported
- (ii) Defining what kind of leadership is going to be needed at all levels in the cultural sector
- (iii) Highlighting the key elements required for cultural policy and cultural strategies which will bring modernization and allow culture, cultural policy and cultural activity to contribute dynamically to human development, social and economic policies and agendas
- (iv) Facilitating access to culture, overcoming divides, such as the urban-rural divide and harnessing culture to modern values and aspirations, especially those of young people
- (v) Balancing support for the preservation of the past with support for the creativity of the future
- (vi) Recognizing the potential and revolutionary impact of communications and new technologies in terms of access, cultural consumption, cultural identity and personal self-actualization
- (vii) Taking into account and maximizing the synergy between cultural players at state, regional, municipal, local, commercial and independent/NGO levels at practical and policy levels so that all the available resources related to culture can be effectively used
- (viii) Sharing positive experience and knowledge in a diverse and confusing world where the tools have changed in a revolutionary way but people perhaps do not change so quickly in terms of their aspirations, limitations and fears

Part of the research has been to try to compare experiences in the different countries in a positive and neutral fashion not to engage in a 'beauty competition'. The research survey is intended to produce insights and act as a quick 'health check' of the six countries in their approach to culture, cultural policy and cultural development and what their future needs may be, objectively and subjectively assessed. On the basis of this it is hoped that increasingly meaningful and value-adding cooperation can be developed between the EU, its member states and the Eastern Partnership countries.

It should be noted that the report does not cover Karabag (Nagorno-Karabakh).

## **2. Some Main Features of Culture and Cultural Development in Azerbaijan**

As with all the Eastern Partnership countries in the period after independence, the main aim of Azerbaijan government policy in the cultural sector was simply survival, combined with special attention to heritage as part of nation-building and national identity policies and preservation of the infrastructure of national institutions inherited from the Soviet period.

The problem was that what change there was, was not accompanied by practical reform and 'preservation' often meant 'fossilization' and the system of cultural policy, planning, management and funding simply not being fit for purpose in the new circumstances in which Azerbaijan, and the other countries, found themselves. Even the positive actions taken often failed to make any real impact because they were only changing things on the surface and not tackling the real underlying issues. Legislation related to culture has been a good example of this. The laws themselves were often well-drafted but unfortunately more often than not were simply not consulted, documents with no practical application because of non-functional systems. When there was some move towards reform, it was either half-hearted or not carried through leading to 'semi-reforms'.

In Azerbaijan's case matters were exacerbated by a disastrous beginning to its independence as a result of the war with Armenia over Karabag (Nagorno-Karabakh) and as a result of which about a fifth of its territory is occupied. This had domestic political consequences. Apart from major IDP (internal refugee) problems it has also had cultural consequences, including access issues and mutual recrimination over respect for cultural heritage. The conflict is of course still an unresolved international issue.

In the past few years a thriving economy driven by oil has brought the beginnings of prosperity and some stability. The cultural sector has benefited from this and indeed culture and cultural diplomacy have been at the forefront of Azerbaijan's increasingly confident projection of itself internationally. In many respects, looked at from a cultural policy perspective, Azerbaijan has moved on from the reactive, post-Soviet period.

The investment that has been made available for culture is being used with increasingly positive effect, showing that notwithstanding a highly centralized and 'dirigiste' model of government, those responsible for cultural policy also listen and learn. Strategic thinking is now very evident in a lot of the planning, with the planning itself often based on long-term perspectives. Good examples of this are the recent ten-year state programmes related to film production and theatre.

The elaboration of a new overall national cultural strategy is currently being developed. This strategic approach is refreshing as in the past it could sometimes seem as though new initiatives were focused on prestigious buildings more than what would go on in them. In the case of the state film production and theatre programmes, for example, the focus is not just on facilities but also on skills development and international engagement and exchange.

Baku's cultural infrastructure has been built up in recent years to an impressive level including in areas very specific to Azerbaijan's cultural traditions such as the Carpet Museum and the International Mugham Centre. While development is most clearly evident in Baku it is not confined to the capital with interesting projects completed in places like Sheki, an historic centre on one spur of the old Silk Route.

The contrast between cultural policy and planning now and cultural policy in the period up until about five years or so ago is very noticeable and reflects the country's maturing confidence while continuing with a centralized, 'dirigiste', political model. This maturing confidence can be seen both in its cultural positioning aspirations and in a changing attitude to non-governmental cultural players who tended in the past to be seen as irrelevant or even a threat.

In the case of its cultural positioning, the country has gone through processes of joining international or regional organizations, learning how they work and then becoming very active. Examples of this include its membership of the Council of Europe, TURKSKOY and ISESCO. In the case of the latter it is interesting to note that Baku was the Islamic Cultural Capital in 2009. It has also astutely been identifying itself strongly with the 'intercultural dialogue' agenda establishing a major international biennial World Forum which plays to its Turkic, European and Islamic credentials and its potential role as a bridge between

Europe and Asia.

As with the other Eastern partnership countries, high priority was given to heritage for national identity and nation-building purposes. While still a priority, in recent times very real efforts have been made to promote contemporary culture both domestically and as part of the national cultural diplomacy strategy. There has been an Azerbaijan pavilion at the Venice Biennale since 2007 as well as support for Azerbaijanian artists of all types to take part in international events. In this context it is interesting to note that such support is not simply confined to traditional activities. A performance in Paris of an experimental theatre production involving Down's syndrome children and State Pantomime Theatre actors is an illustration of this.

As can be seen, there have been some positive developments which augur well for the future even though great challenges still remain, some of which are part of the lingering Soviet inheritance and some of which are inherent in the political and social systems of the country which have until now provided stability and growth but need to evolve to be confident of dealing effectively with changing circumstances and new expectations. Both the Soviet inheritance and the limitations of the current state model of cultural management include the fact that when discussing culture in Azerbaijan one is talking almost entirely about the Ministry of Culture and its activities. There is virtually no commercial cultural sector, nor creative industries in any substantial sense in the country. Cultural NGOs exist but while some of them operate effectively and valuably, including an outstandingly good example in the field of musical recording and archiving ([www.musig-dunyasi.az](http://www.musig-dunyasi.az)), it is not a substantial sector. Serious future change will come only by both reform and development of the state cultural institutions coupled with development of the NGO and commercial cultural sectors.

Another Soviet inheritance relates to demographics, ethnic issues and language. In terms of demographics and ethnic issues this is very vividly illustrated by the on-going Karabag (Nagorno-Karabakh) problem. The language question is a problem because Azerbaijanian may be the official state language but Russian is still widely used. The situation, however, is improving. The country is re-establishing the national language as the state language with Azerbaijanian used now in governmental communication and on TV.

### 3. Research Survey

#### 3.1. Context / Climate

##### 3.1.1. Legislation, tax, registration and employment issues affecting culture. The degree to which these issues are supporting the development of culture and creativity

- a. **The degree to which national legislation (e.g. as perceived by cultural sector actors) directly affects cultural development or 'health' of the cultural sector and the extent to which this is a serious issue.**

A lot of efforts has been made to harmonize national legislation with EU legislation, and according to a recent statement of the Legislative Department of the Milli Mejlis – the National Parliament, this process is due to be completed by 2013. The Law on Culture was adopted in 1998, assuming that it would address changing realities. Possible amendments of this Law are currently being discussed.

According to the draft 'Concept of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan', prepared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism recently, and which is under consideration by a specially established inter-ministerial Working Group, there are seven general cultural policy objectives to be pursued in the medium term, one of them is entitled 'Legal Assurance Development'. This set of measures implies:

- complex improvement of national cultural policy legislation;
- enhancement of international conventions and bilateral agreements implementation mechanisms;
- improvement of existing practice related to cultural and authors rights protection.

- b. **If national legislation affects the development of culture and creativity, whether it is culture-specific or general.**

Current national legislation in Azerbaijan includes a number of laws and decrees specifically addressing various areas of the culture and heritage sector (for example, a Law on Theatre, a Law on Protection of National Folklore, a Law on Museums, and, uniquely, a Law on Carpet-Making).

- c. **Examples of cultural legislation which seems to be working well.**

All the laws need enhanced efforts for their proper and full-scale implementation.

- d. **New or revised legislation relating to culture planned to address perceived problems and description of those problems.**

See 3.1.1.a.

- e. **The degree to which tax regulations or issues are inhibiting cultural development or the health of the cultural sector (e.g. as perceived by cultural sector actors)**

So far, there is no specific provision in national legislation about tax incentives either for cultural production/services or for cultural sponsorship. All financial operations are governed by general legislative acts, which include provisions for granting favourable conditions – such as a Tax Code allowing for simplified tax rates for self-employed individuals and SMEs or a Law on Grants assessing zero-level VAT on income received as a grant donation.

- f. **Process of cultural NGO or commercial entity registration: duration, no. of phases, costs involved, complexity.**

According to legislation the process for state registration of NGOs takes 40 days. If in the course of 30 days examination of the application in the Ministry of Justice some information is incomplete or wrongly arranged, there is another term of 30 days for correcting the application.

According to the ranking contained in the World Bank report 'Doing Business in a More Transparent World' in 2012 (<http://www.doingbusiness.org/~media/fpdkm/doing%20business/documents/annual-reports/english/db12-fullreport.pdf>) Azerbaijan was in 66th position among 183 countries

Azerbaijan in terms of the ease of the process of starting a commercial firm is ranked 18th in the world (with 8 days, 6 procedures and zero minimum capital required for registration).

### **3.1.2. Transparency and Corruption**

#### **a. Country ranking in Transparency International's Index: the current one and compared with the ones for the last two years.**

According to the Corruption Perception Index annually compiled by Transparency International, in 2011 Azerbaijan obtained a score of 2.4 which is the same as the previous year (on a scale from 10 - very clean to 0 - very corrupt) and was ranked 143<sup>rd</sup> among 183 countries surveyed in 2011 (in 2010 the country was ranked 134<sup>th</sup> out of 178).

#### **b. Any other reliable source illustrative of the existence of direct corruption or wilful lack of transparency in the cultural sector or of the impact of general corruption on the cultural sector.**

While corruption is a problem, in the surveys and reports on Azerbaijan the cultural sector is not mentioned as a sphere of serious corruption.

### **3.1.3. Provision and Dissemination of Official and Public Information**

#### **a. Does the Ministry of Culture website contain all current cultural legislation or an easy link to it?**

It does. There are sub-sections under the 'Documents' section referring to laws, presidential decrees and orders, Cabinet of Ministers' orders and decisions, the Ministry Board decisions, statutes, regulations, templates of applications and enquiries.

#### **b. The degree to which the Ministry of Culture website is helpful in terms of advice and support/funding for cultural organizations and/or individuals.**

Currently not this is not covered as a special section on the web-site.

#### **c. Availability of information on support /funding provided by the Ministry of Culture in the previous year or period to cultural organizations and/or individuals on the Ministerial web site.**

Any kind of information (activity reports, calls for nominations, competitions etc.) can be tracked only in the 'News' section of the web-site, and are not brought together in any special section.

#### **d. Availability of reasonably detailed information on the Ministry of Culture's budget, allocations and actual spending on the Ministerial website.**

No.

#### **e. If any of a. to d. bullets not available on the web site of the Ministry of Culture, are they otherwise readily available in electronic (another known web resource) or printed format.**

Information on budget spending (with exact figures) is provided in the country profile on the European Compendium on Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe:  
<http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/azerbaijan.php?aid=623>

**f. Level of use of the Ministry of Culture's website (i.e., web statistics, e.g. hits, visitors).**

No information found.

**g. Level of cross-referencing on the Ministry of Culture's website to websites of other ministries or central or local government bodies related to education, youth, licensing, etc. relevant to culture, integrated planning and cultural activity.**

In the current version of the web-site this is not the case.

***A general note to 3.1.3:***

Accountability and access to information issues are being addressed by the government of Azerbaijan. The decree of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev 'On some Measures in the Field of Provision of Electronic Services by Public Authorities' of May 2011 urges state executive bodies to concentrate efforts on the following actions:

- establish e-service sections on their official websites and make these services freely available
- allow the public to use electronic databases to find out official procedures and documentation
- arrange to receive appeals and statements from the public in electronic (scanned) format
- establish a security system to protect personal data and a system to allow for payments for state services in real time

A Deputy Communications and Information Technology Minister, Elmir Valizade, announced recently the launch of a new site at an international communications conference in Baku through which ten ministries have joined the e-government portal while work is under way to involve other agencies too.

It is appropriate to note that currently a text ticker appears on the front page of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism web-site announcing that a new version of its website is under development and is due to become functional in the coming months, which may be a good sign of self-evaluation and awareness of the need for change.

### **3.1.4. Integration of Cultural Policies in Other Policies and Strategies**

**a. Availability of policy documents or other official sources of information.**

The 'State Programme on Socio-economic Development of the Regions in 2009-2013' involves different ministries, and in particular, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. A new State Program currently under development is focused on fostering research, promotion and support of intercultural dialogue and involves the concerted efforts of different ministries and state agencies.

**b. Examples of joint inter-ministerial / inter-agency / inter-departmental activities.**

In a number of cases, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, or the Cabinet of Ministers, sets up specific state commissions and organizing committees, including representatives from the various levels of government, to facilitate inter-ministerial cooperation and realize long-term state programmes or concrete projects. An example of the work they carry out is the 'State Programme on Socio-economic Development of the Regions in 2009-2013'.

Governmental commissions can also be established in order to prepare national reports for international organizations e.g. the Second Periodical Report of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the 'International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' (ICESCR), with the intention to promote intercultural dialogue and guarantee the rights of cultural minorities. This report was prepared by a Governmental Commission, with the participation of high-level representatives of foreign, internal, justice, health, culture and tourism, education and other ministries.

**c. Regular formal or informal planning, consultations or similar meetings.**

See 3.1.1.a, the case of an inter-ministerial taskforce developing the 'Concept of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan'.

**3.1.5. Accountability and Openness in Practice**

**a. Formal and regular consultations and briefings with: (1) cultural sector representatives; and (2) mass media representatives.**

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism regularly holds roundtable discussions and consultations with experts on specific new projects and initiatives. Examples of such consultations by the Ministry with external representatives includes invitations to numerous panels and meetings regarding discussion of amendments to the Law on Culture, development of the programme of re-organization of the Houses of Culture network, submissions to the UNESCO World List of Intangible Heritage, the taskforce on supporting the jazz music scene in the country and so on.

**b. Regularity of general policy, budgetary and activity information provision to interested public.**

The Ministry is regularly reporting on its activities through media-conferences and press-releases. From time to time local NGOs and independent journalists do conduct ad hoc monitoring and media investigations with regard to culture and cultural policy issues. Examples have included monitoring projects related to the activity of the regional theatres system and another one on the situation with regard to public libraries and were publicly discussed. Both projects were supported in 2010 by the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation (OSIAF) – Azerbaijan.

**c. Public availability of business plans and targets of authorities responsible for culture and the cultural sector.**

Ministry of Culture and Tourism has regular briefings on its plans and targets through media releases, however setting out for the public its long-term planning and detailed business plans is not yet a common practice.

**3.1.6. Contribution of the Cultural Sector**

**a. Evidence or perception, by cultural sector professionals, of the level of awareness among central and local authorities of the potential role of culture and cultural activity in social and economic development, social cohesion, conflict resolution and inter-cultural dialogue.**

In recent years Azerbaijan has had a strategy of positioning the country's cultural profile as being the meeting-place of various cultures. In 2008 and 2009 Baku hosted Conferences of Ministers responsible for Culture on 'Intercultural Dialogue as a Basis for Peace and Sustainable Development in Europe and its Neighbouring Regions' and then the Sixth Conference of Culture Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). In both cases the meetings aimed at establishing dialogue between two regions of the world.

As a logical extension of these endeavours was the First World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, jointly organized by UNESCO, UN Civilizations Alliance, Council of Europe, ISESCO North-South Centre and World Tourism Organization which took place in Baku in April 2011 under the patronage of the President of Azerbaijan Republic. Out of this wide representative gathering of scholars and practitioners from around the globe arose the question of the need for regular and continuous efforts in this area. By a decree signed by the President Ilham Aliyev, it was announced that Baku will be hosting world forums every second year, and hence the next large-scale forum is scheduled for May-June 2013. An international think-tank is currently being formed from among leading specialists in this subject and representing all continents and regions of the world. The first Inauguration meeting of this research body was planned for April 2012.

There are dozens of initiatives and projects of a less wide-scale nature which illustrate active initiatives related to culture. These include:

- a conference entitled 'The Integration of Azerbaijan into the World Community: the Silk Route of Cultures' was organized in Baku in 2009 by an NGO, with the support of the State Council of Support to NGOs;
- a network and annual festival of theatres for children with special needs which has been operating for six years and has some 20 members – independent theatre groups supported by a growing number of donors, including the Ministry of Culture and Tourism;
- a community/public art works project started in cultural venues in five districts in the suburbs of Baku with participation of visual artists from five Nordic countries.

**b. Availability and quality of statistics, research and knowledge related to this area.**

This area of activity has not yet become established. Projects are happening sporadically, often with less public recognition than they do deserve and lacking coordination and cooperation.

### **3.1.7. Role of Independent and NGO Sectors**

**a. Perception of (un-)importance and potential of the non-governmental cultural sector by:**

- **Central authorities**
- **Local authorities**

No information collected.

**b. Perception of (un-)importance and potential of the non-governmental cultural sector by cultural sector professionals.**

No information collected.

**c. Number of registered 'cultural' NGOs.**

No information found.

**d. Number of active registered 'cultural' NGOs.**

Exact number scarcely could be calculated.

**e. Number of 'cultural' NGOs or independent not-for-profit cultural organizations employing over 15 people.**

No information found.

### **3.1.8. Role of Private and Commercial Sectors**

**a. Perception of importance and potential of the commercial cultural sector by:**

- **Central authorities**

The draft 'Concept of Culture' includes the following provisions:

- assessment of optimal size of the state budget for arts and culture;
- attracting alternative financing sources (e.g. sponsors, patrons, supporters etc.);
- implementing up-to-date marketing in order to improve the system of paid cultural services.

- **Local authorities**

No information collected.



- **Commercial cultural sector professionals**

A Coalition of Cultural Entrepreneurs was established in 2009 however it has not worked actively since its inception. A few editions of a newsletter covering international practices in creative industries has been published and distributed by the coalition.

- **Non-commercial sector professionals**

No information collected.

**b. Number of registered businesses classified as being part of the cultural sector or any relevant statistics on commercial cultural activity.**

The classification of SMEs in the country given by the State Statistical Office does not include any reference/attribution to the culture-related sector, i.e. there is no listed category. In the list of activity categories for tax-payers, there are codes/categories for "film, video and TV production, post-production and distribution", "sound recording and music publishing", "education in the sphere of culture", "museums activity", "activity in performing arts", "musicians", "other types activity in the sphere of arts". A brief mapping/survey of independent audiovisual production in Baku conducted by an NGO in 2007 has revealed a dozen-and-a-half of (mostly) small video studios. These were known among a narrow circle of regular clients but not well known outside.

**c. Financial turnover of the commercial cultural sector if available from official statistical data or any other reliable sources.**

No information collected.

**d. Number of commercial cultural organizations and companies employing more than 50 people.**

As far as one can see there are not any..

### **3.1.9. National Conventional and Electronic Media and Interest of Dedicated Publications in Culture and Cultural Issues**

**a. The number of specialist cultural publications and their readership or print-runs.**

There are a few literary magazines (including one in Russian and one devoted to translations from world literature) and a few more multidisciplinary magazines.

**b. Number of important and useful 'cultural websites' relevant for cultural sector professionals.**

[www.mct.gov.az](http://www.mct.gov.az)

<http://e-qanun.az>

[www.azstat.org](http://www.azstat.org)

<http://cssn.gov.az>

<http://www.preslib.az/melum.html>

<http://www.kitabxana.net/>

[kultaz.com](http://kultaz.com)

[www.kultura.az](http://www.kultura.az)

[www.kulis.az](http://www.kulis.az)

<http://www.icom.azeurotel.com>

[www.musigi-dunya.az](http://www.musigi-dunya.az)

<http://azeriart.net/>

[www.bakupages.com](http://www.bakupages.com)

[www.citylife.az](http://www.citylife.az)

[https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=PR304\(2011\)&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=F5CA75&BackColorIntranet=F5CA75&BackColorLogged=A9BACE](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=PR304(2011)&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=F5CA75&BackColorIntranet=F5CA75&BackColorLogged=A9BACE)

Several newly established groups choose an easier way to immediate exposure - through posting on Facebook, for example:

- Киношик and FOKUS, devoted to discussion of film-making related issues;
- Arts Council Azerbaijan, which regularly posts photographic reports on visual art exhibitions in Baku;
- Kitabseverler the forum of bibliophiles, which has more than 4000 subscribers.

A number of on-line debate platforms have extensive culture sections (e.g. [www.disput.az](http://www.disput.az)).

**c. Available statistical data to illustrate levels of use of such websites e.g. hits, visitors etc.**

No information found.

**d. Level of cultural events and debate coverage in local press and media taken from a typical week (e.g. number of articles and listings in main daily and weekly newspapers/magazines; number of media mentions, interviews or programmes related to cultural events).**

Since early 2011, Medeniyyet TV, a new television channel especially devoted to culture is on air 24 hours. The channel covers local and international culture news, and allows for transmission of full concert programmes and theatre, opera, and ballet performances, which used to be difficult to programme into the busy schedule of the first national channel. During the major festivals, recorded performances are seen on TV practically the next day. Unlike other channels, Medeniyyet is regularly including into its programmes the screening of world film heritage, as well as art house films.

Most general scope news agencies in Azerbaijan (distributing information in Azerbaijani, English, and Russian) have a culture section on their web-sites. It is interesting to note, that on some of them there is distinction made between the sections on 'culture' and 'showbiz', which somehow reflects a local attitude/perception.

**e. Perceptions among cultural sector professionals or other facts of changes in local printed and electronic media, specialised media outlets' interest in culture and cultural issues in the last two years.**

No information collected.

### **3.1.10. Urban-Rural Differences Related to Culture, Cultural Provision and Cultural Access**

**Proof (e.g. policy statements, ministerial speeches, serious press and media coverage) of importance or priority attributed to this area by national authorities.**

Started in 2010 the regional project on 'National Culture and Contemporary Cultural Policy' is still current. In the framework of this project seminars have already been held in 11 cities and regions (Ganja, Lankaran, Agdash, Shamakhi, Shirvan, Mingachevir, Gusar, Zagatala, Shaki, Goychay and Sumgait) of the country. Organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the seminars are conducted by well-known scholars together with representatives of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Art, Baku State University and the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law of NASA (National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan). The primary aim of the project is the provision of a knowledge base for implementation of cultural policy.

### 3.1.11. Language Issues

#### **The dynamics of changes of the current status compared with the situation two years before (positive/negative).**

In comparison with previous years, the use of the Azerbaijani language as an official language is increasing and it has various practical implications, in itself an important matter for separate study. The examples in this changing context worth noting are:

- improved quality of teaching and textbooks of the Azerbaijani language in schools with a different language of instruction. Following rules introduced a few years ago by the Ministry of Education, a test in Azerbaijani is arranged in all secondary schools separately, before the final exam for other subjects
- more intensive literature translation activity into Azerbaijani – both at the state level (e.g. a 150-volumes series of world literature initiated by special presidential decree, it includes also translations of literary works by all holders of the Nobel Prize in literature) and by independent publishing houses and literary magazines (e.g. Alatoran magazine with its series of 'magazine in magazine' publications from the literary magazines of Turkey, Georgia, as well as from Western and Eastern European countries).

The monthly level of broadcasting in minority languages on Azerbaijan State Radio is as follows: 80-minutes in (each of) the Talysh, Kurd, Lezgi languages, 160 minutes – in Georgian, 90 minutes – in Armenian and 15 hours - in Russian. Azerbaijan State TV broadcasts 15 hours per month of news in Russian. The public TV channel – Ictimai TV has established a special department of programmes for ethnic minorities. 25 to 40% of programmes on 10 regional TV channels are broadcast in Russian and some part – in the Avar, Lezgi and Tat languages.

The level of English and other foreign languages is increasing parallel to the process of integration of the country into international exchanges of all sorts. People are more intensively traveling and involved in international business contacts. Cultural centres of the embassies of Germany, France, Iran, Egypt, as well as American, British, Korean, Spanish and other language centres supported by respective embassies do operate in Baku

It is worth mentioning that the changes of script used for the Azerbaijani language over the years (the latest was from Cyrillic to Latin in 1992) had serious implications for libraries in terms of their holdings and general access issues but the situation is gradually being managed.

## 3.2. Creation/Production and Preservation/Restoration

### 3.2.1. Relative importance given in national cultural policy and practice (e.g. funding) to contemporary cultural creation

**Evidence of official interest in and support to contemporary artists, creators and producers in terms of policy-related documents, budget allocations, policy statements and ministerial references (e.g. mention in speeches).**

Freedom of creative expression is guaranteed by law (Article 7 of the Law on Culture) and the right to the safeguarding and expression of cultural identity (Article 8 of the same law and it refers not only to ethnic identity, but also to the right to be free in choosing spiritual, aesthetical and other values).

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism continues the system of state commissions and acquisitions for artistic works in the various art forms and disciplines, however it seems that the number of commissioned works and the amounts offered (at least in regard visual arts and music) are much less than they used to be in the Soviet period. Special State Programmes covering development of film for the years 2008-2018, development of theatre for the years 2009-2019 envisage various measures, which include financial support, as well as research, improvement of management and encouragement of international exchange. Film production has substantially grown in the last years both in terms of the number of films and their public appreciation within the country and at international film festivals.

Among other measures worth mentioning are state stipends and pensions to outstanding personalities in the field of arts, the Zirve National Annual Prize for outstanding achievement in arts and culture (various categories) and scholarship schemes for young artists administered through the 'creative unions'.

### **3.2.2. Description of the environment in which the different types of cultural and artistic creation/production take place**

#### **Concrete illustrative positive and negative examples of official support or the lack of it**

(i) **Using a scale of:**

- **Very Supportive**
- **Supportive**
- **Neither Supportive Nor Negative**
- **Difficult**
- **Hostile**

More than 70 documentaries and 30 feature films have been produced in the last six years in Azerbaijan. During this period Azerbaijani films have been shown in 40 countries and participated in more than 100 film festivals. During 2011 alone short films by young film-makers from Azerbaijan were shown at 25 international festivals. Last year there was an Azerbaijan stand at the fair of the 64<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival.

The situation with regard to state support to contemporary visual arts production is more difficult. Although the country has had its national pavilion at the Venice Biennale since 2007, not one of the presentations there was commissioned with state funding. Private sponsorship and patronage to contemporary visual arts is an emerging trend, which is reflected in the increased number of exhibitions and project-related commissions in the last few years.

(i) **Perception of representative practitioners of their creative and working environment.**

No information found.

### **3.2.3. Creativity**

#### **a. Policy documents, statements or official pronouncements on the subject of creativity or the concept of 'creative economy'.**

So far there is no official document adopted or developed on this topic. In the meantime, the issue of cultural industries as a discrete sector of the economy is discussed in the local media and at specialist seminars, led at least since 2004 in Baku by representatives of Creative Clusters and CIDA (UK Creative Industries Development Agency), Design Reaktor, Planet Modulor and Multiplicities (Germany), Interarts Foundation (Spain), Creative Industries Agency (Russia), Democracy through Culture (Ukraine).

In 2004-2006, Azerbaijan joined the Creating Cultural Capital pilot project (CCC) of the Council of Europe. In 2005 a regional seminar, supported by UNESCO, was held in Tbilisi and was attended not only by private sector and NGO representatives from Azerbaijan, but also by the cultural policy department head of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In 2009 a regional project on mapping the creative industries sector in the metropolitan cities of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey has been implemented within the Creative Collaborations programme of the British Council. Currently it is believed that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is considering ways of launching a programme on cultural industries support in terms of testing the public-private partnership model.

- b. Perception among cultural sector professionals of levels of creativity coverage in general and specialised printed and electronic media (i.e. High Interest/Some Serious Interest/Little Interest/No Interest).**

It is not an established topic, regularly monitored or discussed in the press; however articles on the economic potential of creativity and the cultural industries appear from time to time in discussions and publications.

#### **3.2.4. Heritage**

- a. Current main issues related to heritage identified**

- **By the official authorities e.g. Ministry of Culture or municipal authorities**
- **From the point of view of working-level specialists**
- **From the point of view of civil society and communities, including minorities**

No information collected.

- b. Level of civil society and/or community group involvement in any heritage activity officially or unofficially using any available relevant evidence (number of registered or known groups/societies, number of projects/sites, existence of relevant newsletters, websites etc).**

There are quite a large number of registered NGOs and ad hoc initiative groups across the country which carry out some activity in one or another field of heritage protection and promotion.

The 'Women, Islam and Human Rights' NGO is active in spreading awareness about endangered monuments and organizing petitions and media events against destruction of cultural heritage objects and forceful intrusion into the urban landscape. This NGO is a member of *Europa Nostra* and has managed to raise issues related to violations against proper safeguarding of monuments in Azerbaijan at international forums <http://www.slideshare.net/heritageorganisations.eu/azerbejdzan>.

The Centre for National and International Studies, which deals primarily with research and policy analysis deals with documenting and reviving industrial heritage in the suburbs of Baku. In Sheki a very active volunteer archaeologists group works in close coordination with a branch of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences. In Ganja protests of local NGOs prevented plans to build an extension of an asphalt plant in the proximity of the remains of the medieval town.

There was a special working group of independent experts established in mid-2000 to monitor historical/cultural/archaeological heritage protection commitments of the consortium, which was dealing with construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Jeyhan oil pipeline.

#### **3.2.5. Restoration Resources and Capacities**

- a. Number, type, and output of training or professional educational institutions and provision for museum and heritage restorers.**

There is a bachelor's degree in museology and heritage protection at the State Arts & Culture University. On-going training of specialists is conducted at the National Centre for Restoration of Museum and Heritage Treasures.

- b. The degree to which supply of trained restorers meets the demand for them as perceived by a small but representative sample of relevant people (ministry officials, museum directors, heritage planners).**

It currently does not meet the demand.

- c. **The degree to which the training of restorers (e.g. quality of training, availability of training) is an area of interest or concern to any of the interested parties (i.e. the MoC, museum directors, heritage planners).**

International expertise is being attracted for restoration of major monuments – specialists from Germany, Italy, Norway and other countries worked on restoration of Maiden’s Tower, Shirvanshahs’ Palace, Mominekhatun Mausoleum, Zeynalabdin Tagiyev’s mansion, Sheki Khans’ Palace, St. Elisha Church in Kish village etc.

In 2008, when museum directors in Baku were surveyed by Ward Mintz, the representative of the US-based Fund for Arts & Culture in Central and Eastern Europe, about the most urgently needed areas of training for museum professionals in Azerbaijan, many of them mentioned conservation and restoration of objects, and in particular, of textiles. In 2009 a leading international specialist in textiles conservation, Patricia Ewer, visited Baku and led a workshop and carried out a series of individual consultations with local museums. Surprisingly, it was discovered that local specialists had quite sophisticated skills in conservation of textiles, and the gap was mostly about new tools, equipment and chemicals which were not available due to budget constraints.

### **3.2.6. UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**

- a. **Level of awareness (assessed by limited questionnaire/interview method of a small representative sample of relevant cultural planners and senior cultural practitioners) in your country.**

The First Lady of Azerbaijan Mrs. Mehriban ALiyeva holds the honorary title of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and is very actively participating in the activities of this international organization. Under Mrs. Aliyeva’s leadership, the UNESCO Convention has been widely covered in national media both at the moment of its discussion worldwide in 2005 and its ratification by the Milli Mejlis (national parliament) of Azerbaijan in 2010.

- b. **Examples given by the MoC of where their signing of the Convention has led to them taking action in a way which they otherwise would not have done.**

Some would see this document as more about declaration of intentions than an immediate guide to practical action.

- c. **Number/level of mentions of the Convention in official policy documents or statements.**

See 3.2.6.a

20th May - The International Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development has been commemorated in Azerbaijan since 2010, according to the local press. In July 2010, the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Forum on Cultural Studies featured the topic ‘Cultural Diversity as a Socio-political Value’ with support from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

## **3.3. Cultural Provision/Research/Professional Training and Transmission/ Dissemination/Connectivity/Digitalization**

### **3.3.1. General Environment**

- a. **Number, type, size and listing of any institutions, organizations, etc. involved in arts research.**

The main national scientific centre for research in the sphere of culture is the Institute of Architecture and Arts, under the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan. All universities and high schools providing arts and culture education, major museums and libraries do have their research departments and laboratories. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has special outlets for practice-oriented studies

such as the Research and Methodology Centres on Culture, Museology, Folklore. In a phase of immediate development is the idea to transform them into an Institute of Cultural Studies which would receive state subsidy through the Ministry of Culture and Tourism while maintaining the independent status of the new institution.

**b. Perception of the level of cultural and arts criticism and debate by younger cultural professionals (under 35) through limited but representative interview method.**

No information collected.

### **3.3.2. Professional Training**

**a. Level of provision and quality of professional arts and cultural education through information given by the MoC and Ministry of Education.**

All 'classical' arts & culture professional specializations are available for obtaining a degree in one of the following main higher education institutions: the State University of Arts & Culture, Baku Music Academy, the National Music Conservatoire, the National Academy of Fine Arts, the State University for Architecture and Construction Engineering. In addition some diplomas related to the cultural sector can also be obtained through courses at the State Pedagogical University in Baku, the Nakhchivan State University (music teacher, art teacher), the Khazar University (design) etc. However emerging demand in newer professions is not adequately addressed – there are no options available, for example, for obtaining a professional diploma in sound engineering.

A possibly good indicator of quality is that a number of graduates from Azerbaijani arts & culture main universities manage to find jobs abroad – directors, actors and musicians from Azerbaijan work in Russia, USA, Canada, Turkey, Germany, Italy etc. It is curious to note that there are theatre actors from Azerbaijan who are currently well-known in Finland (acting in Finnish) and Greece (acting in Greek)!

**b. Number of known international links in this area e.g. through Erasmus-type links.**

First of all, currently there is a state programme on study abroad for Azerbaijanian young people for 2007-2015 (<http://www.edu.gov.az>). Its list of priority specializations includes for bachelor's degrees: museology, design and graphics, studio and stage sound systems, film and performing arts production, and for master's degrees: directing for animation films and computer graphics, feature film directing, sound engineering, safeguarding of the cultural heritage, stage set artist, restoration of architectural monuments. There are bilateral programs organized through foreign embassies and established institutions – for example, DAAD regularly provides scholarships to composers and classical music performers, Bergen Conservatory has a multi-year agreement with Baku Music Academy on accepting strings-instrument music students from Azerbaijan in Norway etc. A growing number of students from Azerbaijan find scholarships by their own efforts or study abroad with support from their families and they are quite a large number.

Interesting statistical data on Azerbaijan and other EaP countries is available in the following report: [http://eap-mobility.pl/static/documents/Lungu\\_Irina\\_Current\\_state\\_of\\_play.pdf](http://eap-mobility.pl/static/documents/Lungu_Irina_Current_state_of_play.pdf).

### **3.3.3. Internet Use and Connectivity**

**a. Any available statistics related to Internet connectivity and use.**

See [www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com): 3,689,000 users as of June 2010, which is 44.4% of the country's population. Use of Facebook as a tool for social interaction is dramatically growing in the country. There were 198,340 Facebook users by August 2010, 604,040 by December 2011, and 1 million by December 2012 (see <http://www.socialbakers.com/blog/1278-december-2012-social-media-report-facebook-pages-in-azerbaijan>).

**b. The costs in relation to local income levels of being connected**

- **At home**

Starting from EUR 18 monthly rate for unlimited access.

- **By using an Internet café**

Starting from EUR 0.60 per hour.

**c. Any available statistics or information showing the rate of growth in connectivity.**

See: <http://opennet.net/research/profiles/azerbaijan>

**d. Any statistics, information or anecdotal evidence related to any 'digital divide' (e.g. rich-poor or urban-rural difference).**

According to the GINI index, Azerbaijan is 81th in the list of 134 countries.

<http://www.exchangerate.com/statistics-data/distribution-of-family-income-answers.html>

**e. Any available statistics, estimates or research on the use of the Internet in the cultural sphere and trends.**

National Internet sites annual awards Netty and Millinet have a special thematic nomination for culture/tourism. The rating of web-sites produced and maintained in Azerbaijan is available on [www.ilk10.az](http://www.ilk10.az) and [www.katalog.net](http://www.katalog.net)

### **3.3.4. Digitalization Projects**

**Number and illustrative listing of significant digitalization projects taking place with official support (e.g. the creation of a national electronic library, digitalization of collections of national museums, virtual exhibitions using national collections or archives and so on).**

[www.kitabxana.net](http://www.kitabxana.net) - National Virtual Library, a project implemented since 2009 by the New Writers and Artists' Association with support from the State Council for Support to NGOs represents a portal of the Azerbaijan Writers' Union and includes various sections including an extensive e-library, links to e-zines and writers' blogs.

Musigi Dunyasi – [www.musigi-dunya.az](http://www.musigi-dunya.az), a company dealing with the publishing of an eponymous magazine on musicology, has developed outstanding expertise in digitization of sound/ visual archives, music scores, production of web-sites concerning national music, theatre, literary heritage etc. Special projects include a collection of the voices of historical figures from the 1920s to 1980s, an anthology of music folklore of ethnic minorities of Azerbaijan. With a grant from the Endangered Archives Programme of the British Library, Prof. Tariel Mammadov has worked on digitization of a collection of 100 gramophone discs from 1903 to 1930 with recordings of Azerbaijanian folk and traditional music.

The Digital Age Multimedia company has, since 2000, initiated a number of sites, CD-ROMs (with interactive elements like virtual tours and animations) and digital image archives related to museums and heritage monuments of Azerbaijan.



### 3.4. Access and Education

#### 3.4.1. Access

- a. **Any illustrative evidence of any policy provision or discussion at an official level related to any aspect of access to culture (e.g. about cultural rights, about ticket and entry costs to cultural and arts events, etc).**

The Law on Culture includes provision for cultural rights (Chapter II, article 6)  
(<http://e-qanun.az/print.php?internal=view&target=1&docid=4272&doctype=0>)

Baku museums are free of charge for military service staff and war veterans, disabled people, National Heroes, children from orphanages while most of the museums in the regions do not charge. Special ticket discounts are available for school group visits to theatres. There are special 'open door days' for all kinds of visitors, for example on 18<sup>th</sup> of May – the International Day of Museums, when the local museums are open also at night and they offer special tours, talks and performing arts events to their visitors.

- b. **List of the main issues related to access to cultural and arts provision as perceived by a small representative sample of cultural professionals to cultural and arts provision. Such issues might include lack of provision, cost, lack of interest, poor marketing, urban-rural divide issues, inappropriate programming at the main venues, unhelpful opening hours etc).**

No information collected.

#### 3.4.2. Education

- a. **Evidence of some form of arts education as part of the core school curriculum.**

There are drawing and music/choir singing lessons in the core curriculum of elementary and secondary schools in Azerbaijan, however the quality of lessons and available teaching resources is always a matter of public debate. Most arts education is carried out as an extra-curricular activities by the schools, or through a wide network of state-supported or private music schools, dance groups, bands, choirs, drawing and crafts courses, theatre studios etc.

The Baku Educational and In-Service Training Institute has organized recently (with support from the Council of Europe) a seminar on innovative methods and tools for promoting mutual respect and tolerance through education in the context of religious and cultural diversity. It indicates that interculturalism is being treated as a necessary resource in school education.

- b. **Examples of any types of arts activity provided within a typical school context.**

A good example is the activity of Ekosfera ([www.ekosfera.az](http://www.ekosfera.az)) which combines in a sort of holistic way ecological and cultural education and has developed an impressive array of participatory educational programmes and tours for schoolchildren. A newly opened Centre in Gala Village in the suburbs of Baku has good facilities for receiving groups of youngsters for heritage, crafts, ecology education and training courses.

### 3.5. Participation and Audience Development

#### 3.5.1. Participation Statistics

- a. **Available statistics related to participation in arts and culture of any type ranging from theatre or cinema attendance to the number of cultural clubs, etc.**

All available data is shown in the Country Profile in the Compendium:

<http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/azerbaijan.php?aid=821>

- b. **Evidence or examples of trends related to participation e.g. observable growth and decline in attendance and participation in different activities of the cultural sectors.**

There is a positive growth trend in book sales (e.g. the commercial success of the "Ali & Nino" bookstores/cafes chain) and interest in contemporary literature (both national and translated).

Attendance of music events is increasing (reportedly ticket sales are growing – at least during the major festivals).

#### 3.5.2. Audience Development

**Statistics or examples related to audience development and outreach programmes e.g. as part of the core work of theatres, museums, festivals and so on which also given some insight into how developed this activity is.**

All conventional forms of audience development and outreach work have been inherited from the Soviet system, which took exceptional care about access to culture for everybody. All state museums, theatres, concert venues still continue to work with schools and universities, although nowadays there is much less connection with enterprises of any kind. New forms of outreach programmes are introduced sporadically by some cultural organizations, but due to lack of sufficient funding and reluctance to experiment, there is almost no methodological base, nor promotion of best practices. A few good examples are coming from festivals – attracting young audiences to the Baku Jazz Festival by inviting a large group of students to volunteer before and during the event or a special community project at the Gabala Music Festival, which brought together soloists of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra from London and young brass wind orchestra musicians from an orphanage in the suburbs of Baku.

## 4. Main Outcomes of the RMCBU Research Visit to the Country

Starting from the 29 October 2011, the RMCBU made a series of research visits to Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine to establish contacts with key Programme stakeholders in each country and launch the process of identification of specific policy areas in the field of culture to be reinforced at national and regional level. The fieldwork included round-table discussions with key government and civil society stakeholders, meetings with key actors in the culture sector, presentations of the Programme and collection of background data for elaboration of base-line studies on cultural policies in the Eastern Partnership countries. Results of the visits and subsequent studies formed the basis for proposals on capacity-building activities in identified priority areas to be implemented by the RMCBU within 2012 - March 2015.

The RMCBU's research visit to Azerbaijan in October/November 2011 was made by Mr. Luciano Gloor, Team Leader, Ms. Tetiana Biletska, Capacity Building Expert, Ms. Elena Palivoda, Information and Communication Manager and Ms. Oksana Muzychuk, Project and Monitoring Manager.

During the visit, the team met, interviewed and contacted more than 40 representatives of major national stakeholders of the EaP Culture Programme from public and private sector and civil society organizations as well as of the EU Delegation to the country and donor institutions active in Azerbaijan.

A round-table discussion with key stakeholders on needs and priorities of policy reforms in the field of culture in Baku gathered together more than 20 people and became the principal event of the visit. The round-table was co-chaired by Mr. Federico Berna, Head of Operations Section of the EU Delegation to Azerbaijan, and Mr. Vasif Eyvazzade, Head of Division for Cooperation with International Organizations and Programmes of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan. The Ministry was also represented by the heads of other major Ministry departments who actively participated in the discussion.

Mr. Eyvazzade stressed the importance for Azerbaijan in general and its cultural sector in particular of cooperation projects at regional level and with the EU Member States.. He based this opinion on the outcomes of some of the already existing projects, e.g., *Kyiv Initiative* of the Council of Europe. Mr. Eyvazzade further expressed a special interest of his Ministry in the outcomes of the 2008 Needs Assessment<sup>1</sup>. Azerbaijan, positioning itself as the meeting-place of various cultures, recently hosted several international high profile events including the First Global Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, jointly organized by UNESCO, UN Civilizations Alliance, Council of Europe, ISESCO North-South Centre and World Tourism Organization in April 2011. The Ministry stressed the importance of such initiatives in the context of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and cooperation of Azerbaijan with the European Union.

The RMCBU presented the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme including its objectives, tasks and main components. Special attention was paid to explanation of RMCBU tools and working instruments to be used during project implementation including:

- Research process under the activity *Studies and Diagnostics on Cultural Policy*;
- Regional capacity building activities, namely *Culture Policy Exchange Seminars and Workshops* to be organized by the RMCBU in 2013 – 2014;
- Support in implementation of the projects receiving grants under the EaP Culture Programme;
- Communication and networking, providing visibility and disseminating results of the Programme.

Participants were also informed about the possibility for national authorities to receive country-specific ad hoc technical assistance on cultural policy and legal reform issues within the activity *Technical Assistance to Eastern Partnership Authorities* of the RMCBU.

National stakeholders were invited to express their interest to participate in the work of the *EaP Culture Programme Advisory Committee*.

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<sup>1</sup> Report on Support to the ENPI East Regional Cooperation on Culture submitted to the EC in September 2008

While sharing their opinion of the main features of culture and cultural developments in the country for the past three to five years, the representatives of the cultural sector of Azerbaijan mentioned a range of things that have improved or got worse or become matters of new concern in the cultural sector or some of its sub-sectors at the national or local (municipal) level.

Existing professional experience, the knowledge and skills of individual sector representatives, cultural dialogue and partnership, exchange of experience and joint activities in the field of culture as well as openness and tolerance of people in the field of culture were considered as favourable factors conducive to prospects of positive development of the cultural sector in Azerbaijan.

The low level of technical facilities and equipment of public cultural institutions, lack of access to modern technologies and resources, including for researchers, as well as a limited amount of appropriate public spaces for culture-related activity and a low level of cultural services were mentioned as the major threats to the national cultural sector.

The priority needs for reforming and strengthening the cultural sector as well as regional and national policy initiatives and different EU and international programmes related to such areas as culture, education and human development, were addressed during discussion.

Representatives of public and private cultural actors of Azerbaijan mentioned the following issues in respect of the main needs to be addressed by cultural legislation and policies to improve the sector's chance for modernisation and positive change:

- Revising and amending sectoral legislation, in particular, the laws on culture, protection of cultural heritage and intellectual property rights;
- Developing vocational training and educational programmes in the cultural sector for practitioners and students;
- Developing a manual on the history of national culture; reforming curricula in accordance with European standards;
- Introducing new standards of, and approaches to, cultural sector administration based on democracy and cultural rights;
- Revival, protection and promotion of national culture and heritage; popularization of cultural heritage through tourism.

Both public and private cultural actors mentioned the training of professionals as among the priority needs of the national cultural sector. Special focus was made on the development of professional skills, namely in museum management/development, heritage restoration/rehabilitation, for those working in the heritage segment.

The following issues were mentioned as important matters of concern for the country which should inter alia be a focus of policy research:

- Dynamics of international cultural relations (cooperation, networking, regional initiatives) – both state-funded and independent;
- Concept of cultural diplomacy for the country, use of national and local cultural brands;
- Relations between the culture and tourism sectors and the use of tangible and intangible heritage to promote tourism;
- Alternative/underground cultural activities/production – level of policy intervention and public visibility and access.

Participants of the RMCBU round-table and working meetings also expressed their views on the most important factors and preconditions for the success of the EaP Programme and the sense of ownership development among national stakeholders. In this respect, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism advised the RMCBU to avoid a simplistic "regional approach" towards assessment of the cultural sectors and national cultural policies of the partner countries without first taking into account the specificities of each EaP country.

After the RMCBU research visit to the country, the round-table participants and all national stakeholders met during the visit were invited to contribute to the SWOT analysis of the national culture sector and cultural policy by filling in on-line questionnaires. Detailed information on the SWOT assessment is presented in Annex 1 to the report.

To get more information on the priority needs of the culture sector of Azerbaijan and other partner countries, as well as conditions for the Programme's success, please also refer to the Regional Research Report (section 4: *Major Findings of the RMCBU Research Visits*, Annex 3: *National Stakeholders' SWOT Analysis of Cultural Policy and Priority Needs*).

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## **Annex 1. SWOT Assessment by National Stakeholders of Cultural Policy and Priority Needs of the Cultural Domain of Azerbaijan**

This report was prepared by Ms. Svitlana Pakhlova, Senior Researcher of the Ukrainian Centre for Cultural Studies of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, who also provided quantitative and qualitative analysis of questionnaires collected by the RMCBU from the respondents representing cultural sectors of the EaP countries.

The invitation to contribute to the research activities of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme by answering the on-line questionnaire was sent to participants of round-table discussions and other national stakeholders of the programme several times following the research visits to the six EaP countries in December 2011 – March 2012. The RMCBU contacted a total of about 450 respondents from the six countries. One hundred of the received responses were included into the report. The replies were distributed by countries as following: Armenia – 12, Azerbaijan – 10, Belarus – 10, Georgia – 13, Moldova – 11, and Ukraine – 44.

Low level of response to questionnaires among national stakeholders was obviously caused by the period of seasonal holidays in the EaP countries and, presumably, by such factors, as lack of tradition of active use of modern technology and problems with regular access to the Internet.

As the number of respondents from Azerbaijan contributed to the *National Stakeholders' SWOT Assessment on Cultural Policy and Priority Needs of the Sector* was not sufficient to serve as a basis for the analytical research the survey results have been included in the report for information purposes only. At the same time, the SWOT assessment results are in agreement with conclusions of the analysis.

### **Summary**

At the beginning it should be noted that the level of participation of respondents from Azerbaijan interested in the survey was relatively low at only 10 % (compared to respondents from other partner countries, particularly from Ukraine). Therefore, the assessment of current situation in the cultural sector of Azerbaijan only represents opinions of a narrow range of stakeholders concerned.

Another important point is that the majority of respondents from Azerbaijan (80 %) represented only the non-governmental sector.

The following SWOT matrix indicates all factors of impact on the cultural sector in accordance with opinions of the respondents from Azerbaijan.

Location of Factor	TYPE OF FACTOR	
	Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Personal professional experience, knowledge and skills (60%)</b></li> <li><b>2. Staff capacity and intellectual potential (40%)</b></li> <li><b>3. Emergence of initiatives and new practices(40%)</b></li> <li><b>4. Available cultural infrastructure and appropriate resources (40%)</b></li> <li>5. Strengthening of partnership between cultural workers and actors, in particular through cultural events (30%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Low level of technical facilities and equipment of cultural institutions (40%)</b></li> <li><b>2. Low level of cultural services, including research activities due to the lack of a resource center for culture (40%)</b></li> <li><b>3. Lack of partnership, in particular inter-sectoral cooperation, international relation and cultural exchange (40%)</b></li> <li>4. Lack of human resources, especially of professional staff (30%)</li> <li>5. Low level of civil society awareness of cultural products and services (30%)</li> </ol>
External	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Reinforcing inter-sectoral partnership, international cooperation, cultural dialogue, exchange of experience and joint activities in the field of culture (70%)</b></li> <li><b>2. Development and implementation of vocational training for specialists in the cultural sector (40%)</b></li> <li>3. The necessity of developing cinematography and government assistance provision to the film-making industry(20%)</li> <li>4. Research development (20%)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Low level of technical facilities and equipment of public cultural institutions and their access to modern technologies and resources, including for research purposes (70%)</b></li> <li><b>2. Lack of professional staff (30%)</b></li> <li>3. Low level of the film industry and a lack of distribution system (20%)</li> <li>4. Lack of information about the Eastern Partnership Cultural Program and culture of the partner countries (20%)</li> <li>5. Lack of vocational training on culture and other related issues and low level of methodology in the educational system (20%)</li> </ol>

The main needs of the cultural legislation and policy to be addressed to improve the culture sector's chance to take advantage of the described above opportunities are:

- 1. Revise and amend the legislation related to cultural issues, in particular, the laws on culture, protection of cultural heritage and intellectual capacity of culture (70%)*
- 2. Implementation of vocational training in the cultural sector and of educational programs for community and students (40%)*  
(Including elaboration of a training manual on history of national culture and upgrading curricula in accordance with European standards)
- 3. Introduction of new standards and approaches to the cultural sector administration based on democracy and cultural rights (30%)*
- 4. Revival, protection and popularization of national culture and heritage (30%)*  
(In particular, cultural heritage promotion through tourism activity)

Many respondents have noted the difficulty with identifying potential level of cooperation, partnership and joint activities in the cultural field between Azerbaijan and EU Member States and between it and the countries participating in the Eastern Partnership (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). At the same time, equal percentage of respondents has mentioned the high potential of such cooperation with the EU Member States. The current level of cooperation with all countries has been estimated at some activity with much greater potential.

70 % of respondents have been optimistic about the future of culture and the cultural sector - a positive trend in a way of developing this field.

Moreover, it by focusing on key components of all vectors of assessment, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and also main Needs and Priorities of cultural policy we can make the following conclusions as to the three main points to be taken into account:



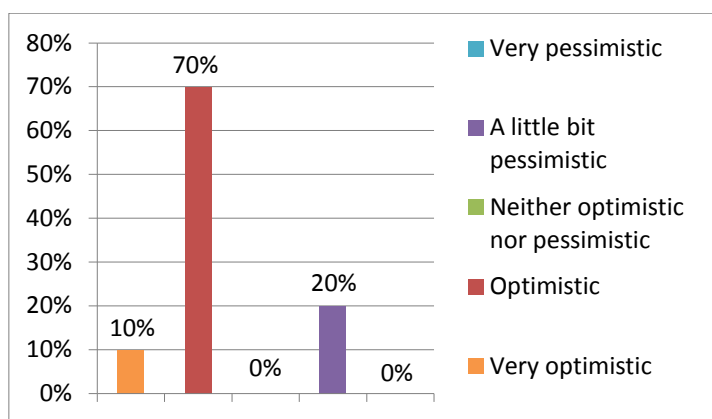
- The major threat/problem for the national cultural sector identified has been the low level of technical facilities and equipment of public cultural institutions and their poor access to modern technologies and resources, including for research purposes. Some respondents noted the lack of appropriate facilities for their activities and insufficient technical support of research activities.
- The favourable factors that can affect development of the cultural sector in Azerbaijan are the existing personal professional experience, knowledge and skills of players, efforts to reinforce partnerships, cultural dialogue, exchange of experience, and joint activities in the field of culture. Respondents have also noted the openness and tolerance of the national community.
- The main legislative needs identified concern revisions and amendments of the body of laws on culture, cultural heritage protection and intellectual potential of culture. The key component of cultural policy is the implementation of vocational training in the cultural sector and of educational programs for community members and students. It was interesting to find that the identified problem with technical support of cultural institutions has not made it into priority needs in the field of cultural policy: rather, the policy needs have been connected with other identified threats and problems, in particular, with the lack of professional staff and low level of cultural services.

**Quantitative analysis**

**Question 1**

When you think about the future of culture and the culture sector in your country, you are:

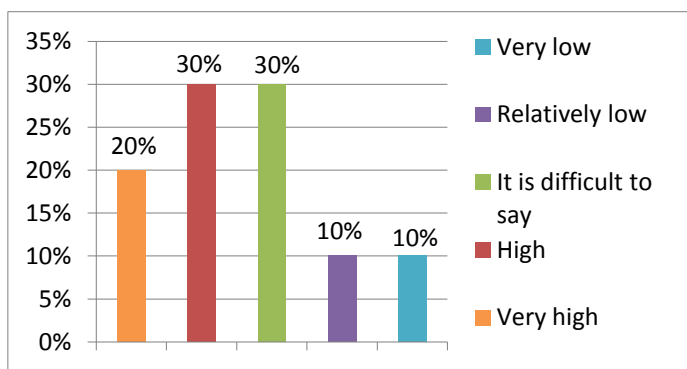
Very optimistic	1/10 – 10%
Optimistic	7/10 – 70%
Neither optimistic nor pessimistic	0/10 – 0%
A little bit pessimistic	2/10 – 20%
Very pessimistic	0/10 – 0%



**Question 7**

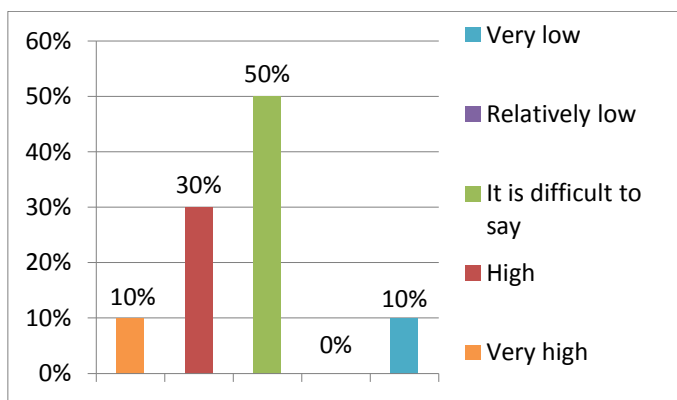
A. What describes best the **potential level** of cooperation, partnership and joint activities in the area of culture between your country and the countries of the European Union? It is:

Very high	2/10 – 20%
High	3/10 – 30%
It is difficult to say	3/10 – 30%
Relatively low	1/10 – 10%
Very low	1/10 – 10%



B. What describes best the **potential level** of cooperation, partnership and joint activities in the area of culture between your country and some or all of the countries participating in the Eastern Partnership (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine)? It is:

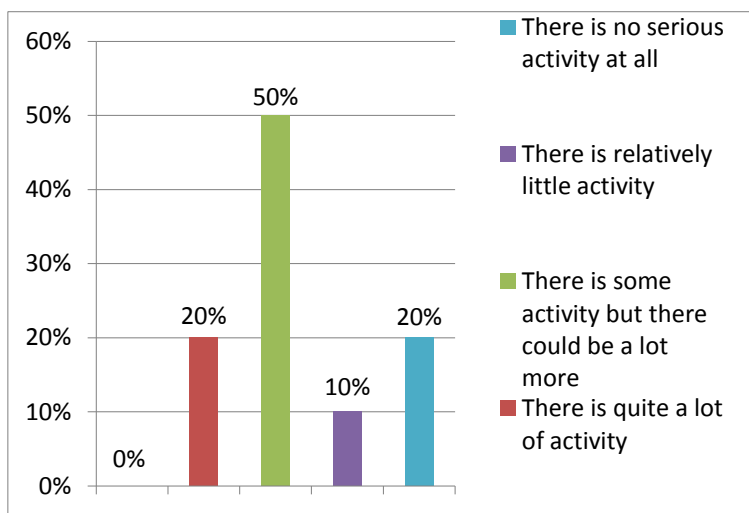
Very high	1/10 – 10%
High	3/10 – 30%
It is difficult to say	5/10 – 50%
Relatively low	0/10 – 0%
Very low	1/10 – 10%



**Question 8**

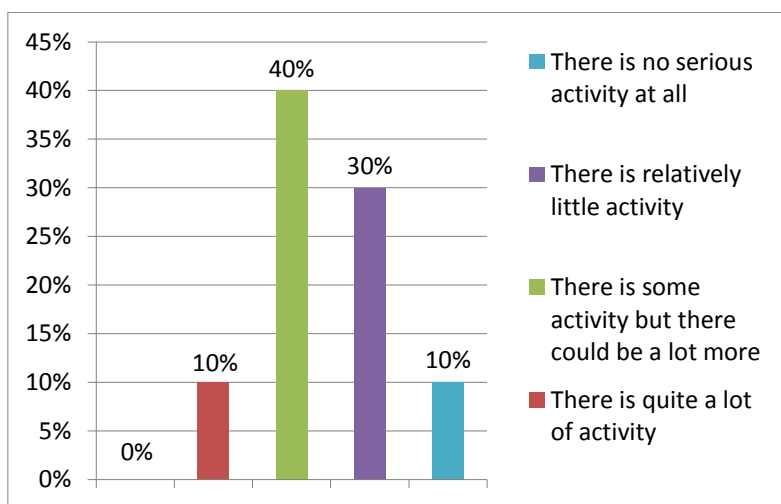
A. How would you describe the **current level** of cooperation, partnership and joint activities in the area of culture between your country and the countries of the European Union?

There is a very high level of activity	0/10 – 0%
There is quite a lot of activity	2/10 – 20%
There is some activity but there could be a lot more	5/10 – 50%
There is relatively little activity	1/10 – 10%
There is no serious activity at all	2/10 – 20%



B. How would you describe the **current level** of cooperation, partnership and joint activities in the area of culture between your country and some or all of the countries of the EaP region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine)?

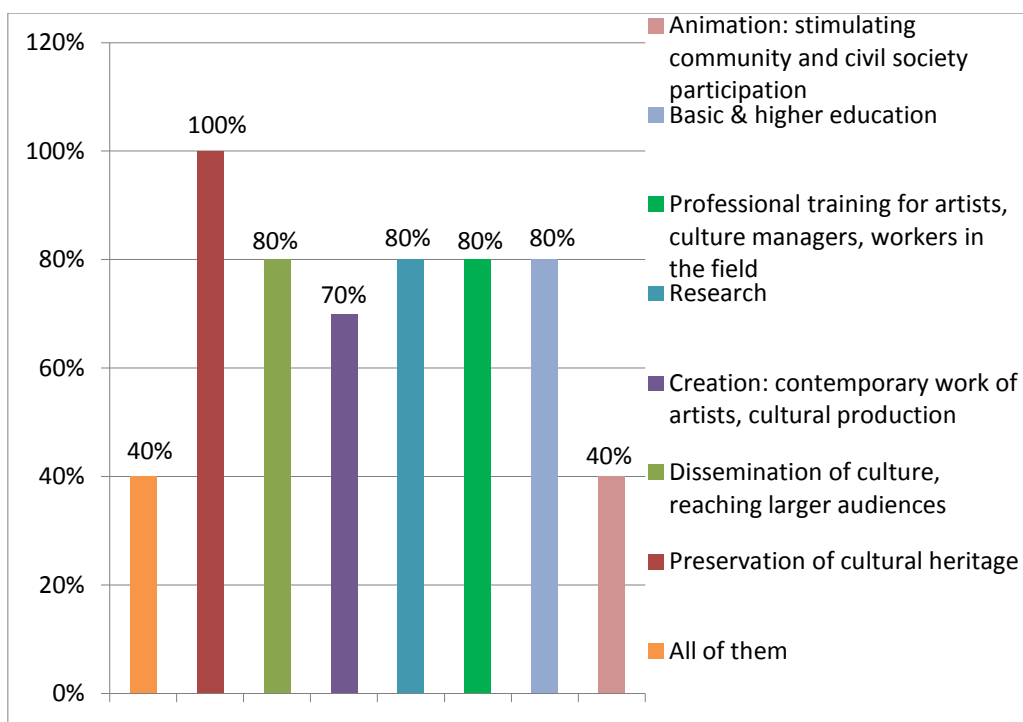
There is a very high level of activity	0/10(9) – 0%
There is quite a lot of activity	1/10 – 10%
There is some activity but there could be a lot more	4/10 – 40%
There is relatively little activity	3/10 – 30%
There is no serious activity at all	1/10 – 10%



**Question 9**

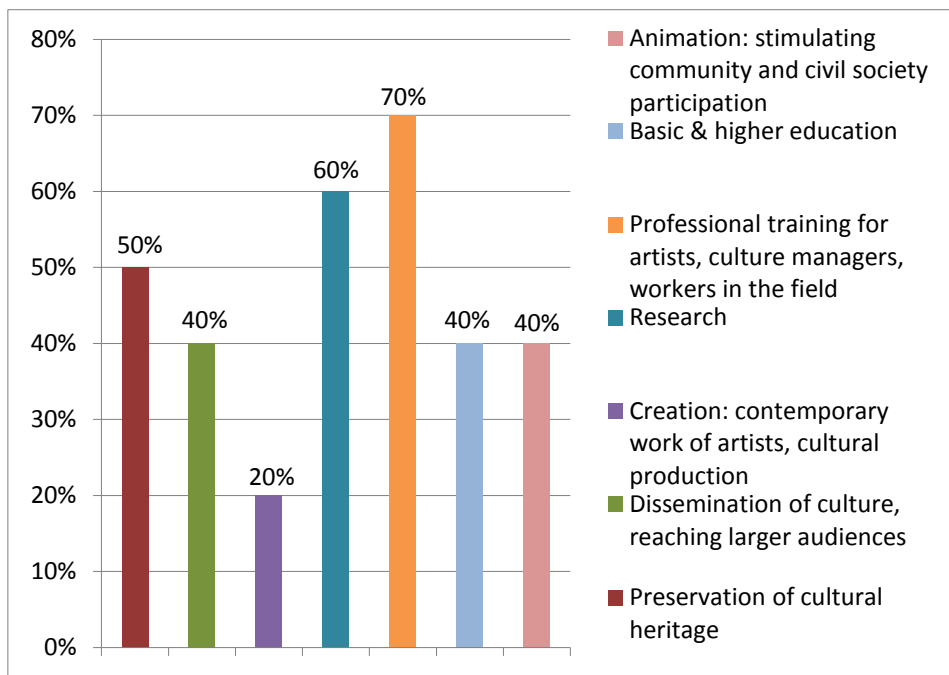
a) Which of the following do you consider to be main components of a comprehensive cultural policy?

- 40% (4/10) – All of them
- 100% (10/10) – Preservation of cultural heritage (sites, artifacts, cultural skills)
- 80% (8/10) – Dissemination of culture, reaching larger audiences
- 70% (7/10) – Creation: contemporary work of artists, cultural production
- 80% (8/10) – Research (audience research, culture mapping, cultural education)
- 80% (8/10) – Professional training for artists, culture managers, workers in the field
- 80% (8/10) – Basic & higher education (curricula development)
- 40% (4/10) – Animation: stimulating community and civil society participation



b) Which three of these are going to be most relevant to the needs in your country in the next three years?

- 50% (5/10) – Preservation of cultural heritage (sites, artifacts, cultural skills)
- 40% (4/10) – Dissemination of culture, reaching larger audiences
- 20% (2/10) – Creation: contemporary work of artists, cultural production
- 60% (6/10) – Research (audience research, culture mapping, cultural education)
- 70% (7/10) – Professional training for artists, culture managers, workers in the field
- 40% (4/10) – Basic & higher education (curricula development)
- 40% (4/10) – Animation: stimulating community and civil society participation



## Qualitative analysis

### Question 2

What do you think will be the three main threads or challenges for you or for your organisation in the next three years (beside financial constraints)?

1.	<b>Low level of technical facilities and equipment of public cultural institutions and their access to modern technologies and resources, including those necessary for research purposes</b> <i>(Some of respondents have noted the lack of appropriate premises for activities)</i>	70% (7/10)
2.	<b>Lack of professional staff</b>	30% (3/10)
3.	Low level of the film industry and a lack of distribution system	20% (2/10)
4.	Lack of information about the Eastern Partnership Cultural Program and culture of the partner countries	20% (2/10)
5.	Lack of vocational training on culture and other related issues and a low level of methodology in the education system	20% (2/10)
6.	Low level of morality	10% (1/10)
7.	Bureaucracy	10% (1/10)
8.	Lack of qualitative assessment of the cultural policy and activity	10% (1/10)
9.	Low level of public involvement in the process of cultural development, especially in the education system	10% (1/10)
10.	Lack of partnership between/within sectors and actors and of international cooperation, including with countries from the EaP region	10% (1/10)

### Question 3

What do you think are the three main current strengths, advantages or positive characteristics of your organization or of the culture sector in your country?

1.	<b>Personal professional experience, knowledge and skills</b>	60% (6/10)
2.	<b>Staff capacity and intellectual potential</b> <i>(Respondents also noted communality among colleagues)</i>	40% (4/10)
3.	<b>Emergence of initiatives and new practices</b> <i>(That impact the strengthening of partnership and promotion of culture)</i>	40% (4/10)
4.	<b>Available cultural infrastructure and appropriate resources</b>	40% (4/10)
5.	Strengthening of partnerships between cultural workers and actors, in particular, through cultural events	30% (3/10)
6.	Independence	20% (2/10)
7.	Cultural heritage	20% (2/10)
8.	Creative capacity	20% (2/10)
9.	Non-profit status of the cultural sector	10% (1/10)
10.	Growing interest in national heritage	10% (1/10)
11.	Positive trends towards using innovations	10% (1/10)

#### Question 4

What do you think are the three main current weaknesses or problems of your organisation or of the culture sector in your country (other than lack of financial funding)?

1.	<b>Low level of technical facilities and equipment of cultural institutions</b> <i>(Including for research activity)</i>	40% (4/10)
2.	<b>Low level of cultural services, including research activities because of the lack of cultural resource center</b>	40% (4/10)
3.	<b>Lack of partnerships (in particular, inter-sectoral cooperation), international links and cultural exchange</b> <i>(Including the lack of collaboration between the government and cultural sector or cooperation with EaP countries)</i>	40% (4/10)
4.	Lack of human resources, especially of professionals	30% (3/10)
5.	Low level of civil society awareness of cultural products and services <i>(Including the lack of information about international programs and cultural heritage of other countries, especially, from the EaP region)</i>	30% (3/10)
6.	Significant regulatory barriers that the public cultural sector faces inhibit further community involvement in the cultural policy	20% (2/10)
7.	Lack of appropriate professional knowledge and research rankings among cultural workers	10% (1/10)
8.	Lack of social protection	10% (1/10)
9.	Lack of interest in culture among national and international actors <i>(Especially, a lack of cultural projects in the South Caucasus region)</i>	10% (1/10)

#### Question 5

What do you think are the three main actual or upcoming opportunities for your organization or for the culture sector in your country, which should not be missed?

1.	<b>Reinforcing inter-sectoral partnerships, international cooperation, cultural dialogue, exchange of experience and joint activities in the field of culture</b> <i>(Respondents have also noted community-wide openness and tolerance)</i>	70% (7/10)
2.	<b>Development and implementation vocational training programmes for specialists in the cultural sector</b> <i>(Incl. elaboration of a training manual on history of national culture)</i>	40% (4/10)
3.	The necessity of developing cinematography and government assistance to film-making	20% (2/10)
4.	Research development <i>(Including researches on history of national culture and related to the cultural heritage of other countries, especially from the EaP region)</i>	20% (2/10)
5.	Development and implementation of democratic principles-based cultural policy at all levels	10% (1/10)
6.	Involvement of national stakeholders in the process of cultural development <i>(Specifically, through participation in innovative projects)</i>	10% (1/10)
7.	Favorable natural conditions of the country	10% (1/10)
8.	Creation of information and educational resource in the cultural sector	10% (1/10)

**Question 6**

What do you think are the three main needs that cultural legislation and policy should address, either in general or specifically to improve your/your organization's/the culture sector's chance to take advantage of the above described opportunities (other than increase of available financial funding)?

1.	<b>Revise and amend the culture-related legislation and, in particular, laws on culture, protection of cultural heritage and intellectual capacity of culture</b>	70% (7/10)
2.	<b>Implementation of vocational training in the cultural sector and culture-related educational programs for the wider community and students</b> <i>(Including elaboration of a training manual on history of national culture and enhancement of curricula in accordance with European standards)</i>	40% (4/10)
3.	Introduction of new standards and approaches to cultural sector administration based on democratic principles and cultural rights	30% (3/10)
4.	Revival, protection and promotion of national culture and heritage <i>(In particular, cultural heritage promotion through tourist activities)</i>	30% (3/10)
5.	Enhancing multilateral dialogue, international partnerships and exchange of experience in order to introduce best practices	20% (2/10)
6.	Ensuring protection and dissemination of national products	20% (2/10)
7.	Introducing tax benefits and incentives	10% (1/10)
8.	Improvement of technical resources and facilities of museums	10% (1/10)



## Annex 2. Background – Azerbaijan in an Historical Context<sup>2</sup>

The countries of the Eastern Partnership are less known, and as a result less well understood, than they should be in the member states of the EU. In the case of Azerbaijan this is true although in recent times through an active cultural diplomacy strategy the country has been making serious efforts to project itself internationally. As with the other countries, its history has been quite complex. It is characterized by four main elements: Turkic ethnic roots, Islamic traditions, European values (through both Russian imperial rule and 'internationalization' through the 'black gold' boom in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and significant ethnic minorities with their own traditions.

In order to be able to understand the context of some of the challenges facing Azerbaijan in terms of its culture and cultural development, and of course the wider political context, it is important to be aware of the background to the emergence in 1991 of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is situated on the Caspian Sea between eastern Europe and western Asia in the South Caucasus region. It has borders with the Russian Federation (Dagestan) to the north, Georgia to the north-west, Armenia - its longest border - to the west and south-west and Iran to the south and with the Caspian Sea to the east. It also has a ten-kilometre border with Turkey from the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, an exclave of Azerbaijan surrounded by Armenian territory. In size it is a little bigger than Scotland and is more or less surrounded by mountains. It has different climate types within its borders (it is claimed it has nine of the existing eleven) ranging from the sub-tropical to the temperate which also accounts for its biodiversity. Its population is just over nine million.

Choosing the starting point of any modern state's history is inevitably arbitrary but official histories trace Azerbaijan's genesis to the Paleolithic age and Azikh cave where stone tools and the remains of Neanderthal man have been found. Bronze Age relics have been found in various parts of contemporary Azerbaijan while at Gobustan, a short drive from Baku, the capital, and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, there are rock carvings some 10,000 years old.

The territory of contemporary Azerbaijan was part of the empire of the Medes, a vast and powerful state from 900-700 BC which became part of the Achaemenids Empire in the sixth century and within which a new state Atropatena (Land of Fire-Keepers) emerged. Zoroastrianism was the main religion. Atropatena fell to Alexander the Great and then to the Seleucid Greek Empire. An independent local Caucasian Albanian kingdom emerged about the third century BC.

Caucasian Albania came under Roman and Parthian control then became a vassal state to the Sassanids in AD 252. In the fourth century Christianity was officially adopted as the state religion, although much of the local population remained Zoroastrian or pagan.

The area remained subject to Sassanid and Byzantine conquests until they were forced out in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by the Umayyad Caliphate to whom it became a vassal state. With the decline of the subsequent Abbasid Caliphate, the area was taken over by a succession of local dynasties until the arrival from Central Asia of the Turkic Oghuz in the eleventh century by which time the region was known as Azerbaijan.

Subsequently part of the Seljuk Empire, it was administered by 'atabegs' (provincial governors) who often became powerful rulers in their own right. During this period there was a blossoming of court culture and patronage, especially of Persian literature, notably through the celebrated poets Nizami (who was born in Ganja, today Azerbaijan's second city), who enjoyed patronage from various rulers, and Khagani (who was part of the Shirvanshah court). The Shirvanshah dynasty lasted almost continuously on the territory of present-day Azerbaijan, as independent rulers or vassals, from 861 to 1538, and were famous for their support of the arts and culture.

The area flourished in the 12<sup>th</sup> century when Baku was built but in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries the region was a vassal of first the Mongols and then Timur. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century there was another revival reflected

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<sup>2</sup> This section is intended as a background introduction for people not familiar with Azerbaijan or its historical development. It has been written by Terry Sandell based on previous work and research he has done

today in the Shirvanshah Palace complex in Baku. By the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in an invasion of revenge, the Safavids sacked Baku and forced the local population to convert from Sunni to Shi'a Islam, the main religion of Azerbaijan today.

After the Safavids, the region was under various Iranian dynasties where there were various self-ruling khanates. These khanates controlled trade between Central Asia and Europe. In the 18th century Russian imperial expansion southwards brought them into the area and they took control from 1722 to 1735 of the coastal strip of the Caspian, including Baku. Two Russo-Persian wars (1796 and 1804-13) allowed them eventually to absorb the khanates into the Russian Empire in 1813. Russia consolidated these and other gains from Persia in the Caucasus after the Russo-Persian War of 1826-1828. The northern part of Azerbaijan was absorbed into the Russian Empire and the southern part into Persia. There are as a result about 15 million people of Azerbaijan origin living in northern Iran today.

As part of the Russian Empire, the area was formed into two guberniya (provinces), Elisavetpol (Ganja) and Shamakha. In 1858 the capital of Shamakha province was moved to Baku.

Baku's pre-eminence was assured by mass exploitation of petroleum in the 1870s which brought huge change, foreign investment (the Nobel brothers and the Rothschild brothers were amongst those involved), growth and economic boom which lasted until World War 1. By 1905, however, social tensions, including strikes and ethnic conflict between Azerbaijanians and Armenians, were arising. The 'black gold' boom saw Baku's population increase through massive immigration, from within the Russian Empire and from outside, from 10,000 to 250,000. The social change included the emergence of an intelligentsia and a middle class but also the existence of considerable poverty.

Political and nationalist awareness increased and with the collapse of the Russian Empire an independent Azerbaijan republic was declared in 1918 in Ganja, following the failure of an attempt to create a Transcaucasian Republic with Georgia and Armenia. In Baku instability reigned with short-term control by a coalition of Bolsheviks and Armenian Dashnaks (a party that sought to improve the situation of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire), by a British occupation force, by an alliance of Ottoman and Azerbaijanian armies and again by the British. By late 1918 the Ottoman Empire had capitulated and at the end of the year Azerbaijan became a secular republic.

In 1920 the new republic was invaded by the Red Army and proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1922 it became part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic with Georgia and Armenia and this entity existed until 1936 when all three became separate Soviet Socialist Republics. Azerbaijan's history followed the pattern of the rest of the Soviet Union, including purges of the intelligentsia and party activists in the 1930s.

At the end of the 1960s, Heydar Aliyev was made First Secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan until removed by Gorbachev in 1987. He returned after independence as President serving for a decade, 1993-2003, before being succeeded by his son, the current President.

Azerbaijan's independence in 1991 came in the context of the break-up of the Soviet Union but was preceded by considerable unrest which at the beginning of 1990 had included the killing of 132 demonstrators by Soviet troops. Following independence there was domestic political turmoil - in part linked to the situation in Karabakh and Armenian occupation of a fifth of Azerbaijan's territory - before authoritarian stability was imposed by the presidency of Heydar Aliyev. Since then Azerbaijan has grown strong economically with Baku in particular developing rapidly and impressively in recent years, including through extensive investment in its cultural infrastructure.