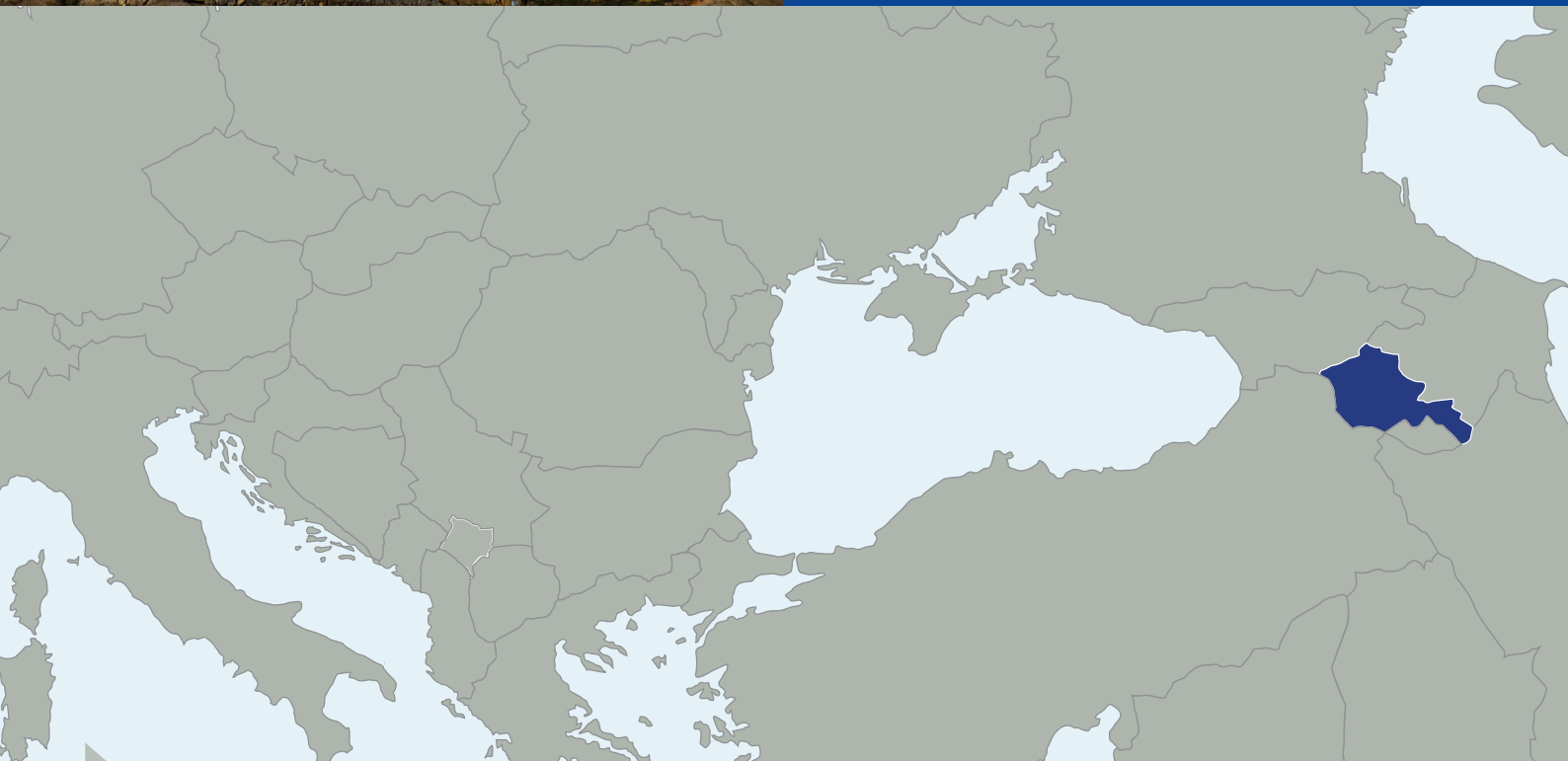




Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

NATIONAL COUNTRY MAPPING FOR ARMENIA



2023

Commissioned by the
Enlarged Partial Agreement
on Cultural Routes of the
Council of Europe (EPA)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The opinions expressed
in this document
are the unique
responsibility of
the authors and do not
necessarily reflect
the values and vision of
the Council of Europe.

Any reproduction request
or translation of all or part
of this document must
be addressed to the
Communication Department
(F67075 Strasbourg or
publishing@coe.int).

Any other related
correspondence to this
document must be addressed
at the APE on Cultural Routes
(28 rue Münster, L-2160
Luxembourg
or culturalroutes@coe.int).

Cover photo: Khor Virap
Monastery Complex,
Armenia. © Davit Hakobyan
Layout: Anne Habermacher

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

NATIONAL COUNTRY MAPPING FOR ARMENIA

Prepared by: **Astghik Marabyan**,
*Head of Department of Cultural
Heritage, Ministry of Education,
Science, Culture and Sport of the
Republic of Armenia*

*in close cooperation with
independent experts and heritage
professionals*

2023

Commissioned by the
Enlarged Partial Agreement on
Cultural Routes of the
Council of Europe (EPA)

Table of Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 7 |
| 2. FRAMING AND CONTEXT OF THE REPORT | 8 |
| 3. NATIONAL HERITAGE POLICIES AND LEGISLATION | 11 |
| 4. INTERNATIONAL/EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABELS AND INITIATIVES IN ARMENIA | 15 |
| 5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL OF THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME IN ARMENIA | 21 |
| 6. INVENTORY OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CULTURAL ROUTES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL | 22 |
| 7. OVERVIEW OF THE POTENTIAL EXTENSION OF EXISTING CULTURAL ROUTES | 27 |
| 8. REVIEW OF NATIONAL FINANCING INSTRUMENTS | 32 |
| 9. FIELD MISSION REPORT AND ANALYSIS | 33 |
| 10. RECOMMENDATIONS | 34 |
| 11. CONCLUSIONS | 36 |
| 12. APPENDICES | 37 |
| 13. BIBLIOGRAPHY | 42 |



Matenadaran. Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts named after Mesrop Mashtots, Yerevan.
© akimov konstantin/Shutterstock

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Armenia became a member state of the Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA) on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in 2015 with a strong vision to extend and share its rich cultural heritage beyond the borders of the country and foster intercultural discourse and integration across a larger European cultural dimension.

Since 2019 Armenia has been a member of Iter Vitis, a Cultural Route certified by the Council of Europe in 2009. In 2022, Armenia joined the Impressionisms Routes (certified in 2018), in 2023 the European Route of Jewish Heritage (2004), the European Cemeteries Route (2010), the Prehistoric Rock Art Trails (2010) and the European Fairy Tale Route (certified in 2022).

The country mapping document has become an investigative tool to structure the cultural potential of Armenia as part of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme.

Referring to the recommendations of the report, for the coming years Armenia will actively communicate on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme among local stakeholders, extend its participation in several certified Cultural Routes and develop links and dialogue with member countries to expand its geographical and cultural scope of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme.

Armenia has a rich and millennia-old cultural heritage, and the protection, research and promotion of this legacy are primary strategic priorities of its cultural policy. Armenia has been a connecting link between the ancient cultures of the region. Being a strong communication hub, the country has always been at the centre of active relations and interactions between the east and west, which has fostered a cultural diversity of the country.

As the first nation to adopt Christianity as its state religion in AD 301, Armenia has been home to rich and vibrant cultural traditions and a stunning cultural

and natural heritage, which is part of our global history, in particular European geo-cultural history.

Tangible and intangible cultural heritage manifestations are evidence of the ancient history and culture of the Armenian people, alive today with dynamic craft traditions, fine arts, music and dance, delicious cuisine, creative and innovative expressions.

The Country Mapping Document for Armenia reveals the potential for Armenia to further engage in Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, as well as develop new routes as part of the European shared heritage.

The main objectives of the document were aimed at exploring the potential of the country as part of the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme on both a global landscape of cultural exchanges and a shared European heritage, as well as at assessing opportunities for local-level stakeholders' participation and further advancement of the programme in the country.



National Gallery of Armenia.
© Bakunts

2. FRAMING AND CONTEXT OF THE REPORT

The Country Mapping Document for Armenia was developed in response to the open call of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes secretariat in May 2021 and is structured according to the requirements of the call. The document was prepared in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia.

The Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe was launched in 1987 by the Council of Europe to promote cultural co-operation and develop tourism in the context of European shared heritage. In total, 48 Cultural Routes have been created within the programme's framework, promoting sustainable, participatory development across the European continent and beyond in the spirit of European identity, cultural diversity, respect and dialogue.

The Cultural Routes put into practice the fundamental principles of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and identity, dialogue, as well as mutual exchange

and enrichment across boundaries and centuries. The Cultural Routes offer a unique opportunity to collaborate with professional associations throughout Europe and to participate in professional discussions and conferences on the subject of cultural heritage and tourism.

The Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe was established in 2010. According to the Committee of Ministers' Resolution CM/Res(2013) 66 Article 1, the aim of the EPA is as follows: the Enlarged Partial Agreement shall contribute to the promotion of European identity and citizenship through

knowledge and awareness of Europe's common heritage, and the development of cultural links and dialogue within Europe as well as with other countries and regions.

It shall seek to shape a shared cultural space through the development of Cultural Routes aiming to foster awareness raising of heritage, education, networking, quality and sustainable cross-border tourism and other related activities.

Armenia became a full member of the Council of Europe on 25 January 2001 (Article 13 of the Parliamentary Assembly Opinion 221 (2000)). In 2015, Armenia became a member state of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

The country mapping report was a vital initiative to assess the development for potential of Armenia as part of the Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe and propose recommendations for joining new Routes to promote European shared values through diverse manifestations and expressions of transnational heritage.

Adhering to the five main priority fields of action defined by the Cultural Routes programme, the report aimed at exploring development and partnership opportunities through the prism of co-operation in research and development; enhancement of memory, history and European heritage; cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans; contemporary cultural and artistic practice; cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

The country mapping for Armenia was conducted between 2021 and 2022 using a combination of research methods, to ensure a comprehensive spectrum of analysis and respectively propose a multilayer basket of recommendations for further developments. The geographical scope of the report is limited to the territory of Armenia.

The study commenced with a desk research including, but not limited to, collecting respective data on the internet, study visits and consultations. The research activities were highly modified due to restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, and many related actions were accomplished online.

A questionnaire was sent to stakeholders of the Cultural Routes programme to assess their vision of the programme. There were 10 participants contacted by phone, via e-mail or in person. Key results of the document were achieved

through a field mission research, during which representatives of all potential stakeholders, including state and local authorities, non-governmental and research organisations, tourist agencies and museums were interviewed and informed about the programme and its mission. This action also helped to classify potential organisations for each Cultural Route, along with the research to develop the programme in the country and join new routes.

The document gives insight into the general landscape of Armenia's potential through a thorough presentation on legislation and policy, and financial development vectors, proposing the country's potential to join at least 11 existing Cultural Routes and four new Cultural Routes at the national level of Armenian cultural heritage.



Zorats Karer Stonehenge, Armenia.
© Ruslan Harutyunov/Shutterstock

3. NATIONAL HERITAGE POLICIES AND LEGISLATIONS

In today's rapidly changing world, the role of culture and heritage has been transformed significantly, and cultural heritage has become an important factor in social inclusion, poverty eradication and sustainable economic growth.

Policy framework

The safeguarding and transmission of the tangible and intangible heritage, are primary strategic priorities of the cultural policy of Armenia.

The importance of the protection of cultural heritage is highlighted in the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia (2020) along with the note on the preservation of national identity. In the field of preservation and use of the cultural heritage in Armenia, political, ideological, religious, racial and national discriminations are prohibited by legislation. In this connection, the state preserves and promotes heritage created by the national minorities residing in Armenia.

The Strategy of Protection and Development of Culture of the Republic of Armenia for 2023-2027¹ sets the main objectives of the cultural policy of the country aiming at the safeguarding, development and enhancement of culture, inclusivity, access to culture and art, encouragement of creativity, and the strengthening the power of democratic values. Culture and creative sectors are recognised as a key source for development of the society and well-being. The role of cultural heritage, as an important aspect of sustainable development, is being highly prioritised, and the policy is built on the general nature of the United Nations (UN) 2030 agenda, including using the cultural heritage as a resource for economic and social development, environmental enhancement and improving the quality of life.

The preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage are primary strategic priorities of the cultural policy of the Republic of Armenia. Promotion of cultural heritage is one of the most important objectives of the Strategy including, but not limited to, ensuring accessibility to monuments and archaeological sites, museums and libraries.

The Action Plan for the Development and Promotion of Archaeology in the Republic of Armenia (2017-2025) identifies tourism as one of the most prospective development priorities, especially in relation to its rich archaeological resources. The major goals are defined to develop touristic routes in the country, the involvement of archaeological monuments in these routes, development of domestic and international tourism, as well as to devise solutions to a number of socio-economic and unemployment issues.

Over 24 250 monuments are registered in the state list of immovable historical and cultural monuments in the territory of the republic, approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. There are over 135 museums in the country, 55 of which are state run, with overall 2 million museum artefacts. The modernisation of the infrastructure of cultural heritage and creation of new historical-cultural reserves are in the action plan with relevant infrastructure and services including interpretation works, organisation of multilingual excursions and associated educational and cultural programmes. There are 15 historical-cultural reservation-museums, many of them standing as major touristic destinations for local and international visitors.

As part of the state policy, a public-private partnership and relevant mechanism implementation are widely encouraged. Through the Local Economy and Tourism Infrastructure Development Project (LETIDP), (currently in progress) in collaboration with the World Bank, the South Corridor project is being implemented, in particular focusing on the restoration and improvement of Khor Virap (Artashat observation site), Dvin historical town, Zorats Karer settlement and Goris town monuments.

The Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Armenia for 2020-2030 defines cultural heritage as one of the pivotal pillars of the tourism development in the country. The largest percentage of tourism in the

1 *The Strategy of Protection and Development of Culture of the Republic of Armenia for 2023-2027 is on the status of interstate procedures.*

general economy of Armenia covers cultural tourism, in total 49% from overall tourism statistics. The tourism strategy also defines infrastructural development as a priority action towards heritage development and accessibility.

in Armenia is to have a world-renowned, accessible, qualitatively sustainable tourist destination with a variety of offers, where visitors will feel, participate in the evolving history of Armenia's ancient culture, preserved nature and lifestyle until 2030".²

The Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Armenia for 2020-2030 states that "1.1 ... The vision of tourism

Table of Armenia's indicators of infrastructure expansion between 2019 and 2030³

NUMBER OF TOURISTS

1.9 million arrivals

7 million arrivals

EXPANSION OF TOURISM EXPENSES

Average expense per tourist

837 USD

1750 USD

Average overnight stay

6.2 days

10 days

Average daily expenditure of a tourist

135 USD

175 USD

EXPANSION OF AIR ACCESS

Expansion of the number of airlines

67 airlines

87 airlines

Expansion of existing directions

67 states/212 directions

87 states/238 sites

Increasing the number of airports

2 airports

3 airports

Expanding the capacity of existing airports

5 million visitors

10 million visitors

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Expansion of the number of hotels

650 hotels

900 hotels

Involvement of international hotel chains

12 international chains

30 international chains

Involvement in international food and

entertainment networks

11 international networks

20 international networks

Improvement of tourist sites

10 tourist sites

60 tourist sites

Improvement and expansion of hiking trails

60 hiking trails

150 hiking trails

Variety of adventure travel offers

40

100

Creating an exceptional tourism product

6

12

Creation of tourist routes

0 route

20 routes

2 Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Armenia for 2020-2030, issued by the Tourism Committee of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia in 2020 https://mineconomy.am/media/9557/TourismStrategy_2020-2030.pdf (p. 43)

3 Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Armenia for 2020-2030, issued by the Tourism Committee of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia in 2020. https://mineconomy.am/media/9557/TourismStrategy_2020-2030.pdf

Legislative context in the field of culture

The legal regulation of the cultural heritage sphere is implemented according to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, laws, the Armenian Government decisions, administrative and other legal acts and international treaties.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, historical and cultural monuments and other cultural values are under the care and protection of the state. The Civil Code of Armenia sets an article on taking back the cultural values used and stored in a wasteful manner and regulates the issues of intellectual property and copyright.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on Basics of Cultural Legislation (2002) defines the main objectives of Armenia's cultural legislation, the principles and aims of state cultural policy, activities of the state in the sphere of culture, including the preservation of cultural heritage, powers of state and local self-government bodies, funding of culture and cultural activities, activity types of non-governmental cultural organisations and the main directions for international co-operation in this field.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Protection and Usage of Historical and Cultural Monuments and Historical Landscape (1998) defines the concept of "historical and cultural monuments", objects and subjects of the sphere of preservation and use of monuments, classification of monuments, powers of public administration and local self-government bodies in the sphere of protection and use of monuments, provisions on the state registration of monument, examination, preparation and approval of monuments' lists, protection of the monuments and historical environment. In order to ensure the enforcement of this law, the government approved the procedures on "State registration, study, protection, reinforcement, repair, restoration and use of immovable historical and cultural monuments" and on "Transportation and transformation of the immovable historical and cultural monuments".

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on the State-Owned Historical and Cultural Immovable Monuments Not Subject to Alienation (2007) regulates the state-owned historical and cultural immovable monuments of the Republic of Armenia according to their type: 1) ancient, old and medieval period monuments with their occupied and separated areas; and 2) new and modern period monuments with their occupied and separated areas. In order to ensure the application of this law, by the decision of the Government of



Dvin archeological site, Armenia.
©AlexeiA/Shutterstock

immovable monuments not subject to alienation" was established. This list includes 18 935 monuments with 6 145 preservation units.

The main goal of the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Import and Export of Cultural Property (2004) is to contribute to the protection of Armenia's cultural heritage, prevent the illegal export and import of cultural property and illegal shift of ownership right towards those values. This law classifies the cultural values, the types of objects of cultural significance, defines the public administration bodies that regulate and supervise the export and import of cultural values, the procedures for temporary import and export of cultural values, the prevention of illegal transfer of ownership right towards cultural values, the duty set for the cultural values and the liability for the violation of legislation on the import and export of cultural values.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on Intangible Cultural Heritage (2009) aims at the protection, safeguarding and use of intangible cultural heritage; the strengthening of public care and respect for national and universal intangible cultural heritage; ensuring the application of intangible cultural heritage; the transmission of intangible cultural heritage to generations; ensuring international co-operation and the integration of the Republic of Armenia into appropriate international institutions, as well as the promotion of exchange and spread of international experience.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on Libraries and Library Work (2012) regulates the grounds for preservation and popularisation of ancient books, written monuments and mandatory copies that constitute a part of cultural heritage.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on Specially Protected Natural Areas (2006) defines the specially protected natural areas as the legal basis of state policy for normal development, restoration, preservation, reproduction and use of ecosystems, natural complexes and separate objects that have environmental, economic, social, scientific, health and recreation value.

The Law on Tourism and Tourism activities (2003) defines the main principles and objectives of the State policy in the tourism sector.

Institutional context in the field of culture

Levels of the cultural and natural heritage preservation sphere are:

• Government of the Republic of Armenia

The Government of the Republic of Armenia ensures the implementation of state policy in the sphere of the preservation and use of cultural heritage; approves the republican and regional state programmes in the sphere of the preservation and use of cultural and natural heritage; creates historical, cultural and natural reserves; approves their statutes and, in exceptional cases, provides permits to transfer or alter monuments of republican significance.

• Republican bodies of public administration (the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia, the Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia, the State Urban Planning Committee affiliated to the Government, regional (marzes) government bodies

The main authorised body in the field of culture and heritage is the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, which develops and implements state policy and respective programmes in the field of cultural heritage preservation and development. The main objectives and goals of the ministry in the field of heritage are, but not limited to, the strengthening of the spiritual and intellectual potential of Armenian people; the preservation and development of national and universal values; contributing to the development of culture and creative forms; the preservation, protection, study, use and popularisation of cultural heritage; raising society's awareness of culture as a means of development; the introduction of new values and new ideas; the creation of conditions for the reproduction

and development of the creative potential of the society; ensuring conditions for the communication of cultural values and the provision of accessible services in the field of culture.

The Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia is an authorised public administration body in the field of natural heritage, hereinafter specially protected natural areas (SPNA). Measures implemented in this field are targeted to the improvement of the system of management of SPNA (national parks, preserves and natural monuments), the creation of new SPNA, the preservation, reproduction, scientific research and capacity development of the sustainable use of natural resources.⁴

The Ministry of Economy is the authorized state body in the Tourism sector, which has been recognized a priority direction in the state economic development. The overall goal of state policy in tourism sector is to increase its contribution to the sustainable development of the national economy and equal territorial economic growth while at the same time alleviating poverty through:

Effective elaboration and implementation of tourism state policy, well established public-private partnership and mutually beneficial international and regional cooperation have resulted in significant growth in tourism sector during the last decade. This growth is reflected both in the number and geographical reach of incoming tourist visits and in investment in hospitality and related infrastructure. Armenia's tourism industry has shown significant growth in the past 5 years with an average annual growth of about 9% of incoming tourist arrivals.

The government-affiliated State Committee on Urban Development of the Republic of Armenia is an authorised state body in the field of urban development. Its main functions include the development of state policy in the fields of urban development, architecture and construction, spatial planning, co-ordination of urban development activities in special urban development regulation facilities.

• Local self-governmental bodies

Local self-government bodies, including urban and rural community offices, support the protection of monuments that are owned by the state and are not used and ensure the application of special regime requirements defined in the monument preservation zones on the territory of their community.

⁴ Law on Monuments, Article 18



5.

Ancient petroglyphs in mountains of Syunik, Armenia
©Mikhail Leontyev/Shutterstock

4. INTERNATIONAL/EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABELS AND INITIATIVES IN ARMENIA

The Republic of Armenia started developing a direct relationship with western/European countries and organisations following Armenia's independence in 1991, which fostered the integration of Armenia in a wider framework of international connections and networks.

- ▶ [Armenian National Commission for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#). Armenia joined on 9 June 1992.⁵
- ▶ [ICOMOS Armenia](#) – International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Armenia officially joined ICOMOS in January 2002 and currently has around 80 members. The International Council on Monuments and Sites is a professional association that works for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places around the world.⁶
- ▶ [ICCROM Armenia](#) – International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). Armenia joined on 5 May 2004.⁷
- ▶ [Organization of World Heritage Cities \(OWHC\)](#). Armenia joined on 8 January 2006. The OWHC “connects with more than 300 cities having on their territory a site inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List”. The headquarters of the organisation are located in Quebec, Canada.⁸
- ▶ [ICOM Armenia](#) – International Council of Museums (ICOM). Armenia joined in June 2008. ICOM National Committee of Armenia has 150 individual and 6

5 Refer to the World Heritage List section of this document for the World Heritage Sites in Armenia.

6 <http://www.icomos-armenia.org/am/icomos-%D5%B0%D5%A1%D5%B5%D5%A1%D5%BD%D5%BF%D5%A1%D5%B6/%D5%BA%D5%A1%D5%BF%D5%B4%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%A9%D5%B5%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B6.html>

7 <https://www.iccom.org/cprofiles/doku.php?id=countries:arm>

8 <https://www.ovpm.org/city/yerevan-armenia/>

institutional members.⁹

- ▶ [Blue Shield International](#). Armenia joined in 2022.
- ▶ [Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation \(BSEC\)](#)

The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) was established on June 25,

1992, in Istanbul, with the signature of the Summit Declaration by the Heads of State and Government of eleven countries – The Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine.¹⁰

International conventions

The Republic of Armenia has signed the most significant international conventions on culture and heritage.

| | NAME OF THE CONVENTION | Adoption date of the Convention | Acceded by the Republic of Armenia |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict | The Hague, 1954 | September 5, 1993 |
| 2. | European Cultural Convention | Paris, 1954 | February 18, 1997 |
| 3. | Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property | Paris, 1970 | June 22, 1993 |
| 4. | Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (also known as the World Heritage Convention) | Paris, 1972 | December 5, 1993 |
| 5. | Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe | Granada, 1985 | June 1, 2009 |
| 6. | European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised) | Valetta, 1992 | June 18, 2005 |
| 7. | Council of Europe Landscape Convention | Florence, 2000 | February 18, 2004 |
| 8. | Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage | Paris, 2003 | March 21, 2006 |
| 9. | Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society | Faro, 2005 | 2012 |
| 10. | European Charter of Local Self-Government | Strasbourg, 1985 | December 4, 2001 |
| 11. | Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority | Utrecht, 2009 | May 13, 2013 |
| 12. | Convention on Biological Diversity | Rio de Janeiro, 1992 | March 31, 1993 |
| 13. | Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions | Paris, 2005 | February 27, 2007 |

⁹ <https://icom-armenia.mini.icom.museum/>

¹⁰ <http://www.bsec-organization.org/UploadedDocuments/BsecAtAGlance/Economic%20Agenda%2026th%20CMFA%20Belgrade.pdf>

World heritage list

UNESCO 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

There are three cultural sites prescribed in the World Heritage List:

- ▶ the Cathedral and churches of Echmiatsin and the archaeological site of Zvartnots (2000);
- ▶ the monasteries of Haghpat and Sanahin (1996, 2000);
- ▶ the Monastery of Geghard and the Upper Azat Valley (2000).

The Cathedral and churches of Echmiatsin and the archaeological site of Zvartnots

Mother See of Holy Echmiatsin, the seat of the Catholicos¹¹, hosts several early Christian monuments: the Cathedral of Saint Echmiatsin (AD 301), the Church of Saint Hripsime (AD 618) the Church of Saint Gayane (AD 630) and the Saint Shoghakat Church. The ruins of Zvartnots Cathedral (built between AD 643 and 652) is located 5 km to the west of Echmiatsin Cathedral.

The monasteries of Haghpat and Sanahin

The monastic complexes of Haghpat and Sanahin, located in Lori, in the northern region of the Republic of Armenia, are the best examples of developed medieval Christian architecture. The monasteries were built during the reign of the Kiurikian dynasty (AD 978-1118). The complexes offer a fusion of vernacular and Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture, historically famous for being spiritual, educational and scientific centres.

- Haghpat Monastery (first church built in AD 977) has 14 architectural structures. It was constructed between the 10th and 13th centuries and features a stone fence with three entrances. It possesses many architectural and constructional features typical of the period; in particular, the crossing arches of the gavit (13th century) allowed constructors to build a large, heavy roof.

- Sanahin Monastery (first church built in AD 966) has 12 architectural structures, each with a different purpose, and hosts a school (Academy of Magistros) which was a prestigious educational



«Zvartnots» Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve, Armenia.
©MehmetO/Shutterstock

created dozens of manuscripts, both religious and secular in nature.

The Monastery of Geghard and the Upper Azat Valley

The Monastery of Geghard was established by Gregory the Illuminator in the fourth century in the caves of the Azat Valley; it was originally called Ayrivank (the Monastery in the Cave), but was renamed as Geghard Monastery or Geghartavank in the 12th-13th centuries. There are seven spiritual and secular structures in the monastic complex, three of which are hewn out of solid rock.

1. Sites included in the Tentative List of Armenia
2. The archaeological site of the city of Dvin (1995)
3. The archaeological site and Basilica of Yererouk (1995)
4. The Monastery of Noravank and the Upper Amaghov Valley (1995)
5. The Monasteries of Tatev and Tatevi Anapat and the adjacent areas of the Vorotan Valley (1995)

UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Seven elements are inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

11 Catholicos is the primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Duduk and its music (2008)

Duduk belongs to the group of double-reed woodwind mouthpiece instruments, to the family of cylindrical oboes. It consists of a body and a double-reed mouthpiece. The body is an open cylindrical pipe. In Armenia, it is mainly made of apricot wood, although there are also pipes made of a wild pear tree. The reed mouthpiece is fastened on the convex part of the body head, and in order to regulate the tension of which an oval ring made of a flexible part of a grapevine is attached to the middle part. There are seven or eight finger holes on the face side, and one finger hole on the opposite side. The scale is diatonic. By closing the finger holes in half or a quarter, master performers can also get a chromatic scale.

Armenian cross-stones art. Symbolism and craftsmanship of khachkars (2010)

Once Christianity was adopted as a state religion in Armenia, it heavily influenced the development of arts and crafts. Cross stones, or khachkars, are a unique example of Armenian stone carving. They are decorated with geometrical or floral patterns, depicting thematic episodes from the medieval period when they were used as memorials or gravestones. Located mainly in outdoor areas, khachkars have actually performed and continue to perform the function of satisfying the spiritual needs of the believer in open-air spaces as well. Each khachkar becomes a phenomenon that marks, sanctifies and protects the place with its presence; therefore the installation of a khachkar in any area already regulates and sanctifies the atmosphere.



Khachkar workshop, Armavir, Armenia.
©Ruben Nalbandyan

Daredevils of Sassoun or David of Sassoun (2012)

The epic “David of Sassoun” includes four generations of the House of Sassoun, which is known for its national and brave spirit. The protagonist of the epic, “David of Sassoun”, is a defiant and self-reliant youth who by the grace of God defends his homeland in an unequal duel against evil. This recital was formed in the 7th-11th centuries based on centuries-old oral tradition and today it has 160 variants. The epic is in the tradition of heroic folktales that dramatises the history of a whole nation and voices its deepest sentiments and aspirations.

The epic has been transmitted intergenerationally in different dialects, particularly by rural narrators who added desirable features to their favourite characters. The epic is narrated in a lyrical voice with rhythmic enunciation, and separate cantos are sung in a rhyming poetic style. The entire epic has a weighty tone which was narrated by medieval historians for days.

Lavash, the preparation, meaning and appearance of traditional bread as an expression of culture in Armenia (2014)

Lavash is a traditional type of bread that is very thin (2-3 mm thick), longish (around one metre), half a metre wide and light (around 200-250 grams). It is shaped with dough made by mixing wheat flour and water. It is baked in a tonir, which is a special traditional cylindrical clay oven buried in the ground. It is a rare type of bread that may be preserved in a dry condition for up to six months. In order to save fuel and workforce, it is baked, in many families, in large quantities; in some places the lavash necessary for the entire winter is baked at the end of autumn. Dry lavash is sprinkled with cold water or wrapped in a wet piece of cloth one hour before use. Lavash is made without yeast, with natural leaven (dough left from the previous bread baking) which is healthy and easily digestible.

Kochari, traditional group dance (2017)

Kochari is a traditional group dance, which is popular in many communities of Armenia and is danced during holidays, weddings and family gatherings without age, gender or social status-based restrictions, with the accompaniment of the trio of folk instruments, the timing of 2/4, 4/4, 6/8, 7/8 or 8/8.

During public gatherings, the dance starts with a small group, in response to the universally recognisable dance music invitation – the call. Its inspiring rhythm encourages the other participants of the given event to join the dance series during the dance process, which is encouraged by the audience with applause harmonious with the rhythm of the

dance. Among Armenians, it is perceived as a symbol of shared identity and solidarity, contributing to the continuity of the transmission of historical, cultural and ethnic memory.

Armenian letter art and its cultural expressions (2019)

The element represents the centuries-old tradition of Armenian letter art, the entirety of Armenian fonts, the rich culture of decorating letters and different uses thereof in folk households, art, science and other fields. The element underpins the Armenian alphabet, created by Mesrop Mashtots in the year AD 405 under the patronage of Armenian King Vramshapuh and Catholicos Sahak Partev. Mashtots' alphabet has 36 letters that were invented with the principle of one sound per letter. These 36 letters, which were later supplemented with three additional letters, are also used as the graphic signs of the Armenian language today.

The element is applied within the entire territory of Armenia regardless of the age, sex, religious affiliation and profession. It is an inseparable part of self-identification and the language and culture of Armenian society.

Pilgrimage to the Saint Thaddeus Apostle Monastery (2020)

The three-day pilgrimage to the Saint Thaddeus Apostle Monastery is an annual event that marked its 65th anniversary in 2019. The pilgrimage is a community celebration held in July with the participation of Armenians and representatives of the Armenian communities of Iran and those of other countries. The pilgrimage is inclusive for all those who want to participate – clergymen, community leaders, officials of regional and local self-government bodies, craftsmen, people with disabilities and other health issues in search of healing power from the saint, women, and men of different ages, children and elderly people who gather to participate in the religious, cultural, educational and ethnic celebration. Hundreds of pilgrims participate from Armenia, coming from different cities and villages of Armenia.

International programmes

As part of its foreign policy priorities, the Republic of Armenia continuously broadens its engagement in international organisations and programmes, enhancing its role and contribution to the preservation and development of culture and common values in a global context.

Ancient Civilizations Forum

Armenia is a member country of the Ancient Civilizations Forum, which was created in 2017 with the participation of Greece, China, Bolivia, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Italy and Peru. The forum is a cultural initiative among countries from different geographical regions that are cradles of ancient civilisations. Through shaping a broad and multifaceted positive agenda of joint actions of the nine states, the Ancient Civilizations Forum aims to transform culture into a source of soft power and a fundamental tool of a modern and multidimensional foreign policy. Another aim is to highlight the international cultural co-operation as a factor for economic development.

Armenia: Preservation, Valorization and Education of Heritage

The program Armenia: Preservation, Valorisation and Education of Heritage is supported by the Fund of Solidarity for Innovative Programmes of the Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of France, aims at supporting the management of heritage preservation and museum work in Armenia and the capacity building of specialists involved in the field.

Creative Europe

Armenia has joined the Creative Europe programme 2021-2027. The main objectives of the programme are to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage, increase the competitiveness and economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audiovisual sector. The novelties of the programme will contribute to the recovery of these sectors, reinforcing their efforts to become more inclusive, more digital and environmentally more sustainable.¹²

ROCHEMP Center

The Regional Office for Cultural Heritage Enhancement, Management and Protection, the [ROCHEMP Center](#), was created in 2019 as part of the co-operation agreement between the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia and the Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna with the financial support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation. The project aimed at improving the current conditions of architectural and historical heritage of Armenia, promoting more effective safeguarding strategies.

12

<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/about-the-creative-europe-programme>



Preparation of lavash bread, Armenia.
©LightField Studios/Shutterstock

5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL OF THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME IN ARMENIA

In the framework of the Country Mapping Document for Armenia, a SWOT analysis was conducted to reveal the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to Armenia's participation in the Cultural Routes programme and outline the development perspectives.

STRENGTHS

- ▶ Distinctive cultural history and heritage
 - » Over 24 500 monuments
 - » Over 125 museums
 - » Over 2 million artefacts
- ▶ Strong existing legislative and institutional framework in the field of heritage.
- ▶ Strategic role/value of cultural heritage in driving tourism and investment.
- ▶ Country Mapping Document for Armenia on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Armenia.
- ▶ Development of tourism infrastructure, especially in the regions.
- ▶ Increased interest in the Cultural Routes programme by stakeholders.
- ▶ Broad engagement in international programmes and platforms.
- ▶ New agreements of partnership with several Routes.

WEAKNESSES

- ▶ Lack of information about the Cultural Routes programme in Armenia.
- ▶ Poor infrastructural development of cultural sites and their management.
- ▶ Lack of sufficient communication infrastructure – transport and roads.
- ▶ Information and knowledge gaps regarding cultural heritage assets.

THREATS

- ▶ Post-conflict context, most notably the economic and social conditions.
- ▶ Geopolitical challenges and relations with neighbouring countries.
- ▶ Economic fluctuations, which have detrimental effect on the tourism sector.
- ▶ Insufficient funding



Areni Wine Festival at Vayots Dzor Province, Armenia.
©lovelypeace/Shutterstock

6. INVENTORY OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CULTURAL ROUTES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The official brochure and leaflet of the Cultural Routes programme was translated into Armenian in 2020, available on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe's official webpage (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/visibility>).

A major activity was the preparation of the Country Mapping Document for Armenia to further promote and develop the Cultural Routes programme in Armenia and reveal the European dimension of Armenian cultural heritage.

As mentioned, the Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe has not been widely represented in Armenia. Accordingly, along with the development of the country mapping document, presentations for different groups of stakeholders and interest parties were organised, with a focus on cultural institutions, civic society and other respective organisations.

The presentation's agenda was as follows:

- ▶ outline of the benefits of becoming a certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe;
- ▶ introduction to the University Network for Cultural

Routes Studies. The university network encourages research on subjects related to the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe; encourages students to undertake their academic research on Cultural Routes; jointly applies for European grants with the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR); participates in the annual programme of activities of the EICR; and offers scientific advice where required;

- ▶ country mapping process: key findings and expectations.

Iter Vitis Route

Armenia joined the Iter Vitis Cultural Route in 2019. The route was created in 2009 and celebrates the culture of wine, wine making and the viticultural landscapes that

have shaped Europe's landscapes and peoples.

In 2020, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the European Federation Iter Vitis and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia with the main goal to develop the route in Armenia and foster the promotion and preservation of wine heritage and viticulture. As a gesture of partnership, the Areni-1 Cave, an ancient location of viticultural heritage, was awarded Honorary Membership of the European Federation Iter Vitis.

Negotiations are currently being carried out with a number of institutions in order to expand the Armenian presence within the Iter Vitis Route.

Impressionisms Route

The National Gallery of Armenia joined the Impressionisms Routes Network in November 2022. "Armenian Impressionism", born in the second half of the 19th century on the basis of traditions of classicism and late realism, was fully developed in the 1900-1910s, finding its various manifestations in the work of Armenian artists of the late 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. Many Armenian painters and sculptors were educated in prominent European studios and by fine art academies. Consequently, Impressionism took root in Armenia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Notable Armenian Impressionists include Hovhannes Aivazovsky, Yeghishe Tadevosyan, Sedrak Arakelyan, Vahram Gaifejian, Martiros Saryan, Hovhannes Ter-Tadevosyan and Gabriel Gyurdzhyan. These artists' works are preserved in the National Gallery of Armenia.

The extensive and rich collection of Armenian Impressionism of the National Gallery of Armenia includes works of famous Armenian artists who have studied in France and Russia. An exhibition "Armenian Impressionism" has been held in the National Gallery of Armenia in May-August, 2022, which is of great importance for the re-evaluation and comprehension



Yeghishe Tadevosyan, *The Woman Reading in the Garden*, 1903, oil on canvas, Armenia. Source: www.wikiart.org

of Armenian fine art. The Impressionisms Routes will have the mission to promote Armenian Impressionists and landscapers such as Yeghishe Tadevosyan (1870-1936), Karapet (Charles) Adamyán (1872-1947), Vahram Gaifejian (1879-1960), Sedrak Arakelyan (1884-1942) and Ohannès (Jean) Alhazian (1881-1958), who are all represented at the National Gallery of Armenia.



Vahram Gaifejian. *Lilac Flowers*, 1917, oil on canvas, Armenia. Source: artchallenge.ru

European Route of Jewish Heritage

In 2023 Armenia joined the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage as part of the Cultural Route Program of the Council of Europe.

The Armenian-Jewish cultural-historical ties trace centuries back, attested through diverse testimonies in ancient historiography and archaeological research. Medieval Jewish cemeteries (dated between 1266 AD and 1497 AD) discovered in Yeghegis, Vayots Dzor Region of Armenia, witness centuries-old shared heritage and connections.

Today, there is a small, yet a very lively Jewish community in Armenia, represented by the "Jewish Community of Armenia" NGO– the Armenian affiliate of the World Jewish Congress. The partnership will foster further promotion of Jewish heritage and culture in

Armenia, contributing to development of new ties, dialogue and diversity, and as stated by the Council of Europe's Cultural Route Program - bringing people and places together in networks of shared history and heritage.



Jewish cemetery in Yeghegis, Vayots Dzor, Armenia.
©Nairi Hakhverdi/en.wikipedia.org/



Jewish Holocaust Memorial, Yerevan.
© Yerevan Municipality

Prehistoric Rock Art Trails

In 2023 Armenia joined Prehistoric Rock Art Trails Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. Armenia hosts hundreds of rock art paintings dated from the 12th to 1st millennia BC, from Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages. Armenia's rock art is predominantly located in small caves and rock shelters formed in basalt and tuff formations within river gorges; altitudes range from 1 100 metres to 1 700 metres above sea level. Both the insides and outsides of the caverns were smooth and thus offered suitable surfaces for drawing.¹³

Drawings in the caves of the Khosrov Reserve, the Darband Cave, the Geghamavan-1 Cave in the Kasakh River gorge, Ughtasar and in the foothills of Mount Aragats are of particular interest and would be suitable additions to the Prehistoric Rock Art Trails.



Khosrov natural reserve, Armenia.
©Kirill Skorobogatko/Shutterstock



The Carahunge (Zorats Karer) archaeological site, Syunik, Armenia.
©Kirill Skorobogatko/Shutterstock

13 Khechoyan A. and Gasparyan B. (2014), "Rock-painting phenomenon in the Republic of Armenia", in Gasparyan B. and Makoto A. (eds), *Stone Age of Armenia. A Guide-book to the Stone Age Archaeology in the Republic of Armenia*, Kanazawa University, Kanazawa, pp. 315-337.

The European Cemeteries Route

Following adoption of Christianity as the state religion in 301 AD, cross stones (Khachkar) were erected as memorials and tombstones in Armenia, demonstrating the nation's ancient aesthetics and symbolizing the connection to ideas of life and death. Noratus, a medieval cemetery-park, houses the world's biggest khachkar collection, about 1,000 graves, dating 13th -17th centuries.

Each of them has their own distinctive design, made of ornamental or life scenes. And from the medieval field of the largest cross stones, which was located in Jugha (Nakhijevan), unfortunately, unique examples have been preserved, one of which can be seen in the History Museum of Armenia. Apart from the ancient khachkar cemeteries, there are also modern pantheons in the country, where many outstanding Armenian cultural elite representatives are buried. The most prominent is the Pantheon and Park after Komitas founded in 1936.



Noratus cemetery-park, Armenia.
©Aydin Hassan/Shutterstock



Pantheon and Park after Komitas, Armenia.
©Komitas Museum,

The European Fairy Tale Route

In 2023 the Hovhannes Toumanyan Museum has joined the European Fairy Tale Route thus extending the cultural route framework of Armenia. Hovhannes Toumanian is a panarmenian poet.

Every Armenian knows him well from the very childhood to the old days. He was a great poet and writer, philosopher and translator, social activist and humanist. The museum has a research center researching and publishing the archives of Toumanian's family and especially his children, new materials about Toumanian and also organizing conferences on children's literature and fairy tales. Since 2009 the Museum has been organizing the «Three apples fell from the sky...» annual competition-festival of storytelling and dialect, aiming at revitalizing the culture of storytelling, oral speech as the most important means of presenting folklore material, encouraging the discovery of creative abilities of youth, recognizing the culture of national minorities living in Armenia and promoting cultural dialogue.



Hovhannes Toumanyan museum, Armenia;
©Hovhannes Toumanyan museum



Jermuk, Armenia.
©Jermuk Municipality

7. OVERVIEW OF THE POTENTIAL EXTENSION OF EXISTING CULTURAL ROUTES

The research conducted as part of the Country Mapping Document reveals a great potential of Armenia to join more Cultural Routes.

European Route of Historic Thermal Towns (2010)

As a mountainous country, on a geological territory with ongoing seismic activity, Armenia's thermal sources are rich. There are over 700 thermal springs in the country, many of which are suitable for swimming. The hot springs can also be used for medicinal purposes due to their healing qualities. The famous resort city of Jermuk is located on a plateau 2 080 metres above sea level; it is surrounded by mountains. The earliest written record of Jermuk appears in the 13th century work "History of the Province of Sisakan" by medieval historian Stepanos Orbelian. Jermuk hosts the remains of an ancient cyclopean fortress and the ruins of an 8th century basilica; both of which evidence early settlements. There are also thermal spas in other resorts such as Dilijan, Hankavan and Arzakan.

the best indicator of cultural and economic connections, which developed in the Middle Ages especially through the Silk Road. Visitors are invited to learn about ancient ceramic art in the museums or create their own art in workshops organised for ceramic art enthusiasts.



Medieval Armenian ceramics, 9th-13th centuries, Dvin, Armenia and Ceramic egg, 18th century, Kutina/Kütahya
Source: <https://artsandculture.google.com>

European Route of Ceramics (2012)

Pottery is one of the oldest Armenian craft traditions, dating back to the sixth millennia BC. Large vessels to carry water, preserve foods and store wine were found in the ruins of ancient dwellings, often with etchings of deer, fish, trees, the sun, and mythological creatures like dragons and serpents. The findings from different historical periods are exhibited in museums across Armenia. Ceramic art was also developed by Armenians outside of the borders of modern-day Armenia. The most popular style comes from the Armenian school of ceramics in Jerusalem, which derives from/has deep roots in the Kutina (present-day Kütahya, Türkiye) school of ceramics. Ceramic art is preserved and developed in cultural centres in Gyumri, Goris and Yerevan.

The ceramic art of Armenia has excellent potential to contribute to the European Route of Ceramics. Pottery is



The «Abraham of Kütahya» Ewer, a small monochrome liturgical ewer with an Armenian inscription, 1510, British Museum.
Source: <https://islamicworld.britishmuseum.org/collection/RRM15544>

14 <http://rcchd.icomos.org.ge/?l=E&m=4-4&JID=3&AID=26&I2>

15 Petrosyan A. and Bobokhyan A. (2015), *The Vishap Stone Stelae*, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Yerevan.

European Route of Megalithic Culture (2013)

Armenia hosts cultural heritage from ancient eras in the form of cyclopean fortresses, dolmens, menhirs, vishapakars (dragon stone) and Carahunge. The territory of Armenia staged elements of the Neolithic revolution; consequently, Neolithic architecture is situated in its mountainous environment.

Vishapakar¹⁴ – also known as vishap stones, vishap stellas, “serpent stones”, “dragon stones” or simply as vishaps – are typical menhirs found in large quantities in the Armenian highlands. They can be found in natural and artificial ponds, and other sources of water. They are commonly carved, from one piece of stone into the shape of a vishap – a mystical creature of a cigar-like shape with a fish or serpent head. There are currently 150 known vishapakar, of which 90 are found on the territory of Armenia.¹⁵

Carahunge – also known as Zorats Karer, Karahunj, Qarahunj and Carenish – is a prehistoric archaeological site near the town of Sisian in the Syunik Province of Armenia.

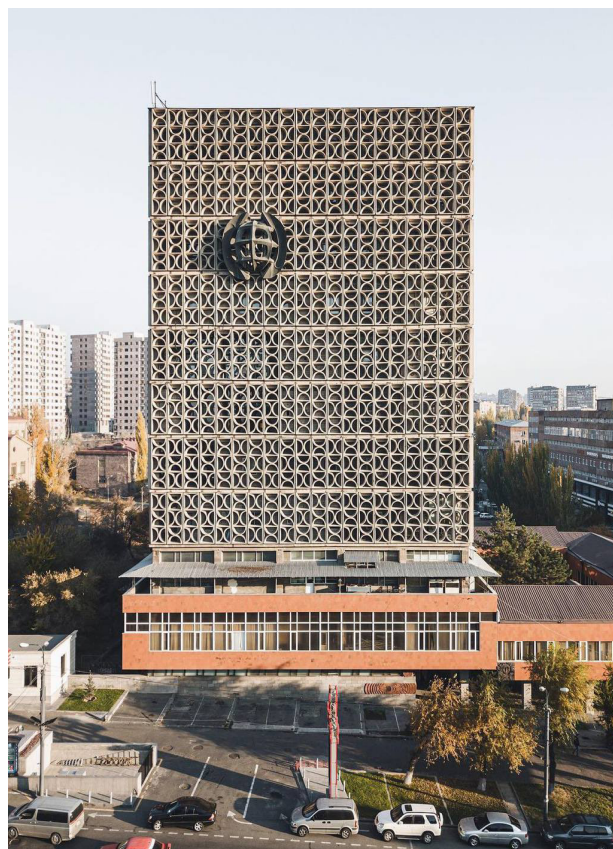


Vishap (ancient Armenian god of water), Armavir, Armenia.
©Ruslan Harutyunov/Shutterstock

It is also often referred to as the “Armenian Stonehenge”. It is believed that the site was formerly a necropolis or an observatory. It is located on a mountain plateau and occupies an area roughly seven hectares in size to the left of the canyon of the River Dar: a tributary of the Vorotan River.

ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th Century in Europe’s Urban Memory (2014)

“The architecture in Armenia was affected by the authoritative nature of architecture in the Soviet Union in the early twentieth century and the growth and prosperity of modernism and continued until 1990. ... This led to a socialistic-nationalistic and Stalinist architecture in the subordinate countries such as Armenia, which was dominated by the political ideas of Soviet Communist government.” The capital city Yerevan houses some impressive examples of Soviet architecture, which combine industrial brutalist design with characteristics of traditional Armenian architecture.



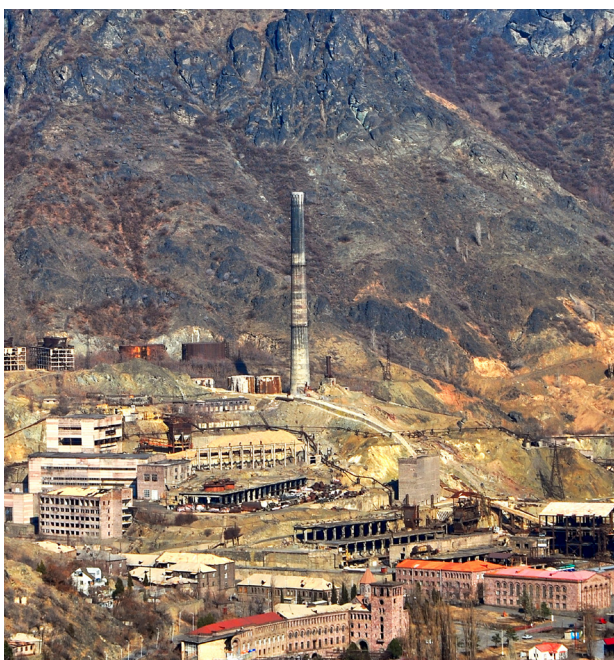
The former Institute of Communications. (Now: Telecommunications company), Yerevan, Armenia.
©@pancaucasus from <https://twitter.com/>

In 2018, 7 prominent examples of the Soviet modernist architecture were recognised as monuments of national significance, including - the Ayrarat Cinema building (1974); the Cascade Complex (1980s), now housing the Cafesjian Center for the Arts; the Hrazdan Stadium (1971); the Summer Hall of the Moscow Cinema (1966); the Republic Square Station of the Yerevan metro (1981); the Yeritasardakan Station of the Yerevan metro (1981); Zvartnots Airport (1980).

European Route of Industrial Heritage (2019)

Armenia is rich in natural resources, in particular copper, molybdenum and gold, marked with a long history of mining since the 1770s. "The Caucasus is of special interest in the study of the origins of metals; it is the easternmost point from which prehistoric remains are known; older than Europe and Greece, it still retains the traces of those civilizations that were the cradle of our own." ¹⁶ Important Armenian industrial cities include Alaverdi, Kapan, Vanadzor, Agarak and Qajaran.

Armenia's economy is largely supported by the mining industry, with the sector contributing to 50% of the country's exports in 2011.¹⁷ Minerals which can be found in the Lori province include molybdenum, diamond and gold. Lead, silver zinc, granite, gypsum, limestone, basalt and diatomite can all be found in smaller quantities.



The industrial town of Alaverdi, Armenia.
©Karen Faljyan/Shutterstock

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 the industrial development of the country was hindered due to geopolitical situations. However, the industrial sites and factories offer a strong potential for the country to join the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

European Route of Historic Gardens (2020)

Public gardens, which serve local communities and preserve the country's unique flora, fauna and spices, can be found throughout Armenia. The Yerevan Botanical Garden is the largest of these gardens. It is managed by the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, whose Institute of Botany is responsible for Armenian plant collections. The Yerevan Botanical Garden is roughly 80 hectares in size; its collection includes around 200 species of endemic, rare and declining plant species. As such, the collection offers a great resource for research into Armenian flora. Yerevan also houses the oldest public garden in Armenia, the English Park, which dates back to the mid-19th century.

The Sochut Dendropark after Edmund Leonowicz, founded in 1931, is another prominent garden in Lori region, Armenia. The garden is 35 hectares in size: 17.5 of these hectares are comprised of natural forest and 15 of ornamental trees. Other historical gardens in Armenia include the Vanadzor Botanical Garden (1936) and Ijevan Dendropark (1962).



Stepanavan Dendropark, Armenia.
©Astghik Marabyan

POTENTIAL NEW CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE EMERGING FROM ARMENIA

Religious architecture of christian europe

The proposed Route of the Religious Architecture of Christian Europe will create a new network, revealing and promoting the developments of spiritual architecture across countries in Europe. As the first nation to adopt Christianity, Armenia had a seminal contribution to the development of Christian architecture and early Christian churches and sites in Armenia date back 4th -5th centuries. The Route will unite countries with Christian heritage creating new opportunities for development and research of this shared heritage.



The church of S. Karapet, (9th century), and the remains of the Gavit (part of the Sevanavank monastery) on Lake Sevan, Armenia.
©frantic00/Shutterstock

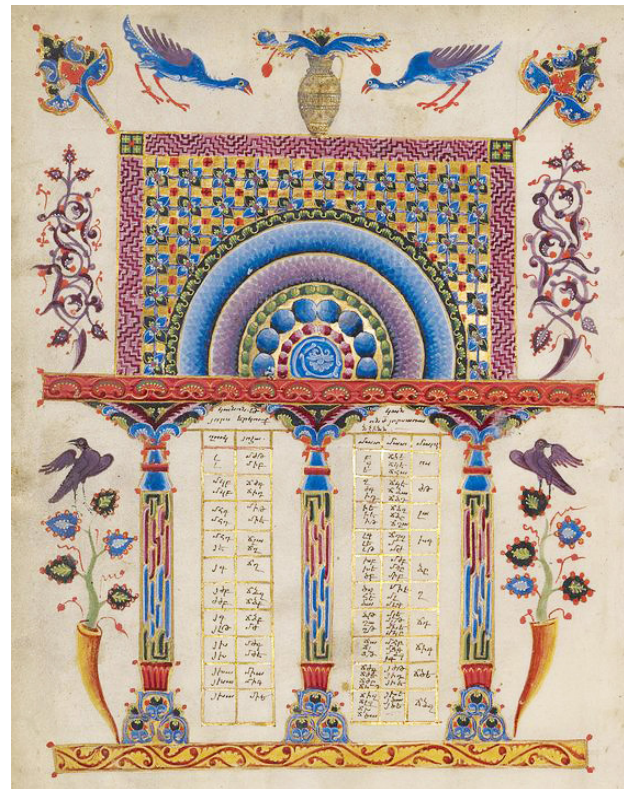
European route of written heritage

Written heritage in the territory of Armenia has a history of several millennia. They are presented to us in various hieroglyphs, and from the 1st millennium BC, also in the form of Urartian cuneiforms and Aramaic inscriptions. You can familiarise yourself with this heritage both on the spot by visiting Erebuni Fortress, Tsovinar and other monuments, as well as in the History Museum of Armenia, where the best examples of written heritage are presented.

The Armenian alphabet was created in the 5th century by Mesrop Mashtots, which fostered research, translation and education across Armenia. About 20 000 manuscripts and fragments in Armenian and other languages are kept in the Matenadaran - Research

Institute of Ancient Manuscripts. Rich collections of Armenian manuscripts are also kept in Venice, the Vatican, Vienna, Paris, etc.

With the advent of printing, Armenians also established printing houses in various cities across the world and contributed to publishing "arts" in Venice, Vienna, Amsterdam, Saint Petersburg, Moscow and Echmiatsin. The proposed European Route of Written Heritage has a vast potential to unite European countries and develop a new cultural route of shared heritage of books and written legacy.



Toros Roslin (1256-1268) (Spiritual Promenades)
Source: <https://i.pinimg.com>



Toros Roslin (1256-1268)
Source: <https://i.pinimg.com>

Urartu civilisation route

Urartu (Kingdom of Van, Kingdom of Ayrarat or Biainili) was contemporary to the mighty Assyrian Kingdom. It was the first statehood on the territory of the Armenian highlands and was active throughout the Bronze and Iron Ages. The remains of this ancient civilisation date back to the 19th century and can be found on the territories of modern-day Armenia, eastern Türkiye and northwestern Iran. Among these remains are the cuneiform inscriptions left by the Kings of the Urartian dynasty, which provide information on the territories they invaded; the fortresses and canals they constructed; the vineyards they planted; and the religious rituals they conducted. The kingdom developed arts, crafts, ceramics and metalwork, before disappearing in the 6th century. The territory under the rule of Urartu stretched from the Caspian Sea to the Upper Euphrates.¹⁸

This route could become an interesting path for discovering a unique ancient civilisation. Urartology is a distinct branch in the human sciences; scholars in the field will certainly be interested in developing and promoting this potential route.



«Erebuni» Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve, Yerevan;
©Erebuni Museum



Erebuni fortress, built in 782 BC, Yerevan.
©Erebuni Museum



Erebuni fortress, built in 782 BC, Yerevan.
©Erebuni Museum



Cross-stones, khachkar, at Noravank Monastery, Armenia
©Artem Avetisyan/Shutterstock

8. REVIEW OF NATIONAL FINANCING INSTRUMENTS

The main funding source for the cultural field is the state budget of the Republic of Armenia. Funding from the state budget is made according to the operational significance of economic and scientific classification of budgetary costs. Funding is made on two administrative levels. The basis for the funding structure are the annual projects for the protection, expansion and development of culture.

Budget allocations for the cultural field are made annually, according to the Law of the Republic of Armenia on the State Budget.

Funding in the cultural field is made based on the Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Budgetary System, the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Local Self-Government and the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Financial Equalisation.

In addition to the budgetary allocations of the Republic of Armenia, the volume of private sector funding has increased in the monument preservation field.

The field of monuments' preservation and use is funded by:

- a) state and community budget means;
- b) funds of monument owners and users;
- c) funds of cultural, public and other organisations and foundations;
- d) other funds not prohibited by the law.



Kochari Traditional Dance in Dashtadem Castle Historical and Cultural Reserve, Armenia.
©Akunq

9. FIELD MISSION REPORT AND ANALYSIS

The main method of the current research was a field mission and interviews, details of which are attached to the document.

During the field mission research, representatives of all state, non-governmental and other field organisations¹⁹ were interviewed in order to define their vision on the potential of the programme at the local and international levels.

It was planned that a field mission to the Areni-1 Cave would take place in September 2021. Unfortunately, due to restrictions necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, large gatherings were not permitted. The presentation was consequently organised on Zoom and the survey conducted by interviewing stakeholders at the local and European levels.

Below is an overview of the virtual field meeting.

- ▶ A presentation on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe was delivered, with information on Armenia's current relationship to the programme and the potential to increase the country's level of participation through local stakeholders.
- ▶ A presentation on the potential of relevant regions becoming involved in the programme was delivered, with follow-up questions answered.

- ▶ Discussions were held with participants exploring potential activities which would improve touristic offers of cultural heritage sites.
- ▶ Discussions on the importance of protecting cultural heritage in order to develop local economies were held.
- ▶ The essential role of local communities for the preservation and efficient use of cultural heritage was outlined.
- ▶ A survey on the potential that the Cultural Routes programme offers to Armenia was conducted.

Selected officials and experts were interviewed in order to find out their opinions on the potential of the programme in Armenia. Ten officials, experts and scholars in Armenia, Austria and Italy, of whom 90% were not aware of the programme, were contacted for this survey. They all think that the programme has potential. Some of them are interested in developing further the involvement in existing routes or engaging with the establishment of the new routes proposed by this document. Conducting the survey itself can be said to have had a beneficial impact as it has increased awareness of the Cultural Routes programme.



Cafesjian Center for the Arts, Yerevan, Armenia.
© Cafesjian Center for the Arts

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the Council of Europe Cultural Routes programme

- ▶ More intensive and closer collaboration between the Cultural Routes Programme entities and local authorities to increase Armenia's involvement in the Cultural Routes programme.
- ▶ Consultations on the development of local infrastructure so that they meet the necessary criteria for the Cultural Routes programme.
- ▶ Organisation of training sessions for those institutions that have opted to join the Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Connect the associations and representatives of the ten existing routes with the relevant Armenian authorities in order to support the involvement of local stakeholders.
- ▶ Communicate to the local authorities the criteria necessary for joining existing routes.
- ▶ Set up a reporting strategy for each calendar year to

see how the development of the programme at the local, regional and international levels is progressing.

- ▶ Creation of a guidebook on how to promote the routes at the national and international level, with a presentation of the best practices.

Recommendations for the local state authorities

Policy, strategic planning

- ▶ Develop a distinct promotion policy and an implementation plan, incorporating media interviews and online and in-person meetings with potential stakeholders.
- ▶ Consultations with the relevant local authorities in order to develop new routes.
- ▶ The EPA representative for Armenia, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic

of Armenia and other institutions at the state level should develop a strategy for the integration of the Cultural Routes programme on a more active basis in Armenia.

- ▶ Develop a long-term and short-term strategic plan for the promotion and activation of the Cultural Routes programme in Armenia.

Communication and promotion

- ▶ Transparency in the exchange of information and an increase in communication between all relevant state bodies and within the programme itself.
- ▶ The EPA representative for Armenia should provide stakeholders with information on the programme and individual routes to which Armenia has the potential to accede on a regular basis.
- ▶ An official page dedicated to the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme on the website of the EPA representative for Armenia and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia could increase the visibility and boost participation at the local level.
- ▶ Official accounts on social media websites administrated by the EPA representative for Armenia would aid the dissemination of information. In particular, posts written in Armenian would increase engagement levels.
- ▶ Creating simple infographics about the Cultural Routes and disseminating them could raise awareness.

Implementation

- ▶ Organise round-table discussions on individual routes in order to attract new members on a regular basis.
- ▶ Organise meetings with relevant cultural institutions to extend further their engagement and membership in diverse routes and associations.
- ▶ Appropriate financing to low budget institutions for the capability of paying the membership fee.
- ▶ Encourage the membership by funding the membership fee by outsourcing the amount.
- ▶ Identify stakeholders to join the existing Cultural Routes, to which Armenia – as assessed in this document – has the potential to accede.

- ▶ Involve all possible stakeholders in the process of developing Cultural Routes in Armenia.
- ▶ Identify and co-operate with Armenian communities existing in Council of Europe member states in order to find partners and boost their participation from their respective countries.
- ▶ Sign a memorandum of understanding with all possible stakeholders in order to increase the promotion of the Cultural Routes programme through their individual channels.
- ▶ Create a shortlist of stakeholders and their respective contact details so that they can be informed of activities or events related to the programme.
- ▶ Translate information on the 11 existing routes which Armenia has the potential to join and send it to the shortlisted stakeholders.
- ▶ Organise public talks on an annual basis for the general public's benefit, either online or in person.
- ▶ Organise promotion meetings with the universities which, as assessed in this document, could potentially accede to the Cultural Routes University Network in order to encourage their accession.
- ▶ Communicate the benefits of the Cultural Routes programme to tour operators, businesspersons, and other commercial and tourism field representatives.



Vineyard row, Armenia.
©lady.diana/Shutterstock

11. CONCLUSIONS

This research was conducted with a view to assessing the potential for extending the participation of different stakeholders at the national level in the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes programme.

The following conclusions have been reached:

- ▶ Armenia, being located at the crossroads of the east and west, south and north and at the centre of many major historical events, has inherited a vast cultural and historical heritage; thus the country shows a great potential for joining at least 10 of the existing Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe;
- ▶ Armenia has a diverse natural landscape with unique flora and fauna: another important factor when considering the potential for Armenia’s increased participation in the Cultural Routes programme;
- ▶ Four potential themes have been proposed as new Cultural Routes. Their relevance to the existing programme infrastructure and to the heritage of other Council of Europe member states was foundational to their selection as proposed routes;
- ▶ The Armenia Diaspora that has formed in many European countries is another resource which can be drawn upon to develop Armenia’s participation within existing and new Cultural Routes;
- ▶ The international and national experts and scholars contacted through the survey expressed an interest in developing Armenia’s participation in the Cultural Routes programme;
- ▶ The survey showed that the majority of stakeholders are not aware of the programme at all; it therefore offered an opportunity for them to learn more about the programme. The majority of participants expressed great interest in the programme;
- ▶ Currently, internet media, including social media, is not being effectively utilised to raise awareness of the programme and increase participation;
- ▶ Lack of knowledge about the procedures and benefits of membership to each individual Cultural Route inhibits motivation;
- ▶ It is still necessary to develop the infrastructure of many Cultural Routes. For example, information panels and signage around the historical monuments could be improved;
- ▶ There are at least three state universities that could join the Cultural Routes University Network;



Blue Persian Mosque in Yerevan, Armenia.
©ArtNat/Shutterstock

12. APPENDICES

12.1. Certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

1. *Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes* (1987)
2. *The Hansa* (1991)
3. *Viking Route* (1993)
4. *Via Francigena* (1994)
5. *Routes of El legado andalusí* (1997)
6. *Phoenicians' Route* (2003)
7. *Iron Route in the Pyrennes* (2003)
8. *European Mozart Ways* (2004)
9. *European Route of Jewish Heritage* (2004)
10. *Saint Martin of Tours Route* (2005)
11. *Cluniac Sites in Europe* (2005)
12. *Routes of the Olive Tree* (2005)
13. *Via Regia* (2005)
14. *TRANSROMANICA – The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage* (2007)
15. *Iter Vitis Route* (2009)
16. *European Route of Cistercian Abbeys* (2010)
17. *European Cemeteries Route* (2010)
18. *Prehistoric Rock Art Trails* (2010)
19. *European Route of Historic Thermal Towns* (2010)
20. *Route of Saint Olav Ways* (2010)
21. *European Route of Ceramics* (2012)
22. *European Route of Megalithic Culture* (2013)
23. *Huguenot and Waldensian Trail* (2013)
24. *ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th Century In Europe's Urban Memory* (2014)
25. *Réseau Art Nouveau Network* (2014)
26. *Via Habsburg* (2014)
27. *Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route* (2015)
28. *European Routes of Emperor Charles V* (2015)
29. *Destination Napoleon* (2015)
30. *In the Footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson* (2015)
31. *Fortified Towns of the Grande Region* (2016)
32. *Impressionisms Routes* (2018)
33. *Via Charlemagne* (2018)
34. *European Route of Industrial Heritage* (2019)
35. *Iron Curtain Trail* (2019)
36. *Le Corbusier Destinations: Architectural Promenades* (2019)
37. *Liberation Route Europe* (2019)
38. *Routes of Reformation* (2019)
39. *European Route of Historic Gardens* (2020)
40. *Via Romea Germanica* (2020)
41. *Aeneas Route* (2021)
42. *Alvar Aalto Route* (2021)
43. *Cyril and Methodius Route* (2021)
44. *European Route d'Artagnan* (2021)
45. *Iron Age Danube Route* (2021)
46. *Historic Cafés Route* (2022)
47. *European Fairy Tale Route* (2022)
48. *Women Writers Route* (2022)

12.2. List of laws of the Republic of Armenia relating to culture

1. *RA Law on Import and Export of Cultural Property, December 6, 2004*
2. *RA Law on the Basics of Cultural Legislation, November 20, 2002*
3. *RA Law on Copyright and Related Fields, December 8, 1999*
4. *RA Law on Intangible Cultural Heritage, October 8, 2009*
5. *RA Law on the Preservation and Use of Immovable Monuments of History and Culture and the Historical Environment, November 11, 1998*
6. *RA Law on Archival Work, June 8, 2004*
7. *RA Law on Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments Considered State Property and RA Not Subject to Alienation, April 11, 2003*
8. *RA Law on Libraries and Library Work, March 21, 2012*
9. *RA Law on Tourism and Touristic Activities, December 17, 2003*
10. *RA Law on Urban Development, November 6, 1995*
11. *RA Law on mandatory copies of documents, June 4, 2005*
12. *RA Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas, November 27, 2006*



Vineyard Sun, Armenia.
© Karas Wines

13. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abovyan K. (1956), "Complete collection of compositions", Volume 8, EVN, pp.523.
- Armenia Development Strategy for 2014-2025, appendix to the Government of the Republic of Armenia Decree No. 442 N on 27 March 2014.
- Bobokhyan A. et al. (2019), *The Vishap: from fairy tale to reality*, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA, Yerevan, pp. 652.
- Bobokhyan A. et al. (2019), *The Urartian God Quera and the Metamorphosis of the 'Vishap' Cult*, in: Avetisyan P.S., Dan R., Grekyan Y.H. (eds.), *Over the Mountains and Far Away: Studies in Near Eastern History and Archaeology presented to Mirjo Salvini on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday*, Oxford, pp. 98-105.
- Belli O. (1999), *The Anzaf fortresses and the gods of Urartu*, Istanbul
- Dan R. (2020), *A Study of the Toponyms of the Kingdom of Bia/Urartu*, Serie Orientale Roma No. 19, Scienze e Lettere, Rome, pp.328.
- Donabédian P. (2020), *Ereyouyk – Un site archéologique majeur, haut lieu de l'Arménie chrétienne*, Ed. Sarguis Khachents – Printinfo, pp. 204.
- Gasparyan B. and Makoto A. (eds) (2014), *Stone Age of Armenia. A Guide-book to the Stone Age Archaeology in the Republic of Armenia*, Kanazawa University, Kanazawa.
- Hakobyan H. (1932), *Travels [Ուղեգրություններ]*, Yerevan.
- Hakobyan J. (2003), "Life in the monuments of death: a visit to the cemetery village, Noraduz", *ArmeniaNow*, Yerevan.
- Harutunyan V. (1992), "History of Armenian architecture", Luys Publishing House, Yerevan, pp. 632.
- Harutyunyan Kh. (ed., 2022), "Historical and Cultural Heritage of Armenia", Yerevan.
- "Heritage assessment report Armenia" (2017), *Community-Led Urban Strategies in Historic Towns (COMUS)*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.
- Kotanjian G. (2014), "The artistic legacy of Impressionism and Armenian pictorial art (second half of the XIX–first half of the XX centuries)", Yerevan.
- Kouymjian D. (n.d.), "Arts of Armenia" sculpture, *Armenian Studies Programme*, California State University, Fresno.
- Kouymjian D. (2014), *The Archaeology of the Armenian Manuscript: Codicology, Paleography and Beyond*, in V. Calzolari and M. E. Stone (eds.), *Armenian Philology in the Modern Era. From Manuscript to Digital Text (Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section Eighth: Uralic and Central Asian Studies, 23/1)*, Leiden-Boston: Brill, pp. 5-22.
- Kroll S. and al. (eds) (2012), *Biainili-Urartu. The Proceedings of the Symposium held in Munich 12-14 October 2007*, Peeters Publishers, Leuven.
- Maranci C. (2003), "[The architect Trdat. Building practices and cross-cultural exchange in Byzantium and Armenia](#)", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Volume 62 No. 3, University of California Press, Oakland, pp. 294-305.
- Moghadam M. H., Shahsavari F. and Mahdavinejad M. (2013), "Democracy and totalitarianism in contemporary architecture of developing countries, case: Armenia (1850-2010)", *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, Volume 3 No. 8, 2013.
- Petrosyan A. and Bobokhyan A. (2015), *The Vishap Stone Stelae*, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Yerevan.
- Orengo Al. (2016), *L'invenzione dell'alfabeto armeno: fatti e problemi*, in *Rhesis (International Journal of Linguistics, Philology and Literature)*, Linguistics and Philology 7.1, Cagliari, pp. 9-27.
- Petrosyan H. (2008), *Khachkar. The Origin, Functions, Iconography, Semantics*, Yerevan State University, Yerevan, pp. 406.
- Pickard R. (2017), "Report on increasing the competitiveness of the cultural heritage sector in Armenia", *European Union-Eastern Partnership Culture and Creativity Programme study*.
- [Republic of Armenia National Security Strategy, 2007.](#)
- United States Agency for International Development (2020), "Tourism development concept paper, Armenia", *Competitive Armenian Private Sector project*.
- Wijesuriya G., Thompson J. and Young C. (2013), "Managing cultural world heritage", *World Heritage Resource Manual*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, p. 155.
- Zulalyan M. K. (1985), *European authors about Armenia and Armenians (XIII-XVI centuries)*, Yerevan, pp. 17.

**Council of Europe
Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity**

F-67075 Strasbourg

**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes
- Council of Europe**

*Neumünster Abbey
28 Münster Street
L-2160 Luxembourg*

Phone. : +352 24 12 50

www.coe.int/routes

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union.

All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.