



APPLICATION OF FARO PRINCIPLES IN GEORGIA. AN OVERVIEW

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Legal Framework

Georgia has signed the Faro Convention on 01.09.2010 and ratified it on 04.01.2011. The Convention entered into force on 01.06.2011

- ❑ The Constitution of Georgia
- ❑ The Law of Georgia on Culture
- ❑ The Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage Protection
- ❑ Organic Law of Georgia Local Self-Governance Code
- ❑ Law on the Socio-Economic and Cultural Development of Mountainous Regions
- ❑ The Law on Museums
- ❑ The Law on Export and Import of Cultural Properties
- ❑ The National Strategy - Culture 2025



Civil Society Initiatives & Actions

- ⚙️ There are around **1280 civil society organizations** registered. **112** list “culture and art” as at least one of their areas of activity. **4660 companies** list “art, entertainment and leisure” as at least one of their areas of activity, out of which **1456** are active.

- ⚙️ In Georgia there is a clear trend of increased activity of heritage groups and evolution of a civil movement. Advocacy and public awareness organizations, and also spontaneously emerging groups are now more active.



Public Awareness Campaigns

Public Rallies

Protests and Manifestations

TV Debates and Discussions

Support to CSOs

*Non-governmental and voluntary activities related to cultural heritage are supported to some extent by central and local government through **cultural institutions, open grant competitions and tenders**. In 2020, former Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia together with its structural institutions have announced **19 open grant competitions (with the total budget of 850,000 EUR)** and supported projects of up to **155 civil society and private organizations**.*

Significant support to civil society initiatives come from international agencies as well. **U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation Grant (AFCP)** – Proposal solicitation for cultural heritage preservation project (\$10,000 – \$500,000). In Georgia, the AFCP has funded 19 preservation projects worth nearly \$1,5 million, including a 2013 grant for USD \$600,000 to preserve the Gelati Monastery, a registered UNESCO World Heritage site. Preservation projects have spanned large segments of Georgian cultural heritage from folk music to architecture and art to archaeology.


The **World Bank Regional Development Projects for Georgia** aimed to improve infrastructure services and institutional capacity to support increased contribution of tourism in the local economy. The project comprises of two components. The first component, infrastructure investment financed urban regeneration of old towns and villages, including restoration of building facades and roofs, public spaces, museums, roads and water, and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage sites, including access and presentation. The second component, institutional development supported institutional capacity and performance of the Georgia national tourism administration (GNTA), national agency for culture heritage preservation of Georgia (NACHP), national museum, project implementing entity (municipal development fund (MDF) of Georgia), and other local and regional entities.

EU4Culture: 'Support to non-capital cities and towns of the Eastern Partnership Region in Preparation of Cultural Development Strategies'. The EU4Culture project, funded by the European Union, has launched its first call for proposals for 'Support to non-capital cities and towns of the Eastern Partnership Region in Preparation of Cultural Development Strategies'. The project places culture, the creative industries and **cultural monument sites** at its core, which all carry a huge potential for sustainable policies with a broad impact.

Faro & the Comus Project



Community-led Urban Development Strategies in Historic Towns (COMUS) was one of the first projects to be implemented in Georgia within the frames of the Faro Convention. COMUS aimed at fostering urban (social and economic) development using cultural heritage as a driver in 2 historic pilot towns in Georgia: Chiatura and Dusheti.



The steering and coordination platform established at the national level facilitated the inclusion of Dusheti historic town into the comprehensive regional development programme funded by the World Bank.

COMUS triggered transformative change for Chiatura, by highlighting its industrial and engineering infrastructure as invaluable national heritage.

Cultural Heritage in Education

Another area of civil society that needs to be considered in relation to cultural heritage is academia. There are **19 Public universities (with 101000 students)** and **45 non-public ones (with 57000 students)** in Georgia. **3370 students** are involved in vocational education institutions throughout the country. **Out of 347 PhD students 57 (16.4%)** are involved in Humanitarian Sciences and Arts Program. **16 higher education institutions** offer art education as one of the academical programs, whereas education in the field of cultural heritage is offered by the following higher educational institutions in Georgia:

- Tbilisi State Academy of Art**
- Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University**
- Ilia State University**
- Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film Georgian State University**
- GIPA – Georgian Institute of Public Administration**

Informal education is also crucial to enhance cultural heritage awareness and understanding. For this purpose, various educational programs are provided by different cultural institutions across the country. **National Museum of Georgia** offers 97 educational programs - courses for traditional Georgian craft, summer schools, various lectures and workshops, etc. **National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia** offers Youth Archeology, Cultural Heritage for kids and other education programs.

A photograph of a wooden architectural model of a building complex. Several black silhouettes of people are placed on the model, some standing on the roof of a building, others on the ground level. The model is set against a blurred background of a cityscape.

Promotion of Faro Convention

Since its ratification, **ICOMOS Georgia** has strongly lobbied its implementation and has organized several international and regional workshops on the topic as well as translated the Convention and disseminated it among relevant stakeholders.

Third Regional Seminar: Faro Convention for Concrete Action on Cultural Heritage. 10-11 June, 2021. Tbilisi, Georgia. Seminar hosted up to 60 participants from 20 Council of Europe member states.

National study supported by Council of Europe in 2021, showcases **up to 20 best practices** of applying the Faro Convention principles by Georgian public, private and civil society sectors.

Main findings of the study



This compilation of good practices is obviously just a sample of activities in Georgia.

In the past years the public protest against decisions taken behind closed doors in the area of heritage increased.



Insufficient attention given to heritage in local policies and by local authorities is an issue of concern for cultural heritage NGOs.

Municipalities in Georgia complain of insufficient financing and human resources. This last tendency unfortunately results in a lack of competences in the heritage protection field.



It is necessary to create a platform, which the interested part of the civil society, advocacy groups, professional organizations and all stakeholders can use for expressing their opinions regarding the cultural policy.

The authorities can foster creation of a space for dialogue with civil sector interested in culture and heritage.



The wide public participation and engagement in heritage protection shall be ensured through local heritage events and community projects funding, encouragement of establishing heritage societies, creating quality media programs, etc.



All in all, the biggest need is for an interdisciplinary approach in local policies. Were such an approach to be introduced, that would lead to greater understanding of the important and complex role of heritage as a force for social and economic development. The provisions of the Faro Convention reflect this interdisciplinary aspect of a sustainable approach to heritage in the life and development of society and the Strategy 21 recommendations can be seen as a vital complement. All this tends to confirm the view that Georgia's accession to the Faro Convention was a beneficial move.

Key Observations

- ❑ Legislation has a very classical, historical and monumental approach to cultural heritage: **IT SHOULD FORMALIZE THE CIVIL SOCIETY RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL LEVELS OF ITS GOVERNANCE AND ENHANCEMENT.**
- ❑ Citizens and associations are key to defend cultural heritage and to assess its problematics. **RECOGNITION OF HERITAGE COMMUNITIES AND AN APPROPRIATE FRAMEWORK TO FACILITATE THEIR TASK AND NETWORKS IS NEEDED.**
- ❑ Bearing in mind the multiculturalism of the Community of Georgia, it is essential that legislation **SPECIFICALLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE CONTRIBUTION OF MINORITIES TO ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE.**
- ❑ Legislation hardly recognizes cultural heritage crucial contribution to life quality, economic income, employment, healthy leisure, territorial and ecologic balance, landscape maintenance and adaptation to climate change. It should promote a **HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CULTURAL HERITAGE BENEFITS FOR SOCIETY, INCLUDING SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT GROUNDED ON ITS WISE AND SENSIBLE VALORIZATION.**
- ❑ Legislation barely deals with the relationships between cultural heritage, education and training systems: **IT MUST PROMOTE HERITAGE AWARENESS & ENHANCE ITS POSITIVE EFFECTS ON AND FROM EDUCATION.**



***“Heritage is not just conservation,
it’s a conversation”***

Liina Janes

THANK YOU!

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