



CAUCASUS CULTURAL INITIATIVES NETWORK

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EUROEAST
CULTURE

Building Bridges Through Culture

CAUCULT – Caucasus Cultural Initiatives Network

CAUCULT is an international, intercultural project promoting local culture-related initiatives that support ethnic, religious and cultural diversity across the South Caucasus.

The unique cultural diversity was the strength of the Caucasus region throughout its history and resulted in an amazingly wide range of cultural expressions. Wars and conflicts of the past decades cast a shadow on the beauty and strength of this unique feature of the Caucasus.

The aim of CAUCULT is to rediscover the cultural diversity in the Caucasus as a key to a creative, progressive and prosperous development of the region. Communities in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are activated and empowered through art events.

Furthermore, these activities encourage a mutual and vivid dialogue between various stakeholders representing different cultural backgrounds.



Project Partners

- o Interkulturelles Zentrum, Austria
- o The Centre for Cultural Relations – Caucasian House, Georgia
- o Academy for Peace and Development, Georgia
- o International Center for Intercultural Research, Learning and Dialogue, Armenia
- o YUVA Humanitarian Center, Azerbaijan
- o Association for Non-Formal Education in Lithuania

Aims of the Project

- o Raise awareness about cultural diversity issues among societies in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.
- o Support active participation of citizens in cultural activities, especially among groups with least recognized ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.
- o Establish strong, inclusive and long-lasting networks of cultural actors from different areas to actively promote cultural diversity.
- o Develop intercultural dialogue between all relevant stakeholders to reach greater respect for people of different cultural backgrounds.



To achieve this

- o People/groups from disadvantaged backgrounds are trained and supported to carry out community based cultural initiatives.
- o Political actors are engaged in dialogue with these initiatives to develop policy recommendations.
- o Media representatives are trained on cultural diversity issues.
- o Experience is shared on an international level with cultural stakeholders from the partner countries.
- o More than 50 activities (community art events, trainings, conferences, study visits, national festivals) as well as a web platform, media reports and multimedia documentations will promote cultural diversity.

Main Locations

Central locations of the activities are Gyumri, Goris, Alaverdi/ Vanadzor, Quba, Lenkaran and Zaqatala and their surrounding regions, towns and villages as well as the areas Kvemo Kartli, Adjara and Samtskhe-Javakheti. In order to create tighter links



between these provinces and the capitals, and to support their mutual acknowledgement, also Baku, Tbilisi and Yerevan are included in the project. International links – in particular with EU member states – are reached with the project partner countries Austria and Lithuania.

Setting up and Promotion of Cultural Initiatives Network

The project identifies, trains and empowers a broad and diverse network of cultural actors to gain relevance in the cultural development of the involved regions and countries. The variety of involved stakeholders reaches from local cultural initiatives and organizations up to disadvantaged cultural/ethnic groups.

These actors are brought together on different levels (regional, national, international) to form sustainable networks for future cultural activities and to promote cultural diversity.

Media trainings and PR measures empower the Networks to increase the visibility of their activities and to directly involve media representatives for better promotion of cultural diversity issues.



Leading actors: 60 Key Dialogue Workers

A core group – the Key Dialogue Workers – is trained and supported in implementing a series of cultural events, art activities and peer-to-peer trainings in the communities. They are persons who are active in the field of culture, representing different cultural groups, institutions and sectors. Through a series of trainings, they are empowered to manage and promote activities related to cultural diversity and to actively participate in decision-making processes on the local and national level.

Community Art Development

“Community Art Development” activities increase the impact of the network by involving further actors in local cooperation. Trainings on cultural management are carried out and



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communities are supported in organizing Community Art events. Artistic performances and productions will actively engage the local population in order to revive cultural life as part of communal development. All this will result in national festivals focused on the diversity of cultural expressions.

Policy Recommendations for Cultural Diversity

The political level is addressed throughout the whole project – starting from the needs analyses on the communal level, through the empowerment of leading actors, implementation of community art actions, inclusion of the European components in the form of study visits and exchange with experts, up to national festivals and conferences. In all these ways, the needs of the target groups are consistently brought to the attention of political decision makers, who are directly involved in project activities and so meet and exchange with other actors.



Project Timeframe



Armenia

Currently representatives of over 50 nationalities live in Armenia. However a vast majority of the population are ethnic Armenians, while other groups only comprise 3% of society, thus making Armenia a largely mono-ethnic country.

After the collapse of the USSR, the cultural life in Armenia faced a considerable downturn caused by the new difficult social conditions and the outflow of the population, including representatives of national minorities. Nowadays the cultural life in Armenia is concentrated in Yerevan and is very passive or even absent in the outlying regions, especially in border towns and villages.

CAUCULT is designed to revive cultural life in these regions and to raise awareness on the potentials of diversity as a part of regional development.

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Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country where many different groups historically live together and minorities share approximately 10% of the total population. After regaining its state independence for the last two decades Azerbaijan underwent a difficult period of transformation that brought dramatic organisational, economic and social changes, and had an immediate impact on culture and culture trends.

Although in Azerbaijan the importance of the protection and promotion of cultures of national minorities is recognized and valued, there is still a need for promotion of cultural diversity and the encouragement of the creativity, exchange and participation of different groups in cultural life.

CAUCULT is a great opportunity in this sense and will aim to use the power of culture to promote intercultural dialogue and positive social change in the region.

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Georgia

With the break up of the Soviet Union, Georgia gained independence in 1991. After years of trouble marked by two internal conflicts (in South Ossetia and in Abkhazia), a tense relationship and conflict with Russia, the political and social situation has calmed down. These turbulent times have affected the cultural life of the Georgian people, especially to its more vulnerable cultural groups. Georgia is a multi-ethnic, multinational state, with ethnic minorities constituting 16% of the country's population. Many of these groups live in small communities and have little contact with the Georgian majority population. Thus, it is necessary to develop the potential of different identities, cultural diversity and participation.

CAUCULT will revive cultural life in the target regions and improve communication through structured dialogue among various cultural stakeholders and actors.

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THE CENTRE FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS

**CAUCASIAN
HOUSE**



Lietuvos neformaliojo
ugdymo asociacija



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