



Support to the Armenia-Turkey
Normalization Process

European Union Initiative



**EURASIA
PARTNERSHIP
FOUNDATION**



SUPPORT TO ARMENIA-TURKEY NORMALIZATION PROCESS PROGRAM, STAGES 1 AND 2 (2014-2017)

some success stories

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How does one define success? In such difficult work as Armenia-Turkey normalization, success may start from a very modest point: if the undertaking has been successfully accomplished, that is already a kind of success. However, over the implementation of ATNP-1 and ATNP-2, we have seen some successes which are more than that.

Here we call a success an accomplishment which (in the approximate order of significance):

- a. Had a public significance for improving relations between Turkey and Armenia and has been done for the first time; and it would be very difficult to accomplish it, if not for the EU and ATNP.
- b. Had a public significance and gave birth to another accomplishment, and then another one, making the collaboration between people or organizations sustainable.
- c. Grew from a case of individual collaboration to a sustainable institutional collaboration.
- d. Successfully engaged state-linked institutions for the first time, which has been impossible to imagine before and could not have been planned, given the lack of official relations between Armenia and Turkey and usually the lack of risk taking by state-linked institutions.
- e. Had a large-scale impact on the societies of both countries and larger regionally.

In what follows, we present a selection of stories which illustrate one or a few points from our definition of success given above. These stories are collected only from the sub-grant, fellowship and travel grant projects of ATNP-1 and ATNP-2. With limited resources, lack of state support, and meticulous work invested in identifying potential partnerships, building relations and cultivating them, the ATNP Consortium and its networks have been able to open some inroads in the relations of the two societies which previously could not have been done. Other cases of success of ATNP activities are presented in additional papers.

grant scheme

Grant Scheme, Fellowship Scheme, Travel Grants

1. With the support of the ATNP grant scheme, Versus Studio created a documentary¹ called “Closed Border Dialogue.” This has been the first attempt to create a comprehensive and succinct visual history of relations between Armenia and Turkey including the initial engagement between the two countries in 1991-1992, the closing of the Armenia-Turkey border in 1993, the appearance of the Armenian Genocide issue in Armenia’s foreign policy agenda in 1998-

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pL0JGGCSY9g>

2008, the work of the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission in 2001-2004, Hrant Dink's assassination in 2007, and the Armenia-Turkey protocols and "football" diplomacy in 2008-2010.

Responding to feedback from various civil society actors from Armenia and Turkey, the film has been translated into English². A special version of the film was produced with French subtitles to be screened in France among the Armenian and Turkish communities. Currently the documentary in different languages has more than 3000 views only online, apart from in-person viewers, and the number of views is growing constantly. The partnership with the History Foundation was crucial in ensuring high-level participation of "storytellers" from Turkey. The film is an enduring resource for new generations of diplomats and civil society peacebuilders.

2. The ATNP-1 grant scheme supported Okan University in Turkey to implement a project³ called Turkish-Armenian Dialogue and School of Discourse Transformation. The project empowered the participants of the School to promote cultural dialogue and tolerance in relations between the two societies, engaging students and young faculty members from both countries. The project contributed to awareness-raising about the largely marginalized peace and conflict transformation narratives.

As a result, a new project idea was born, developed and supported within the ATNP-2 grant scheme. The History Foundation, in partnership with Imagine Center for Conflict Transformation promoted Armenia-Turkey normalization through building collaboration between historians and history educators from the two countries.

For the first time ever, partners jointly conducted an analysis⁴ of contradicting historical narratives in history textbooks in Armenia and Turkey.

An alternative history narrative on relations between Armenians and Turks was elaborated with the engagement of university students and faculty, and other professional groups. In cooperation with the Association of Young Historians (Armenia), a network of historians and history educators from Armenia and Turkey was created, which engaged in several workshops and eventually presented their findings during the CRRC conference (another grantee, demonstrating synergy across grants). The material developed by the group of experts is extremely important as it is a unique attempt to challenge the mainstream exclusionist discourses on both sides of the border.

3. The project⁵ of HCA Armenia on prose translation aimed at promoting cooperation and understanding between Armenia- and Turkey-based literary translators. The translation method used during the workshop in Armenia made it possible to co-translate contemporary writer Birgul Oguz's award-winning novel "HAH" from Turkish into Eastern Armenian. It was the first time that the author of the book herself participated in the workshop with young literary translators and enriched their work with her perspective. It was the first time that collaborative literary translation method (a US methodology) was applied to Armenia-Turkey relations. The book is published in Armenia by Antares publishing house. Open space reading sessions and other presentations for young professionals interested in literary translations from Turkish to Armenian will follow. Collaborative relations have been built between Turkey- and Armenia-based writers and translators as a result.

2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OidJE4TjTYU>

3. <http://armenia-turkey.net/en/Okan-University-Grantee>

4. <http://caucasusedition.net/analysis/history-education-in-schools-in-turkey-and-armenia/>

5. <http://armenia-turkey.net/en/HCA-Armenia>

fellowship scheme

1. **Duygu Bostanci**, who did her fellowship at the Institute for Contemporary Art, conducted a research on the traditional dances of Armenia and Turkey (November 2016-April 2017, Yerevan). Based on her research, she developed a contemporary performance idea, collaborating with Baardia Dance Laboratory and contemporary dancers from Yerevan. The performance "Ne var ne yok – Inch ka chka"⁶ was included in the program of "ARé" performing arts festival 2017 and staged at NPAK - Norrarar Portzarakan Arvesti Kendron Art Gallery. After the performance in Yerevan, Duygu and the other dancers decided to stage the performance in Ankara and Istanbul as well, which was received with great enthusiasm by the Turkish audience.

Duygu also organized a number of events (Contemporary Dance Short Films Screening⁷, a short film⁸ screened by her on her way from Kars to Yerevan, a dance game⁹) thus making the cultural life of the institute more active. During her stay in Armenia, Duygu wrote a personal blog¹⁰ in Turkish to share her experience with people from Turkey. By sharing her experiences, she wanted to fill in the gap about Armenia in the minds of people from Turkey. At the end of her fellowship, Duygu presented her film "Aygestan"¹¹ with which she summarized her blog.

2. During her fellowship, **Anahit Ghazaryan** conducted an Eastern Armenian Language Course at Lifelong Education Center in Kadir Has University (November 2016-June 2017, Istanbul). According to an internal survey conducted at the Center among the students of Language Studies, Anahit's course has been recognized as the "most efficient" one. As a result of these courses, one of the students from Anahit's group went to Armenia to continue studying at an Armenian language summer school.

3. **Mariya Yeghiazaryan** conducted her fellowship at Ret Film and Liman Film, where she assisted the teams in the organization of Armenia-Turkey Cinema Platform (ATCP) (November 2016-April 2017, Istanbul). By the end of her fellowship, she became one of the organizers of ATCP, by helping with relevant activities in Yerevan within the Golden Apricot international festival.

4. **Anna Muradyan** completed her fellowship at Yuva Association where she conducted research on migrants from Armenia who currently live in Turkey (November 2014-May 2015, Istanbul). Her research findings were published by Yuva Association under the title 'An Island within an Island: Educational Needs Assessment of Armenian Migrants in Turkey'.¹² This research is the most recent one done in the field of Armenian migrants in Turkey. Historically, there is very limited research in this area that is reliable. Doing such research is extremely challenging and valuable since Armenian illegal migrants are not inclined to come out and speak overtly.

5. **Suzan Rosita Meryem** completed her fellowship at Gallery 25, where she built connections between artists of the two countries, did research for her art projects "Voices in the Dark" and "Consumption Patterns" (November 2014-February 2015, Gyumri). After the com-

6. <http://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/forum/2017/04/09/ermenistanda-bir-zamane-genci/>

7. <http://armenia-turkey.net/en/Contemporary-Dance-Short-Films-Screening>

8. <https://vimeo.com/196478574>

9. <https://www.facebook.com/events/684600718389793/>

10. <https://hayastandans.wordpress.com/>

11. <https://vimeo.com/221753376>

12. <http://armenia-turkey.net/files/2016-02/WOzmNK3RKmZuMej01auDvYmTTG.pdf>

pletion of her fellowship, her art project “Silent Book [Armenian Genocide]” was published by Antares Publishing.

6. **Marianna Hovhannisyan** completed her fellowship at SALT Research, where she studied the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions as well as the archives of SALT Research as a reference to explore city life in the early 19th and 20th centuries in several Anatolian cities with significant Armenian populations (October 2014-April 2015, Istanbul). After the completion of her fellowship, she was offered a new fellowship grant by SALT Research for the completion of her research and for the organization of the resulting exhibition Empty Fields¹³ curated by her in 2016.

travel grants

1. The executive director of Music of Armenia¹⁴, **Hasmik Movsisyan**, visited Istanbul to establish partnerships for Music of Armenia's upcoming festival - Tsovits Tsov. During this visit, Music of Armenia has also become one of the co-organizers of the event “102 STEPS | 102 ADIM,”¹⁵ where **Hasmik Harutyunyan**, another Travel Grantee, gave a concert. During this visit, Hasmik Movsisyan established a partnership with various institutions, among them Atelier Muse¹⁶. These two organizations have taken their cooperation into further stages - **Müge Olacak**, Founding Director and Performance Artist of Atelier Muse, visited Yerevan with the support of the Travel Grant to take part in the preparation work of the festival in Yerevan and Tbilisi. As a result of this cooperation, Atelier Muse has also become one of the host organizations in the new cycle of the Turkey-Armenia Fellowship Scheme.

2. **Umut Vedat** from Istanbul visited Yerevan to find a gallery that would hold his solo exhibition in Yerevan, aiming to build a bridge between the two countries through his art. As a result, he organized the exhibition “Who am I?”¹⁷ in Yerevan. The aim of the exhibition was to show the changes that occurred in the east of Turkey and to increase the readiness of people in the neighboring countries to encounter the narratives from the other side. On January 2017, the Armenian Diocese in Georgia held a ceremony as a tribute to Hrant Dink which was followed by Umut Vedat's “Who am I?” exhibition.

3. **Vedat Akçayöz** from Kars, president of the Kars Culture and Art Association, was supported with a Travel Grant to visit Vanadzor, to do research on the Ani Ruins and Molokans, Doukhobors. His contacts and the networks he built led to a series of workshops on the issues related to the protection and restoration of the Turkish and Armenian common architectural heritage in and around the Kars province.

4. **Levon Lachikyan** from Yerevan was supported with the Turkey-Armenia Travel Grant to visit Istanbul and make graphic drawings for a book project on Istanbul, and to make arrangements for the exhibition of these drawings in Istanbul. The exhibition in Istanbul¹⁸ raised wide public resonance. As a result of the trip, Levon Lachikyan organized another exhibition entitled “Constantinople Reflections” in Yerevan and Gyumri. The exhibition comprised 24 graphic works on Istanbul. The exhibition in Yerevan¹⁹ was open to the public for one week and was dedicated to the centennial of the Genocide.

13. http://saltonline.org/en#!en/1364/empty-fields?q=empty_fields

14. <http://www.musicofarmenia.com/>

15. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1789506184700072/>

16. <http://www.mugeolacak.com/atelier-muse/>

17. <https://www.tomsarkgh.am/en/event/27961/PHOTO-Video-exhibition-WHO-AM-.html>

18. <http://en.aravot.am/2015/10/29/172712/>

19. <https://www.facebook.com/1962337540654103/videos/vb.1962337540654103/1983048868582970/?type=2&theater>