



## EPF EDUCATION AND LEARNING CONTINUATION

### **NON-FORMAL EDUCATION / EPF SIGNATURE SCHOOLS** ***Conflict Transformation School***

The Nagorny Karabakh/Artsakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has been one of the major impediments for the region's unstoppable development. In order to contribute to its peaceful and sustainable resolution, EPF has worked for many years trying to give its beneficiaries conflict transformation skills. Since 2008, EPF Armenia and EPF Azerbaijan<sup>1</sup> have been implementing several Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict transformation and dialogue projects. The NK conflict has entrenched ethnic hatred, negative stereotypes and war rhetoric towards the 'other side' for the past twenty years. The political stalemate of the peace process only intensifies the animosity and stereotyping. In order to address the challenges of enemy image-building and tunnel vision within and among the societies, EPF Armenia and EPF Azerbaijan developed the Conflict Transformation School (CTS) methodology, starting from 2013. The CTS approach is based on citizen peacebuilding, paving the way for civil society actors from the different sides of conflict to build trust via using critical thinking skills and accumulate experience of joint undertakings.

The School's approach is based on the understanding that rivalry, hatred and violence, promoted through the official ideological systems of the two nations, preclude any possibility for building peace; the formal educational systems of the sides teach students to regard conflict resolution only in the form

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1. Armenian-Azerbaijani Dialogue Programme (2008-2016): <https://epfarmenia.am/document/Armenian-Azerbaijani-Dialogue-Programme-2008-2016>



of one side prevailing over the other; even the diplomatic services of the sides work on maximizing the interests of their own side only. The School's methodology is based on suggesting that critical thinking and rationality are the basis for dialogue, and that the best mutually beneficial solutions to the conflict will come when the sides accept that the truth is born from a constructive dialogue of both sides and that it is not fully owned by either one. For years,

the School has been supported either by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Conflict Prevention Pool or by the European Union. More detailed information about the methodology of the Conflict Transformation School can be found [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Critical Thinking School***

Starting from 2017, EPF in cooperation with its partner Media Initiatives Center within the framework of Media for Informed Civic Engagement (MICE)<sup>3</sup> and PeaCE programmes, commenced Critical Thinking School<sup>4</sup>. The school focuses heavily on critical thinking.<sup>5</sup> Participants develop skills and competences, engaging heavily in text analysis, data verification, discerning fake

2. Conflict Transformation School. Towards a New Generation of Peacebuilders: <https://epfarmenia.am/document/CTS-infoleaflet>

3. Media for Informed Civic Engagement (MICE) program: <https://epfarmenia.am/project/mice>

4. Critical Thinking School. Promo Clip: <https://epfarmenia.am/video/Critical-Thinking-School-promo>

5. Infotuns: <https://epfarmenia.am/Infotuns>



news and disinformation, as well as dismantling propaganda messages. The purpose of the school is for beneficiaries to become a more conscious and literate media producer, learn the propaganda and manipulation tricks and their impact on the audience. During 2017-2019, EPF held Critical Thinking Schools for about 115 participants from Yerevan, the regions of Armenia and Artsakh/Nagorny Karabakh.

### **CSO DePo Management School**

Within its five-year long CSO DePo program (2014-2019), EPF and its partners established the CSO Management School<sup>6</sup> that became a hub of support with practical learning modules offered to CSOs. EPF and DePo partners have designed a dedicated organizational development process to undertake this task. The CSO Management School served as an education and innovation lab for CSOs. It made an effort to consolidate the best CSO development methodologies available in Armenia. While training on specific institutional development subjects, DePo experts assisted with changing the values, attitudes and behavior of the CSO employees. The CSO Management School included 2-3 day large-scale workshops, several smaller-scale group consultations, and has accumulated over 40 multimedia-based lectures - Jam Sessions<sup>7</sup>, as open resources for CSOs. The following themes and modules are available at the CSO School: Policies and Procedures, Planning and strategy development, Human resource management, Program and financial management, Fundraising and Proposal writing, Communication systems, Basic research capacity, Social entrepreneurship, Working with media, How

6. <https://epfarmenia.am/CSO-Management-School>

7. <https://epfarmenia.am/index.php/hy/Jam-Session>



to communicate the impact, and others. The CSO Management Schools were often complemented by consultations for individual CSO teams. Over the course of the CSO DePo, 180 CSOs participated

in 20 large-scale workshops; 120 CSOs received individual mentoring and consultation by DePo in-house and external experts to renew their policies and systems. One of the significant achievements of the



CSO Management School was the increased number of CSOs that started focusing on internal capacity building as an important prerequisite for financial and institutional sustainability.

### **Expertise Tailored Trainings: Bridge for CSOs**

Aiming to improve organizational capacities of CSOs to better respond to citizens' needs in various fields, during 2017-2019 EPF, in collaboration with AGBU Armenia, has designed 'Tailored Trainings<sup>8</sup>' component within the EU-funded Bridge for CSOs programme<sup>9</sup>, putting a special emphasis on the so called *vertical* capacity building – i.e. addressing CSO sector-related capacity needs. Each training was tailored for, targeting and needs-responsive for a specific group of CSOs. EPF and AGBU identified most advanced sector-specific expertise from various sectors (such as: education, environment, arts and culture, gender mainstreaming, conflict sensitivity, youth entrepreneurship,

8. <https://epfarmenia.am/component-Bridge4CSOs/trainings>

9. <https://epfarmenia.am/project/Bridge4CSOs>



crowd-funding) to bring in to service to CSOs in combination with the best local expertise. Emerging and newly established CSOs were given priority during the selection of participants of the workshops. One of the practices that EPF applied in the workshop design is that trainers/experts commit to some practical assistance for CSOs after the workshops, such as reviewing or developing gender equality policies, reviewing business plans

for social enterprises, consulting on proposal development process, assisting in the design of crowd-funding events etc. Nineteen workshops were organized which included the following two capacity building directions: a) vertical capacity building: provision of sector-specific knowledge, policies and local priorities to help CSOs design high quality and well-informed programs in respective sectors; b) horizontal capacity building elements: providing expertise in building core organizational systems and values, such as open and good governance, transparency and accountability, adherence to human rights principles, communication, stakeholder management, financial and human rights management, fundraising, program design and management, sustainable development of CSOs and for ensuring trust towards CSO operations within the society. In addition, EPF and AGBU Armenia in cooperation with the American University of Armenia (AUA) developed a *certificate program in non-profit management* provided at AUA for CSO professionals and employees.

## ***School for Local Democracy***

Starting from 2019, EPF in cooperation with its partners Communities Finance Officers Association (CFOA) and the Information Systems Development and Training Center (ISDTC) within the scope of Civic Engagement in Local Governance<sup>10</sup> (CELoG) program funded by USAID has designed and has been implementing the School based on the methodology of educating active community youth by providing them with civic, professional and methodological knowledge and skills on community/local democracy and local governance. The educational part addresses two types of participants: potential trainers and potential community leaders. School for Local Democracy is conducted in all regions of Armenia. Sessions are followed by small grant projects implemented by the school participants. The participants of the regional training sessions gain knowledge on local self-governance peculiarities and skills on governance/management, communication, project management and human rights. In addition to the training course and small grant projects, SLD participants have opportunities of undergoing internship programs in municipalities, CSOs, and media, as well as of involving in the initiatives implemented



10. <https://epfarmenia.am/project/CELoG>

by EPF’s Infotun Network. At the final stage of the school, participants have the opportunity to participate in the process of reform development on legislative and policy levels. Between the timeframe of 2019-2020, 216 people participated at the Schools. During 2020, SLD module and curricula was also transformed into online course and placed on *www.celog.am* website as a specific distance learning component. It provides innovative online learning platform; the interested people can undergo on-line the whole circle of training provided during the offline-regional sessions. The successful participants receive certificates after passing the online tests embedded in the CELoG portal.

## RESEARCH/MANUALS/PUBLICATIONS

### ***Manual on Critical Thinking (2019)***

The manual, entitled ‘Logical Fallacies and Misleading Rhetorical Tricks<sup>11</sup>’, is the first publication in Armenian on this issue. It distinguishes between media literacy and critical thinking and focuses on the latter. The manual explains why critical thinking skills are needed in the challenging and quickly transforming environment today. In the Introduction, it defines the core in relation to which critical thinking is needed, as cooperative communication. It contains a glossary that describes logical, rhetorical and communication fallacies and mistakes, major stereotypical cases of forming a weak and/or misleading argument. At the same time, the glossary offers stylistic and thinking tools that one can use to develop effective communication strategies and skills. The glossary is based on the material freely available on



11. <https://epfarmenia.am/hy/document/Logical-Fallacies-and-Misleading-Rhetorical-Tricks-Critical-Thinking>

the web (Wikipedia, etc.) that was partly translated from English and localized for Armenian realities. The manual is designed as an educational tool for self-learning for citizens of any age who speak Armenian and who want to develop their critical thinking skillset. It can be used as an exercise-book for the trainers when designing their workshop sessions.

### ***Manual on conflict reporting (2014)***

The manual entitled ‘What Journalism serves for<sup>12</sup>’ aims at training journalists in professional and credible coverage of conflicts. It is a result of several years of Eurasia Partnership Foundation’s (EPF) confidence-building work with journalists, media professionals, and bloggers from Armenia and Azerbaijan. The manual delivers a message that peace journalism means first of all adherence to professionalism and humanistic values, and that journalistic ethics should not be adversely affected by the fact of the conflict. The manual is a toolkit which can be used for training journalists from conflict sides. It includes methodical guidance, instructions, examples and training materials, as well as links to them. The manual’s Armenian version targets the Armenian media society, but can be useful for other settings, too, particularly for joint Armenian-Azerbaijani mixed group trainings. The manual can be used by teachers and trainers of journalism who care for the professionalism of media, particularly with respect to such an important and sensitive area of specialization as conflict reporting. At the same time, the manual aims at a larger audience. Its message transcends the media specialism and is directed to anybody who studies the conflict, writes about it, works on its resolution or transformation, or thinks about it: the message of the manual is that ethical thinking is needed while addressing the conflict from any perspective. This unique resource has a potential of being the basis for all peace journalism trainings that take place with the participation of the media of the sides.

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12. <https://epfarmenia.am/hy/document/What-Journalism-serves-to>

## **Armenia-Turkey History Education (2017, 2019)**

As a part of the Support to Armenia-Turkey Normalisation Process: Stage 2 programme<sup>13</sup> (2016-2018), the History Foundation (Turkey), in partnership with Imagine Center for Conflict Transformation (USA) promoted Armenia-Turkey normalization through building collaboration between historians and history educators from the two countries. For the very first time, partners have jointly conducted analysis<sup>14</sup> of contradicting historical narratives in history textbooks in Armenia and Turkey and recommended conceptual alternatives to the existing models. One of the results is a paper offering an analysis of possible obstacles and opportunities in the process of building a joint narrative on Turkish-Armenian history teaching. The project aimed to challenging the enemy image of each other in the history textbooks in Armenia and Turkey, and advocated for conflict-sensitive and inclusive approaches in the normalization process between the two countries. This analysis later served as the basis for the preparation of three teaching modules<sup>15</sup> via engaging teachers, students, methodologists and other stakeholders in the process of a critical assessment of the current state of history education and production of alternative educational materials. Each module consists of one teaching method and two parallel teaching materials for Armenia and Turkey. In the peer-review conducted by Lusine Kharatyan, it is mentioned: “This is a very timely, important and valuable initiative and it will greatly inform the dialogue between Armenia and Turkey by providing research-based information and analysis of history education, a key pillar for identity, as well as animosity construction in nation-states. It is of great value, as never before history education in two countries have been scrutinized and compared by a joint team of experts with the same conceptual framework and research methodology.”

13. <https://epfarmenia.am/project/ATNP2>

14. History Education in Schools in Turkey and Armenia: A Critique and Alternatives, 2017: <https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/Tarih-Vakfi-and-Imagine-Final-Papers-June-20.pdf>

15. Alternative History Education Modules for Armenia and Turkey, 2019: <https://epfarmenia.am/document/Alternative-History-Education-Modules-for-Armenia-and-Turkey>

## ***Culture of violence in Armenia***

During 2019-2020, EPF with the funding from the Black Sea Trust and from Heinrich Boell Foundation, implemented a project on addressing the culture of violence in Armenia with an aim of giving civil society and state agencies dealing with education, defense, police, social issues, etc. to start changing their policies to reduce societal violence. EPF involved independent experts and civil society actors to conduct studies and developed practical studies on the roots of violence and the ways of its prevention in secondary education, domestic violence, the military, and the society in general. The researches resulted in a book which examines the roots of violence in the Armenian reality, focusing specifically on the origins of criminal culture, manifestations of violence in school, army and family. The book analyzes the connection between violence and criminal morals, language and behavior, and reveals the nexus between poverty and domestic violence. Each article outlines policy steps, policy proposals for all the stakeholders ranging from government to individual. The publication is intended for decision makers, policymakers, scholars, as well as general reader. An accompanying publication contains an analysis of the book findings and further policy and practical recommendations in the 3 areas of focus.

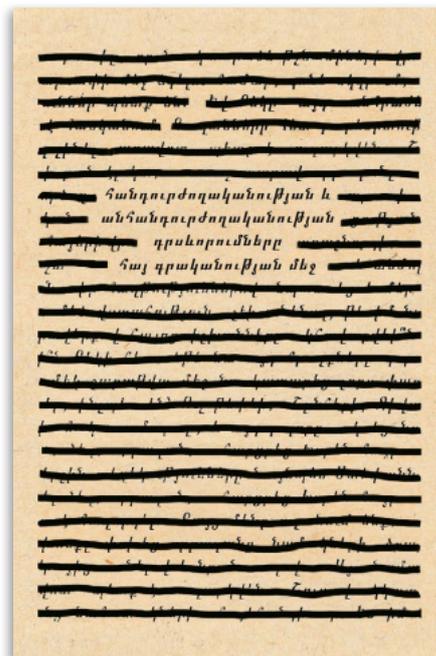


## ***Manifestations of Tolerance and Intolerance in Armenian Literature (2017)***

The research book<sup>16</sup> aimed to examine the roots of tolerance and intolerance and their manifestations in Armenian literature

16. [https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/Tolerance\\_Intolerance\\_in\\_Armenian\\_Literature\\_book\\_2017.pdf](https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/Tolerance_Intolerance_in_Armenian_Literature_book_2017.pdf)

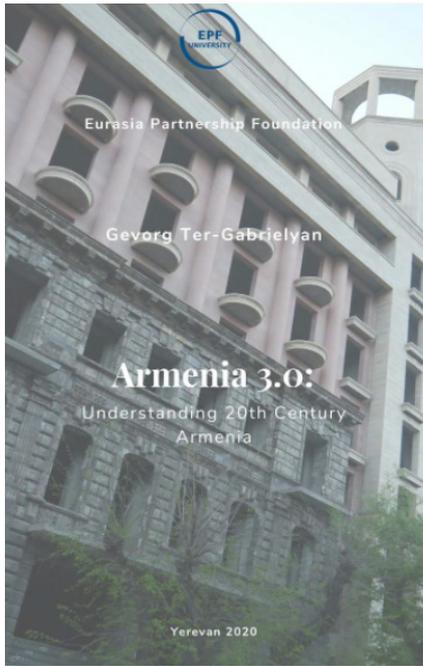
passed on from generation to generation, as well as in history and literature textbooks. The book analyzes Armenian medieval sagas, the classic prose of the 19th and 20th centuries along with the literature of the Diaspora, the prose of Soviet and post-Soviet Armenia, as well as some of the textbooks for schoolchildren. The book is a guided tour through the whole body of the Armenian literature and presents a condensed image of the development tendencies of the Armenian literature. One of the researches focuses on tolerance and intolerance in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades' textbooks on Armenian literature, History of Armenian Nation and History of Armenian Church. The research revealed that school textbooks often display ethno-national, religious, gender, and social-based intolerance. The ethno-nationalism prevails in textbooks being closely intertwined with religious and gender intolerance. The subjective approaches of the textbook authors are displayed as the only acceptable interpretations, which directly contributes to the formation of specific social constructions, containing at times intolerant approaches towards number of phenomena and groups. The research book was prepared with the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



### ***Armenia 3.0. Understanding 20th Century Armenia (2020)***

This book<sup>17</sup> is based on nine video lectures delivered by Gevorg Ter-Gabrielyan, EPF's Director and a writer, between December 2016 and March 2017. Its purpose is to provide a picture of how Armenia's 20th-century history has left its legacy on today's society. It discusses many controversial developments that took place in the Soviet Armenia and their resultant social problems:

17. <https://epfarmenia.am/document/Armenia-3-0-Understanding-20th-Century-Armenia>



industrial and cultural developments, Bolshevik and Stalinist purges, and the indelible traces they left on further historical events. The author exposes details about the Gulag and criminal subculture, the culture of self-inflicted violence, the decay of the society's value system, and the consequent rooting of several types of false consciousness, inherited by Independent Armenia. Various types of corruption typical for Armenia today have their roots in these social traumas. The main problem which hinders successful reforms, in

this context, is the atomization of society, infected by several types of false consciousness. Corruption of minds resulted in the incapacity of making rational choices and implementing successful positive collective action. By the end of the discussion, a method is proposed which, if followed, will help initiatives to bring about change and development become more effective. The book is intended for the Armenian Diaspora in the West, all those who study and want to understand Armenia and other post-Soviet states, and, more generally, the English-language reader. The book is also useful to the citizens and residents of Armenia, particularly the young generation, who want to understand the roots of the problems the country faces today.

### ***Understanding Europe and European Union (2010)***

In 2010, EPF with the support of EU and USAID developed and published two manuals in Armenian entitled 'Hello Europe<sup>18</sup>' and 'European Union and Armenia<sup>19</sup>' which present a summary of important and relevant information about the European Union. The manuals explain the main ideas behind the concept of European integration and the European values that served as the foundation for the process of European unification. They narrate

18. [https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/Hello\\_europe\\_Arm.pdf](https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/Hello_europe_Arm.pdf)

19. [https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/European\\_Union\\_and\\_Armenia.pdf](https://epfarmenia.am/sites/default/files/Document/European_Union_and_Armenia.pdf)



the history and clarify the structure of the EU. They also briefly dwell on the history, current status and related perspectives of relations between Armenia and the European Union. The approach used in developing the manual was to design a user-friendly source of information in order to fill the knowledge gap that existed in Armenian society, and to present a clearly-written text in

a dynamic and engaging style, answering many of the most anticipated questions that may arise from a wider Armenian audience concerning the European dimension. The manuals help the ordinary Armenian reader to form their own opinion regarding what the EU is, and how relations between the EU and Armenia are being developed. They also aim at showing how the structure of European institutions and the historical development of the European integration process are linked to common, shared European and global values, approaches and aspirations.

## MANUALS FOR CSOS

### ***Current Knowledge for Effective Advocacy***

The modules, presentations and relevant materials of each training conducted within the Bridge for CSOs program were compiled and processed to form parts of a practical manual. Local and international experts were engaged in the compilation of the workshop materials and other essential information into an educational resource. The manual<sup>20</sup> (in Armenian)

20. <https://epfarmenia.am/hy/document/Manual-for-CSOs-Bridge4CSOs> (in Armenian)

covers such topics as: social entrepreneurship, youth policy, environmental protection, education, gender equality and beyond. It can be useful for CSOs working in various thematic areas to develop their own capacities, as well as for CSO trainers and consultants. The manual presents key concepts and ideas of the issues mentioned above, describes the current situation with addressing them and development trends in Armenia. The manual is intended to assist CSOs already working or just starting their activities in the relevant field by offering basic knowledge and directions for their consideration while planning further advocacy initiatives. At the same time, it will also be useful for CSO members, state employees, and larger audience to improve their general knowledge, to become familiar with a particular field, and to acquire a learned approach towards relevant facts and developments. The materials compiled in the manual provide general understanding of legal regulations in the environment, education, gender equality, and other topics, as well as information about the state institutions that develop and implement sectoral policies in these fields. The authors also highlighted relevant legislative and practical gaps that need to be addressed in each of these areas. CSOs may take these suggestions and start to work in the outlined directions, launch campaigns, or approach them critically and raise additional issues. The manual also contains educational materials on the social impact of social enterprises, gender-related concepts, definitions, and approaches to conflict sensitivity. Finally, some of the materials present statistical data, information from relevant assessments and studies in Armenia, thus serving as additional learning resource and/or evidence for advocacy campaigns.

### ***CSO DePo Manuals***

CSO representatives need continuous education in and literacy at various aspects of reforms, governance structures, internal and external development processes in Armenia. During 2019 within CSO DePo program, EPF in cooperation with a pool of professionals from various fields of expertise developed manuals focusing on Armenia's foreign policy, security issues,

regional politics, and social security. These manuals will support CSOs' aim to improve the quality of projects and increase their influence on reform processes in Armenia. The developed four manuals for CSOs are the following: Armenia's External Relations and Security Strategy<sup>21</sup>, Armenia and the region<sup>22</sup>, the Armenian Government System and Economy<sup>23</sup>, and Social Protection in Armenia<sup>24</sup>. One of the manuals is a unique work for Armenia. It provides an overview of the Muslim countries from social, political, religious and cultural perspectives and the glossary of the terms of the most important and key concepts of Islam. The geopolitical position of the Republic of Armenia, its historical course and the developments in modern rapidly changing world create needs for every member of civil society to have credible source of information to help him or her to quickly navigate in these complex notions. Moreover, the activities of Islamic extremist groups and their impact on both regional and global politics increase the importance of knowledge and understanding of these processes.

## ONLINE EDUCATION

### ***EPF Jam Session series & Talk shows***

During the period of 2016-2019, EPF produced in-house video materials covering the topics of critical thinking, conflict transformation, media literacy, and civil society development produced in Armenian.<sup>25</sup>

An on-line talk-show entitled 'Line of Contact' presents issues on human rights, religious tolerance, Armenia-Turkey relations and Armenian-Azerbaijani dialogue and conflict reporting<sup>26</sup>. Special

21. <https://hkdepo.am/hy/resources/armenia-external-relations-and-security-strategy> (in Armenian)

22. <https://hkdepo.am/hy/resources/armenia-and-the-region> (in Armenian)

23. <https://hkdepo.am/hy/resources/armenian-government-system-and-economy> (in Armenian)

24. <https://hkdepo.am/hy/resources/armenia-social-protection-system> (in Armenian)

25. <https://epfarmenia.am/Jam-Session>

26. 'Line of Contact' playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HBeyEhWg-J4&list=PLze7VHI5SyYhGhQVI0fQsTjhdTUA56acO>

series of Jam Sessions were produced focusing on formal education issues<sup>27</sup>. Two videos on education (Problems of Education: Institutions and Social Construction<sup>28</sup> and Problems of Education and Power<sup>29</sup>), two videos on critical thinking (Paradigm Change. Part 2. Critical Thinking: Context and Grammar<sup>30</sup> and Critical Thinking: Communications and Power<sup>31</sup>), and one video on Civil Society and NGOs in Armenia<sup>32</sup> have been issued for a Russian-language audience. In earlier years, EPF has produced a series of TV talk shows under the heading 'Article 27<sup>33</sup>' which were focusing on a broad range of topics: environment, freedom of speech, religious tolerance, civic movements, peacebuilding, etc. \

## **EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENTARIES, ANIMATIONS, THE SOVIET PAST**

### ***Examining the Soviet past, and Armenia after independence***

As part of its programming, EPF has supported production and dissemination of films on the issues of past and recent history, such as on the events of 1948 (repatriation and Stalin's purges); on dissidents and freedom of speech in USSR; on the downwards slop in women's rights after independence (on silent housewives); on the four presidential elections in Armenia; Armenia-Turkey diplomatic relations since Armenia's independence, on March 1, 2008 events, etc.

EPF puts a great emphasis on discussing the issues which touch upon the recent history of Armenia and post-Soviet space, such

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27. 'Educational Issues in 21st Century' playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SvzN8pCUAE&list=PLze7VHI5SyYhnUTKWYIY7UhGnEAJJ2NHB>

28. <https://epfarmeria.am/video/jam-sessions-in-russian-paradigm-change>

29. <https://epfarmeria.am/video/russian-jam-session-paradigm-change-problems-of-education-part2>

30. <https://epfarmeria.am/video/epf-jam-session-paradigm-change-critical-thinking-context-and-grammar>

31. <https://epfarmeria.am/video/russian-jam-session-paradigm-change-communications-and-power>

32. <https://epfarmeria.am/video/jam-sessions-in-russian-civil-society-ngos>

33. [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLze7VHI5SyYi5SUK6Q5XAdw97kMak\\_B-n](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLze7VHI5SyYi5SUK6Q5XAdw97kMak_B-n)

as the broadcast/video lectures on the repressions of the writers, literary actors and intellectuals during the entire existence of the Soviet Union, in the context of some parallels with the post-Soviet Armenian reality. As a part of the Jam Session series, special edition of English-language broadcasts were produced during 2016-2017 entitled 'Armenia 3.0 Understanding Armenia. 20th Century'<sup>34</sup> focusing on the social, cultural and economic development of Armenia during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and specifically the period of sovietization of Armenia.<sup>35</sup> These lectures afterwards resulted in a monograph with the same title<sup>36</sup>. The lectures and the monograph aim at giving first-hand information about the roots of Armenia's problems to the internationals and the Diaspora members interested in Armenia, but can be also useful to the residents of Armenia. In addition, EPF has produced several films on tolerance issues, covering the ethnic and religious minorities who live in Armenia, such as the Molokans, the Jewish community, the Yezidis, etc. The full information of the documentaries produced by EPF or with the assistance of EPF, can be accessed here<sup>37</sup>.

### ***Short Animations on local self-governance***

"Where does the citizen stand"<sup>38</sup> is a series of short animated videos on local self-governance, which is created within the Civic Engagement in Local Governance (CELoG) program. The series introduce the structure and the functions of the local self-government system, reforms that are being implemented in this sector and the mechanisms of public participation. By 2021, 10 five-minute long animations were produced.

EPF has produced or supported the production a variety of other films and video materials, the majority of which can be used in the educational processes. To learn more about EPF-sponsored

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34. <https://epfarmeria.am/Jam-session/Armenia-3-0>

35. <https://epfarmeria.am/Jam-session/Armenia-3-0>

36. Armenia 3.0. Understanding 20th Century Armenia, 2020: <https://epfarmeria.am/document/Armenia-3-0-Understanding-20th-Century-Armenia>

37. Culture, Literature, Art leaflet: <https://epfarmeria.am/document/EPF-Culture-Literature-Art>

38. 'Where does the citizen stand' playlist: [https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLze7VHI5SyYgKkpkA7ap6nQ8pD6kMIn\\_N](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLze7VHI5SyYgKkpkA7ap6nQ8pD6kMIn_N)

films, multimedia, and investigative media productions, please refer to EPF Media products section<sup>39</sup> on EPF website.

## **ADDRESSING THE ISSUES/NEEDS OF FORMAL EDUCATION**

### ***Support of Higher Education Reform***

During 2009-2012 EPF engaged in the issues of higher education reform in light of the Bologna process. The Bologna process offers an opportunity to participating states and universities, via approximation of educational and academic standards, to move towards a joint and compatible educational market. EPF took into consideration several factors: (a) the lack of sufficient academic independence of major universities in Armenia, (b) a significant market interest of the Armenian population towards higher education, coupled with a hindering factor – the mismatch and lack of coordination between the offer of the higher education institutions and market demand, (c) gaps in the legislation, which for instance lacks the concept of Ph.D. EPF addressed the market mismatch by supporting the installment of an internship mechanism<sup>40</sup> at the Yerevan State Linguistic University (YSLU). The project was implemented in cooperation with YSLU, aimed at establishing institutional connections between the University and potential employers from both state and private sectors. It was funded by USAID. The result was a significant increase in internship opportunities for students, interest by other businesses and universities to provide internship opportunities, and increased recruitment rates of YSLU graduates.

In the three year period between 2010 and 2012, YSLU embarked on even bolder reforms with the support of EPF and other organizations. YSLU implemented a number of projects and activities that became important components of the University reform process. As a part of that process, for instance, YSLU established the European Studies Center, Chair of Oriental

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39. <https://epfarmeria.am/epf-media>

40. The Necessity of Improvement of the Internship Mechanism in the System of Higher Education: Occasional Policy Brief: [https://epfarmeria.am/sites/default/files/inline-files/internship.\\_summary.pdf](https://epfarmeria.am/sites/default/files/inline-files/internship._summary.pdf)

languages and a Translation Lab. The latter was established with the financial support of SIDA via EPF. The Career Center and the Quality Assurance Center of the University were redesigned, the Science Department strengthened. Changes also took place in the management system, following the reform of the YSLU strategy, for which EPF's signature Methodology of Systemic Though Activity was used.<sup>41</sup>

In 2011, EPF supported a research on plagiarism in higher education<sup>42</sup>, implemented by Khachmeruk Debate Club NGO via the SIDA-funded Open Door grant scheme. The research demonstrated that both students and university teachers lack a basic understanding of academic plagiarism that plagiarism is rampant, and the roots of the problem stem from the secondary education system. The results of the research are still relevant today and inform the policies of fighting against plagiarism initiated by the National Assembly.

In 2021 within the framework of 'Meknark' (Start) radio program of the Public Radio Arevik Youth Channel, EPF Program Director Mikayel Hovhannisyan has started a series of educational programs<sup>43</sup>, where he presents the essence of project-based education and narrates about the possibilities of introducing project-based education components in the educational system of Armenia.

The role and the input of students, teachers, education specialists in the organization and implementation of project-based learning, as well as present the advantages of such educational approach in the modern world are being discussed during the radio programs.

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41. [https://epfarmeria.am/sites/default/files/Document/MSTA\\_Creative\\_Game\\_English\\_2018.pdf](https://epfarmeria.am/sites/default/files/Document/MSTA_Creative_Game_English_2018.pdf)

42. Plagiarism in higher education institutions in Armenia: Research (in Armenian): [https://epfarmeria.am/sites/default/files/Document/Plagiarism\\_in\\_Armenia\\_Report\\_Arm.pdf](https://epfarmeria.am/sites/default/files/Document/Plagiarism_in_Armenia_Report_Arm.pdf)

43. Mikayel Hovhannisyan: 'Meknark' part 1 (in Armenian): <https://epfarmeria.am/hy/news/Mikayel-Hovhannisyan-on-Arevik-Radio>, part 2: <https://epfarmeria.am/hy/news/Mikayel-Hovhannisyan-on-Arevik-Radio-part-2>; part 3: <https://epfarmeria.am/hy/news/Mikayel-Hovhannisyan-on-Education-Arevik-Radio>

## ***Student Democracy***

During 2021-2024, EPF will be continuing its efforts towards the higher education reform and increasing the student participating in the Higher Education Institutions' (HEI) management. During the upcoming three years, the consortium of organizations consisting of EPF (the lead), Restart Student-Civic Initiative and CRRC Armenia will be implementing an EU-funded project which is aimed to protect the rights of young people and strengthen the capacities of students and student organizations and to empower them to engage in public affairs. This objective will be achieved through a series of interconnected activities with the direct involvement and participation of the main beneficiaries of the project: students, young people and student organizations. The activities mainly include: a) capacity-building for students and student organizations on civic activism, organizational development, research methodologies, communication and advocacy and participatory governance; b) support to student initiatives on monitoring HEIs, reform of student self-organization, student engagement in university governance, development of e-tools for promotion of student democracy and participation; c) study of international practices and local situation and development of policy and legislative recommendations in the spheres of student self-organization, student engagement in university governance, student-centered education, reform and proper institutionalization of internship and scholarship mechanisms; d) research-based policy advocacy carried out by students based on the consolidated experience acquired during the trainings, camps, initiatives, study trips and conducted studies.

## ***National Assembly Educational Center Methodology***

During 2020, EPF, in consultation with the UNDP Country Office-Armenia, the National Assembly staff, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MoESCS), experts, teachers, students and other stakeholders and beneficiaries embarked upon the development of the concept, methodology and curriculum for the Civic Education component of the Centre for Parliamentary Democracy (CPD) of the National Assembly (NA)

of Armenia within the scope of the project funded by United Nations Development Program, Armenia (UNDP Armenia). The concept, structure and work plan of the Civic Education Centre at the National Assembly, the methodology, curricula and training modules for the civic education programme amongst the youth in high schools and universities are being developed, with a focus on promotion of interest, awareness and knowledge of the parliamentary culture, engagement with the parliament, and civic education in general. The methodology will present an overview of the civic education notion, the international practices of parliamentary education, and offer designs of the main concept for NA PD Center.

*Last modified April 2021*