

Unbiased E-Media Coverage in Armenia and Azerbaijan

March 2013



About the Project.



The project started in 2010 and aimed at contributing to accurate and unbiased reporting of the bilateral relationship between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, especially in the online media and blogosphere. To this end the project focused on establishing a cooperative network of citizen journalists, bloggers and other media professionals from Armenia and Azerbaijan. With this in mind, the project initiated a dialogue between the two countries through developing new and supporting already existing on-line platforms for dialogue-oriented journalists and bloggers.

Throughout the project bloggers and journalists from Armenia and Azerbaijan got together within the scope of the workshops on the issues of ethical journalism and unbiased reporting. The skills and knowledge gained during the trainings were later employed in joint projects; developed and implemented by the participants themselves. It is noteworthy, that prior to the project networking opportunities for the bloggers on both sides were rather restricted due to the absence of relevant platforms, as well as the mutual reluctance to get in touch. Thanks to the project currently several cross-border platforms exist on Facebook, twitter, and elsewhere, facilitating the interaction between the civic journalists and bloggers from Armenia and Azerbaijan. Besides the workshops and the small joint projects, another major component of the project was the media monitoring carried out by Yerevan Press Club and Yeni Nesil. The partners accomplished a baseline assessment of the bias in internet based media in Azerbaijan and Armenia, and produced a media bias glossary. The monitoring and the report on the monitoring results is available at <http://goo.gl/m2uPP>. A presentation on the glossary and its role is available at <http://goo.gl/mlIX3>.

Talk Shows on Yerkir Media TV.

Four TV talk shows were aired in Yerevan and six regions of Armenia in March-June 2011 featuring the project and the key Armenian participants. This made it possible for EPF to present the online peace discourse to the wider public through airing the visual products of the project, including the film "Passenger" (was created formerly during the project "Armenia-Azerbaijan Media Bias") and the four cartoons, followed by a discussion with the project participants invited as guest speakers. The average viewership of EPF's TV Talk Shows broadcast on Yerkir Media under branding of "Article 27" is about 3,000 per talk show.

The talk shows are available at <http://vimeo.com/21482836#>, <http://vimeo.com/21483794>.





Armenians in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis in Armenia.

Two well-known journalists from Armenia and Azerbaijan who used to cooperate with each other previously; Marianna Grigoyan and Zarema Velikhanova produced about 10 articles on Armenians who are still living in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis living in Armenia.

Joint Cartoons.

By Vahe Nersesian and Maharram Zeynalov, available at <http://vimeo.com/21293094>.



Small Joint Projects.

Neutral Zone Blog. Women Narratives.

Whether in conflict, in peace or in the current conundrum of no war, no peace, women's voices on both sides of the Armenia-Azerbaijan border are rarely heard in mainstream discourse. Empowering women to make their voices heard in their families and community, as well as allowing women to hear other women's stories, especially from the other side of the border, is another way to show how the problems and concerns of women can be similar in conflicting societies. This joint Armenia-Azerbaijan project aimed at creating an opportunity for women from both countries to tell their stories and hear the stories of other women (notably from the other side of the border).

During the project two teams of journalists, writers and bloggers in Armenia and Azerbaijan have interviewed women of different ages and backgrounds, both in Yerevan and Baku, as well as in the regions. The interviewees were inquired about their lives, hopes and wishes for themselves, their families and their countries. These interviews are currently available in Armenian, Azeri and English at <http://armazwomen.wordpress.com/>.

Joint Fiction Book.

The electronic book is about two heroes (an Armenian and an Azerbaijani) whose story brings them closer to understanding and appreciating each other's viewpoint. The project was implemented in cooperation with the Imagine Center of Conflict Transformation. The book "Trip to Nowhere" is available in Russian at <http://goo.gl/ySK5n>.





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