

Awards for Research on Forgotten Places in Albania

6th Albanian History Competition: “Show Me Your Albania” (2023/2024)

On 24 February 2024, a festive award ceremony at the Tirana International Hotel concluded the 6th Albanian History Competition. In this year’s iteration of the “Ask your Grandparents” competition, participants explored unknown and forgotten places under the motto “Show Me Your Albania” in the form of essays or multimedia works.

Organisers challenged the students to combine critical historical research with a creative form of presentation. The research projects by participants aged 14-21 delved deeply into Albanian history through close examination of important historical sites, from mines and monasteries to bunkers and prison camps. From a total of 175 entries, the jury selected 27 finalists who were invited to the award ceremony. Introductory remarks by Jonila Godole, the director of the Institute for Democracy, Media and Culture (IDMC), were followed by the greatly anticipated announcement of this year's winners.



The winner of the 6th Albanian History Competition, Engjëllushe Pashaj | Photo: Conference videography Service Albania-CVSA

The first place went to Engjëllushe Pashaj and her video “309” which investigated the Ballsh prison camp in Southern Albania built by the Communist regime. Joana Teneqexhi and Matias Grishaj were awarded second prize for their projects dealing with communist housing and the Atheist Museum in Shkodër. Alongside three third places that went to Georgios Giakoumis, Rosela Kaso, and Arla Peza, two encouragement awards and one social media engagement prize were awarded.

The prizes were presented by a group of honoured public figures, including the journalist Agim Baçi, the German ambassador to Albania Karl Begner and the poet Gëzim Peshkopia, who was a political prisoner in Ballsh prison camp.



Presenting the awards to the winners | Photo: Conference videography Service Albania-CVSA

Alongside the awards, the winners of the history competition received monetary prizes funded by Raiffeisen Bank and, to top it off, the opportunity to apply for a fully funded study trip to Riga, Latvia, to participate in the EUSTORY annual summit. Oriada Dajko, “Cultural Heritage” representative of IDMC, praised the successful conclusion of the competition and thanked all students and teachers “for their tireless work, appreciating [...] the entire creative and reflective process to achieve such high-quality works.”

The award ceremony took place during the “Memory Days” which the IDMC organises annually.