

## Record Numbers for Albania's History Competition

### “Show Me Your Albania” (2024/2025)



*The finalists of the 7th edition of the Albanian History Competition*

*Photo: Conference videography Service Albania-CVSA*

The awards ceremony for the 7th edition of the "Ask Your Grandparents" competition took place in the Classic Hall of the Tirana International Hotel on 22 February 2025. Over 200 guests attended, including Marina Maier, Director of the Austrian Service Abroad, historian Ulrich Mählert, and representatives from the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sports. The event also saw the presence of previous winners, academics, and young finalists with their families, all gathered to celebrate the achievements of this year's competition.

With a record 326 participants aged 14 to 21, this year's competition saw a remarkable increase in both participation and public engagement. The submitted works – ranging from essays to art and multimedia projects – reflected not only a growing historical awareness but also innovative approaches to memory preservation. Public interest reached unprecedented levels during this year's Albanian History Competition, particularly through social media engagement. All finalists' posts were showcased on IDMC's Instagram account, where the public could vote by liking their favourite post. The post with the highest number of likes was awarded the Audience Prize. This direct and transparent voting method sparked significant interaction across platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.

## Prize winners

The jury praised the exceptional creativity and historical insight, using essays, art, and multimedia to preserve memories, challenge narratives, and bring the past to life.



*Winner of the 1st prize in the essay category | Photo: Conference Videography Service Albania-CVSA*

In the essay category, the first prize was awarded to Amber Spahi from Tirana for "The Journey of Light, the Story of an Indomitable Soul." It tells the story of Zeqir Rashica, who fought for the unity of Albania and Kosovo, enduring suffering under the communist regime. It highlights his struggles, sacrifices, and the lasting impact of his ideals on future generations.



*Winner of the 2nd prize in the essay category | Photo: Conference Videography Service Albania-CVSA*

The second prize went to Xhesika Preçi from Shkodër for "And the Bells Fall Silent." Her essay chronicles the construction, destruction, and eventual restoration of the Cathedral of St. Stephen in Shkodër, highlighting its role as a symbol of faith and resistance during times of Ottoman rule, Communist oppression, and eventual revival after the fall of the regime.



*Winner of the 1st prize in the art category | Photo: Conference Videography Service Albania-CVSA*

In the art category, Luesa Lalollari from Tirana won first prize with "The Tear of Peace." In this contribution, a young girl can be seen in a meadow of flowers enclosed in a tear of fire and water, with several motifs depicting conflict in the background.

In the multimedia category, Erla and Edjon Allmuça from Tirana won first prize for "Return to the Lost Era." Their video project shows a time machine to travel back to different periods of the past Albanian dictatorship.

The public choice award, based on social media voting, went to Erti Katroschi from Tirana for "The Tears of Kosovo." The video reflected and commented on the Kosovo War.