

## Armenian History Competition 2021/2022

“Between Forgetting and Remembering: Soviet and Post-Soviet Memory Landscape in Families and Communities”

The first Armenian History Competition finishes with promising figures: Since the launch of the competition “Between Forgetting and Remembering: Soviet and Post-Soviet Memory Landscape in Families and Communities”, the experts and organisers have met 44 teachers and 217 students in different workshops they organised throughout the past months. This commitment has paid off: In the end, they received 46 entries. The participating students had managed to conduct their own research projects on Soviet tangible heritage, like buildings, monuments and memorial sites in their surrounding areas.



*Armenian prize winners, their tutors and competition organisers at the award ceremony in Yerevan | Photo: DVV International Armenia*

Part of the success of the pilot project was the decision to add an intense mentoring programme for interested teachers to the competition activities. Staff from DVV International Armenia together with experts from the Armenian NGO Hazarashen organised a kick off workshop for interested teachers. In the following months, organisers, experts and jury members continued to be available for consultations. Teachers could receive feedback on first ideas of students’ research topics and experts were ready to provide tailor-made material

regarding methodology or sources for relevant research material. The competition project successfully encouraged history teachers to try out new methodologies like oral history or digital storytelling. “We were eager to make sure that teachers’ first experiences with historical project work in class would be rewarding”, said Ester Hakobyan, country director Armenia of DVV International.

Although teachers were the competition’s key stakeholders, the student participants were looked after too: In different spring schools, students met to present and discuss their research questions to each other and receive and give peer-to-peer feedback – an innovative approach in the rather competitive school system of Armenia. These efforts paid off as Hourig Attarian, jury member and Associate Professor at the American University of Armenia, recognised: “Going through the various projects across three different regions of Armenia, I was struck by how excited the students themselves felt about their projects and their peer collaborations. What shone through for me personally in the students’ work was their palpable sense of discovery, which comes with authentic learning experiences.”



*Students’ poster from the competition’s Spring School, now decorating the DVV International Country Office in Yerevan*

*Photo: Körber-Stiftung*

On 17 June, organisers and jury members revealed the results of the pilot competition in a festive ceremony at the Aram Khachaturian Home Museum. Fourteen works, most of them created by groups, were awarded for their performances. Eight works got special nominations and six jurors awarded another eight main prizes. The research works represented the wide variety of approaches and forms of presentation chosen by the students very well. Experts Lusine Kharatyan and Ruzanna Tsaturyan as well as jury members Eviya Hovhannisyan, Vahram Soghomonyan and Hourig Attarian recognised the special achievements of the winning entries during the ceremony. “Your microstories, insights into local history from a personal perspective, help us all to create tighter links between the generations and to value our communities”, stressed Lusine Kharatyan when addressing the audience. “Do not stop here, share your results with your peers, in your schools and villages!” To contribute to a greater outreach of the students’ research results, they will also be published on the competition’s website.

Katja Fausser from Körber-Stiftung introduced the international EUSTORY Network to the Armenian prize winners. They will have the opportunity to share their experiences and results with peers from other countries in upcoming international History Camps.