

Armenian History Competition 2023/2024

“Using Propaganda as a Tool for Dissemination Soviet Ideology in Armenia, Specifically in Public Spaces, Everyday Life, Culture and Education”

The room was filled with the buzzing voices of the guests. The excitement was palpable: Which contribution would be awarded first place? What were the other competition entries, excerpts of which were shown on a screen in the entrance hall, about? And what was the story behind the colourful cardboard boxes scattered around the room?

This alternative exhibition welcomed the guests to the Armenian History Competition’s award ceremony on 31 July 2024. In 39 entries submitted in the competition’s current edition, participants explored the topic of “Using Propaganda as a Tool for Dissemination Soviet Ideology in Armenia, Specifically in Public Spaces, Everyday Life, Culture and Education” from different angles. They examined school and cultural events during Soviet time, dived deep into Soviet cartoons, looked behind the facades of monuments in their villages as well as analysed the propagandistic impact of everyday items like toys, coins and stamps. And the topic struck a chord with participants: “I learned a lot during this project work, because the topic was unique, non-standard, and interesting. [...] Thanks to the analysis of Soviet cartoons, we discovered the dark and light sides of an entire period”, Rudolph Hovsepyan remarked.



Winners of the 2nd Armenian History Competition | Photo: DVV International Armenia

During the award ceremony, eleven of the 39 entries were honoured with a prize. After speeches by Ester Hakobyan, country director of DVV International Armenia, Lusine Kharatyan, representative of the NGO Hazarashen - Armenian Center for Ethnological Studies, and Katja Fausser, representative of Körber-Stiftung, the colourful cardboard boxes came into play. Each contained information on the prize winners and the entry’s topic as well as quotes from the team members or an excerpt from one of the entry’s interviews. After announcing the eleven prize winning teams, presenters at the award ceremony put up the

quotes and photos contained in the boxes. This way, a small exhibition emerged – a colourful reminder of the diversity of competition entries.

All the winners were delighted about the prize they received in the colourful cardboard box. Besides, they also emphasized the valuable intangible prizes they gained through working on their project. “The most important thing I learned during this project was to be an analyser, examiner, discoverer [...]. During the project, I became more open-minded and began to think from multiple perspectives”, prize winner Tamara Yailoyan highlighted.



Winners receive their prizes during the award ceremony

Photo: DVV International Armenia

The competition is a part of the international project “A Toolkit for Critical History Teaching”, financed by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany. The project's main partners are DVV International and Körber-Stiftung. It is implemented jointly by DVV International representative offices and local NGOs: Teachers Association NOVA DOBA (Ukraine), The National Association of Young Historians of Moldova ANTIM (Moldova), Soviet Past Research Laboratory (SovLab) and GAHE - Georgian Association of History Educators (Georgia), and "Hazarashen" Armenian Center for Ethnological Studies (Armenia).



Exhibition of photos, quotes by the prize winning team and interview excerpts from their work

Photo: DVV International Armenia