

The Eastern Partnership Cultural Observatory was set up with the aim to provide an overview on culture in the EaP Region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), bringing together evidence-based materials and identifying priorities for research and new policy initiatives. Its first thematic briefs have been displayed on the Observatory [webpage](#), part of Culture and Creativity EU Programme [portal](#), administered by the British Council after the end of the programme.

BRIEF NR.3: CULTURAL HERITAGE

In [Brief Nr.2](#) we reviewed the prevailing cultural policies and found that cultural heritage is among top priorities in all six countries. In fact, caring about built heritage appears to be the most important common cultural policy objective in these countries. Seen in the same perspective, the issue of intangible cultural heritage, its preservation and revival, is also considered to be a primary policy aim in all six countries.

General characteristics

Two important instruments of the Council of Europe allow for circumventing the challenge of six languages as well as the great variety in accessing documents and other information. One is the [Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe](#), and the other is [HEREIN System](#) of European Heritage Policies. The first is general, absorbing all aspects of cultural policy while the second, as the name suggests, specialises on heritage. Nevertheless, [Chapter 4.2.2.](#) on heritage issues and policies in the Compendium offers much richer content. The latest updates from [Azerbaijan](#) and [Georgia](#) are exceptionally rich in information about the institutional structures and achievements of the cultural heritage sectors in the two countries. (To our knowledge the country profile of Belarus is also under preparation.)

The table shows presences in the two instruments.

	Compendium Chapter 4.2.2. year of latest update	HEREIN System
Armenia	2015	no
Azerbaijan	2016	no
Belarus	no	yes
Georgia	2016	yes
Moldova	2015	yes
Ukraine	2015	yes

European Heritage Days

The European Heritage Days was first launched in France in 1984 as the Days of Open Doors. It has since been adopted by the Council of Europe and later also by the European Union. They are held each year in September along a centrally defined theme. The European Heritage Days are widely celebrated in all six countries. About the latest edition in 2017, unfortunately [the website](#) of the programme reports only about [Georgia](#), how the [national programme](#) utilised the recommended [101 ideas](#).

Cultural routes

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe is another important international initiative based on cultural heritage. The routes in this very well administered programme – see [the website](#) - have great touristic potential and are important for the visibility of the cultural heritage of the participating countries. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia take part as members of the programme while Ukraine as an observer (nevertheless with a part in one route).

Destination Napoleon	BY
European Route of Historic Thermal Towns	AZ
European Route of Jewish Heritage	AZ GE
Hansa Route	BY
Iter Vitis Route	AZ GE MD
Prehistoric Rock Art Trails	AZ GE
Via Regia	UA
Viking Routes	BY

European Year of Cultural Heritage

In 2018, the 28 members of the European Union celebrate the shared cultural heritage in the frame of a dedicated European Year. To date we have information about the intention to join the initiative only from Ukraine.

Preservation of built heritage

Characteristic features of national heritage policies and actions related to built heritage monument are illustrated with selected examples.

- Significant amounts from the national budget of Georgia have been spent on the restoration of many of the 7424 listed monuments in the country, amply complemented by the private Cartu Charity Foundation;
- With strong political backing, private foundations have started initiatives also in Armenia on the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage, both for monasteries inside the country (with the Tatev revival project) and abroad (renovation of Saint Gevorg church in Tbilisi with over 1,00 sq. m of frescoes restored);
- Major works completed lately in Moldova are the restoration of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Chisinau, Manuc Bay's mansion and the Soroca Fortress.
- Extensive renovation work on Belarusfilm national studio lasted ten years and was completed in 2017. The reconstructions works of the 11-17th century castle in Navahrudak, Grodna region, and the 19th century Puslovskija Palace in Kosava (the, 19th, Brest region received fresh impetus. Private funds and people accomplished the remarkable reconstruction of the 16th century castle in Lubcha, Grodno region.

With regard to built heritage, the **World Heritage List** of UNESCO is the most important international point of reference. Submissions require considerable intellectual investment. Inceptions therefore are important signs of recognitions about a country's cultural heritage policies. At present the six countries are represented on the list with **seventeen items**. With two early exceptions, all cases were submitted after gaining independence.

What	When	Country
Ancient City of Tauric Chersonese and its Chora	2013	UA
Wooden <i>Tserkvas</i> of the Carpathian Region in Poland and Ukraine	2013	UA

Residence of Bukovinian and Dalmatian Metropolitans	2011	UA
Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape	2007	AZ
Ancient and primeval beech forests	2007	UA
Struve Geodetic Arc	2005	BY, MD, UA
The cathedral and churches of Echmiatsin and Zvartnots site	2000	AM
The monastery of Geghard and the Upper Azat Valley	2000	AM
Walled city of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower	2000	AZ
Mir castle complex	2000	BY
Lviv – the ensemble of the historic centre	1998	UA
Monasteries of Haghpat and Sanahin	1996	AM
Upper Svaneti	1996	GE
Gelati monastery	1994	GE
Historical monuments of Mtskheta	1994	GE
Kiev: Saint-Sophia Cathedral and Pechersk Lavra	1990	UA
Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park	1979	BY

The international non-governmental association Europa Nostra regularly calls attention to the **endangered** heritage sites in Europe. Regrettably, the latest list contains two items from the region. Both are found in Georgia:

- [Aerial Cableway Network in Chiatura](#)
- [David Gareji Monasteries and Hermitage](#)

The most prestigious award in the field of built heritage belongs to Europa Nostra, which administers the **European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage** jointly with the European Commission. The majority of these awards are connected to specific physical renovations or preservations. Till now, in the absence of such an example, the EU prizes have acknowledged activities connected to the preservation of built heritage in the six countries.

What	When	Country
Dedicated service	2008	MD
Education, training and awareness-raising	2015	AM
Education, training and awareness-raising	2015	MD
Dedicated service	2016	BY
Education, training and awareness-raising	2017	GE

Intangible Heritage

The activities about the exploration, preservation and highlighting of the intangible domain of national cultural heritage is very intensive in the six countries, taken also in international comparison. Illustrative examples:

- Professional creativity in national music (*mugham*) and handmade craft (carpet) receives hefty support from the state in Azerbaijan;
- Efforts include a focus on specific gastronomic heritage, e.g. Armenian and Azerbaijani *lavash* as well as Azerbaijani breakfast; The Georgian government supports the popularization of the traditional *Qvevri* wine-making method throughout the world;

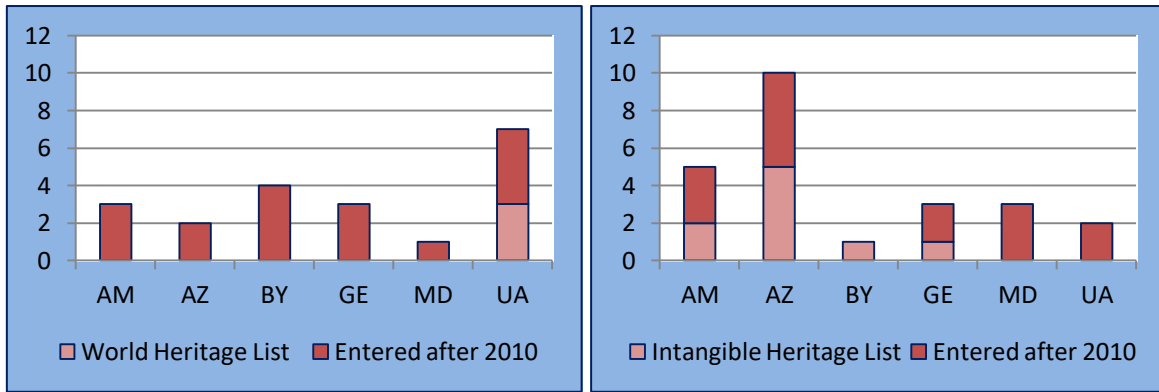
- In Belarus, the viability of the forest beekeeping tradition and honey production is encouraged across the country;
- Also in Belarus the biennial Berahinia Festival and the movement around it promote local folk arts, crafts and dance tradition in Oktiabrskij town, Homel region;
- The craftsmanship and symbolism of Armenian cross-stones art, *khatchkar*, transmitted through families was listed as an intangible heritage to protect;
- The Authentic Ukraine campaign, launched by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with Google Ukraine, envisions the number of projects aimed at the demonstration of the national traditions using the modern technologies;
- In Moldova national days are dedicated to wine and to national costumes, and the national fairs of rustic carpet (*Poeme țesute cu dor*) attract huge crowds each year.

With the latest increase– three new additions approved on 4 December, 2017 – there are now 24 items from the six countries on the **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**.

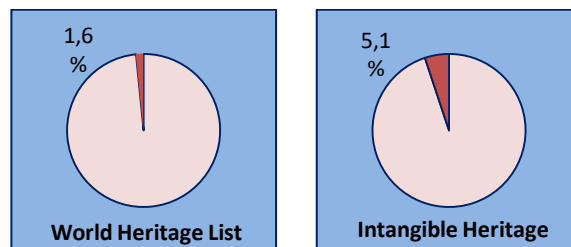
What	When	Country
Kochari, traditional group dance	2017	AM
Dolma making and sharing tradition	2017	AZ
Cultural practices associated to the 1st of March	2017	MD
Novruz	2016	AZ
Lavash	2016	AZ
Living culture of three writing systems of the Georgian alphabet	2016	GE
Traditional wall-carpet craftsmanship	2016	MD
Cossack's songs of Dnipropetrovsk Region	2016	UA
Copper craftsmanship of Lahij	2015	AZ
Kelaghayi, making and wearing women's silk headscarves	2014	AZ
Lavash	2014	AM
Chovqan, a traditional Karabakh horse-riding game	2013	AZ
Ancient Georgian traditional Qvevri wine-making method	2013	GE
Men's group Colindat, Christmas-time ritual	2013	MD
Petrykivka decorative painting	2013	UA
Craftsmanship and performance art of the Tar	2012	AZ
Performance of the Daredevils of Sassoun and David of Sassoun epics	2012	AM
Traditional art of carpet weaving	2010	AZ
Symbolism and craftsmanship of Khachkars cross-stones	2010	AM
Rite of the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars)	2009	BY
Art of Azerbaijani Ashiq	2009	AZ
Georgian polyphonic singing	2008	GE
Mugham	2008	AZ
Duduk and its music	2008	AM

The 24 entries of the six countries correspond to a mean of 4.0, which is roughly equivalent of the same average of 41 countries in Europe.

The six countries on the two global heritage lists



As the next couple of graphs shows, the global representation of the six countries is significantly more important on the total list of intangible heritage list with 5.1%, than the 1.6% percentage share in the physical heritage list. (The total number of entries on the World Heritage List is 1073, while on the intangible heritage registry 470.)



Impressum

This cultural policy brief was prepared in January 2018 by the Eastern Partnership Cultural Observatory, a project of the EU-EaP Culture and Creativity Programme. The content of this paper does not reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the publication lies entirely with the authors: Péter Inkei, Nairi Khatchadourian, Levan Khetaguri, Kateryna Kravchuk, Zviad Mchedlishvili, Tarlan Rasulov, Veacheslav Reabcinschii, Maria Savushkina.