

# Country Profile

## Azerbaijan

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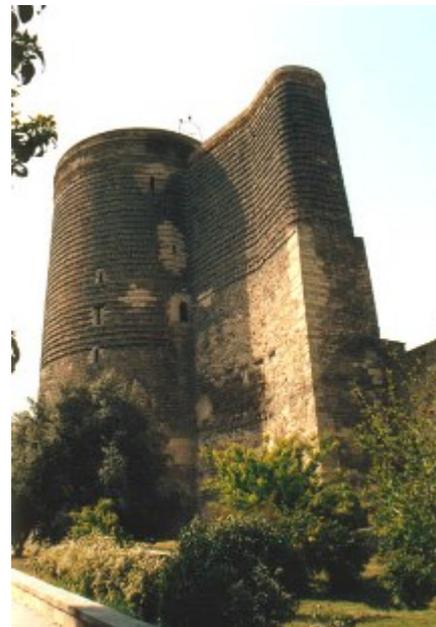
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# 1. Cultural policy system

## 1.1. Objectives, main features and background

The current cultural policy operating in the Republic of Azerbaijan is developed based on universal values, the national history of statehood, culture and art, and in line with main European cultural policy principles such as the promotion of identity and diversity, support for creativity, participation in cultural life, respect for artistic rights and ethics. National culture plays a significant role in the consciousness of Azerbaijanis, and the achievements of arts and literature organically fit into their mentality, axiological attitudes and everyday behaviour. In this context, the primary purpose of cultural policy in Azerbaijan comprises the harmonisation of relations between culture, arts workers, the people and the state. It means building relationships in which culture develops based on internal needs, creative persons realise their potential, audiences receive aesthetic inspiration, and the state provides due support.



As a result of general development and the formation of an independent state policy, the *Culture Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan* (No. 273 dated 14 February 2014) has formed a systems approach to the understanding of the main cultural policy objectives at the level of the highest executive document in the field of culture. Thus, the government policy implemented in recent years involves adjusting cultural policy provision mechanisms to actual requirements of cultural activity and artistic creativity. First of all, that implies improvement and further development of:

- cultural legislation (national, international, copyright);
- financing (public budget, paid cultural services, fundraising);
- administration (public institutions, creative unions, private enterprises);
- information (research, databases, mass media);
- human resources (education and training, social security, encouragement);
- infrastructure (buildings, equipment, supply);
- international cooperation (multilateral, bilateral, diaspora).

It should be noted that the state cultural policy currently being implemented in the Republic of Azerbaijan follows the model of harmonious development based on historical continuity. This attitude is necessary to bring together a comprehensive approach to practical handling simultaneously with artefacts from different eras, modern art achievements, and new artistic technologies looking into the future. Rock painting of Gobustan and Nakhchivan dates back thousands and tens of thousands of years, the first opera and ballet in the East, symphonic-mugham and jazz-mugham, and professional theatre and cinema arts, which have emerged in Azerbaijan in the 19th century, and so on. All of it, including the latest forms of creativity, lives, breathes and requires increased attention and responsibility to the descendants.

Considering all of it, a temporal, "yesterday-today-tomorrow" approach, has been developed in the current national cultural policy, defined by the *Concept of Culture*. Thus, the whole variety of manifestations of culture and art in the life of modern Azerbaijani society is usually subdivided into:

- cultural heritage (tangible-immovable, movable, intangible);
- professional arts (music, theatre, fine arts);
- cultural industries (cinematography, publishing, intersectional industries).

Thanks to this systematisation used in the country, there are cultural and political opportunities for targeted and qualified development of programmes, road maps, and action plans in all these areas of creative activity in culture and art to set specific tasks and monitor key performance indicators.

The cultural policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan is constantly developing, comprehending and rethinking itself. In general, society and the state have already understood their roles in culture by virtue of the *Concept of Culture*. Now, the issue is to apply this understanding successfully. Spontaneous attempts to implement separate, unrelated and isolated individual programmes, which were not as effective as a rule, do not work anymore. Projects for the sake of projects and programmes for the sake of programmes mislead nobody now. This time has passed, and concrete long-term and sustainable results are needed. Following the conceptual understanding of the theory and practice of managing the sphere of culture, the agenda of public administration actualised the need, in an integrated and systematic approach, the necessity for a comprehensive and long-term strategy.

Based on this understanding, and precisely in these conditions, the draft *Culture Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan* for the period up to 2030 is being developed. Within the framework of this general long-term strategy, medium-term and short-term programmes, projects, road maps and so on will be prepared. A characteristic feature of the strategy is that it involves a strong intensification of creating databases and registers in all areas of culture and art. It has become especially evident in the period of social isolation and the increasing importance of virtual representation. The execution of the decisions will also be put on the rails; the state institutions have taken it seriously and require an account to society for each declared task. A separate requirement of the cultural policy was increased financial discipline and a gradual transition to programme-targeted financing.

#### *Historical background for the past 70 years*

1950-1960. Azerbaijan is part of an empire that occupied and liquidated the first secular parliamentary state in the East - the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920). These are the years of transition to a political thaw. As a result, in 1953, the Ministry for Culture of the Azerbaijan SSR was established with minor powers.

1961-1970. The first signs of individualism and rejection of principles of socialist realism became visible at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. Since that period, the arts have gradually emancipated themselves from state control.

1971-1980. Large-scale measures to develop the economy, the creation of numerous industrial enterprises in Azerbaijan. The republic gets money for culture and arts, the formation of an influential creative environment.

1981-1990. A powerful surge of national and cultural awareness, which Soviet tanks are trying to crush on 20

January 1990, in the streets of Baku.

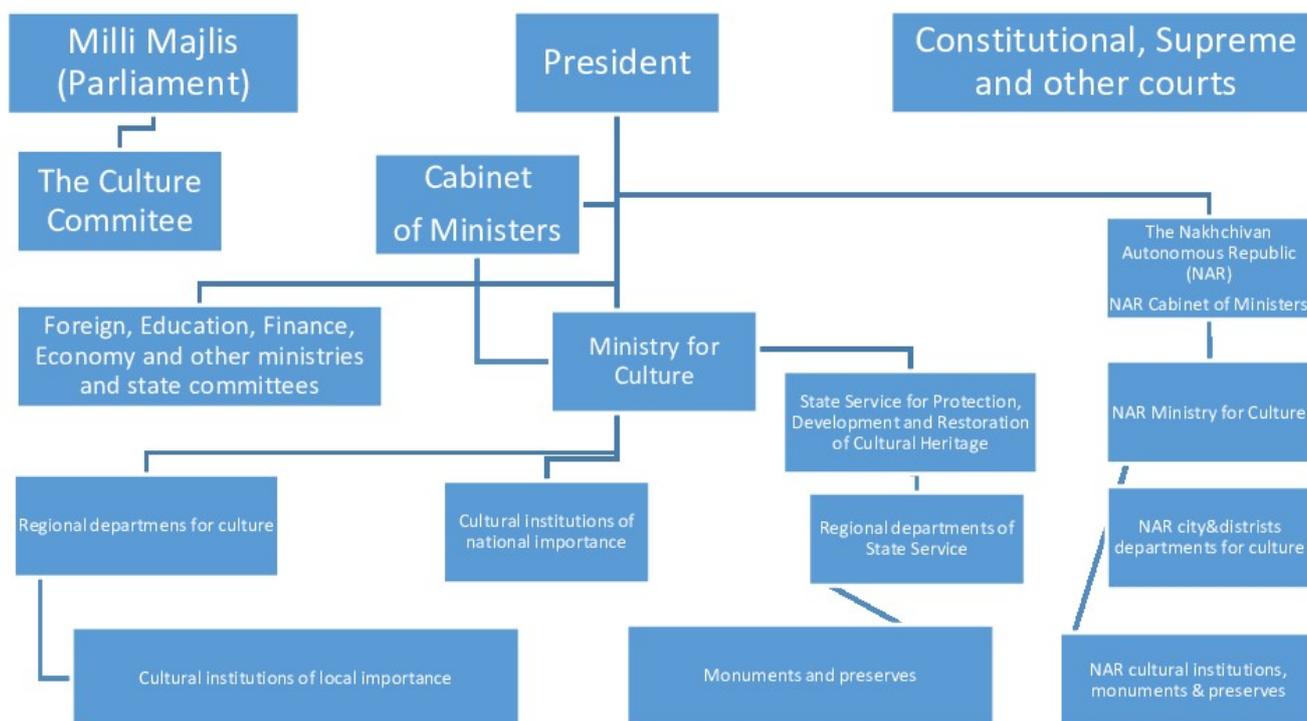
1991-2000. 18 October 1991 is the day of restoration of the State Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Destruction of the cultural infrastructure in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia. The National Leader of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, was returned to the leadership of the state at the request of the people.

2001-2010. Years of modern cultural policy formation in active cooperation with UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ISESCO and other international organisations.

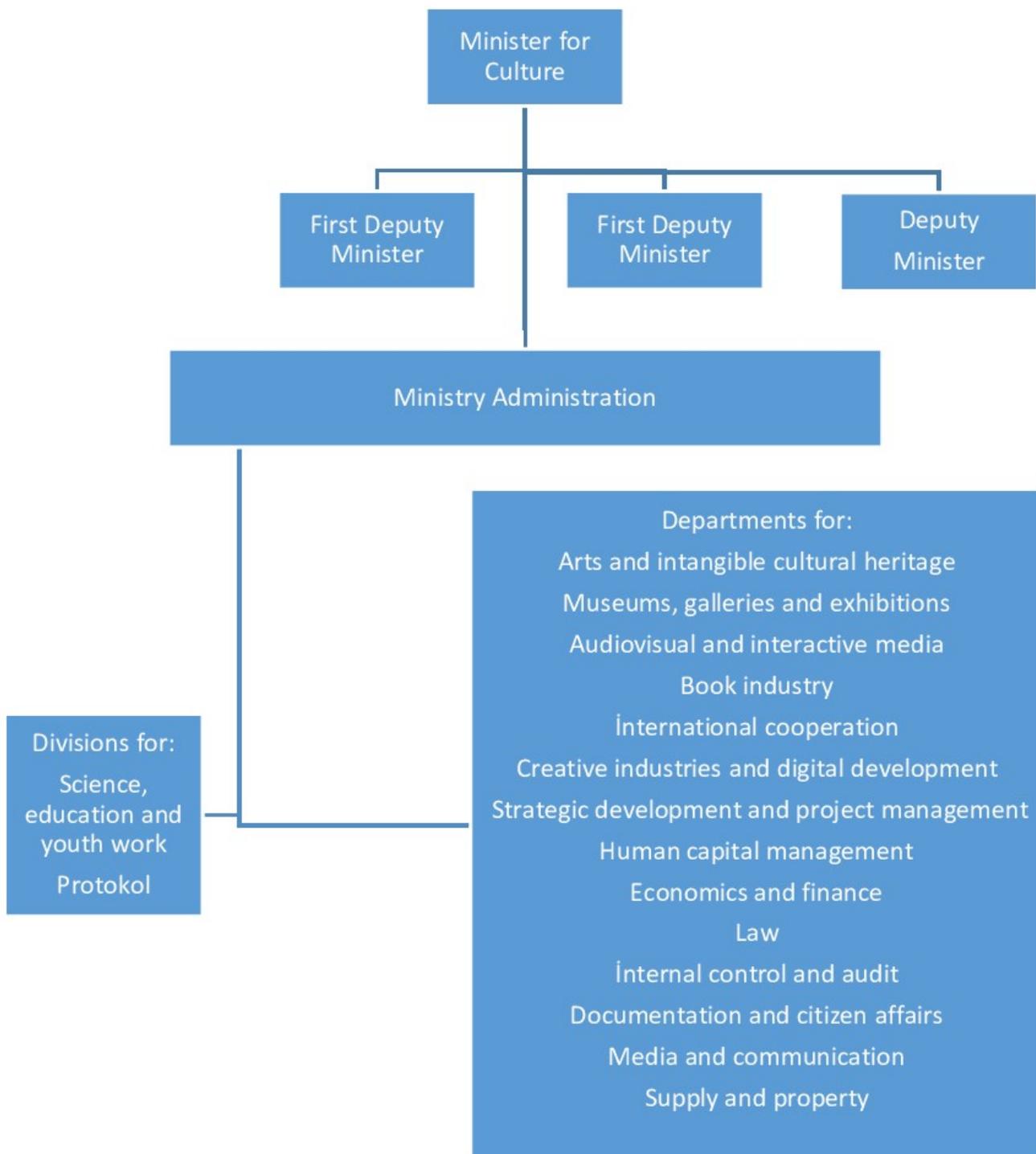
2011-2020. The Republic of Azerbaijan initiates many international cultural programmes and events and becomes a strong global cultural and political player. The territorial integrity of the country was restored on 10 November 2020. It meant restoring cultural integrity as well.

## 1.2. Domestic governance system

### 1.2.1. ORGANISATIONAL ORGANIGRAM



Source: The Ministry for Culture, 2021.



Source: The Ministry for Culture, 2021.

### 1.2.2. NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a democratic, law-based, secular, unitary republic. The only source of state power in the Republic of Azerbaijan is the people of Azerbaijan. The *Constitution*, approved by a general referendum on 12 November 1995, provides the principle of division of powers: the Milli Majlis (Parliament) exercises legislative power; executive power belongs to the President; and law courts exercise judicial power.

[Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#) - one chamber body comprising 125 deputies, elected by direct elections for a 5-year term. The Culture Committee of the Milli Majlis is the leading committee concerned with

drafting laws and decisions about forming and fulfilling the state policy on culture and protecting cultural heritage. The Culture Committee draws up draft laws concerned with culture, including language, literature, arts, museums, theatres, cinema, design, architecture, urban planning and development, library services, archival activities and protection of the cultural heritage. The Committee also gives its opinions about the draft laws submitted already.

The Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the courts of appeal, general courts and other specialised courts of the Republic of Azerbaijan implement judicial power. Judicial power is exercised through constitutional, civil and criminal proceedings and other means prescribed by law.

[The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#) is the Head of the state of Azerbaijan. He represents the state of Azerbaijan both within the country and in its foreign relations. The President is elected for a 7-year term by way of general, direct and equal elections, with a free, personal and secret ballot. The President appoints the Prime-minister by consent of the Parliament. The President establishes the Cabinet of Ministers to implement executive powers, subordinated and reporting to the President.

[The Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#) is the central executive body implementing state policy and regulation in culture, art, history and protection of cultural monuments, publishing and cinematography. The Ministry for Culture manages the cultural sphere at a centralised and local level. The management of enterprises located in the regions (except for theatres and cinemas) is under the direct control of the regional cultural departments and indirectly under the relevant structural units of the ministry. Cultural institutions and organisations located in Baku, which are of national importance and non-duplicated (for example, the Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum, the National Library, etc.), are under the direct control and management of the relevant structural units of the ministry.

[The State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry for Culture](#) was established by the *Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 409 of December 18, 2014)*. The State Service is the executive authority exercising state control in the field of protection of cultural heritage, use of immovable historical and cultural objects (monuments) under state protection, their restoration, reconstruction, conservation and reconstruction, except for the territories of "Icheri Sheher" State Historical-Architectural and "Gala" State Historical-Ethnographic Reserves and other relevant areas.

### 1.2.3. REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Sixteen regional departments for culture of the Ministry for Culture were established by merging and enlarging the previous 64 city and district departments for culture by the *Presidential Decree On Improving the Structure of the Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 1932 of March 29, 2016)*. As a result, this system's architecture changed to form a transparent and effective management system in the field of culture and to improve the structure of the Ministry for Culture.

At present, Baku City Culture Head Department and 15 regional departments of Sumgayit, Khachmaz, Ismayilli, Sheki, Kurdamir, Agstafa, Shamkir, Ganja, Barda, Agjabadi, Agdash, Sabirabad, Bilasuvar, Masalli and Lankaran, with 219 full-time positions, are carrying out the direct management of state-local culture and art institutions of the capital city and the regions. Following the *Regulations on Regional Cultural Institutions* approved by the *Decision of the Board of the Ministry for Culture (No. 5/1 of October 3, 2018)*, the regional departments for culture

participate in forming a unified state cultural policy in the regions and ensure the implementation of this policy. They also draft and implement various programmes to develop the relevant fields in the regions in coordination with the ministry.

The *Presidential Decree On Improving the Activity of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan (№844 of October 22, 2019)* improved the management system of immovable cultural heritage in the regions. Five regional departments of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry for Culture were established to strengthen state control in protecting immovable historical and cultural monuments under state protection and ensure effective management. According to this decree, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the division of territorial affiliation of the Baku, Shabran, Gabala, Ganja and Salyan regional departments of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry for Culture. The number of employees of the regional departments of the Civil Service was determined to be 215 staff units, including 20 staff units for the staffing of the regional offices and 195 staff units for the guards of the monument.

The [Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic](#) is an integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Accordingly, the *Constitution* and laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan, decrees of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, including those in the sphere of culture, are binding within the territory of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. At the same time, given the constitutional status of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, the Ministry for Culture of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic is responsible for regional cultural policy within its jurisdiction.

#### 1.2.4. LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Territorial and administrative units are formed according to the *Law on Territorial Structure and Administrative Division (№ 892-IQ of June 13, 2000)*. The Republic of Azerbaijan is administratively divided into 66 districts and 11 cities subordinate to the Republic. The districts are further divided into municipalities. Out of these, seven districts and one city is located within the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic.

The Ministry for Culture, being the central executive body implementing state cultural policy, manages the cultural sphere not only at a centralised but also at the local level through its regional and local structures. The 15 regional cultural departments of the Ministry for Culture manage state-local cultural enterprises, and five regional departments of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry for Culture and protect immovable cultural heritage located in the regions. State institutions of culture and art, monuments of history and culture, and a number of historical and cultural reserves, which are in the system of the Ministry for Culture, are financed from the central or regional budgets of the ministry.

District institutions of culture in the system of the Ministry for Culture act under their model regulations approved by the *Decision of the Board of the Ministry for Culture (No. 6/1 of November 8, 2018)*, such as:

- *The Model Regulations of History and Ethnography Museums;*
- *The Model Regulations on the Centralised Library System;*
- *The Model Regulations of Children's Schools of Music, Art and Painting;*
- *The Model Regulations of City (District) Cultural Centres;*

- *The Model Regulations of City (district) Heydar Aliyev centres;*
- *The Model Regulations of State Art Galleries operating in the Regions of the Republic.*

The Ministry for Culture and its subordinate bodies cooperate with city/district executive authorities and self-government bodies in implementing the state cultural policy at the local level. "*Regulations on local executive authorities*" approved by the *Presidential Decree (№ 648 of June 6, 2012)* define the duties of the local executive power in the field of culture as follows:

- Implements state policy in the field of culture in the relevant area
- Makes proposals on draft state programmes for the development of culture and art and ensures the implementation of these programmes in the appropriate location;
- Organises protection of historical, cultural, natural monuments and cultural heritage sites with the Ministry for Culture.

For this purpose, departments of socio-political and humanitarian affairs and departments related to architecture are included in the city, district and city district executive authorities. For example, the Baku City Executive Power structure includes the Department of Protection of the city's cultural heritage and the Sector for registration of toponymy, architectural monuments, and allocated areas.

According to the *Law on The Status of Municipalities (№ 698-IQ of July 2, 1999)*, they may assist in developing cultural institutions and preserving historical and cultural monuments via their local social protection and social development programmes.

### 1.2.5. MAIN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

Development of culture and art is among the priority areas of state support to non-governmental organisations, according to the *Concept of State Support to Non-governmental Organisations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 2288 of July 27, 2007)*.

Council of State Support to Non-Governmental Organisations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan functioned from 13 December 2007. However, analysis and summarisation of the results of state support for non-governmental organisations made it necessary to build activities in this area on a more sophisticated basis and improve regulatory mechanisms for their active participation in the life of the state and society. As a result, *Presidential Decree № 1317 of April 19, 2021*, established a public legal entity, the "Agency of State Support to Non-Governmental Organisations of the Republic of Azerbaijan".

[The Heydar Aliyev Foundation](#), which operates in education, health, cultural, social and other fields since 2004, are among the main non-governmental actors influencing cultural policy in the country. The Foundation actively participates in the preservation, restoration and use of cultural values and historical and cultural monuments, the implementation of musical projects, the organisation of art festivals and exhibitions.

The Union of Azerbaijan Writers, Union of Azerbaijan Composers, Union of Azerbaijan Artists, Union of Azerbaijan Theatrical Workers, Union of Azerbaijan Ashiqs, and Union of Cinematographers are among the most proactive non-governmental organisations. They play a significant consultative and lobbying role in corresponding spheres of culture and arts as well as concerning ethics and cultural rights.

## 1.2.6. TRANSVERSAL CO-OPERATION

Considering that drafting and putting the national cultural policy into practice requires joint efforts of two or more institutions, the Ministry for Culture cooperates closely within the Cabinet of Ministers with other ministries, state committees and relevant executive bodies.

General management is carried out by the Administration of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers, while regional cultural events and policies are coordinated with local executive authorities where necessary. Issues related to legislation on culture are discussed with the Parliamentary Committee on Culture and all kinds of regulations with the Ministry of Justice. Arising copyright issues are agreed with the [Intellectual Property Agency](#).

On funding for culture procedures, it is necessary to communicate with the Ministry of Finance closely. At the same time, the infrastructure provision of cultural institutions and taxes for culture are coordinated with the Ministry of Economy and, where it is necessary, with the State Urban Planning and Architecture Committee. Likewise, projects in information-communication technologies are discussed, if needed, with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies.

The main partners of the Ministry for Culture in matters of education, training and research in culture are the Ministry of Education and the affiliated research institutes of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. On human resources issues, cooperation has been established with the State Examination Centre, the Ministry of Youth and Sport, and the State Committee on Family, Women and Children's Issues. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population administers the social welfare of cultural workers.

Multilateral cooperation within the frameworks of international organisations and international bilateral relations with foreign countries are coordinated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while diaspora issues are under the jurisdiction of the State Committee on Work with the Diaspora.

The State Statistical Committee collects statistical data annually for further processing and systematisation.

In some cases, the President, or the Cabinet of Ministers, sets up specific organising committees and working groups, including representatives from the respective levels of government, to facilitate inter-ministerial cooperation and implement long-term state programmes or concrete projects. Their work includes concepts on the economy, science, education, culture, health, transport, the *State Programme on Socio-economic Development of the Regions for 2019-2023*, etc.

Government can also establish commissions to prepare national reports for international organisations. *The Periodical Reports of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, which was prepared by a Governmental Commission, with the participation of high-level representatives of foreign, internal, justice, health, culture and tourism, education ministries and other relevant state bodies, e.g.

## 1.3. Cultural institutions

### 1.3.1. OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

The rise in entertainment businesses, culture industries, and cultural tourism has attracted the attention of

private companies; the number of private galleries, museums, antique shops, and national souvenirs and crafts producers is growing. In addition, design agencies, the book market, and printing houses are developing. Furthermore, the culture industries such as book publishing, the press, audio-visual and phonogram production, entertainment industries and new technologies are undergoing rapid development.

The general picture is that if you look at the directions, it is striking that the institutions and organisations of cultural heritage (immovable, movable and intangible) are mainly under the management of state bodies. On the contrary, the cultural industries' various forms of organisation are more concentrated in the private and non-state spheres. Professional art (music, theatre, fine arts) is somewhere in the middle in this "public-private scale". That is, where it is about the preservation of traditions and personnel training, it is primarily concentrated in state institutions. Nevertheless, the performing arts and concert activities are already more eager to monetise and are more commercial. Moreover, many activities in arts and culture, namely festivals, concerts, fairs, etc., both international and local, attract a significant share of sponsorship from the private sector.

In total, state cultural policy in cultural infrastructure prescribes:

- Modernisation of the material and technical bases with the construction of specialised buildings and rehabilitation of cultural institutions;
- Equipping cultural enterprises with modern engineering and information communication technologies;
- Providing cultural institutions with stage costumes, musical instruments, etc.

### 1.3.2. DATA ON SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

*Table 1: Cultural institutions, by sector and domain*

Domain	Cultural institutions (subdomains)	Public sector	Public sector	Private sector	Private sector
		Number (2020)	Trend last 5 years (ln %)	Number (2020)	Trend last 5 years (ln %)
Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage sites (recognised)	6036	-4.3%	-	-
	Archaeological sites	2550	+24.7%	-	-
Museums	Museum institutions	239	+2.1%	1	0%
Archives	Archive institutions	78	0%	-	-
Visual arts	Public art galleries / exhibition halls	33	0%	-	-
Performing arts	Scenic and stable spaces for theatre	29	+3.6%	-	-
	Concert houses	10	+11.1%	6	+20%
	Theatre companies	29	+6%	-	-
	Dance and ballet companies	1	0%	-	-
	Symphonic orchestras	1	0%	-	-
Libraries	Libraries	2922	-9%	-	-
Audiovisual	Cinemas	2	-60%	3	+40%
	Broadcasting organisations	4	0%	36	+5.9%
Inter-disciplinary	Socio-cultural centres / cultural houses	2231	-15.8%	-	-

Other (please explain)	Historical, cultural, architectural, art and ethnographic reserves	28	+7.7%	-	-
	Child musical, art and painting schools	238	+0.4%	-	-

Source(s): the State Statistical Committee, 2021 and the Ministry for Culture, 2021

There is no data available on private cultural institutions, only incomplete information. For example, you can still cite private cinemas, which decreased from five in 2015 to three in 2020. There is also data for one private museum, also for concert and broadcasting organisations. However, statistics for the private sector of other domains indicated in the table are not kept yet.

The State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry for Culture deals with cultural and historical monuments, archaeological sites, and a number of historical, cultural, architectural, art and ethnographic reserves.

The Ministry for Culture manages public museums, art galleries, concert halls, theatres, libraries, cinemas, children's music, arts and painting schools, cultural houses, et cetera. The National Archive Fund manages archive institutions.

Although a tiny fraction of these institutions is run by other government agencies, for example, out of 2 922 public library units, two belong to the State Oil Company, 3 to the Confederation of Trade Unions, and another 24 to other organisations. In addition, out of the total number of museums in 239 institutions, three museums are under the Cabinet of Ministers, 4 of which are in the National Academy of Sciences. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Oil Company have one museum each. Out of 2 231 club establishments, the State Oil Company owns three, the Confederation of the Trade Unions owns seven, and 28 club institutions belong to other organisations.

### 1.3.3. PUBLIC CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS: TRENDS AND STRATEGIES

Institutions and organisations of culture are functioning practically in all areas of cultural activity. Accordingly, the *Concept of Culture* undertakes to classify cultural institutions in heritage, art and cultural industries.

Archaeological, architectural, garden-park, monumental, memorial, decorative, applied art monuments, culture, architecture, art, and ethnographic reserves, form immovable cultural heritage. Museums of history, memory, ethnography, art, and archives and libraries protect movable cultural heritage. The centres of culture, houses of culture, and clubs represent the infrastructure of intangible cultural heritage (folklore, local lore and crafts).

Concert halls and theatres, art galleries and exhibition halls are places where professional art is widespread. Music, dance and art schools are places where professional skills and professional audiences are nurtured. Finally, film studios and cinemas, publishing houses and book houses represent directions of the cultural industries.

The majority of cultural institutions have public status, being financed by centralised or local budgets. Libraries, museums and art galleries are funded by public budgets, and the state partially subsidises the theatre-entertainment organisations. Salaries are guaranteed by the state, while expenditure on maintaining buildings or building new stages, etc., is carried out at the expense of the theatre-entertainment organisations. A high

percentage of centralised expenditure goes on libraries and museums of national importance, subsidies to state theatres, centralised events, theatrical and musical performances, the visual arts, restoration of cultural monuments, creation of new monuments, and conduction of events in foreign countries, etc.

Structural reforms in these spheres explain a significant decline in public libraries (11% in the last five years) and socio-cultural centres/cultural houses (18.8% in the previous five years). Small neighbouring rural branches of Regional Centralised Library Systems were merged and consolidated. In addition, the Ministry for Culture carried out fundamental reforms in the field of the club system under the "Project for the establishment of the city (district) cultural centres". The project envisaged the establishment of one centre in each city or region, with other club institutions to be branches of the centre. In the future, some of the branches may be dedicated to crafts, ethnography and folklore. In the reform, the Ministry for Culture established 55 cities (district) cultural centres throughout the country.

The *Presidential Decree On Measures to Improve the Structure and Management of the Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan (January 15, 2019)* envisages increasing the efficiency of cultural and educational institutions (libraries, cultural centres, clubs, music schools, art galleries, etc.) under the Ministry for Culture by:

- Reconstruction of the library system in the country, taking into account the opportunities of information and communication technologies, as well as the existing demand;
- Conducting an inventory of state-owned museums, optimising their activities and organising more advanced museum activities;
- More compact organisation of music schools by administrative-territorial units by conducting an inventory, to increase the efficiency of its activities;
- Improving the activities of cultural centres, cultural houses and clubs, art galleries by conducting an inventory, more compact organisation and raising the level of service in the administrative-territorial units of the country, taking into account the current needs.

## 1.4. International cooperation

### 1.4.1. PUBLIC ACTORS AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

After regaining its independence in 1991, the Republic of Azerbaijan has pursued a policy of cooperation with many important international and regional organisations, like the UN, UNESCO, Council of Europe, European Union, World Tourism Organisation, Organisation of the Islamic Conference, ISESCO, TURKSOY, CIS, GUAM, IKKROM, IRSICA, etc.

The Ministry for Culture drafts and implements bilateral and multilateral foreign cultural policy in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the central executive body in Azerbaijan responsible for implementing all international relations and cooperation issues. The Republic regards the development and strengthening of global standard-setting activity as highly important and has acceded to many international conventions.

Active participation in the elected bodies of international organisations is also a priority for the dynamic and extensive cultural interchange with other countries. In this regard, the Republic of Azerbaijan was elected a member of the following structures:

- UNESCO Executive Board (2005-2009);
- Intergovernmental Committee for the Restoration and Promotion of the Return of Illegally Acquired Cultural Property (2011-2015);
- Deputy Chairman of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (2011-2015 and 2015-2019);
- World Heritage Committee (2015-2019);
- Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2018-2022); and
- Intergovernmental Committee of the Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2019-2023).

The country is also interested in hosting major international cultural events, becoming one of the global players and policymakers. For example, the 7th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC), held in Baku, Azerbaijan (25-27 April 2016) under the central theme on "Living Together in Inclusive Societies: A Challenge and A Goal", is a brilliant example of international and even global cultural activity of the country.

The Ministry for Culture develops bilateral international relations, implements intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements, programmes, protocols and other documents to promote Azerbaijani culture and arts internationally. A developed legal framework for cooperation in culture with more than 40 countries exists and is planned to be updated and concretised. The diplomatic missions of the Republic of Azerbaijan in more than 70 countries and the embassies of more than 60 foreign countries in the Republic of Azerbaijan are constantly working on expanding cooperation.

Azerbaijan Cultural Centres operate under the diplomatic missions of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Uzbekistan, France, Austria and Germany. Currently, construction work is underway for a new Cultural Centre in Italy. The Ministry for Culture organises the activities of the Cultural Centres, carries out coordination work and promotes national culture through the Centres.

"The State Programme on Education of Azerbaijani Youth Abroad in 2007-2015" (№ 2090 of April 16, 2007 ) provided 5 000 Azerbaijani youth with education in various countries, the most prestigious universities in the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Turkey, Russian Federation, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and other countries, in various specialities, bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees. All of the expenses of those admitted to the programme during the period of study - airfares, visas, living expenses, and tuition fees - are paid by the state.

#### 1.4.2. EUROPEAN / INTERNATIONAL ACTORS AND PROGRAMMES

Since 1999, Azerbaijan has participated in the CoE / ERICarts comparative research project "Cultural Policy in Europe: a Compendium of Key Facts and Trends." From 2001 to 2005, Azerbaijan participated in the Council of Europe "STAGE" Project, followed by the Kyiv Initiative Regional Programme (KI). Since 2011, Azerbaijan has joined the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes project. The Twinning Project was implemented in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2016-2017.

"Icheri Sheher, Maiden Tower and Shirvanshahs Palace Complex" (2000), "Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape" (2007), and the "Historical centre of Sheki together with Khan Palace" (2019) are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List". Gobustan National Historical and Artistic Reserve and Icheri Sheher State Historical and Architectural Reserve were granted enhanced protection status in 2013. Two cities are included in

the UNESCO Network of Creative Cities: Sheki on the theme of "art and crafts" (2017), and Baku on the theme of "design" (2019).

UNESCO included fifteen samples of Azerbaijan's intangible cultural heritage on the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage: "Azerbaijani Mugham", "Art of Azerbaijani Ashiq", "Novruz", "Azerbaijani carpet weaving art", "Chovqan, a traditional Karabakh horse-riding game", Yalli (Kochari, Tenzere), and the traditional group dances of Nakhchivan, et cetera.

ISESCO declared "Baku - the Capital of Islamic Culture for 2009, and Nakhchivan - the Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018. Likewise, TURKSOY declared Sheki the cultural capital of the Turkic world for 2016.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has ratified (№ 918-IIIQ of November 26, 2009) the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. The central ministries dealing with implementing this convention are the Ministry for Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO.

### 1.4.3. NGO'S AND DIRECT PROFESSIONAL COOPERATION

The state encourages trans-national cooperation between arts and heritage institutions, professional associations, networks, and other NGO actors in cultural policy, heritage protection, theatre, dance, film, music, etc. At present, the Ministry for Culture funds yearly membership fees to several international organisations. In addition, it supports the participation of Azerbaijan specialists at conferences of the European Music Council, World Congresses of Dance Researchers, European Council of Artists conferences, etc.

Each higher education institution, the Baku Academy of Music, the Baku Choreography Academy, the State University of Culture and the Arts, Azerbaijan National Music Academy, Azerbaijan State Academy of Fine Arts, carries out various international activities. Moreover, they all have agreements with leading foreign higher educational institutions regarding training students, exchanging experience, and implementing joint projects.

The Union of Azerbaijan Theatrical Workers, Union of Azerbaijan Journalists, Union of Azerbaijan Ashiqs, Azerbaijan National Culinary Association, other creative unions and professional cultural networks have extensive ties around the world with their foreign colleagues and similar organisations. They organise joint events, exhibitions, concerts, hold international festivals and competitions, and implement mutually exciting projects in their areas of activity.

Large institutions in the field of culture and art, libraries, museums, cinematographic institutions, publishing houses, art galleries, reserves, research centres, et cetera, independently conduct active international activities with the support of government agencies, if necessary.

Backing for international festivals are one element of direct professional cooperation, and the Ministry for Culture supports national and international conferences and festivals organised by different professional communities. Among such events are the regular International Mugham Festivals, International Music Festivals in memory of Uzeyir Hajibeyli, International Qabala Music Festivals, International Mstislav Rostropovich Festivals, and so on.

The readers of this project may be interested in the fact that, for example, the 10th-anniversary meeting of the

project "Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe" was held in Baku on 4-5 December 2008, with the participation of many eminent researchers from the Council of Europe and ISESCO member-states. It was a rather unusual and exciting meeting of cultural policy researchers to offer a significant opportunity to promote intercultural dialogue and examine new opportunities for future transnational cooperation.

## 2. Current cultural affairs

### 2.1. Key developments

At present, cultural-political reforms starting with developing the draft *Culture Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the period up to 2030* are planned and being carried out by the new leadership of the Ministry of Culture. This *Culture Strategy* was drafted to develop Azerbaijani culture, protecting it from internal and external threats, its worthy representation in world culture, ensuring cultural rights and freedoms. Proceeding from the *Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development (2021)*, the *Culture Strategy* envisages implementing the *Concept of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2014)* at the current historical stage. The legal basis of the *Culture Strategy* is the *Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1995)*, the *Law on Culture (2012)*, international conventions, agreements and other relevant normative legal acts to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party.

The drafting of the *Culture Strategy* is based on:

- The *Constitutional Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Normative Legal Acts"(2010)*,
- The *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Public Participation" (2013)*,
- The *"Regulations on the Procedure for Preparation and Adoption of Normative Legal Acts of Executive Authorities" (2002)*, and
- The *"Rules for the Preparation, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of State Programmes" (2021)*.

The *Culture Strategy* launches reforms arising from the internal needs of culture, taking into account international experience and social order. The strategy defines modernisation of organisational tools applied in such sub-areas of cultural activity as immovable cultural heritage (including historical and cultural monuments and parks, movable cultural treasures (including museum exhibits), intangible cultural heritage (including folk creativity), professional art (theatre, music, fine arts, and choreography), book circulation, cinematography and creative industries as a strategic goal. Simultaneously, the strategy mandates improvements in the legal, administrative, financial, information, personnel, infrastructural and international support mechanisms of national cultural policy to resolve challenges cultural policymakers face in developing new priorities.

Based on a description of global and regional trends, challenges and threats, analysis of the current situation in the sub-sectors (structure, functions, organisations, employees and brief information on the work done), the *Culture Strategy for 2030* lists five priority areas:

- "Protection of cultural heritage and its transmission to future generations",
- "Development of man and society",
- "Support for cultural and creative industries",
- "International promotion of Azerbaijani culture", and
- "The return of culture to Karabakh, the return of Karabakh to culture".

In connection with the issues raised: the main reasons for prioritising the relevant areas are identified, existing problems and shortcomings are revealed, measures are proposed, expected results and outcome indicators are determined, and possible risks and steps to neutralise them are reviewed.

The Strategy prescribes preparing and implementing strategic planning documents in priority areas, legislative, financing and institutional reforms, optimising human resources and infrastructure units, creating comprehensive databases, et cetera. Public debates are envisaged, and the opinion of professionals will be taken into account during all these procedures.

## 2.2. Cultural rights and ethics

Fundamental rights, including cultural rights, in the Republic of Azerbaijan, are defined within the legislative system, consisting of the following normative-legal acts: the *Constitution*; acts adopted by referendum; laws; decrees; decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers; and normative acts of central executive bodies. In addition, international agreements, to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, are an integral part of the legislative system of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Individual professional or creative groups can also accept their internal ethical rules following their internal statutes.

The *Constitution* defines the fundamental rights and freedoms that underlie cultural rights and the very foundations of cultural rights. The *Constitution* indicates cultural rights and freedoms as the rights to intellectual property, to culture, to education, to national identity, to use native language, to protect honour and dignity, and freedoms of thought and speech, of conscience, of information, and of creative activity. At the same time, the *Constitution* also defines the fundamental duties of citizens. A noteworthy fact is Article 77 of the *Constitution*, according to which "Protection of historical and cultural monuments" is one of the fundamental duties of a citizen.

The *Law on Culture (2012)*, in more detail, dwells on cultural rights, the definition and regulation of which is devoted to an entire Chapter - 3. ("Main human and civil rights in the field of culture") and such articles as:

- The right to participate in cultural life;
- The right to cultural identity;
- Freedom of creativity;
- The right to cultural activities abroad;
- Property rights in the field of culture;
- Foreign trade in cultural resources;
- The right to entrepreneurship in the field of culture;
- The right to use cultural institutions and cultural property;
- The right to education in the field of culture;
- Non-governmental organisations in the field of culture; and
- Freedom of information in the field of culture.

The law provides that everyone's rights and freedoms in the field of culture in the Republic of Azerbaijan are guided by the principles and norms of international law. Therefore, the state guarantees everyone the right to exercise their rights and freedoms in the field of culture, regardless of gender, race, language, religion and political beliefs, nationality, social status, social origin, health opportunities, and membership of public associations. The state ensures the equality of cultures, rights and freedoms of peoples and national minorities living in the state's territory, equality of peoples and national minorities to preserve their culture, determine their cultural identity, and restore, strengthen, and develop their cultural heritage.

Along with this, cultural rights should not go beyond the Prohibitions in the field of culture established by Articles 43 of the *Law on Culture (2012)*. Therefore, the following actions are not allowed in the area of culture:

- To conduct propaganda that may harm the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, constitutional order, economic, defence, scientific and technical potential and national interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- To hold cultural events aimed at propagating and promoting war, social, racial, national, religious, class and generational superiority;
- To hold cultural events aimed at calling for the promotion and encouragement of violence, pornography and drugs;
- Illegal export of samples of national cultural heritage from the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic;
- Restriction of fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms in the field of culture, regardless of race, nationality, religion, language, social origin, the position of service, beliefs, or affiliation to public associations;
- The use of cultural and natural heritage, incompatible with its historical and artistic purpose;
- Copying of cultural values, their use for tourism, excursion and advertising purposes without the consent of the owner or user;
- Demolition, destruction, fragmentation, reorganisation, relocation and change of appearance of cultural values.

In the context of this paragraph, mention should also be made of the *Law on the Rules of Ethical Conduct of Civil Servants (№ 352-IIIQ of May 31, 2007)*, which explicitly obliges civil servants (including those in the field of culture) to adhere to professional, ethical and cultural behaviour. As an interesting initiative, developing a draft of the *Culture of Behaviour Concept* has begun by the Ministry for Culture. In the initial stage of this process, a survey is being conducted to study public opinion.

## 2.3. Role of artists and cultural professionals

The *Law on Culture (2012)* defines a creative person as an individual engaged in creating cultural resources, including pedagogical or research activities in the field of culture. Protection of the rights of creative persons operating in culture, state, private and municipal cultural institutions and ensuring the implementation of creative activities are among the main directions of state policy in culture. The organisation of incentives for cultural workers and creative people for services and contributions to the development of culture are among the duties of the state in the field of culture. Creative persons, legal entities, cultural institutions and non-governmental organisations may be involved in cultural activities. According to Article 24 of the law, "Anyone can engage in professional or amateur creative activities. The state supports creative activity in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The state takes economic measures to develop professional creativity".

The rules of establishment, activity, reorganisation and liquidation of non-governmental organisations as legal entities, their relations with public authorities are determined by the *Law On Non-Governmental Organisations (Public Associations and Foundations) (№ 894-IQ of June 13, 2000)*. The *Rules for Preparation, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of State Programmes (№ 1294 of March 6, 2021)* requires that public hearings and discussions must be provided during the preparation of the draft of any state programmes, strategies, national action plans, concepts and other similar documents, including in the field of culture. Furthermore, the *Law On Public Participation (№ 816-IVQ of November 22, 2013)* prescribes such public hearings and discussions.

According to the current regulatory legal acts, public councils under the central executive bodies, consisting of 5-15 members with experience or knowledge in the relevant field, must be elected by civil society institutions in connection with the involvement of citizens in the implementation of public administration. In this regard, [the Public Council under the Ministry for Culture](#) consists of nine members who were elected recently (13-16 July, 2021), representing different cultural and social non-governmental organisations, such as:

- The Cultural Development Centre Public Union,
- Zirve Culture and Art Public Union,
- Khan Shushinsky Foundation,
- World Union of Young Turkish Writers,
- Social Assistance to Hearing and Speech Impaired Persons Public Union,
- Free Minds Youth Enlightenment Public Union,
- Looking to the Future European Integration Public Union,
- The Union of Disabled Organisations, and
- The Azerbaijan National Non-Governmental Organisations Forum.

A multi-branched system of creative unions continues to function and operate mainly as professional unions and play an essential role in cultural life as well as in strategies to stimulate employment, as well as promoting a better social situation for artists and cultural professionals:

- The [Union of Azerbaijan Writers](#) (established on June 13, 1934) is the largest public organisation of Azerbaijani writers, poets and translators. It currently has more than 1 510 members;
- The [Union of Azerbaijan Composers](#) (established on June 30, 1934) - unites in its ranks about 200 highly qualified professional composers and musicologists;
- The [Union of Azerbaijan Architects](#) (established in 1934) - focuses on improving the effectiveness of all types of architectural work, developing architectural and urban planning activities, strengthening international cooperation and developing national culture;
- - The Union of Azerbaijan Artists (established in 1940) - public creative organisation of professional artists and art critics;
- The [Union of Azerbaijan Theatrical workers](#) (established in 1897) – founded in 1897 as the "Union of Actors" is now the most extensive public organisation uniting theatrical figures and stage lovers in Azerbaijan;
- The [Union of Azerbaijan Journalists](#) (established in 1955) - unites about 3 000 journalists working in more than 1 000 newspapers and magazines, 25 TV and radio companies, 20 news agencies and about 40 publishing houses;
- [Union of Azerbaijan Ashiqs](#) (established in 1984) is an independent public organisation aimed at developing and promoting the art of Ashig; et cetera.

## 2.4. Digital policy and developments

Implementation of new information and communication technologies in the cultural field is one of the main priorities of the national cultural policy in Azerbaijan. Therefore, relevant programmes and projects affect the development of new technologies and digitalisation in Azerbaijan, affecting the arts and culture.

[The "E-Government"](#) project was structured following the *National Strategy on Information-Communication Technologies for the Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2003-2012)*. With the aim of broader use of

information communications technologies (ICT), the project envisages increasing the rationality and optimality of the activity of state agencies, increasing communication among the population, business bodies, and between themselves. In addition, the project is contributing to better citizen-official relations, ensuring transparency and fully meeting the need for information.

The implementation of the Strategic Roadmap for the Development of Telecommunication and Information Technologies in the Republic of Azerbaijan (December 6, 2016), the effective organisation of the formation, storage, maintenance and integration of state information systems and reserves necessitates the creation of a centralised Government Cloud (G-Cloud). The National Data Centre of the Government Cloud is establishing under the concept of the creation of the Government Cloud (G-Cloud), and measures in the field of providing cloud services approved by the *Decree of the President (June 3, 2019)* and the Transition Plan developed based on the *Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers (October 29, 2020)*. Implementing the Government Cloud project will enable government agencies (including the Ministry for Culture) to reduce their IT infrastructure costs by 25-30%.

Different projects accelerate international IT integration and create new virtual opportunities like e-government, e-trade, etc. [The Project Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway \(TASIM\)](#) is a project of regional importance, with the aim of laying a transnational fibre-optic line covering the countries of Eurasia from Western Europe to Eastern Asia. The project envisages the creation of a significant transit link from Frankfurt to Hong Kong. The transit line will stretch through China, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey to Germany.

The strategy for digitisation of the arts and culture, implemented by the Ministry for Culture, is carried out at three levels:

- Static (content assistance in the creation of databases and registers),
- Dynamic (organisational assistance in the creation of portals and sites) and
- Interactive (representation of institutions and areas of culture and art in global social networks).

The "State Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Azerbaijan" (<http://intangible.az>) includes:

- A list of more than 5 000 intangible cultural heritage samples.
- A database of more than 850 intangible cultural heritage samples.
- Information on 180 intangible cultural heritage carriers and 68 institutions and organisations.

It was created by the Ministry for Culture in close cooperation with the Institute of Folklore, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, the Institute of Architecture and Art of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, related public associations and non-governmental organisations, and individual researchers.

The Ministry for Culture created the "Permanent protection portal of museum property" (<https://museums.com.az/>) to strengthen control over movable cultural values of the country preserved in the state museums. The portal is provided for official use only.

A database covering various fields of national art and creativity of prominent musicians has been created by the scientific-pedagogical, critical-publicist and cultural-educational [music magazine "Musiqi Dunyasi"](#), with the support of the Union of Composers Azerbaijan and Baku Academy of Music.

The state agencies' virtual resources in the field of culture are mainly the portals of [the Ministry for Culture](#), [the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage](#), [the Scientific-Methodical and Professional Development Center](#) and [the Baku Main Department of Culture](#). The cultural sectors on which digitisation has the most impact in the country are museums, monuments, libraries, cinema, creative industries, and so on, selectively presented by portals of:

- [Gobustan National Historical-Artistic Preserve](#);
- [Azerbaijan National Museum of Art](#), [Museum Centre](#), [Internet guide on Azerbaijani museums](#);
- [Azerbaijan National Library](#);
- [Azerbaijan film studio named after Jafar Jabbarli](#), [Azerbaijan State Film Fund](#);
- "Creative Azerbaijan",
- -[Children's music and art schools](#); etcetera.

## 2.5. Cultural and social diversity

### 2.5.1. NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

The multinational and multi-confessional nature of the Azerbaijan population is an essential aspect of intercultural dialogue, one of the national cultural policy priorities. The fundamental spirit of the national policy derives from the *Constitution (1995)*, which ensures all citizens equality, regardless of ethnic or racial origin. The *Law on Joining the International Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (№ 95-IQ of May 31, 1996)* has found its reflex in the *Law on Culture (№ 506-IVQ of December 21, 2012)* and other relevant laws. On 16 June 2001, Azerbaijan joined the *Framework Convention of the Council of Europe for the Protection of National Minorities*. The leading public actor responsible for implementing the programmes and policies to promote intercultural dialogue in Azerbaijan, at national and local policy levels, is the Ministry for Culture, which closely cooperates with other state bodies, depending on the matter under consideration.

The Ministry for Culture has implemented the project "Cultural Diversity in Azerbaijan", which was designed to highlight the country's ethnic and cultural diversity. It involved the cultural associations of the various national minorities and helped realise one of its chief strategic aims – developing and supporting intercultural dialogue. Another significant event, traditional festivals - "Azerbaijan – my motherland", was organised by the Ministry for Culture in November 2006, October 2008, November 2011, June 2014, and June 2016. Scientific conferences, photo exhibitions and preliminary concert performances and gala concerts, held in the framework of the festivals, attracted thousands of participants from different regions representing practically all national minorities and ethnic groups living in Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan joined the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions on November 26, 2009*. Furthermore, the establishment of [the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre](#) (May 15, 2014) testifies to the country's commitment to principles of tolerance. 2016 was declared the Year of Multiculturalism to preserve, develop, and promote multiculturalism traditions, mutual understanding, and dialogue.

[The "Baku Process"](#) is based on the interregional specifics of Azerbaijan, resulting from its geographic situation, social-political aspirations, and historical-cultural traditions. With the modern Republic of Azerbaijan being at that time the only state member both of the Council of Europe and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organisation (ISESCO), the Baku Process has been initiated by the Ministry for Culture to bring these regions closer.

Formalising the Baku Process involved three initial stages:

- Organising a Council of Europe Conference of Culture Ministers in Baku, to which ISESCO and some of its member states were invited (December 2-3, 2008), with the theme of "Intercultural dialogue as a basis for peace and sustainable development in Europe and its neighbouring regions".
- Holding an ISESCO Conference of Culture Ministers in Baku, to which the Council of Europe and some of its member states were invited (October 13-15, 2009), following the celebration of Baku as Islamic Culture Capital for 2009.
- Establishing a biennial Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue with the participation of relevant inter-governmental organisations, culture ministers from all over the world.

The Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue has taken responsibility for delivering:

- *The Global agenda on the Dialogue among Civilisations adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (2001),*
- *The UNESCO Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005),*
- *ISESCO's 'Islamic Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2004),*
- *The Declaration and the Action Plan of the Third Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the Council of Europe (2005),*
- *The Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008),*
- *The Baku Declaration for the Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue (2008).*

In cooperation with UNESCO, the UN Alliance of Civilisations, the UN World Tourism Organisation, the Council of Europe, ISESCO, with the participation of culture ministers of numerous states, heads of leading international organisations, mayors of various world cities, diplomats, media organisations, international NGOs, scientists, scholars, distinguished cultural experts, practitioners, intellectuals and activists, the Republic of Azerbaijan has already hosted:

- The First Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue under the motto - "United Through Common Values, Enriched by Cultural Diversity" (April 7-9, 2011);
- The Second Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue on the subject of "Living Together Peacefully in a Diverse World" (29 May - 1 June 2013);
- The Third Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue dedicated to the theme "Sharing Culture for Shared Security" (May 18-19, 2015);
- The Fourth Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue on the subject "Advancing Intercultural Dialogue: New Avenues for Human Security, Peace and Sustainable Development" (May 5-6, 2017);
- The Fifth World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue under the motto of "Building dialogue into action against discrimination, inequality, and violent conflict" (May 2-3, 2019).

## 2.5.2. DIVERSITY EDUCATION

Intercultural education is a part of the general school and university curricula. Mainly policymakers responsible for education, namely, the Ministry of Education, administer this field. The Ministry for Culture administers children's music, art and painting schools. There are different themes focused on shared national values and

identity; to promote tolerance, multilingualism, equality; to inform students about world cultures, religions, traditions, etc., within humanitarian disciplines, delivered at all levels of education. The subject "Azerbaijani Multiculturalism" is included in curricula 28 higher education institutions of Azerbaijan.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of October 30, 2006, approved the *General Education Concept in the Republic of Azerbaijan (National Curriculum)*. The *Law on Education (2009)* defined the concept of curriculum and explained its essence for the first time in the national legislation. It states that the "educational programme" (curriculum) is a state document reflecting the learning outcomes and content standards for each level of education, teaching subjects, the number of weekly lessons and extracurricular activities, the organisation of the pedagogical process, the system of assessment and monitoring of learning outcomes".

Based on this, the Cabinet of Ministers updated the *General Education Concept* and approved it under the *State Standards of General Education and Programmes (Curricula)* on June 3, 2010. According to the document, curricula have been developed and are being implemented in 21 subjects.

Pupils of I-IX grades in secondary schools study the subject "Knowledge of Life". According to the National Curricula, students on the subject "Knowledge of Life":

- interpret the essence of the provisions on human rights and freedoms established in the relevant normative-legal documents, with examples of specific historical events, facts, literary works, and demonstrating respect for the rights of oneself and others;
- learn, with the use of concrete examples, that harmful habits are dangerous to human life and have serious consequences, and will learn in their daily activities how to lead a healthy lifestyle;
- demonstrate a mastery of life safety rules in written and oral presentations, training events;
- express opinions on relevant problems via discussions, debates and other events on moral and ethical issues, expressing their position and attitudes by evaluating the events and facts on their merits;
- build, present and implement small projects on economic efficiency in daily life;
- gain an understanding of the nature of regularities related to natural and social phenomena, comparing the information obtained within this subject with the same content in other subjects, systematising them and makes generalisations.

Two more relevant curricula are implemented in general education schools: "Educational programme (curriculum) on music for I-IX grades of secondary schools" and "Curriculum on fine arts for I-IX grades of secondary schools". Teaching music includes information about the most important moments in the history of our national music and acquaintance with widespread examples of world music culture. The subject of fine arts expands children's knowledge. It enriches their inner world by giving students an idea of the classic representatives of Azerbaijani and world art and unique works of art.

Students are taught general music history and theory, and music literature in children's music and art schools. In addition, students are acquainted with the biographies of composers, musical genres and forms, symphony orchestra instruments, and musical terms.

### 2.5.3. MEDIA PLURALISM AND CONTENT DIVERSITY

More than 4 500 registered mass communication media, most of which are newspapers, and more than 80 are TV and radio broadcasting services. Government structures founded 15% of newspapers and magazines, and

more than 65% of newspapers belong to opposition political and social organisations, private networks and legal entities. The *Law on Anti-monopoly Activity (1993)* prevents media concentration. There is no limitation in obtaining official information from government structures; it is the responsibility of the relevant press services to supply the public with official news.

The Azerbaijan Television and Radio Broadcasting Closed Joint-Stock Company established the [Madaniyyat channel](#) on February 14, 2011. One of the main goals of this "Culture" channel is to convey the human values of the rich Azerbaijani culture to the world and promote the pearls of world culture in the country to enhance the artistic aesthetic taste of the young generation. Besides this special arts and culture TV channel, other operating channels, depending on their broadcasting policy, also offer a variety of regular programme series with cultural and artistic content, ranging from popular pop shows to programmes on classical heritage.

The [National Television and Radio Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#) was established by *Presidential Decree No. 794 of October 05, 2002*. The primary purpose of the Council is regulation of the activities of television and radio broadcasters, protection of the interests of the public during broadcasting, monitoring compliance with the legislation on television and radio broadcasting. The Council consists of 9 members. Three of the Council's members are appointed for two years, three for four years and three for six years. Members have the right to be re-appointed. The members of the Council elect the chairperson and deputy chairperson among themselves. The chairperson of the Council carries out the management of the Council. The council determines the technical and quality standards, grants special permission (license) for television broadcasting, conducts competitions for this purpose, and imposes administrative sanctions and other measures against television broadcasters in cases and the manner prescribed by the law.

The Press Council of Azerbaijan is a self-regulatory body. The Council was created during the First Conference of Azerbaijani journalists, in which 180 media organisations were present, on March 15, 2003. The Council is exercising public control to ensure that journalists act according to relevant legislation and professional principles requirements. In addition, it aims to improve government-media and public-media relations and contributes to the freedom of speech. To fulfil the objectives stated above, the Council considers the possibilities of pre-judicial solutions of conflicts arising from newspaper articles, examines complaints about the conduct of correspondents of various media outlets and makes decisions about complaints.

The *Law on Public Television and Radio Broadcasting* was adopted on September 28, 2004. The opening ceremony of the [Public Television and Radio Broadcasting Company](#) took place on 29 August 2005. When preparing programmes, the public broadcaster considers the political beliefs of society, religious views, various currents of public opinion, and the equality of citizens of the country. In addition, programmes of Public Television aim to reflect national and spiritual values, national customs and traditions, as well as all the diversity of culture and art. Public Television adheres to the laws of Azerbaijan and the basic principles of classical public broadcasting.

On 31 July 2008, The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed the *Decree on Adopting the Conception on State Support to the Development of Mass Communication Media in the Republic of Azerbaijan* and the *Decree on Rendering One-time Financial Assistance to the Mass Communication Media of the Republic of Azerbaijan*.

The Ministry for Culture conducts enhancement of information provision of cultural policies by conducting methodological research and public opinion polls, holding specialised conferences, seminars, etc. In addition, it generates databases, drafts and implements relevant conceptions, programmes and projects presenting

information about national arts and culture in national and international mass media and the Internet.

#### 2.5.4. LANGUAGE

In relation to the protection of the rights and freedoms of national minorities, minority peoples and ethnic groups living in the Republic of Azerbaijan, state support for the development of language and culture laid the foundation for independent state policy concerning national minorities. It took shape in various laws, strategies, and projects dedicated to preserving and developing the cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities and ethnic groups. At the centre of national policy in this field are: observance of national traditions and customs; freedom to perform religious ceremonies and rites; preservation and use of places of worship; free development of national artisanship, professionalism and amateur creativity and folk arts of ethnic minorities; and protection of historical and cultural monuments of all nations.

According to the *Constitution (1995)*, "The Azerbaijani language is the state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the state provides development of the Azerbaijani language. The Republic of Azerbaijan ensures free use and development of other languages spoken by the population (Article 21)."

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a state party of *the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities since June 16, 2000*.

On June 18, 2001, the President signed the *Law on the Improvement of the Use of the State Language*. It points out the need for the comprehensive use of the state language and the general use of Latin script. The *Law on the State Language of the Republic of Azerbaijan*, which came into force in January 2003, prescribes using protection and development measures for the state language. There are no official language quotas in the mass media. Russian is considered to be the second most important language and is widely used in most large cities.

1 503 754 students study in the state language - Azerbaijani. Education is conducted in Azerbaijani in 4 073 (91.96%) schools; in Russian in 17 (0.38%) schools; and Georgian in 6 (0.14%) schools. 0.2% of students study in other languages (English, Turkish, French). Education in 305 (7%) schools is carried out in Azerbaijani-Russian; in 12 (0.7%) schools is carried out in Azerbaijani-Russian-English; in three (0.07%) schools is carried out in Azerbaijani-Georgian; and in one (0.02%) school is carried out in Azerbaijani-Russian-Georgian.

The study of minority languages is envisaged in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Therefore, minority languages such as Lezgi, Talysh, Hebrew, Avar, Sahur, Udin, Kurdish, and Khinalig are taught in secondary schools in some country regions. For example, the Lezgi language is taught in 95 schools, the Talysh language in 254 schools, the Avar language in 19 schools, the Sahur language in 3 schools, the Udin language in 3 schools, and the Kurdish, Khinalig, and Hebrew languages in 1 school each. In total, 29 942 students belonging to national minorities learn their native language in schools.

The Department of National Minorities was established in 2012 in the Institute of Folklore of the Academy of Sciences. The department's primary purpose is to collect, systematize, and conduct research on the folklore of minorities.

#### 2.5.5. GENDER

The Republic of Azerbaijan ratified the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*

in 1995 and signed its optional protocol in 2000. The Family Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (779-IQ of December 28, 1999) defines the principles of establishing and strengthening family relations, their termination, rights and responsibilities of participants in family relations, responsibilities of state bodies in this field. The purpose of the *Law On Ensuring Gender Equality (№ 150-IIIQ of October 10, 2006)* is to ensure gender equality by eliminating all forms of discrimination based on gender, creating equal opportunities for men and women in the political, economic, social, cultural and other spheres of public life. The *Law On the Prevention of Domestic Violence (№ 1058-IIIQ of June 22, 2010)* focuses on domestic violence between close relatives to mitigate its adverse legal, medical and social outcomes and provide legal and social assistance for victims.

There are no legal restrictions on the participation of women in politics. As of 2020, there were 22 women in the 125-seat parliament, including the Speaker of the National Assembly. The percentage of female members of parliament increased from 11 to 17.6 per cent between 2005 and 2020. The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic introduced universal suffrage in Azerbaijan in 1919, thus making Azerbaijan the first Muslim-majority country ever to enfranchise women.

The State Committee on Family, Women and Children's Issues, a ministerial-level body responsible for implementing state policy on family, women and children's affairs, was established based on the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Women's Issues, by *the Presidential Decree of 6 February 2006*. In addition, there is also a Parliamentary Committee on Family, Women and Children's Issues.

Concerning the gender aspect of equality in Azerbaijan, culture and education are traditionally mostly a "female" sphere. The vast majority of employees of libraries, museums, archives, music schools, theatres are women who also participate actively in managing culture.

The representation of women in key decision-making positions in cultural institutions and important cultural policymaking positions is also very high. For example, the Deputy Minister of Culture, seven heads of departments in the Ministry Administration, and the directors of many cultural institutions and arts organisations are women.

In the last decades, there has been a women's movement growing throughout the Republic. Several specialised organisations have been set up in the cultural sphere and a whole series of magazines for women and about women are being published. [The Association of Creative Women](#) was established in July 1999 by professional creative women involved in culture, art and science. The Association's goal is to develop national culture, art and science, raise the socio-cultural level of the low-income population, and carry out psychological rehabilitation activities with orphans, refugees, and disabled people. ["Azerbaijan Gender Information Centre" AGIC](#) is the first informational-analytical, bibliographical-documental centre of the women's movement on the territory of the South Caucasus.

## 2.5.6. DISABILITY

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a state member of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and the *Option Protocol of this Convention* since October 2, 2008. Article 16 ("Ensuring access to cultural and sports facilities for persons with disabilities") of the *Law On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (№ 1153-VQ of May 31, 2018)* obliges that relevant executive authorities shall ensure that cultural institutions and sports facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. By Article 14. (The right of access to cultural

institutions and cultural resources”) of the *Law on Culture (2012)*, preferential use of cultural resources is provided to persons with disabilities, including children under 18 years of age with disabilities.

According to the information of the [State Statistics Committee](#), by the beginning of 2020, the number of persons with disabilities who receive a pension and allocation is 633 469, and 62 951 of them are children under 18 with limited health capacities.

The *Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers On the Implementation of a Comprehensive Programme on the Problems of Disabled People in the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 185 of May 10, 1994)* assigned the following tasks to the Ministry of Culture:

- To provide relevant jobs in various clubs and cultural centres for those who are visually impaired or children with disabilities of groups I and II in the area of special music education;
- To organise departments for readers who are blind at the central libraries in the cities;
- To strengthen the offices of the Azerbaijan Deaf Society in the relevant houses of culture;
- To hold regular holidays, concerts and performances, and other actions for children with disabilities;
- To provide free access to all museums for members of disabilities communities, et cetera.

Wheelchairs and lifts have been installed in the Heydar Aliyev Palace, the Azerbaijan State Academic National Drama Theatre, the Azerbaijan State Puppet Theatre, the Azerbaijan State Russian Drama Theatre and the Azerbaijan State Theatre for Young Spectators and many other major cultural institutions to ensure the cultural rights of persons with disabilities.

Public organisations representing people with disabilities are exempt from paying rent for buildings with cultural clubs, houses of culture, libraries.

To ensure equal access to cultural life for people with disabilities, in 2016, the National Library developed a methodological manual titled "Organisation of library services for people with disabilities".

[The Republican Library for People who are Visually Impaired](#) annually records copies of new books that are included in the library's fund and makes them available to visually impaired readers living in the republic's regions. In addition, the library has been equipped with modern technical equipment; all computers have been loaded with a particular programme, "Jaws", for the visually impaired. At the same time, the library organises training courses for the middle and older generation of readers in the new Latin script Braille.

## 2.6. Culture and social inclusion

Social integration/cohesion is one of the issues of current cultural policy in the Republic of Azerbaijan. There is a generally accepted approach that when developing policies or programmes by national, regional or local authorities, as a rule, culture and art are considered as tools to enhance social integration and cohesion of certain groups of the population. Government bodies must engage closely with civil society institutions and private actors when implementing such programmes and action plans. In particular, in the action plans of state programmes aimed at supporting specific groups (refugees, disadvantaged groups, the elderly and the unemployed, etc.), there is always a place for many measures to involve them in a full-fledged cultural life. For this reason, at present, the Ministry for Culture, or its subordinate organisations and institutions, are

implementing several national programmes that are not directly under its supervision. Further, there are specific examples of such programmes and activities implemented for social integration and cohesion in this section.

For instance, the State Programme on Solving the Problems of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (№ 895 of September 17, 1998) also prescribes regular cultural activities among refugees and IDPs. Furthermore, the “State Programme on Improving Living Conditions and Increasing Employment of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons” (№ 298 of July 1, 2004) instructs the Ministry for Culture to carry out work on restoration and reconstruction of unfinished history, cultural institutions and monuments in the settlements liberated from occupation and damaged during the war.

*The State Programme on Strengthening Social Protection of Elderly Citizens (№ 1413 of April 17, 2006)* envisages ensuring the rights of senior citizens in social protection; protecting the health of the older generation; and strengthening the scientific basis of social security of senior citizens. In addition, however, ensuring the participation of senior citizens in the socio-economic and political life and implementing measures to meet their socio-cultural needs are also among crucial goals and objectives of the Programme. An example under this type of programme is the establishment of clubs for the elderly, amateur and interest groups in the cultural centres of the Republic.

Activities in the field of culture are also reflected in state programmes dedicated to preventing negative factors and dangerous phenomena. The “State Programme on Combating Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors and Drug Addiction for 2019-2024” (№ 1334 of July 22, 2019 ). Among the activities prescribed by the programme are the:

- Organisation of intellectual competitions to address illicit trafficking in drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors to form an anti-drug worldview of pupils and students;
- Theatrical performances, feature, documentary and animated films on the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the harm caused by drug addiction;
- Activities organising the leisure time of teenagers and youth in cities and regions.

The “National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020-2024” (№ 2173 of July 22, 2020) envisages:

- Taking appropriate measures in administrative, educational, social, cultural and other spheres to create an environment of public intolerance in society in connection with the cases of human trafficking and forced labour crimes and to involve civil society institutions and mass media in this work
- Strengthening advocacy and awareness-raising in the fight against human trafficking, making various social advertisements, videos, short films, preparing and showing programmes, preparing multiple educational materials, posting Internet information resources and promoting their use;
- Applying the practice of evaluating the results of all awareness-raising activities and training on human trafficking by organizers and participants.

*The National Action Plan for the Protection of Human Rights in the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 1880 of December 28, 2006)* and *the National Action Programme to increase the effectiveness of the protection of human rights and freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 1938 of December 27, 2011)* pay special attention to such cultural issues

as:

- Preservation and further development of the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities;
- Holding human rights olympiads, competitions, art exhibitions, festivals and other events on the application of human rights for school children and students;
- Carrying out enlightenment actions for the development of thinking and culture of the population, and the inadmissibility of discrimination, the promotion of peace and tolerance and national and spiritual values of our people;
- Development of human rights sections in libraries;
- Round tables, seminars, conferences, etc., on the prevention of crimes that pose a significant threat to human rights and freedoms.

## 2.7. Societal impact of arts

Culture and art traditionally have a significant social impact in Azerbaijani society, influencing policymakers in developing new policies, which ultimately finds its expression in decisions taken by the state. Therefore, the participation of the Ministry for Culture is provided for in the preparation and implementation of various kinds of relevant state programmes and action plans. In addition, the legislation ensures the active participation of the public in these processes. So, according to the *Law on Public Participation (№ 816-IVQ of November 22, 2013)*, state bodies must ensure the participation of citizens and civil society institutions in the preparation and implementation of state policy in various spheres of state and public life and consider public opinion. These procedures also apply in decision-making at the national and local levels, in the organisation of public control over the activities of relevant government agencies. Furthermore, private or civil society actors, individual figures, and researchers in culture and art actively use this right. All this is reflected in various state programmes, including activities and projects in culture and art.

The essential strategic document *Development Concept for Azerbaijan 2020: the Vision for the Future (№ 800 of December 29, 2012)* included preservation and effective management of cultural heritage along with the main directions for the country's development.

The *State Programme for socio-economic development of the regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2019-2023* prescribes continuation of work in the field of overhaul and construction of cultural facilities, restoration and conservation of historical and cultural monuments, including buildings of the National History Museum of Azerbaijan, the Yerevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theatre, and so on.

*The Azerbaijani Youth State Programme for 2017-2021 (№ 3236 of September 15, 2017)*, among other areas of youth support, involves numerous cultural events to support the creative activity of young people and the organization of leisure time such as:

- Supporting the participation of young talents in international festivals, competitions, contests and summer schools;
- Organisation of festivals, competitions, summer schools, master-classes, creative evenings, concert programmes and other events for young talents in the field of culture and art (painting, music, dance, cinema, literature, photography, architecture, theatre, etc.);
- Issuance of state orders to creative and talented youth for the production of theatrical performances, as

well as feature, documentary and animated films;

- Organisation of local and international exhibitions and film screenings of works by young directors, artists, sculptors and photographers;
- Promoting the achievements of talented and creative youth in the country and abroad; and so on.

Furthermore, the *Action Plan of the Strategy for Children for 2020-2025 (№ 2306 of November 27, 2020)* ensures cultural and aesthetic education of children and their right to development. Furthermore, it involves creating a system for early detection, development and support of talent in the interests of the individual, society and the state provided by the *State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan (January 19, 2015, № 995)*, et cetera.

## 2.8. Cultural sustainability

Supporting the competitiveness of various forms of culture, which can also be interpreted as their sustainability, is among the main directions of state policy in the field of culture, according to the *Law on Culture (2012)*.

Approved with the Presidential Decree, the *Concept of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 273 of February 14, 2014)* reflects the understanding formed in the national cultural policy that cultural creativity and heritage need supporting mechanisms from outside culture to ensure sustainability and full-fledged development.

Furthermore, there is a clear understanding that culture does not exist by itself, in isolation, but as a social phenomenon. Therefore, culture actively interacts with other spheres of social life, such as politics, law, economics and finance, science and education, and international relations, etc. Therefore, the direct approach of the *Concept of Culture* is to establish a harmonious and mutually beneficial interaction of culture with all these spheres of social life to ensure its sustainable development, which in turn will provide the cultural sustainability of society.

The *Concept of Culture* considers not only issues of the development of culture itself, namely, issues directly related to the preservation of immovable monuments of history and culture, movable cultural values, intangible cultural heritage, support for theatres, musical creativity and visual arts, the development of cinematography and publishing, museums, libraries, cultural centres and so on. Along with all of the above, the *Concept of Culture* pays great attention to the mechanisms of ensuring cultural policy, such as legislative support, administrative support, financial support, information support, staffing, logistics and international cooperation. All these areas of cultural policy are analysed, appropriate recommendations are given, and different development paths are indicated.

Thus, the *Concept of Culture*, the principal executive document of the state in the field of culture, laid the foundations for a systematic and sustainable approach to solving practical issues of national cultural policy. All subsequent state programmes, action plans, strategies and roadmaps in the field of culture, legislative initiatives, financial policy, personnel approach, and so on, have to proceed from the *Concept of Culture*, according to its status in the hierarchy of state executive documents. Such a synergistic approach to cultural issues is already reflected in understanding the main actors involved (e.g. public, private or civil society actors).

Cultural sustainability issues are included in the agendas of some events organised in the country. Thus, a thematic discussion on the topic [“Protect our heritage: Social, cultural and environmental sustainability”](#) was managed during the 110th session of UNWTO Executive Council (Baku, Azerbaijan, June 16-18, 2019), with relevant recommendations to national, regional and local governments and tourism administrations in

connection with cultural sustainability.

The [Third World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue](#) (Baku, May 18–19, 2015) had significant concern for culture and sustainable development. The Fourth World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue (Baku, May 5–6, 2017) discussed “Advancing Intercultural Dialogue: New Avenues for Human Security, Peace and Sustainable Development”.

## 2.9. Other main cultural policy issues

The long-awaited fact that the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been restored, in accordance with [resolutions, declarations and other documents of the United Nations, OSCE, OIC, Council of Europe, European Union, NATO, CIS, ECO, Turkic Council, GUAM, and the Non-Aligned Movement](#), has created new tasks, opportunities and horizons in the field of culture, as in all areas.

The new reality produced conditions for the restoration of cultural life in the liberated territories, the active participation of cultural figures in the process of returning the population, the creation of modern, progressive new types of enterprises, employment of talented people through frozen staffs and supplements.

In this regard, Shusha city was declared the Cultural Capital of Azerbaijan by *Order (№ 2632 of May 7, 2021) of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev*. This status will contribute to restoring the historical appearance and glory of the liberated Shusha city, rejuvenating its cultural life, and promoting Azerbaijan's culture, architecture and urban planning in the international arena.

## 3. Cultural and creative sectors

### 3.1. Heritage

Protection and support of tangible and intangible cultural heritage are among the main priorities of the Government. There are 6 036 archaeological, 3 086 architectural, 223 garden-park, monumental and memorial, and 177 decorative-applied art monuments under state protection. Due to the importance of immovable historical and cultural monuments under state protection, 101 are of world importance, 2 145 are of national importance, and 3 790 are of local significance. There are also 26 historical, cultural, architectural, artistic and ethnographic reserves in the country, 18 of them in the system of the Ministry for Culture, 7 in the State Tourism Agency, and one in the Icheri Sheher State Historical-Architectural Reserve under the Cabinet of Ministers.

The executive body exercising state control over the use, restoration, reconstruction, conservation and reconstruction of immovable historical and cultural monuments and reserves within the system of the Ministry for Culture is the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage, established by the President on December 18, 2014. The regional offices of the State Service in Baku, Shabran, Gabala, Ganja and Salyan were set up on February 17, 2020, by the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers. The implementation of "The state programme on restoration, protection of physical historical and cultural monuments, and the improvement and development of historical and cultural reserves activities for 2014-2020" was completed last year. As a result, 3 824 monuments were monitored, and national passports containing GPS coordinates, history, description and other information were issued for 368 monuments, borders of 244 monuments were determined, and protection zones were prepared.

Special attention is paid to preserving, restoring and supporting Azerbaijan's intangible cultural heritage. It includes the country's local lore (customs and traditions, ceremonies and festivities, symbols and mysteries), national folklore (music and dances, verbal literature traditions, games and performances), and artisanship (traditional applied, visual and decorative arts). The Ministry for Culture has created "The State Register of Azerbaijan Intangible Cultural Heritage Samples" in cooperation with the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, related public associations and non-governmental organisations.

Club enterprises organise the local infrastructure of Azerbaijan's intangible cultural heritage and folk art. There are 2 244 club establishments (Cultural Centres, Palaces of Culture, Houses of Culture, clubs), with 320 679 seats in auditoriums and lecture halls in urban and rural areas of the country. Reforms in the field were carried under the "Project for establishing the city (district) cultural centres". In 2010-2016, the Ministry for Culture implemented the "Peoples' Creativity Capitals of Azerbaijan" Programme. Within the framework of the programme, "Capital of Legends", "Capital of Folklore", and "Capital of Crafts" were announced every year. Besides numerous actions, festivals, fairs, concerts, projects, etc., implemented during the realisation of this programme, some local initiatives retained special popularity, namely the biennial International Ashigs Festival, the annual International Masally Folklore Festival, the annual Balaken International Folklore and Tourism Festival, the annual Guba Apple Festivity, the annual Gabala Jam Festivity, etc.

## 3.2. Archives and libraries

The *Law on the National Archive Fund (June 22, 1999)* regulates the formation, protection, use, and activity of the National Archive Fund archives in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Today, the archive system of the Republic of Azerbaijan includes six state archives of national importance, 15 branches of the State Archive, the State Archive of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, as well as 57 districts and city archives, which are directly subordinated to [the National Archives Department](#).

State archives of national importance include:

- The State Archive (1 581 funds and 589 378 works are protected in the archive. The chronological period of the documents covers the years 1917-2011),
- The State Historical Archive (757 funds, 244 419 works are protected in the archive. The chronological period of the documents covers 1805-1922),
- The State Archive of Literature and Art (764 funds and 108 390 works are protected in the archive. The chronological period of the documents covers the XIX century – 2011),
- The Archive of State Scientific and Technical Documents (The archive preserves 170 funds and 188 361 works. The chronological period of the documents covers the years 1873-2011),
- The State Cinema-Photo Documents' Archive (The archive preserves 20 632 film documents and 342 346 photo documents), and
- The State Sound Recordings' Archive (The archive preserves 32 983 background documents and 1 677 video documents. The chronological period of the documents covers the years 1903-2011).

The *State Programme On the Development of Archival Work in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020-2025 approved with the Presidential Order (February 12, 2020)*, aimed to ensure reliable protection and widespread use of archival documents, to modernise archival service organisations, to implement modern information and communication technologies, etc.

The *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan On Libraries (December 29, 1998)* formulates the principles of state policy on libraries, provides an everyday basis for the library system, regulates the founding and running of libraries, and covers funding, the public's rights regarding the use of libraries, and the principles of international co-operation in this area. The mass library network of the Ministry for Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan consists of the National Library of Azerbaijan, republic, mass and children's libraries, and centralised library systems. In addition, the State Oil Company (2), Confederation of Trade Unions (5), and other organisations (35) also own some of the libraries.

Under the Ministry for Culture, the Centralised Library System has 75 Central Libraries, 213 city library branches, 137 settlement library branches, and 2 087 rural library branches – 2 512 libraries a total. At present, 2 281 403 readers use the library fund of Centralised Library Systems (22 493 426 copies in total). The “State Programme on development of library and information sphere in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2008-2013”, dedicated to the modernisation of the library-information network, was executed in the previous decade. ALISA (Automated Library Information System of Azerbaijan), the first national system in this field to automate library and bibliographic processes, has been implemented in 45 Centralised Library Systems.

The *Presidential Decree “On measures to improve the structure and management of the Ministry for Culture of the*

*Republic of Azerbaijan*” (January 15, 2019) implies reconstruction of the library system in the country, taking into account the opportunities of information and communication technologies, as well as the existing demand and international experience.

### 3.3. Performing arts

The performing arts such as theatre, dance, and music are traditionally in the centre of attention of both audiences and government in Azerbaijan. Therefore, it naturally finds its reflection in the state cultural policy. In particular, the *Concept of the Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan* (February 14, 2014), which is the framework document of the executive branch in the field of culture, pays considerable attention to the support of professional performing arts. For instance, main state strategies for the development of professional theatrical art presuppose:

- supporting creation of new works of high artistic value in various genres of theatrical art and broader and more effective use of state orders to ensure their stage embodiment, implementation of related programmes;
- to stimulate the preparation of performances in theatres, holding national and international level theatre festivals, competitions, ensuring the participation of theatre groups in these events, and so on.

There are 29 professional theatres in the country, including one opera and ballet theatre, 19 drama, musical comedy, and musical drama theatre, nine children's and youth theatres. These professional theatres include the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Azerbaijan State Academic National Drama Theatre, Azerbaijan State Academic Musical Theatre, Azerbaijan State Academic Russian Drama Theatre, Azerbaijan State Theatre of Young Spectators, Azerbaijan State Puppet Theatre, Azerbaijan State Pantomime Theatre, etc.

The *State Programme "Azerbaijan Theatre in 2009-2019* envisaged the formation of a new theatre policy and optimisation of management in the theatre process, support of young talents in all genres and professions of theatre; improving the system of personnel training and additional education, repair of theatre buildings, application of modern information and communication technologies, and so on.

The history of Azerbaijan dance traces its roots from the Stone Age. Drawings chiselled into the rocks at [Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape](#) up to 40 000 years ago represent old Azerbaijani folk dances, which initially were ceremonial and based around hunting.

The Baku Choreography Academy is the country's only training school for ballet and folk dancers. The Academy provides general secondary special and higher education for choreographers, ballet education, ballet artist, ballet history and other specialisations.

Based on this, there are two areas of dance skills in the country now: ballet and folklore. Today's leading choreographic collective of Azerbaijan is the Azerbaijan Song and Dance Ensemble, named after Fikret Amirov, which operates in the Azerbaijan State Philharmonic Hall. The repertoire of the ballet troupe of the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre includes such ballet masterpieces of the Azerbaijani composers as:

- “Maiden Tower” by Afrasiyab Badalbeyli.
- “Seven Beauties” by Gara Garayev.

- “The Legend of Love” by Arif Malikov.
- “Babek” by Agshin Alizadeh.
- “Whites and Blacks” by Khayyam Mirzazadeh.
- “Love and Death” by Polad Bulbuloglu, et cetera.

The stages for rehearsals and performances, social security and salaries of the members of these groups, costumes, sets, tours around the country and abroad are provided by the state.

### 3.4. Visual arts and crafts

The fine and decorative art of Azerbaijan has an ancient history and rooted traditions. The development of modern fine and decorative-applied art is related to supporting artistic creativity and promoting creative works both nationally and internationally.

Support is provided to the visual arts in the following ways:

- publication of books, discs, booklets, catalogues, etc. dedicated to modern fine and decorative-applied art of Azerbaijan, and creation of related internet sites;
- Support for exciting projects in the different categories of fine and decorative-applied art;
- Holding national and international symposia, festivals, contests, and support for the participation of professionals in international projects and contests;
- Support and stimulation of the activities of talented young people;
- Offering all necessary facilities for transforming picture galleries into art centres;
- Formation of respective art collections, support for the exhibition and educational activity of galleries;
- Enriching the collections of local galleries with artworks, application of new information technologies.

The Azerbaijan State Art Gallery, as well as 32 state regional art galleries, are operating within the system of the Ministry for Culture in the sphere of fine arts (graphics, sculpture, painting, and partly architecture) and decorative-applied arts (carpet weaving, jewellery, copper-smithing, armaments, pottery, etc.) at present. Private galleries also operate in this field including the Union of Artists of Azerbaijan and its regional branches in Ganja, Nakhchivan, Sheki, and Lankaran, "YARAT!" Contemporary Art Space and other public associations. The creation of cultural heritage samples and national fine and decorative-applied arts in the Republic is possible mainly due to artists. Numerous events and exhibitions are held to support the development of digital art and contemporary art.

There is an extensive museum network in the Republic of Azerbaijan of historical, historical-regional ethnography, scientific, political, art and literature, patriotic museums, and house-museums of culture and artworks, promoting the visual arts and crafts sector in the country. In general, there are 239 museums in the country under the ministries and departments. 225 museums belong to the Ministry for Culture and 4 museums to the National Academy of Sciences. In addition, there is one museum in each of the Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, Ecology and Natural Resources, and the Interior. Furthermore, the State Oil Company has one museum, and one museum is private. Of the total number of museums, 76 are history museums, 42 are memorial museums, 68 are ethnographic museums, 41 are art museums, and 12 are other museums. The fund of museums in the Republic consists of 1 330 000 exhibits in total.

The main leading museums are [Azerbaijan National Museum of Art](#), [Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum](#), [Azerbaijan State Theatre Museum named after Jafar Jabbarli](#), [The State Museum of Musical Culture of Azerbaijan](#), [National Museum of History of Azerbaijan](#), and [Azerbaijan Independence Museum](#).

## 3.5. Cultural arts and creative industries

### 3.5.1. GENERAL DEVELOPMENTS

According to UNESCO's definition of the cultural and creative industries, "the creative and cultural industries are those whose primary purpose is the production or reproduction, promotion, dissemination or commercialisation of products, services, and activities of a cultural, artistic or heritage nature." The culture and creative industries are not defined statistically in the country yet, but in the working documents of state bodies, they are called Cultural and Creative Industries. There is an understanding that this cross-border sphere is situated at the intersection of culture and the economy. That is, any cultural product at the stage of creativity is in the field of culture. However, with the release of this cultural product into circulation, that is, when the economic laws of mass production, exchange, trade, and consumption come into force, this is already an area of economics.

The development of cultural and creative industries as a field of activity providing the production of cultural products and implementing cultural services is envisaged as one of the main directions of state cultural policy. However, despite some progress in some sub-sectors of the cultural and creative industries, this area is forming yet.

Private companies, studios, workshops, centres, and individual entrepreneurs are the top part of the creative industries. Private organisations operating mainly in Baku and other major cities cover design, advertising, crafts, fashion, fine arts, music, and other creative fields. However, the lack of regular publication of comprehensive statistics on cultural and creative industries (CSIs) at the national level does not fully allow the measurement, monitoring, and evaluation of development processes in this sector.

At the same time, according to the UNCTAD report, in 2014, Azerbaijan's imports of CCI's products amounted to 138.04 million US dollars, while exports amounted to 3.95 million US dollars, resulting in a negative trade balance of CCI's of 134.09 million US dollars. In the 2017 EU Report on Cultural Development Indicators for Azerbaijan to determine the share of CCI's in the Azerbaijani economy, the share of CCI's in GDP was officially set at 1% (\$ 374 million for 2016). Furthermore, a study based on the International Intellectual Property Organisation's Guidelines for 2019 shows that the growth of the creative industries from 2003 to 2015 increased by 13 times, from 220.5 million to 2 815.9 million AZN.

Since 2018, the Ministry for Culture has taken various measures and drafted several plans to develop CCI's. In addition, the research on the role of the CCI's sector in the world economy, the local situation in the Azerbaijani context, the contribution of CCI's to the Azerbaijani economy, shortcomings in this area, public-private investigations into partnerships and partnership gaps were conducted.

According to the "Action Plan for 2019 on implementing the necessary activities for developing creative and cultural industries", a strategic document on CCI's is being prepared.

The main areas of activity, such as the Start-up Competition and Forum on MYS, sectoral organisations (councils), and the brand "Creative Azerbaijan", have already been identified. Furthermore, on October 31, 2019, Baku was included in the UNESCO "Creative Cities Network" on the theme of "design". In addition, the Ministry for Culture has acted as a partner in several events to support and develop the industry ("Azerbaijan Design Forum 2019", "Azerbaijan Design Award").

The Ministry for Culture has been a partner in several competitions to coordinate independent creative industries with state-funded and managed culture, support and development initiatives that combine creativity and business, increase the interest of business organisations and youth in this field, and support startups in the country, such as "Creative Business Cup", Venture Battle Hackathon, "Big Idea Challenge", Republican Innovation Competition, etc. The Boomerang project was presented as part of the Creative Spark programme implemented by the British Council.

On February 27, 2020, with the support of the "Creative Azerbaijan" portal, organised by the Ministry for Culture and the Public Council under the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (SMBDA), a public discussion on "Cultural Business Forum: Current Situation and Prospects" at the YARAT Contemporary Art Centre was organised. In addition, the Ministry for Culture regularly holds meetings with representatives of the culture and creative industries, exchanging views on the challenges and opportunities in the field.

The understanding is emerging that Azerbaijani culture has excellent internal potential and driving force to promote the cultural and creative industries. That is why many necessary activities for the period up to 2030 have been identifying within the current *Cultural Strategy*:

- Improving the legislation on cultural and creative industries, tax policy, and other financial and legal issues in this field, the application of comprehensive protection of copyright, brands, patents, and trademarks;
- Improving the existing legal framework in cinematography and book circulation to regulate modern trends and new opportunities.
- Regulation of production, exchange, sale and consumption of cultural products, the establishment of art management and production institutes, increasing the knowledge of key actors in logistics, marketing, fundraising, crowdfunding, advertising and promotion, expansion of monetisation and paid cultural services, application of international experience in the field development of cultural and creative industries; et cetera.

### 3.5.2. BOOKS AND PRESS

State and private publishing houses carry out book publishing in the republic. These publishing houses are acting under the *Law on Publishing* and other respective legislative acts. There are about 70 publishing and printing companies in Azerbaijan, mainly in the capital Baku, and include: "Azerbaijan State Publishing House", "Sharg-Garb", "Qanun", "TEAS Press", "Tahsil", "Hadaf Naşhrlari", "Elm", "Altun Kitab", "Qelem", "Aspoliqraf", "Alatoran Yayınları", "Parlaq imzalar", "Xan", "Renessans", "3 Alma", "Aghılı bala", "Qedim Qala", "Çashioglu", "Chinar-chap", "Mujru", "Elm ve tehsil", "Letterpress", "Libra Kitab", "Shirvannaşr", "Mutarjim", "Uchbujaq" and others. In addition, Azerneshr, a self-supporting publishing house, operates under the Ministry for Culture.

In 2019, 3 697 titles and 3 435 800 copies of books were published across the country. Included are 1 355 titles of scientific literature, 833 titles of educational literature, 1 266 titles of fiction, 243 titles of children's literature,

and other publications. In the field of the book trade, there are large book trade enterprises and other enterprises such as "Ali and Nino", "Libraff", "Baku Book Center", "Azerkitab", and "Ovod Book House". These companies also organise the e-book trade. According to the *Law on Publishing*, publishing houses are free in their activities and are personally responsible for their publications.

Regarding the current problems and shortcomings in the field of publishing, the following can also be mentioned. Legislative discounts on book publishing, including tax breaks, are not provided (although currently, the publication of textbooks and children's books is exempt from VAT; the fact that VAT remains on paper does not affect the prices of these books).

A low level of reading leads to low book circulation, which, in turn, negatively influences the financial situation of publishing houses and reduces the range and quality of books. Many publishers do not have the opportunity to communicate directly with readers, identify readers' needs and adapt publishing policies (their bookstore). In addition, bookstores in the regions are almost non-existent, making it difficult for readers to obtain books for their private libraries.

Publishers are reluctant to publish the works of young writers because introducing a new name (author) to the reader requires certain marketing costs and copyright infringement (piracy and plagiarism) in the book market. Thus, all of it seriously undermines the financial support of authors and weakens official publishers.

According to the *Culture Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan*, the following strategy is necessary for the improvement of national publishing work:

- Provision of book publishing on scientific, social-political, artistic, publicist themes (encyclopaedias, dictionaries, multi-volumes, collections, anthology, musical publications, etc.) to a high standard;
- Promotion of the translation of Azerbaijan literature samples into foreign languages and world literature samples into the Azerbaijani language as well as the creation of new works;
- Improvement of the enrichment of library funds through the Republic Library Collection system; and
- Providing access for book publishers in Azerbaijan to the international arena, participation in international book exhibition fairs, holding international book exhibitions in the country.
- Introduction of modern publishing, including "print-on-demand" technology to Azerbaijan, application, and promotion of e-book and audiobook formats along with traditional book publishing, researching ways to promote national literature to the world audience, including e-book markets, are among the recent books debates.

### 3.5.3. AUDIOVISUAL AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA

Currently, the state policy in audio-visual and interactive media is carried out through the Ministry for Culture (film and video) and the National Television and Radio Council (TV and radio). In each of these supervisions, appropriate state programmes and specific policies are adopted to promote the country's audio-visual and interactive media industry.

Within the framework of the *State Programme for the Development of Azerbaijani Cinema for 2008-2018 (№ 2961 of August 4, 2008)*:

- the material and technical base of cinemas has been significantly strengthened, including the construction

of a new building with the latest technological equipment for the State Film Fund and the reconstruction of the Nizami Cinema Centre to world standards.

- Film production has been improved by the state order, and various projects aimed at strengthening the human resources potential of national cinema have been implemented.
- More than 300 films have been made in public and private studios with the state order and financial support. In addition, many screen works have been awarded various prizes at international film festivals.

To ensure the implementation of the *Order of the President On Some Measures Related to the Development of Azerbaijani Cinema (№ 1007 of March 1, 2019)* a technical base for the Azerbaijan-film studio named after Jabbarli was reconstructed to the latest standards and modern cinematographic equipment was purchased.

The draft *Concept for the Development of Azerbaijani Cinematography*, prepared by the Ministry for Culture, taking into account the proposals of the Union of Cinematographers and other specialised departments, is being agreed upon with the relevant state structures.

Preparatory work is underway to create the Film Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ARKA), to attract investment to the national film industry, attract foreign partners, and thus achieve convergence of the private and public sectors.

To implement the *Presidential Order On Providing One-time Financial Assistance to Private National TV and Radio Broadcasters in the Republic of Azerbaijan (№896 of January 17, 2019)*, 3 million AZN was allocated to private national TV and radio broadcasters.

In 2020, The National Television and Radio Council conducted a study titled the "Current state of the audio-visual industry in Azerbaijan; forecasts and objectives". The study shows that educational programmes and projects dominate the programme basket of AZTV, MADANIYYET TV, IDMAN TV, and ITV, funded from the state budget. Moreover, during the pandemic, such TV lessons were of exceptional importance to the country's schoolchildren as they continued their distance (or online) education.

The TV and Radio Academy, established on June 14, 2010, is located in the building of Azerbaijan Radio. The material and technical base of the academy has been formed, filming, and editing equipment has been installed, filming pavilions and a recording studio have been established. The purpose of establishing the academy is to train professional TV and radio specialists to higher education standard, to improve employees' skills. Along with local scientists and specialists, TV specialists from Turkey, Russia, European countries, and the United States are invited to teach at the academy.

#### 3.5.4. MUSIC

The musical traditions of Azerbaijan are accepted as a vital part of the country's uniqueness and future development. They are an essential part of Azerbaijani culture and its people. Therefore, specific policies to promote the music industry in Azerbaijan are directed to the development of infrastructure, musical collectives, and concert activities.

There are 16 concert halls in the country, including five philharmonic halls, five concert halls, and six independent groups. Among the leading concert venues is the Azerbaijan State Academy Philharmonic, named after Muslim Magomayev, the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, the Heydar Aliyev Palace,

the International Mugham Centre, the Azerbaijan State Song Theatre, the Azerbaijan State Children's Philharmonic, and the Ganja State Philharmonic. The state provides support for this infrastructure, repairs, and maintenance of the buildings of these organisations, equipping them with modern technologies, concert and stage equipment. Thus, for example, the building of the Azerbaijan State Academic Philharmonic built back in 1912, based on an organic combination of Italian architectural style and the traditions of oriental architecture, was restored, reconstructed, and provided with the necessary equipment at the level of modern requirements entirely at the expense of the state budget.

The most famous musical groups of the country are the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra named after Uzeyir Hajibayli, the Azerbaijan State Choir Capella, The Azerbaijan State Chamber Orchestra named after G.Garayev, The Azerbaijan State Piano Trio, The Azerbaijan State String Quartet, The Azerbaijan State Folk Song and Dance Ensemble named after F.Amirov, and The Azerbaijan State Orchestra of Folk Instruments. In addition, enterprises and groups such as the Azerbaijan State Wind Orchestra, Gaya State Ensemble, and Zeynab Khanlarova's State Ensemble can be mentioned. The state partially finances these musical groups by purchasing professional instruments and stage costumes, fixed wages, providing social support to participants, and so on. An example is the *Presidential Order On Strengthening the Social Protection of the Artistic Staff of the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra, named after Uzeyir Hajibayli (№3340 of November 3, 2017)*.

Various festivals, concerts, anniversary evenings, etc., are regularly held with the participation of music groups and soloists. At the same time, the ensemble and soloists represent Azerbaijani culture at a high level, performing at events and tours abroad. Furthermore, the Ministry for Culture provides serious support to concert-touring and festival-competitive activities of state musical institutions, bands, and outstanding performers both in the country and abroad. It happens mainly within culture days, official events and includes touring concerts, under related programmes and projects, and multilateral and bilateral international treaties.

The number of concerts in 2019 was 1 224, including 573 in philharmonic halls, 347 in concert halls, and 304 by independent groups. Eighty-four thousand people attended the concerts of independent groups. According to statistics, the number of visitors to concert venues was 50 per 1 000 people. The statistic is given for 2019 because the activities of concert halls have been restricted in the quarantine regime.

### 3.5.5. DESIGN AND CREATIVE SERVICES

[The State Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture](#) is the central executive body implementing state policy and regulation in urban planning, spatial planning, architecture, and related design in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Together with relevant executive authorities and self-government bodies, the Committee must:

- take measures for preservation, protection, and enrichment of national and historical heritage, urban planning, architectural monuments, natural and cultural landscape, and other protected areas;
- together with the relevant executive authorities and local self-government bodies in newly constructed facilities, the national architectural style must be considered in the landscaping works carried out in cities and regions to ensure aesthetic beauty, modernity.

[Baku State Design Institute](#) was established in 1937. Since its inception, it has been involved in design activities and addresses the urban planning issues in Baku, as well as developing schemes and projects for engineering and transport infrastructure. In addition, it created the Master Plan of Baku that was effective until 2005. The

activities of the Institute include regional planning projects, master plans, complex planning projects, residential construction projects, residential and commercial construction projects, engineering communications and transport infrastructure projects, environmental protection, ecology, dendrology, drainage, geodesy and geological and feasibility studies, project management, and architectural supervision.

[Union of Architects of Azerbaijan \(UAA\)](#) is a voluntary professional creative association of architects of the country that aims:

- To develop creative concepts and implement the development strategy of Azerbaijan architecture together with the governmental bodies;
- To promote the protection of the historical architectural and natural environment, and pay careful attention to architectural monuments,
- To promote improvements in architectural education and continued improvement in professional skills of architects in the country, to encourage and nurture the young generation in the profession
- To propagate achievements in Azerbaijan architecture, promote the development of printing and architectural critics; organise shows, exhibitions, and sale of the works of architecture, painting and applied arts, et cetera.

["Azerbaijan Design Forum 2019"](#) was organised at the International Mugham Center on November 23, 2019, with the support of the Ministry for Culture. The forum's primary purpose was to bring together Azerbaijani designers, exchange experiences, discuss, and share the most innovative approaches to these issues. The event also discussed the importance of Baku's recent inclusion in the UNESCO Network of Creative Cities and the establishment of the Azerbaijan Design Council.

The "Azerbaijan Design Forum 2019" competition winners' ceremony was held at the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre on March 2, 2020. The competition, supported by the Ministry for Culture and free of charge for creative people, was held to raise the level of design in the country and identify talented people. A jury of world-renowned professionals (18 judges from 6 countries) evaluated all projects online anonymously. In total, 611 works by more than 400 designers were submitted to the competition in 10 categories on the official website: branding, packaging design, illustration, web design, industrial design, application design, interior design, exterior design, print design and outdoor design.

### 3.5.6. CULTURAL AND CREATIVE TOURISM

The *Law on Tourism (№ 674-IQ of June 4, 1999)* determines the state policy's principles to establish the tourism market's legal basis, the foundation of tourism activity. It regulates the relations arising in the field of tourism, determines the order of effective use of tourism resources as one of the means of socio-economic development. According to the law, cultural facilities are classified as tourism resources, and effective use of historical and cultural heritage is a part of state regulation of tourism activities.

From 2006 to 2018, the tourism sector was under the Ministry for Culture and Tourism jurisdiction. The main goal was to bring the tourism sector, being potentially self-sufficient from an economic point of view, closer to culture and cultural heritage, and help the two sectors develop together in a framework of joint cultural tourism programmes and projects. At the next stage, tourism began to stand out as an independent branch due to the vital flow of tourists to the country in 2010-2016. As of 2017, the tourism sector provides about 4% of

Azerbaijan's GDP while being a relatively fast-growing industry. Based on this trend, the Government decided to separate the Ministry for Culture and Tourism and establish two separate bodies: the Ministry for Culture and the State Tourism Agency (№4 of April 20, 2018).

The [State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#) is the central executive body implementing state policy and regulation in tourism and protecting historical and cultural monuments located in the territories of state reserves. Ensuring the development of cultural tourism was assigned to the State Agency alongside health, sports, mountain and winter tourism, extreme, business, ecological tourism, beach, hunting tourism, and other types of tourism. For this purpose, the agency was strengthened by the following organisations under its subordination:

- [Azerbaijan Tourism Bureau \(ATB\)](#) - a public legal entity, has the main goal to strengthen the country's competitiveness in the global tourism market and increase the level of recognition of Azerbaijan as a tourist destination by forming and promoting Azerbaijan's tourism brand locally and internationally.
- [The Azerbaijan Convention Bureau \(AzCB\)](#) is a lead entity for promoting and implementing Azerbaijan's business events development strategy.
- [The Reserves Management Centre](#) aims to implement conservation measures to protect its reserves' tangible and intangible heritage assets, develop their tourism potential, and revitalise the economy by integrating the local population into the tourism and heritage value chains.
- ["Shahdag Tourism Centre"](#), Closed Joint-Stock Company;
- [Azerbaijan National Culinary Centre \(ANCC\)](#), engaged in collecting, studying, and promoting national culinary culture, uniting the country's leading chefs, scientists, and specialists.

Tourism Information Centres function in Baku (including Baku City Tour tourist buses) and districts like Shamakhi, Khachmaz, Guba, Lankaran, Ganja, Sheki, Zagatala, Gabala, Ismayilli, Barda.

Various aspects of tourism in general and of cultural and creative tourism, in particular, are taught in such educational institutions as Azerbaijan Tourism and Management University, Baku Tourism Vocational School, and Mingachevir Tourism College.

## 4. Law and legislation

### 4.1. General legislation

#### 4.1.1. CONSTITUTION

Following the Constitutional Referendum of 12 November 1995, the new *Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan* entered into force on 5 December 1995. The country's basic law was developed in line with the fundamental principles and norms of international law.

Besides general guarantees, fundamental rights, freedoms, and responsibilities, the *Constitution* has several provisions related to culture and, more specifically, cultural rights, freedom of expression and creativity, copyright protection, heritage protection, etc.

Article 40 of the *Constitution* ("Right to culture") provides that "I. Everyone has the right to take part in cultural life, to use cultural institutions and cultural values. II. Everyone must respect and care for historical, cultural and spiritual heritage, protect historical and cultural monuments."

Article 51 of the *Constitution* ("Freedom of creative activity") ensures that "I. Everyone is free to carry out creative activities. II. The state guarantees freedom in literary-artistic, scientific-technical and other kinds of creative activity."

Article 30 of the *Constitution* ("Right to intellectual property") declares, "I. Everyone has the right to intellectual property. II. Copyright, patent rights and other rights to intellectual property are protected by law."

The interests of artists and cultural workers are also reflected in such articles of the *Constitution* as "Official language" (Article 21), "Freedom of thought and speech" (Article 47), "Freedom of information" (Article 50) and "Protection of historical and cultural monuments" (Article 77).

#### 4.1.2. ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Legislative procedures for the allocation of public funds for culture in the Republic of Azerbaijan is defined by the *Constitution*, the *Law on the Budget System*, annual laws and Presidential decrees on the state budget, and annual laws and Presidential decrees on the execution of the state budget. In addition, the Cabinet of Ministers' *Rules of Preparation and Execution of the State Budget* and *The Unified Budget Classification of the Republic of Azerbaijan* are instruments of these procedures for state bodies.

The competence of the Milli Majlis (parliament) includes approval of the state budget upon the submission of the President and supervision over its implementation. An annual law on the state budget approves the amount of revenues and expenditures for the following year, including centralised and local. Tax revenues of the state budget are directed towards the corresponding purposes at the level of sections and subsections of the functional classification, including activities in culture, arts, and related fields.

After adopting the annual law on the state budget, the President signs a special decree on several issues related to applying this law, which approves the order of financing of organisations and events from the state budget.

The decree defines the distribution of the budgetary funds for culture between the central and local institutions, activities and events. The costs of education in culture and art, regulation of wages and other social measures, charges for improving the technical base, and extra-budgetary expenditures of budgetary organisations are also specified in this legal act. Finally, the Ministry of Finance specifies incomes and expenditures of sources based on approved indicators of the state budget of the next budget year and delivers it to the Ministry for Culture.

In general, the proposals for the allocation of public funds for culture are based on the estimation of forecasts of the country's economic and social development for the next and following three years. Targeted programmes and evaluation of the results of the cultural activity are collected during the preparation process of the draft state budget, which starts 11 months before the next budget year. All budgetary cultural institutions participate in this process, submitting their budget requests and forecasts to the Ministry for Culture through the administrative hierarchy, integrating them into a single application.

In case a necessity arises for review of the state budget in the execution process, and it was impossible to consider the need during the preparation and approval of the state budget of the current year, a question can be raised before the Milli Majlis (parliament) in the manner of legislative initiative. Also, the Ministry for Culture may apply to the Ministry of Finance in the second half of the year if required to transfer already allocated funds between paragraphs of the approved indicators of the current state budget year.

The procurement of goods, works and services by budgetary institutions and organisations is based on the *Law on Public Procurement*. The procurement of goods, works and services by budgetary institutions and organisations is based on the *Law on Public Procurement*. However, if the amount of the specified public procurement is equal to or exceeds AZN 50 thousand, a compulsory public tendering for funds is announced based on the *Law on Tenders*.

All budget proposals are prepared under the new *Unified Budget Classification*, which was approved on October 11, 2018.

#### 4.1.3. SOCIAL SECURITY FRAMEWORKS

According to Article 38 of the *Constitution*, "everyone has the right to social security". Social welfare payments are described by laws *On Social Benefits (2006)*, *On Social Insurance (1997)*, *On Protection of Public Health (1997)*, *On Medical Insurance (1999)*, *On Labour Pensions (2006)*, *On Social Services (2011)*, *On Unemployment Insurance (2017)*, *On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2018)*, *On Employment (2018)*, et cetera.

In practice, The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population is in charge of regulating the labour markets and ensuring social protection of the population. Regulation of activities in social insurance and provision of pensions to citizens falls under the State Social Protection Fund.

The following public legal entities under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population were established according to the *Presidential Decree "On Additional Measures to Improve Governance in the Field of Social Protection" (2019)*:

- The State Employment Agency (based on the State Employment Service) conducts activities related to the organisation of active employment measures, management of unemployment insurance funds, standards for social protection of job seekers and the unemployed, as well as labour market analysis

- The State Social Protection Fund (based on the State Social Protection Fund) regulates activities in the sector of social insurance and provision of pensions to citizens;
- The State Agency for Medical-Social Expertise and Rehabilitation (based on the State Medical-Social Expertise and Rehabilitation Service); operates in disability identification and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.
- The Social Services Agency provides social services to persons (families) in need of social services, improving their social protection and welfare, and implementing state policy and regulation on adoption.

According to the *Presidential Decree On Additional Measures to Ensure the Self-employment of the Population (2016)*, a self-employment programme is implemented. Within the framework of this programme, low-income families are provided with the state's support to establish or develop the individual households by providing families directly with cattle, material and other property (not cash). In addition, the family is provided with production or service equipment under the business plan provided.

These general social security measures are relevant for culture, and the mentioned schemes would apply to those working in the cultural sector, including self-employed artists. The *Law on Culture (2012)* also provides social security measures for cultural workers. Social protection of the subjects of cultural activity included in the main directions of state policy and organisation of incentives for cultural workers and creative people for services and contributions to the development of culture are among the duties of the state. It applies to creative workers and includes provisions to improve the working conditions of artists and scientists, e.g. artists and sculptors receive working spaces under favourable conditions (e.g. low rents). Salaries for cultural institutions with national status are well above those that do not enjoy this status. Workers who were actively involved in the country's cultural development, and have long service, may receive special pensions after retirement. Creative persons who win festivals and competitions are awarded honorary titles, scholarships, orders and medals.

#### 4.1.4. TAX LAWS

The Tax Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2001) determines the system of taxes, the general principles of taxation, the rules of the establishment, payment and taxation, et cetera. Presently, there is a unified legislative and regulatory framework for taxation:

- The number of regulations and compliance with laws and regulations governing tax relations has decreased;
- The number of taxes has decreased, which simplifies settlements for taxpayers;
- The tax burden is reduced, which allows the tax system to play a regulatory (stimulating) role.

The most progressive element of the Tax Code is the application of simplified tax rates. So, under Article 218.1.1 of the Tax Code, persons who are not registered for VAT purposes and whose taxable transactions amount to AZN 200 000 or less in any month (months) of a consecutive 12-month period have the right to pay the simplified tax rate. According to Article 219.5 of the Tax Code, a legal entity that pays simplified tax is not a payer of VAT, profit tax, and an individual (including an individual engaged in entrepreneurial activity without establishing a legal entity) is not a payer of income tax and VAT. According to article 220.10 of the Tax Code, the monthly fixed amount of the simplified tax for individuals engaged individually (without employees) in weddings, celebrations and other cultural events individually (without hiring employees) is AZN 20. Since January

2006, enterprises outside Baku pay tax at 2% and those registered in the capital pay tax at 4% of total turnovers. Registration of enterprises is submitted to the tax department and is usually implemented within three days.

The Ministry of Taxes is also constantly expanding its coverage of electronic services provided to taxpayers. So, in 2006, the Automated Tax Information System (AVIS) was established. In 2007, the Internet Tax Administration ([www.e-taxes.gov.az](http://www.e-taxes.gov.az)) began to exchange electronic documents with banks, and a system of electronic submission of tax returns by legal entities and individuals has been established. Furthermore, since January 1, 2010, the use of electronic invoices began.

Given that tax policy is one of the essential tools for attracting finance and investment in culture and crucial to improving culture and art workers' social status and welfare, there is a need to develop a package of cultural legislation, and this process is undergoing. So, there is good news for enterprises, departments and organisations operating in the field of culture. Tax exemption criteria for enterprises, departments and organisations working in science, education, health, sports and culture were approved by the *Decision No. 88 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated March 12, 2020*. Legal organisations (except for commercial legal entities) that organise artistic and cultural events, prepare and distribute publications, and produce films for promotion and development of national culture and cultural heritage are exempt from tax. The same applies for legal organisations that function as a theatre, library or museum.

#### 4.1.5. LABOUR LAWS

The *Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1995)*, the *Labour Code (1999)* and laws *On Employment (2018)*, *On Trade Unions (1994)*, and *On Culture (2012)* regulate employment in the cultural field. A unified system of salaries is in place for those working in the different spheres of the public sector. Relationships between employers and workers are based on a contract system (usually concluded on a permanent or short-term basis). The collective contract is signed between the employer on the one side and the trade union on the other. In the event of the trade union's absence, the working collective signs the contract. The trade union, working collective, employer, corresponding executive and representative body of employers can initiate signing the contract. The trade union can promote the negotiating related to the contract signing. In the event of its absence, the working collective can establish a commission for that purpose. The *Law on State Service (2001)* regulates the employment of state employees at all levels.

"ASAN service" centres were established by the *Presidential Decree On Measures to Establish the State Agency for Citizen Services and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and to Improve the Services Provided to Citizens by Government Agencies" (2012)*. It should be noted that ASAN centres, which increase transparency and speed up the transition to e-services, have quickly gained immense popularity among the population and have practically eliminated potential corruption in relations between officials and citizens.

The public legal entity "ABAD" under the State Agency for Citizen Services and Social Innovations, created in 2016 by the corresponding decree of the President, plays a significant role in increasing employment and forming competitive family farms. For instance, ABAD centres implement projects to support family businesses operating in decorative and applied arts and food production. In addition, ABAD centres provide business planning, marketing, training, branding and design, financial accounting, legal assistance and, most importantly, sales organisation and equipment. Furthermore, certification of manufactured products on the principle of "one-stop-shop", organisation of logistics and sales are also carried out by ABAD.

The Small and Medium Business (SMB) Development Agency under the Ministry of the Economy was established following the *Presidential Decree On Further Improvement of Management in the Field of Small and Medium Business* (2017). The goals are to improve the system of business regulation and effective coordination, to increase the role and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises in the country's economy. In addition, they aimed to adapt the management system to modern requirements, strengthening the legal support of entrepreneurship and creating favourable conditions for developing entrepreneurship in the regions.

The "Sustainable and Operational Social Security Agency" (DOST Agency), a public legal entity under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population, was established according to the *Presidential Decree On Additional Measures to Improve Governance in the Areas of Employment, Labour, Social Protection and security* (August 2018). The DOST centres, managed by the Agency, provide services for the appointment of pensions, benefits, employment, and solve other relevant issues.

#### 4.1.6. COPYRIGHT PROVISIONS

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a state member of the following international copyright agreements:

- *The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (June 4, 1999),*
- *The WIPO Copyright Treaty (April 11, 2006),*
- *The Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organisation (December 25, 1995),*
- *The WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (April 11, 2006),*
- *The Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms Against Unauthorised Duplication of Their Phonograms (September 1, 2001),*
- *The Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations (October 8, 2005), - the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled (December 24, 2018);*
- *The Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of the Protection of Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (April 5, 1996);*
- *The European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production (05-02-2002), etc.*

The *Law on Copyright and Related Rights (1996)* regulates the terms arising from the creation and use of scientific, literary and artistic works (copyright), as well as performances, phonograms, programmes broadcasted or cable broadcasting organisations (related rights) on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The main principles of this *Copyright and Related Rights Act* are those current in European countries. First, it follows the "continental" conception of copyright as a personal right, preferring this to the Anglo-Saxon vision, which stresses the commercial side of copyright. Secondly, the term "author" is interpreted broadly, as it is in other countries with high standards of copyright protection. Finally, authorship is not restricted to directors, scriptwriters and composers in the audio-visual field but extends to camera operators and set designers.

The Act also recognises related rights, performers' rights, and the rights of phonogram producers and broadcasting bodies (TV and radio). Inherited rights are also acknowledged for 50 years after an author's death. Proportional payment is more profitable for authors and other rights-holders. However, the state fixes only the minimum payment rate, and payment methods are negotiated between rights-holders and the users of their works.

The *Law on Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights and the Fight Against Piracy (2012)* regulates the relations for

ensuring the enforcement of rights of those who are holders of intellectual property rights, protection of their interests, and preventing infringements, including illegal production and distribution of the copies of intellectual property objects.

The Intellectual Property Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan was established as a result of a merger of the Copyright Agency and Patents and Intellectual Property Agency according to the *Order of the President On Measures to Improve Management in the Field of Consumer Market Control, Standardisation, Metrology and Protection of Intellectual Property Rights" (2018)*. The Intellectual Property Agency is the public legal entity that ensures:

- The development of the field of intellectual property rights,
- Copyright and related rights,
- Rights to data sets and integrated circuit topologies,
- Rights to inventions, utility models, industrial designs, trademarks and geographical indications,
- Rights to samples of Azerbaijani folklore (traditional cultural samples), traditional knowledge and other intangible cultural heritage.

#### 4.1.7. DATA PROTECTION LAWS

The *Law on Information, Informatisation and Information Protection (1998)* regulates the relations arising at the formation of information resources based on creation, collection, processing, accumulation, keeping, searching, and dissemination of information. It also applies with the establishment and use of information systems, technology and means for their insurance and at the protection of data. The most important advantage of this law for the cultural sphere is the legal formulation of state policy regarding information resources - documents and arrays of documents in information systems (libraries, archives, funds, data banks, etc.) and separately existing documents in their collections.

The *Law on Copyright and Related Rights (1996)* protects all translations, anthologies and collective works, including computer programmes and databases.

The *Law on the National Archive Fund (1999)* protects a set of documents reflecting the material and spiritual life of the people, regardless of the type, place of creation and storage and form of ownership, having historical, scientific, economic, political, social and cultural value, considered an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani people.

The *Law on the Legal Protection of Data Sets (2004)* regulates legal relations arising from creating and using data compilations irrespective of their forms.

The *Law on Personal Data (2010)* forms personal data in the national information space. It governs the questions connected with cross-border transfer of personal data and establishes the rights and obligations of the state and local government bodies, physical persons and legal entities operating in this sphere.

#### 4.1.8. LANGUAGE LAWS

The foundations of the state language policy and legal provisions on multilingualism are laid down in the relevant articles of the *Constitution (1995)*. The official language is the Azerbaijani language; the state guarantees the development of the Azerbaijani Language and ensures free use and development of other languages spoken

by the population. Everyone has the right to use their native language. In addition, everyone has the right to an upbringing, education, and engage in any creative activity in any language, as desired. No person may be deprived of the right to use their native language. The *Law on the State Language in the Republic of Azerbaijan* was passed and came into force on 30 September 2002.

The *Law on Media (1999)* states that "The mass media use the state language in the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic. Therefore, mass media must observe the norms of the state language. Citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan have the right to use other languages spoken by the population of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as other languages widely spoken in the world, and the production and dissemination of mass information."

The *Law on Advertising (2015)* determines that "...in addition to the state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan, other languages may be used in the advertisement".

#### 4.1.9. OTHER AREAS OF GENERAL LEGISLATION

The *Law on Getting Information (2005)* provides that access to information in the Republic of Azerbaijan is free. Everyone has the right to contact the owner of the information directly or through his representative and to choose the type and form of access to information. Everyone who applies to the owner of the data has the right: to find out whether the requested information belongs to the owner of the information and to receive additional details to obtain it in the absence of this information. If the data owner has the requested information, then it must be provided freely, without obstacles and on equal terms for all.

At the same time, access to information is allowed on the condition that this access does not contradict protecting the interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the political, economic, military, financial-credit and monetary policy. Furthermore, it must not contradict the protection of public order, health, and morality, protection of rights and freedoms of others, commercial and other economic interests, the purposes of ensuring the reputation and impartiality of the court, the ordinary course of the criminal investigation.

## 4.2. Legislation on culture

### 4.2.1. GENERAL LEGISLATION ON CULTURE

Azerbaijani society is typified by cultural diversity, so all laws on culture are geared to satisfy a broad range of cultural requirements. Some laws are general (e.g. the *Law on Culture* of 2012), others more specific (e.g. the laws on cinematography, town planning, museums and publishing). The *Law on Culture* spells out the state policy's principles and aims and lays down the duties of government and local authorities in this area. It guarantees the right of individuals to engage in creative activity, promotes international contacts and co-operation, prevents the state from monopolising culture, and covers preservation and development of the cultural identity and heritage of Azerbaijan and ethnic minorities, historically resident in its territory. It also provides measures to promote creativity and public agencies and organisations working in the cultural sphere.

The *Law on Culture (2012)* is intended to legalise all trends and expertise of current cultural policies and practices, such as arts management, cultural marketing, fundraising, producing, etc. State interference is limited to prohibiting any material that is pornographic or which encourages violence, racial, national or religious intolerance or drug addiction. Effective legal sanctions back these prohibitions.

The development of legal guarantees for the arts and culture in the Republic of Azerbaijan includes:

- Complex improvement of national cultural policy legislation;
- Enhancement of international conventions and bilateral agreement implementation mechanisms; and
- Perfection of existing practice on cultural and authors' rights protection.

Table 2: List of existing cultural legislation

Title of the law	Year of adoption
<i>On Culture</i>	21 December 2012 № 506-IVQ
<i>On Copyright and Related Rights</i>	5 June 1996 № 115-IQ
<i>On Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments</i>	10 April 1998 № 470-IQ
<i>On Cinematography</i>	3 July 1998 № 515-IQ
<i>On Library work</i>	29 December 1998 № 611-IQ
<i>On Museums</i>	24 March 2000 № 839-IQ
<i>On Publishing</i>	30 may 2000-ci il № 887-IQ
<i>On Legal Protection of Azerbaijani Folklore Samples</i>	16 May 2003 № 460-IIQ
<i>On Protection and Development of Azerbaijani Carpet Art</i>	7 December 2004 № 799-IIQD
<i>On Theatre and Theatre Activities</i>	29 December 2006 № 222-IIIQ

Source: Milli Majlis (Parliament), 2021.

Table 3: International legal instruments implemented by the Republic of Azerbaijan in the cultural field

Title of the act	Year of adoption
<i>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</i>	1992 13 Aug 1992 a
<i>Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its I and II Protocols</i>	1993 (Protocols on 1993 and 2000)
<i>Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage</i>	1993 16/12/1993 R
<i>Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information</i>	1995
<i>Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region</i>	1996
<i>Universal Copyright Convention</i>	1997
<i>Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property</i>	1997
<i>European Cultural Convention</i>	1997
<i>Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works</i>	1998
<i>Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe</i>	1999
<i>European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production</i>	1999
<i>UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects</i>	2000
<i>Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage</i>	2006
<i>Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe</i>	2008
<i>Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions</i>	2009

Source: Milli Majlis (Parliament), 2021.

#### 4.2.2. LEGISLATION ON CULTURE AND NATURAL HERITAGE

The *Law on Culture (2012)* pays a lot of attention to cultural heritage in general and its areas that are outlined in relevant chapters: immovable, movable, intangible cultural heritage, including historical and cultural monuments, cultural property, national cultural archives, examples and objects of national cultural heritage, underwater cultural heritage, national culinary examples, commitments to the protection of national cultural heritage and of cultural values, mode of use of cultural objects, list of protected cultural treasures, export of cultural resources, etcetera.

The *Law on the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments (April 1998)* defines the issues, specifies the responsibilities of state and local authorities, and lays down principles for the use, study, conservation, restoration, reconstruction, renovation and safety of historical and cultural monuments. The scope of the law extends to archaeological and architectural objects, ethnographic, numismatic, epigraphic, anthropological materials, buildings, monuments, things related to historical events and personalities, and values related to religious beliefs. Furthermore, the law declares that privatisation of state-owned monuments included in the list of world natural and cultural heritage and national cultural and natural heritage is not allowed.

New requirements concerning the keep and use of national archives, the need to determine the ownership status of state and non-state archives and documents, and the absence of any legal basis for management and use of this immense intellectual resource, were the main inspiration for the *Law on National Archives Fund (June 1999)*.

The *Law on Museums (March 2000)* regulates relations between museums and the state, defines the duties, functions, privileges and powers of both sides, lays down detailed rules on museum activity, promotes the protection, conservation, development and enrichment of museum collections, and improves the social security position of museum workers.

The *Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas and Objects (March 24, 2000)* declares that specially protected natural areas and objects are the national wealth of the Republic of Azerbaijan and have exceptional ecological, scientific, cultural and aesthetic value. It refers to state nature reserves (including the biosphere), national, nature, ecological, zoological, geological and dendrological parks, natural monuments, botanical gardens, health resorts, et cetera. This Law determines the legal bases of the organisation and protection of specially protected natural areas in the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic, and protection of specially protected natural objects.

The Cabinet of Ministers also approved necessary rules and guidelines in this domain:

- The *Rules of Import, Export and Transit of Cultural Values Through the Territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2014)*,
- The *Rules of Temporary Export of Cultural Values in Connection with Exhibitions, Tours, Restoration Works, Presentations, Carrying out of International Cultural Actions (2014)*,
- The *Rules for the Protection, Restoration and Use of Cultural Heritage in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2015)* and
- The *Guarantees Given to Owners of Objects of National Cultural Heritage to Ensure the Protection of These Objects (2016)*, et cetera.

#### 4.2.3. LEGISLATION ON PERFORMANCE AND CELEBRATION

Article 21 of the *Law on Culture (2012)* recognises the organisation of art and artistic events, creative competitions, exhibitions, creative evenings, cultural and art presentations, festivals for promotion, encouragement and development of Azerbaijani culture as a part of organisational activities in the field of culture. Furthermore, article 25 provides that creative persons, winners of festivals and competitions who have made notable contributions to the development and promotion of culture shall be awarded honorary titles, scholarships, etcetera. In addition, article 45 of this law approves that public funding of cultural events and development projects in music, choreography, theatre and circus, et cetera, organised by non-governmental organisations, is expedient.

The *Law on Legal Protection of the Samples of Azerbaijani Folklore (2003)* regulates relationships arising from legal protection, use and maintenance of national folklore expressions, which are a component of cultural heritage as a particular type of intellectual property. The law refers to artworks, folk music, games and dances, folk handicraft and applied arts, and other products of folk work created and protected by the Azerbaijani people. Article six of this law (“Requirements for the use of folklore samples”) states that the forms of traditional, standard and commercial use of folklore expressions in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall be free. Legal and natural persons of other states shall be entitled to use folklore expression outside the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan for commercial purposes only with the authorisation by the relevant executive body and with payment of the fee for use. That fee shall be used for the promotion of intellectual creativity and the safeguarding and enriching of folklore expressions. Article 8 of the law provides that in cases of mass performance and notification of folklore samples, their source, as well as the geographical name of the place of origin of the folklore sample used and (or) the name of the people (society) to which they belong must be clearly indicated.

The *Law on Theatres and Theatre Activities*, initiated by the Ministry for Culture, entering into force in 2006, governs the relations arising in the preparation and mass demonstration of theatrical performances, and determines the legal basis of theatrical activities and state support of theatres. The law establishes an institution of theatre producers. It brings new impetus to the infrastructural reforms and development of professional Azerbaijani theatre, which has a rich history dating back a century and a half. Chapter IV of this law (“Exclusive right to live performance of theatrical productions”) defines the subjects of the exclusive right in connection with the live performance of a theatrical performance, rights of authors, producers and performers, duties of the producer in connection with the protection of the creative solution of the theatrical performance and protection of the right to theatrical performance.

#### 4.2.4. LEGISLATION ON VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

The *Law on Culture (2012)* defines artisanship (applied arts, traditional decorative arts, national fine arts) as a kind of intangible cultural heritage. Works of fine arts (including plaques, pictures, drawings, engravings, stamps, lithographs, patterns, sculptures, original art collections and montage) and works of applied art (carpets and carpet products, gold, platinum, silver, precious stones, copper and clay items, ceramics) are classified as cultural values.

The *Law on Legal Protection of Azerbaijani Folklore Samples (2003)* regulates the relations arising in connection with the provision of legal protection, use and protection of national folklore, which is an integral part of the

cultural heritage of Azerbaijan, as a particular type of intellectual property. It also applies to examples of applied arts and folk crafts, including graphic arts, paintings, series drawings, shadow paintings, forging and carving, sculpture, ceramics, clay, mosaics, metalwork, copper and bronze castings, silkworm breeding, carpet weaving, coppersmithing, jewellery, tanning, embroidery, basket-making, clothes, ornaments, patterns, musical instruments, carpentry, architectural works and other such examples.

The *Law On Protection and Development of Azerbaijani Carpet Art (2004)* regulates the relations arising with the preservation, study, promotion and development of Azerbaijani carpets woven in the historical territory of Azerbaijan and now hand-woven by folk artists, masters and painters. It is helpful to note that this law is an exciting and original example of concrete and practical legislation in visual arts and crafts.

First, it underlines that the Azerbaijani carpet is a material and spiritual wealth of the Azerbaijani people, the result of intellectual activity, reflecting the aesthetic outlook, artistic talent, originality and cultural identity of the people, and provides the main indicators of the Azerbaijani carpet as follows:

- Type of carpet (pileless and piled carpet);
- Carpet art schools (Guba, Shirvan, Derbent, Baku, Ganja, Gazakh, Borchali, Goycha, Karabakh, Nakhchivan, Tabriz, Ardabil, Zanzan, Khalkhal, Urmia, Garadagh, Marand, Maragha);
- Carpet names (names determined by the place of weaving, taste, composition, the pattern of the carpet);
- Sample (a technical project of the composition and pattern of the rug to be woven, prepared by the artist);
- Artistic features - composition of the carpet (pattern and colour arrangement), ornament (national pattern and its elements), colour (colour shades or colour solution).

Second, the register of the Azerbaijani carpet must be compiled and maintained by the relevant executive authority to create a database on the type, school, names, weaving techniques, dye composition, and artistic features of the carpets.

Third, the law provides for the certification of Azerbaijani carpets, i.e.:

- The word "Azerbaijan" and the name of the school of carpet weaving are woven with loops on the mass-produced and individually woven Azerbaijani carpets.
- To determine Azerbaijani carpets' conformity and artistic significance to the samples of folk art, the carpets are certified following the procedure established by the relevant executive authority.

#### 4.2.5. LEGISLATION ON BOOKS AND PRESS

The *Law on Libraries (1998)* aims to improve the organisation of libraries, make libraries more effective and valuable, and extend library and information services to people living in rural areas. It provides the legal basis that libraries require to do their job effectively, improve, and update their working methods. The Act formulates the principles of state policy on libraries, provides an everyday basis for the library system, regulates the founding and running of libraries, and covers funding, the public's rights regarding the use of libraries, and the principles of international cooperation in this area.

The *Law on Publishing (2000)* is designed to remedy shortcomings in the publishing and printing industry and supply the lack of comprehensive legislation in this sector. The Act lays down the main principles of state policy,

specifies the state's duties, defines optimum approaches to the organisation and running of publishing and printing activities, and formulates principles to govern relations between operatives in this area.

Publishers, printing companies, distributors are entirely free in preparing thematic plans and programmes, selecting topics and authors, determining the circulation, price and trade supplements (discounts) of publications (except for publications financed based on state programmes), forms of communication with each other and other legal entities and individuals.

The *Law on Mass Media (1999)* regulates the general rules of search, acquisition, preparation, transmission, production and dissemination of mass information. It determines the basis of organisational, legal and economic activities of the press, news agencies, and television and radio organisations.

Article 29 ("Mandatory copies") of the *Law on Mass Media*, Article 15 of the *Law on Libraries* ("Provision of libraries with free compulsory copies") and article 22 of the *Law on Publishing* ("Mandatory copies") regulate legal deposit (compulsory library copies) matters. Obligatory copies of printed materials issued by state and non-state publishing houses, polygraphic enterprises engaged in publishing activities and other legal entities must be sent to the library designated by the Ministry for Culture (3 free obligatory copies) and to the libraries determined by the Milli Majlis (2 free mandatory copies). In addition, all newspapers and magazines published in the Republic of Azerbaijan must send two free copies of their newspapers and magazines to the libraries specified above. Electronic versions of the obligatory copies shall also be submitted to libraries if stipulated in the contract concluded between the customer and the publishing house (publisher). The use of objects included in the Library Fund is carried out following the *Law on Copyright and Related Rights* requirements.

There is no special translation legislation. However, the Azerbaijan State Translation Centre (AzSTC) under the Cabinet of Ministers was founded in 2012 to oversee the accuracy of the language and translation in the country; and promote Azerbaijani literature worldwide at the international level and world literature in the country through translations into Azerbaijani.

#### 4.2.6. LEGISLATION ON AUDIOVISUAL AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA

The *Law on Cinematography (1998)* provides a legal basis for cinematography as a particular form of art, regulates state funding, and covers measures to promote Azerbaijani films. Furthermore, the *Law On accession to the European Convention on Joint Film Production (1999)* provides vast opportunities for cooperation within Europe.

There are two primary laws on TV and radio: the *Law on Television and Radio Broadcasting (2002)* and the *Law on Public Television and Radio Broadcasting (2004)*.

The *Law on Television and Radio Broadcasting (2002)* determines legal, economic, and organisational bases for these spheres and inputs restrictions on television and radio broadcasting monopolies. It defines that state, municipal, private, and public broadcasters form the basis of the national television and radio system.

The law provides that:

- A private broadcaster may be established by citizens permanently residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and (or) legal entities whose authorised capital belongs to citizens permanently residing in

the Republic of Azerbaijan.

- Persons previously convicted of severe crimes and crimes against public morality, political parties and religious institutions, and so on may not be the founders of private television and radio broadcasting services.

Recent amendments urge:

- not to promote tobacco products and the process of tobacco use, as well as not to broadcast works, performances, programmes in which tobacco products and the process of tobacco use are demonstrated;
- not to disseminate information products in the country without ensuring the classification of information products by age following the *Law on Protection of Children from Harmful Information* and marking information products per the relevant age category.

The *Law on Public Television and Radio Broadcasting (2004)* outlines specific cultural obligations that public broadcasters must follow:

- recording of performances, feature, documentary and cartoon films, serials, works of art, important historical and cultural events on the works of Azerbaijani and world authors and keeping them in the golden fund of the public broadcaster for future generations;
- programmes should reflect national and spiritual values, national customs and traditions, all the diversity of culture and art.

The law states that:

- Public broadcasting programmes, as a rule, are broadcast in the state language;
- Programmes prepared in a foreign language must be accompanied by subtitles in the Azerbaijani language, except programmes taught and retransmitted in this language;
- Feature films, documentaries, speeches, et cetera must be translated into Azerbaijani;
- Public broadcasting programmes must include programmes in the languages of national minorities living on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to the article about "Requirements for public broadcasting programmes" of this law, "the programmes should prioritise the broadcasting of film, TV, video and radio products produced in Azerbaijan."

The *Law On Mass Media (1999)* recognises the Internet as a type of media. In addition, the Internet is included on the list of telecommunications services regulated by the *Law on Telecommunications (2005)*.

#### 4.2.7. LEGISLATION ON DESIGN AND CREATIVE SERVICES

The responsibilities of the state in the field of culture cover architecture, design, advertising, and other areas of activity, according to the *Law on Culture (2012)*. Moreover, design works and architectural projects, parks and natural landscape objects, architectural monuments are classified as cultural property. Architectural, archaeological, cultural and historical, religious and secular monuments important for the national cultural heritage, and archaeological, natural areas and architectural complexes of historical and artistic interest and works of art are considered immovable cultural heritage. Copying of cultural values and their use for advertising purposes must comply with the *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan On Copyright and Related Rights* requirements.

Negative building trends in the early 1990s had severe effects on the architectural and aesthetic quality of cities, towns, and settlements. It was the background to the *Law on Architectural Activity (1998)*. The law set out to stop the downward slide caused by a lack of proper control, restore architectural harmony, and preserve the architectural heritage that, over the centuries, has given Azerbaijani cities their unique character.

The *Urban Planning and Construction Code (2012)* pays significant attention to landscape issues and provides that the protection of historical landscapes and cultural heritage sites, specially protected natural areas or facilities, must be ensured as part of urban planning and construction activities.

The *Law on Advertising (2015)* determines the legal basis of relations, control and regulation in order, production (preparation) and advertising distribution, and self-regulation in this field.

## 5. Arts and cultural education

### 5.1. Policy and institutional overview

The Ministry for Culture and the Ministry of Education are the central government bodies responsible for arts and cultural education and training in the Republic of Azerbaijan. That is to say, cultural education and training institutions are divided between the Ministry for Culture and the Ministry of Education. Thus, the Ministry for Culture implements the state cultural policy for the out-of-school arts and cultural education sphere and supervises children's music, art and painting schools, which offer primary and secondary out-of-school education to children, adolescents, and young people. The total number of children's musical, art and painting schools in the system of the Ministry for Culture is 238. In addition, the Baku Choreography Academy, a higher education institution established on 30 April 2014, based on the Baku Choreographic School, is also in the system of the Ministry for Culture and implements general, secondary and higher education programmes in the field of choreography.

The Ministry of Education oversees artistic education in secondary schools (4433, total) by implementing music and fine arts curricula for I-IX grades. Schools providing education in culture and the arts at the special secondary level are also mainly in the system of the Ministry of Education. Education is free and compulsory for children between the ages of six and fifteen – they are entitled to 9 years of mandatory general education. Basic schooling is divided into three: primary education, general secondary and complete secondary education.

The Ministry of Education supervises most of the higher arts and cultural education institutions, such as:

- The Baku Academy of Music, named after Uzeyir Hajibeyli,
- The State University of Culture and the Arts,
- The Azerbaijan State Academy of Fine Arts,
- The Azerbaijan National Conservatory.

Higher education institutions with partial teaching of individual specialisations in the field of culture, such as the Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University and the Baku State University, are also in the curation of the Ministry of Education.

Higher education provides the three cycled training based on complete secondary education or secondary vocational education: baccalaureate, the magistrate, and doctorate. Admission to bachelor's and master's degrees programs in higher educational institutions in the field of culture is two-stage. At the first stage, applicants take centralised exams conducted by [the State Examination Centre of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#). At the second stage, the aptitude exam is organised with the participation of the educational institution itself.

### 5.2. Arts in schools

To describe artistic education in schools, we must consider general education schools in which specific hours a week are devoted to cultural education and specialised schools in which some areas of the arts are the priority. The field is regulated by the *Law on General Education (№ 1532-VQ of March 29, 2019)*, the *State Standards of General Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 103 of June 3, 2010)* and the *Model Charter of a Secondary School*

(№ 5 of January 13, 2011). Furthermore, one of the goals of the *State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan* (№ 995 of January 19, 2015) is to develop competency-based general education standards and curricula.

Currently, curricula for relevant subjects are being developed. At present, two curricula prepared by the Institute of Educational Issues, under the Ministry of Education, are devoted to arts education: the *Educational Programme (Curriculum) on Music for I-IX Grades of Secondary Schools* in general education and the *Curriculum on Fine Arts for I-IX Grades of Secondary Schools of the Republic of Azerbaijan*. These educational programmes provide the teaching of these disciplines for pupils of grades 1-9 of secondary schools in weekly lessons of a standard duration of 45 minutes. The primary purpose of music and fine arts in secondary schools is to ensure that students develop an understanding of arts and culture based on national and human values.

At present, there are 16 specialised schools providing education in culture and the arts at the special secondary level (11 music schools, three culture special secondary schools, a college of art and a dance school) in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Special secondary schools specialising in music (there are eight, including the Music College of Azerbaijan National Conservatoire) train performers in classical and folk instruments and teachers for children's music schools. The College of the Azerbaijan State Academy of Fine Arts teaches painting, sculpture, carpet making, ceramics, model making, theatre design and the decorative and applied arts. Technical schools specialising in culture provide training in the following fields: culture and arts management, museum management, monument conservation, decorative and applied arts, and librarianship. They also have music departments that train music teachers for pre-school institutions and music schools. The second-level course runs for three years, while the first-level course runs for four. Some specialised schools offer both as a continuum; for example, the Secondary Special Music School, named after Byulbyul of the Baku Academy of Music. Training in these institutions lasts 11-12 years. Students who excel are provided with free tuition in the form of receive scholarships.

### 5.3. Higher arts and cultural education

Since the introduction of three-levels of education in Azerbaijani universities, courses last between 4-6 years, depending on the level (bachelors, masters and PhD), per the Bologna process. Some of the courses are fee-paying, others not. Students who achieve good results qualify for scholarships.

The Baku Academy of Music, named after Uzeyir Hajibeyli, is accepting students for bachelor's degrees in instrumental performance (piano, organ, harpsichord, orchestral instruments, solo singing (academic vocals), Conducting (choir conducting, opera-symphonic conducting, and conducting wind orchestras), Composing, as well as Musicology. Master's degrees are available in two areas: 1) theoretical master's degree (Musicology) and 2) speciality master's degree (Instrumental performance, solo singing, conducting and composing). In addition, doctoral education in the assistant intern, postgraduate, and dissertation forms are also available at the Academy.

The State University of Culture and the Arts runs courses for bachelor's and master's degrees in relevant specialities in culturology, music, cinema and television, theatre, and painting. Additionally, special Registration, Evaluation and Monitoring divisions operate under the Department of Teaching Organisation and Quality

Assurance of the University.

The Azerbaijan State Academy of Fine Arts offers courses on painting, graphics, sculpture, architecture, decorative and applied arts, theatre design, the history and theory of the performing arts, interior design, carpet design, advertising and model making. The Academy has a 4-year bachelor's degree, a 2-year master's degree, and postgraduate research programmes.

The Azerbaijan National Conservatory offers higher education in National vocal, Mugham (khanende-singer), Instrumental mugham, Folk musical instruments, and General piano; the faculty of History offers courses in the History and theory of music, History and theory of national music, Orchestration and conducting of folk musical instruments, as well as, Social sciences.

The Faculty of Architecture of the Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University trains bachelors and masters in Architecture, Design and Urban Planning for various fields of the construction and design sector of the country. In addition, doctorates are offered for such research directions as architectural theory and history, restoration and reconstruction of monuments, architecture of buildings and structures, urban planning, settlement planning and landscape architecture.

The Baku Choreography Academy is the country's only training school for ballet and folk dancers. The Academy provides general education, secondary specialisation and higher education programmes in the Art of choreography, Ballet pedagogy, Ballet artist, Ballet history and other specialisations. Bachelor's and master's degrees are offered in specialities of Choreography (classical dance, choreography, national dance, modern dance, ballet director), Dance teaching, Art history, Management (producer), Music teaching, Folk instruments, Theatre studies, Design, and Directing. In addition, research in choreography, theatre art, music art, art theory, analysis and criticism are conducted at the doctoral/dissertation level.

The Faculty of Librarianship and Information of the Baku State University is the only higher education centre that offers graduate courses for librarians and bibliographers. Bachelor specialists of higher education are trained in the direction of Librarian-bibliographer and Publishing and editing. Training of specialists to Master's level is carried out in four specialisations, such as Library science, Bibliography science, Formation and use of the library fund, Publishing and editing.

## 5.4. Out-of-school arts and cultural education

Children's music, art and painting schools are state institutions that form the artistic and aesthetic taste of children, adolescents, and youth and provide culture and art education. Schools offer primary and secondary education in music, painting, and choreography, forming their aesthetic taste based on the best examples of Azerbaijani folk, classical and world culture, and art. They create conditions for discovering the abilities of children, adolescents and youth and the development of their talents. The period of study at the schools is 4, 5, 7 and 11 years. Thus, the most talented and capable students are admitted to secondary and higher education institutions in relevant specialities to continue their education.

Music is taught in children's music schools, painting in painting schools, music, painting, and choreography in art schools. The following departments operate in schools accordingly:

- music: piano (piano-jazz, synthesizer), string instruments, wind and percussion instruments, folk instruments, singing, vocals, pop singing, choir, as well as theory, composition and jazz-improvisation as a speciality class in 11 years of education, choir conducting, et cetera;
- painting: painting department;
- choreography: choreography department.

The schools have a theory department for solfeggio and music literature. This department may include music literacy and music listening, choir, harmony and other related subjects.

Music and art schools are state-funded. However, in addition to the state plan, the school can provide paid education in various specialities.

The *Development Programme for Improving the Activities of Children's Music, Art and Painting Schools in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2009-2013*, approved by the *Cabinet of Ministers Decision (August 27, 2008)*, aims to improve organisational and infrastructural provisions in this field. As a result, schools are provided with musical instruments, hard and soft equipment, books, CDs with performances by well-known composers and musicians, and other necessary equipment for each new school year.

The Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan launched the Educational portal of children's music and art schools in 2017. The portal contains information about the country and world composers, notes of their works, the activities of the education system in the field of music in our country, teaching in music and art schools, and the rules of admission to schools. In addition, video materials about master classes, methodical aids, and information about musical instruments are also available on the portal.

The new *Children's Schools of Music, Arts and Painting Model Regulations* was approved by the *Decision of the Board of the Ministry for Culture on November 8, 2018*.

Table 4: Children's musical, art and painting schools in the system of Ministry for Culture at the beginning of the 2019/ 2020 school year

	2019/ 2020
Number of children's music, art and painting schools	238
<i>including by types of schools:</i>	
Children's music schools	184
<i>of which number of pupils, person</i>	44 907
Total number of children's musical schools in rural places	68
<i>of which number of pupils, person</i>	10 392
Art and painting schools	54
<i>of which number of pupils, person</i>	17 386
Number of pupils in children's music, art and painting schools	62 293
<i>including by divisions:</i>	
Piano	29 238
National music instruments (tar, kemancha, lute, voice-mugham, canon, accordion, balaban)	22 738
Wind- and brass-instruments (flute, clarinet, trumpet, tambourine, drum etc.)	1 146

String instruments (violin, violoncello)	3 037
Mugham	2 884
Vocal	335
Accordion	12
Guitar	70
Fine arts	1 544
Choreography	1 136
Theatre	153
Number of teachers in children's music, art and painting schools	16 051
<i>of which in children's music schools</i>	<i>11 752</i>
<i>of which art and painting schools</i>	<i>4 299</i>

Source: The Ministry for Culture, 2021; The State Statistical Committee, 2021.

## 5.5. Vocational and professional training

Article 24 ("Additional education") of the *Law on Education (2009)* states that additional education is an integral part of continuing education and vocational training. It provides access to continuing education for every citizen who has a state certificate of completing higher, secondary, or vocational education stages. The additional education system aims at developing human potential and raising and improving academic and vocational training. In addition, it supports adaptation to constantly changing and updated working conditions, ensuring the active and effective participation of older citizens in the country's social, economic, political, and cultural life.

Additional education is carried out in professional development and retraining institutions, relevant structures established in educational institutions, internships, vocational training courses, and other institutions licensed to operate in this field. *"The Model Regulations of training and retraining institutions"* (1997) and *"Rules for the content, organisation of additional education and the issuance of relevant documents to persons trained in any area of additional education"* (2010) were approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

In this regard, several educational institutions provide all or some kinds of additional education, vocational and professional training such as professional development, retraining, internships and staff development, repeated higher, secondary specialisation and higher technical vocational education, upgrading and adult education. For instance, The Baku Academy of Music, The Baku Choreography Academy, The State University of Culture and the Arts offers vocational education and training on the arts with introductory and main educational courses in relevant specialities.

According to the *Law on Culture (2012)*, training qualified personnel in culture and raising their professional level are among the main directions of state policy. Generally, the Scientific-Methodical and Professional Development Centre for Culture under the Ministry for Culture provides vocational education and training on culture, cultural policy and arts. This Centre was established based on the merger of the Scientific-Methodological Centre for Cultural Studies and the Republican Centre for Training and Retraining of Employees of Cultural Institutions with the *Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on November 16, 2018*. The Centre, which has 94 staff members, is a scientific institution that serves the implementation of state cultural policy, protection, development, promotion of cultural heritage, support for scientific development, the study of international experience, and the development of culture in general.

The Centre also organises professional development courses for employees of cultural institutions within the system of the Ministry for Culture. These courses improve the professional skills of directors of cultural centres, theatre and concert hall managers and staff, librarians, and staff of museums, children's music and art schools, cultural associations and centres, art galleries, etc. Professional development courses are organised based on new training modules to increase human resources in culture. The curricula are based on knowledge and skills of specialities, creativity, innovation of cultural workers, laws and concepts in culture, state programmes, new approaches to cultural institutions, international experience and teaching new practical principles. In carrying out its activities, the Centre closely cooperates with all cultural institutions of the Republic, provides scientific-methodical and practical assistance to city (district) cultural institutions, and regularly organises training, seminars and master classes.

## 6. Cultural participation and consumption

### 6.1. Policies and programmes

The *Constitution (1995)* guaranteed the right to participate in cultural life and use cultural institutions and values ensured by the *Law on Culture (2012)*. The *Law on Culture* provides preferential use of cultural resources to low-income earners, people with disabilities, including children under 18 with disabilities, and war veterans according to the procedure established by the relevant executive authority (Article 14. "The right to use cultural institutions and cultural resources"). In this regard, the *Procedure for Preferential Use of Cultural Resources by the Low-income Population, People with Disabilities, Including Children Under 18 with Disabilities, War Veterans* were approved by the *Cabinet of Ministers Decision No. 287 of August 20, 2015*.

At present, preferential use of cultural resources for non-commercial purposes is carried out in state and municipal property and the territories of state reserves under the Ministry for Culture, the State Tourism Agency, Icheri Sheher State Historical-Architectural and Gala State Historical-Ethnographic Reserves. Access is provided for low-income families, people with disabilities, and children with disabilities under 18, and war veterans free of charge. Preferential use by these populations of cultural values protected or displayed in privately owned cultural institutions is foreseen by mutual agreement. The list of people covered by the privileged use and the relevant documents are placed on display at state- and municipal-owned cultural institution that protect or displays cultural property.

At the same time, the use of cultural resources in the state and municipal-owned cultural institutions must be carried out in accordance with their historical and artistic purpose. Therefore, the use of cultural property incompatible with its historical and artistic purpose, copying cultural property and their use for tourism, excursion, and advertising purposes without the owner or user's consent is not allowed.

Since 2007, The Ministry for Culture has also initiated special programmes to broaden and promote participation in cultural life for different social strata. Targeted projects are implemented to simplify the population's access to cultural institutions and cultural spaces, the enjoyment of cultural resources by children and youth, and by informing the people about the cultural sphere. Free and favourable access to museums, reserves and monuments are allowed for all visitors on state official holidays, international museum and tourism days.

For instance, an "open day" is announcing on April 18th on the Day of Preservation of Historical Monuments, May 18th on the International Museum Day, September 27th on World Tourism Day, September 18th on Music Day, February 2nd on Youth Day and other historical days in museums across the country. At the same time, museums themselves also hold "open doors" initiatives. In addition, cultural institutions sometimes celebrate "open days" for sponsored charity projects. There are "open days" for children on certain days, and many schools are invited to these projects. These measures are intended to raise the social consciousness and cohesion of citizens by activating participation in the cultural life of society.

## 6.2. Trends and figures in cultural participation

The primary developmental trends over the last ten years, namely 2010, 2015 and 2019 (pre-pandemic year), show an approximately stable percentage of people who attended such cultural activities as theatres and libraries.

At the same time, there was a sharp increase in visits to cinemas in the indicated years. It is associated with an increase in cinema halls in all kinds of malls and other shopping centres.

There was a steady growth in the number of museum and concert visits, associated with the increased quality of services provided and the introduction of modern technologies.

However, the number of participants in cultural centres (clubs, houses of culture, etc.) and pupils in children's music, art and painting schools is decreasing. In the case of club institutions this can be explained by a significant decrease in their number in recent years, while in the case of pupils in children's music, art and painting schools, the decrease can be explained by an increase in the share of paid education.

*Table 5: People who participated in or attended a certain cultural activity during the last 12 months in the Republic of Azerbaijan (in % of the population, over 3 available years)*

Field / Domain / Sub-domain	2010	2015	2019
Theatre	6%	7%	6.4%
Concerts	3.1%	4.2%	4.9%
Libraries	27.4%	27.2%	25.9%
Museums	20%	26.9%	33.2%
Cultural centres	0.9%	0.7%	0.4%
Pupils in child music, art and painting schools	0.8%	0.7%	0.6%
Cinema	0.9%	6.2%	16.3%

Source(s): State Statistical Committee, 2021

## 6.3. Trends and figures in household expenditure

*Table 6: Household cultural expenditure by expenditure purpose, 2010 and 2020*

Items (Field/Domain)	Average per capita expenditure (EUR)	
	2010	2020
Recreation and cultural services	2.35	5.25
Education	1.1	2.45
Communication services	1.95	4.95
TOTAL		

Source(s): State Statistical Committee, 2021

## 6.4. Culture and civil society

The Ministry for Culture supports the amateur arts and people's creativity via a network of cultural houses, clubs, and relevant centres financed by the state or large enterprises. According to statistics for 2020, the total number of clubs funded by the state is 2 231, including 335 in urban places and 1 896 in rural locations. To a small extent, clubs belong to the State Oil Company (3), the Confederation of Trade Unions (7) and other organisations (28). The total number of seats in the clubs' auditoria and lecture halls is 307 370, or 31 per 1 000 population.

Cultural clubs and houses of culture provide a good background and conditions for club circles, amateur art groups and unions, clubs of interests and amateur associations, amateur art circles and collectives, technical creativity courses and classes, children's circles and collectives.

The activities of club-type cultural institutions have been restricted due to the introduction of a special quarantine regime in the country, starting from March 2020. Nevertheless, according to activity statistics at the end of the pre-pandemic year 2019, clubs under the system of the Ministry for Culture offered 4 398 different types of cultural leisure (hobby and amateur groups, creative circles and collectives, etc.) in which 45 000 active participants were involved. From the total number of these types of activity:

- 1 075 were clubs of interest and amateur unions (involving 10.3 thousand people),
- 2 488 were clubs of amateurs art activities (26.6 thousand people),
- 835 were technical creation courses and classes (8.1 thousand people),
- 1 894 were child hobby groups and collectives (29.5 thousand people).

The number of events organised in creative and intangible cultural heritage club-type cultural institutions was 40 097 at the end of the pre-pandemic year 2019, including 22 147 concerts/performances, 5 216 spectacles/games, 1 760 festivals/competitions, 3 271 fairs/exhibitions, 1273 excursions/tours and 6 430 conferences/seminars. The total number of participants at these events was 3 811.7 thousand.

There has been a decrease in the number of cultural clubs over the last decade. This decrease was due to insufficient funding and the internal changes occurring within society, with a rethinking of the social role of such institutions. The primary debate regarding this system of houses and cultural centres revolves around their material and technical base and the state of buildings and infrastructure, which are often unsatisfactory and justifiably criticised by the population. The technical condition of club buildings under the system of the Ministry for Culture (at the end of 2020) is as follows: 811 club buildings, or 36.9% of the total number, need capital repairs; 80 of club buildings, or 3.6%, are in an emergency situation. The educational attainment of cultural and educational employees in clubs is also not satisfactory. Out of the 5 794 cultural and educational employees of clubs under the system of the Ministry for Culture in 2020, only 8.0% have attained higher education in culture and the arts, 8.1% have higher education outside of culture and the arts, and 11.0% have specialised secondary education in culture and the arts.

In the decade, the Ministry for Culture had initiated the reorganisation of the cultural houses' and community cultural clubs' system, aiming to broaden social participation in cultural life in the current economic circumstances. However, there are emerging ideas to reconfigure this overall system, set aside non-working functions and develop new forms, serving as infrastructural units of intangible cultural heritage. City (town)

centres of culture and their local-lore, folklore and artisanship branches serve this idea via attracting relevant experts, performers, collectives, research, NGOs and private structures.

The Ministry for Culture also has one circus, with 81 performances, which has audiences of 92 thousand (9 per 1 000 population) in 2019. The number of culture and recreation parks on the balance sheet of local executive authorities totalled 349 at the end of 2019. The number of cultural-recreational and health-sport activities in these parks numbered 1 336, of which 495 were for children.

## 7. Financing and support

### 7.1. Public funding

#### 7.1.1. INDICATORS

Expenditures allocated by the state in the field of culture shall be determined within the state budget of the Azerbaijan Republic approved under paragraph 5 of part I of Article 95 and paragraph 32 of Article 109 of the *Constitution*.

Thus, Article 7 of the *Law on the State Budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2021* allocates financial resources from the state budget in this area for culture, art, information, physical education, youth policy and other similar activities (including television, radio and publishing).

Of the state budget for 2021, AZN 379 326 086 is allocated for the use of the Ministry for Culture. The general dynamics of the funds allocated to the Ministry for Culture from the budget for 2020 (AZN 368 3 million) and 2021 (379 million) has increased. However, this dynamic was mainly due to a salary increase for staff.

The total public expenditure in 2021 is AZN 28 543 000. Public culture expenditure as a percentage of the total public expenditure in 2021 is 1.33%

GDP for 2021 is calculated as AZN 75 800 000. Public culture expenditure as a percentage of the GDP, in 2021 is 0.50%

Public culture expenditure at all levels of government per capita in 2021 is 37.5 AZN or EUR 18.8.

#### 7.1.2. EXPENDITURE ON GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Table 7: *Public cultural expenditure by the level of government, in AZN and EUR, 2021*

Level of government	Total expenditure in AZN	Total expenditure in EUR*	% share of total
Central	126 504 173	63 252 086.5	33.3%
Regional	252 821 913	126 410 956.5	66.7%
TOTAL	379 326 086	189 663 043	100%

Source: The Ministry for Culture, 2021

Table 8: *Public cultural expenditure by the level of government, in AZN, 2015 and 2021*

Level of government	Total expenditure in 2015 in AZN	Total expenditure in 2021 in AZN	Trend in %
Central	127 473 009	126 504 173	-0.8%
Regional	138 559 143	252 821 913	+82.4%
TOTAL	266 032 152	379 326 086	+42.3%

Source: The Ministry for Culture, 2015 and 2021

It should be noted that, as a result of the decentralisation of budgetary expenditure on culture, most of the public funds are now distributed locally. Moreover, the general trend is that the percentage changes over the years are in favour of the regions. For example, in 2015, this ratio was 52.1% versus 47.9% in favour of the local budget. However, in 2021, this ratio was already 66.7% against 33.3% in favour of the regional budget. This trend occurred because expenditures at the central level remained practically at the same level and even decreased by 0.8% over the same period. In contrast, spending at the regional level increased sharply by 82.4% in 2021 compared to the local budget in 2015.

Nevertheless, the overall dynamics of the budget for culture is positive and has increased by 42.3% over the 6 year period. Spending on culture in 2015 was AZN 266 032 152, and increased by more than AZN 120 million in 2021 to AZN 379 326 086.

Centralised expenditure on culture is primarily focused on the capital, Baku. However, with culture permanently short of funding, preference also goes to organisations of national importance, most of which operate from Baku.

### 7.1.3. EXPENDITURE PER SECTOR

Table 31: Overall state cultural expenditure: by main sectors, in AZN, 2015

Field / Domain / Sub-domain	Direct expenditure	Transfers (to local government)	Total
Museums and reserves	6 907 412	-	6 907 412
Central libraries (excluding National Library)	1 188 093	-	1 188 093
National Library	5 215 440		5 215 440
Theatre-concert enterprises, Cinema, Film Foundation	27 949 830	-	27 949 830
Awards of the President to cultural personalities	782 496		782 496
Centralised cultural events and other enterprises expenditures	23 852 920	-	23 852 920
Transfers to local cultural enterprises	-	70 302 845*	70 302 845
UNESCO activities	1 400 000	-	1 400 000
Other international activities	6 000 000	-	6 000 000
Cultural tourism	7 546 285	-	7 546 285
Centre of national culinary	180 576	-	180 576
International Mugham Centre	1 003 200	-	1 003 200
Education	5 992 718	68 256 298*	74 249 016
Administration	2 783 739	-	2 783 739
Capital investment	38 070 300	-	38 070 300
TOTAL (excluding other expenditures)	127 473 009	138 559 143	266 032 152

Table 9: Direct state cultural expenditure and transfers (central level)\*: by sector, 2021, in 1000 of national currency (AZN)

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Field / Domain / Sub-domain	Total in 1000 AZN	Total in %	of which: <u>Direct expenditure**</u> (of government or its agencies)	of which: <u>Transfers**</u> to other levels of government
I. Cultural Heritage				
<i>Historical Monuments</i>	3 380.3	0.9%	3 380.3	-
<i>Museums and reserves</i>	29 388.0	7.7%	12 386.9	17 001.1
<i>Libraries</i>	53 159.0	14.0%	10 323.8	42 835.2
<i>Intangible Heritage / Folk Culture</i>	38 962.2	10.3%	-	38 962.2
II. Visual Arts	-	-		
III. Performing Arts				
<i>Theatre and concert facilities</i>	40 050.7	10.6%	38 288.1	1 762.6
V. Audio-visual and Multimedia				
<i>Cinema</i>	6 528.0	1.7%	6 528.0	-
<i>Broadcasting of cultural programmes</i>	2 006.4	0.5%	2 006.4	-
VI. Interdisciplinary				
<i>Assistance to public associations</i>	5 652.0	1.5%	5 652.0	-
<i>Awarding scholarships and awards to artists</i>	1 492.8	0.4%	1 492.8	
<i>Cultural Relations Abroad</i>	5 568.0	1.5%	5 568.0	-
<i>Cultural centres in foreign countries</i>	6 358.1	1.7%	6 358.1	-
<i>Administration****</i>	7 840.8	2.1%	4 104.7	3 736.1
<i>Cultural Education****</i>	150 320.3	39.6%	4 606.6	145 713.6
VII. Not covered by domain I-VI				
<i>Centralised costs</i>	16 196.6	4.3%	16 196.6	-
<i>Investment costs</i>	5 277.0	1.4%	5 277.0	-
<i>Other expenses</i>	7 146.0	1.9%	4 335.0	2 811.0
TOTAL	379 326.1	100%	126 504.2	252 821.9

Source(s): The Ministry for Culture, 2021.

## 7.2. Support programmes

### 7.2.1. STRATEGIES, PROGRAMMES AND OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT

Centralised and local state budgets support cultural creativity and artists in Azerbaijan, mainly by providing relevant conditions for maintaining cultural institutions, salaries, honoraria, and retirement and health contributions. The *Law on Targeted State Social Assistance (№ 1039-IIQ of October 21, 2005)*, the *Law on Social Benefits (№ 55-IIIQ of February 7, 2006)* and other such regulatory documents are some examples of building economic and social frameworks to support cultural and creative workers indirectly.

There are also other ways the state supports creativity by involving artists in implementing state development programmes and projects and supporting private projects and initiatives. For example, holding festivals and competitions in different spheres of culture for professionals (theatre, music, visual arts, etc.), sending delegations to international events, providing free primary, secondary and higher specialised education etc.,

may be taken into account.

Targeted support for the particular culture and art forms is an approved approach to cultural financing; examples are the orders of the President and decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers that provide direct support to particular artists or groups. Thus, for example, the *Presidential Order on Measures to Improve the Activities of the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra named after Uzeyir Hajibayli (№ 701 of December 2, 1997)* intended to increase the monthly salaries of employees from January 1, 1998, by four times.

The average monthly salaries of the ballet troupe of the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre were increased from January 1, 2000, on average by five times, by the *Order On Improving the Social Security of the Ballet Troupe of the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre (№ 281 of December 6, 1999)*.

The *Order On improving the Social Security of the Azerbaijan State Choir Capella (№ 432 of June 2, 2000)* increased the monthly salaries of the Azerbaijan State Choir Chapel employees by four times on average from July 1, 2000.

The *Order On Increasing the Salaries of Employees of Some Music Groups Financed from the State Budget (№ 565 of 29 December 2004)* provided increases from January 1, 2005, by on average twice the average monthly wages of orchestra employees of:

- The Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra named after Uzeyir Hajibayli,
- The Azerbaijan State Choir Capella,
- The Ballet Troupe of Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre,
- The Azerbaijan State Dance Ensemble,
- The Azerbaijan State Chamber Orchestra named after Gara Garayev,
- The Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, and
- The Azerbaijan State Musical Comedy Theatre.

The recent *Order on strengthening the social protection of the artistic staff of the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra named after Uzeyir Hajibayli (№ 3340 of November 3, 2017)* determined the supplement of 500 AZN to the monthly salaries of the employees of the artistic staff of the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra named after Uzeyir Hajibayli from November 1, 2017.

## 7.2.2. ARTIST'S FUNDS

The Special Scholarship Foundation was established according to the *Presidential Decree On Special Scholarship Fund to Support the Creative Activities of Writers, Artists and Composers of the Older and Younger Generations (№ 612 of August 6, 2007)*. The Special Scholarship Foundation funds are directed to finance special scholarships for writers, artists and composers of the older and younger generations to increase the state care for artists of the Republic of Azerbaijan and to create more favourable conditions for the development of art in the country. The Special Scholarship Foundation was formed at the expense of the state budget and envisaged in the centralised expenditures of the Ministry for Culture.

The Union of Azerbaijan Writers, the Union of Azerbaijan Composers, and the Union of Azerbaijan Artists select special scholarship holders from the older and younger generation of writers, artists, and composers. The Union of Azerbaijan Writers, the Union of Azerbaijan Composers and the Union of Azerbaijan Artists submit the list of chosen fellows approved by their general meetings to the Ministry for Culture by March 1 of each year. The List

for the following years is formed based on the results of the activities of these selected artists.

The approved *"Rules for the use of a special scholarship fund to ensure the creative activities of writers, artists and composers of the older and younger generation"* determines the number, amount and duration of special scholarships as follows:

- AZN 300 (three hundred) per month for the older generation for one year (fifty for writers, fifty for artists and thirty special scholarships for composers);
- AZN 200 (two hundred) per month for the younger generation for one year (twenty for writers, twenty for artists and ten special scholarships for composers).

In this case, the choice of the unions of writers, artists and composers are not accidental because the government established this format of scholarship to ensure the implementation of the following orders:

- *On Measures to Improve the Creative Conditions of the Members of the Writers' Union of Azerbaijan (No. 2023 of March 12, 2007),*
- *On Measures to Improve the Creative Conditions of the Members of the Union of Artists of Azerbaijan (No. 2024 of March 12, 2007) and*
- *On Measures to Improve the Creative Conditions of Members of the Union of Composers of Azerbaijan (No. 2025 of March 12, 2007).*

### 7.2.3. GRANTS, AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS

The legislative basis of the state grant support system, including in the field of culture, represents the *Law on Grants (№ 483-IQ of April 17, 1998)*, which regulates economic and legal relations connected to the issue, receipt and use of grants. The law defines grants as assistance rendered to develop and implement humanitarian, social and ecological projects in education, health, culture, legal advice, information, publishing, sport, scientific research and design. Other programmes deemed essential for the state and public also may receive grants.

The grants are given only for a specific purpose (s). Religious organisations, non-governmental organisations, and branches and representative offices of foreign non-governmental organisations operating in the Republic of Azerbaijan may not receive assistance of financial resources and (or) another material forms without a grant agreement (decision). The exceptions are donations and assistance from public authorities provided in the laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan *On Freedom of Religion* and *On Non-Governmental Organisations (Public Associations and Foundations)*.

Along with the legislative basis, several organisational documents are devoted to awards, scholarships for artists and cultural workers in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The *Presidential Decree "On honorary titles of the Republic of Azerbaijan" (№ 706 of May 22, 1998)* established the honorary titles of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the fields of culture, literature, science, education, health, physical education and sports, journalism, engineering, as well as the civil service, law, agriculture and civil aviation. The sphere of culture and literature includes such honorary titles as "People's Writer", "People's Poet", "People's Actor", "People's Artist", "Honoured Art Worker", "Honoured Actor", "Honoured Artist", "Honoured Cultural Worker" and "Honoured Architect". According to the "Regulations on Honorary Titles of the Republic of Azerbaijan" (№ 130 of May 14, 1999), honorary titles are awarded for special services in culture, literature, high professionalism, and active participation in public life. Individuals awarded the honorary title of the Republic of Azerbaijan enjoy the privileges established by the legislation.

Following the *Presidential Decree On the establishment of a personal pension awarded by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (№ 715 of June 11, 2002)* to evaluate the services of Azerbaijani literary and artistic personalities and improve their social status, they are awarded individual scholarships of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Five hundred personal pensions of AZN 1450 (one thousand four hundred and fifty) each are granted from the state budget.

The "Golden Book" of young talents of Azerbaijan and the "Young Talents' Foundation" was established by the *Presidential Decree On the State Care for Young Talents in Azerbaijan" (№ 464 of June 22, 1996)*. In this regard, the state established a special monthly pension of AZN 400 from the reserve fund of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan for each of the young talents whose names are written in the "Golden Book" until they reach 25 years of age.

#### 7.2.4. SUPPORT TO PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS' ASSOCIATIONS OR UNIONS

Professional creative unions currently obtain their main funds and material-technical bases, including buildings, from the state system, but administer material, social and professional matters themselves, without state interference. Central and local authorities provide different organisational and financial support to creative unions, involving their members in national and international events and purchasing products of their art and creativity at regular intervals. In particular, special funds from the state budget are intended to support professional creative unions and other non-governmental organisations through the Ministry for Culture.

For example, AZN 3 580 096 was allocated from the state budget for 2019 to support such organisations as:

- The Union of Azerbaijan Writers,
- The Union of Azerbaijan Composers,
- The Union of Azerbaijan Artists,
- The "Azerbaijan Dunyasi" International Relations Centre,
- The Organisation of War, Labour and Armed Forces Veterans,
- The Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society,
- The Union of Azerbaijan Architects,
- The Union of Azerbaijan Theatrical Workers,
- The Union of Azerbaijan Ashıqs.
- The Azerbaijan Council of Elders, and
- The Union of Cinematographers of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In 2020, similar support was increased to 5 523 650 AZN, and in 2021 – 5 652 029 AZN. Firstly, the sharp jump is explained by the fact that organisations such as the Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh Region, Azerbaijan Children's Fund, and an alternative Union of Cinematographers of Azerbaijan started to receive funding through the Ministry for Culture. Another reason for the increase in financial support is the government's intention to support creative unions and professional cultural organisations in the difficult years of the global pandemic and in the face of reduced opportunities for them to function in the labour market fully. As a result, the cultural spaces and premises were closed. In addition, the activities of cultural and art institutions have been restricted due to the introduction of a special quarantine regime in the country to prevent the spread of a new type of coronavirus (Covid 19) infection starting from March 2020.

## 7.3. Private funding

The state's strategy for diversification of financing sources for cultural activities and policies aimed at:

- Assessment of optimal scopes of the state budget for arts and culture;
- Attracting alternative financing sources (sponsors, Maecenas, supporters etc.);
- Implementing up-to-date marketing to improve the system of paid cultural services.

Many activities in arts and culture, namely festivals, concerts, fairs, etc., both international and local, attract a significant share of sponsorship by the private sector. Furthermore, funds, banks and other financial institutions operating in the country give considerable subsidies to assist and promote the mobility of artists and artworks.

At the same time, it should be noted that there are currently no private funding statistics. For this reason, it is not possible to provide data and trends of financial contributions/donations made to cultural activities, artists or institutions by independent foundations, commercial sponsors, and individual donors and so on. Furthermore, such information on non-public funding bodies for culture and creativity is not available because studies, surveys, et cetera regarding private funding for culture are not carried out.

Paid cultural services, namely the sum earned by cultural organisations, e.g. fees charged for paid cultural services provided by museums, exhibition halls and libraries, are another way of self-financing for public cultural institutions. This method is increasing in importance. However, these sums are still insignificant for now, accounting for less than 1% of total expenditure on culture, the arts and conservation of monuments.

The state cultural institutions subordinated to the Ministry for Culture provided paid cultural services amounting to AZN 404.0 thousand in 2020. Museums and museum-type institutions provided 42% of these paid cultural services, 37% were provided by educational institutions, 20% - by culture houses and clubs and 1% - by libraries. Most of the amount received from the paid cultural services provided in the club facilities was raised by three big regional departments: Baku City Head Department of Culture, Sumgayit and Sabirabad regional cultural departments. Many institutions, or more precisely, 1 825 institutions for 2020, do not yet operate in this way. A significant portion of the revenue raised in this way came from non-core services.

Privatisation is another answer to the problem of funding, and the periodic press, publishing, TV and radio, records, film production and distribution, concert organisation, etc., are the areas most affected. At the same time, privatisation has slightly affected the cinema production and distribution industry, which requires significant capital contributions. There are also restrictions on privatisation; for example, the following may not be privatised: state museums, libraries, galleries, historical monuments and cultural assets of international importance.

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Yashar Huseynli studied Philosophy at the Moscow State University and Philosophy and Sociology at the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. He worked as a rector assistant and a lecturer of humanitarian disciplines at the Western University, lecturer of philosophy and logic at the State Administration Academy, and Deputy Head of the Ethics and Aesthetics Department at the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. Currently, Yashar Huseynli is the Head of Division at the Strategic Development and Project Management Department of the Ministry for Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan. He has experience in different international programmes and project development for, among others, the Council of Europe, the European Union and UNESCO.

In 2000, the Azerbaijani profile was first prepared by Nigar Akhundova and updated by Akhundova until 2005. Since 2006, the profile was updated by Yashar Huseynli.