



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OCT 22, 2023 YEREVAN

# CULTURAL RIGHTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: GENDER, HERITAGE, LANGUAGE



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN  
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.

Russia and Central Asia in Exile



**CULTURAL RIGHTS  
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EUROPE:  
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In the contemporary landscape characterised by persistent military escalations, tense interstate conflicts, massive waves of forced displacement, and political repressions, we are witnessing the alarming and widespread occurrence of severe human rights violations, which unfortunately are often left unaddressed. Within the countries of the European Union and its neighbouring countries, we observe grave violations of cultural rights affecting various aspects of people's lives. In a context where fundamental human rights are consistently and extensively violated, culture and cultural rights appear to be subordinated. Being an integral component of human rights, cultural rights have not been properly articulated and enforced in numerous corners worldwide. The challenge of upholding cultural rights endures, even though the concept of cultural rights has been in circulation for several decades, and numerous countries have endorsed the 2016 UN resolution advocating for the protection and assurance of cultural rights for all individuals, irrespective of their gender, race, or religious identities (see UN Resolution A/HRC/RES/33/20).

How is the educational process carried out in the midst of war or under conditions of political pressure on people's rights and freedoms? How is unrestricted participation in cultural and scientific life ensured? To what extent do people have the freedom to choose their language in a given critical situation? How can gender equality be ensured in a context of militarization, increased social polarisation, and radicalization of public discourse? All of these issues are intrinsically tied to the realm of cultural rights, and persist as highly significant matters for both Central and Eastern Europe. Finally, it is critical to recognize that the violation of cultural rights, (linguistic, gender, and ethnocultural discrimination, as well as the limitations on the freedoms of artists, scientists, and the media, along with the destruction and damage to cultural heritage), collectively signify an identity crisis and serve as consequential obstacles to the progress of liberal democracy.

Human rights defenders are still in the process of acknowledging the importance of advocating for cultural rights. It is essential to foster a cross-border dialogue among civil societies from various countries, in order to establish common mechanisms and approaches on such matters. The conference "Cultural Rights in Central and Eastern Europe: Gender, Heritage, Language" is an attempt to promote dialogue among different countries in Eastern Europe. In the framework of the conference, the organisers will also conduct a book presentation of "The Contemporary Human Rights Situation in Central and Eastern Europe."



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The publication "The Contemporary Human Rights Situation in Central and Eastern Europe" is a result of shared design between the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Russia and Central Asia, office in exile, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom for Central Europe and the Baltic States, and the Novum Institute from Ljubljana, Slovenia. Publications – Human Rights in the 21st Century (humanrights21.eu)

The authors analyse specific views of the contemporary human rights situation. Each had the freedom to focus on the problems they regard to be pressing in their country. The articles refer to diverse aspects of protection of individual rights and freedoms in Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Poland, Russia and Ukraine. While the political context in all the researched countries differs, the aim of the editorial team was to strengthen communication within the human rights community and to identify common challenges and threats.

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**CULTURAL  
& SOCIAL  
NARRATIVES  
LABORATORY**

## PROGRAMME

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>12:00-12:30</b>   | <b>Welcome remarks and light refreshments</b>  |
| <b>12:30 - 13:00</b> | <b>Book presentation “The Contemporary Human Rights Situation in Central and Eastern Europe”</b> |
| <b>13:00 - 14:30</b> | <b>Moderator Anna Ayvazyan, Friedrich Naumann Foundation</b>                                     |

### Speakers

**Tigran Amiryan, founder / CEO of the CSN Lab** | Cultural Rights in Armenia: The Significance and Dynamics in the Context of the Cultural and Social Influence of Russia.

**Mariam Yeghiazaryan, project manager at the CSN Lab** | Translation of the “Cultural Rights Manual” as a basis of discourse on cultural rights in Armenia.

**Mikalaj Packajeu, Chair of the Association of Belarusians in Great Britain** | Violent suppression of Belarussian linguistic rights by the authorities of Belarus: implications for human rights situation analysis and security risks in the context of war.

**Alexander Vileykis, Almaty Management University** | Central Asia: decolonisation of the higher education sphere and language policy.

Follow up questions and discussion

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>14:30- 15:30</b> | <b>Moderator: Sebastjan Piki, Institut Novum</b>   |
|                     | <b>Erik Uszkiewicz, Hungarian Europe Society</b>   Anti-LGBTQ Rhetoric and Legislation as a Political Agenda in Hungary.   |
|                     | <b>Hripsime Kizogyan, PINK Armenia</b>   Armenia's LGBT+ rights landscape, public perception and attitudes, and the role of the media in shaping this landscape. |

**15:30-17:00**      **Networking**

**LOCATION**      Cultural and Social Narratives Lab, Mashtots ave. 29, apt. 7

**WORKING LANGUAGES**      English and Russian, with simultaneous interpretation

The “Cultural rights in Central and Eastern Europe: gender, heritage, language” conference is organised by the Cultural and Social Narratives Laboratory NGO (CSN Lab) together with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), Office Russia and Central Asia in exile.



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