

# REPORT OF THE CONVENTION OF THE FUTURE ARMENIAN

10-12 MARCH  
2023



CONVENTION OF  
THE FUTURE ARMENIAN

THE FUTURE  
ARMENIAN



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**10 - 12 MARCH 2023**

Report of the Convention



May 2023

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# FOREWORDS

Throughout history, we have not had many opportunities to dream about, plan for or create our own future. Others have been creating it for us, and we have only followed their directions.

About 30 years ago we were given an interesting chance to manage our future ourselves, but failed to do so because the urgent troubles we faced kept us from dealing adequately with our future. We have no right to be sad because of the existing challenges, they will always be there – but that is no excuse for ignoring the future.

Discussions in this format have never taken place in a country with a post-Soviet heritage. The framework of this “citizens’ assembly” should be focusing on the shared, common future of the Diaspora and the country, making this event unique. With the help of leading experts who developed draft scenarios and recommendations with appropriate expert justification as preparatory work, we have a strong foundation for our discussions.

We must understand that cooperation across the diverse constituencies of our world-wide nation is the best way to move forward. We cannot change our past, but we can change our future, so let’s define our future together.



**Dr. Noubar Afeyan**  
Co-Founder of  
The FUTURE  
ARMENIAN Initiative



**Artur Alaverdyan**  
Co-Founder of  
The FUTURE  
ARMENIAN Initiative

I would like to see the Armenian nation united and joined. We must build a qualitatively new, efficient mode of interaction in Armenia.

Having witnessed the proceedings of the Convention firsthand, I must say that I am thoroughly impressed with the outcome. It was a resounding success, marked by vigorous and productive debates, and yielded a plethora of crucial outcomes. The positive energy and momentum generated by the Convention are sure to provide a significant boost in implementing the proposed solutions and recommendations.

Overall, I believe that the Convention has set a high bar for future events of this nature, and the outcomes achieved here are a testament to the effectiveness of collaborative efforts toward achieving common goals.

The typical democratic process involves citizens' participation in elections every few years, where they are essentially given a binary choice of saying "yes" or "no". However, this approach often fails to capture nuanced and complex issues of society. What is needed now is a more sophisticated and innovative approach to democratic decision-making, one in which democratic expression is not just binary, but instead captures the citizens' voice in more direct and relevant ways.

In this context, the introduction of a more direct and participative democratic process is a novelty in Armenia, and its implementation represents a ground-breaking step forward for democracy in the country. If successful, this approach could serve as a model for other countries looking to strengthen their democratic institutions and engage citizens in more meaningful ways.



**Richard Azarnia**  
Co-Founder of  
The FUTURE  
ARMENIAN Initiative



**Ruben Vardanyan**  
Co-Founder of  
The FUTURE  
ARMENIAN Initiative

The challenge that we face as a society is undoubtedly a formidable one, and the urgency of the situation cannot be overstated. To effectively tackle the issues that confront us, we must first find the strength and courage within ourselves to confront them head-on. This will require a deep understanding of the core values and principles that underpin our society, as well as strong leadership that can inspire and guide the nation toward a brighter future.

The role of events such as this cannot be overstated in this regard, as they provide a platform for people to come together and engage in constructive dialogue around these crucial issues. Through thoughtful and nuanced discussion, we can begin to uncover the answers to the pressing questions that confront us and chart a course forward that is both meaningful and impactful. In this way, events such as this have the potential to serve as a catalyst for positive change and transformation on a national scale.

The devastating events of 2020 and the Second Artsakh War made us think once again about the most important questions: what kind of Armenia and what kind of Armenians do we want to have, and how do we build that Armenia? In many discussions we initiated, among other opinions, an important thought was voiced: it is possible to build a dignified future for Armenia and the Armenian people only with the united efforts of Armenians all over the world. More than 112,000 compatriots from 108 countries around the world have already joined the initiative. Guided by these ideas and thoughts, The FUTURE ARMENIAN initiative formulated 15 Goals, aimed at achieving the sustainable development of Armenia and Armenians around the world, and strives to form universal awareness and mutual understanding around that Goals. Today, we are opening a new page in the history of The FUTURE ARMENIAN initiative. We are starting a very important stage of public discussions, in a format that is widely known as a “citizen’s assembly”. This is in some ways a new experience in the Armenian field, and we are sure that with joint efforts, we will achieve success.



**Artak Apitonian**  
Executive Director  
of The FUTURE  
ARMENIAN  
Development  
Foundation

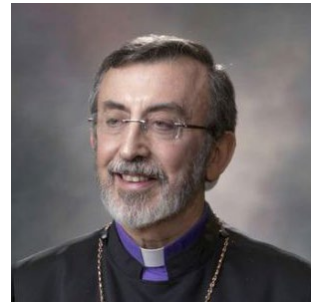


**Armine K.  
Hovannisian**  
Chair of the Expert  
Committee on  
Growing Population

For some, Armenia is our noble mountains and deep valleys, for others Armenia is our ancient monasteries, fortresses, and khachkars, and yet for others, it can be Artsakh’s “We are our mountains” monument, their village, their home, the drinking fountain on their street. Whatever it may be, Armenia will cease to be a homeland, if Armenians don’t live and create on this land. It is a sad fact that today our motherland is depopulating, and emptying at a very fast pace. Thousands of people are emigrating, there is a decline in the birth rate, an aging population, and thousands of young people perished in the previous wars. If this continues, the losses will be irreversible. Today we have gathered to face these difficult problems and to think about what should be done and how - what is the way to go forward. The moment is urgent, the responsibility is serious, and it is beyond doubt that action must be taken. It is time to act. Together we can!

The approach is very professional. It is appreciated that organizers wanted to involve different parts of Armenians from Armenia and various other countries. Additionally, there are people of different ages in attendance. I can also see many women participants and I am glad about that because Armenian initiatives do not typically see high levels of participation from women. I am glad that the Armenian people, with all their differences, are involved.

If we make a plan for the future or want to make a dream come true, everyone must have a sense of ownership of it. For the success of any project, it is important that everyone, starting with the leader, feels a connection to it. When psychologically that feeling occurs, people work with greater enthusiasm and feel more responsible. And I see this very positive spirit throughout the Convention.



**Archbishop Khajag Barsamian**

Chair of the Expert Committee on Historic Responsibility



**Aram Abrahamyan**

Chair of the Expert Committee on Armenia-Diaspora Unity

We, as experts, certainly do not have final answers. Decisions should be made by the participants. There are three groups of problems. First, who is the Armenian? Regardless of whether he or she is 0% or 100% ethnic Armenian, he or she is ready to participate in Armenian agendas. Second, what is Armenia? It is the Republic of Armenia; it is the Republic of Artsakh, and it is what every Armenian considers as homeland. Thirdly, what is the Diaspora? It is not a single structure that Armenia as a state, Artsakh as a state, or we as Armenians of Armenia can communicate with. Diaspora is a combination of structures, and these structures can eventually form a kind of network.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From March 10 to 12, 2023, the first Convention of the Future Armenian (CFA) was held. This wasn't just another civil society event; rather, it marked the launch of a new chamber of governance with the mission to grant Armenians across the world an opportunity to shape the future of Armenia.

Toward this end, 200 Armenians convened in Yerevan for three days in order to answer the following questions:

*“How can different segments of the Armenian nation take on their historic responsibility to pass down our heritage of Armenian identity, homeland, historical memory, and values to future generations and the world?” [Historic Responsibility]*

*“How can we build a strong and effective system of Armenia-Diaspora relations based on shared principles and practical foundations?” [Armenia-Diaspora Unity]*

*“What are the key steps we can take to solve our demographic challenges and ensure a stable future for Armenia?” [Growing Population]*

In June 2022, an online survey of the signatories of The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative from all around the world was conducted in order to determine the **topics of the upcoming CFA**. Three of the '15 Goals' presented by the Initiative in 2021 (see Section 1.1) were selected.

As part of the pre-Convention process and in order to support deliberations, **three Expert Committees** were formed, composed of over one hundred high-profile experts with diverse backgrounds from Armenia and the Diaspora. Between August 2022 and February 2023, the committees held a total of twenty-one meetings, during which they defined framing questions, provided strategic advice on the content of the learning phase of the Convention, and developed proposals for the consideration of Convention participants.

The Expert Committee on Historic Responsibility focused on preserving Armenian heritage, understanding historical events, and promoting accountability among individuals and groups. The Expert Committee on Armenia-Diaspora Unity addressed challenges in the relationship between Armenia and its Diaspora communities, aiming to foster collaboration and mutual assistance. The Expert Committee on Growing Population concentrated on demographic challenges in Armenia and developed strategies to increase the population and mitigate negative trends.

The **Convention process** itself was based on the Citizens' Assembly and the 21st-century Town Meeting deliberative models.

The 200 participants were represented<sup>1</sup> of the global Armenian population in terms of gender, age, educational level, and place of residence.

Due to uncertainty of the officially available figures, the proportion of Diaspora Armenians relative to those residing in Armenia proper was estimated at slightly more than double, yet the participants were distributed evenly between the homeland (Republic of Armenia and Artsakh) and the Diaspora in order to ensure equal weighting and strengthen common ownership of the Goals. Furthermore, the number of participants from Artsakh was over-represented to highlight its struggles and provide a critical perspective on Armenian issues.

The participants were selected through a lottery process from a pool of 5,786 pre-registered candidates.

<sup>1</sup> Due to the numbers involved and the challenges of precisely ascertaining the demographic breakdown of the global Armenian population, this was descriptively, not statistically, representative.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the technical challenges of the Diaspora sortition, this was partially achieved. See section 2.1 for further details about the methodology.



The intention was that, as much as possible<sup>2</sup>, any Armenian on earth could participate in the selection. This required a concerted global effort to raise awareness about this process among as many Armenians as possible, drawing on everything from TV, web, and outdoor advertising to social media, newsletters, in-person meetings, roadshows and discussions, and, of course, Armenian institutions and community influencers in the maximum number of countries.

Once recruited, the Convention participants met for three days in Yerevan. They were supported by professional facilitators and expert testimony to discuss the possible policies and programs that might address the aforementioned questions and adopt collective recommendations for action.

At the end of each day of the Convention, participants were engaged in voting to determine position statements and priorities for policy proposals and initiatives. (For the complete list of recommendations and voting records, please see Section 3.)

Participants were asked to choose one option for each question regarding the position statements.



Within the framework of **Historic Responsibility**, participants specified four main elements: recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide; the issue of Armenian statehood and the security of Artsakh; preservation and recognition of Armenian heritage; and the problem of keeping the next generations Armenians.

About one third (30.6%) of the participants noted that efforts aimed at recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the Armenian state, communities, organizations, and individuals have not been effective so far and corrections are needed. The same proportion of participants (30.6%) thinks that despite the effectiveness of previous endeavors, pan-Armenian efforts today should be directed more towards solving security problems.

The issue of Artsakh is a matter of concern for all 10 million Armenians around the world, according to 92.7% of the participants. Most of them (54.84%) also stated that Armenians all over the world should jointly assume responsibility for Artsakh and not leave the state and the citizens of Armenia and, even more so, the people of Artsakh, to solve this issue alone. Another 29% of the participants, agreeing with the aforementioned statement, added that it requires a complex negotiation process and adventurism is dangerous in the face of the weakening positions of Armenia and Artsakh.

The Armenian language and its role were particularly emphasized by the participants in discussions on preserving Armenian national identity. “While knowledge of the Armenian language is undoubtedly important, it should be acknowledged that language is merely a tool, and the act of forcing language knowledge can often have the opposite effect. Instead,

it is crucial to create an environment and implement effective mechanisms that make learning Armenian both beneficial and interesting for individuals. Only then can we expect to encourage Armenian youth from around the world to learn and embrace their language and culture”, said 72.9% of the participants.

On **Armenia-Diaspora Unity**, although the overwhelming majority of participants (over 84%) think that there is a crisis of confidence in Armenia-Diaspora relations, 57% believe that this crisis can be overcome, and we need new cooperation platforms. The crisis of confidence is surmountable, and unity will amplify the effectiveness of the work.

53% also stated that the primary agenda of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation should be the strengthening of Armenia, with the expectation that a stronger Armenia will much more easily contribute to the preservation of Armenianness in the Diaspora.

On **Growing Population**, 74.7% of the participants agreed that demographic policy should be declared the main policy direction to be implemented in the country, and it should be supported by the policies of other spheres. Until now, demographic policy has been perceived as a tool for social support. The majority of participants (54.9%) believes that in order to ensure population growth, the simultaneous implementation of three directions



is necessary: increase the birth rate, reduce emigration, and increase immigration. In the case of immigration, emigrant Armenians should be the primary target (54.6%). At the same time, 57.9% of participants believe that immigration can lead to social tension if high level of unemployment and poverty are maintained in Armenia and the problems of economic development are not resolved.

During the voting process, the Convention’s participants also selected initiatives from a list of options, generating a prioritized list of 24 recommendations:

### HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY

1. Establish an institution which will compile a comprehensive database of Armenian heritage
2. Establish a coordinating council for youth exchanges



3. Build a “Pan-Armenian Web Army” to gain advantage in online information wars
4. Launch a campaign for the digitization of historical heritage assets
5. Establish an “Armenian language through games” program to promote Armenian language and culture among Diaspora youth
6. Establish an online coordinating council for the Armenian Genocide recognition process
7. Establish a network of Armenian virtual universities
8. Establish an Armenian “Anti-Defamation League” human rights defense mechanism
9. Launch a campaign to include materials about the Genocide in the educational programs of other countries
10. Organize a global Armenian forum called “Artsakh: 10 Million”
11. Establish an “Artsakh Pan-Armenian Development Fund”



## ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY

1. Organize regular professional pan-Armenian assemblies
2. Build a collaborative network of businesspeople
3. Establish a foundation or institute that will arrange regular assignments of Armenian language teachers from Armenia to Diaspora communities
4. Organize citizens’ assemblies in Diaspora communities
5. Launch a pan-Armenian movement called “Back to Armenia”
6. Build a pan-Armenian lobbying network
7. Establish an investment company named “Armenia”

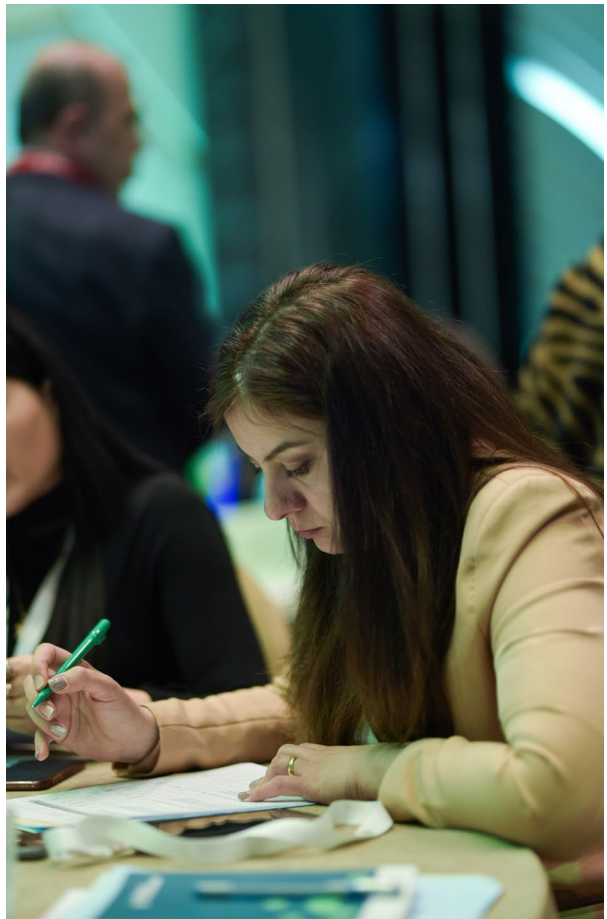
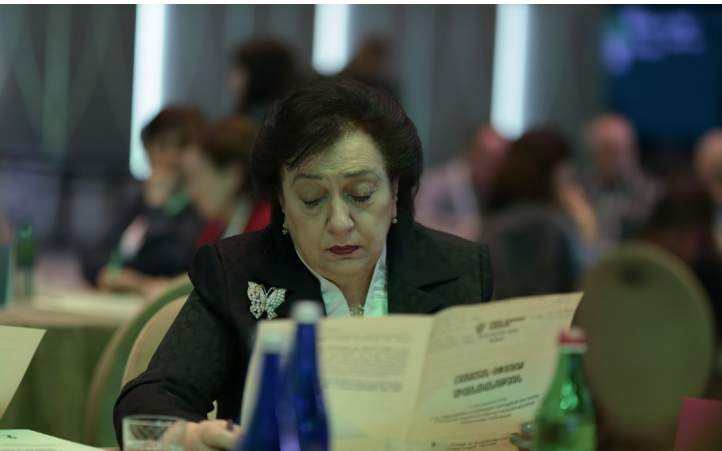


## GROWING POPULATION

1. Establish an agency for immigration organization and advocacy
2. Launch a “Children First” public initiative
3. Launch a public health and healthy lifestyle awareness initiative in reproductive healthcare
4. Establish an online pan-Armenian dating platform
5. Establish organizations for conflict management support in young families
6. Lobby the U.S. Congress to amend the Social Security Act

Around the world, deliberative processes such as citizens' assemblies are being established to improve governance at the global, national, and community levels. The CFA itself was groundbreaking, specifically in the following ways:

- **Affiliation Network:** the establishment of a group of influential individuals and organizations who can implement the CFA proposals, so that the CFA will not be dependent on other institutions.
- **Prominent Expert Committees:** established to shape the content of the CFA. Many of the members of the committees are high-profile individuals, lending gravitas and legitimacy to the CFA.
- **Diaspora sortition:** As far as the organizers are aware, this was the first time that a sortition selection process was implemented with participants from across a nation's diaspora.





Surveys were conducted on the first and last days of the Convention to evaluate the impact of the process on the participants.

The survey responses indicated that participants were generally satisfied with various aspects of the Convention. The quality of deliberation and respect within the groups received high ratings, and participants felt that they had made meaningful contributions to the collective recommendations. However, participants also provided suggestions for improvement, particularly regarding the time allocated to discussions, administrative smoothness, facilitation, and the content of the materials provided.

The Convention participants, in their deliberations over three interconnected topics critical to the future of Armenia, its Diaspora, and Artsakh, felt a strong sense of historic responsibility toward preserving the Armenian nation and its culture. They recommended initiatives to promote awareness of the present conflict and the Armenian Genocide, as well as the preservation of self-determination in Artsakh. The unity between Armenia and the Diaspora was emphasized, with participants recognizing the mutual reinforcement of Armenianness in both groups. Establishing a collaborative network of businesspeople across the world was a popular recommendation to strengthen this unity. Addressing the population decline and aging in Armenia was another key concern. Participants agreed on the need to prioritize demographic policy and proposed initiatives to support population growth, such as advocating for immigration and implementing a “Children First” initiative. There was a recognition that the economic development and addressing unemployment were necessary in order to reduce emigration and social tensions. Participants expressed the importance of pursuing multiple viable initiatives simultaneously.

The Convention’s legacy and next steps involve creating a citizen-led deliberative process to address critical challenges by 2041. The focus now shifts to achieving outcomes in institutional actions, Affiliation Network actions, and citizens’ actions, as well as refining the new governance model. The Convention has set a historic precedent for pan-Armenian unity, demonstrated innovative deliberative practices, and showcased the collective intelligence and power of Armenians in addressing their challenges together.

# LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

## Diaspora

Magda Aghababyan, Sri Lanka  
Sergey Alaverdyan, Russia  
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Aram Arkun, USA  
Oksana Arutiunian, Ukraine\*  
Varsenik Arzumanyan, USA  
Vahan Arzumanyan, Russia  
Zarigh Avayans Ikiaghag, Iran  
Edgar Avetisyan, Russia  
Anahit Avetisyan, Canada  
Enok Babajanyan, Georgia  
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Nare Balasanyan, Russia  
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Ofelya Ispiryan, Georgia  
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Ruzan Khachaturyan, Sweden  
Khachatur Kherumyan, Russia  
Sevak Khodaverdian, USA  
Gayane Kirbashyan, Russia  
Armine Magumian, Russia  
Edouard Manoukian, Egypt  
Hayk Manukyan, Russia  
Ani Manukyan, France

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Arsen Minasov, Spain  
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Varduhi Mkrtchyan, USA  
Lyudmila Mkrtchyan, Russia  
Ana Mkrtichyan, Georgia  
Karen Muradyan, Belarus  
Karen Nagapetyan, Russia  
Anna Nalbandyan, Russia  
Yulia Nalbandyan, Russia  
Nelli Navasardyan, USA  
Vazgen Oganessian, Moldova  
Houry Papazian, Lebanon  
Mary Papazian, USA  
Svetlana Pashayan, Belarus  
Anna Petrosian, Russia  
Marina Petrosyan, France  
Narek Petrosyan, France  
Noyemi Piroyan, France  
Varouj Pogharian, Colombia  
Artur Poghosyan, Russia  
Armen Poghosyan, USA  
Artashes Revazyan, Russia  
Tatiana Sahakyan, Russia  
Narine Shahbazian/Chekhanovich, Canada  
Maria Soghoian, Russia  
Georges Tachdjian, Lebanon  
Maria Tavrizyan, Russia

Lusine Ter-Davtian, Russia  
Levon Ter-Petrosyan, USA  
Ruben Tonoyan, USA  
Lusine Tshagharyan, USA  
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Apet Vardikyan, Russia\*  
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## **Armenia**

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Tigran Aghayan, Kotayk  
Agop Aintablian, Yerevan  
David Akopyan, Yerevan  
Ararat Alikhanyan, Tavush  
Vahagn Amirkhanyan, Yerevan  
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Nairuhi Antonyan, Kotayk  
Armen Arzumanyan, Syunik  
Edgar Asatryan, Aragatsotn  
Lianna Asoyan, Gegharkunik  
Erik Avetisyan, Tavush  
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Argam Khoyetsyan, Lori  
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Nane Manukyan, Aragatsotn  
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Roza Matinyan, Lori  
Hrachuhi Matosyan, Yerevan  
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Marine Meloyan, Ararat  
Nina Minasyan, Yerevan  
Susan Mnatsakanyan, Yerevan  
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Yasha Sahakyan, Kotayk  
Narine Sargsyan, Syunik  
Samvel Sargsyan, Shirak\*  
Hrach Sargsyan, Ararat  
Lilit Sargsyan, Yerevan  
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Anna Ter-Hovhannisyan, Yerevan  
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Lusine Aydinyan, Artsakh\*\*

Arman Danielian, Artsakh\*\*

Gayane Gabrielyan, Artsakh\*\*

Anush Ghushunts, Artsakh\*\*

Vahagn Harutyunyan, Artsakh

Kajik Khachatryan, Artsakh\*\*

Ara Nersisyan, Artsakh\*\*

Ira Tamrazyan, Artsakh\*\*

\* Were not able to participate or excused themselves from participation.

\*\* Were not able to attend because of the Artsakh Blockade.



# INTRODUCTION: THE NATION'S CHALLENGES AND FUTURE GOALS



# 1.1 DEVELOPING THE 15 GOALS

In 2021, the FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative presented 15 Goals as priorities to safeguard the prosperity of Armenia and all Armenians over the following 20 years (see Figure 2). The formation of these Goals began in 2020, when discussions entitled “Securing Armenia’s future collectively” were initiated, involving prominent Armenians from around the world. After the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, otherwise known as the “44-Day War”, these discussions were transformed into consultations on the security of Armenia and the Armenian nation.

Building on these discussions with further research and a series of online and offline talks, the Initiative group established a set of 10 broad Goals intended to describe a desired future for Armenia. The Initiative aimed to build recognition and mass support of these Goals, establishing them as the “SDGs of the Armenian world”. The Goals are intended to shift the mindsets of all

Armenians towards focusing on the future together, rather than holding onto a painful past.

Upon completion of the 10 Goals, they were shared with around 1000 experts to elicit suggestions and feedback. These experts included former and present government representatives, as well as Diaspora and Church leaders. More than 300 responded with concrete ideas to help improve the Goals, and, with their feedback, the 10 were refined into 15 which more comprehensively represent the various aspects of Armenia’s future.

With the 15 Goals in hand, The FUTURE ARMENIAN was launched on April 29, 2021 through a website and a call to action for Armenians to become Signatories. As of May 1, 2023, the campaign successfully accrued more than 112,000 Signatories from Armenia and around the world (see Figure 1) to facilitate further dialogue.

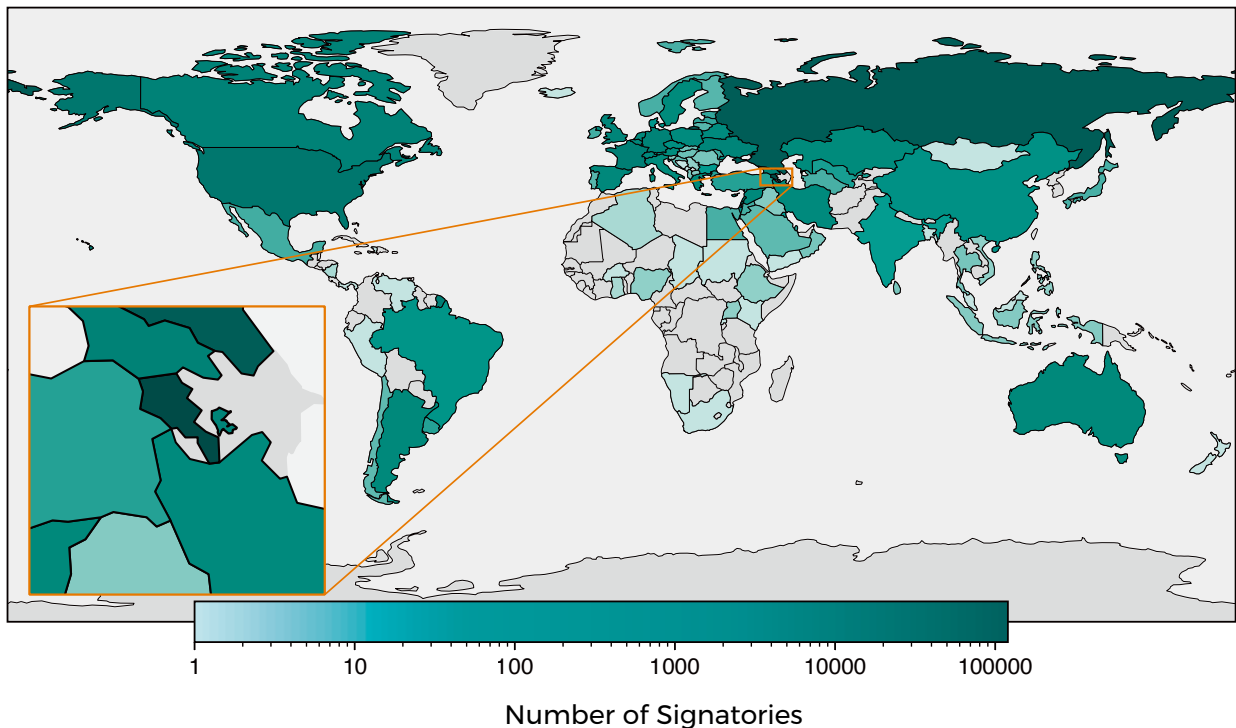


Figure 1: Countries of Signatories to the 15 Goals







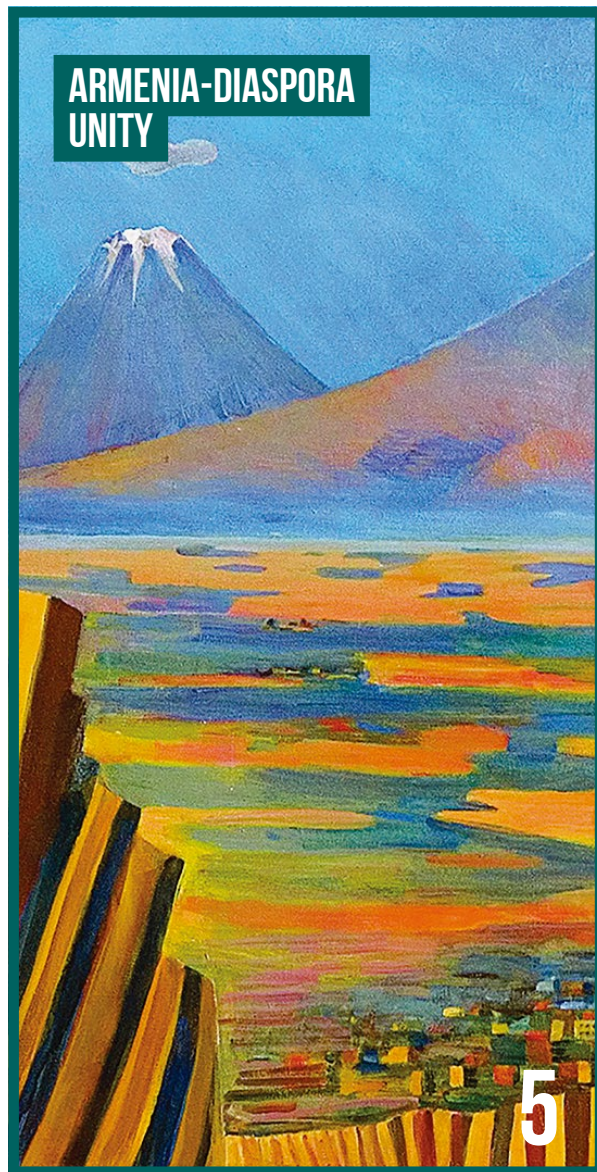


Figure 2: The 15 Goals of The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative, with the three topics of the first Convention of the Future Armenian highlighted.



## 1.2 SELECTING THREE GOALS AND PILOTING THE CONVENTION'S PROCESS

With a deliberative process in mind, it was clear that to address all 15 Goals at once would dilute the focus far too much, so a subset had to be chosen for the first Convention. To choose these, a survey was conducted among the Signatories, asking them to prioritize the most urgent topics. The top three goals selected were Historic Responsibility, Armenia-Diaspora Unity, and Growing Population.

To pilot the model designed for the 1st Convention, the **Artsakh Forum of the Future Armenian, entitled “Growing Population in Artsakh”** was held in Stepanakert on May 22, 2022. In preparation for the Artsakh Forum, an inclusive group of leading experts on Armenian demographics held several meetings and discussions to elaborate and formulate draft recommendations based on various development scenarios. These were presented for the consideration of participants of the Artsakh Forum, who ultimately selected which recommendations should be prioritized.

The Artsakh Forum comprised more than 60 Signatories of the Initiative, who represented the diversity of the Artsakh society. They met to discuss the demographic problems in Artsakh, express their views on the challenges they face, and explore possible sustainable long-term solutions. The discussions were closely followed by Artsakh government officials as well as demographic experts.

The participants of the Artsakh Forum adopted recommendations as a comprehensive package of actions, which has been presented by The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative to the relevant state bodies, Armenian organizations and institutions, business circles in Armenia, and in Diaspora. The objective was to seek the implementation of the recommendations through joint coordinated efforts.







## 1.3 CONCEIVING THE CONVENTION

Deliberative processes, like citizens' assemblies, have been gaining popularity all over the world in recent decades<sup>3</sup>. They are seen as a way to get citizens involved in developing policies to tackle complex topics that established governance structures struggle to address. There is now strong evidence<sup>4</sup> that deliberative processes, when run well, (a) generate ambitious and just policy, (b) activate citizens, (c) overcome polarization, and (d) create informed public debate. If the Covid-19 pandemic has taught us one thing, it is that people are essential, interconnected actors in finding solutions to the many crises we face, be it hunger, inequality, forced migration, pandemics, or security.

With this in mind, the Convention of the Future Armenian was conceived as a way for Armenians to collectively address the challenges they face.

In this first Convention, the intention was to:

- Generate practical proposals to be taken forward by numerous actors, including the Convention's Affiliation Network, The FUTURE ARMENIAN Development Foundation, politicians, citizens, civil society organizations, businesses, etc.
- Demonstrate through a high-profile prototype this new, citizen-led deliberative process for Armenians to tackle their challenges together
- Provide evidence that the proposals are having a demonstrable positive impact
- Learn lessons to help refine the process for future iterations
- Establish the platform as a permanent piece of Armenia's governance infrastructure.



*“We need to create a system in order to understand what solutions our compatriots in different countries offer to different issues. Maybe we already have such a solution that can be useful in the case of the Armenian community of another country.”*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*

<sup>3</sup> OECD (2020) Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave | OECD iLibrary.

<sup>4</sup> Cherry, C.; Capstick, S.; Demski, C.; Mellier, C.; Stone, L.; Verfuert, C. Citizens' Climate Assemblies: Understanding public deliberation for climate policy ; Duvic-Paoli, Re-imagining the Making of Climate Law and Policy in Citizens' Assemblies | Transnational Environmental Law | Cambridge Core ; Andrews, N.; Elstob, S.; McVean, S.; Sandie, G. Scotland's Climate Assembly - process, impact and assembly member experience: research report - gov.scot ; Dean, R.; Hoffmann, F.; Geissel, B.; Jung, S.; Wipfler, B. Citizen Deliberation in Germany: Lessons from the 'Bürgerat Demokratie'; Wells, R.; Howarth, C.; Brand-Correa, L. I. Are citizen juries and assemblies on climate change driving democratic climate policymaking? An exploration of two case studies in the UK | SpringerLink



The work to build this first Convention of the Future Armenian (CFA) was planned around three phases:



### **Phase 1 - Preparation:**

The CFA team recruited three Expert Committees to develop possible development scenarios for each of the three goals. Based on these, committee members offered relevant recommendations, each with a comprehensive expert justification, to be deliberated on by the Convention's participants.

### **Phase 2 - The Convention:**

During the Convention, selected participants received reports, scenarios and suggestions prepared by Expert Committees. All sessions were facilitated by professional facilitators, and all unselected applicants had the opportunity to contribute comments and suggestions to the ongoing discussions through an online platform.

After deliberating on each Goal, participants adopted recommendations by majority vote. Collectively, these formed a comprehensive package of actions to be presented by The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative to state bodies, Armenian structures and organizations, business circles in the Republic of Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora, for implementation through joint efforts.

### **Phase 3 - Implementation and the affiliation network:**

In parallel with the first two phases, The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative established an affiliation network made up of Armenian institutions, private sector and civil society organizations, international partners, charity associations and individuals. Through joint efforts, it will attempt to enact the recommendations adopted by the Convention's participants.

## 1.4 QUESTIONS FOR DELIBERATION

The Convention was conceived as a social innovation experiment<sup>5</sup>, guided by the 'innovation challenge question':

*“How might we create a new citizen-led deliberative process for enabling Armenians from Armenia, Artsakh and Diaspora to rapidly accelerate our ability to collectively address the critical challenges we face by 2041?”*

This question guided the preparatory work of the Expert Committees who, in turn, came up with a specific framing question for each of the three Goals selected for deliberation by the Convention's participants. These were:

*“How can different segments of the Armenian nation take on their historic responsibility to pass down our heritage of Armenian identity, homeland, historical memory, and values to future generations and the world?”*

*“How can we build a strong and effective system of Armenia-diaspora relations based on shared principles and practical foundations?”*

*“What are the key steps we can take to solve our demographic challenges and ensure a stable future for Armenia?”*

<sup>5</sup> See guide by Nesta, Idea and Design For Europe, available at: [https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/nesta\\_ideo\\_guide\\_jan2017.pdf](https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/nesta_ideo_guide_jan2017.pdf)

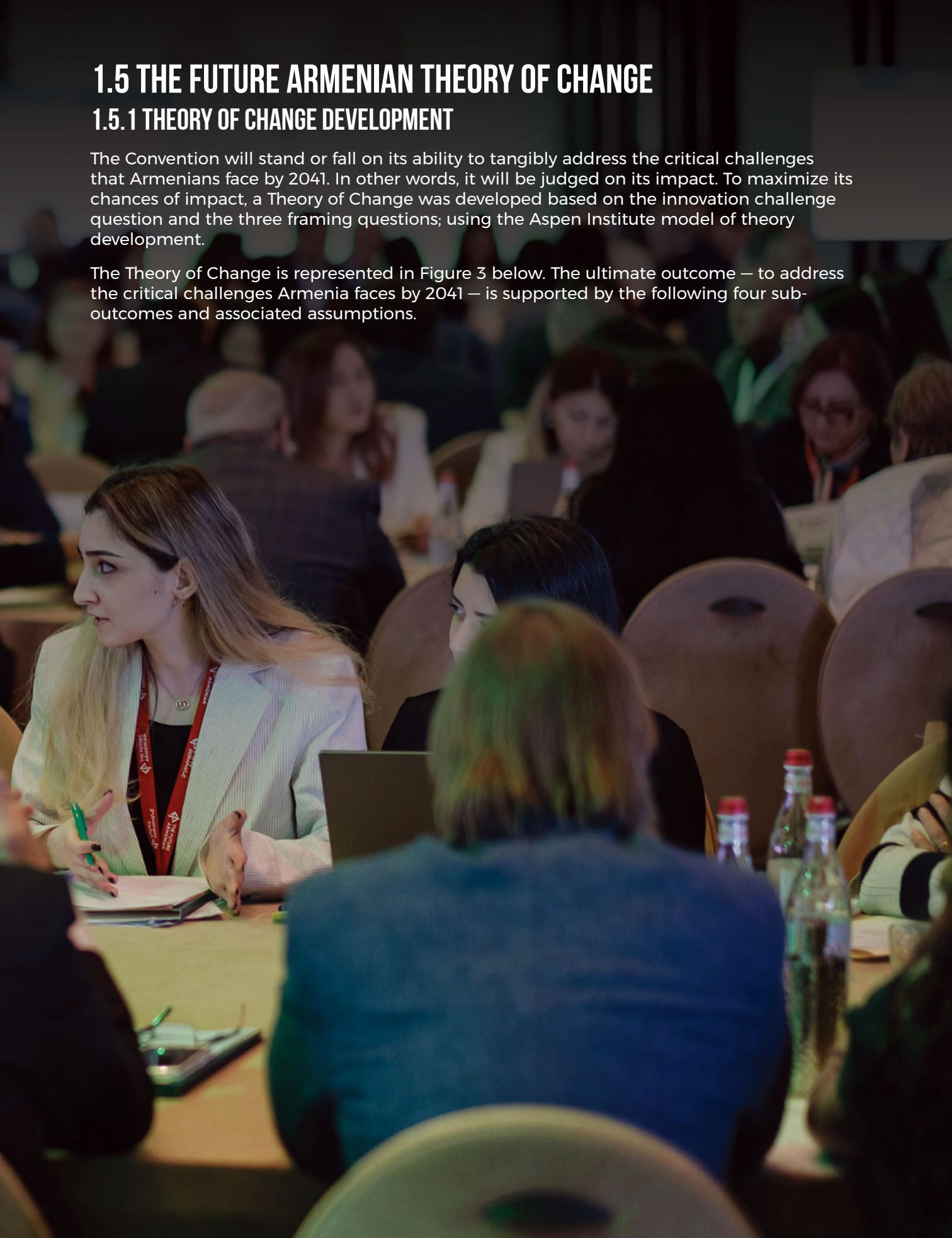


# 1.5 THE FUTURE ARMENIAN THEORY OF CHANGE

## 1.5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE DEVELOPMENT

The Convention will stand or fall on its ability to tangibly address the critical challenges that Armenians face by 2041. In other words, it will be judged on its impact. To maximize its chances of impact, a Theory of Change was developed based on the innovation challenge question and the three framing questions; using the Aspen Institute model of theory development.

The Theory of Change is represented in Figure 3 below. The ultimate outcome – to address the critical challenges Armenia faces by 2041 – is supported by the following four sub-outcomes and associated assumptions.





## KEY ASSUMPTIONS

We must invest in a robust Expert Committee process to involve key influencers in the CFA at an early stage, so they can have a significant impact on it and become champions of it

It is expected that some institutions would demonstrate certain interest to the CFA right from the outset

We will need to target multiple power holders to maximize impact

Institutions will not act on recommendations unless there is widespread public awareness and pressure

Citizens will support effective proposals

There is a policy impact gap: government policy does not guarantee impact, so bringing a larger group of people along can help turn policy into impact

There is a lack of channels for Diaspora engagement in policy development, as well as a fragmentation of Diaspora activities and resources

## ACTIVITIES

Setting up the Expert Committees early and getting their buy-in and support for engaging institutions

Supporting the Convention participants to take forward national press and advocacy

Advocacy and communications ensuring key influencers are aware of the CFA and its proposals

Media work - ensuring the press is aware of the CFA, its proposals, and any participants of the Convention from their country or region

Recruiting people into the Affiliation Network

Involving members of the Affiliation Network in the different aspects of the CFA, such as the Expert Committees

## SUB-OUTCOMES

Four routes to impact

### INSTITUTIONAL ACTIONS

e.g., actions taken by government agencies at the national, regional, and local levels, traditional Armenian institutions (Armenian churches, Diaspora pan-Armenian organizations)

### AFFILIATION NETWORK ACTIONS

e.g., actions taken by members of the affiliation network, which may include traditional institutions, government and municipal agencies, philanthropic and business structures, donor and development organizations, civil society, academia and media

An ascending involvement of the Diaspora in the CFA is needed to expand its impact

Going through the process will increase the self- and/or collective efficacy of the Convention participants and others 'touched' by the process will be able to translate their motivation to act into practical actions

Citizens hold substantial power and need to be treated as such

There is a growing recognition of the need to improve governance across the world

Institutions (e.g., governments, civil society, religious organizations, private sector) want to get involved

Supporting facilitators to proactively cultivate Convention participants self- and collective efficacy

Designing the Assembly process to proactively cultivate Convention participants self- and collective efficacy

Raising the profile of the need for governance reform through Expert Committees, the Affiliation Network and media work

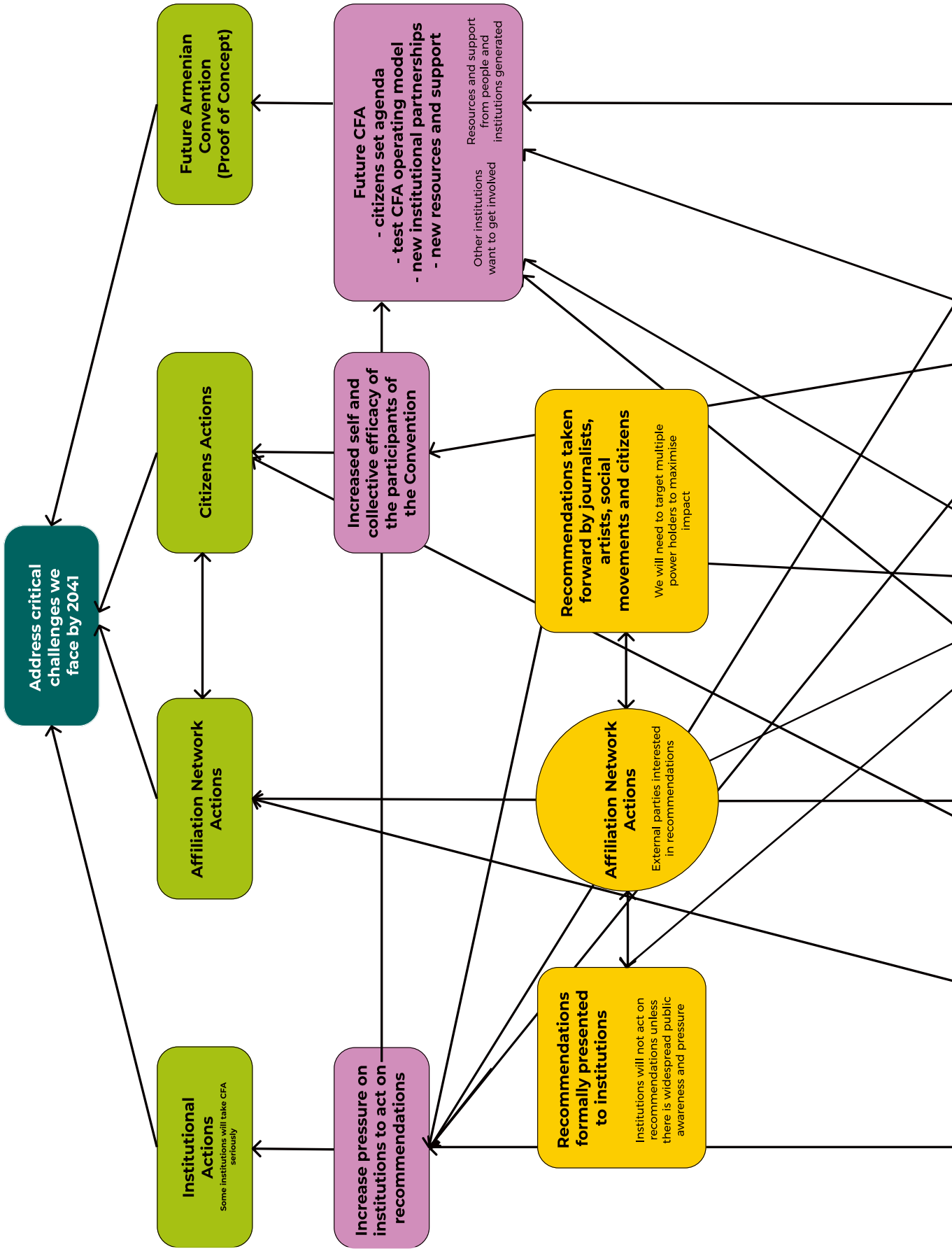
Liaising with key stakeholders to explain the need for governance innovation

## CITIZENS' ACTIONS

e.g., people (especially those touched by the CFA) being activated to take actions

## NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL

e.g., through running the CFA, we are demonstrating that alternative ways of making decisions exist, and that these may help us address the challenges Armenia faces



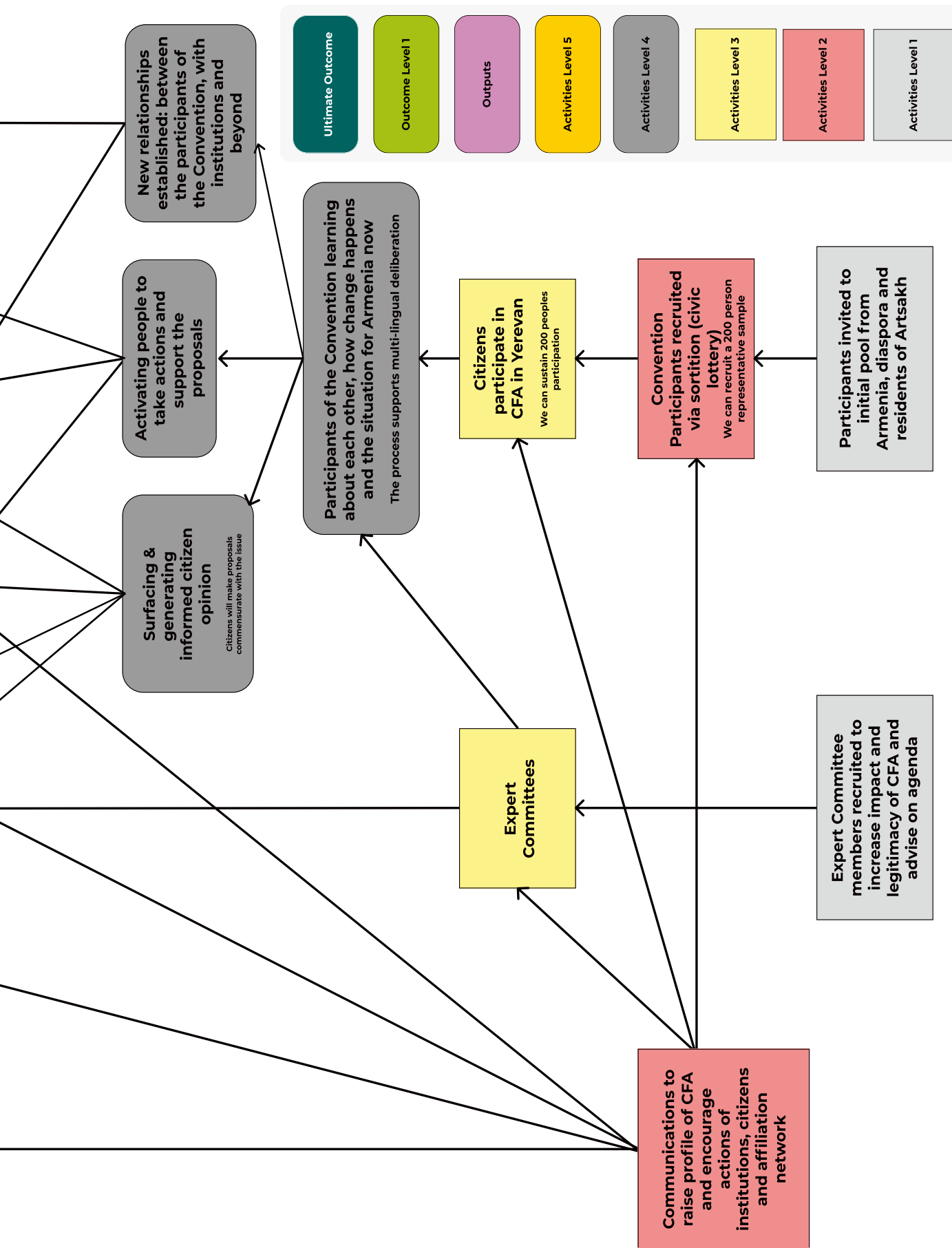


Figure 3: High level theory of change diagram for the Convention of the Future Armenian

## 1.5.2 THREE SIGNIFICANT INNOVATIONS

The CFA made three significant innovations to increase impact that have rarely (if ever) been seen before in a deliberative initiative:

### PROMINENT EXPERT COMMITTEES

Expert Committees were established with prominent academics, specialists and practitioners as members. The committees were established early and met intensively in the months before the CFA, to shape the content of the CFA. Many of the members of the committees were high profile and influential individuals. Together, the committees lent gravitas and legitimacy to the CFA, helped with press coverage, and fostered popular buy-in. Collectively, this is helping to ensure the CFA has an impact.

### CONVENTION PARTICIPANTS FROM ACROSS THE DIASPORA

As far as the organizers are aware, this was the first time that a citizens' assembly-like process was undertaken with participants from across a nation's Diaspora. To do this required significant planning and innovation, as described above and in Section 2.2. This was undertaken first and foremost so that the CFA could represent a genuinely coherent voice of the global Armenian nation. But it was also important to dramatically increase awareness of the CFA and create a global community of supporters. This has proved critical in light of the global-facing nature of the proposals generated and the potential role of the Armenian diaspora in realizing them.

### AFFILIATION NETWORK

The establishment of a loose group of influential organizations and individuals was put in place in order to facilitate the implementation of the CFA's proposals. This might involve direct funding of the proposals, or taking them forward themselves if they are within a network member's area of responsibility or capability.





## 1.5.3 FIVE NOTABLE CHARACTERISTICS

There were five standout characteristics that have laid the foundations for creating impact:

### HIGH QUALITY TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Embracing communications and integrating high quality media work from inception has been core to the CFA. This has been evident from the Expert Committees, online presence, and recruitment, as well as the CFA itself. Collectively, this resulted in the media coverage detailed in Final Report section on CFA website<sup>a</sup>.

### EXPERIENCED FACILITATION TEAM

The facilitation team, led by the International Centre for Human Development in Yerevan, has a long history of running deliberative events in Armenia.

### POLITICALLY LITERATE STRATEGY

The staff and advisors of The FUTURE ARMENIAN initiative are steeped in Armenian political culture, and developed a strategy for impact based on their experience of what works. Drawing upon their networks and know-how, they developed a street-wise strategy for creating impact.

### MAKING THE CFA PERMANENT

The intention from the start to make the CFA into a permanent piece of civic infrastructure created a sense of excitement amongst many of those associated with the CFA. This was because they were building something that would last over the timescales necessary to handle the major challenges that Armenians face.

### METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATION

The method deployed was a hybrid between the 21st Century Town Meeting model and a citizens' assembly, drawing upon the strengths of both: from citizens' assemblies - the legitimacy of sortition selection and an emphasis on deliberation, from 21st Century Town Meetings - the creation of a single political moment.



<sup>a</sup> [www.futurearmenian.com/convention/final-report/](http://www.futurearmenian.com/convention/final-report/)

## 1.6 THE ORGANIZERS, FUNDERS, AND CONTRIBUTORS OF THE CONVENTION OF THE FUTURE ARMENIAN

The Convention of The FUTURE ARMENIAN was organized by **The FUTURE ARMENIAN Development Foundation**. The organization represents The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative, and is equally funded by Noubar Afeyan, Artur Alaverdyan, Richard Azarnia, and Ruben Vardanyan.



The CFA strives to create an independent platform that any Armenian would be happy to join, and enrich public discourse about the future of Armenia and Armenians. To these ends, it is also seeking to model best practices in transparent, independent governance. Organizational expenses as well as travel and accommodation expenses of the participants have been covered by The FUTURE ARMENIAN Development Foundation. The involvement of the experts in the committees, including the work of the chairmen, has been pro bono. The initiative is not affiliated with any political group or organization.

Several partners provided support to the Convention with their expertise, connections, and feedback across all phases of preparation and implementation of the event.

**Iswe Foundation / OSCA:** Strategy and governance advice, high-level methodology and process design, process delivery observation, reporting.

**International Center for Human Development (ICHD):** Process design and facilitation

**Breavis Research and Communications:** Participant selection methodology and practical support.

**Vardenis High School Armath Laboratory and Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE):** Participant selection application.



Մարդկային զարգացման  
միջազգային կենտրոն  
International Center for  
Human Development



## 1.7 AN AFFILIATION NETWORK

A key element of The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative's theory of change is a growing Affiliation Network: a group of Armenian institutions, civil society organizations, businesses and NGOs who would be assembled to carry forward the recommendations of the Convention. Some of the potential network partners were present at the Convention to follow the deliberations as observers<sup>b</sup> (for "Observers briefing guidelines" see "Rules and Regulations" section on the CFA website). The role of the government of Armenia or separate government/municipal institutions in this potential network is a subject of discussion with government and municipal entities, and within network partners themselves. Any organization who would like to join the Affiliation Network is invited to contact The FUTURE ARMENIAN team.

*"We have many problems that the state should deal with, but individuals, groups of people, and the Diaspora are dealing with them instead."*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*



<sup>b</sup>[www.futurearmenian.com/convention/rules-and-regulations/](http://www.futurearmenian.com/convention/rules-and-regulations/)





# THE CONVENTION PROCESS

# 2.1 DEVELOPING THE METHODOLOGY

The modern practice of deliberative mini-publics comes in many forms, such as citizens’ juries<sup>7</sup>, citizens’ assemblies<sup>8</sup> or deliberative polling<sup>9</sup>, with other innovative democratic variations operating worldwide, such as citizens’ summits<sup>10</sup>, or 21st Century Town Meetings<sup>11</sup>. The terminology can become quite particular, but the common themes are generally those of: a clear question for deliberation, professionally facilitated conversations, an equal voice for all participants, demographic representation, and trust that well-informed non-expert people can find common ground and reach robust collective decisions. As can be seen from Box 1, the CFA constitutes a novel deliberative approach, which combines features from the citizens’ assembly and 21st Century Town Meeting models.

## Box 1: The methodological ingredients of the CFA

CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIZENS’ ASSEMBLY <sup>12</sup>	CHARACTERISTICS OF A 21ST CENTURY TOWN MEETING <sup>13</sup>
Clear purpose	A link to decision-makers: the people responsible for taking action on an issue must be involved from the start and committed to responding to what they hear.
Sufficient time for in-depth deliberation (multiple sessions over weeks to months)	Participant diversity: demographic and political diversity are essential for helping a community reflect the ideas of all its members, and for leaders to know the results are credible.
50-250 participants are selected by lottery (sortition) to be descriptively representative of the population	Informed participation: providing neutral and accessible background materials ensures a level playing field for all participants.
Inclusive, supporting the needs and responsibilities of participants	Facilitated deliberation: trained facilitators at each discussion table help participants wrestle with difficult trade-offs and divisive issues.
Independent from the influence of established structures and institutions	Fast feedback: iterative and highly productive conversations are made possible through computers at each table, a Theme Team grouping shared ideas, live participant polling to prioritize the results of discussions, and immediate reports on the day’s work.
Processes are open for all to see	Shared priorities and clear recommendations for action: carefully designed meetings ensure participants find areas of shared support and common priorities for action.
Support generative learning	Sustained citizen involvement: citizens must play an ongoing role in implementing shared priorities, evaluating progress, and identifying areas for continued collaboration.
Information and learning materials are delivered throughout the early sessions of the assembly, with expert and witness testimonies introduced in later stages as the deliberation progresses	
Deliberation is structured and supported by professional facilitators in groups of 5-8 people deliberating in parallel	
Decisions are the result of collective decision-making	
Independently evaluated	

<sup>7</sup> Citizens’ jury description: [www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-jury](http://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-jury)

<sup>8</sup> Citizens assembly description: [www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-assembly](http://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-assembly)

<sup>9</sup> Deliberative polling description: [www.participedia.net/method/147](http://www.participedia.net/method/147)

<sup>10</sup> Citizens’ summits description: [www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-summits](http://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-summits)

<sup>11</sup> 21st Century Town Meeting description: [www.participedia.net/method/145](http://www.participedia.net/method/145)

<sup>12</sup> Citizens’ assembly standards: [www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/how-do-i-setup-citizens-assembly/standards-citizens-assemblies](http://www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/how-do-i-setup-citizens-assembly/standards-citizens-assemblies)

<sup>13</sup> 21st Century Town Meeting Standards: [www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/how-do-i-setup-citizens-assembly/standards-citizens-assemblies](http://www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/how-do-i-setup-citizens-assembly/standards-citizens-assemblies)



## A HYBRID CONVENTION

The Convention of The Future Armenian combined and adapted elements from these two process formats to create a process suitable for the budget, ambition and scale of the initiative, the travel requirements of participants, and the Armenian context in general.

Its attributes could be summarized as:

---

Clear purpose

---

Limited time for in-depth deliberation

---

Three broad topics

---

200 participants selected by lottery are representative of the Armenian population and Diaspora

---

Independent from existing governance structures

---

Based on the spirit of collective pan-Armenianism

---

Transparent processes

---

Supportive of generative learning within time constraints

---

Free-flowing deliberation style with professional facilitation

---

Information materials provided in advance with expert testimony at the event

---

Decisions made collectively based on expert-informed templates

---

Semi-independently evaluated by hands-off process advisors

---

As well as methodological distinctions, it is also important to consider the societal and political space in which a deliberative process operates, as well as how its recommendations will be taken forward. The CFA's approach to participant selection, for example, draws on the practice of 'sortition', but intentionally over-represents Armenian residents relative to Diaspora, and over-represents Artsakh residents relative to both Armenian residents and Diaspora. Both of these decisions were made to increase the legitimacy of the CFA, as explained in Section 2.2.2. The inclusion of Diaspora in a national deliberative process is itself a highly novel adaptation<sup>14</sup>. While being essential in the context of Armenia's challenges, the travel requirements for the Diaspora participants placed some logistical constraints on the length of the process and who might be able to participate.

As explained in Section 1.5, the CFA is underpinned by a theory of change that identifies three primary routes to impact, encouraging actions from institutions, citizens, and members of the Affiliation Network. This is a deliberate attempt to maximize the chances of impact and minimize the risk of relying on one route to change, for example government action.

## 2.2 PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

### 2.2.1 POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS' ENGAGEMENT

Because citizens' assemblies are organized in many different countries, each with very different access to population datasets, the methods of selection of their participants are diverse. Theoretically, these methods should ensure that the selection process fulfills the principles of randomness, representation, and equality. In practice, however, there are many factors that can impact the implementation of these principles<sup>15</sup>.

Recruiting a descriptive sample of participants for a stratified, lottery-selected deliberation requires a pool of potential participants at least six to ten times larger than the number who will actually be selected. Recruitment for local processes is a well-established part of the process, but the inclusion of a globally distributed Diaspora community presented a substantial new challenge.

A range of tactics were employed to promote the Convention around the world, including social media, online videos<sup>16</sup>, broadcast media, and newsletters to those already subscribed to the Initiative's communications. It is, however, important to also include less politically engaged people in deliberative processes, so some more direct approaches were also needed to introduce this first Convention and its registration process to a wider audience. To this end, more than 20 online and in-person discussion meetings were organized across several regions of Armenia and in Diaspora communities.

In Armenia, many of the in-person meetings and registration campaigns were specifically targeted at people with limited internet access and those facing difficulties with online registration. Utilizing word-of-mouth promotion, the campaign aimed to reach out to new audiences and engage all segments of society.



<sup>15</sup> Gąsiorowska (2023), Journal of Deliberative Democracy 19(1), Gąsiorowska | Sortition and its Principles: Evaluation of the Selection Processes of Citizens' Assemblies | Journal of Deliberative Democracy [www.delibdemjournal.org/article/id/1310/](https://www.delibdemjournal.org/article/id/1310/)

<sup>16</sup> For example: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2rTmopMW4Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2rTmopMW4Y)



Among the Diaspora, the recruitment process took advantage of the fact that individuals usually have strong ties to their Armenian communities, which themselves contain active representatives who spread awareness about new initiatives and opportunities. The recruitment team reached out to several representatives to present the Convention’s pan-Armenian significance, prompting them to introduce the Convention to their community members and encourage participation. This was an effective approach for engaging those who had missed the social media campaigns.

From surveys collected during the Convention itself, it is clear that social media made by far the most effective contribution, followed by direct communications to existing signatories to the Goals, and broadcast media (see Figure 4). It is good to see that only 10% of participants were already signatories to the Goals, as it demonstrates that the recruitment campaign was successful in enticing a great majority of people who had not already been engaged by The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative’s pursuits.

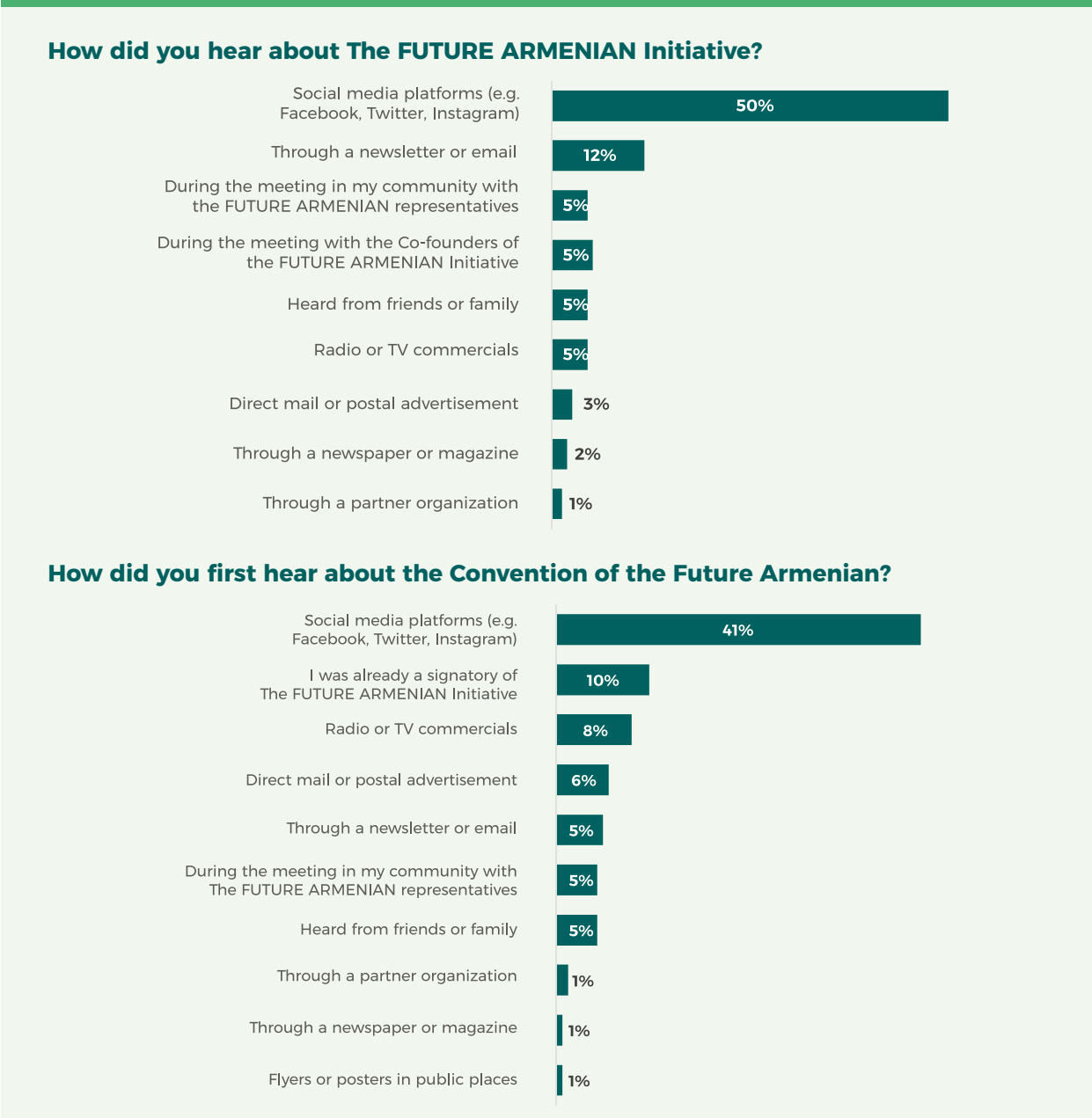


Figure 4: Methods by which participants first heard about The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative and the Convention of the Future Armenian.

## 2.2.2 SELECTION METHODOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Core to the methodology of citizens' assemblies, which partly inspired the CFA process, is the requirement that participants be demographically representative of the population in focus, be it a village, a region, or a whole country. This is normally done by a process known as 'sortition' which is a type of civic lottery stratified by relevant demographic criteria. In the case of the CFA, this methodology had to be evolved in order to include not only Armenians living in Armenia, but also residents of Artsakh<sup>17</sup> and Armenians living in Diaspora communities around the world.

The demographic criteria chosen to build a descriptively representative cohort for the Convention were:

Gender

Age

Education level

Geography, organized by:

- Armenia
  - rural, urban (excluding Yerevan), Yerevan
- Artsakh
  - rural, urban (excluding Stepanakert), Stepanakert
- Diaspora
  - country of residence

In principle, these are uncontroversial, standard criteria for sortition processes, but, for the Armenian context, the geography criterion required certain modifications. Due to the uncertainty of officially available figures, the proportion of Diaspora Armenians relative to those residing in Armenia itself was estimated at slightly more than double, yet they were only given 50% of the spaces in order to strengthen representation from Armenia and Artsakh, and present an equal weighting for the distinct communities of Diaspora and Armenia+Artsakh. In addition to this, the decision was taken to over-represent the number of participants from Artsakh relative to the population of Armenia itself by around two times compared to what would be expected from the raw population numbers. This was a transparent but nonetheless political decision made both to emphasize the struggles associated with the region, and to ensure a suitably influential voice from this community, which is so central to the ongoing question of Armenian statehood.

The selection methodology was developed independently of the CFA team, and the proportion of participants representing each of the key demographics is detailed in Table 1 below. For more details on the rationale behind the selection process and information about the data sources consulted, please check the CFA website<sup>c</sup>.

The total population of Armenia is 2.9 million according to the latest census data<sup>18</sup>. There is no accurate data<sup>19</sup> for the Armenian diaspora, but estimates range from 4-7 million.

<sup>17</sup> Artsakh is an unrecognized independent state in the South Caucasus. It was formed on the basis of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region of the USSR and declared its independence according to the Constitution of the Soviet Union in its final years. The population of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh Republic) is 120,000, and the overwhelming majority are ethnic Armenians. The predominant Armenian ethnic composition of Artsakh runs at least two thousand years.

<sup>18</sup> New Census Shows Armenia Population Drops Below 3 Million.

<sup>19</sup> Armenians - Wikipedia

## DEMOGRAPHIC SELECTION CRITERIA AND THEIR REPRESENTATION PERCENTAGES

### GROUP 1. DIASPORA

50% of the participants

#### GENDER

Male - 49%

Female - 51%

#### AGE GROUPS

18-30 - 22%

46-60 - 25%

31-45 - 27%

61+ - 26%

#### EDUCATION

Secondary or lower - 22%

College or vocational - 42%

University and higher - 36%

#### COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE

Russia - 39%

USA - 20%

France - 9%

Georgia - 6%

Iran - 2%

Turkey - 2%

Europe (excluding France) - 6%

Former SU (excluding Russia & Georgia) - 6%

Middle East (excluding Turkey & Iran) - 4%

Latin America - 3%

Other - 3%

OBSERVER  
EXPERT

### GROUP 2. ARMENIA

45% of the participants

#### GENDER

Male - 47%

Female - 53%

#### AGE GROUPS

18-30 - 22%

46-60 - 23%

31-45 - 31%

61+ - 24%

#### EDUCATION

Secondary or lower - 55%

College or vocational - 21%

University and higher - 24%

#### REGIONS:

Ararat - 9%

Armavir - 9%

Aragatsotn - 4%

Gegharkunik - 8%

Kotayk - 9%

Lori - 7%

Shirak - 8%

Syunik - 4%

Tavush - 4%

Vayots Dzor - 1%

Yerevan - 37%

of which urban - 27%  
of which rural - 36%

### GROUP 3. ARTSAKH

5% of the participants

#### GENDER

Male - 49%

Female - 51%

#### AGE GROUPS

18-30 - 25%

46-60 - 25%

31-45 - 25%

61+ - 25%

#### EDUCATION

Secondary or lower - 30%

College or vocational - 30%

University and higher - 40%

#### RESIDENCE

Regions, urban - 25%

Regions, rural - 25%

Stepanakert - 50%

Table 1. Demographic selection criteria and their representation percentages

## 2.2.3 SELECTION PROCESS

Of the 5786 registrants, 200 participants were selected for the Convention by a lottery process<sup>20</sup>. The lottery selection algorithm was designed and run by students at the Armath Laboratory at Vardenis High School. The work was performed within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed between The FUTURE ARMENIAN Development Foundation and the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE).

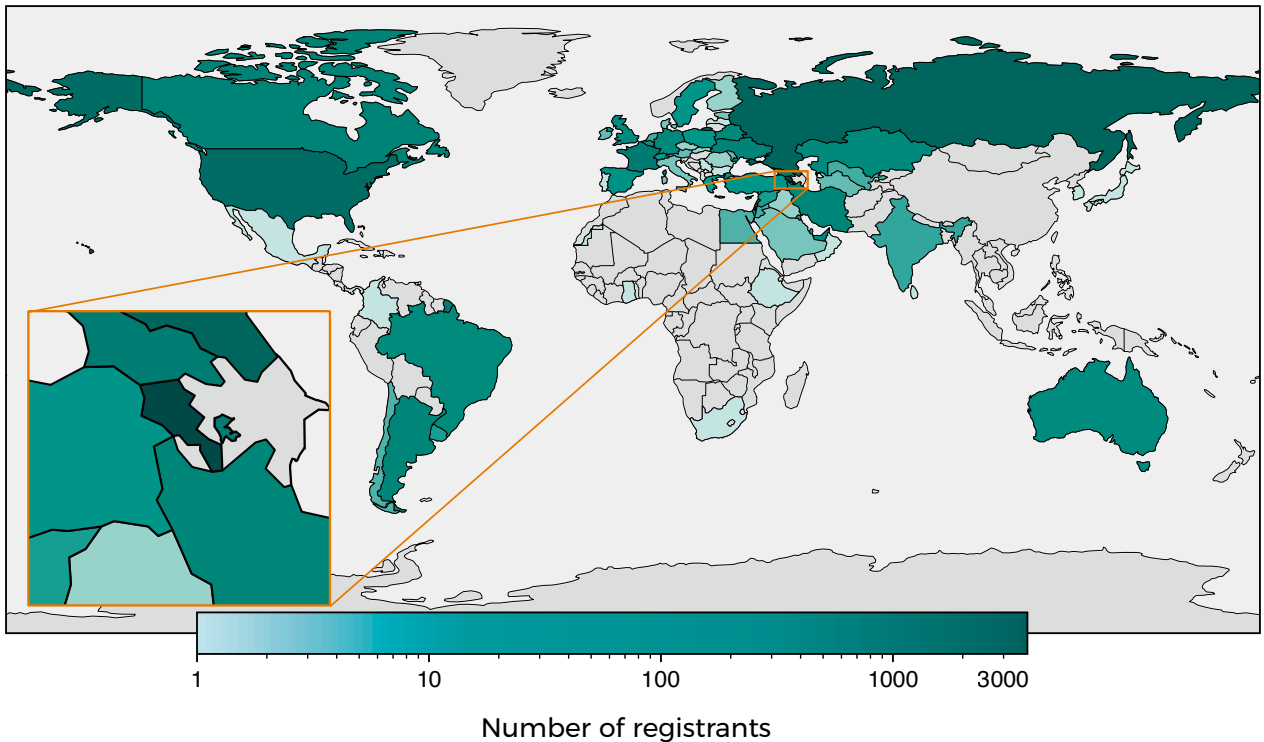


Figure 5: Countries of potential participants who registered for the Convention

<sup>20</sup> Video about the participant selection: Students of Armath from Vardenis will develop the software for the drawing: [www.futurearmenian.com/news/moufuturearmenianuate/](http://www.futurearmenian.com/news/moufuturearmenianuate/)



The algorithm aimed to provide a cohort of participants that was descriptive of the global Armenian population as described above. It prioritized the demographic criteria in the following order:

1. Participant group (Diaspora/Armenia/Artsakh)
2. Geography (country/region)
3. Gender
4. Age group
5. Education level

From the pool of applicants, the algorithm managed to select exactly the desired distribution of participants in each participant group, and was able to match the categories of geography and gender to within 0.5 percentage points (which equates to one person), both for the Convention as a whole and within each participant group<sup>21</sup>. For the other categories, deviation from the desired overall percentages is shown in Figure 6.

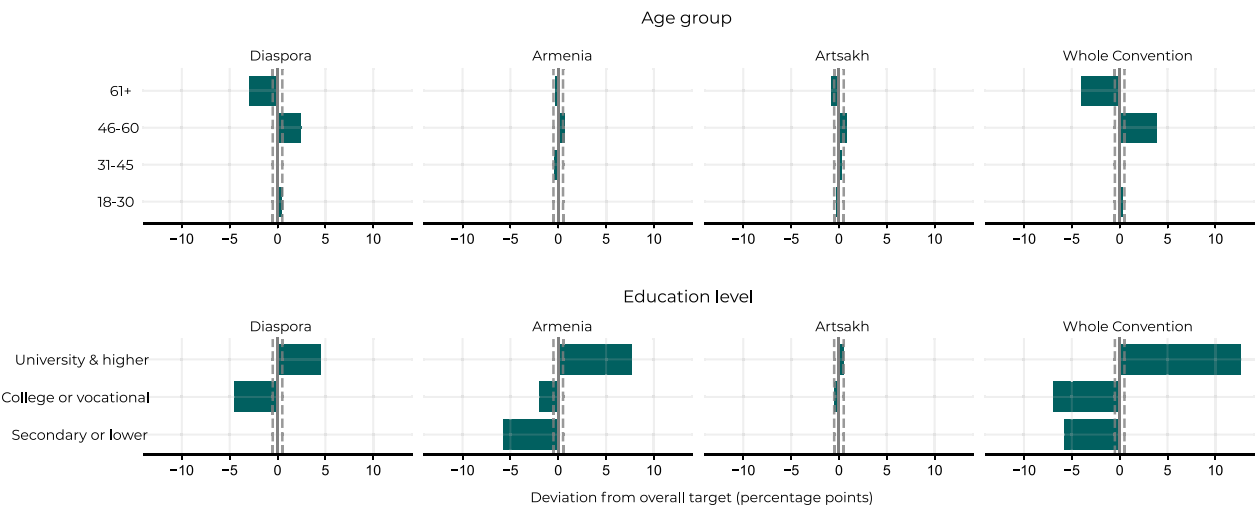


Figure 6: Deviation from the desired distribution of participants according to age group and education level, relative to the overall percentages (not the percentages within each geographic group). The dotted lines indicate  $\pm 0.5$  percentage points, which equates to one whole person.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that due to the sudden closure of the Lachin Corridor, it was not possible for participants residing in Artsakh to attend. Participants who usually reside in Artsakh, but were in Armenia at the time of the corridor's closure, were able to participate (two out of ten).

## GROUPS AND COUNTRIES OF THE CONVENTION'S 200 PARTICIPANTS

### GROUP 1. DIASPORA

**100 participants**

Russia - 39

USA - 20

France - 9

Georgia - 6

Iran - 2

Turkey - 2

Austria - 1

Belgium - 1

Germany - 1

Greece - 1

Spain - 1

Sweden - 1

Belarus - 2

Kazakhstan - 1

Moldova - 1

Ukraine - 2

Egypt - 1

Jordan - 1

Lebanon - 2

Argentina - 2

Colombia - 1

Canada - 2

Sri Lanka - 1

### GROUP 2. ARMENIA

**90 participants**

Ararat - 8

Armavir - 8

Aragatsotn - 4

Cegharkunik - 7

Kotayk - 7

Lori - 6

Shirak - 7

Syunik - 4

Tavush - 4

Vayots Dzor - 1

Yerevan - 34

### GROUP 3. ARTSAKH

**10 participants**

Urban - 3

Rural - 2

Stepanakert - 5

Table 2: Countries and country groups of the Convention's 200 participants





## 2.2.4 ENABLING PARTICIPATION

In order to be inclusive, deliberative processes must ensure that it is equally possible for participants to attend, irrespective of their time availability and commitments, financial resources, and responsibilities such as care. For these reasons, all participants had their transportation and accommodation costs covered by the Convention's budget.

All materials, surveys, and voting forms were available in three languages: Armenian, English and Russians. Translators were also provided for anyone not fluent in Armenian during the deliberations.





## 2.3 QUESTION FORMING AND PREPARATION OF LEARNING MATERIALS BY EXPERT COMMITTEES

### 2.3.1 THE ROLE OF EXPERTS

In preparation for the Convention, The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative invited a number of high-profile experts in their fields from both Armenia and the Diaspora to form the framing questions for the Convention's deliberations<sup>c</sup> (for the "Framing question guidelines" see "Rules and Regulations" section on the CFA website), and to support the learning phase by preparing all necessary documents and materials<sup>d</sup> (for "Terms of Reference for the Expert Committees" see "Rules and Regulations" section on the CFA website). In line with the requirements for citizens' assemblies, the work of these committees was necessary to make balanced, well-justified expert knowledge available to participants on the Goals to be deliberated - in this case the three goals previously selected. The experts were invited to participate in coordinated group work and meetings, which were divided into three separate committees corresponding to the three Goals of the Convention.

The main roles of the Expert Committees included:

- Defining framing questions based on the guidelines
- Supporting a fair, balanced, and comprehensive work program for the Convention
- Providing background expert advice on the issues being discussed
- Providing auxiliary papers and literature on the Goals discussed
- Advising on the criteria for selecting speakers to appear before the Convention

- Providing feedback and content after each round of group discussion
- Providing feedback on the final scenarios
- Participating in the piloting of the Convention

### 2.3.2 FORMATION OF EXPERT COMMITTEES

Based on the thematic characteristics of each Expert Committee and the main problems put forward for discussion, the CFA invited hundreds of experts from Armenia and the Diaspora to participate in the regular work of the committees. For this purpose, invitations were sent to many scientists, scholars, theoreticians, experts, analysts, and other specialists in the academic and social spheres. After accepting the invitations, experts were included in the relevant committee and had the opportunity to nominate the participation of other experts in the work of the committees.

Three committees were formed in August 2022 and chaired by three well-known and respected Armenians to coordinate the work:

- Archbishop Khajag Barsamian (Historic Responsibility)
- Aram Abrahamyan (Armenia-Diaspora Unity)
- Armine K. Hovannisian (Growing Population)

The role of each chairperson was to facilitate expert discussions and act as a speaker during the Convention. Throughout the discussion, all chairs remained impartial and did not attempt to influence the discussion in a particular direction, keeping it focused on framing questions. To ensure that the discussion was fair and open, the chairs gave every expert an equal chance to speak and provided fair and balanced information about the proposed Goal or question to all experts of the committees.

<sup>c</sup> <https://futurearmenian.com/convention/rules-and-regulations/>

<sup>d</sup> <https://futurearmenian.com/convention/rules-and-regulations/>



### 2.3.3 THE WORK OF EXPERT COMMITTEES

For six months, in offline, online, and hybrid meeting formats, more than 100 representatives of the three Expert Committees discussed and developed possible scenarios for the realization of Goals, strategic directions, draft proposals, and programs, providing relevant expert justifications for each of them. For each of the three Goals, experts outlined several 'viewpoints' which helped break down the whole Goal into concrete questions and issues. Over the months, the committee members documented the current situation in terms of each viewpoint, collecting factual data on each issue and articulating the main problems.

After outlining the range of problems and issues, the committees were tasked with defining ways of solving them, thereby crafting a 'menu' of discussion points and practical proposals to facilitate the eventual deliberations of the Convention. Many opposing opinions added to the richness of the discussions and were all recorded by the organizing team, who built a draft version of these materials.

After more than two-dozen meetings, the draft materials were presented at the last pre-convention meeting of the Expert Committees in February 2023. Here, the three committees discussed the issues in mixed groups rather than within only their specialist areas. They discussed concrete policies and suggested possible initiatives, programs, and solutions in the form of recommendations corresponding to each viewpoint. This meeting resulted in over 300 comments and suggestions, which were factored into the final materials presented to the Convention.

The final versions of Viewpoints as presented to the consideration of the Convention are contained in the Appendix 2.

During the Convention in March 2023, experts attended each day's discussions in person to provide expert assistance to the participants, and observed the proceedings to reflect on how the materials were received. Their feedback will provide extremely valuable lessons to be incorporated into the design of future events.

More details about the Expert Committees and their members are available on the CFA website. Details of the work of each committee is described below.





## HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY

The Expert Committee on Historic Responsibility was mainly focused on the ideological and practical issues of the historic responsibility of the Armenian people. One of the primary goals of the committee was to define possible ways of ensuring intergenerational responsibility. This involved developing strategies and frameworks that could be used to preserve Armenian heritage, culture, and historical knowledge, and ensure that present generations understand both the complex historical events that have shaped their society, and how these may influence future generations and events. The committee worked to identify key educational, institutional, and project-based practices that could help promote a greater understanding of historic responsibility among Armenians, find new ways of rethinking the responsibility and traditional attitude towards many historical events, and foster a sense of accountability and responsibility among individuals and groups.

Over six meetings (five online and one in person), the committee addressed many topics and discussed issues such as:

- making all Armenians more proactive and formulating a pan-Armenian way of thinking;
- determining and clarifying the entity in charge of historic responsibility;
- outlining and putting together all possible commonalities between Diaspora Armenians and Armenians of Armenia;
- the historic responsibility of all Armenians for the Armenian genocide and possible mechanisms to prevent such crimes in the future;
- legal, lobbying, scientific, educational, political, foreign policy, communicative, and narrative perspectives on the Armenian genocide;
- ensuring the preservation and recognition of Armenian heritage and the responsibility of keeping Armenians' national identity and passing it onto the next generations.





## ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY

The Expert Committee on Armenia-Diaspora Unity addressed the challenges and issues affecting the relationship between Armenia and its Diaspora communities around the world. The primary objective of the committee was to identify these issues and develop strategies to address them, with the ultimate goal of promoting stable cooperation and mutual assistance between Armenia and its Diaspora.

To achieve this goal, the committee considered a wealth of existing research and analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to tensions and misunderstandings between Armenia and its Diaspora. This included examining historical, political, and cultural factors that may affect the relationship between the two groups, as well as identifying the practical challenges and barriers to effective communication and cooperation.

Once the committee had identified these issues, in later meetings it worked to develop concrete solutions that could help promote a more collaborative and mutually supportive relationship between Armenia and its Diaspora communities. These solutions involved changes in policy, new mechanisms and fields of collaboration, investment in communication and outreach, and the development of new initiatives, pan-Armenian movements, and programs designed to address specific concerns and challenges.

After seven meetings (three online, three in-person and one hybrid), the committee managed to address many important issues and questions, such as:

- the current state of Armenia-Diaspora relations and prospects for the future
- the possibility of ensuring unity in Armenia-Diaspora relations and the ways and means to achieve it
- options for the participation of Diaspora representatives in Armenia's social and political life
- mutual responsibility and clarification of duties in Armenia-Diaspora relations
- the provision of integrated education for Diaspora Armenians in Armenia's universities, and possibilities for joint development of the education sector
- the creation of possible networks within academic circles
- eliminating existing trust issues between Armenia and the Diaspora and increasing opportunities for cooperation
- studying successful models of cooperation between Armenia and the Diaspora.

## GROWING POPULATION

The work of the Expert Committee on Growing Population was dedicated to studying and addressing the demographic challenges facing the Republic of Armenia. The committee's main objective was to develop strategies and policies that can help increase the population of Armenia and mitigate the negative impacts of population decline.

During the meetings, all experts on the committee engaged in in-depth discussions and analyses of the state of population growth and migration in Armenia. This included examining factors such as birth rates, mortality rates, fertility rates, and migration patterns, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing Armenia's population as well as ethnic Armenians worldwide.

The committee worked to identify possible solutions to these challenges. This involved the development of policies and initiatives designed to incentivize population growth, raising awareness of the importance of public health, and lobbying foreign governments to ensure the safety and demographic stabilization of Armenians in the Diaspora. Committee recommendations also included family support programs, policies, and initiatives aimed at encouraging young families to have children. Finally, the committee explored ways to address the negative impacts of migration, such as brain drain or the loss of skilled workers, as well as the possible positive outcomes of more controlled migration.







The committee held six meetings (two online, two in-person, and two hybrid), in which the experts covered issues and questions about demography, such as:

- Armenia's demographic situation and possible scenarios to alter the current demographic picture in the near and distant future
- the necessity of formulating a single goal regarding demography at the state and societal levels
- possibilities for repatriating people to their homeland and keeping them in Armenia
- the importance of the formation and preservation of the Armenian identity of Armenians born and raised in the Diaspora
- the necessity of solving security issues to incentivize immigration and reduce emigration
- mechanisms and programs for returning Armenians who have emigrated back to Armenia, and possibilities for facilitating immigration among members of the Diaspora, as well as the immigration of foreigners
- programmatic and strategic recommendations supporting the public role of women and single mothers
- institutions and structures responsible for solving demographic problems
- other issues and questions about birth rate, life expectancy, mortality, population aging, healthcare, marriages and divorces, employment, the necessity of support for young families, ensuring educational opportunities, and natural growth of the population.

## 2.4 DELIBERATION PROCESS

### 2.4.1 PROCESS DELIVERY TEAM

#### FACILITATORS

Facilitation is key to the success of any deliberative process. Facilitators make sure that discussions remain on-topic and adhere to time constraints, while supporting generative learning and ensuring that the diverse voices of all participants are heard equally. Facilitators at the Convention were expected to:

- focus on the process over the subject
- keep to time
- keep the discussion within the context of the framing question
- ensure effective communication among participants
- respect both group and individual interests
- help participants feel that their voice counts
- prevent observers from intervening or otherwise impacting discussions
- assist in organizational matters such as voting procedures.

The majority of the Convention's facilitators were seasoned in 21st Century Town Meeting or citizens' summit processes. They received two days of training on citizens' assembly methodology, deliberation (as opposed to dialogue and debate), and soft skills such as active listening, effective communication, non-verbal communication, inquiry, the ladder of inference, and how to deal with partisan perceptions. Beyond this, they were briefed in detail on the framing questions, and guided through scenarios to prepare them for the topics and format of the Convention.

#### NOTETAKERS

The outputs of a deliberative process are not only votes and recommendations. Every word spoken by participants represents part of the collective insight, so recording these faithfully was of utmost importance. Notetakers, therefore, performed a critical role in writing down the thoughts and opinions of participants as accurately as possible.

#### MANAGERS

The content produced by notetakers as they record the comments of 200 participants is extensive, and requires some management to be usable thereafter. In any deliberative process, a copyediting and/or aggregation function is performed by 'managers', 'editors', or other similarly named roles. Some methodologies, such as 21st Century Town Meetings, require this material to be rapidly checked and sent to a screen for all to see, while in others, such as citizens' assemblies, a more detailed aggregation of participant consensus and divergence may take place between sessions to inform deliberations thereafter. The Convention followed the 21st Century Town Meetings model in this regard, with a team of managers ensuring that a continuous stream of statements and quotes were visible on a large screen for all participants to see.

*"We must continue to educate. Education will provide us with distinct abilities so that we can respond correctly and quickly to the changing situation and advance our interests."*

*Participant comment recorded by  
notetaker*



## 2.4.2 DELIBERATION STRUCTURE

Deliberation at this first Convention of the Future Armenian was structured over three days, with one day for each of the three Goals selected. Upon arrival, participants were seated at tables with up to nine of their peers and presented with written learning materials based on the distinct viewpoints developed by the Expert Committees (see Section 2.3.3), as well as other supporting data describing empirical evidence on the discussion topic. Tables were semi-randomly assigned each day to ensure a diversity of age, gender, and country of residence. Each day followed a similar format:

- Opening remarks and voting results from the previous day (if applicable)
- A learning phase, consisting of a 20 minute oral presentation by the chair of the relevant Expert Committee, followed by a 20 minute video covering the same material as that contained in the document-based learning materials
- Facilitated deliberations interspersed with lunch and coffee breaks
- Voting.

Deliberation was led by facilitators who supported participants to engage with the viewpoints described in the learning materials, using them as the foundation for the conversation.

There was no prescriptive structure imposed upon the conversations, but facilitators were encouraged to direct participants on a three-stage journey for each viewpoint under discussion:

**Stage 1:** The present reality, considerations, and problems

**Stage 2:** Potential policies, strategic direction

**Stage 3:** Desirable scenarios, practical initiatives, and projects.

Participants were encouraged to explore their underlying values as triggers for discussions, with facilitators attentive to areas of generative disagreement on each table's collective journey towards the practical 'how' for each viewpoint.

In the tradition of 21st Century Town Meeting methodology, notetakers at each table captured participants' contributions on a networked laptop computer. These were collated in real-time by a team of managers who transmitted the comments to a large screen visible to the whole room. During the 3 days of the Convention, a total of 3647 comments were collected from the participants.





## 2.4.3 ARRIVING AT RECOMMENDATIONS

A common output from a deliberative process is a series of recommendations passed onto a decision making body, such as government, parliament, or a local authority.

In the case of the CFA, and in line with The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative's theory of change, the recommendations produced at the Convention, besides being addressed to the authorities, traditional Armenian institutions and large public in general are also aimed at establishing a network of business and civil society actors, referred to as the Affiliation Network.

There were two types of outputs that the Convention's participants voted on: the recommended initiatives, and a series of collective statements to ascertain the participants' collective perspective on the Goals more broadly.

Due to the short time frame and extensive content of the Convention, the statements and initiatives to be voted upon were drafted in advance by the Expert Committees. For a short time each day, nominated participants from each table<sup>22</sup> met to review these drafts, bearing in mind the discussions and consensus emerging at each of their tables. Collectively, these representatives were able to propose changes, additions, and deletions to the ballots, which would be made ready by the Convention's organizing team in time for votes to be cast at the end of the day.

A full record of the votes cast can be found in Section 3.



<sup>22</sup> Known as the 'Oversight and Voting Committee'. See section 3.1 for details.

## 2.5 PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCE

In order to assess the impact of taking part in the Convention's process on the participants, surveys were conducted on the first and last days of deliberations. They were designed to reveal insights about participants' perspectives on the Convention's topics, and sociopolitical processes in general.

Overall, people with diverse views, interests, and demography shared common attitudes and concerns towards Armenia and the Convention topics specifically.

### 2.5.1 INITIAL PERSPECTIVES

Initially, participants were asked to evaluate their interest, concerns, confidence in their understanding, and perceptions of the relevance of each of the Convention's Goals.

Figures 7, 8, and 9 show that participants showed a high level of interest in all Goals, were concerned about them and felt they were relevant Goals for the discussions of Armenians around the world (almost 90% very or quite interested/concerned/relevant).

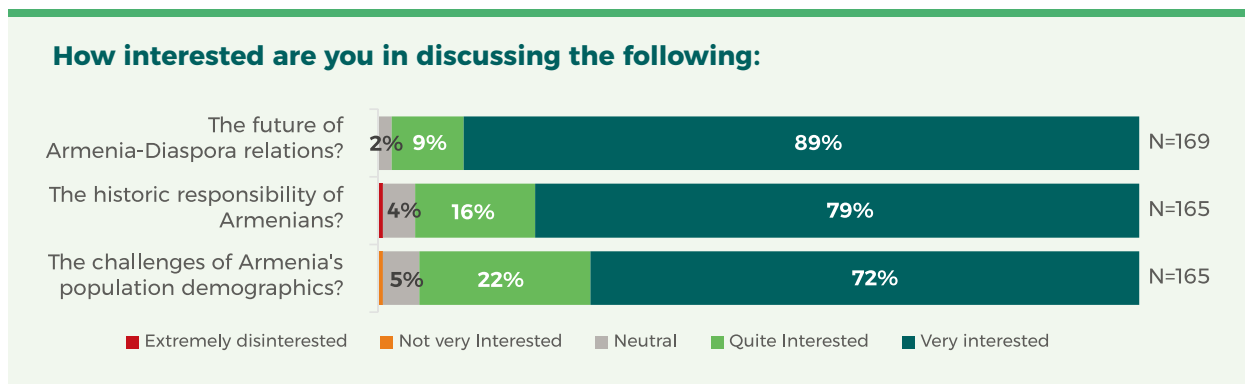


Figure 7: Participants' interest in discussing the Goals of the Convention

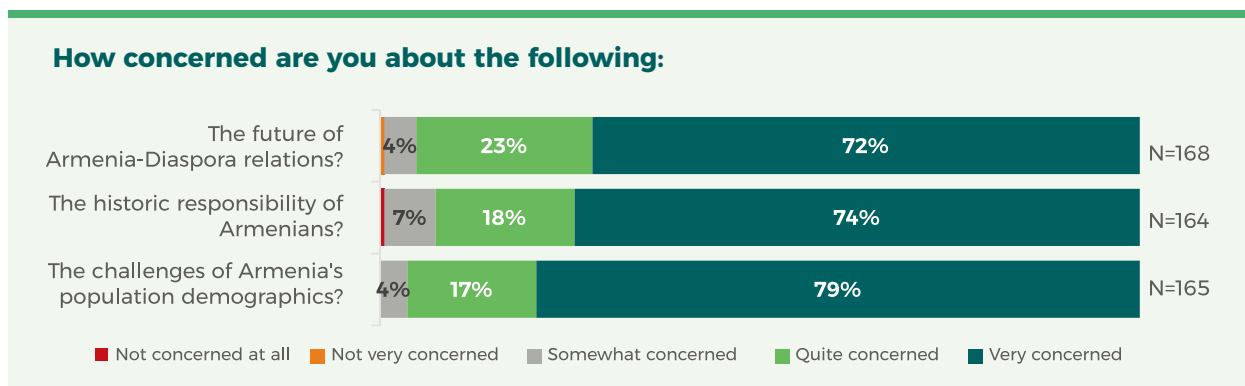


Figure 8: Participants' concern for the Goals of the Convention

## How relevant is the discussion of the following topics for the Armenians around the world?

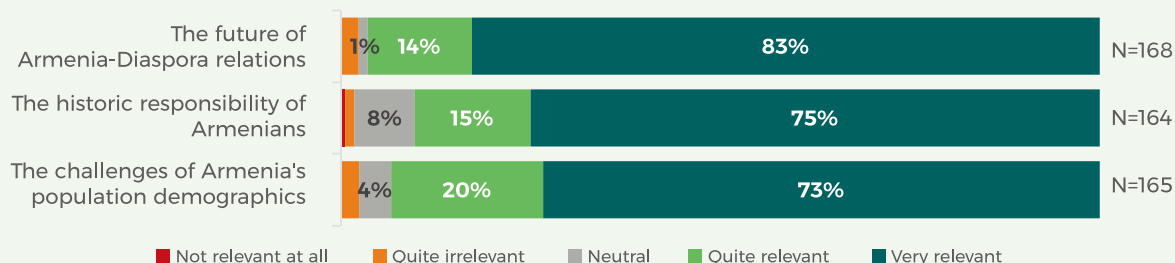


Figure 9: Participants' perception of the relevance of the Conventions' Goals

## PARTICIPANTS' OUTLOOK

Looking beyond the Convention's process (Figure 10), participants were collectively consistent in their anticipation that the CFA will (1) make a contribution to the formation of a pan-Armenian agenda; (2) promote the mission of uniting the efforts of the Armenian people and common responsibility toward solving Armenian statehood issues; and (3) promote self-empowerment. For each, around 85% of participants were split between anticipating 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' of impact from these categories. They were more skeptical that the CFA would overcome polarization, but 95% still reported positive or neutral sentiments.

## Do you think the Convention of the Future Armenian will:

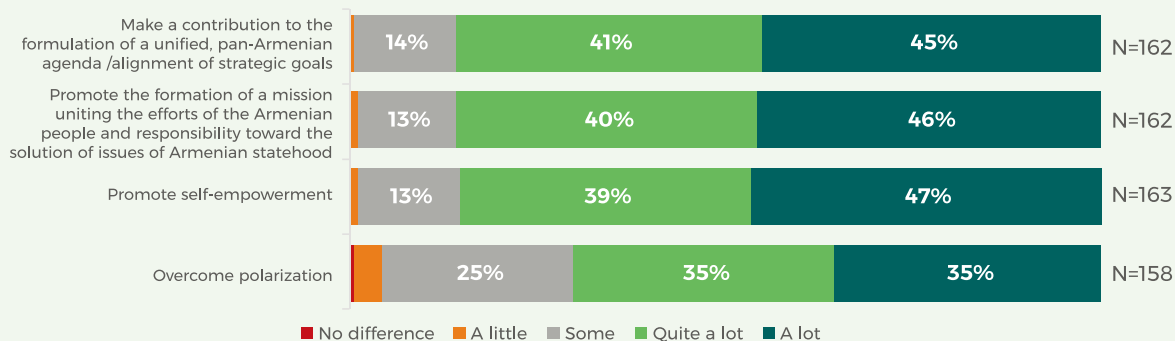


Figure 10: Participants' expectations of the impact the Convention will have

*"These types of events are a very good idea, for example, promoting uninterrupted communication between Armenia and the Diaspora."*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*



## POLITICAL INTEREST AND ATTITUDES

The Convention participants varied not only by their demography, but also by their political views (Figure 11). 41% of respondents identified as democrat, 31% categorized themselves as nationalists, 14% as liberal, 13% as conservative, and 8% each as libertarian and socialist. Amongst the Diaspora, 52% of respondents identified as a democrat, while in Armenia the number was 30%, although it is worth noting that more than 20% of respondents in Armenia declined to answer the question.

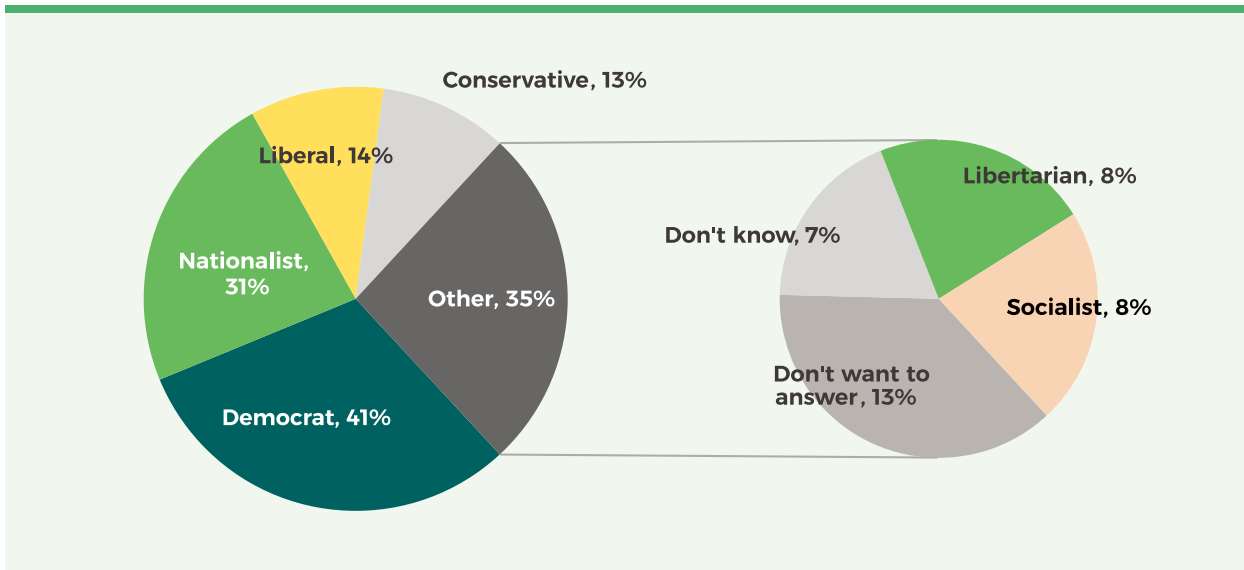


Figure 11: Breakdown of participants' political views

Figure 12 shows that nearly 80% of respondents reported being very interested or quite interested in politics. Participants in the Diaspora seem to have slightly higher interest than in Armenia (84% vs 73%), which may not be surprising given the extra efforts required for them to attend the Convention.

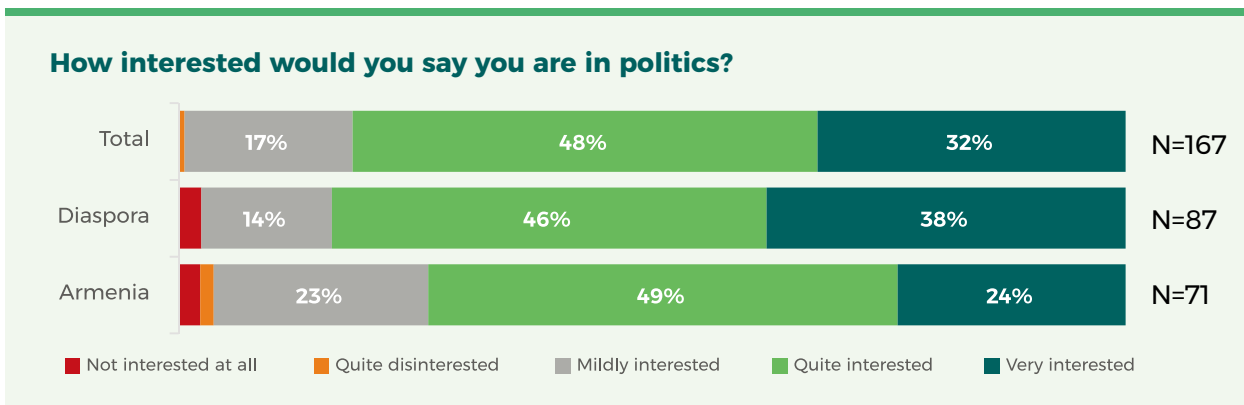


Figure 12: Participants' self-assessed level of interest in politics before the Convention

Another measure of political activity is to ask how active people are in political and civil society activities. The results show that not all participants are necessarily active in these areas, but a significant number are engaged in each of the items listed in Figure 13. Notably, these results reveal that over three-quarter of respondents had engaged in volunteering or unpaid help, suggesting a strong tendency for communitarian spirit, and that over one-third had interacted with politicians directly.

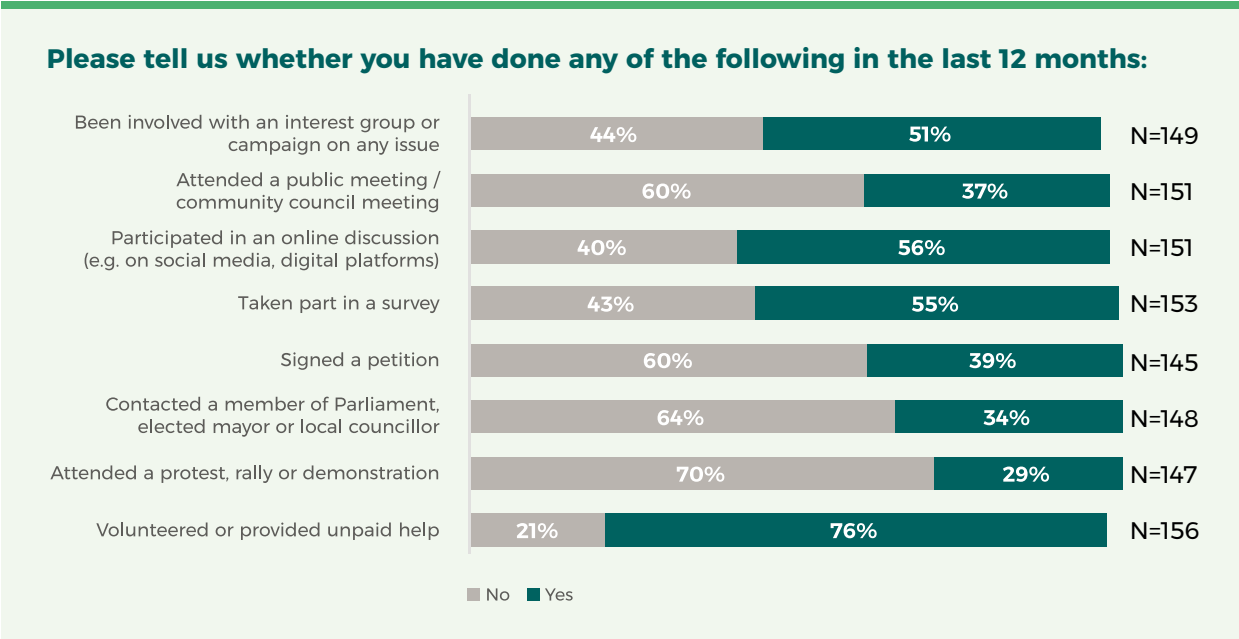


Figure 13: Political and civic activities engaged in by participants’ in the year prior to the Convention

As for their sense of influence in Armenian politics specifically, only 8% of respondents felt they had a say in the activities of the Armenian government, with a clear majority disagreeing with the notion (see Figure 14). A slightly lower majority disagreed with the statement “No system is perfect, but the political system in Armenia works fairly well”.

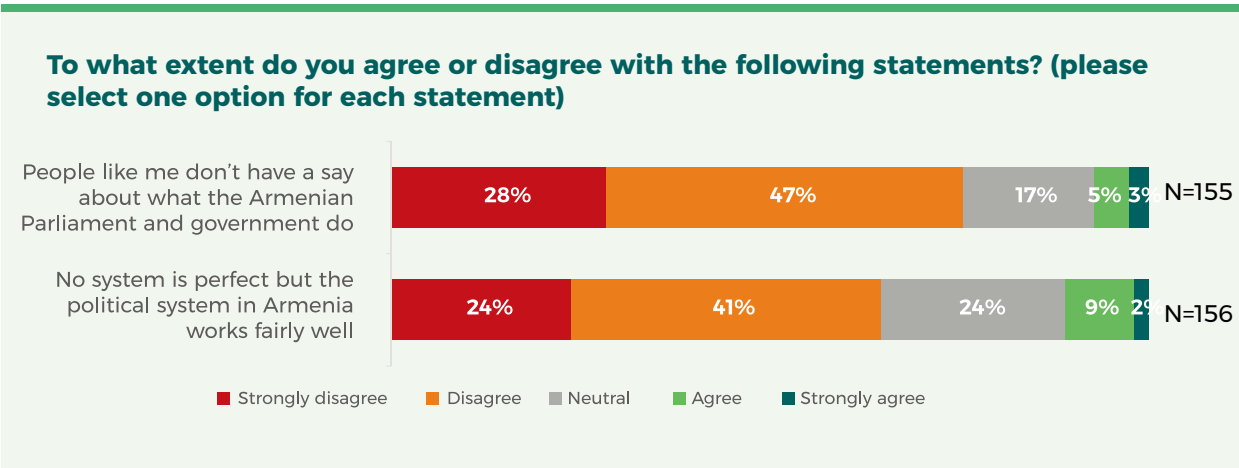


Figure 14: Participants’ feelings about the Armenian government and their influence on it

## PARTICIPATING IN DELIBERATION

On a more personal level, participants were asked to give their views on various aspects of group discussions, such as their ability to discuss, debate, and present their own views. Figure 15 shows that the vast majority of respondents reported that they enjoy deliberative activities and are comfortable with disagreement and speaking in a group, as well as claiming characteristics of open-mindedness and humility.

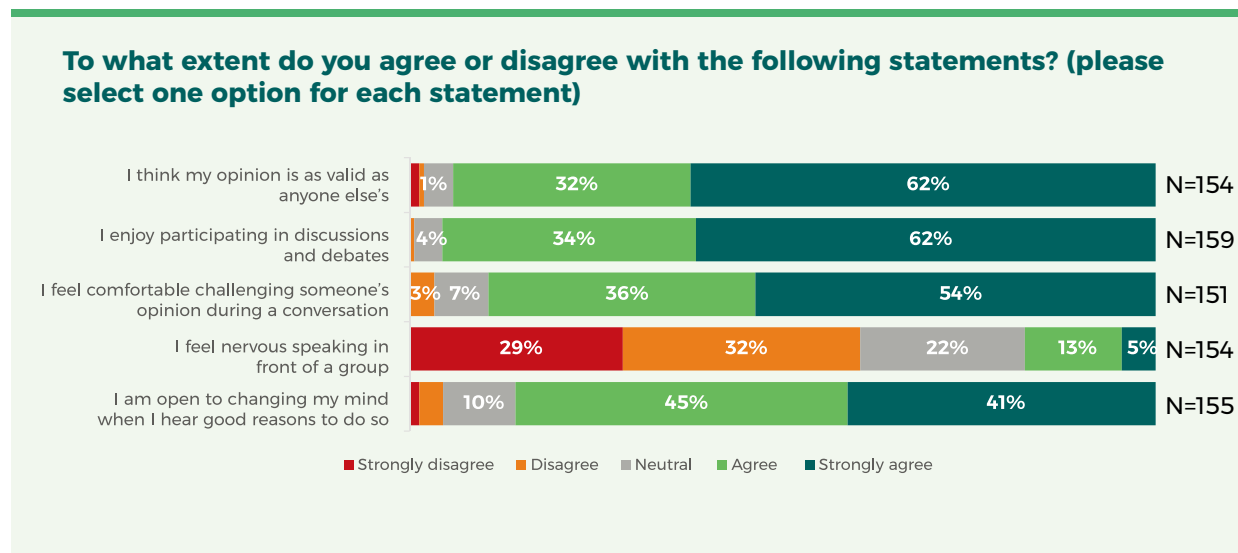


Figure 15: Participants' feelings about participating in group discussions

Reflecting on other people's abilities (Figure 16), more than half of respondents expressed positive expectations of their peers' abilities to contribute politically, and more than three quarters were confident that people could change their views when presented with compelling reasons.

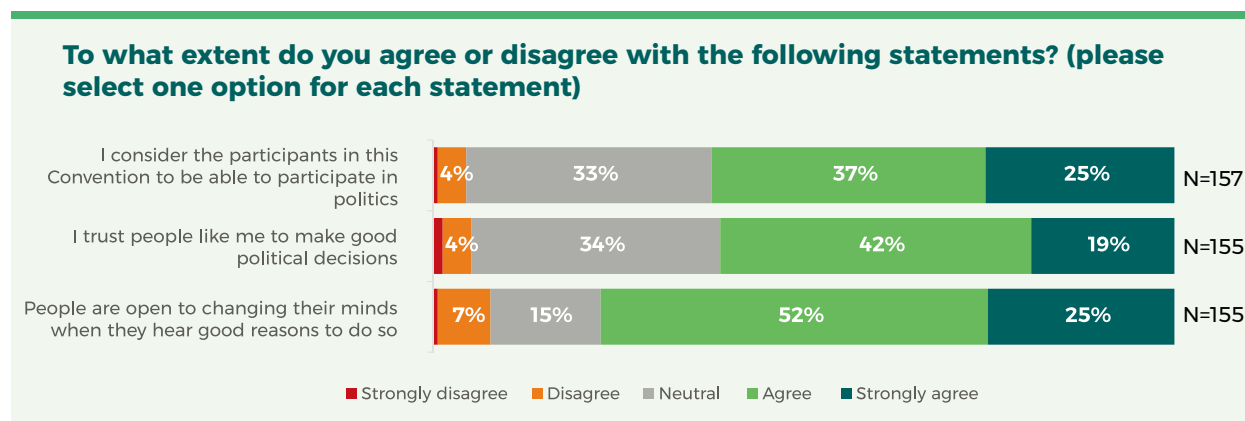


Figure 16: Participants' opinions about other people's ability to contribute to group discussions

Overall then, at the beginning of the Convention, participants were considerably interested in the topics at hand, and were ready to talk about them. They collectively represented a diverse spectrum of political beliefs, and many were actively engaged in other civic and political activities. They had little confidence in the Armenian government, and were quite optimistic about the ability of fellow citizens to rationally contribute to big political questions.



## 2.5.2 EFFECT OF THE PROCESS ON OPINIONS

Some survey questions were asked on both the first and last days of the Convention. This section compares some of these responses to reveal the impact the process may have had on participants' perspectives. The response rate of between 150 and 170 out of 200 represents a 3-4% margin of error at 95% confidence level.

### INTEREST TOWARDS THE TOPICS

Taken together, the Day 1 and Day 3 surveys show a slight decrease in the collective interest of respondents towards the Goals of the first two days (Armenia-Diaspora relations and Historic Responsibility), although the absolute numbers still remain very high (Figure 17). Interest in the Goal of the third day (Growing Population) slightly increased, albeit with less people very interested than on Day 1. Perhaps these results partially indicate that a certain amount of curiosity had been satisfied.

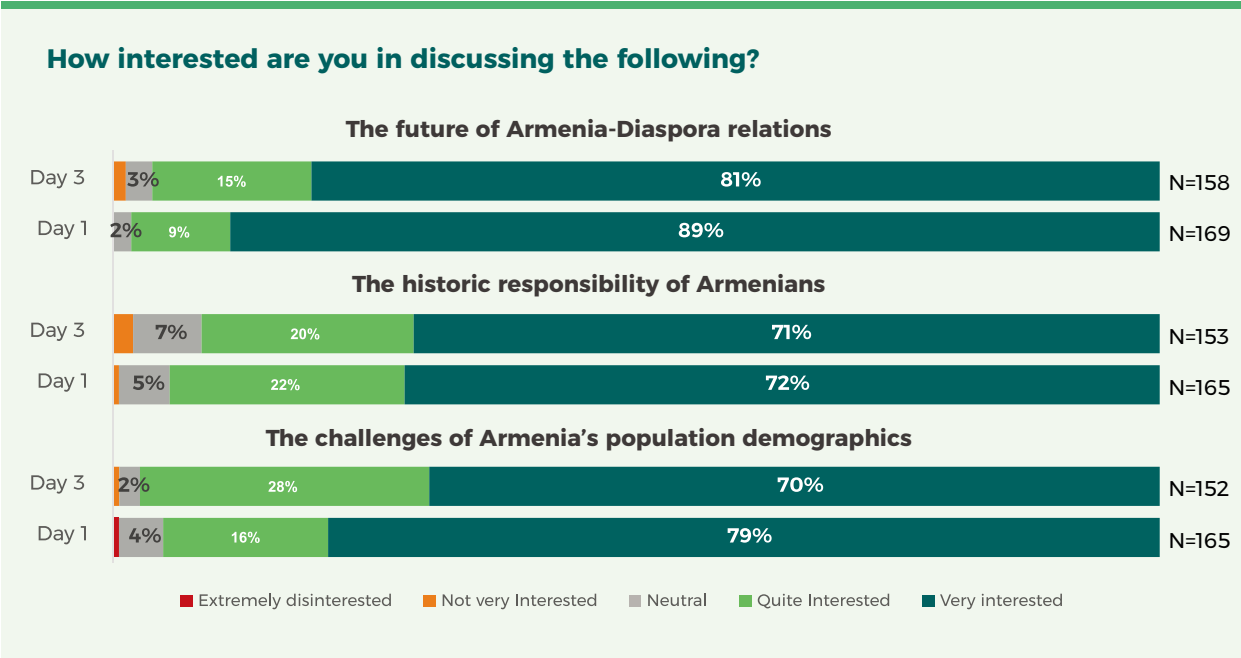


Figure 17: Participants' interest in discussing the Convention's Goals on the first and last days of the Convention



## CONFIDENCE IN THE GOALS

While interest may have waned slightly, participants' confidence in their understanding of the Goals increased over the three days, especially for the issue of Armenia's population demographics. As Figure 18 shows, the percentage of people who were confident or very confident in their understanding of the Convention's three key issues increased by 12% for Armenia-Diaspora relations, 9% for historic responsibility, and 23% for demographic issues.

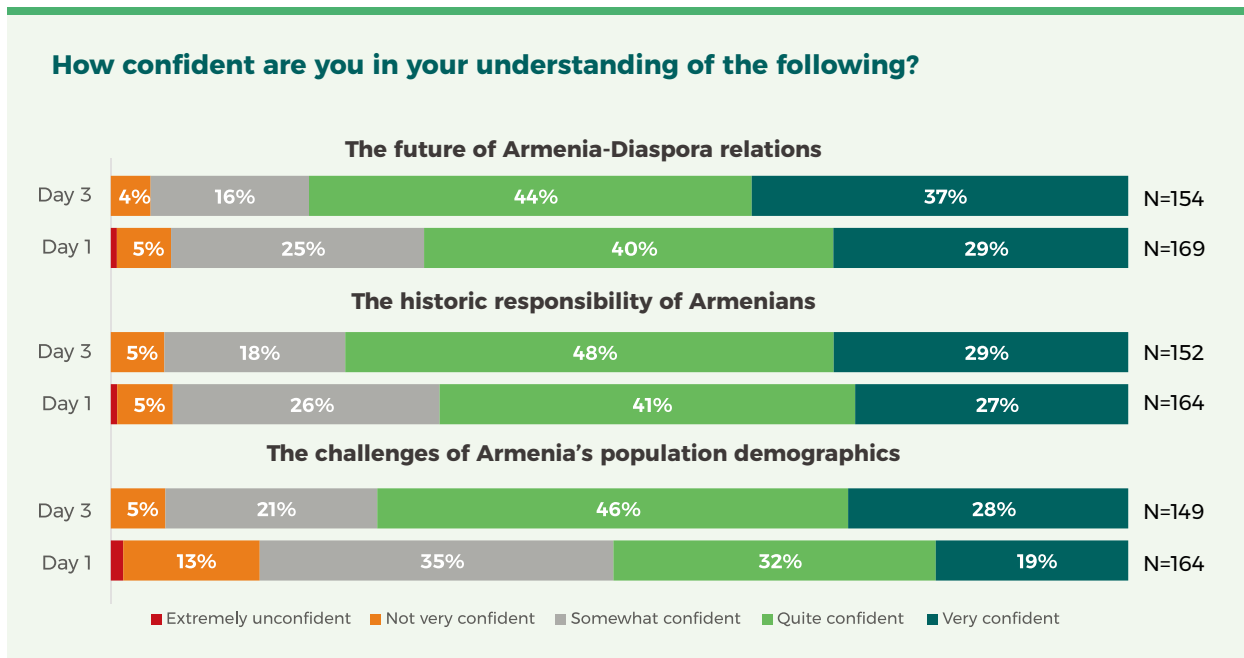


Figure 18: Participants' confidence in their understanding of the Convention's Goals on the first and last days of the Convention

## CONNECTION AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

Finally, it is possible to compare changes in respondents' feelings towards the future of Armenia, and the connection they feel to the nation (Figure 19). The slight positive and negative changes fall within the margin of error for the response rate. Participants' connection to Armenia and its history therefore remained strong (at least 90% positive responses for both). The need for Diaspora Armenians to retain a strong connection was also almost universally agreed upon. The question of whether Armenia has a bright future elicited a higher degree of neutrality than the others in Figure 19, however the median respondent is still comfortably in the range of agreeing with the statement.

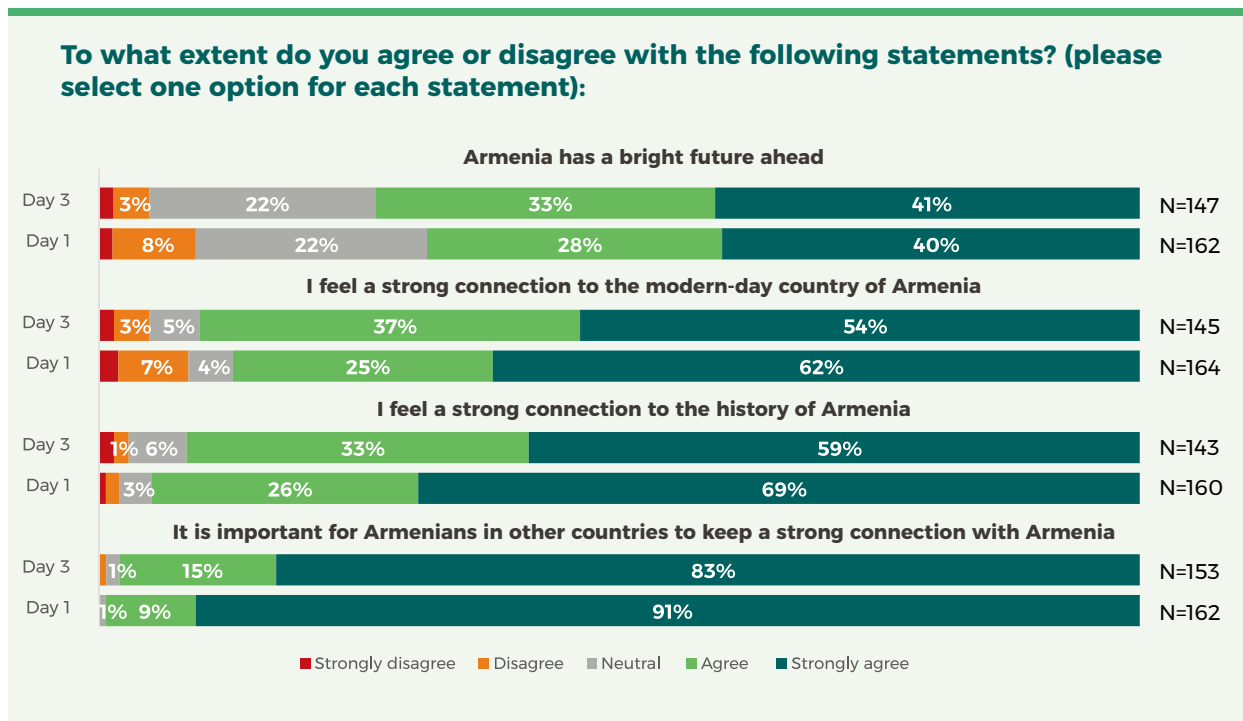
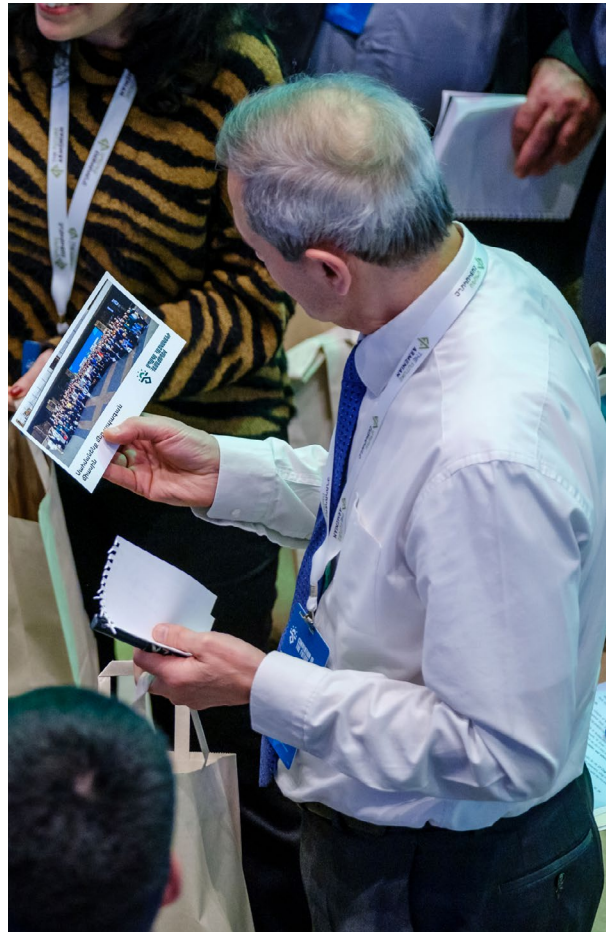


Figure 19: Participants' agreement with several statements about the future and their connection to Armenia on the first and last days of the Convention









# FULL VOTING RECORD OF THE CONVENTION

## Օր 3. Բնակչության աճ

Կաքանչյուր աղյուսակում ընտրեք մեկ պատասխան.

Բնակչության աճ ապահովելու արդյունավետության տեսանկյունից ամենապահանջին հեղինակությունը ո՞ր ուղղությանը պետք է ուղղել.

1. Ծնելիության աճ
2. Արտագաղթի նվազեցում
3. Ներգաղթի ապագայում
4. Բոլորը միասնականակ
5. Այլ զեղչարժան

### 3.2 Ճիշդ է ասացի՞ր, ինչու.

1. Արդյունավետ՝ հաստատված չէ. հետազոտությունները ցուցաբերում են, որ բնակչության աճը ապահովելու ամենապահանջին հեղինակությունը ուղղվելու է.
2. Բնակչության աճը ապահովելու ամենապահանջին հեղինակությունը ուղղվելու է.
3. Բնակչության աճը ապահովելու ամենապահանջին հեղինակությունը ուղղվելու է.
4. Այլ զեղչարժան



At the end of each day, participants voted on two types of ballots. On one, they selected a single response to a question or statement, while on the other they selected a certain number of recommendations from a longer list of practical initiatives, to be carried forward by the affiliation network. Due to the short timeframe of the Convention, these initiatives and statements were drafted in advance by the Expert Committees. Before voting, the oversight and voting committee met to adapt the questions if they wished to, taking into account the deliberations they had experienced so far that day.

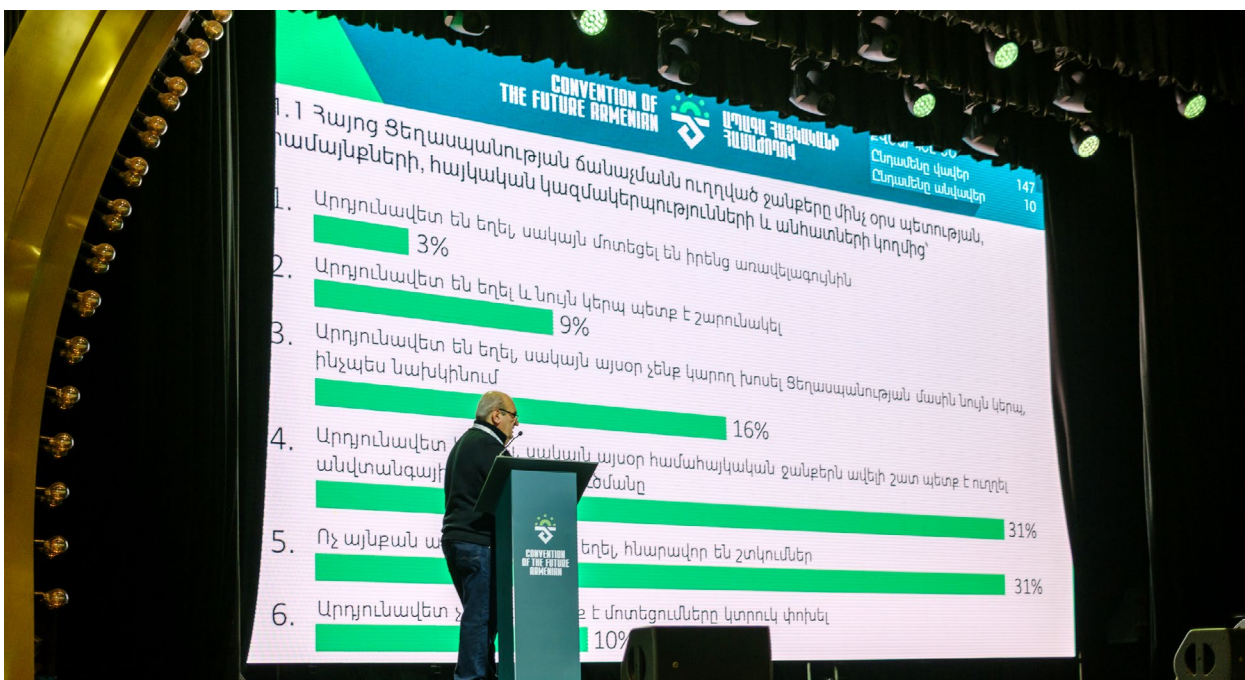
## 3.1 OVERSIGHT AND VOTING COMMITTEE

On the first day of the Convention, a subgroup of participants was elected to form the oversight and voting committee which was responsible for organizing the voting on position statements and recommendations for initiatives. One member of the committee was elected from each table, resulting in a group composed of 20 participants. The committee then elected a chair (Arick Gevorkian) and two vice-chairs (Lyudmila Mkrtchyan, Narine Grigoryan) from amongst its members to coordinate the counting of ballots each day. The committee was divided into three groups (two of seven, one of six), so that counting responsibilities were carried out by different members each day.

The responsibilities of the committee were to:

- Determine the composition of the coordinating and calculating group for each day
- Approve the list of initiatives and position statements to be voted upon each day, and the threshold for the acceptance of recommended initiatives
- Alter, add, or remove voting options (two position statement questions were dropped, five recommendations were added)
- Approve the procedure for electing three participants as members of the Advisory and Program Committee of the Foundation
- Confirm the voting results for each day.

All committee decisions were made as a result of an open vote requiring majority consent (11 of the 20 members). The coordinator of the committee presented the voting results to everyone each day.





# 3.2 RECORD OF PARTICIPANTS’ VOTES ON POSITION STATEMENTS

This section shows the level of support for each of the position statements voted upon by the Convention (see the voting rules in “Rules and Regulations” section of CFA website<sup>c</sup>). Participants were asked to choose one option for each question. The statements which received the highest level of support are highlighted in bold. A record of all the observations from the participants during 3 days of discussions are available on CFA website.

## 3.2.1 HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY (DAY ONE)

<b>1.1. Efforts aimed at recognizing the Armenian Genocide by the state, communities, Armenian organizations and individuals to date:</b>	
They have been effective, but they’re nearing their maximum potential	3.41%
They have been effective and should be streamlined in the same way (if you continue at the same pace, you’ll reach new milestones)	8.84%
They have been effective, but we cannot talk about the Genocide today in the same way we did before	16.33%
<b>They have been effective, but today, pan-Armenian efforts should be directed more toward solving security problems</b>	<b>30.61%</b>
<b>They have not been very effective, and so changes in the approach may be needed</b>	<b>30.61%</b>
They have not been effective, and so the approaches should be drastically changed	10.21%
<b>1.2. The issue of Artsakh is:</b>	
It is an issue for the 120,000 residents of Artsakh	2.65%
It is an issue for the 120,000 residents of Artsakh and the 3 million Armenians in Armenia	4.64%
<b>It is an issue for the 10 million Armenians around the world</b>	<b>92.71%</b>

*“The Armenian genocide should be considered an integral part of the Armenian question and the issues of Armenia and Artsakh. The Armenian question is not only about the past, but also about our present and future, on which we need to work daily.”*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*

### 1.3. Select one of the observations below:

<b>Armenians all over the world should jointly assume responsibility for Artsakh and not leave the state and the citizens of Armenia and, even more so, the people of Artsakh, alone to solve this issue. The Armenian nation should not be afraid of victories.</b>	<b>54.84%</b>
The issue of Artsakh is a complex negotiation process. After the 2020 war, the positions of Armenia and the security of Artsakh have weakened. Today, the situation has stabilized with the assistance of Russian peacekeepers and European observers. Adventurism is dangerous.	6.45%
These two claims don't contradict each other	29.03%
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	9.68%

### 1.4. Our approach to heritage preservation:

<b>It is our duty to preserve our historical and cultural heritage and pass it on to the next generations. Both the state and Armenians around the world should dedicate as many resources as necessary to this purpose, and do this effectively</b>	<b>61.74%</b>
We should be able to preserve our historical and cultural heritage similar to a business profit model. This means viewing our heritage not as a burden or responsibility, but rather as a valuable asset that can generate revenue and be further developed while also being preserved for future generations	28.86%
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional observations from voting)	9.40%

### 1.5. Regarding the Armenian language and Armenian preservation:

To facilitate communication among Diaspora community institutions, the Church, and Armenia, it is essential to make the Armenian language mandatory. This will encourage Armenian youth from all over the world to learn and embrace their language and culture	19.36%
<b>While knowledge of the Armenian language is undoubtedly important, it should be acknowledged that language is merely a tool, and the act of forcing language knowledge can often have the opposite effect. Instead, it is crucial to create an environment and implement effective mechanisms that make learning Armenian both beneficial and interesting for individuals. Only then can we expect to encourage Armenian youth from around the world to learn and embrace their language and culture</b>	<b>72.90%</b>
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	7.74%

### 3.2.2 ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY (DAY TWO)

#### 2.1. So far, efforts at Armenia-Diaspora cooperation:

They have been sufficient. The Diaspora has been able to engage in both self-preservation and defense of the Armenian cause, as well as providing assistance to Armenia. Nothing needs to be changed.	0.63%
They have been sufficient, but not strategic. We have not noticed how we are slowly losing both the Diaspora and Armenia, trying to contrast the preservation of one to the other	13.92%
They have not been enough. There is a crisis of confidence, and unity is only at the level of appeals	27.86%
<b>We need new cooperation platforms. The crisis of confidence is surmountable, and unity will multiply the results</b>	<b>56.96%</b>
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	0.63%

#### 2.2. The main agenda of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation should be:

<b>The strengthening of Armenia, with the expectation that a stronger Armenia will contribute to the preservation of Armenianness in the Diaspora much more easily</b>	<b>53.16%</b>
Armenian preservation in the Diaspora and tackling the issues that Diaspora communities face, acknowledging that the danger of assimilation has become quite grave	20.89%
Helping each other as much as possible, while also realizing that resources in this case are split in two, therefore decreasing their impact	20.25%
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	5.70%

*“The Diaspora should work in the direction of strengthening Armenia, Armenia should be at the center. Armenia should become a strong and safe country.”*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*



### 2.3. How should the implementation of the Armenia-Diaspora agenda be managed?

It should be managed by Armenia through its state institutions	5.03%
<b>It should be managed from Armenia with the participation of Diaspora Armenians, by providing mechanisms for the diaspora to participate in state administration with constitutional reforms</b>	<b>45.91%</b>
It should be managed through a newly created pan-Armenian institution, which will consolidate all existing mechanisms and harmonize the work	37.74%
There is no need for unified management. New cooperative solutions and platforms should be formed according to the issues at hand, accepting the diversity of Armenia and the Diaspora	7.55%
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	3.77%



### 3.2.3 GROWING POPULATION (DAY THREE)

#### 3.1. From the viewpoint of efficiency of ensuring population growth, in which direction should efforts be directed to begin with?

Increasing the birth rate	15.03%
Reducing emigration from Armenia	14.38%
Increasing immigration to Armenia	8.50%
<b>All at once</b>	<b>54.90%</b>
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	7.19%

#### 3.2. First of all, it is better to:

<b>Organize the immigration of Armenian emigrants back to Armenia</b>	<b>54.61%</b>
Organize the immigration to Armenia of members of the historical Diaspora	19.74%
Organize the immigration of foreigners (non-Armenians) to Armenia	3.95%
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	21.70%

#### 3.3. Choose one of the observations below:

<b>Demographic policy should be declared the main direction of the policy implemented in the country, and it should be served by the policies of other spheres. Until now, demographic policy has been perceived as a tool for social support</b>	<b>74.67%</b>
The demographic policy should be a set of smaller policies and programs, because having and implementing a comprehensive and unified policy is expensive	16.67%
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	8.66%



*“The state should value the birth of every child. It is not about one-time payments. One of the priorities of the state’s policy should be to promote the birth of children and prevent emigration.”*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*

3.4. Choose one of the observations below:	
In addition to a repatriation policy, the immigration of foreigners (non-Armenians) should also be organized, helping us solve the problem of population growth	25.66%
<b>It is wrong to direct all efforts toward immigration while we have high levels of unemployment and poverty in Armenia. Without solving the problems of economic development and unemployment, immigration will lead to social tensions</b>	<b>57.89%</b>
Another observation (see Appendix 3: Additional Observations from voting)	16.45%





# 3.3 INITIATIVES PRIORITIZED BY THE CONVENTION

This section contains a list of all the initiatives recommended for each of the three Goals, with scores ranked according to how much they were supported by the Convention’s participants.

Participants were asked to select initiatives from the list of options. The number of options available and the number they were asked to select was not always the same, therefore the results were adjusted to compensate for the unequal chance of selection. These adjustments<sup>23</sup> were based on the ratio between the number of initiatives participants could choose and the number of options available. The adjusted values for options with a lower choices-to-options ratio were therefore increased relative to those with a higher ratio. Initiatives with an adjusted approval rating of over 50% were accepted and will be carried forward through the Affiliation Network.

## 3.3.1 HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY (DAY ONE)

1	<b>A unified list of all Armenian heritage pieces</b>	<b>72.19%</b> <b>(71.79%)<sup>24</sup></b>
	Documenting pieces of Armenian heritage, creating a system similar to UNESCO’s World Heritage List.	

**Supporting comments:**

- *Speaking about heritage, we, first of all, understand our historical and cultural heritage. We go, we see that moss is growing on the domes of our monasteries, the foundation is not strong. When we were children, we were told about our monasteries. We thought that they were the best. But when you see from abroad how they are preserving these cultural structures, you are shocked.*
- *In order for us to live safely in this world, we must have a civilizing influence on the world. It should be equally important for us to both preserve heritage, as well as create and spread a new one.*
- *Preservation of heritage is not only done with beautiful words. Everyone should consciously donate money toward this end.*
- *Everything depends on our goals. In order to create the future, we need to understand what our heritage is, develop our heritage, create a new value system, and pass this new heritage on to the coming generations.*

<sup>23</sup> Details: The choices-to-options ratio was calculated for each question by dividing the number of options participants were asked to select by the number of selections available. A normalization coefficient for each option was calculated by dividing the mean of these ratios by the ratio for each option. The approval rating for each option was multiplied by its coefficient to give the adjusted

<sup>24</sup> approval rating: In bracket: Initial support percentage before the adjustments

## 2 A coordinating council for youth exchanges

70.90%  
(70.51%)

Enhancement and coordination of programs involving educational exchanges, camps, meetings and mutual visits.

### Supporting comments:

- *We should organize exchange programs between the Diaspora and young people living in Armenia, so that they get to know each other's culture, customs, and lives.*
- *In addition to schools, different gatherings should be organized abroad. Centers should be created where everyone speaks Armenian, sings Armenian, preserves the Armenian language, and passes it on to future generations.*
- *Volunteer programs are important. A young man who has visited Armenia once will definitely change his attitude towards his identity in a positive way.*
- *I suggest that we establish a mandatory exchange of children from Armenia and the Diaspora. Children aged 15-18 must go to a Diaspora community and live under the care of a family during the year. A few years, and the connection will be established.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *70-80 percent of Luys Foundation graduates did not return. Such investments in education are risky.*

## 3 An "All-Armenian Web Army"

66.56%  
(75.64%)

To gain advantages in virtual information wars and on all social networks by involving all willing Armenians.

### Supporting comments:

- *It is necessary to create a knowledgeable Internet army that can transmit information through the proper experts. As of now, we enter the Internet, see something, get nervous, and write something disorganized.*
- *The Armenian cultural platform can be turned into a social network.*
- *We must excel in the information war. Just look at the activity on social platforms during the war. We should always be active like that.*
- *We cannot talk about security as long as our technological basis is American servers. We should think about creating Armenian domains and servers. In the field of IT, we are not inferior to the rest of the world, and we can even create our own social networks.*

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**4****A campaign for the digitization of historical heritage assets****59.30%**

A major project to digitize, preserve and disseminate the assets we hold in all museums **(58.97%)**

**Supporting comments:**

- *We need to give our values new and modern breath so that they become interesting for the new generation.*
- *On the online platform, Armenians from different countries should present resources regarding Armenian presence and heritage in their countries.*
- *I propose to digitize the music, the list of Armenian heritage, and preserve it on a virtual platform.*
- *New approaches, new technologies that will attract the new generation should be introduced into our historical and cultural structures. .*

**Dissenting comments:**

- *We have a major drawback: the modern methods of introducing heritage burden young people and cause discomfort.*

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**5****An “Armenian language through games” program****58.66%**

Promotion of knowledge of the Armenian language and Armenians through the creation and distribution of modern computer games. **(58.33%)**

**Supporting comments:**

- *There is a lack of content. If the material is presented in an interesting way, it will impress and interest young people.*
- *We can create an opportunity for the child to be handed a device upon entering a museum. Through this device – with interesting sounds, cartoons, and games – he will be interested and involved in the material.*
- *We have a problem with teaching methods, especially in the Diaspora. The old methods do not work and are not interesting to the new generation.*
- *It is possible to spread Armenian in the Diaspora through games. A grant competition can be organized, and the company offering the best game will win. Creating Armenian games is very important so that our children in the Diaspora want to learn Armenian.*



### Dissenting comments:

- *I live in the Diaspora, and I speak local languages fluently. What do you offer me to learn Armenian? What is the benefit to me? Why should I burden myself with Armenian?*

## 6 An online coordinating council for the Genocide recognition process

54.71%  
(62.18%)

A coordinating committee that will harmonize the work in that direction with a complex strategy.

### Supporting comments:

- *The “I remember and demand” slogan should be restored and the idea spread in the Diaspora and Armenia. The commissions dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Genocide all over the world must resume their work.*
- *Since we are the nation that survived the first genocide, we must force the entire world to recognize the Armenian Genocide in order to prevent further genocides.*
- *It is necessary to create a national body that will be able to work on a daily basis, with professional staff, toward spreading the Armenian issue globally.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *I do not agree that the Genocide, and specifically its recognition, should be considered a goal. Our goal should be justice. Many genocides take place around the world, and states not only recognize them, but also apologize and rebuild the memory and dignity of those peoples. Legal proceedings can be carried out, but there is little chance of success.*
- *The Genocide issue is not a priority. Armenia has other priorities. There is no need to direct the entire state system in that direction.*

## 7 A network of Armenian virtual universities

53.51%  
(53.21%)

A big push for online education among the world's Armenians, specializing in the Armenian language and Armenian history.

### Supporting comments:

- *Many Armenian schools should be established in the Diaspora, because when they teach the language, they also transmit the culture.*
- *We have a problem with teaching methods, especially in the Diaspora. The old methods do not work and are not interesting to the new generation.*

- *Optional courses of Western Armenian language should be organized, which will contribute to solving the issue of communication and the dying of the language. This is important, and it should be coordinated in Armenia.*
- *Armenian educational centers should have centralized management, and the main manager should be the Republic of Armenia, which should oversee all Armenian educational centers operating in the Diaspora.*
- *Armenian language courses can be organized remotely. The center should be Yerevan, from where classes will be held for different countries. After several years, the results will be visible; additionally, the language and culture will also be transferred.*

## 8 An Armenian “Anti-Defamation League” human rights defending mechanism

53.02%  
(60.26%)

An Armenian legal institution to lead the fight against genocide denialism.

### Supporting comments:

- *It is necessary to create an Armenian legal group, which should develop a casefile, which will contain the Armenian genocide claims documents.*
- *It is necessary to create a national body that will be able to work on a daily basis, with professional staff, toward spreading the Armenian issue globally.*
- *Denying, refuting, or ridiculing the Genocide should be punishable by law in every country. Otherwise, it is necessary to solve such problems through community frameworks, to apply punitive measures or sanctions as a community.*
- *We are so depressed that today, the churches of Artsakh have already become Albanian, and there is no structure to monitor and apply sanctions.*

## 9 A campaign to include materials about the Genocide in other countries' educational programs

53.02%  
(60.26%)

Increased lobbying efforts to study and teach about the Armenian genocide in various countries.

### Supporting comments:

- *Diaspora children heard about the Genocide from their grandparents. Go to Turkey, communicate with Turkish youth. They are well-educated. Their way of thinking*

*is different today, and ours should be different too. Today, Armenians in Armenia understand and perceive the idea of genocide less than the emigrants themselves. It is necessary to move forward and not be a victim.*

- *In France, the Genocide is taught not as an emotional phenomenon, but with a clear scientific approach: the motives, how it happened, what happened next. This kind of education is important to carry forward.*
- *We need not only to work on the emotional aspect, but also provide a more observable and continuous process of recognition with educational and informative tools.*
- *An Armenian genocide curriculum is already being developed and implemented in some schools in Los Angeles.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *I don't want the young generation to grow up with a victim mentality, so education should be approached very carefully.*

**10**

#### **An “Artsakh: 10 million” forum of Armenians of the world**

**52.46%**  
**(59.62%)**

On the agenda: formation of effective mechanisms that will become nodes institutionalizing the connection between Artsakh and the Armenians of the world.

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *In our Armenian world, Artsakh is now in a very vulnerable state. I am sure that the question of Artsakh is also a question for 10 million Armenians.*
- *The only formula for the security of Artsakh is to live in Artsakh. If we had half a million citizens in Artsakh, the situation would be different. If you want to have a country, you have to live there, and you have to fight for it.*
- *In order to achieve the recognition of Artsakh by the world, we need a 10-year road map with a clearly written action plan.*
- *With us Armenians, it's like this: we don't do anything until the knife reaches the bone. I think that fateful moment is now. How should we unite, around whom?*
- *We should not distinguish between the Diaspora, Armenia, or Artsakh. Everyone's questions are collective, and separating them only leads to a dead end.*



### Dissenting comments:

- *The security of Artsakh is solely the agenda of the Republic of Armenia; no one else should claim it.*
- *The Genocide issue holds great importance for the Diaspora, whereas the Artsakh issue is not as prominent. I have personally heard people in the Diaspora express concerns at events, saying, 'Oh man, I hope they don't suddenly bring up Artsakh; we have many guests here.' It is unfortunate, but this is a reality.*

11

### An “Artsakh Foundation” for development programs

50.20%  
(57.05%)

Funding of projects that advance the economy and security of Artsakh, making Armenians around the world participants in the solution of this vital national issue.

### Supporting comments:

- *The Armenian genocide should be considered an integral part of the Armenian question and the issues of Armenia and Artsakh. The Armenian question is not only about the past, but also about our present and future, on which we need to work daily.*
- *If we live in other countries for a long time, we become very diverse, we focus on completely different issues, and there is no unified ideology. If youth centers are created in the Diaspora and Armenia – which will raise interest among them about, for example, the painful issue of Artsakh – maybe some priorities will be formed in our country.*
- *It is necessary to have one, or at most two, foundations for Artsakh. It is better to have one large foundation rather than ten small ones.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *How will the Artsakh Fund differ from the All-Armenian Fund? Without a unified vision and agenda from the state regarding the security of Armenia and Artsakh, any initiative will merely become a form of self-expression by a separate group or an individual, whether they are known or unknown.*
- *Artsakh exists due to external sources. Instead of creating funds, the money can be invested in specific events and initiatives within Artsakh.*

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**12 An “Ambassadors of Armenian Heritage” movement****46.41%**  
**(46.15%)**

An effective mechanism that will allow all of us to be involved in spreading information about Armenia, Armenians and our successes in the world.

**Supporting comments:**

- *Armenian children achieve great success in different countries. Efforts should be made to educate these children and make them ambassadors of Armenia.*
  - *I really like the idea that any Armenian should become the PR ambassador of Armenia, not only in Diaspora, but also in Armenia. My sister in Russia works in a structure attached to the Church, where young people come to sing Armenian songs, exchange ideas, talk about Armenian culture. This can become one of our main trump cards.*
  - *Every Armenian living in the Diaspora should consider themselves the cultural ambassador of Armenia.*
- 

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**13 An Armenian heritage foundation****45.76%**  
**(45.51%)**

The foundation would monitor all auctions and, if there are pieces of Armenian heritage, quickly buy them and return them to Armenia.

**Supporting comments:**

- *I propose to create a database including Armenian organizations operating in the Diaspora. Members of organizations in the same industry can easily find each other and collaborate. Maybe the AGBU, which is already working in that direction, will expand the scale of the work being carried out.*
  - *In terms of cultural preservation, a highly beneficial suggestion is the establishment of a cultural preservation fund aimed at acquiring and safeguarding significant cultural works. This responsibility is best suited for the state, as it may prove challenging to sustain within the private sector.*
- 

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**14 Opening 3 overseas branches of the Genocide Museum****44.56%**  
**(50.64%)**

Increasing the scale of presentation of materials dedicated to the Armenian genocide in the world.

**Supporting comments:**

- *The opening of memorials and museums will help more people become aware of the Armenian genocide and remember what happened.*

- *We have the Genocide museum, which plays a very important role. We should create many such museums in different places. Among these, each of us should have a small museum in our family to preserve the memory.*
- *I am in favor of creating online museums. Armenian culture will be presented there as a part of global culture.*
- *Given the significant size of their Diaspora populations and the well-established tourism sectors, it is essential to establish genocide museums in Russia, France, and the USA.*

#### Dissenting comments:

- *We cannot have museums abroad, because we do not have specialists who can oversee all that. We should do everything to develop cultural diplomacy in Armenia and the Diaspora and then talk about the opening of museums.*

### 15 Project “Armenica”

**42.54%**

Creation of an Armenian studies platform based on an already existing Armenian studies center, following the example of the “Iranica” project.

**(42.31%)**

#### Supporting comments:

- *We also do not have an intellectual platform, even the History Museum does not participate in anything, nor does the Language Inspectorate. I suggest that such a platform be formed, that will consistently monitor the distortion of all historical facts concerning us on a state basis.*

## 3.3.2 ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY (DAY TWO)

### 1 Organization of professional pan-Armenian conventions

**86.35%**

Organization of periodic Conventions of Armenians by nationality, according to profession, which will present sectoral recommendations and programs.

**(45.75%)**

#### Supporting comments:

- *It is necessary to create a unified network of doctors, teachers, engineers, musicians, and other specialists. If someone wants to know where to invest and in what business, they can find out through that network.*



- *It is necessary to create professional networks, to have a platform where different Armenian professionals can cooperate, support each other, and create mutual aid groups for Armenian students studying in different countries.*
- *There should be a pan-Armenian professional network where specialists and those who need a specialist are registered. They will find each other without state or diplomatic channels.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *40% of Russians were invited to this Convention, but no representative from that community was included in the Expert Committees. Without supporting the Russian diaspora, even in this instance, the Convention cannot proceed under these circumstances.*

## **2 Collaborative network of businesspeople**

**82.85%**  
**(82.39%)**

Creating an opportunity for Armenian business people living in various parts of the world to find one another and implement joint projects.

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *It is necessary to ensure not only the Armenia-Diaspora connection, but also the Diaspora-Diaspora connection. For example, French-Armenians should get to know Russian-Armenians.*
- *It is necessary to create an organic connection between Armenia and the Diaspora. There must be mechanisms to solve these problems. It is even possible to create an advisory body where all the questions of Diaspora Armenians starting a business in Armenia will be answered.*
- *Until there are no incentives for the Diaspora in Armenia, nothing will be achieved. We need incentives at the state level. Businesses and educational institutions operating abroad need to be encouraged by certain mechanisms so that, for example, their businesses develop further and attract, let's say, more Armenians.*
- *It is necessary to work and bring the businesses of Armenians living in the Diaspora to Armenia by reducing taxes and creating a more favorable business environment.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *Creating a business network is a great idea, but it is not practical because there is no consensus.*

**3****Creation of a foundation/institute that will arrange regular trips of Armenian language teachers from Armenia to Diaspora communities****67.04%**  
**(66.67%)**

A system through which Armenian teachers will alternately be sent to Diaspora communities to develop Armenian study centers or teach Armenians abroad

**Supporting comments:**

- *Armenia should become the guarantor of the preservation of the Diaspora and the Western Armenian language.*
- *Parents of Armenian children who left Armenia choose foreign language schools instead of Armenian schools, because the teaching is in Western Armenian, which confuses the child and complicates the learning process. We suggest sending specialists from Armenia.*
- *What can Armenia give to the Diaspora? Of course, mainly schools, remote courses. Their managers will be from the Diaspora; they will monitor the programs. The materials should be chosen by Diaspora Armenians. It is also possible to establish remote universities. For example, there are such universities in Lebanon, Athens. The center will be Armenia: the lecturers there can be established here and issue certificates remotely.*
- *There is a need for Armenian language teaching specialists in the Diaspora, but the students of the Armenian school in Los Angeles are achieving very good results in education.*
- *We need education specialists in the Diaspora. The teachers of our schools are old people. If they retire, our children will no longer have an Armenian teacher. Our books are also old. Only Tumanyan's house-museum helps us, but just with Tumanyan's books.*

**Dissenting comments:**

- *Is it mandatory to know Armenian? There are many intelligent Armenians who only speak Russian, but they can play a very important role for Armenia.*

**4****Organization of citizens' assemblies in the Diaspora****65.38%**  
**(34.64%)**

Based on the experience of the Convention of the Future Armenian, organize citizens' assemblies in Diaspora communities with the aim of reaching joint decisions with the participation of local Armenians.

### Supporting comments:

- *These types of events are a very good idea for, for example, promoting uninterrupted communication between Armenia and the Diaspora.*

## 5 A pan-Armenian movement “Back to Armenia”

65.14%  
(64.78%)

Establishing the necessary public support mechanism for the adoption of a large-scale immigration strategy at the state level.

### Supporting comments:

- *The state must organize a large immigration movement. The state should deal with populating the border areas. The population in those places is aging.*
- *I propose a program that will help a family living abroad and wishing to return to settle in Armenia, provided that, over time, the family will gradually repay that aid, facilitating the return of other families.*
- *Immigration or repatriation? They have different understandings. I am more inclined to the idea of repatriation. As a first step, young professionals should come. There are private companies here that pay high wages.*
- *I propose a program called “Talent Hunt” to bring smart children to Armenia, to implement preferential programs for them, so that they mature and become the force that will work in Armenia and have that awareness that they should serve Armenia.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *We cannot organize immigration in the next 5-10 years, because we have a security problem. I myself have a 16-year-old son. He is my only child. I don’t want to sacrifice my child. He will have to take care of me tomorrow.*
- *We constantly talk about repatriation, about bringing the best specialists from the Diaspora and resettling them in Armenia. Question: who should stay in the Diaspora? Shouldn’t the Diaspora, as an institution, not weaken?*

## 6 A pan-Armenian lobbying network

64.51%  
(64.15%)

Supplementing the great work carried out by Armenian lobbying institutions in a unified, pan-Armenian format



### Supporting comments:

- *There is a need to create a platform where the opinions of the community and suggestions to the ambassador and embassy will be registered in the Diaspora. Wherever possible, institutionalize ambassador-community relations, and the ambassador should be the center of community unification.*
- *Everyone from the Diaspora and Armenia should become the PR ambassador of Armenia to the world.*
- *Living abroad, I consider it my mission to represent Armenia in the best light. We are the ambassadors of Armenia abroad.*
- *Having an organization dedicated to Armenian lobbying across various countries would be highly beneficial. It is crucial to develop a comprehensive strategy from Armenia to determine the specific areas where this lobbying effort should be focused.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *The Pan-Armenian lobby network cannot work in all countries. For example, in Russia, it is prohibited.*

## 7 An investment company named “Armenia”

**57.55%**  
**(57.23%)**

Creating an opportunity for every Armenian to participate in the development of Armenia’s economy in the form of buying shares.

### Supporting comments:

- *Targeted investment programs should be formed in Armenia, assessing the needs of individual communities.*
- *The business interests of the Diaspora should be aligned with the business interests of Armenia and bring investment programs by creating different investment structures.*
- *Armenia does not need direct help. Armenia only needs investments. Let the Diaspora not just give money and complain, but make an investment. Both the Diaspora and Armenia will benefit.*
- *It is necessary to create such a fund that will inspire confidence. For example, Israel has it, and it works very well.*

#### Dissenting comments:

- *The Diaspora has made many investments in Armenia in recent years, but these investments have not been brought to light.*
- *There is no trust in Armenia. Corruption is at a high level, and this raises concerns when investing from the Diaspora.*

### 8 A pan-Armenian IT company

**46.80%**

The possibility of participation by people in different formats in the model of a joint-stock company **(46.54%)**

#### Supporting comments:

- *The last war showed that this is already a battle of technologies. I think that the creation of a technological center aimed at the development of the military industry with the Diaspora will at least significantly promote our strengthening.*
- *There are already established partnerships in the IT sector, and I think that it is realistic to expand contacts in that regard.*
- *Armenians in Armenia already cooperate with Armenians of other countries in many ways in the field of IT. I suggest we unite these people, create sectoral councils, and make a big network.*

#### Dissenting comments:

- *Creating a global IT company is very unrealistic. We must be able to assess everything realistically. It is a very abstract and unrealizable idea.*

### 9 Creation of an Armenian online museum

**39.21%**

Creation of an online museum based on the Armenian genocide Museum-Institute. **(38.99%)**

#### Supporting comments:

- *Each community has its own cultural center, and it is not necessarily the church itself. Coordination is important here.*
- *In the process of popularizing Armenian culture, it is necessary to present Armenian culture, dance, song, and music in Armenian communities through festivals and other events not only to Armenians, but also to foreigners.*

- *I am in favor of creating online museums. Armenian culture will be presented there as a part of global culture.*
- *When considering the establishment of a museum, it is important to consider the associated challenges, such as financial resources, investments, legal issues, and the scarcity of materials. Given that we are in the 21st century, it would be more practical to explore the option of creating an online museum.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *Opening online museums is nonsensical. While numerous communities have both online and offline museums, the actual number of annual visits they receive is often minimal.*

### **10 Creation of a portal of successful experiences of Diaspora communities**

**37.01%**  
**(19.61%)**

A mechanism for covering the successful experience of any community in the Diaspora in various fields and spreading it to other communities, which will allow the best experience to be spread and imitated everywhere.

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *It would be wonderful to activate a network that would be available to Armenians in another country. You can find out from the network what Armenian specialists there are in that country, on whom you can count. That way, you will know, when in a foreign country, that there are Armenian specialists who are ready to help.*
- *Let's create a unified Armenian information platform so that verified information can be sent to all Armenians, and issues on the agenda can be raised and communicated.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *The connection between the Armenian diaspora and Armenia involves the exchange of experiences, and it holds great significance to periodically visit Armenia.*

### **11 Common surnames**

**12.01%**  
**(11.95%)**

The process of unifying the “yan” surname ending used in Armenia and the “ian” ending used in the Diaspora



### Supporting comments:

- *In the USA, when a foreigner sees that your surname ends with “yan,” he says that he should be wary of you, but he trusts surnames with “ian.” The newcomers are more clever and disposed to deceive. The bearers of the surname “yan” have just arrived.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *Does every person deserve to be called an Armenian, to bear the title of Armenian with honor, just because his last name ends with yan?*

## 3.3.3 GROWING POPULATION (DAY THREE)

1

### An agency of immigration organization and advocacy

**74.94%**  
**(79.49%)**

A professional management body for the immigration process, which will also be able to forecast the nearest possible flows to Armenia and properly prepare for the arrival of people

### Supporting comments:

- *Armenians in Beirut are in a very bad situation today. We can quickly organize the immigration of Armenians from countries where the situation is very bad, not from countries where they live in safety.*
- *Diaspora parents can be told that, for example, there are no drugs in Armenia; you can safely send your children to Armenia. In other words, with our existing resources, it is possible to create such a situation where even those people who approach Armenia with skepticism will think about immigration.*
- *I am in favor of managed immigration. Let's create the conditions and accept foreign people. For example, let's have 3,000-5,000 people from India. If we can bring our compatriots from our communities, welcome them with a smile, build apartments for them, integrate them, learn to live together, this will be our salvation. The immigration of foreigners should be strictly controlled.*
- *It is not possible to ensure immigration without a state program. As much as I want to return to Armenia, I understand that I will face many problems. If there is a state program, I will be reassured that I can easily find an apartment and a job, make an investment, or organize my business here.*
- *The immigration committee (or the ministry) should provide language training, professional training relevant to the Armenian labor market, free or low-fee schools and kindergartens, social security guarantees, and affordable housing.*

- *We need structures that will work clearly by organizing immigration. In Israel, they still welcome people from the airport and provide that person with education and work opportunities through a state program.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *If we look at this realistically, whoever left will not return. More needs to be understood about what to do for those who have remained. Natural growth must be ensured at the expense of all the rest.*
- *If I allow my husband to choose, he will want to come and live in Armenia. But when I see the possibilities of the USA, I am sure that my child will definitely progress more easily in the USA.*
- *Nobody wants to come to a country at war. Even if it is their country that is at war, they prefer to stay and not repatriate.*

## **2 “Children First” initiative**

**66.47%**  
**(70.51%)**

A platform for the interaction of many existing programs aimed at children’s development and learning, which will significantly increase their inclusiveness

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *The state should value the birth of every child. It is not about one-time payments. One of the priorities of the state’s policy should be to promote the birth of children, regardless of whether the family is well-off or not. The family allowance should not be called a “poverty allowance,” either.*
- *If we want to develop, to promote childbearing, the state must protect the child, regardless of who their parents are.*
- *There should be educational institutions for children in the regions; for example, centers like Tumo.*
- *Child insurance is very important for solving the demographic problem.*
- *Accumulated funds should be created for children to ensure their future education, and this can become an incentive for parents.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *The state giving money for each child is only a temporary solution to promote population growth. It cannot contribute to the qualitative growth of the population if other conditions are not improved, because the children will grow up and leave Armenia due to unfavorable conditions.*

### 3 Public health, healthy lifestyle awareness-initiative

64.66%  
(68.59%)

Implementation of public health and healthy lifestyle awareness events and marketing campaigns through various channels and platforms.

#### Supporting comments:

- *The socio-economic issue should be regulated at the state level. Healthcare is very expensive in our country. In our country, one sick person is a big problem for 100 healthy people.*
- *Out-of-wedlock births are not accepted here. Young people tend to get married after the age of 30, and many health problems arise with age, which complicates having children. This is where the problem comes from.*
- *The question of the quality of the healthcare system and the high rate of infertility is also very important. The number of people living a healthy lifestyle is low. Bad habits affect infertility.*
- *I am sorry to say that the population of Armenia is illiterate regarding healthcare. The most influential medium is television. There should be a state channel that raises public awareness on healthcare topics.*
- *Not only Armenian girls should be educated that you should have a child, but boys also should be educated to create a normal family.*

### 4 An online, pan-Armenian dating platform

53.18%  
(56.41%)

Facilitating contacts among Armenian youth interested in getting to know each other and starting a family, through a competently managed, thorough verification of applications and registration of only Armenian participants.

#### Supporting comments:

- *I propose the development of a program that will help create acquaintances between different Diaspora communities, which in turn will contribute to the rise of marriages.*
- *Using the example of France, I can say that when they cannot find an Armenian partner in the community or in their circle of acquaintances, and it is already the age to get married, they often come to Armenia, and very successful couples are formed.*
- *It is possible to organize frequent youth forums in Armenia, which will encourage Armenian youth from different countries to gather in one place. Maybe the time spent together will help the participants to form a family.*
- *One can even organize special forums for people to gather for the purpose of marriage. They come to Armenia from different countries to find an Armenian spouse.*



Professional support for family issues, for families who stand on the verge of divorce in regions and Yerevan, creation of a network of counseling centers (including existing ones).

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *Today, those who want to have many children are a minority. Today, people don't get married because they don't have a job. There are young people who are supported by their parents. Nevertheless, I think that the most serious problem is preserving marriage. Today, thirty percent of my kindergarteners' parents are single mothers.*
- *The number of divorces has increased a lot. Today, young people want to solve conflict as easily as possible. They simply divorce and do not even try to find other solutions.*
- *Family support centers should be established to help reduce the number of divorces.*
- *One of the reasons that I did not marry an Armenian man is that for an Armenian man, all household matters are only for the woman: they are only the woman's responsibility.*

Giving an opportunity for Armenian American pensioners to receive their pension while absent from the United States, which will promote repatriation.

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *Pensioners from the USA can come here and receive their pensions. Their children and grandchildren will also come to Armenia and get acquainted with their homeland.*
- *According to my information, the main conditions that will contribute to the return of Diaspora Armenians are the payment of pension and health insurance. As for young people the reduction of university tuition fees and access to housing stock.*
- *There are many people who have lived abroad all their lives and returned after retirement, but their children do not return.*
- *For European retirees, Armenia is their dream country with tasty dishes, good wine, warm people, nature, and a pleasant environment.*
- *There are only a few reasons that will make a member of the Diaspora return to Armenia: a business idea, getting married, enjoying old age, obtaining an education. There are only a few areas: let's just do the right work in all these directions.*

## 7 An “At least 4 children” public movement

48.95%  
(51.92%)

A mechanism for combining forces in the formation and direction of a large advocacy campaign.

### Supporting comments:

- *Socially disadvantaged families have more children than wealthy ones. You don't need a lot of money to have a child.*
- *From the beginning, we wanted to have four or more children. Security is not a problem for me. Our problem is my wife's career and health. That's why we limited ourselves to two children.*
- *It is possible to have a tax reduction policy. That is, the more children you have, the lower the tax burden. This is a practice used in America and France.*
- *The current shameful demographic situation comes from mismanagement. It is the families with many children living in the villages that should be encouraged.*
- *Let's offer packages of social benefits. For example, if you have 4 children, one of them is given the opportunity to study at the best university for free.*

### Dissenting comments:

- *All over the world, people are having fewer children; we cannot stop it. We can only help the process slow down a little.*
- *They don't have children, or they have them late because they think about leaving the country and having a child there. They are trying to postpone that process so that they can go, arrange their documents, and then have a child.*
- *During the last Artsakh war, we went to a hostel where there were families from Artsakh with 5 children. I used to come, tell people around me, look at the difficult conditions they live in. They would reply, “They shouldn't have had so many children.”*

## 8 A high-quality, fictional film featuring a single mother character

29.01%  
(30.77%)

A moving and educational film about a woman who decides to have a child without her husband.

### Supporting comments:

- *Single girls should have the right to have a child, and society should not stone them for it.*
- *Instead of showing love to the girl who raises a child without a father, we call her immoral. That is outdated; you have to understand that life is different now.*

- *Society has no right to label a single mother. It should be preached that labeling should be used not for having a child, but for raising that child wrongly.*
- *It is necessary to introduce active programs supporting single mothers. It is not only about financial support. It is necessary to work on society's attitude. For example, find successful single women and create media materials about them, make movies about their success, achievements, and all the conditions necessary to raise a child in the family.*
- *A campaign advertising motherhood is needed so that successful businesswomen who have become mothers become examples. Women should understand that it is possible, one does not exclude the other.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *However, the basis of state policy should be the full promotion of families, at least those consisting of father and mother. The development of a child in a single-parent family is not only a financial problem, but also a problem of proper development and upbringing.*

### **9 An "Emigration is shameful" public movement**

**22.36%**  
**(23.72%)**

Altering the public perceptions and behavior of people who are inclined to emigrate, using various advocacy tools.

#### **Supporting comments:**

- *I think that those living in the Diaspora already have their comfort zone, and it is very difficult to change it and bring it with them. It will be easier and more appropriate to keep those who go to "Khopen" and instead develop their potential here. The immigration of foreigners is also welcome.*

#### **Dissenting comments:**

- *It is necessary to replace the slogan "it is a shame to emigrate" with the slogan "it is a pride to stay...". This kind of propaganda will be louder and more effective.*
- *The slogan "emigration is a shame" is even more shameful. We must educate the child in such a way that this consciousness is in his blood.*
- *It is a shame when a grown man cannot support his family. There is no shame in emigrating.*



# CONVENTION OF THE FUTURE ROMANIA

Defining  
our future  
collectively







# 4 THE SPIRIT OF THE CONVENTION

## PRINCIPLES AND EXPECTATIONS

To address the challenges facing Armenia and the Armenian people, the Convention of the Future Armenian was aiming to re-generate public debate, to activate citizens and to overcome the existing polarization. For that it was guided by the following set of principles:



**Unity:** The current challenges facing Armenia and the Armenian people could be tackled only by the strengthening of the unity of Armenians worldwide. The Convention served as a platform for pan-Armenian dialogue, bringing the potential of the expert community and diverse groups from society under one roof, thus contributing to the formation of both expert and active, public discussions.



**Inclusiveness:** Registration for participation in the Convention was open to anyone from Armenia, Artsakh or the Diaspora. With no restrictions on the participation of adult citizens, the Convention brought together equally represented groups covering all gender, age, educational and geographical strata of all Armenians worldwide. All interested parties who have registered for the Convention, but did not make it through the lottery stage, had the opportunity to make their voices heard in other planned formats.



**Transparency:** The entire process of the Convention was open and public, including the work of expert committees, the lottery to select participants, public discussions and the process of forming partnership networks. All interested parties had opportunities to follow all of these processes on our official website, social media platforms and news sources.



**Public legacy:** All recommendations and programs adopted within the framework of the Convention are public property and available to all members of the public and private sectors so that they can develop their respective versions. As an authentic instrument of direct democracy, the Convention was a platform of consolidating the efforts of all strata of society.



**New mindset, new results:** Together, we were forging a new culture of civic participation with dialogue and awareness of collective responsibility at its very core. Through its approaches, the Convention, which is the only one of its kind in Armenia, should contribute to the formation of discourse on issues of vital importance for the state and society and to the development of ways to overcome challenges.



## MODEL OF ARMENIAN PEOPLE IN ONE HALL

The participants of the Convention assembled in one grand hall from various corners of the world and all regions of Armenia have brought the flavor and colors of their communities. In harmony they became rather a representative group of the pan-Armenian reality in one place.

- I am an Armenian from **Istanbul**, and I do not consider myself a member of the Diaspora, because I live in my historical lands, whereas the Diaspora are those that live far away.
- I am from **Goris**, my uncle died in the war, my brother fought in the war. The priority for me is the security of Armenia.
- Once we had 23 schools in **Lebanon**, but today there are much fewer.
- I live in **Fresno**, but I dream of returning to my homeland every day. This is the most painful question for me.
- We have four separate Armenian communities in **Krasnodar**, Russia.
- I was born in **France**, and I don't need to prove anything to the French as an Armenian.
- The main thing that unites the Armenian community in **Volgograd** is the national holidays, which are too little for preserving the Armenian identity and uniting the youth.





- I am a fifth-generation **Argentinian**-Armenian, and I still feel Armenian. Although other ethnicities in Argentina are already assimilated after the third generation, we the Armenians are an exception.
- There are 180,000 Armenians in **Kaluga**, but we have no community, we have not a single Armenian school. There are several hundred Armenians in Kesab, they have their schools.
- There is a need for Armenian language teaching specialists in the Diaspora, but the students of the Armenian school in **Los Angeles** are achieving very good results in education.
- I am from **Vanadzor**, we have had contact with our repatriated relatives since childhood. All of them were extraordinary specialists who brought us freshness.
- Being born in **Iran** and living in the Iranian cultural environment, I still feel myself as an Armenian at heart and connected spiritually to Armenia.
- The diaspora in **Sweden** is not organized, but our day starts with news from Armenia.
- Armenia is my soul, **Javakhk** is my body.



## “GOAL” IS THE WORD IN THE AIR

There was almost a full consensus among participants on the importance of setting goals. They could disagree with each other on various issues, and have heated debates, but they all agreed on one thing: the Armenians should be able to set clear goals and go towards them.

- The Armenians should be united not by language or land, which are only means, but **by the goal**.
- We the Armenians love disagreements, but for our **great goal** we must all unite.
- Everything depends on **our goals**. To create the future, we need to understand what our heritage is, to develop our heritage, to create a new value system and to pass this new heritage on to the coming generations.
- Genocide recognition is not a goal; it is a path that we have to go through. We must clearly formulate **what our goals are**.
- I have heard about unity all my life, but we grow up and understand that these are just words. We must have a unifying goal for that word to have meaning. It can be Artsakh.
- Following the example of Israel, **a goal should be set** to increase the population of Armenia so that the number of Armenians in homeland and in Diaspora will be almost equal.
- The **first among the goals** is the state. Armenians should want to have a proper state. When the state is pan-Armenian, everyone will want to be in it.
- For years, **the goal** of the unification of Armenians has been the recognition of the Genocide, if today the Hye-Dat is not a primary issue, then we should think about another “case” that will unite the Armenians around one goal.
- In the framework of this Initiative, clear proposals have already been developed, and we must start implementing them. For the first time, we have **formulated goals**, which were formed with the participation of experts. We need to move forward; this is a good start.





## ARGUMENTING IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

The statement “Truth is born in the argument” was very true in the Convention hall. Many expressed thoughts received the contrary remark, sometimes the debate was conducted not at one table, but between the tables. But all disagreements did not interrupt the process of thinking, on the contrary, forced the participants to find new solutions acceptable to all.

- **Immigration of the Diaspora Armenians to Armenia should be organized**, because now is a favorable time for that.
- **I do not agree with immigration**, many Diaspora Armenians are more useful in other countries.
- **It is necessary to create a system** so that each community in the Diaspora has its representative in the Armenian government and can provide its assistance in various ways.
- **It is not important** that there are people from the Diaspora in the management system, it is important that the voice of the Diaspora is heard, and that an active commission is created, where the recommendations from the Diaspora will be collected and discussed in the government.
- Any Diaspora Armenian is obliged to **pay tax** as an Armenian.
- **I agree** that all Armenians should make a payment, but it should not be defined in a specific amount.
- I think it's **absurd** to force money, especially a specific amount.
- Motherhood should always be encouraged. If it was not possible to start a family by a certain age, I think **one should have a child without getting married**.
- If a woman has a child out of wedlock, **it is immoral**. It is better for us not to multiply, but to remain moral.
- If we **have a Diaspora parliament** and people have someone that will represent them, the Diaspora will become more Armenia-centric.
- **I don't think** that if there is a separate parliament of the Diaspora, one **will take it seriously and follow its decisions**, it will have a fictitious role.
- Young people of Armenia and the Diaspora can get married, but **only on the condition of living in Armenia**.
- **It is not important** where a couple consisting of an Armenian from Armenia and a Diaspora Armenian will live. If one Armenian is missing from here, the Armenian community in another country is increasing.
- It is necessary to find people outside of Armenia who will support the dissemination of information. **The opening of memorials and museums** will help more people to be aware of and remember what happened.
- **It is pointless to open museums**. In Russia, where the largest Armenian community is, there is a wonderful museum, but how many visits does it have annually?



## RELYING ON INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Armenians from different parts of the world brought with them knowledge about the experience of various countries in solving problems. Israeli experience was the most mentioned one over the three days for a wide range of issues - from Genocide recognition to immigration management.

- There is a concept of timeshare in the **USA**, something like this can be introduced in Armenia and bring our young people to Armenia.
- We need to deeply study the **Israeli** and **Irish** experiences to see how they work with their diaspora.
- Jews organize concerts in the **Holocaust Museum**. When Americans go to a concert, they are indirectly connected to the Holocaust, learn about it, and familiarize themselves with it. In other words, the Holocaust is indirectly publicized through culture.
- We need structures that will work clearly by organizing immigration. In **Israel**, they still welcome people from the airport and provide that person with education and work opportunities through a state program.
- In **Turkey**, everything is free for children up to the age of 7: transport, schools, etc. On the other hand, if the child's grandmother takes care of her grandchild, the state provides money and gives a pension to the grandmother. A similar program can be implemented so that the child does not become a "burden" for the family and grandparents.
- **Moldova** has a relatively new Diaspora but has managed to attract large donors and strengthen its connection with the Diaspora. That example can help Armenia.
- A camp should be organized in Sevan, **similar to Artek**, so that parents from the Diaspora can send their children in the summer. Let them live there and ensure organic communication with the motherland.

- In 1818 in **Singapore**, a charter was written for the botanical garden, which has not changed over the years. They went ahead with it and did not change anything. Our lobbying companies should also develop a clear charter, which should come from Armenia.









## UNITY IS THE CORE OF EVERYTHING

Unity: this word was stressed almost constantly. The participants saw the way to achieve all the goals and solve all the problems through being united, and the lack of unity was considered one of the main obstacles in everything.

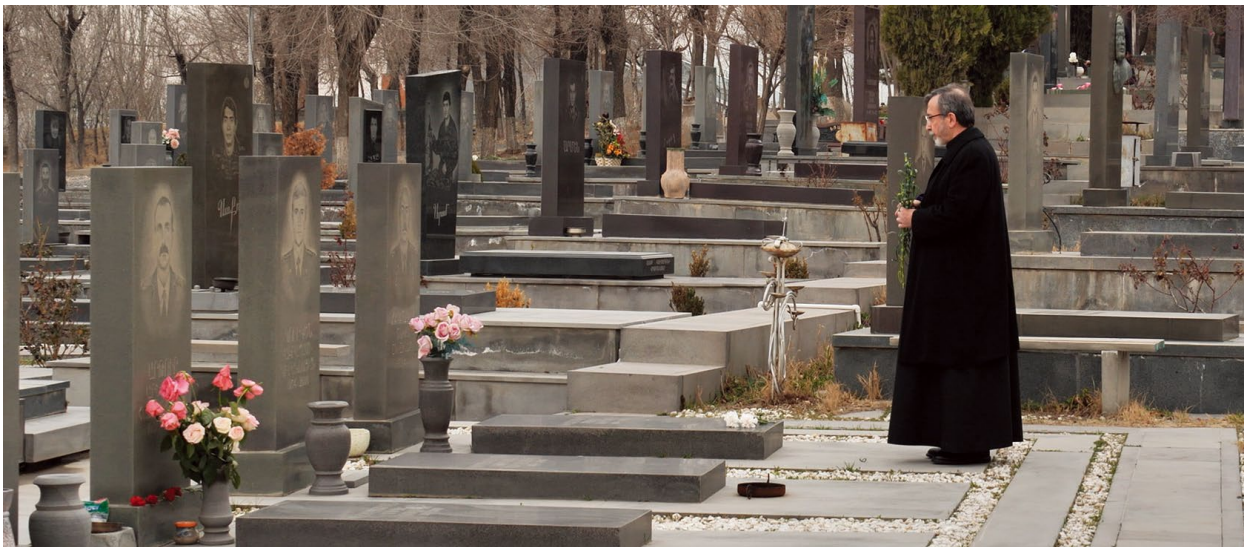
- We are not **united** as a nation and we do not appear united to the world.
- To become stronger means to act from a **united** position, to restore trust between our society and the state, between the Diaspora and the state.
- I have not seen **unity** in the Diaspora, I have not seen unity in Armenia.
- **Unity** should be anchored on several points: nation, homeland, people, and religion.
- In order to have a unified homeland, we must **unite** around a unified idea.



- We must come to a common declaration, be **UNITED**. Unity is the beginning of everything.
- In my opinion, **unity** is tolerance.
- There can be **unity** in the Armenian nation only around the issue of security. This is the point around which Armenians can unite.
- **Unity** is a false category: there cannot be unity among all Armenians merely because they are all Armenians. There can be unity only around ideas and deeds.
- It is necessary to be **united**. No matter how different we are, no matter how much we disagree, we must be united.



Participants of the Convention visit Yerablur Military Pantheon





## A FLOOD OF FEASIBLE SUGGESTIONS

The diagnosis-treatment chain worked effectively in the 3-day discussions. The participants were not only able to comprehensively analyze the existing problems, set goals, but also came up with 100 suggestions that can lead to the achievement of the set goals. The suggestions are particularly noteworthy in that most of them are indeed doable without enormous resources. Here are a few suggestions from the participants, but those who want to do something can find many more such thoughts in the discussion summaries.





# THESE SUGGESTIONS

- **I suggest** that Armenian schools in Diaspora teach not only Western Armenian, but also Eastern Armenian.
- **I suggest** we have a Heritage Day where we put on our national clothes, upload our pictures on social networks, and spread the message of Armenianness to the world.
- **I suggest** developing a program or textbook that will be suitable for those who start learning Armenian from scratch, regardless of age.
- **I suggest** training young families in online professions and moving them to villages to live.
- **I suggest** organizing such Conventions not only in Armenia, but also in the Diaspora, where discussions and dialogues will take place between the Diaspora Armenians and the Armenians from homeland.
- **I suggest** creating a small booklet about our culture, to distribute to the embassies, so that it gets spread at least. Let's make our children proud that they are Armenians, that little booklet should be a source of pride for all children.
- **I suggest** that we organize an "Armeniavision" song contest, where the Armenians from all countries will participate, and the next song contest will be held in the winner's country.
- **I suggest** organizing crowdfunding for The FUTURE ARMENIAN, people will believe and give money, and the money received through that platform can be used for the implementation of security programs.
- **I suggest** separate boarding houses for girls and boys, where they will be prepared to form a strong family in the future. They will be taught how to be a good mother and a good father.

# EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS





## 5.1 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Reflective self-evaluation is an important part of any deliberative process. In order to gather the participants' feedback about the process, surveys were completed at the start and end of the Convention.

Participation in the surveys was voluntary. The surveys were issued in hard copy by the table facilitators, and each participant was asked to complete the survey at their allocated table.

The surveys comprised a series of closed and open questions covering the participants' knowledge of and attitudes about the topics of the Convention, their experiences during the process, and their political attitudes and interests.

Each member had a unique ID to add to each survey they completed, enabling answers to be linked to participants' demographic and attitudinal data. The Day 1 survey received 165 responses, and the Day 3 survey received 158.

## 5.2 PARTICIPANTS' SURVEY RESPONSES

Participants' self-reported satisfaction with most aspects of the Convention was generally high, as evidenced by the quantitative scores shown in the charts below, and by the qualitative comments collected. The quality of deliberation and respect within the group was high, and most respondents felt like they had made a meaningful contribution to their collective recommendations. Participants did, however, provide several suggestions for improvement, particularly around the time allocated to discussions (more time was needed overall but some individual sessions were too long), the smoothness of administration, and the content of materials provided.

### RESPECT, INCLUSIVENESS, AND QUALITY OF DELIBERATIONS

Perhaps the most important dimension of any deliberative process is the quality of the deliberation itself. This can be measured in a variety of ways, as shown in Figure 20. Participants in the CFA who responded to these questions were overwhelmingly satisfied with the respectfulness and impartiality of facilitation (98% agreement). They also rated their and their peers' ability to sufficiently express their opinions highly (97% and 95% positive agreement, respectively). Very few respondents (5%) felt that the diversity of opinions in the Convention was not well represented.

Some areas for improvement are also clear. For example, 17% of participants felt that some participants tended to dominate discussions, and 12% reported feeling some pressure to agree with the arguments of others. On the whole though, the survey results indicate that the deliberation was very healthy.



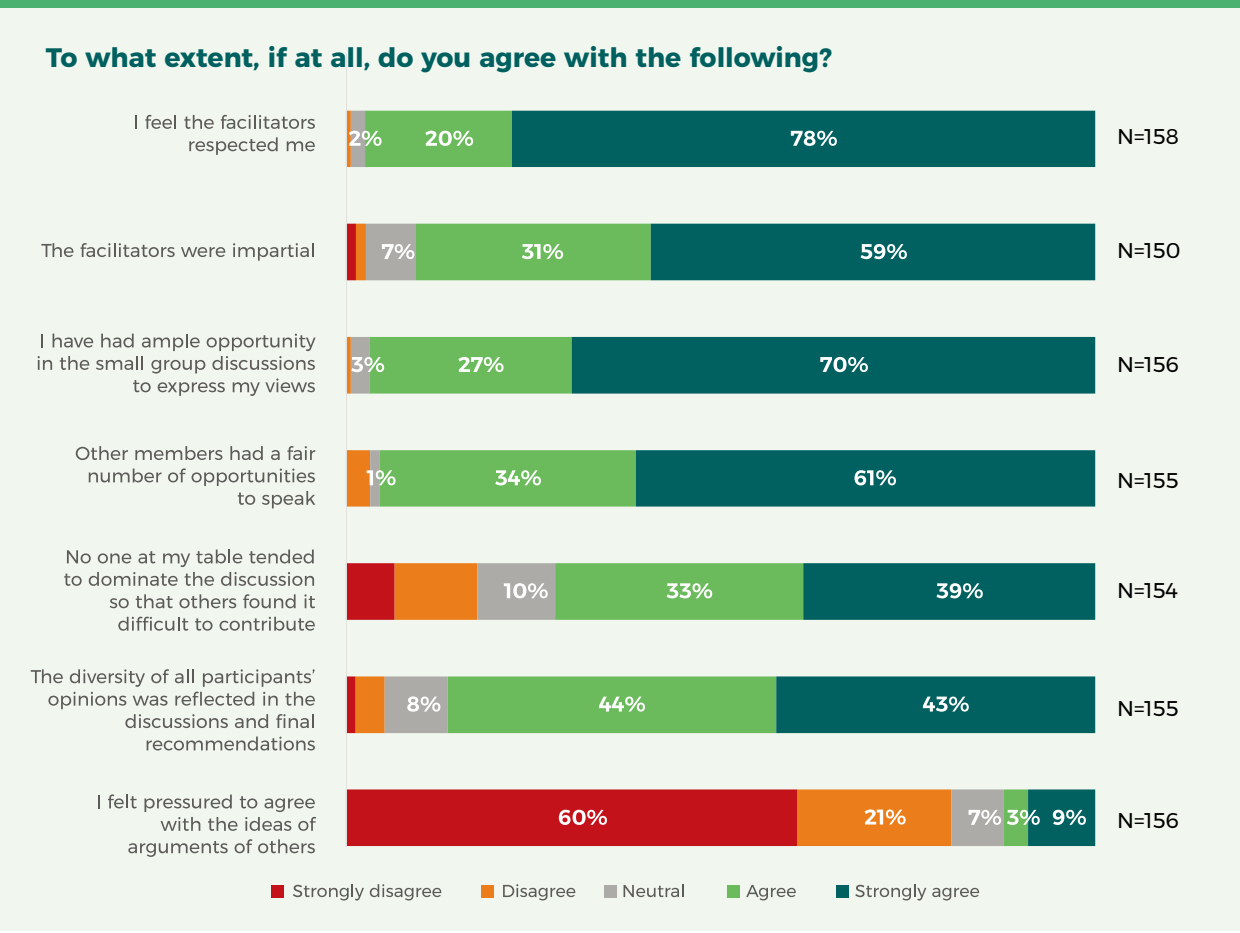


Figure 20: Several measures of deliberation quality



## INFORMATION AND TIME

Figure 21 shows that the scenario viewpoints and background materials were widely considered to be fair and balanced (88% agreement) and that levels of understanding were generally high. There does, however, appear to be some room for improvement in ensuring mutual understanding is as high as it can be. For example, Figure 22 suggests that future materials may be able to provide slightly more complex information. A longer timeframe for future processes could go a long way to improving both of these aspects.

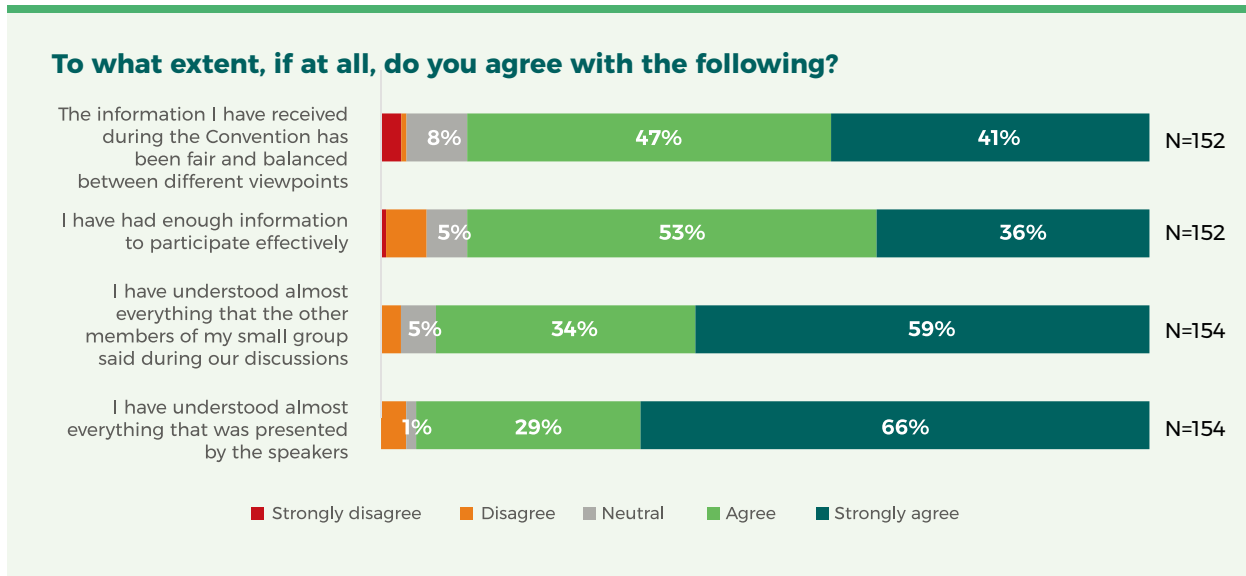


Figure 21: Several measures of participant comprehension

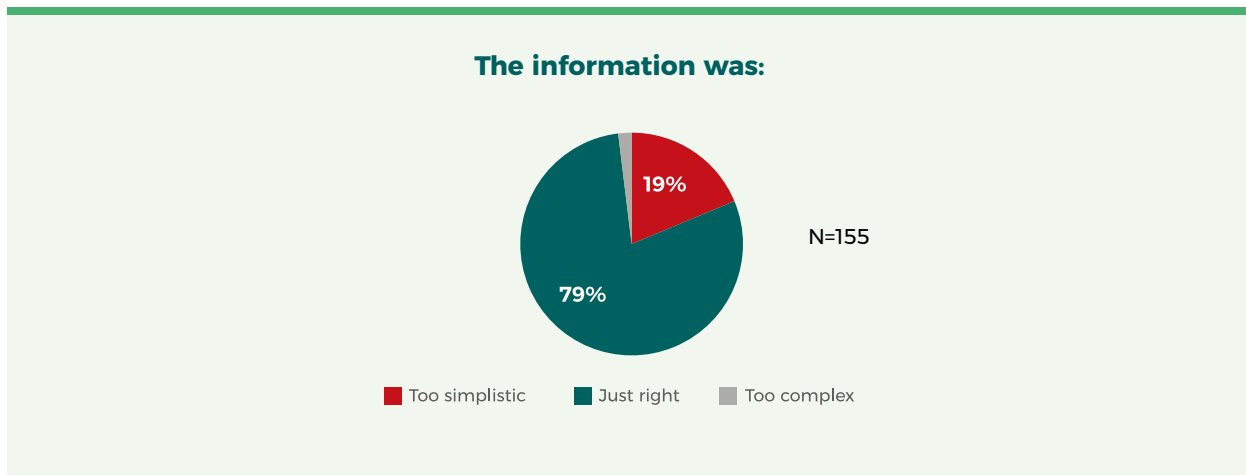


Figure 22: Participants' opinions about the level of the information materials

The timing of deliberations is a critical area where the balance must be struck between allowing for in-depth discussions while covering all the material, and making sure participants neither feel rushed nor become tired or bored. A clear majority (83%) felt that the sessions were well-paced and 73% agreed or strongly agreed that there was enough time for discussions overall (Figure 23).

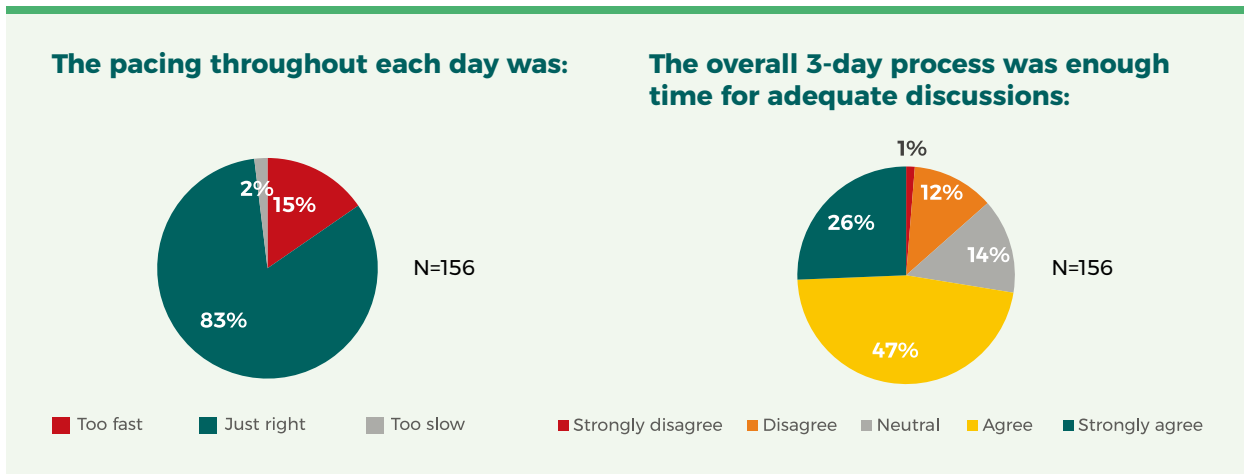


Figure 23: Participants' opinions about the timing and pacing of the Convention

## PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCE

Deliberative processes provide participants with the opportunity to feel like they have contributed to political decision making to a level beyond what many citizens have come to expect. Figure 24 shows that a majority (58%) of respondents felt that they influenced the final recommendations, and a more sizeable 84% agreed or strongly agreed that the recommendations met their expectations.

*"We had volunteer translators. They were all perfect and did their best when we needed something. However, for general speeches on the stage, it would be nice to have earbuds so the work of the translators would be easier."*

*Participant comment recorded by notetaker*

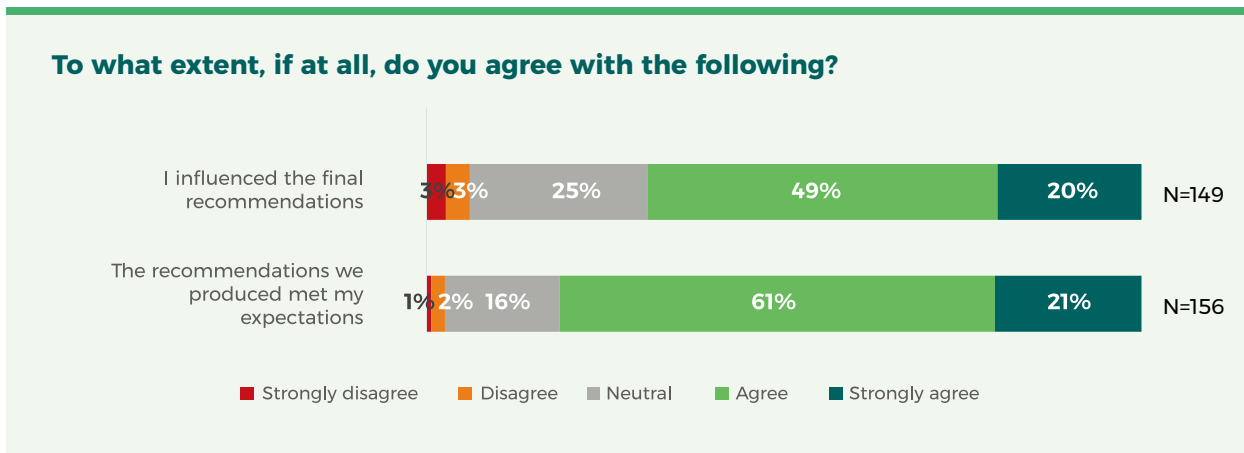


Figure 24: Participants' perceptions of the recommendations

As shown by Figure 25, respondents feel less strongly that they have influence over these issues more broadly. Even so, the fact that around half of respondents feel like they have 'a lot' or 'a great deal' of influence over these topics is notable, and a testament to the sense of empowerment made possible by deliberative processes.



### How much influence do you feel you have personally on the following aspects?

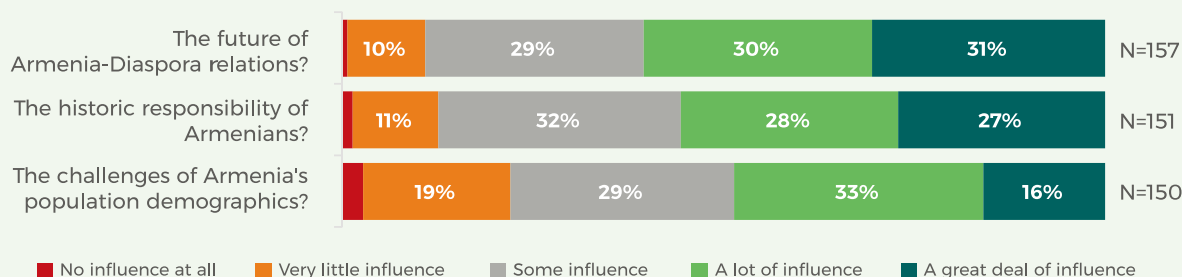


Figure 25: Participants' perceptions of personal influence over the Goals of the Convention

## OVERALL SATISFACTION

Participants' enthusiasm for deliberation is corroborated by 95% agreement in the Day 3 survey that deliberative processes are an effective way of engaging people in decision making. The same proportion also agreed (most of them 'strongly') that the Convention was a valuable experience for them personally (Figure 26). Furthermore, not a single respondent rated the Convention as anything less than good, and more than half rated it as highly as possible (see Figure 27).

### To what extent, if at all, do you agree with the following?

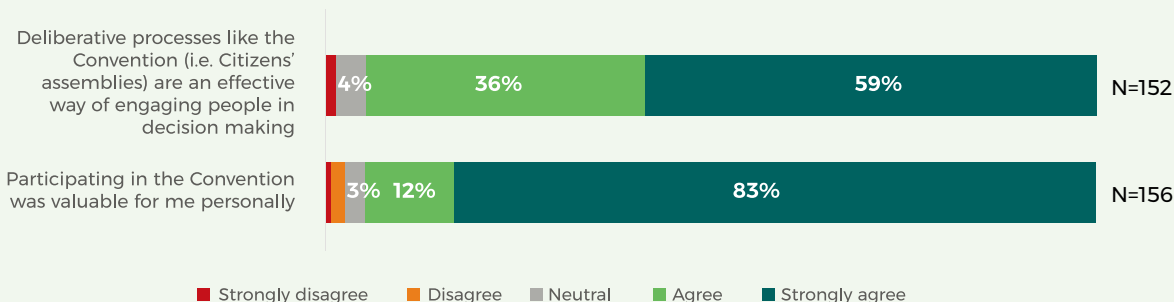


Figure 26: Participants' feelings about the effectiveness of deliberative processes, and their personal value to them

### Overall, how would you rate this weekend's event?

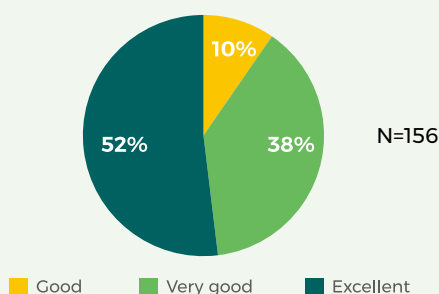


Figure 27: Participants' ratings of the whole Convention experience

The survey also included a few open-ended questions in which participants could express what they liked most or least, and suggest improvements. Analysis of these comments reveals that the **most liked aspects** of the Convention were:

- 1. The diversity of participants, atmosphere, and networking experience (48% of total responses, or 76 comments)
- 2. The organization of the event, the overall format (37% of responses, or 59 comments)
- 3. The discussion topics, ideas, and suggestions made (13% of responses, or 20 comments).

Participants’ **least liked aspects** of the convention included:

- 1. The short duration of discussion: i.e. the broadness of the topics versus the time allocated for discussions (11%, or 17 comments)
- 2. Administrative issues (8%, or 12 comments)
- 3. Other participants’ competence in discussing the topics (7%, or 11 comments)
- 4. The quality of the information content (6%, or 9 comments)
- 5. 34 other comments related to government disengagement, facilitation, language barriers, and other topics.

Participants also suggested several areas for improvement. The most commonly raised suggestions were:

- 1. Administrative improvements (11%, or 18 comments)
- 2. Improvements related to content (9%, or 14 comments)
- 3. Improvements related to facilitation of discussions (9%, or 14 comments)
- 4. Improvements related to participant recruitment (9%, or 14 comments)
- 5. Other comments related to time management, expectations related to future Conventions, and practical next steps.

Finally, participants expressed several common opinions about the following aspects:

Mostly positive comments about organizational matters, suggestions on table organization, scheduling, etc.	89 comments (57%)
The importance of practical next steps and implementation of the approved projects	29 comments (18%)
Expectations for the next Convention and/or suggested organization of regional/Diaspora conventions	24 comments (15%)
Various ideas on the importance of government engagement, and ideas on the composition of the Affiliation Network	3-9 comments (2-6%)

## 5.3 SOME PARTICIPANTS' REFLECTIONS

### ANI ARAKELYAN ARTSAKH

I am young, I am a patriot, and the topics of our discussions are all within that scope. As a professional economist, I am ready to have my share in the implementation of the decisions of this Convention. I will definitely assist and play my role in that. The discussions are very interactive, and the fact that so many clever people have gathered under one roof bears huge potential for the future.

---

### DAVID DAVTIAN FRANCE

The Convention has great value. I see myself as an ambassador of the Convention in my community. I have to spread these discussions where I live. This Convention was a unique opportunity where all of us, coming from different countries, united during these three days around one goal: making our nation prosperous.

---

### IRINA GARGARYAN ARMENIA

When I heard about the Convention, the Goals that were to be discussed, and the number of countries from which the participants would be, I realized how wonderful it would be to sit at the same table with these people and hear the voice of Armenia-Artsakh-Diaspora.

---

### ARICK GEVORKIAN USA

I am young, I am a patriot, and the topics of our discussions are all within that scope. As a professional economist, I am ready to have my share in the implementation of the decisions of this Convention. I will definitely assist and play my role in that. The discussions are very interactive, and the fact that so many clever people have gathered under one roof bears huge potential for the future.

### ZHANNA HARUTYUNYAN ARMENIA

During these three days, I gained an enormous amount of knowledge and experience. In terms of soft skills, I had many complexes regarding public speaking and expressing my opinion, but the atmosphere here pushed me to express myself and build relationships with people. I embraced many ideas that I plan to implement. After the Convention ends, I will share the acquired knowledge with my teammates.

---

### ARMINE MAGUMIAN RUSSIA

Before this, no one had formulated the 15 problems facing Armenia and the Diaspora, but now at least we have an idea of what we need to solve, and what we need to discuss. Now, I can tell my friends and my relatives that there are different aspects, different viewpoints, and we can work together. I hope that such conventions will be held regularly, that other Armenians will come, and in this way we will spread the idea of unity.

---

### MARY PAPAZIAN USA

The most interesting part for me has been the coming together of Armenians from all over the world, who care, and we are having wonderful debates. We disagree, but we are trying to listen to each other. Armenians sometimes like to talk more than listen, but it's been very good, very lively, and people are very engaged.



## 5.4 REFLECTIONS FROM HONORARY GUESTS AND OBSERVERS

**LARISA ALAVERDYAN**  
**FORMER HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER OF ARMENIA**

It was very interesting. The participants were not only from different states but also from different continents. I am very satisfied with the discussion, and the level and knowledge of the participants.

---

**ANTHONY BARSAMIAN**  
**CO-CHAIR OF THE ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA**

It allows people to talk to one another. Noubar Afeyan said something that I was struck with: this is important for five, six, and seven-year-olds because if we prepare the table today, those children, as they grow up, will have a new model to talk to each other with in Armenia tomorrow.

---

**HRANUSH HAKOBYAN**  
**FORMER MINISTER OF DIASPORA OF ARMENIA**

The Convention had historical, political, national, moral, patriotic, and encouraging significance for our people, our heroes living in Artsakh, for the Armenians spread all over the world. My deepest gratitude to our powerful compatriots, the co-Founders of The FUTURE ARMENIAN. I am sure you will make your predictions and vision come true by uniting the Armenian people and overcoming all kinds of obstacles.

---

**ARCHBISHOP NATHAN HOVHANNISIAN**  
**MOTHER SEE OF HOLY ETCHMIADZIN**

We welcome this Initiative, because it is not an easy task to unite all Armenians around one agenda. It must be achieved step by step, and this Initiative is one of the steps toward that direction. It has already received quite a great response among Armenians in Armenia, Artsakh and Diaspora.

**EDELE HOVNANIAN**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE H. HOVNANIAN FAMILY FOUNDATION**

It had a unique structure. It wasn't thousands of people who just talked about what they did, but trying to break it down into topics that we can analyze on a deeper level, and bring in diasporans and locals who have very different perspectives. For me, it is interesting. My goal is to see if Armenians can reach conclusions.

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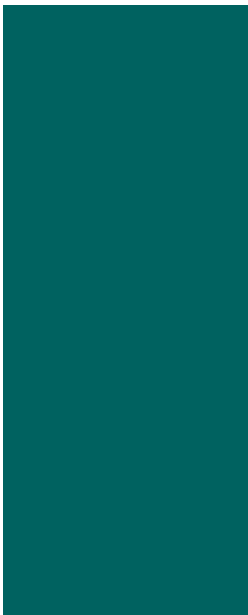
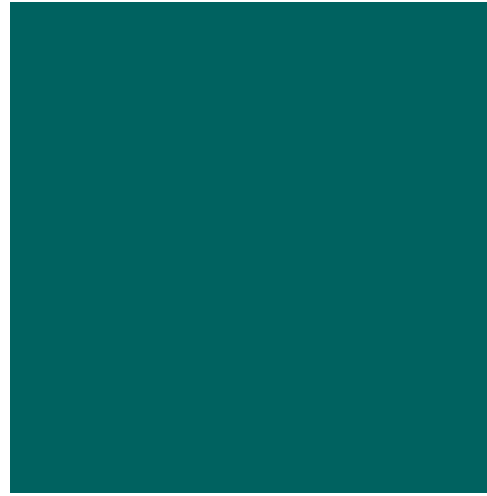
**VASKEN YACOUBIAN**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE AGBU ARMENIA**

There are many different points of view. And platforms like this should create an opportunity for priorities to be raised so that we can work toward them. We need to find new ways to involve non-involved Armenians, and, in my opinion, this The FUTURE ARMENIAN platform is a good first step in that direction.

---

**YERVANT ZORIAN**  
**PRESIDENT OF "SYNOPSIS ARMENIA"**

What I liked most was the difference in opinion. When you live in the same community, the opinions are often the same. This Convention managed to gather people with different opinions. And when you put them side by side, you get solutions.





OBSERVER  
EXPERT



# CONCLUSION



The 200 members of this first Convention of The Future Armenian deliberated for three days in March 2023, over three interconnected topics critical to the future of Armenia, its Diaspora, and Artsakh. These topics correspond to the most highly prioritized of The FUTURE ARMENIAN Initiative's 15 Goals, developed by experts and ranked by over 112,000 engaged Armenians from all over the world.

With the support of materials prepared by three Expert Committees, participants produced a list of recommended initiatives to be taken forward by a network of affiliated charities, businesses, and other organizations, and potentially, government institutions. This report contains details of these recommendations, along with participants' opinions on a number of position statements. Collectively, these can be summarized as follows.

## HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY

"How can different segments of the Armenian nation take on their historical responsibility to pass down our heritage of Armenian identity, homeland, historical memory, and values to future generations and the world?"

A majority of the Convention's participants felt highly invested in the preservation of the Armenian nation and its culture, with 62% taking the position that it is the duty of all Armenians around the world to preserve their culture and heritage (position statement 1.4). They recommended a range of initiatives to promote truth and awareness around the present conflict and the historical narrative, particularly the Armenian Genocide. There was also clear support for preserving the self-determination of the people of Artsakh (93% agreed that it is an issue of concern for all Armenians the world over; position statement 1.2). A range of interventions received more than 70% support, such as creating an 'All-Armenian Web Army' to "promote the cause", "a unified list of all Armenian heritage pieces", and a "coordinating council for youth exchanges".

## ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY

"How can we build a strong and effective system of Armenia-Diaspora relations based on shared principles and practical foundations?"

The perspective that being an Armenian is not a status restricted to those residing in Armenia was foundational to the Convention. More than 50% expressed a sense of responsibility incumbent upon Diaspora Armenians to contribute to their motherland and support the preservation of its heritage and culture. Simultaneously, there was a recognition that Armenians in Armenia need to be open and supportive to the contributions of the Diaspora, and that the preservation of Armenianness in both groups would be mutually reinforcing; 53% of participants supported "the strengthening of Armenia, with the expectation that a stronger Armenia will contribute to the preservation of Armenianness in the Diaspora much more easily", and 56.96% agreed that "we need new cooperation platforms. The crisis of confidence is surmountable, and unity will multiply the results".

The most popular recommendation on this topic, with 82% support, was to establish a collaborative network of business people across the world.

## GROWING POPULATION

“What are the key steps we can take to solve our demographic challenges and ensure a stable future for Armenia?”

The population of the nation of Armenia is both shrinking<sup>25</sup> and aging. 75% of participants agreed that “demographic policy should be declared the main direction of the policy implemented in the country, and it should be served by the policies of other spheres” (position statement 3.3). Consequently, various initiatives were proposed to support this, such as 79.49% supporting “an agency of immigration organization and advocacy”, and 70.51% supporting a “Children First initiative”, ensuring that it is easier to have children and once they are born, they are properly supported.

There was also recognition that in order to reduce emigration, Armenia needed to become a more attractive place to stay, with 57.89% agreeing that “it is wrong to direct all efforts toward immigration while we have high levels of unemployment and poverty in Armenia. Without solving the problems of economic development and unemployment, immigration will lead to social tensions” (position statement 3.4). Just over half (55%) of participants agreed that all viable initiatives should be pursued at the same time (position statement 3.1).

## LEGACY AND NEXT STEPS

The original ‘innovation challenge question’ guides assessment of the Convention’s legacy and next steps:

“How might we create a new citizen-led deliberative process for enabling Armenians from Armenia, Artsakh and Diaspora to rapidly accelerate our ability to collectively address the critical challenges we face by 2041?”.

The CFA has already brought together well over 112,000 people who expressed an interest in participating, ADD individuals and organizations involved through Expert Committees, the 200 Convention members themselves, and the countless Armenians across the world who have been inspired by the endeavor. In essence, the CFA is a global network of people and organizations working together “to rapidly accelerate our ability to collectively address the critical challenges we face by 2041”.

Given the ambition of the project and the instability in the socio-economic operating environment, that this network has been created at all is a significant milestone. Add to this a rigorous new model of Armenian Diaspora sortition, expert facilitation of the CFA, professional communication and framing through elements such as the Theory of Change, we now have solid foundations upon which to build.

The first step in creating a new “citizen-led deliberative process” has been achieved. A new governance chamber made up of a representative group of the global Armenian population now exists.

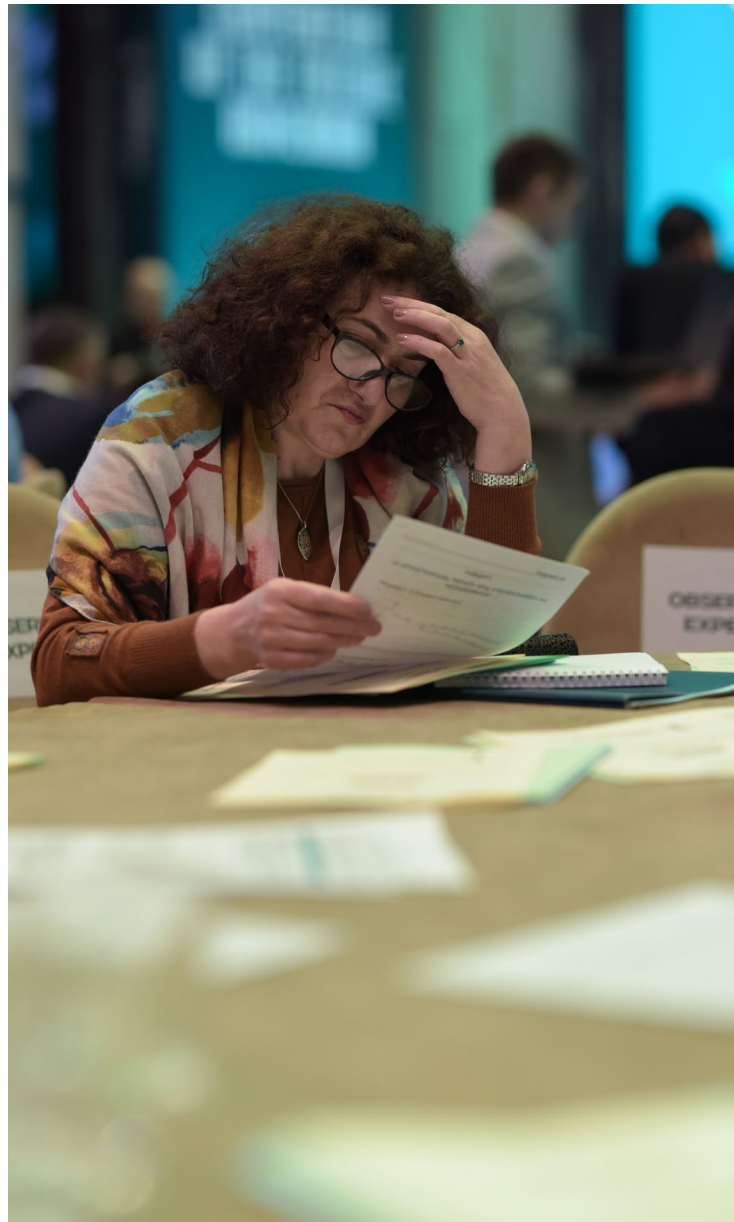
The big challenge now is how it can “accelerate our ability to collectively address the critical challenges we face by 2041”. As mentioned in Section 1.5.1, the Convention will stand or fall on its ability to do so. To achieve this goal, the CFA identified four outcomes:

- Institutional actions
- Affiliation Network actions
- Citizens’ actions
- New governance model.

The fourth has been achieved, although future iterations will undoubtedly need refinement based on the success in terms of the other three action outcomes, which is where attention must now be directed. The establishment of the Affiliation Network, a key innovation of the CFA, gives genuine hope that over the coming months and years, impacts will be substantial.

This first Convention of the Future Armenian marks a historic moment in the governance of Armenia and its relationship with Armenians from all over the world. It has established a replicable platform through which pan-Armenian knowledge and wisdom can be united and amplified for their common interest, both as individuals and as a collective united by a nation, its culture, and its unique, profound challenges. Furthermore, as a new piece of governance infrastructure, it has drawn on the best of contemporary deliberative practice, and demonstrated to the wider world how these can be innovated for legitimacy and impact in a manner appropriate to its particular context. Moreover, it has done so independently of established government institutions, and in spite of geographical constraints and the devastation of ongoing conflict.

This Convention has established Armenia on the deliberative democracy map, as its people – both near and far – begin to harness their collective intelligence and power to rise to the challenges they face, together.





# APPENDIX 1: EXPERT COMMITTEES' MEMBERS

## EXPERT COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY



**Archbishop Khajag Barsamian** - Chair of the Expert Committee on Historic Responsibility

Pontifical Legate of the Western Europe and Representative of the Armenian Church to the Holy See



**Varoujan Altebarmakian**

chairman of the Endowment Fund of the Western Diocese Armenian Church, doctor, formal medical director at the Fresno Medical Center



**Rouben Galichian**

independent London-based scholar and researcher, cartographer, consultant for oil-gas-petrochemical industries



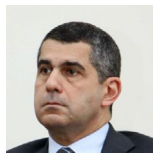
**Garo Armenian**

former member of the ARF Bureau, economist and financier in international finance



**Ruben Karapetyan**

former ambassador to Egypt and Italy, Ph.D. in history, professor



**Shahen Avakian**

former secretary general of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia, former advisor to the President of Armenia



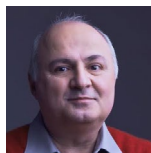
**Aleksander Manasyan**

Armenian philosopher, professor, lecturer and corresponding member of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia



**Ashot Bleyan**

pedagogue and founder of "Mkhitar Sebastatsi" educational complex in Yerevan, former MP



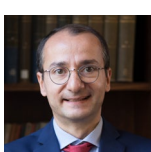
**Harutyun Marutyan**

ethnographer, professor, the director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Foundation. Ph.D. in history



**Hayk Demoyan**

historian, former director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, Ph.D. in history



**Khatchig Mouradian**

lecturer in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African studies (MESAAS) at Columbia University, and the Armenian and Georgian area specialist in the African and Middle Eastern Division at the Library of Congress



**Khatchik Der Chougassian**

chair of the Theory of International Relations at Universidad Nacional de Lanus, Ph.D. in international studies from University of Miami in Coral Gables



**Ruben Safrastyan**

orientalist-Turkologist, academician of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, Ph.D. in history, professor

**Ara Sanjian**

associate professor of history and the director of the Armenian research center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn

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**Khachig Tölölyan**

Armenian diaspora expert, literary critic and publicist

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**Khachatur Stepanyan**

professor, lecturer and head of the Department of World History and its Teaching Methodology at ASPU

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**Vahe Vartanian**

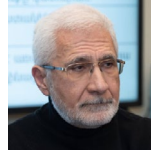
London-based founder, CEO of the Global Family Office Community (GFOC), co-founder of the Global Next Gen Community

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**Yeghia Tashjian**

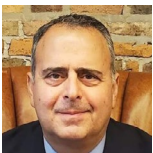
regional analyst and researcher, an associate fellow at the Issam Fares Institute at the AUB and a part-time instructor in international affairs at the American University for Science and Technology (AUST)

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**Ashot Voskanyan**

philosopher and diplomat, former ambassador to Austria and the OSCE, former MP, PhD in Philosophy and associate professor

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**Oscar Tatosian**

member of the Board of the Armenian Relief Fund, an honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia in Chicago

## EXPERT COMMITTEE ON ARMENIA - DIASPORA UNITY



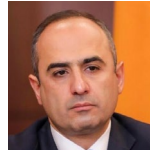
**Aram Abrahamyan** - Chair of the Expert Committee on Armenia-Diaspora Unity

Armenian journalist and publicist, founding editor of Aravot daily



**Levon Afeyan**

Canadian industrial entrepreneur, honorary consul of Armenia in Quebec



**Artyom Geghamyan**

former deputy Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia, Ph.D. in law



**Hakob Asatryan**

journalist and editor of Ozer magazine (Czechia), member of Yerevan Press Club and Journalists' Union of Armenia



**Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan**

Henry George chair in economics and associate professor of economics at St. John's university in New York City, Ph.D. in economics



**Hovel Chenorhokian**

entrepreneur, writer, activist and founder of DiasporArm



**Sevan Kabakian**

aerospace engineer, country director of Birthright Armenia (Depi Hayq).



**Armen Der Kiureghian**

Armenian-American academic, co-founder of the American University of Armenia



**Vahagn Melikian**

diplomat, former ambassador in the United Arab Emirates and Argentina, former deputy minister of Diaspora



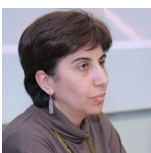
**Babken Der-Grigorian**

Iranian-Armenian repatriate, economist, former deputy Minister of Diaspora of Armenia



**Atom Mkhitarian**

expert in the field of higher education and science management, Ph.D. in Physics



**Siranush Dvovyan**

lecturer and coordinator of the scientific programs of the Armenian Research Center in Humanities, Ph.D. in philology, associate professor,



**Razmik Panossian**

Canadian-Armenian historian and political scientist, director of the Armenian Communities Department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation



**Hagop Panossian**

an engineer, scientist, Ph.D. in engineering and founder

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**Arpi Vartanian**

regional director of the Armenian Assembly of America

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**Hovhannes Sargsyan**

Ph.D. in philosophy, associate professor, chair of the department of Political Science at the Russian-Armenian University

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**Vasken Yacoubian**

engineer, founder and CEO of Leon A. Yacoubian Contracting LLC, president of AGBU Armenia

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**Anna Hess Sargsyan**

head of the diaspora sector at Genesis Armenia

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**Tigrane Yeghavian**

French-Armenian freelance journalist, essayist and eastern studies specialist

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**Sarkis Shahinian**

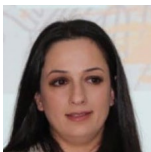
architect, co-founder and secretary general of the Parliamentary Friendship Group Switzerland-Armenia

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**Arman Yeghiazaryan**

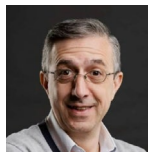
Ph.D. in history and associate professor

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**Lilit Shakaryan**

sociologist and lecturer, Ph.D. candidate in human development and family science and teaching assistant and researcher at University of Nevada.

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**Artem Yerkanyan**

journalist, political commentator and presenter

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**Nicolas Tavitian**

researcher at the Open University, former director at AGBU Europe

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**Vahan Zanoian**

author, public commentator, economist, global energy and national security consultant

## EXPERT COMMITTEE ON POPULATION GRWOTH



**Armine K. Hovannisian** - Chair of the Expert Committee on Growing Population

public figure, lawyer, founder of the charitable public organization “Oran”, director at “Junior Achievement of Armenia” organization



**Anastas Aghazaryan**

Ph.D. in History and Economics, UNDP Climate Change Program expert, head of National Health Accounts Center of the National Institute of Health



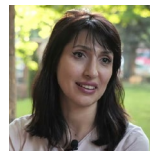
**Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan**

primate of the diocese of Tavush of the Armenian Apostolic Church, member of the Supreme Spiritual Council



**Mira Antonyan**

social protection expert, Ph.D. in sociology, founding president of the Association of Social Workers of Armenia, visiting and permanent lecturer at many universities



**Lilit Chantarchyan**

economist and Ph.D. in economics, lecturer at Galik University and senior researcher at the Pension and Demography Department of the National Institute of Labor and Social Research



**Ara Babloyan**

professor, chief pediatric surgeon of the Ministry of Health of Armenia, former Speaker of the National Assembly of Armenia



**Hovhannes Grigoryan**

sociologist, lecturer, CEO and founder at Breavis



**Karen Daduryan**

international expert in leadership, strategic planning, management and in demographics, UNFPA expert, leadership, management and strategic planning consultant



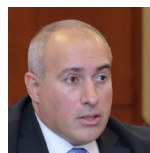
**Serob Khachatryan**

education expert, lecturer, former executive director of the COAF, lecturer of the Department of History, Theory and Logic of YSU Faculty of Philosophy and Psychology, head of the working group of the UN National Human Development Report



**Irina Davtyan**

deputy head of the Migration Service at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of Armenia



**Suren Krmoyan**

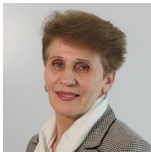
lawyer, candidate of law, founder and president at DIGITAL ARMENIA, legal advisor at AUA, former deputy minister of Justice

**Karine Kuyumjyan**

demographer, head of the Census and Demography Department of the National Statistical Service of Armenia (NSS)

**Hrant Mikaelian**

political scientist, expert of the Caucasus Institute

**Heghine Manasyan**

honorary (retired) director of HRK-Armenia Foundation, representative of the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) in Armenia, member of the Scientific Council of the World Values Research Association (WVSA).

**Tevan Poghosyan**

former MP, lecturer at the Armenian-Russian University, former adviser to the President of the Republic of Armenia

**Samvel Manukyan**

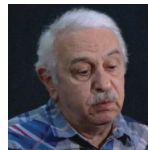
lecturer and scientific analyst in sociology, demography, political science and socio-economic fields, analyst at the "Orbeli" analytical center, lecturer at YSU

**Arman Voskerchyan**

Ph.D. in medical sciences, businessman, expert in medical technology, co-founder and chairman of the Board of Trustees of HENAR

**Vartan Marashlyan**

Ph.D. in economics, co-founder and executive director of "Repat Armenia Foundation", member of "5165" club and "ARAR" foundation

**Ruben Yeganyan**

demographer, leader of a number of demographic studies

**Artak Markosyan**

associate expert at AIISA and demographer

**Lilit Yezekyan**

economist-analyst, former economist-analyst and economist-statistician at Central Bank of Armenia, director of research at the CRRC-Armenia Foundation.



APPENDIX 2: THE FINAL VERSIONS OF VIEWPOINTS  
AS PRESENTED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF  
THE CONVENTION





**CONVENTION OF  
THE FUTURE ARMENIAN**

**10-12 MARCH 2023**

**Yerevan**

# **HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY**

Framing question:

**How can different segments of the Armenian nation take on their historical responsibility to pass down our heritage of Armenian identity, homeland, historical memory, and values to future generations and the world?**



**The Armenian  
Genocide**

## Actuality

In lengthy and comprehensive discussions, the Expert Committee singled out the aspect of the Armenian Genocide as a priority in the context of historical responsibility. *“Continuing to pursue the recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide is not merely a matter of a tribute to the past. Today, this is a real problem, because genocides breed new genocides, and such signs are observed in the perspective of Turkish-Azerbaijani cooperation. **The issue of genocide is a question of the existence of the Armenian people and Armenian statehood.** Therefore, this issue is very current. It should be examined with a new perspective and pan-Armenian efforts aimed at the future should be planned.”* This and similar reasoning were highlighted by the experts.

35 countries have recognized and condemned the Armenian Genocide at various levels. According to experts, however, when discussing the issue of international recognition of the Genocide, at least two principles should be adopted. The first is **to be honest with ourselves**, and the second is **to be realistic**. Sometimes we get carried away by the number of countries that recognize the Genocide and start creating fictitious situations or get excited by the pro-Armenian thoughts of one or two Turkish nationals and generalize those thoughts to the whole of Turkey. Meanwhile, the reality is that *“in the context of the emerging realities of 2015-2020, we have a fundamentally new situation, and **we simply cannot talk about the Genocide in the same way as we did before.**”*

The process of recognizing and condemning the Armenian Genocide also has the goal of deactivating and preventing Turkey's aggressive stance. However, after the events of 2020, it became clear that the policy pursued by the Armenian side was no longer sufficient to restrain Turkey. Some experts consider this and continue: *“**Recognition should be more tangible and realistic in terms of the dangers that threaten us.** The recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide by a number of countries did not in any way become a factor preventing the Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression. A number of countries that recognized the Armenian Genocide remained silent during the 44-day war and the events that followed.”* Moreover, the International Union of Genocide Scholars issued a statement saying that **the actions of Azerbaijan and Turkey entail a danger of genocide against the Armenians of Artsakh.**

## Policy

Turkey is a strong state today, and therefore the forms of demands and struggle should be clarified. Can we, with our limited resources and capabilities, pressure and force Turkey to recognize the Genocide? The Jewish people have a clear vision and, regardless of the differences within their communities, do everything to pursue that vision with concerted efforts. We Armenians do not have a vision that unites us all. *“**What is the historical responsibility of all Armenians, in particular, the homeland and the Diaspora,***



*regarding the Armenian Genocide? We want the world to recognize it, but we haven't decided what we want next. We demand justice, although there is little of it in politics,”* the experts observed.

*“On the one hand, there is the euphoric extreme, where Turkey recognizes the Genocide, and the issue is solved. On the other hand, there is the case where Turkey does not recognize the Genocide, and we move on without having closure to the issue.”* The real and future life falls between these two extremes, where **we must outline clear actions and plan them accordingly**, as well as consider experts and suggest thinking about **how to do it**.

Armenian institutions, the ANCA, and our traditional political parties have done an immense job in many countries for decades. **Taking the position of preventing genocides**, Armenia and Armenians have also created platforms of international importance, such as the **Global Forum “Against the Crime of Genocide”**, the **AURORA Prize** awarded on behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, etc. The adoption of the **Pan-Armenian declaration** on the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide became an important milestone for Armenia-Diaspora unity. Of course, a lot of work has **been and is being done**. However, denial can still be found almost everywhere today. **So how can we join forces to move forward, and what should we change in our steps?** This must be understood first.

### Initiatives

Experts talked a lot about the need to have an **Armenian institution equivalent to that of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League (Armenian Anti-Defamation League) human rights organization-mechanism**, observing that such an institution can fight against any manifestation of genocide denial.

*“Furthermore, we have communities in various countries of the world that have very different agendas and priorities. If we can assist these communities in coordinating and synchronizing the fight, we can achieve a global response.”* It was proposed to create **an online coordination council of the Armenian Genocide recognition process**. The council will include a coordinating committee with the participation of all the main actors, organizations and large communities, harmonizing the work of the Armenian Diaspora around the world.

There are about 70 exhibitions and museums dedicated to the Holocaust around the world, and there are more than nine dozen Jewish museums where the Genocide is talked about and presented in certainty. We have one fully functioning museum dedicated to the Armenian Genocide and two or three other museums carrying out certain research activities. **The opening of 3 foreign branches of the Genocide Museum should be useful.**

Very few of the countries that recognize the Armenian Genocide have any mention of the Armenian Genocide in their educational systems. Meanwhile, the Holocaust is studied and taught almost everywhere. **The inclusion of materials about the Genocide in the educational programs of other countries** should be ranked among the priorities of our lobbying efforts.



**CONVENTION OF  
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# **HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY**

Framing question:

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**Responsibility for the security  
of Armenia and Artsakh**



## The issue

*“I believe that the main objective of Historic Responsibility should be to create a unifying idea that brings all Armenians together, and language cannot fulfill such an ambition. Perhaps faith can. Nonetheless, I think that the most significant factor that unites us is our land.”* These and similar observations were often heard in expert discussions. The fragile security situation of Artsakh and the Republic of Armenia forces us to **prioritize discussions on security**. From the point of view of historical responsibility, it is necessary to talk first of all about the possibility of adopting potential formulations and solutions aimed at the security issues of the two Armenian states, the challenges and problems facing us.

*“The situation is so dire that sometimes there is an impression that all these discussions and conversations are worth very little, and the expressed concerns remain unaddressed.”* Ultimately, all of this should be organized around a specific understanding, answering the following questions: **What challenges are we confronting, what problems do we have and how should we tackle them?**

## Policy

As a result of their discussions, the experts agreed, that the **preservation of statehood is a matter of common, pan-Armenian responsibility**. We should try to solve the part of the problem that falls to us and not leave it to the next generations. From this point of view, several clear provisions were recorded:

1. The Armenian people have a responsibility to promptly develop their country.
2. We have a historical responsibility to preserve and develop Artsakh.
3. Armenia and the Diaspora should become **one united fist** to fulfill our historical responsibility. And finally, we need to understand why it was not possible to formulate **a unified pan-Armenian way of thinking, mission and formula** and move on to concrete actions that stem from all that.

According to experts, in the context of historical responsibility, today we have the responsibility to stop the continuous series of diplomatic and military-political losses. The realization of this responsibility will contribute to the restoration of the broken solidarity between Armenia and the people living in Armenia. At the same time, our current problems should not keep us from formulating goals for our future. *“Our failures come from not formulating goals and not carrying out proper work aimed at their implementation,”* the experts noted.

On the issue of Artsakh, the experts proposed to choose once and for all one of three possible options and announce to the world that the **issue of Artsakh** is:

1. the issue of the 120,000 people of Artsakh, or
2. the issue of the 120,000 people of Artsakh and 3 million people of Armenia, or
3. the issue of 10 million Armenians around the world.

As obvious as this choice seems, it must be made and then all plans will be made according to that choice. Even after this choice, everything does not become as clear and unambiguous as it seems. For example, those who consider themselves more courageous can claim:

*“The Armenians of the entire world should jointly commit to assuming the responsibility of Artsakh and not leave it only on the shoulders of the state and the citizens of Armenia and, even more so, the people of Artsakh. **The Armenian nation should not be afraid of victories.**”*

And those who consider themselves more prudent can retort:

*“The Artsakh issue is a complex one, a negotiation process. After the 2020 war, the positions of Armenia and the security of Artsakh have weakened. Today the issue has stabilized thanks to Russian peacekeepers and European observers. **Being adventurous can be dangerous.**”*

How do we see reality? This is worth a serious discussion.

### Initiatives

*“The issue of Artsakh has created a fragmented atmosphere in the Diaspora. Diaspora has a desire to help in the matter of Artsakh but does not know how to help. There is no common, unified direction,”* says one of the experts. If we can unite the Armenians of the world to assure the security of Armenia and Artsakh, many risks will be reduced. Azerbaijan and the world should clearly see and understand that they are not dealing with 120,000 Artsakh residents, but with 10 million Armenians from all over the world. **With the convening of the “Artsakh-10 million” forum of Armenians of the world**, it will be possible to significantly raise the united voice of the Armenian people on the Artsakh issue and throughout the event form effective mechanisms that will become permanent institutions “supporting the backs of 10 million” of Artsakh Armenians.

In 2022, Artsakh’s Parliament and Security Council made various statements calling for the unification and help of the Armenian people. Will the Diaspora, for example, financially support Artsakh if necessary? At one time, our Diaspora communities financed our embassies. What if the same is done for Artsakh? *“The All-Armenian Fund was financing infrastructure, maybe we can create an institution that will focus more on development*

*projects. If I live in another country, how can I become a part of and support my Motherland?"* If there is a united will, then it is possible to create the **"Artsakh" Foundation for Development Projects**, which will finance projects that advance the economy and security in Artsakh, giving Armenians living in any part of the world a chance to become a part of finding the solution to the vital national problem.

The role of **Twitter, or rather all social networks, including Wikipedia**, should be highlighted. *"Israel, for example, has a platform launched in Persian, which recorded 450 million views last year. Israel has the largest collection of Persian content on the web."* After the war, the volume of work we did on Wikipedia declined. Azerbaijanis continue to fill in new topics, while we are not so active. We need to create a well-managed **"All-Armenian Cyber Army"**.





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# **HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY**

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**Preserving heritage and  
ensuring its recognition**

*“To give up your roots means to give up yourself. I have been lighting candles in Armenian churches since I was five years old. And the church is not just faith, but also culture...”*

*Henri Verneuil*

### Actuality

In addition to the issue of the Armenian Genocide, there is also the issue of preserving and recognizing our rich history and heritage. The importance of making the Armenian people more active on various issues is clearly noticeable. *“Many of us are not familiar with our treasures, our heritage and prominent representatives of the Armenian nation, such as Nerses Shnorhali, Grigor Narekatsi and many others.”* Armenians have left the world a great heritage. One of our great treasures is faith, which contributed to our survival and is also a global value. *“We must talk about Tangible and intangible cultural heritage,, referring to our culture in its broad and narrow senses, our art, philosophy, religion and other realities.”* Preserving all this and presenting it to the world is our historical responsibility, but **who should carry out this mission, and how?** It is on this issue that we should come to an agreement as a nation.

It is important to understand **how we can preserve, develop and pass on Armenian identity, spirit and spirituality to the next generations.** One recent study on heritage was named “Hidden Treasures” by experts, implying that a significant amount of our people are unaware of our heritage. *“There is also a problem in the spiritual sense, when many people do not know the essence of our faith. Of course, there are pieces of our heritage exhibited in various places, such as in the Metropolitan Museum in New York City, but we do not have approaches based on serious, strategic foundations.”*

### Policy

Experts are also convinced that issues of culture and its preservation in the broadest sense should be our priorities. Our language, literature, and music are rich, and questions about their preservation should be central to our discussions. In a broad sense, culture can incorporate our national cuisine, a number of other components characteristic of the way of living, which have a cultural base and are an inalienable part of our culture. **We have an obligation to protect all of these.** Regarding this, we have issues everywhere, whether it's in Armenia, Artsakh, our neighboring regions, or the Diaspora. There is a lot to do in terms of heritage preservation, for example, in Venice, Vienna and Jerusalem: the Armenian state is not properly represented there, while the local Armenian entities are not very capable of handling the issue on their own.

According to experts, **the formation of a sense of pride and behavioral models among young people regarding our history, victories and successes** should be our responsibility. Currently, emphasis on our historical heritage is severely lacking in the school curriculum. School is the key to many solutions, but also the source of many problems. For example, *“How did it happen that we are Christians, but there suddenly was a struggle against the priests and the church in order to expel them from the schools? Why was the practice of reading testaments and gospels eliminated? This was done before our very own eyes,”* noted a well-known educational expert.

Some experts also highlight the **issue of historical responsibility toward the Soviet years**, which we seem to be avoiding. *“We have created values, and that era is also part of the historical responsibility. We are the bearers of that historic legacy today,”* experts noted.

But **what mechanisms should be put in place, and how should our heritage be popularized?** This is what we need to talk about.

### Initiatives

According to experts, first we need to be sure that the pieces of heritage that are important to us are documented. This will allow us to have a large list or system documenting our heritage, **Armenian cultural heritage list**, much like the **UNESCO** cultural heritage list, which will serve as an inventory of our heritage in different corners of the world. Such initiatives are already underway, and there is a need for one unified, impactful program.

*“Any Armenian can and should be a fighter for the preservation of their nation's heritage and a “PR-ambassador,” properly representing the homeland and all Armenians,”* argued the participants of the discussions. There is an idea to initiate the **“Ambassadors of Armenian Heritage”** movement with its platforms, targeted PR campaigns, and an effective mechanism that will allow all of us to get involved in spreading Armenia, Armenians and our successes.

There are private collections containing samples of Armenian heritage, about which we know little. There is a risk that these samples could be scattered around the world. The experts emphasized the idea of creating an **Armenian Heritage Foundation**, which will coordinate such processes, monitor all auctions and, if there are samples of Armenian heritage, quickly buy them and bring them to Armenia, as well as collect information about existing collections.

There is the “Iranica” platform, which is a good repository, the result of a number of Iranological studies and the cooperation of international universities studying this direction,



and a wonderful way to present Iran with one face and from one place. Any specific material written in Iranica has a scientific basis and justification. The experts proposed to create and advance the “**Armenica**” **program** based on the example of Iran on the basis of some centers of Armenian studies.

In all museums, we need to preserve pieces of our heritage through digitization and other means. The experts emphasized the importance **of a great project of digitization, preservation and dissemination of the values** that we have.



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**The responsibility of keeping  
Armenian's national identity**

*“Our ancestors bequeathed us and the world no small heritage.  
But we must understand and never forget that the greatest  
treasure of our heritage is our language.”*

*Paruyr Sevak*

### Actuality

- According to the research of specialists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Armenian language is among the 60 most influential languages in the world.
- In 2010, Western Armenian was included in UNESCO's “Electronic Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger”
- There are about 10 million Armenians in the world, while only 6 million people speak Armenian.

Issues related to the Armenian language, specifically the preservation of the language and its transmission to the next generation, are essential in the Diaspora. The problem becomes even more acute when the Armenian language is divided into different dialects and language forms in various Diaspora communities. *“I send my kids to an Armenian Sunday school in London. About 100 children attend the school, while there are about 30,000 Armenians living in London.”* How can we unite Armenian representatives of different generations around such schools and educational centers, around Armenian heritage and its unique manifestations? How can we **encourage them to learn the Armenian language**, to attend such schools, to practice Armenian? It can be at home, at school, in any group where there is a corresponding environment, with Armenian-speaking people and friends. These questions were raised by the experts when addressing the topic.

### Policy

Work aimed at the issue of learning the Armenian language is always carried out by various Armenian organizations in communities in different countries. However, those efforts are by no means a fundamental solution to the issue. Only creating and opening groups of the Armenian language and, in particular, of the Western Armenian language is not enough. We **need effective mechanisms** that will put the preservation of Armenianness in the Diaspora on a stable foundation.

Experts believe that there is a clear **need to develop and implement an educational policy in the Diaspora**. A widespread and consistent policy not only implies the coordination of everyone's efforts, but also defined steps and concrete processes in the school-textbook-teacher chain.



Experts also believe that those mechanisms will not be sufficient if children are not immersed in a proper environment. This includes communicating with peers and friends and learning through communication and games, all the while enjoying the process. In this case, the policy will turn into a mere imposition of language, which will hardly be useful. *“It is crucial to look at all these questions and **proposals through the eyes of children**, really evaluating the possible outcomes and effects.”* *“Armenian studies is also politics, and so it is necessary **to create Armenian studies centers in the best universities of the world**, and this is a matter of direct state strategy,”* said the participants of the expert discussions.

**We have serious problems in preserving the Western Armenian language.** If we do not find solutions, Western Armenian, under the pressure of Eastern Armenian, may after some time, turn into a language spoken in very narrow circles, which is no longer used at any level. Meanwhile, it is obvious that the preservation of the Western Armenian language is of strategic importance. *“**TUMO and AGBU Armenian Virtual University** have excellent remote learning methods and experience, and they can respond to these problems,”* experts believe. Some suggested that, as an educational center created by the efforts of the Diaspora, the **American University of Armenia** could become the main forge of the Western Armenian language in the world.

The experts discussed at length the aspect of Armenian diversity. *“We have defined Armenians as one culture, one nation, but by doing so, we have neglected our diversity,”* argued one of the experts and suggested that we should be guided by the well-known Latin slogan **“E pluribus unum” “Out of many, one”**. *“Why do they fight against the dialect today and do not allow, for example, children to speak in their dialects in a school in the Shirak region? Why don’t the kids in Shirak study their dialect?”*

### Initiatives

Camps, meetings, mutual visits with different goals and contents can be organized. Today, there are “Birthright Armenia”, “Ari Tun” (*Step Toward Home*), “Repat Armenia” and other programs with similar initiatives. More should be added. Educational exchanges, both domestic and international, have great potential to solve the problem. There is a need for serious state support in this matter. The experts proposed the creation of a **Coordination Council for Youth Exchanges**, with the involvement of the state and key institutions, to advance this process.

Inspired by the example of the AGBU, the committee seriously entertained the idea of promoting the creation of **Armenian virtual universities** and ensuring competition. Remote learning can become a lifeline for Armenian studies, considering that physical

presence is not always viable. If we can create a virtual environment with the involvement of the best personnel and specialists, the virtual university can become a unifying and knowledge-creating factor.

*“Imagine the possible results achieved if Armenians from all over the world got excited about the idea of receiving high-quality education in the spheres of Armenian language, Armenian history and culture from their homes.”*

Diaspora Armenian experts who have young kids were particularly active in discussing the **initiative of “Language through games.”** *“We want our children's connection with the homeland to develop, for them to remain Armenian. It would be very good if there were modern games, where children would go online, earn badges based on their knowledge of Armenian language and Armenianness, and share with each other how many they have collected.”*



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# **ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY**

Framing question:

**How can we build a strong and effective system of Armenia-Diaspora relations based on shared principles and practical foundations?**



**Armenians and the Armenian  
Diaspora today**



## Preface

### Who are we?

The experts,<sup>1</sup> invited to discuss the issue of Armenia-Diaspora unity, considered it important primarily to discuss some fundamental issues related to common perception of the Armenia-Diaspora. The intention being that people could listen to each other, contemplate and in subsequent discussions be certain that there is harmony around the discussion table on basic perceptions.

- **How do we describe ourselves? Who is an Armenian in the 21st century?** Suggestions were made to start the discussion with this question.

- **How do we formulate patriotism? What about national solidarity?**

- **Who is a competitive Armenian?**

- **What is our idea of an attractive and powerful Armenia?**

- **What is a birthplace and what is a homeland? What is the difference?**

According to the experts, the answers to these questions will help the participants of the Convention make the search for solutions for Armenia-Diaspora unity easier.

### What do we know about the Diaspora?

Experts from Armenia and the Diaspora agree that we have a serious lack of data on the Diaspora, and that it is necessary to carry out much work toward **creating databases on the Diaspora**. There even was a suggestion that work should be done with Google and other major companies that own and manage data.

According to experts on the Diaspora, the Diaspora is not some kind of representative institution. It cannot be monolithic by itself, and it has various issues. *“The unity of the Diaspora is an utopia,”* was voiced during the discussions. **The Diaspora is not one Diaspora**, and problems should be considered on the community level. *“I know of three different Diasporas.”*

1. **The Diaspora formed in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide**, which, especially in the Middle East, has a marked tendency toward sovereign statehood and is very Armenian-centric. Of course, there are also Diaspora-centric circles here.
2. **Those who have emigrated from Armenia in the past 30 years**. For example, Armenians who came to Glendale, who have relatives, close friends, and other such strong ties to Armenia, but exceptionally weak ties in terms of statehood.

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<sup>1</sup> The experts decided to use the option **“Armenia-Diaspora”** instead of **“Homeland-Diaspora”**, stressing that the term “Armenia” should be understood as **Armenia and Artsakh** together, while the term “Homeland” is much more abstract and contains other dimensions.

3. The “Third Diaspora” is the oldest. For example, for Boston’s Armenian community, where people have been **living for four or five generations**, being Armenian has nothing to do with Armenia. Instead, it is more connected to culture and cuisine.

In reality, the Diaspora consists of ordinary people driven by simple motivations. We have two groups: one, people who are motivated by personal interests and their livelihood; and two, people who value the state and feel an obligation towards it. Everyone is somewhat ready to be involved in the Pan-Armenian agenda.

During the Republic of Armenia’s more than 30 years of existence, the role and importance of the Diaspora have been great in almost all spheres. The most important **contribution of the Diaspora** to the economy and public life **has been and continues to be not just money, but also culture**. Even in the Soviet era the influx of Diaspora Armenians brought, for example, music that didn’t even exist in the USSR. Today the Diaspora continues its influence and investment with ideas, such as “TUMO”. And this is what we need to consider in the relationship paradigm.

### What goals do we have?

According to experts, the ranking of the relative importance of goals for Armenians around the world looks like this:



Or simply put, we must be able to solve the issue of Strengthening Armenian identity everywhere. We must ensure our existence in a sovereign Armenia, and to do this we must be able to tackle the security issue, and to ensure security, we need economic empowerment. And to do all of it, we need unity.

### What problems do we have?

Until today, as a rule, individuals, the Diaspora Armenian elite, participated in the formation of the Pan-Armenian agenda: we now lack **the platforms where the people will speak**. What’s more, the Diaspora itself has a low level of institutionalization. Only 15% of the Diaspora is related to Armenian organizations, the main one being the Armenian Apostolic Church. The rest has nothing to do with Armenian structures.

Meanwhile, today in the Diaspora, **there is a serious crisis of confidence**, not only in the Armenian state, but also in the population. For example, the Western Diaspora noticeably does not trust residents of Armenia, and people in Armenia continue to treat the Diaspora in an “akhbar” manner, giving a negative connotation. *“I think it is important that we all call each other Armenians and try to build trust on that basis,”* suggested one of the experts. *“I’ve lived for a long time in the United States and Europe, and there is a serious trust issue there, also regarding whether the collected funds will reach Armenia.”*

In this context, the most important question remains: **What can be done? What concrete steps can be undertaken to close the trust gap between the Diaspora and Armenia, between Diaspora Armenians and residents of Armenia?**



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**Armenia at the Center**



## Actuality

*“Before, the Diaspora used to have a purpose: Hay Dat. That was what brought us together. Now we have lost that purpose. All our work and plans are means, but what is the end? We must shift the focus from the Strengthening Armenian identity to the protection of Armenia”,* - following these words of one of the experts, the goal of Armenia-centrism became a separate branch of discussions in the Armenia-Diaspora Unity Expert Committee. **The formula “State + Armenia”** was quite widely included in these discussions and received a particularly remarkable formulation by one of the respected experts, later becoming a regularly quoted saying:

*“I see the Diaspora in the form of iron dust scattered on the table that we are trying to collect. **The Republic of Armenia should be the magnet** that brings everyone together. However, for this, there must be an infinitely reliable state. The Diaspora should not work on its own to carry out piecemeal projects in various sectors. How can we make the state zealous about attracting the Diaspora like a magnet? Also, how do we charge those iron particles?”*

According to some experts, we should admit that **today's Diaspora is not Armenia-centric**, and we should stop pretending that it is. According to the survey results, Armenia places only fourth in the interests of the Diaspora, and this fact should be considered. Although, it should be noted that, despite being in fourth place overall, Armenia is still present in everyone's answers.

## Policy

*“In my opinion, the most important issue we have today is the protection of Armenia's statehood. Excuse me, what Armenia-Diaspora can we talk about if there is no Armenia?”* - with this observation, the idea that Armenia needs fresh blood, that is, **organizing a Great Immigration**, was put forward. It is clear that this is difficult to implement, but if we make this a priority, many other issues “automatically fall into place”: defense, economy, mentality, education, the state system. Armenia will change, and so will Artsakh, because without security for Artsakh, we will not be able to ensure Armenia's security. Let's remember that Soviet Armenia organized immigration at the state level three times, and that in Israel, the Ministry of Diaspora is today called the Ministry of Aliyah (Jewish immigration to Israel) and Integration.

The formula “State + Armenia” implies that the **logic of the state administration system** must be **changed**, which should thoroughly and rigorously take into consideration and think about the 10 million Armenians around the world instead of the 3 million Armenians in Armenia. In other words, any decision in any sphere should be considered through the prism of all Armenians. Everyone's way of working needs to be restructured based on that. According to the experts, the government of Artsakh is working on this idea to some extent.

A topic that gave birth to an intense discussion in this context is the political participation or non-participation of the Diaspora in the development of Armenia in various formats. **The need for constitutional changes**, which would lift restrictions on the Diaspora, was especially emphasized. *“We have six articles in our Constitution, which, for example, do not allow an Armenian who studied abroad and has dual citizenship to become a minister.”* We have no right to refuse the resource of the Diaspora. There are many countries where dual citizenship is not an obstacle. Not even in the United States. *“In fact, 75-80% of the potential of the Armenian people is in the Diaspora, where there are also Armenian citizens. How can we strengthen our state by giving up so many resources?”*

The topic of the integration and participation of the Diaspora in the political life of Armenia was then, discussed within the sphere of legislative power. Proponents of moving forward step by step suggested that we can first legally require the parties participating in the elections **to include representatives of the Diaspora in the candidates’ lists** at a certain proportion. And as the final stage of solving the issue, the **Bicameral Parliament model** was considered, where the Upper Chamber or the Senate is made up of representatives of the Diaspora. This idea has been circulating for a long time, and everyone understands the difficulties in implementing an election mechanism.

Another proposal touched on the issue of paying **a tax (on average \$100-150) to Armenia** by people who consider themselves Armenians. There were also those who opposed the idea. *“Why should, for example, an Armenian living in Argentina who receives \$1,000 dollars a month transfer some amount to Armenia’s budget every month? What will be their motivation?”* Proponents of more compromise solutions smoothed the sharp angles of the discussion. *“After 2020, Armenian-centric trends increased in the Diaspora, and our compatriots understand, realize and picture everything more systematically and seriously. We need to understand how to use these features. I think we should think of a **system that would allow people to make such payments according to their ability.**”*

The experts also discussed the issue of Diaspora Armenians **serving in the Armenian Army** on a voluntary basis or by any other acceptable mechanism.

### Initiatives

- In the case of adoption of the Great Immigration Strategy at the state level, initiation of the **“Back to Armenia” pan-Armenian movement**.
- Creation of a "Hayastan" investment company with reliable management, giving every Armenian the opportunity to participate in the development of the **RA economy in the form of buying shares**.
- Initiating the process of unification of the **“yan” ending** of surnames used in Armenia and the **“ian” ending** used in the Diaspora.



**CONVENTION OF  
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**10-12 MARCH 2023**

**Yerevan**

# **ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY**

Framing question:

**How can we build a strong and effective system of Armenia-Diaspora relations based on shared principles and practical foundations?**



**The goal: Preservation  
of the Diaspora**

## Actuality

The goal of the Diaspora is not only the strengthening of the Republic of Armenia or the creation or strengthening of statehood. It should be one of many goals, not the only one.

**Self-preservation, development, preservation and passing of identity, language and culture to the next generations are also among the goals of the Diaspora.** From this point of view, “Diaspora is also an end goal in itself.” Historically, the Diaspora has always been like that, but it dreamed of the Motherland.

Therefore, **the preservation of the Diaspora** can also be defined as the main goal of Armenia-Diaspora unity. And there are many problems in Diaspora communities. The most recent example is Lebanon, where the situation is quite dire. The minimum wage is \$21, even lower than in Afghanistan. A significant portion of the people, including the Armenian community, is barely making ends meet. Nevertheless, even in those circumstances, people are still concerned about Armenia.

**There is a decline in the level of education in the Diaspora.** One of the experts recounted their conversation with the editor of the Greek daily “Azat Or” and quoted him as saying: *“Every year they publish the data of Armenians who graduated from universities, that year this number was 21. The community has increased from 21,000 to 50,000 people, while the number of students has decreased.”* The social and economic level of the New Diaspora is not sufficient and there is a great deal of work to be done.

These and other issues are numerous and all need to be addressed. The approaches must differ from community to community. It is necessary to work with the French-speaking community of France in one way, and with the Spanish-speaking Argentinian Diaspora in another way. **Yes, it is necessary to work with the Diaspora in a variety of ways**, as the Diaspora itself is like that. The cooperation should be multifaceted, but such ties are missing, and, according to experts, they are missing because of Armenia and because that framework should have been created by Armenia.

The Diaspora went through war in Syria, then crisis in Lebanon, and today it is going through the crisis in Ukraine. We constantly see that we have a lack of **support systems for our communities in the Diaspora**. Another crisis was the 44-day war, which showed that there was a lot of support, but there was no effective system, which even leads to problems related to Armenia-Diaspora relations. We must have a system and leadership that will act as a guide during crises.

## Policy

And which of Armenia’s institutions or structures should manage Diaspora affairs? Only those who live in and work directly with the Diaspora know the specific problems. In this context, the importance of an official working with the Diaspora in all Armenian embassies of a person, who understands the given community and its characteristics well, was



emphasized. Experts discussed insights into the effectiveness of the **Commissioner's Office or the Ministry of Diaspora**. *“We need to unite so that the Republic of Armenia speaks with one voice to the Diaspora.”* Here, the experts looked at the experience of Greece, where, for example, there is a Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where two ministers manage the ministry – the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Diaspora. They manage both directions together and there is no separation.

There were also opposing positions on this issue. For example, instead of state intervention, it is necessary to define a new approach and policy, to form new subjects and centers. *“We conditionally name it **Phoenix-Armenia** and spread the centers around the world: Phoenix-France, Phoenix-Russia, etc.”* These will be public, social and educational-oriented organizations, through which the connection between the Republic of Armenia and the Diaspora will be ensured. Such institutions are much less problematic. *“**We are talking about having a special Diaspora representative at the embassies.** It is much more problematic when someone tries to speak and act on behalf of the state, so by developing it in the form of, in the name of and the ideas of such NGOs, we will get better output.”*

According to the third point of view, we already have the **Hayastan All-Armenian Fund**, which has its own institutions. Therefore, it is necessary simply to reconstruct what already exists so that it is clear, for example, during the annual fundraising campaign, that some money will be directed toward solving issues in one or another community. Videos will show the problems of Diaspora communities, and projects will be financed.

In general, there was no shortage of ideas in the discussions regarding the creation of the most diverse networks. **Professional networks of doctors, engineers, lawyers and others** have been created and already exist at the state's initiative. The experts highlighted the importance of public supervision of the work of relevant state institutions overseeing the constant activity of these networks.

### Initiatives

The experts also came up with the idea of creating a **Cooperative Network of Businessmen**. Successful Armenian businessmen are everywhere. *“Let them form joint business ties, from Argentina to India, etc., and a part of the joint profit will serve the Motherland. And it doesn't necessarily entail that these connections must be mediated by Armenia. They can be direct, for example, between the Armenian community of Canada and the Armenian community of Cyprus.”*

*“My proposal concerns the establishment of a **Pan-Armenian IT company**. In order to emphasize its pan-Armenian nature, we can create it as a joint-stock company, where people will participate in various formats,”* another expert had this kind of interesting proposal.

However, the most important Pan-Armenian network, the establishment of which experts were talking about, was the **Pan-Armenian Lobbying Network**. The Armenian lobby honorably carries out its mission throughout the world, but it includes only a small part of Armenians worldwide. With the establishment of a single, extensive network, Armenians from Australia to Canada can join efforts and achieve joint victories in tackling national issues.



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# **GROWING POPULATION**

Framing question:

**What are the key steps we can take to solve our demographic challenges and ensure a stable future for Armenia?**



**Armenia's current  
demographic situation**

	Births	Deaths	Permanent population at the beginning of the year, thousand people
1990	79 882	21 993	3 514.9
1991	77 825	23 425	3 574.5
1992	70 581	25 824	3 633.3
...			
2020	36 353	36 433	2 959.7
2021	36 623	34 388	2 963.3
2022	36 353	26 805	2 961.4

*“Available analyses indicate that there is little to be hopeful about in terms of demographics in Armenia. According to experts, **we have a very sad picture of natural growth**, which has not recovered after the war. **Emigration rates are also quite high**,”* as stated by the experts during long and comprehensive discussions around Armenia’s demographic situation.

Armenia's population keeps declining. The negative balance of migration waves also remains a problem. For example, according to the border registrations of entries and exits through Armenia’s border checkpoints, **27,941 people left Armenia in 2022, which is a greater number than the number of returnees with Armenian identity documents.**

Armenia's population is also aging. **Only every fifth family has a child under the age of 15.**

*“Apart from the pandemic and the war, the deterioration of the security environment is of demographic significance. It is necessary to define the problem of maintaining the current number of the population for the coming years, because **after 2026, we will have a decline in the number of births**,”* experts consider. Preventing the population from reaching a point of irreversible decline would be a significant accomplishment. Our goals for the future must be both ambitious and achievable.

According to various estimates, in the case of maintaining the current rates, **by 2050 the population of the Republic of Armenia will be about 1.9 million, and in 2100, 1 million.** Expectations are not positive either, and there is a lack of faith in possible optimistic future scenarios. Consequently, far fewer people today are inclined to expect population growth. *“I’m under the impression that a kind of race has started in society to obtain an **American Green card or a Russian passport**, and too many people are involved in these processes. Isn’t this a sign of despair?”* a participant of the discussion pointed out with sadness.

**Security, faith, hope.** These are the most important aspects of the demographic situation, experts consider. And what is being done in Armenia today around the demography and



population growth issues is assessed as highly insufficient. *“We have an apathetic mood among the public. Many people are not aware of the reality and the problems, and do not imagine their scale. Moreover, many do not know what they want, what they would like to change and how to do it. A clear policy is needed to solve the aforementioned problems, as all local research and individual efforts aimed at any problem are not concerted and remain fruitless.”*

In recent years, **various efforts have been made by the state in this direction**: in particular, the housing program, the increase of the one-time monetary allowance for first and second children of families, state benefits for non-working parents in rural areas, etc. However, there are far more serious factors that negatively impact mitigation efforts that require a much more comprehensive approach.

According to experts, we must first understand and define **what demographic goals we are setting**. What are Armenia’s demographic possibilities and potential? How and what quality outcome can be ensured? How big of a population do we imagine Armenia to have in the next **10, 20 or 30 years? Do we consider a population of 2 million, 4 million, 6 million or maybe 3 million** realistic and acceptable? Why?

Experts see the importance of a highly active, two-level complementary effort system.

1. the priority and overarching goal of **improving the demographic situation** lying at the basis of all state policies in all sectors,
2. **broad public support** and initiatives.

However, even experts differ in their approach to policy scalability.

*“Demographic mainstreaming: to declare demography to be a major issue that should be served by the policies of other spheres. Until now, demographic policy has been perceived as a tool of social support. We need a comprehensive policy that encourages people to stay in Armenia and create,”* a group of experts say.

*“The demographic policy should be **a set of smaller policies and programs**, because having and implementing a comprehensive and unified policy is expensive and not within the means of the current Armenia,”* - countered others.

Which route to take and how? This needs to be seriously talked about. However, everyone agrees on one thing: **there is an obvious need for urgent steps**.

The importance of broad public support for the process and support by private initiatives were also clearly emphasized in the discussions. **What should the general public do? What can our businesspeople, cultural and educational institutions do? What can all the media do? What kind of ideas for feasible initiatives can there be?** Experts are drawing everyone’s attention to these issues and encouraging creative discussions.



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# **GROWING POPULATION**

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**Natural population  
growth**

### Actuality

The experts discussed in detail a wide range of issues related to fertility, life expectancy, mortality, aging population, health care, marriages and divorces, support for young families, the role of women in society, employment, the role of providing educational opportunities and natural population growth.

For years, Armenia had a **fertility rate of 2.1**, which has decreased and currently stands at 1.6-1.7. The birth rate in the regions is even lower compared to Yerevan. At a rate of 1.6, it is still possible to bring it closer to 2.1 with the right policies, but at a rate of 1.3, the resulting situation becomes, in a sense, irreversible.

**The declining birth rate** is a global phenomenon, and the need to have children has been steadily decreasing in Armenia for quite some time. **Postponing marriages and the birth of the first child** is also a visible phenomenon nowadays. **Divorce** also paints an alarming picture: every third newly created family is in the risk group. The issue of **gender-biased sex selection** remains a problem, although it has improved in recent years, and even though this issue does not have a significant impact on the demographic picture. *“Our health is in a very bad state, and we have a big problem with the elderly. In our country, the situation of children under 5 years old is very good, we are almost close to European indicators. The general longevity number has increased at the expense of this age group, and still we say that the picture is positive”* - one of the experts shared their concerns during the discussion of life expectancy issues.

The **gender-age composition** of our society is almost similar to the gender-age composition of a country that went through the World War II. There is a huge shortage of men aged 25 and over. War is a noticeable factor here, but the biggest problem and factor in this case is migration.

**We have varying levels of mortality** in Yerevan and regions. The health care system does not function as a unified body that can provide equal access to healthcare in the capital and regions. This directly affects mortality and other indicators.

### Policy

It is necessary to develop and have a **family unit, a model based on national goals**, and build the entire societal relations philosophy on its basis, from kindergarten, textbooks and advertisements to the pension system. For example, in extended families, the influence of values by grandparents on grandchildren is much greater, and the elderly are the bearers of the belief of having many children.

**Motherhood should be promoted as a value**, and something held in high esteem as a source of happiness. *“There are girls (approximately 1 in 10) who do not get married for various reasons, but they want to have a child. But only because our society looks at it badly, they don't have children. Such women are often harassed by women themselves.*

*Meanwhile, everyone should unite and honor the woman who wants to have a child without a husband,”* said one of the experts. **Shooting even one high-quality feature film** about a woman who decides to have a child without her husband can change the atmosphere in the country.

There are also problems in ensuring **the working conditions of mothers taking care of children**. In Armenia, pregnant women and pensioners are very often left out of economic activity and do not work, but they can be retrained and, as much as possible, come back and get involved in various professional fields. This is a problem that will continue to restrict birth rates in the country.

As an option to promote natural growth, the experts suggested to consider the experience of the Russian Federation, where under the **“Maternal Capital” program**, new parents are provided with land or financial support exclusively for its acquisition, and its volume is increased with each subsequent child.

It is important to assess the available opportunities in the labor market, because women with young children should be able to have **part-time employment opportunities**. In the case of such positions, it should be divided into two parts and given to two people, so that the latter can manage to plan other things to do with the work.

Experts also emphasized **the role of the church**. *“In preaching, in my opinion, the clergy has a great role, especially in villages, unlike cities. People listen to representatives of the rural clergy in their communities. Moreover, the clergymen of the villages very often have their own families and are close to the local population and their concerns, and from this point of view, they are able to correctly assess people's needs and approaches,”* they concluded.

In the expert discussions, **the creation of large-scale advocacy and awareness mechanisms** was particularly highlighted from the viewpoint of public initiatives. *“Everyone who is concerned should become the spreader, proponent, and example of the idea of having many children”*. A non-governmental organization with the tentative name “At least four children” can specialize in initiating and managing a large advocacy campaign. Along with a big wave of advocacy campaigns, the state can also promote **a policy encouraging the birth of third and fourth children**, and it will be possible to achieve results through joint efforts.

According to experts, in order to contribute to the problem of starting a family among the young people of Armenia and the Diaspora, the possibility of creating an **“online pan-Armenian dating platform”** can be considered. As a result of thorough inspection and registration of Armenian participants, it will be easier for young Armenians who are interested in getting to know each other, getting close, and starting a family.





**10-12 MARCH 2023**

**Yerevan**

# **GROWING POPULATION**

Framing question:

**What are the key steps we can take to solve our demographic challenges and ensure a stable future for Armenia?**



**Immigration and  
emigration**

## The Problem

Migration continues to be a major factor in population growth. And we continue to register negative migration trends.

The experts discussed three groups of questions on immigration and offered to choose which priority direction to invest efforts in.

1. **Organization of immigration of emigrant Armenians**

What steps should be taken so that Armenians who emigrated return to Armenia? What factors should be ensured, is it possible to implement them or not, is it useful to organize this process for us or not?

2. **Organization of immigration of representatives of historical diaspora**

How to help members of the Diaspora immigrate to Armenia? We have had similar historical events at different times, and we and our compatriots have returned to their homeland from Syria, Lebanon, and recently also from Russia and Ukraine. What can be done to keep immigrants here and what can be done so that more and more people from the Diaspora come and live in Armenia?

3. **Organization of immigration of foreigners**

Do we want foreigners to come and live in Armenia? Will such immigration help Armenia or not? What are the prospects for this issue, and what are the near and far impacts?

In the discussions of the topic “Armenia-Diaspora Unity”, we have already considered in detail the **possibility of a Great Immigration**. The idea of organizing a mass immigration of Armenians was enthusiastically received by many, but there were also opposing opinions that were just as valid. *“Why are we formulating a problem of Diaspora Armenian immigration? What is more important from RA's point of view today? to have a pensioner who lives here today is secure, or to have one pensioner who, in the case of a highly organized policy of the state, becomes the actor and propagandist of the approaches of the state, the government. I think the second option is better.”*

There was also a conflict of opinions in the third topic: **the involvement of foreigners**. We must ask the question: Do we want to have an Armenia inhabited only by Armenians, or instead a state that can be a home for people of other nations, religions and values? Maybe we should organize the immigration of people like us, who are Christian, tolerant and share common values? Are we tolerant toward people of foreign nationalities in Armenia? Quite positive opinions were expressed regarding the involvement of foreigners, but there were still those who had other opinions. In particular, it was mentioned that there is a question of priorities here. For example, when **you have not stopped emigration**, talking about attracting members of other nations cannot have a positive perception among the public.

*“Our priority should be to keep people in the country. From the point of view of importance, this is a much more urgent task than bringing in people from outside,”* was

heard in expert discussions. In the case of Syrian Armenians, we had a large influx, but were not able to keep many of them. There are many factors that make people leave and often they are very human and personal. There are many people who do not listen to the possible options offered to them as an alternative to leaving Armenia. People of this group consider Armenia as a transit country.

Emigration is one of our painful topics. Why have people emigrated and continue to emigrate from Armenia? If it is possible to determine the specific reasons why people leave, then it will be possible to conduct evaluations and understand how to eliminate these reasons. *“The saddest thing is that **there is no perception that the departure of anyone from Armenia is a big problem.** This is almost not manifested in public and other sentiments,”* this is how the experts expressed their concern.

When asked why people leave Armenia, they mention the security situation. **We still have voluntary-mandatory returns**, where the majority of returnees are mostly people who went to the European Union and were refused asylum. Now, we do not have clear data on how many people coming to Armenia from Russia and other places will continue to stay here, and how many people use their Armenian passports to go to Europe.

### To do

With the initiation of **the public movement “Emigration is a shame”** and the use of various propaganda tools, it is possible to influence the public atmosphere that favors emigration, changing people's behavior as well.

It is necessary to be able to foresee possible near-term flows to Armenia and properly prepare for the arrival of people. *“In Israel, they have an agency that deals with the organization of flows of Jews, while we don’t have such a body”* experts mentioned. **The creation of an immigration organization and advocacy agency** is also becoming important in Armenia.

If, through the efforts of our diaspora, it is possible for the **US Congress to make an amendment to the Social Security law**, and Armenian pensioners, along with Israel and Poland, will also be given the opportunity to receive their pension while they are away from the country, it will be an incentive for repatriation.

The experts talked about many other possible actions to take. To enrich that list, the participants of the Convention are invited to **brainstorm and generate fresh ideas.**

# APPENDIX 3: OTHER OBSERVATIONS REGISTERED DURING THE VOTING ON POSITION STATEMENTS

## DAY ONE. HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY

### 1.3.

- First of all, the people of Artsakh should understand if they want Armenia's help, if they accept that, or if the positions of Armenia and Artsakh are different.
- The issue of Artsakh should be made an issue of self-determination of international nations.
- Since the 1980s, the issue has been clear. Case 1. Ethnic cleansing of Armenians from Azerbaijan. Case 2. Recognition of Artsakh. Justice (International)
- The issue of Artsakh was resolved in 1989 and we (all Armenians) did not stand up for our own decision. Now we must try to make all possible and seemingly impossible efforts to correct our mistakes.
- The security issue of Armenia and Artsakh is a complex negotiation process, unfortunately, we cannot say that we have achieved stability, we must continue to work in that direction. This is the question of the entire Armenian world, not only the citizens of Armenia and Artsakh.
- The Government must ensure all the rights of its citizens.
- Yes, our positions have weakened, but the current problem has not stabilized thanks to Russian peacekeepers and European observers.
- All Armenians should have a national doctrine, from which the solution to the issue of Artsakh will follow.
- We need national restructuring and wise leadership.
- In foreign policy, we need to look for new strategic allies.
- It's not a matter of being afraid of victory. It's about being prepared for the risks and preparing mitigations to ensure victory.
- Having united Artsakh with the Diaspora, the Republic of Armenia should take responsibility for Artsakh at the state level.
- I do not have complete data; the question is not formulated very well. What is the term "responsibility of Artsakh"?
- Let's be realistic, but also not be afraid of victories! Namely, the issue of Artsakh is the issue of both the people of Artsakh, the Republic of Armenia and all the caring Armenians of the world (but there will not be even 1 million of them who are not indifferent in words but in deeds). In a narrower sense, an even greater response should be expected from the pan-Armenian elite.
- The Artsakh issue has multilevel and very subtle nuances, it is impossible with two lines.
- The wording of the questions is "either-or", but the issue of Artsakh is also the problem of 120,000 Artsakh people who must formulate what kind of future they want to have.
- Both Armenia (as a state) and the Diaspora should make efforts on the ground to ensure the security of Artsakh.
- It is necessary to proceed from the wishes of the Artsakh government, but these wishes should not be of unilateral interest only to Artsakh, the interests of Armenia should also be considered.

### 1.4.

- These statements do not contradict each other.
- Both points are relevant since not all samples of historical and cultural heritage can fit into the business model.
- It is possible to make a mix of the above two options, based more on the first option.
- Preserving heritage is, of course, important, but not at the expense of the state budget (since the 1st goal is the well-being of the population), for example, at the expense of charitable funds.
- Both options can be used.



- The above statements should connect and do everything effectively.
- Point 1 must be followed in all possible cases by point 2.
- Combine the first and second points.
- I agree with 2. In addition, I see the solution in a strong marketing strategy.
- There should be a symbiosis of points 1 and 2.
- If we don't protect our history, the new generation will not create a new history.
- We must learn to preserve our historical and cultural heritage through modern mechanisms. Interaction with the public. Media is the creation of content, historical films, cartoons, apps, etc.
- Mutually. To preserve it because it is a heritage and a national value, but also to use it with a business model - to achieve self-financing.
- Preservation of our historical and cultural heritage should be a component of the national doctrine.
- We must learn to respect and love ourselves and our heritage. But you also need to know how to count money.
- We need to document our cultural heritage and introduce intellectual property rights and licenses. Let's stamp everything Armenian.

### 1.5.

- Above all, we should strive to form an emotional connection with the motherland, to relive being an Armenian.
- Armenian should not be made a mandatory condition of relations.
- Both together.
- Being Armenian should become beneficial all over the world.
- It is necessary to develop and implement a unified centralized education system, which will be mandatory, and have a supervisor in every city. A point system should be introduced.
- Preservation of the Armenian identity is possible only if Armenia is strong and by living in Armenia.
- Knowledge of the language is the main issue that can unite Diaspora Armenians and Armenians of the Republic of Artsakh, but we need a competent approach to the issue of youth mobilization. To study the language, it is necessary to create popular, interesting media products in Armenian: cartoons, series, music, etc.
- Try to integrate learning Armenian through TV series, music, pop culture and social media.
- A component of the national doctrine should be the creation of a national school, the hands of which will reach all communities of the Diaspora.
- Learning and knowing the native language is not a profitable business. Efforts should not be spared to attract interest and make teaching the native language and culture in the Diaspora dear. Knowledge of the state language of Armenia is mandatory for foreigners settling in Armenia.
- The preservation of the Armenian identity is not only about the language. Family, cultural and national values and their transmission are also important.
- Language proficiency does not have the opposite effect, it is extreme if this tool is not effective. However, language conveys the spirit and reinforces culture to a greater extent than without it.
- Historical and cultural heritage is allegedly limited. Discussions became more interesting.
- Language should live, parents should educate.
- Knowledge of Armenian is mandatory, but the tools for language delivery and acquisition have long been outdated. It is possible to modernize the education system so that students themselves seek knowledge.

## DAY TWO. ARMENIA-DIASPORA UNITY

### 2.1.

- There have not been enough, there are platforms that are not effective. Instead of creating new platforms, why not upgrade existing ones?

### 2.2.

- It is necessary to consider a “pan-Armenian agenda” without separating the Republic of Armenia from Diaspora.
- Political integration, after the trust building, and not financial and cultural exchange or merging.
- To solve or to contribute to the solutions of the problems of Artsakh to be ready for strengthening of Armenia.
- Strengthening of Armenia with the participation of the Diaspora ensuring that their Armenianness is preserved in the meantime and that they feel included and supported.
- Strengthening Armenia with the expectation that there will be no need to have a Diaspora.
- The maximum possible mutual assistance, realizing that in this case resources are distributed in two directions, and, accordingly, their total weight in each of them does not decrease.
- Armenia as a state should become an instrument of the Diaspora, both for self-defense and for the well-being of Armenia.
- Distance learning in schools through Diaspora teachers.
- Considering the specifics, make plans. Establish a body independent from the government with certain powers under the law.

### 2.3.

- It is necessary to create such a platform where both Armenians living in the Diaspora and Armenians living in Armenia can monitor the distribution of resources online and can make suggestions.
- It should be managed by Diaspora and Armenia working together directed and motivated by a common vision. In Diaspora we need coordination, we don't need a new structure, but we coordinate the structures that already exist and link them with Armenia. Create a big arborescence, where the core is in Armenia.
- Armenia and the Diaspora are one people, but that management should be unified.
- Let's try to change the “Armenia should rule” approach with cooperation, where the role of both sides is equally important.
- Armenia does not manage, but coordinates, creates conditions, uses the possibilities of the Foreign Ministry (through representations in the embassies of cooperation with the Diaspora, through the constitutionally fixed mechanisms of Diaspora participation).
- Creation of the Ministry of Diaspora, involvement of Diaspora Armenian figures in the Armenian state.

## DAY THREE. GROWING POPULATION

### 3.1.

- The social and economic conditions of the citizens of the Republic of Armenia should be improved so that people want to live and give birth here.
- The security of the country.
- Raising the level of awareness of the population.
- Limit foreign immigration.
- Over-confirmation of constitutional rights, economic growth.
- I agree that all factors affect population growth, but for the effectiveness of solving this problem, it is necessary to study and analyze this problem and existing programs at the state level in order to develop more effective short-term and long-term programs in this direction and for specific actions of the state.
- Creating a safe and developed country.

- One window integration office to care of housing, business and social.
- An environment of safety, trust.
- To strengthen the quality of life in the country.
- Creating fair and competitive environments.

### **3.2.**

- Organize the return of emigrants and stop emigration from Armenia.
- The Armenians who emigrated have not yet lost their connection to the Republic of Armenia, but the historical Diaspora will be assimilated into alienation over time.
- Create conditions, and people will join themselves.
- Creating attractive economic conditions (jobs and security) for immigration throughout the Diaspora.
- Organizing immigration cannot be an end itself. Clear strategic actions are needed.
- Work with families to reduce abortions and adopt children from orphanages.
- Limit foreign immigration.
- Limit all barriers to entry into the country and report this possibility.
- To make the country safe and economically stable, developed.
- If possible, all possible options: a. organization of immigration of emigrant Armenians, b. organization the immigration of representatives of the historical diaspora, c. organization of immigration of foreigners.
- The organization of immigration of emigrant Armenians and the organization of immigration of representatives of the historical diaspora together.
- The order doesn't matter.
- First of all, to create attractive conditions for the return of representatives of the Diaspora who emigrated and want to return, and more importantly, that people do not leave their country, Armenia.
- It is necessary to work in the direction of attracting human resources abroad. For example, for Christian communities in the Middle East and other vulnerable communities close to Armenians.
- Many legal hoops have to work properly to organize immigration.
- Return of all Armenians.
- The problem has a complex nature, a multifaceted approach is needed.
- Construct infrastructure (housing and business) similar to Diaspora Armenian regions to welcome the new and old Diaspora returnees.
- Improving the quality of life in the country.
- We stressed that the priority is to facilitate young people to immigrate.
- Prevent migration.
- Reduce emigration.
- Create conditions so that the local population does not leave.
- Support for integration to those who moved to Armenia by their own decision.
- In my opinion, first of all, a policy should be pursued to stop emigration from Armenia.

### **3.3.**

- This is an element of national security, and the policy should be chosen based on the 10-20-year development strategy of the Republic.
- The demographic policy should align with social and economic policies.

- Improving the quality of life is the key to solving most problems.
- Direct democracy and states like Switzerland reach agreements with Diaspora-Armenian countries.
- The first option, but at the same time to invest the maximum in the exchange of the human factor: robotics, modern technologies, etc.
- The demographic policy should be part of the national doctrine.

### 3.4.

- We cannot focus our efforts on ensuring immigration. This is important for Armenia, and this question should be approached in a balanced way, we should analyze, and try to understand why this or that person or group of people (family) emigrates.
- First, it is necessary to create an environment for emigrants and then introduce a policy of repatriation.
- I share both opinions at the same time: a. In addition to the policy of repatriation, the immigration of foreigners should also be organized, thus we will solve the problem of population growth. b. it is wrong to direct all the forces in the direction of ensuring immigration when we have a high level of unemployment and poverty in Armenia. Without addressing the problems of economic development and unemployment, immigration will lead to social tension.
- Along with economic development, the immigration problem will be solved.
- The mentioned points (a., b.) are relevant, but contain a number of risks.
- Open access to highly qualified well-mannered individuals/families (regardless of nationality).
- Make efforts to stop emigration.
- Clear institutions must be built to accommodate immigrants.
- To begin with, to make our country attractive to Armenians, and then to other nations, if it succeeds.
- Immigration of foreigners in small portions is acceptable.
- Both directions: a. In addition to a repatriation policy, the immigration of foreigners (non-Armenians) should also be organized, helping us solve the problem of population growth. b. It is wrong to direct all efforts toward immigration while we have high levels of unemployment and poverty in Armenia. Without solving the problems of economic development and unemployment, immigration will lead to social tensions.
- 10 years of old and new Diaspora returnees, after that open to internationals.
- Attract the young generation from Diaspora that may solve identity, marriages, economic and intellectual issues. They are the more realistic and promising target population.
- We need a large repatriation program.
- Self-regulation.
- Improving the educational and professional level of people will lead to overcoming unemployment, will contribute to economic development, which will make the country attractive for immigration, including for high-quality foreigners.



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