



# 20 YEARS ON

## unesco Recent developments and prospects for the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Culture Heritage

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# Presentation structure

- **Rationale** for creating the Convention and **major changes** resulting from its implementation
- Important **milestones and results** in the life of the Convention
- **Ways forward**



Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking

# UNESCO Culture Conventions



Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954)



Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)



Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)



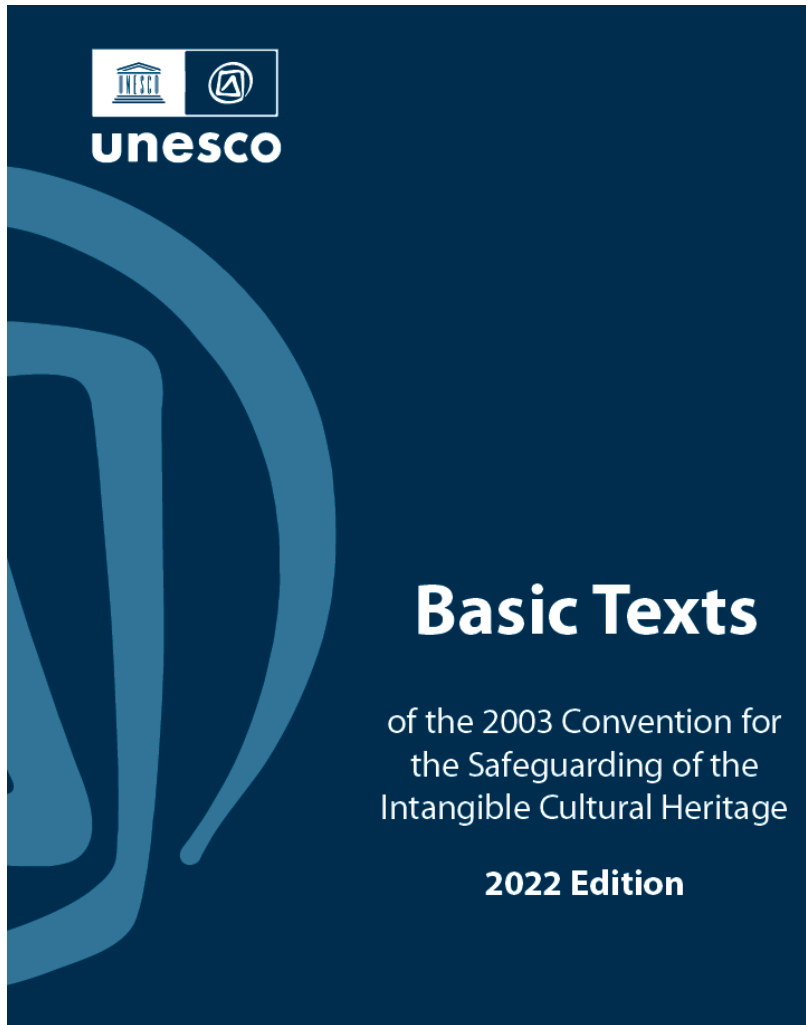
Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)



**Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)**



Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)



- Safeguard the intangible cultural heritage;
- Ensure **respect** for the intangible cultural heritage of **the communities, groups and individuals concerned** ;
- **Raise awareness** at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring **mutual appreciation** thereof;
- Provide for international cooperation and assistance

## World Heritage (1972)

- Sites, monuments and landscapes
- Conservation of World Heritage properties
- Outstanding universal value (expert view)
- Authenticity and integrity help to define value, often restricting change

## Intangible Heritage (2003)

- Expressions, skills, practices and knowledge
- Safeguarding of all ICH
- Communities concerned define value (community/bearer perspective)
- Living/dynamic heritage

# The Convention's definition of intangible heritage (1)

## Article 2.1:

*...practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.*



Puppetry in Slovakia and Czechia, © SL'UK Bratislava, 2014

# The Convention's definition of intangible heritage (2)

## Article 2.1 continues:

*...transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.*



The art of the traditional blouse with embroidery on the shoulder (altiță), © Constantin Plugari, 2020

## Article 2.1 continues:

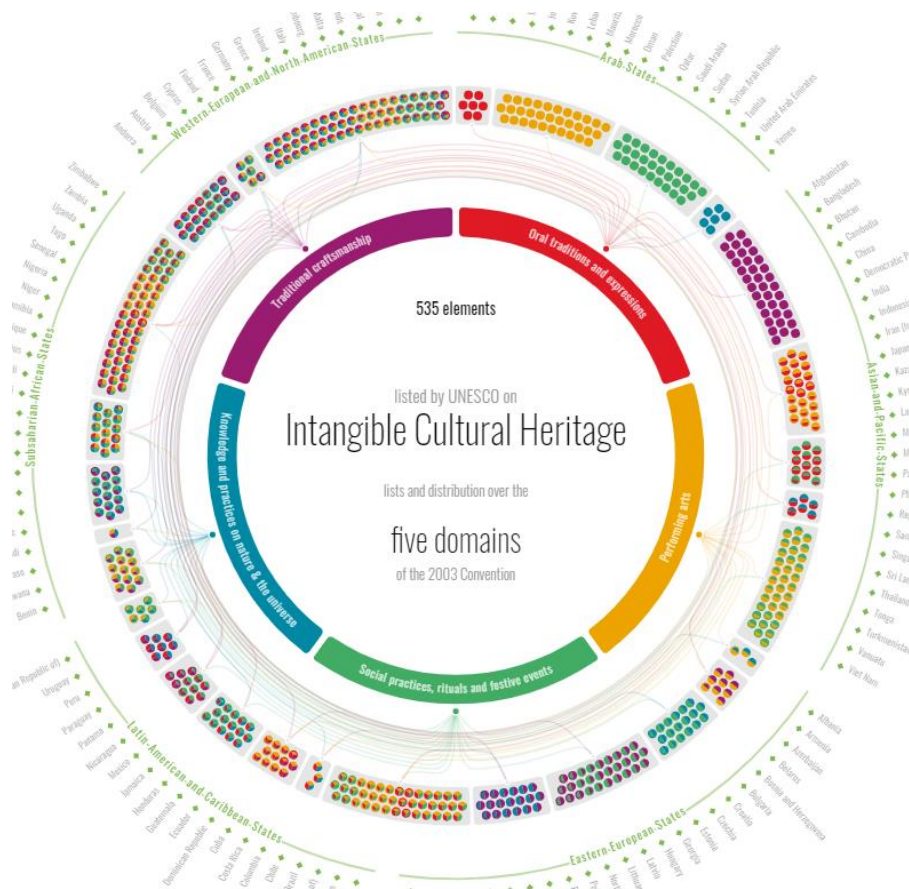
*For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international **human rights** instruments, as well as with the requirements of **mutual respect** among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.*



Namur stilt jousting, © Dominique Pire, 2016



# ICH domains as defined by the 2003 Convention



- Oral traditions
- Performing arts
- Traditional craftsmanship
- Social practices, rituals and festive events
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe



Other domains defined by the State Parties

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/dive>

# MILESTONES



Craft techniques and customary practices of cathedral workshops, or Bauhütten, in Europe, know-how, transmission, development of knowledge and innovation, © Münsterbauamt Ulm

# A paradigm shift

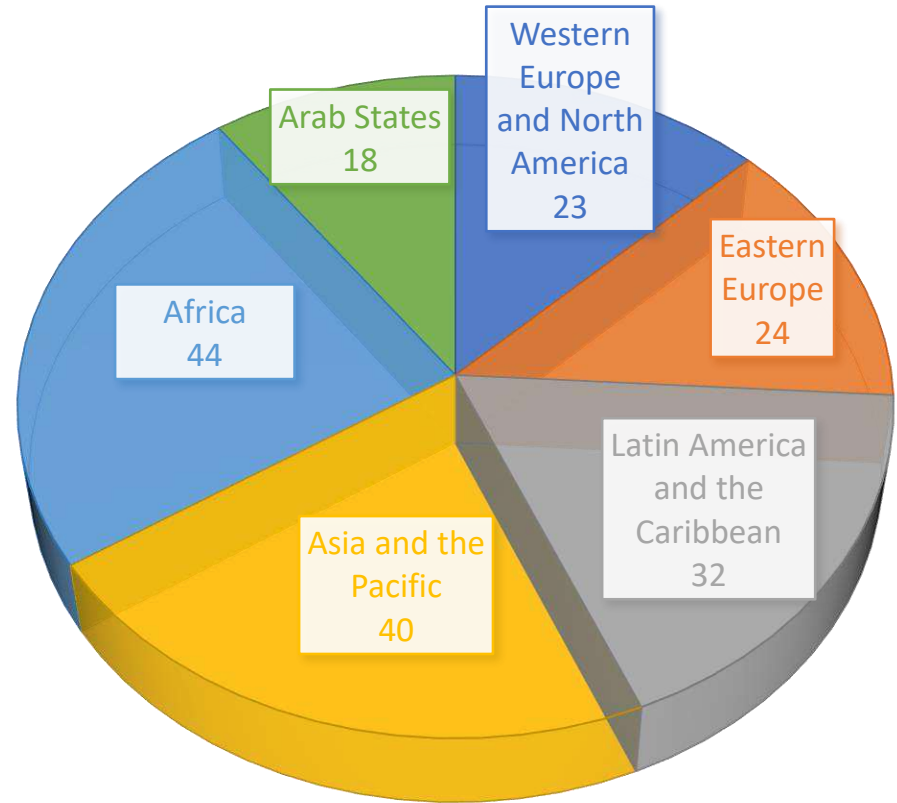
With the adoption of the **Convention**:

- ✓ The international community **expanded** the notion of cultural heritage from sites and monuments to include cultural practices (ICH);
- ✓ **Communities** were placed at the heart of defining and safeguarding ICH;
- ✓ No '**outstanding value**' ;
- ✓ A **dynamic** concept.



# The 2003 Convention today

- ✓ Adopted on **17 October 2003**
- ✓ Entered into force on 20 April 2006
- ✓ **Rapid ratification rate** across all regions within **a decade**
- ✓ Now ratified by **181 countries**, making it nearly universal

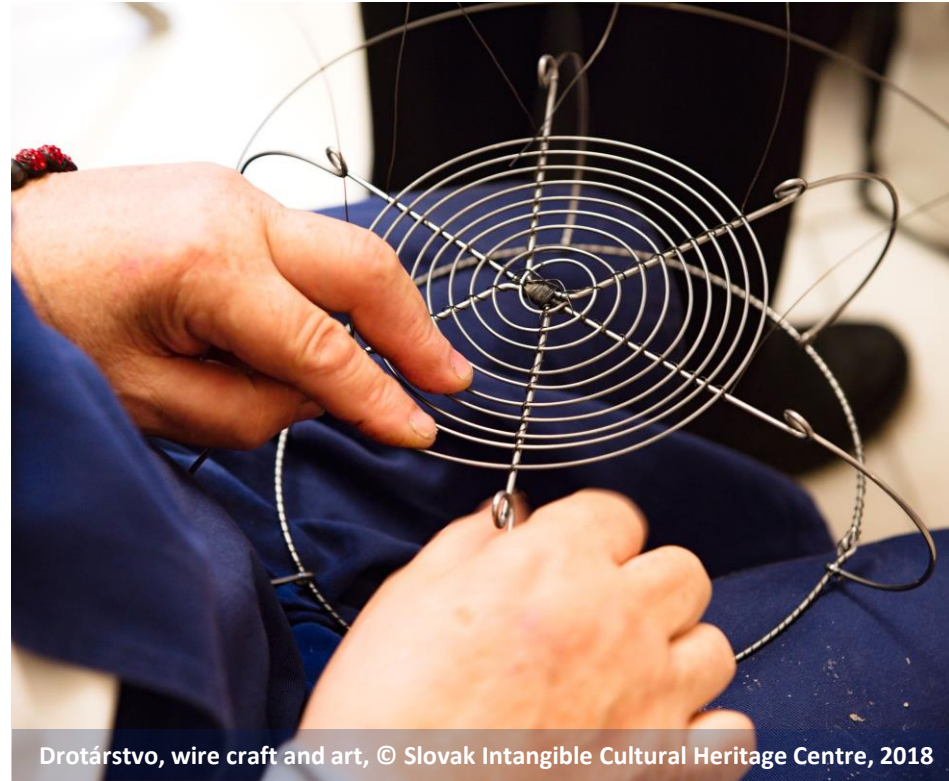


# Major changes

## Awareness successfully raised

Intangible cultural heritage today is:

- ✓ An **established concept** in heritage discourse and international heritage law;
- ✓ **Integrated in cultural policies**, programmes and strategies at the national level;
- ✓ Increasingly acknowledged as **playing a key place and role in sustainable development.**



# Milestones: leading to longer-term results

- 2009:** Beginning of inscribing elements on the **Lists** of the Convention
- 2009:** Establishment of the **global capacity building programme** for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage
- 2012:** The first **ICH NGO Forum**
- 2016:** Adoption of Operational Directives on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and **sustainable development**
- 2016:** Measures to improve accessibility of the **International Assistance** mechanism
- 2017:** A new global programme on **living heritage and education**
- 2018:** Reform of the Convention's **periodic reporting** mechanism
- 2022:** Revision of the listing mechanism.

# Milestones: the Lists

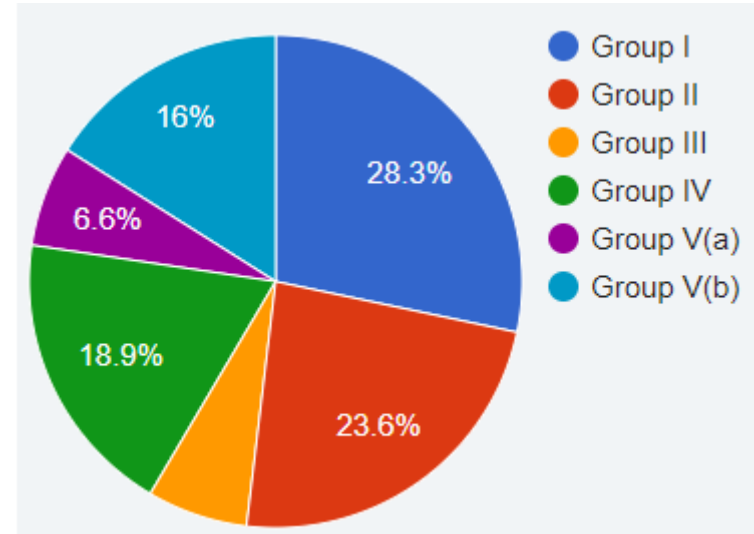
## Key achievements

- ✓ **Representative List** of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (568 elements corresponding to 136 countries)
- ✓ List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of **Urgent Safeguarding** (76 elements corresponding to 40 countries)
- ✓ Register of **Good Safeguarding Practices** (33 elements / 31 countries)
- ✓ **TOTAL: 676 elements / 140 countries**



Annual carnival bell ringers' pageant from the Kastav area,  
© 2008 by Ministry of Culture

# Multinational files



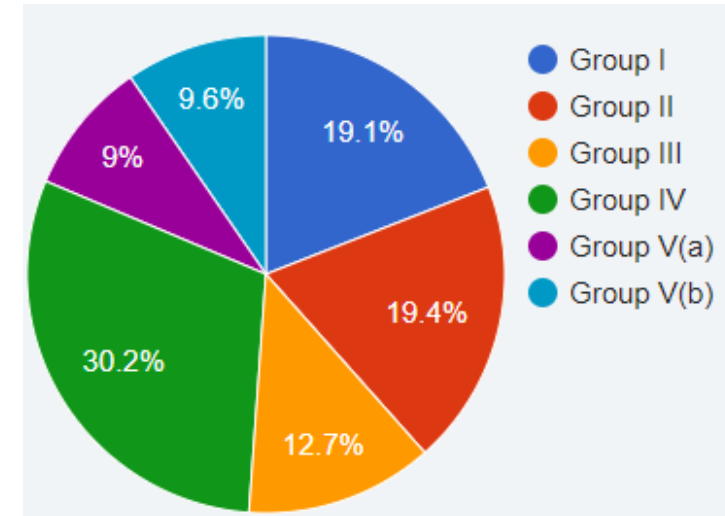
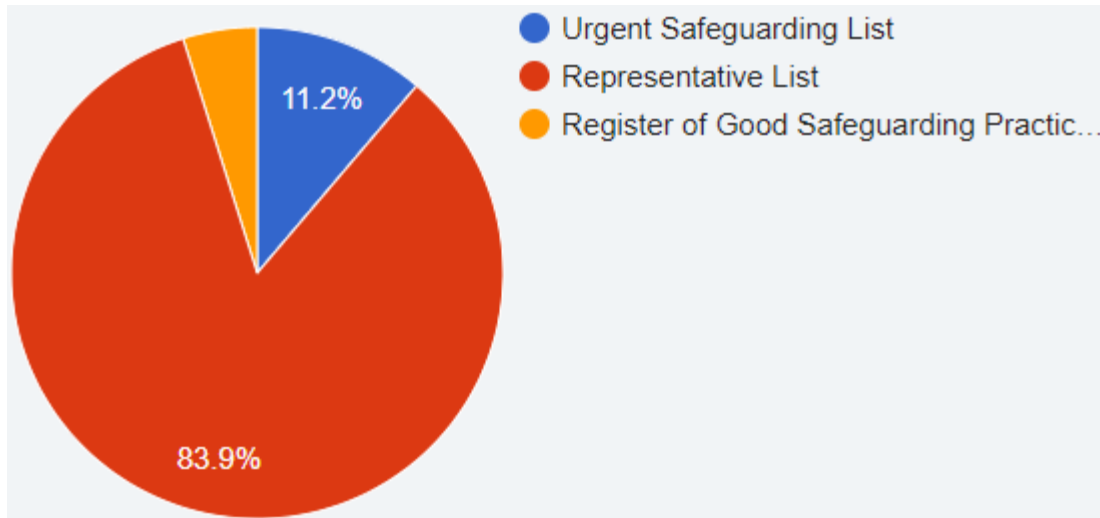
2018 **Traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum)**: joint application by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea

2021 **Falconry, a living human heritage**: joint application by 24 countries

**2022 → 75 elements / 101 countries**



# Geographical Distribution of Inscribed Elements



## 2022: Revision of the listing mechanism

- Group I: Western Europe and North America
- Group II: Eastern Europe
- Group III: Latin America and the Caribbean
- Group IV: Asia and the Pacific
- Group V(a): Africa
- Group V(b): Arab States

# Milestones: NGO participation

- 2012: First **Forum of accredited NGOs**
- 2015: NGOs included in the **Evaluation Body** (replacing the Consultative Body and the Subsidiary Body)
- 2018-2019: Reflection on the **participation of NGOs** in the implementation of the Convention
- 2020: **Standalone item** during the Committee meeting to discuss the report of the ICH NGO Forum
- 2021-2022: **Mapping of the domains of competencies** of accredited NGOs by the ICH NGO Forum
- 2023: **217 accredited NGOs**



Tocati, a shared programme for the safeguarding of traditional games and sports, © AGA, 2015

# Milestones: ICH & sustainable development

**2016:** Operational Directives: **New chapter** on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development

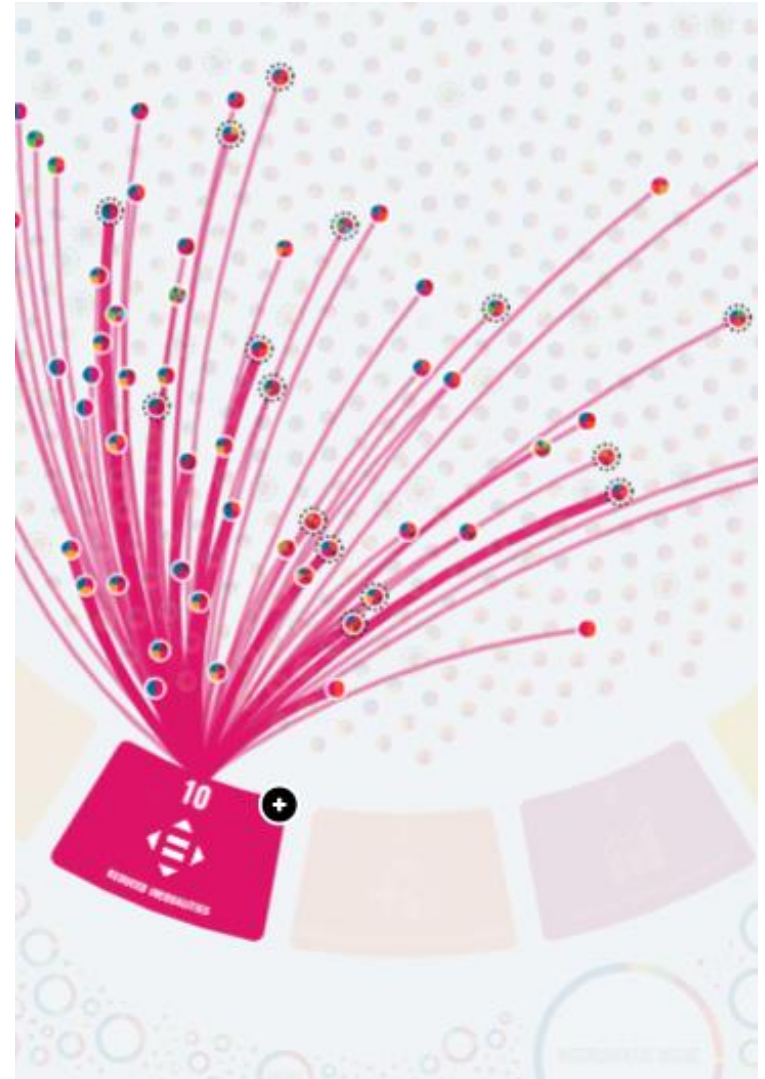
- ✓ Inclusive social development
- ✓ Inclusive economic development
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Intangible cultural heritage and peace



# Milestones: living heritage and sustainable development

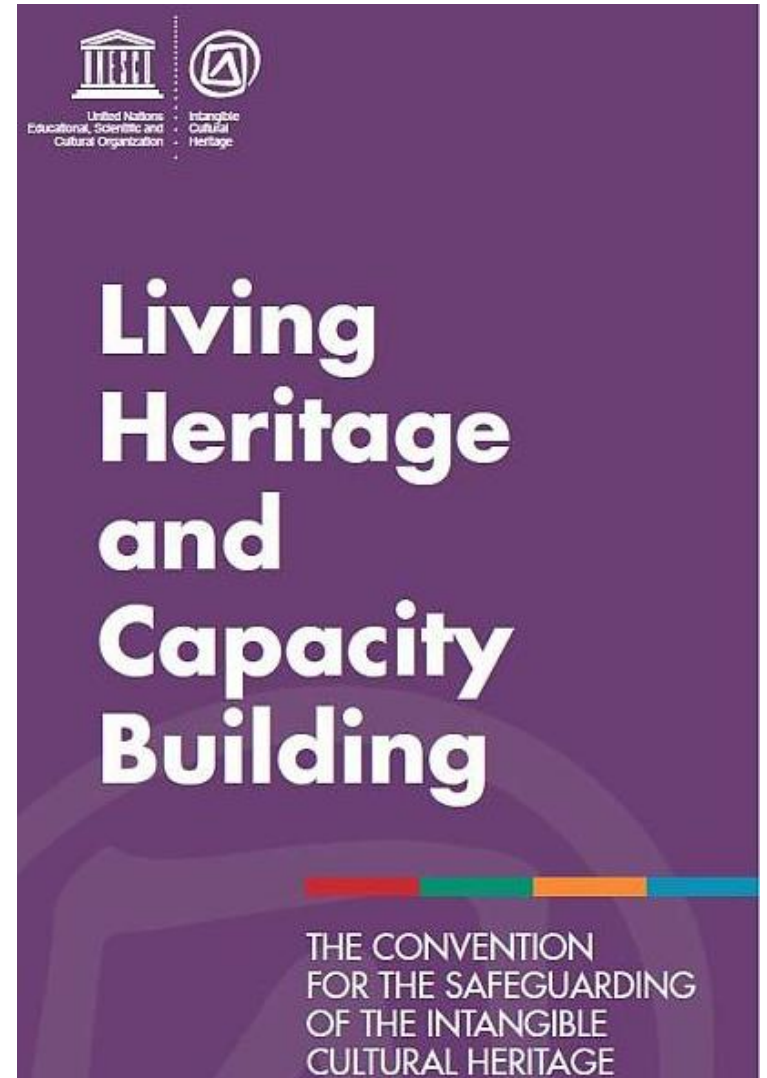
- ✓ **109** listed living heritage elements contributed to **SDG 2**, Zero hunger;
- ✓ **241** elements to **SDG 8**, Decent work and economic growth;
- ✓ **144** elements to **SDG 12**, Responsible Consumption and Production; and
- ✓ **505** to **SDG 16**, Peace, justice and strong Institutions.

[www.ich.unesco.org/en/dive](http://www.ich.unesco.org/en/dive)



# Milestones: the capacity building programme

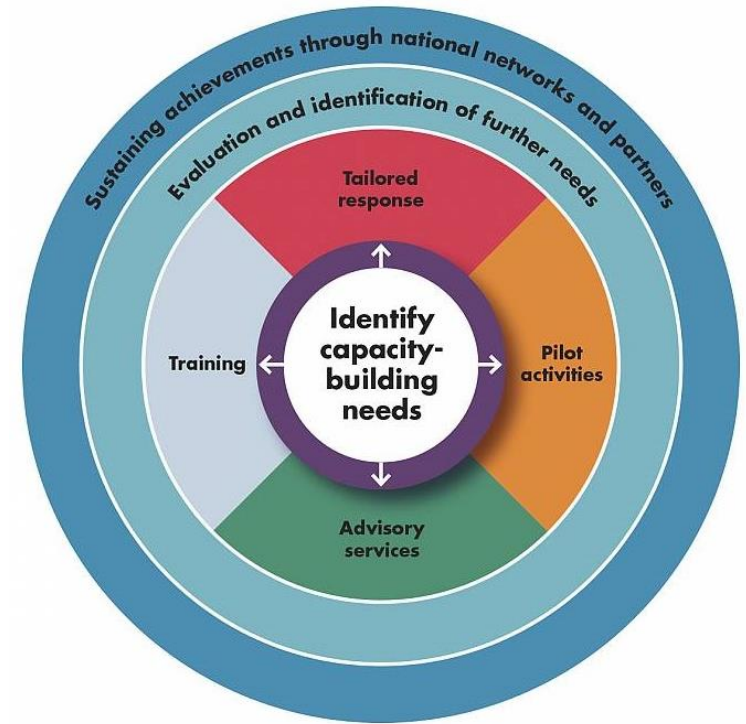
- 2009: **Conception** of the global capacity global programme
- 2011: **Facilitators network** built and rollout started
- 2016: Expanding the reach by **strengthening partnerships** with C2Cs, NGOs and universities
- 2020: **Reorientation** of the programme to **multimodal** format and **thematic** expansion
- 2022: **Expansion** of the facilitators network



# Milestones: CAP in numbers

## Key achievements

- ✓ **+138** benefitting countries
- ✓ **+60** thematic training units
- ✓ **141 + 97 new** members in the Global Network of Facilitators
- ✓ **+330** capacity-building workshops conducted



## Partnerships

- 8 category 2 centres (C2C)
- 14 UNESCO Chairs and 2 UNITWIN Network

# Milestones: international assistance

2008: Creation of the International Assistance mechanism

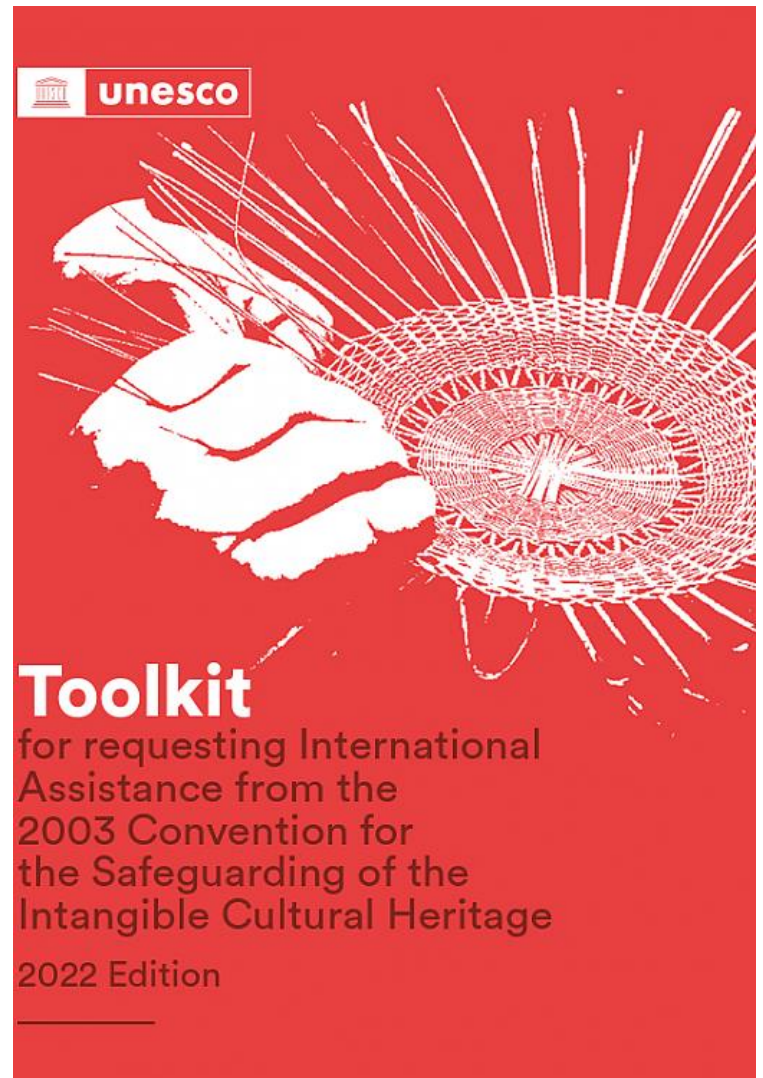
## Accessibility improved:

2016: Requests up to US\$ 100,000 can be made at any time

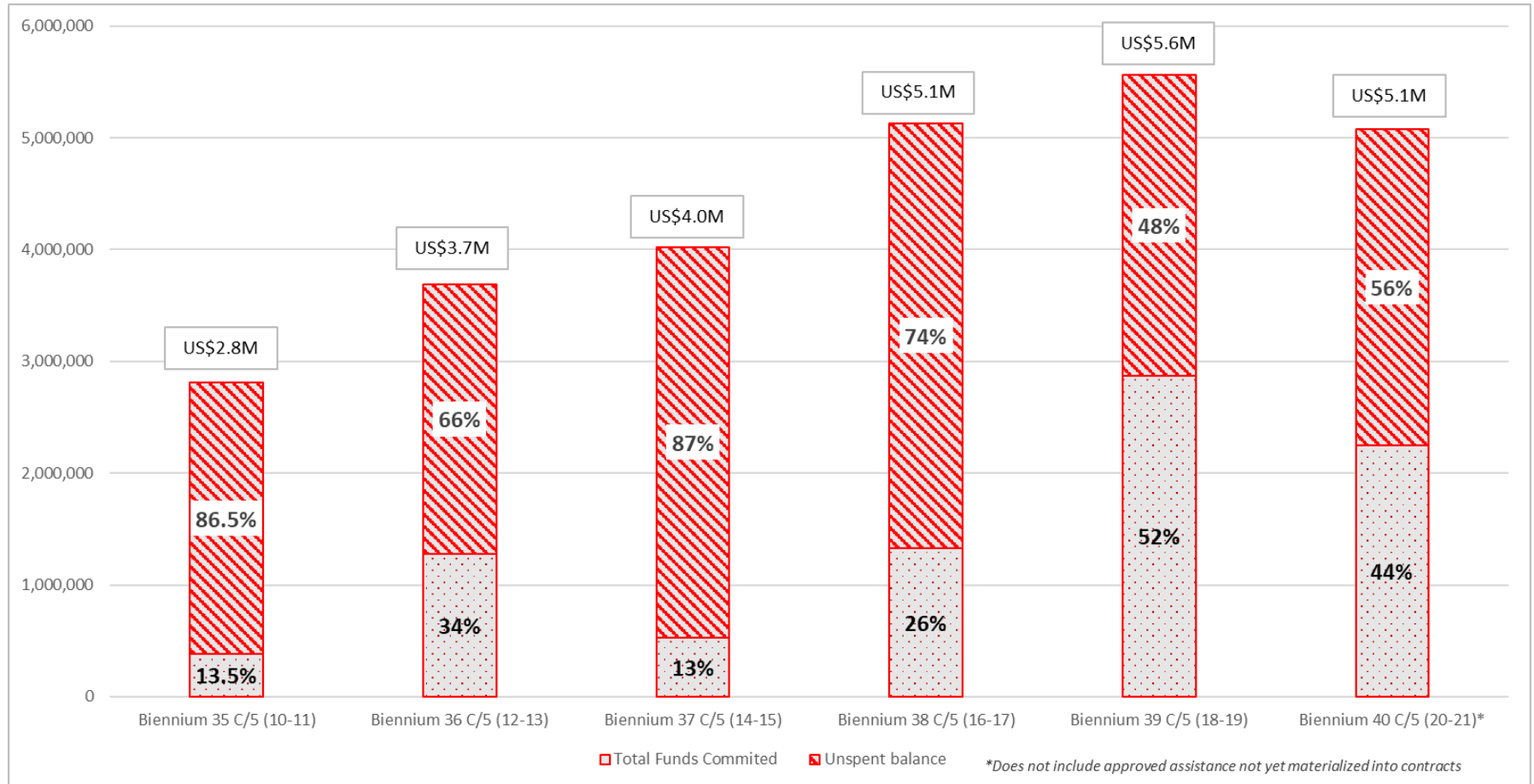
2018: Dedicated team in the Secretariat

## Key achievements

- ✓ **+60** countries receiving International Assistance
- ✓ **+100** projects funded
- ✓ **+US\$ 10 million granted**



# Evolution of the international assistance



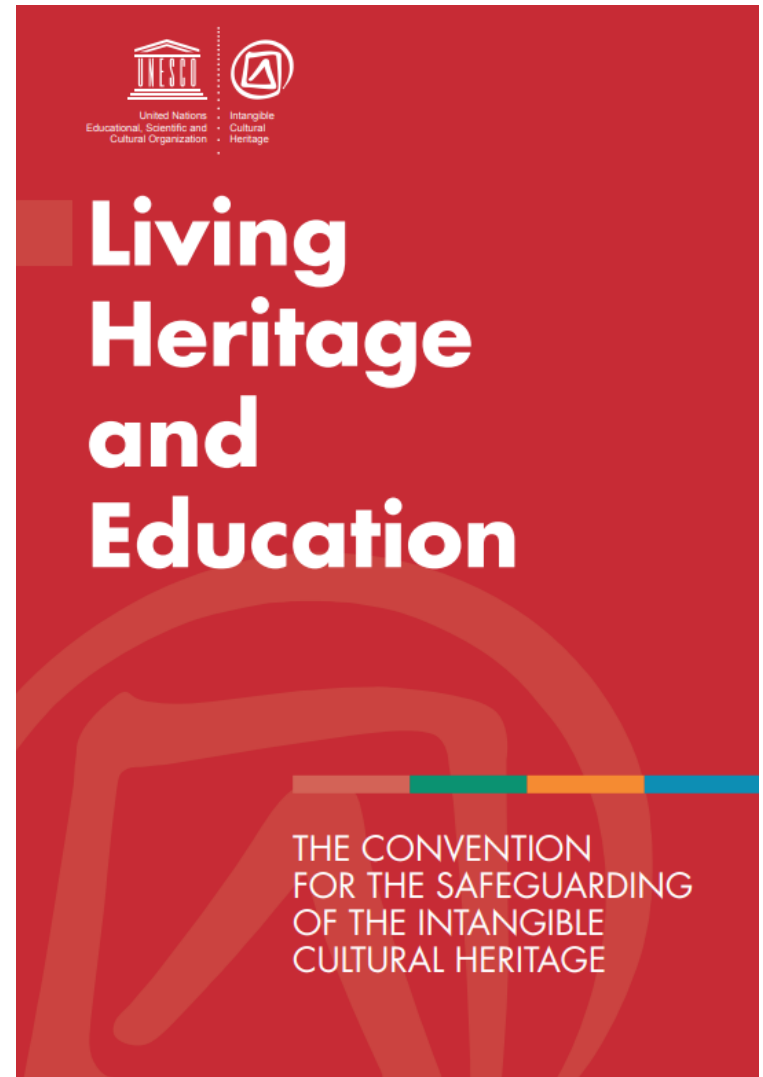


# Milestones: safeguarding ICH in formal and non-formal education

2017: An **intersectoral initiative** on the safeguarding of living heritage in formal and non-formal education

**Strategic advantages** for culture and education:

- Promoting a broader approach to safeguarding that has the potential to reach communities while helping States meet their commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)



# Milestones: safeguarding ICH in formal and non-formal education

## Key achievements

- ✓ **+80** countries
- ✓ Increased **awareness of and respect** for living heritage
- ✓ Fostered identity, pride and appreciation for **cultural diversity**
- ✓ Teachers developed **capacities and confidence** to integrate intangible cultural heritage in their teaching across all subjects
- ✓ **Partnerships** between communities, bearers and schools
- ✓ **Intersectoral collaboration** established between the UNESCO Culture and the Education Sectors

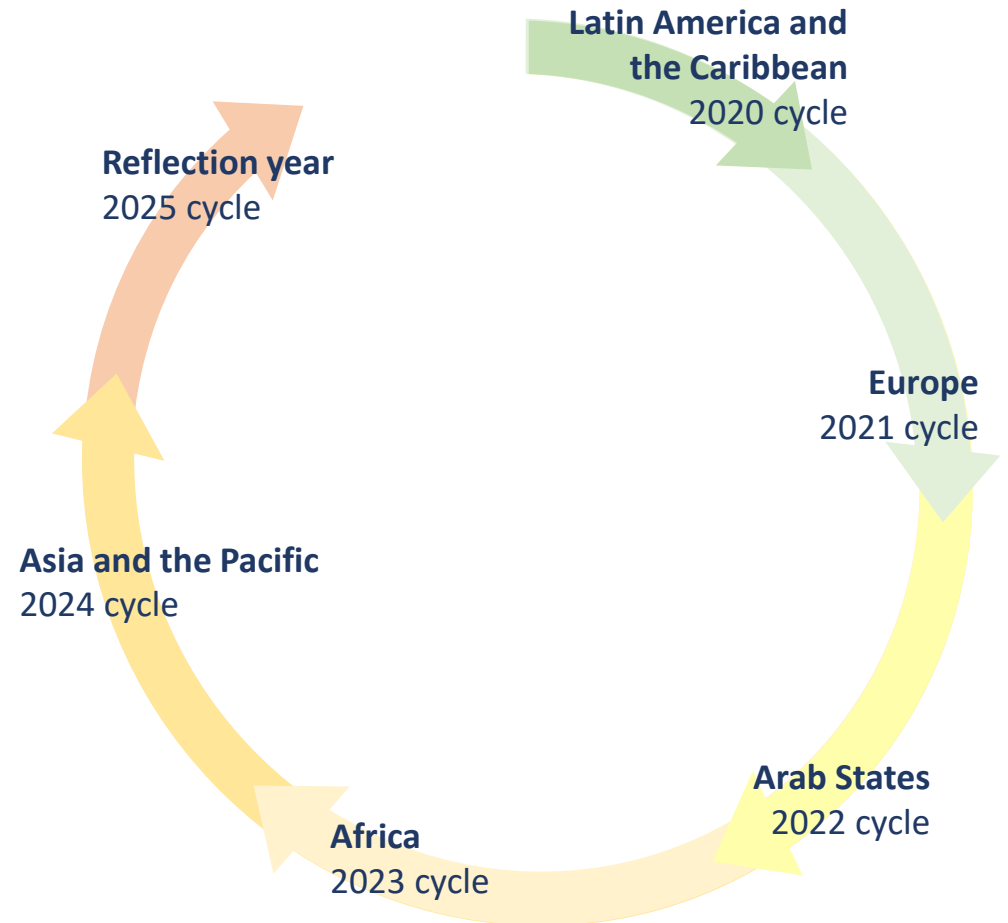


Seto Leelo, Seto polyphonic singing tradition,  
© 2007 by Merlin Loiv

# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

2018: **Overall Results Framework**

2018: **Reform:** alignment with the Overall Results Framework and regional approach



# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

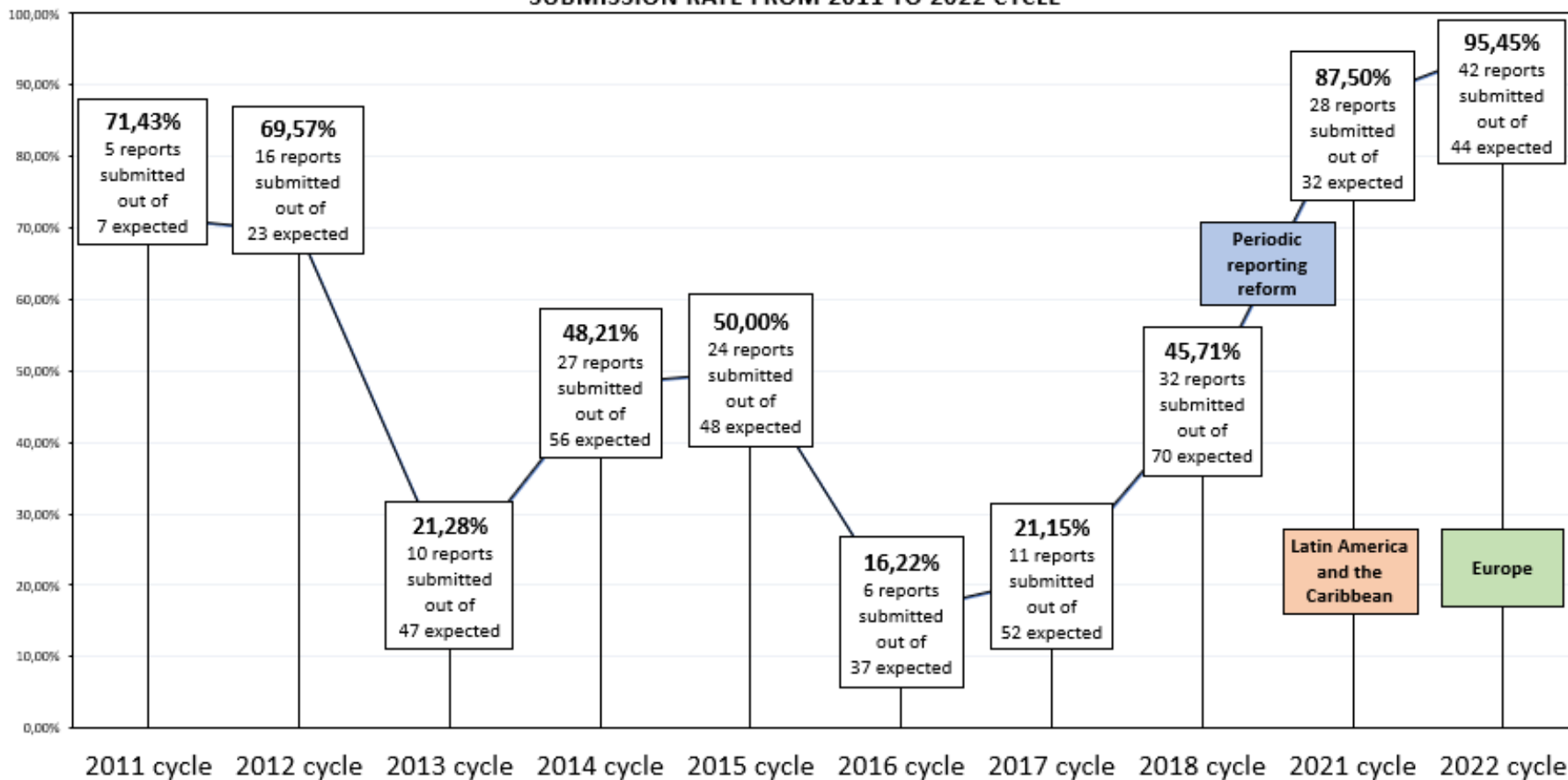
## Key achievements

- ✓ Substantially increased **submission rates (today: >80%)**
- ✓ Encouraged a **participatory and multi-stakeholder approach**
- ✓ Inspired **policy debates**
- ✓ Allowed **to generate data** on safeguarding ICH systematically with analysis at regional and global levels



# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

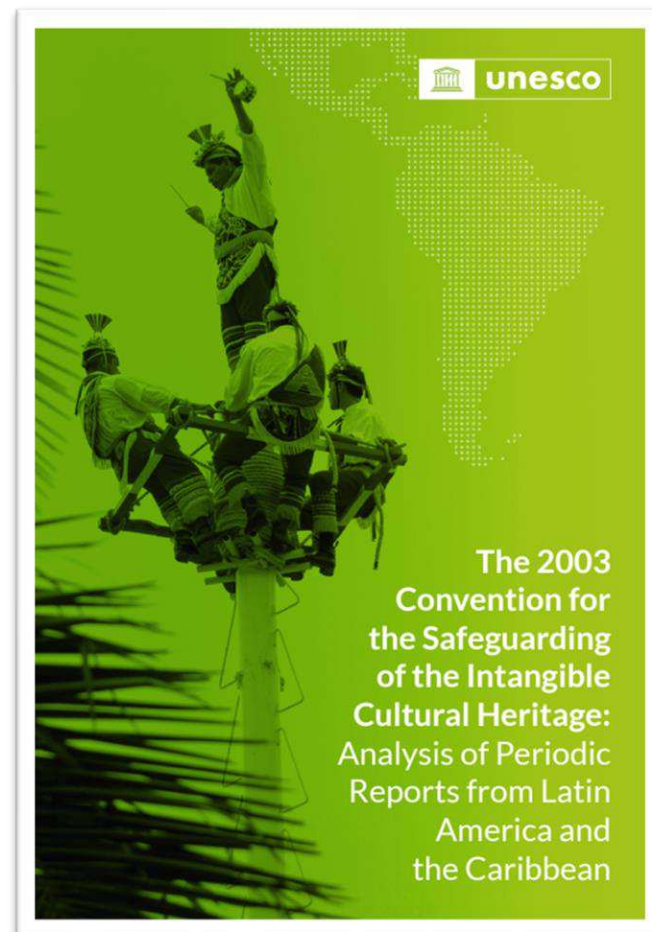
2003 CONVENTION PERIODIC REPORTS  
SUBMISSION RATE FROM 2011 TO 2022 CYCLE



# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

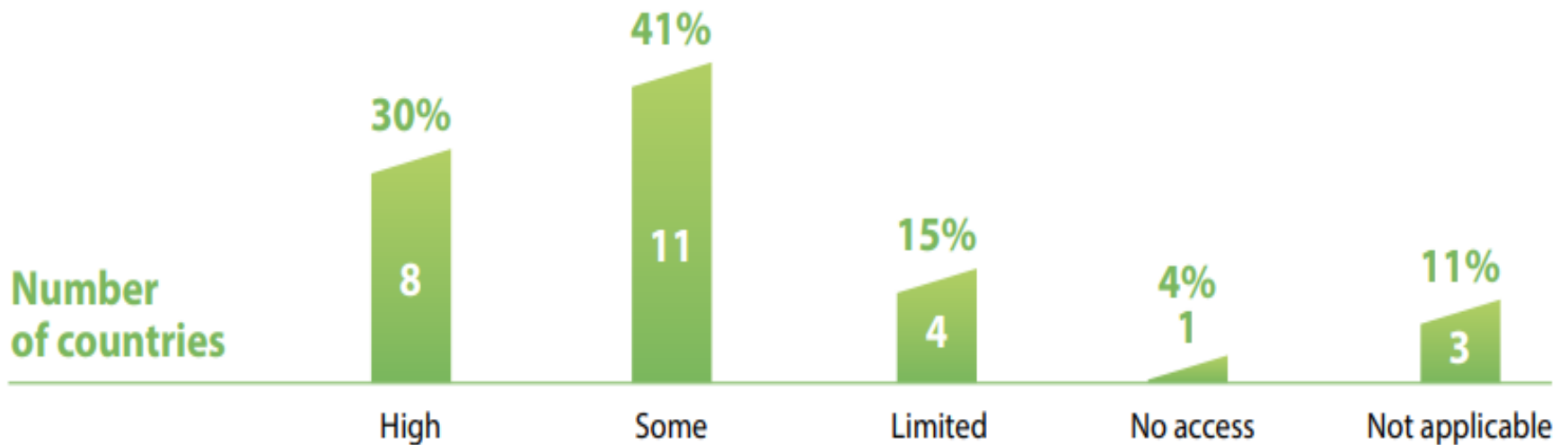
## Key achievements in Latin America and the Caribbean (2021 cycle)

- ✓ Most of the reporting countries (28) established or revised and implemented policies in the culture sector that:
  - Establish the **competent bodies** for implementing the Convention;
  - Set up **inventories** and associated safeguarding processes;
  - Protect the **culture and rights of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities**.
- ✓ Nearly 4/5 of the countries have also taken ICH into consideration in broader policies and administrative measures for: a) inclusive social development, b) environmental sustainability, c) inclusive economic development



# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

## Key achievements in Latin America and the Caribbean (2021 cycle)



Extent of participation of communities, groups and individuals in cultural policy-making and implementation in reporting countries

# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

## Key achievements in Europe (2022 cycle)

- ✓ **98%** of countries reported policies, legal or administrative measures in the **culture sector** that integrate ICH and its safeguarding and reflect its diversity;
- ✓ Nearly **80%** of countries reported policies, legal or administrative measures in the **education sector** that ensure recognition of, respect for and enhancement of ICH, or strengthen its transmission;
- ✓ About **50%** of countries integrated ICH in policies responding to situations of **natural disaster** or **armed conflict** or recognized ICH that contributes to **peaceful conflict prevention and resolution**.

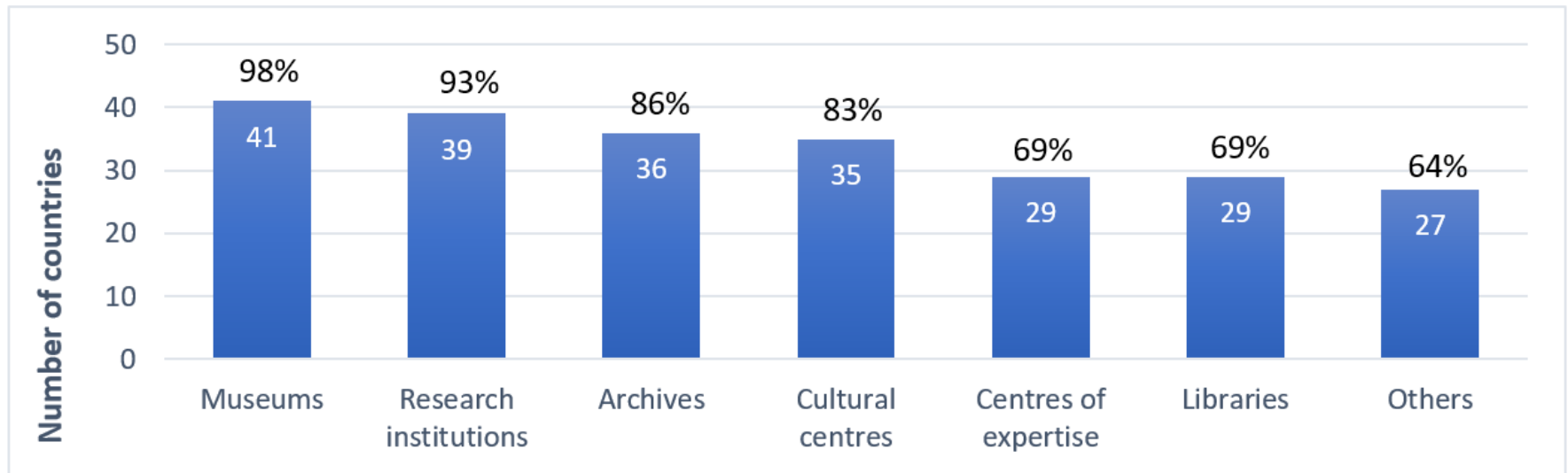


Winter festivities, Carnival of Podence, © Manuel Correia, 2018



# Milestones: Periodic reporting mechanism

## Key achievements in Europe (2022 cycle)



Contribution of different kinds of institutions towards intangible cultural heritage safeguarding and management in reporting countries

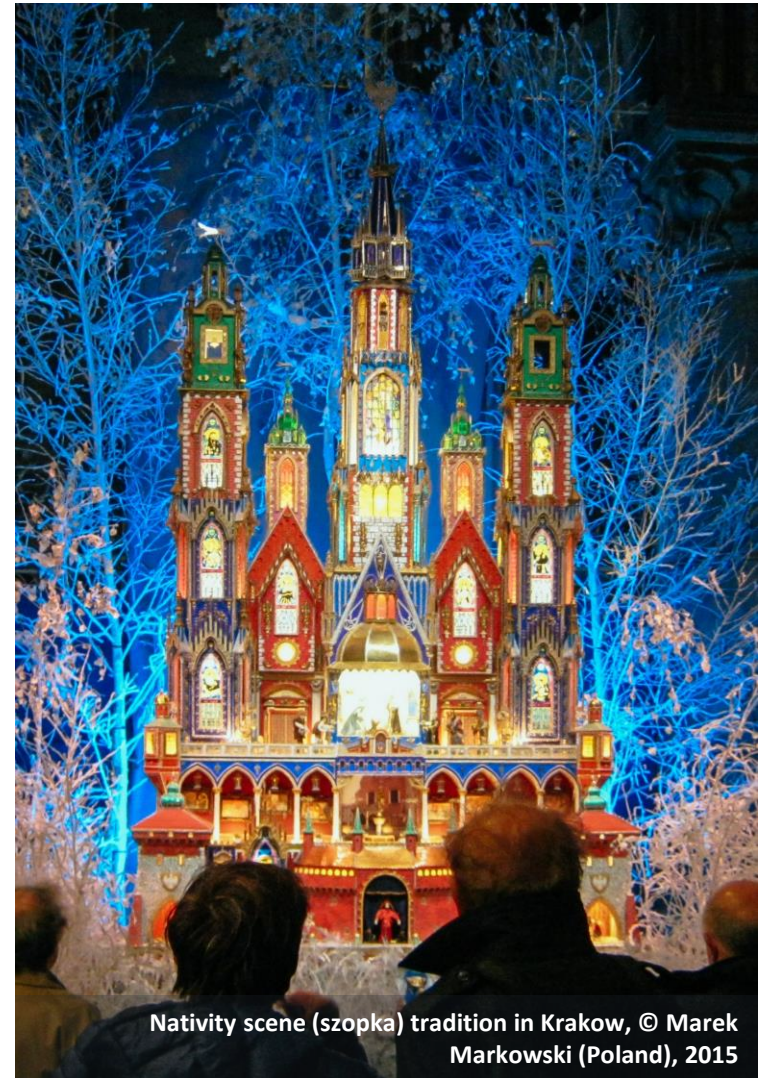
# Milestones: Rethinking the Lists

- ✓ **Global reflection** on the listing mechanisms of the Convention
  1. **More flexibility** in the nomination process (videos, languages, reform of some criteria);
  2. **More fluidity** between the lists (and register);
  3. **More established framework** for follow up issues;
  4. **Fast tracking and streamlining** aspects of the International Assistance.



# Milestones: Rethinking the Lists

- ✓ Ongoing **reflection** on a broader implementation of **Article 18**:
  1. Improving the access to and increasing the visibility of the **Register** of Good Safeguarding Practices
  2. Towards the creation of a **platform** for sharing good safeguarding experiences
  3. Other issues



Nativity scene (szopka) tradition in Krakow, © Marek Markowski (Poland), 2015

A craftsman with a beard, wearing a dark t-shirt and a leather apron, is working on the interior of a large wooden boat hull. He is using a long, thin wooden strip to reinforce or shape the hull's structure. The hull is made of light-colored wood and is curved, showing the ribs and planking. The workshop is dimly lit, with warm light highlighting the wood and the craftsman's hands.

# WAYS FORWARD

Nordic clinker boat traditions, © Jaska Poikonen, 2019

# Marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention

- The current **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year** provides opportunities to reflect on the directions that the 2003 Convention may take in the future



# The Seoul Vision “Unleashing the power of living heritage for ensuring sustainable development and peace”

Bring community voices to the forefront

Living heritage for livelihoods and wellbeing

Living heritage to tackle environmental challenges and reaffirm our relationship to the natural world.

Living heritage to enable contextually relevant quality education

Living heritage and opportunities of the digital environment

Involvement of all stakeholders to fully integrate living heritage into development plans, policies and programmes at all levels.

GLOBAL MEETING & ANNOUNCEMENT OF SEOUL VISION

**20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

OF THE CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

25<sup>TUE</sup> -26<sup>WED</sup> JULY 2023

Seoul, Republic of Korea

UNESCO

th

Unleashing the Power of Living Heritage for Sustainable Development and Peace

HOSTED BY: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cultural Heritage Administration

ORGANIZED BY: UNESCO, ICHCAP, United Nations World Heritage Centre

Live-streaming

Registration

The Seoul Vision: <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/61291-EN.pdf>

# Ways forwards...

- ✓ Bringing to the forefront voices of communities:
  - **Strengthen civil society involvement**, including youth and indigenous peoples;
  - **Reach to other audiences** to broaden commitment to safeguarding;



L-Ghana, a Maltese folksong tradition, © Culture Directorate, 2020

# Ways forwards...

## ✓ Promoting the contribution of living heritage for sustainable development

- A. Economic dimensions of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage;
- B. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and climate change;
- C. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in urban contexts.



Beekeeping in Slovenia, a way of life, © Ivan Esenko, 2018



# Ways forwards...

- ✓ **Create synergies with other conventions and development frameworks** to integrate the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in policies and strategies for sustainable development and peace.



Corso culture, flower and fruit parades in the Netherlands,  
© Arnaud Roelofs, 2019

# To open the discussion...

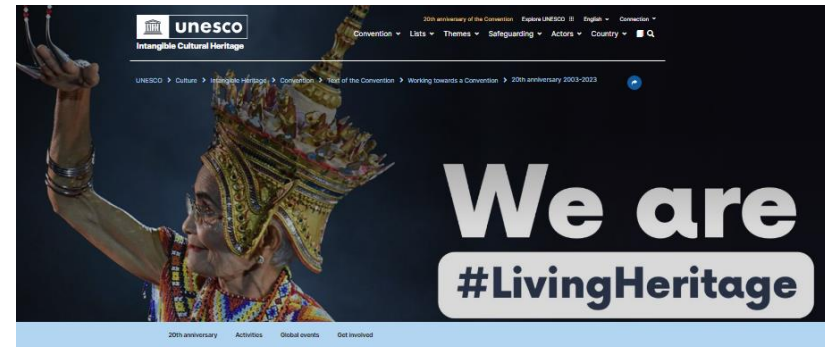
In line with this year's theme of “**Heritage: a living being**”:

- In your view, what are the connection between intangible and tangible heritage?
- How can we reinforce synergies between the 1972 Convention and the 2003 Convention in line with the broadened understanding of cultural heritage?

# For you information

## ✓ Anniversary campaign

- In order to further raise awareness of the importance of living heritage safeguarding, an anniversary campaign has been put together under an umbrella slogan **We are #LivingHeritage**;
- **Dedicated webpage** featuring events organized across the world;
- Organization of a **photo exhibition** during the **42<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Conference**.



### 20th anniversary 2003-2023

The year 2023 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – twenty years since the Convention was adopted, on 17 October 2003, by the 32nd session of the General Conference of UNESCO. It is the opportunity for UNESCO, States Parties to the Convention and all stakeholders involved in the safeguarding of living heritage to highlight that living heritage belongs to all. Organized under the theme **We Are #LivingHeritage**, the anniversary is also the occasion to reflect on the role of the 2003 Convention in raising awareness about the diversity and richness of intangible cultural heritage and in fostering international cooperation.

Living heritage is about people, resilience and knowledge passed on from generation to generation. For this reason, the anniversary is also an invitation to governments, NGOs, universities, learners, practitioners and those who appreciate living heritage to **organize activities, join UNESCO's social media campaign #LivingHeritage** and **follow anniversary events**, online or in person.



### Activities around the world



Moderated discussion on ICH in Slovakia  
13-06-2023  
Bratislava (Slovakia)



Spanish ICH Workshops in National Museums  
04-10-2023  
Spain



LIVING Meeting and Workshop  
12-11-2023  
Riga (Latvia)



Latin American and Caribbean Film Festival (SALC 2023)  
18-23-06-2023  
Paris (France)



25th Jubilee International Folklore Festival (VELIKO TARNOVO 2023)  
23-29-07-2023  
Veliko Tarnovo (Bulgaria)



Ceremonial meeting on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage  
01-11-2023

# Thank you

Share your  
**voice!**

We are #LivingHeritage

Learn more:

[www.ich.unesco.org/en/anniversary](http://www.ich.unesco.org/en/anniversary)

