



17th Annual Meeting in Sevilla "Heritage: A Living Being"

SPAIN

Executive Summary

**Host - Ministry of Culture and Sports
Venue - Archivo General de Indias**

27 - 29 September 2023

The 17th Annual Meeting of the EHHF took place in Sevilla, hosted by Mr. Isaac Sastre de Diego and his team from the Spanish Ministry of Culture. The meeting was held from Wednesday 27th to Friday 29th of September 2023. It gathered about 50 representatives from 24 countries and regions. The Forum opened with a guided tour of Sevilla's Cathedral and old town, followed by a welcoming reception at the *Museo de Bellas Artes*. Thursday and Friday morning were dedicated to the conference itself, at the *Archivo general de Indias*. Under the theme "Heritage: A Living Being", the EHHF celebrated the 20th anniversary of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage by discussing the relationship between tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Europe. Members had the chance to enjoy the gardens of the *Reales Alcazares* for the official dinner on Thursday and were invited to attend a flamenco recital on Friday evening. The optional excursion on Saturday gave the Forum the opportunity to discover the UNESCO's World Heritage traditional olive tree landscape and *almazara*.

The related documents (participants list, powerpoints and presentations) are available on the EHHF website and upon request to the Permanent Secretariat, which remains at your entire disposal.

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SEVILLA CATHEDRAL

The Seville Cathedral, also known as the Catedral de Santa María de la Sede, was the meeting point for bringing together EHHF members in order to kick off this 17th annual meeting of the Forum in the heart of Seville. This stunning Gothic cathedral is renowned for its immense size and remarkable architecture. The cathedral was built on the site of the city's former mosque after the Christian Reconquista and stands as a symbol of the city's history, architecture, and religious heritage.

Key feature of the Seville Cathedral includes its Giralda Tower that members had the possibility to climb, and which was originally a minaret of the mosque. Inside, the Forum could admire its grandiose interior with intricate stained glass windows, beautifully decorated chapels, the Tomb of Christopher Columbus, and a central nave adorned with ornate altarpieces. Notably, the Seville Cathedral is one of the largest cathedrals in the world and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

WALKING TOUR: SEVILLA OLD TOWN

The visit continued with a guided walk around Seville's old town, a captivating historic district weaving a tapestry of cultural heritage spanning centuries. Its Moorish, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque influences were highlighted to us through key façades, hidden courtyards, emblematic statues and evocative street names. From the Cathedral and its Giralda, the group moved through picturesque squares, numerous plazas and a labyrinth of narrow streets all of them displaying tapas bars serving up Andalusian flavors and resonating with the soul-stirring rhythms of flamenco. In Seville's old town, cultural heritage thrives as a living testament to history and a vibrant way of life, inviting visitors to explore its rich past and present.

WELCOME RECEPTION : MUSEO DE BELLAS ARTES

The walking tour ended up at the Fine Arts Museum of Seville, also known as the Museo de Bellas Artes, which is housed in a former 17th-century convent. The building itself is an architectural gem, showcasing elements of Andalusian Baroque and serving as a backdrop for the art on display. Members were welcomed by the museum's director and were then guided through the most iconic artworks of the museum, including masterpieces by renowned Spanish artists like Murillo, Velázquez, Zurbarán, and Valdés Leal. The museum's collection also features works from other European painters, sculptures, decorative arts, and numerous religious paintings. With its rich cultural heritage and an extensive collection spanning several centuries, the Fine Arts Museum of Seville marked the end of this first day of discovering Seville and Spain's vibrant cultural history. The members eventually enjoyed a welcome reception in one of the four museum's courtyards.

PRESENTATION OF THE VENUE

Ester Cruces, Director of the Archivo General de Indias



The Archivo General de Indias was established in the late 16th century as the repository of an extensive collection of manuscripts, maps, and records pertaining to the Spanish Empire's conquests and overseas territories. This architectural marvel is a UNESCO World Heritage site, boasting an elegant Renaissance design and a tranquil courtyard adorned with intricate tilework. Its significance goes beyond its physical beauty, as it safeguards the collective memory of an era when Spanish explorers and adventurers left an indelible mark on the world. The Archivo General de Indias is a living testament to Seville's role in shaping global history, making it a most relevant place for our EHHF members to meet as they discuss the narratives of our shared human heritage.

In her welcome speech, the Director introduced the institution as an iconic historical building in Spain. This unique archive, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, holds centuries' worth of records, making it a source of pride. Ms Cruces expressed confidence that the day's agenda would flourish in this remarkable setting and extended her gratitude to those in attendance.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Isabel Lopez Mayo, acting Subdelegate from the Estatal Government in Andalucía.

In her welcome speech, Isabel Lopez Mayo, representing the government of Andalucía, opened the European Heritage Forum, emphasizing the importance of intangible cultural heritage as defined by UNESCO. She highlighted the positive evolving aspects of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, now including sustainable development and gender diversity. Ms Lopez Mayo's speech also celebrated the unique relationship between tangible and intangible heritage, reflecting on the significance of traditions and knowledge. The acting subdelegate expressed hope for fruitful international cooperation during the meeting, and extended her gratitude to the organizers.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Monica Ortiz, General Director of Cultural Heritage of the Junta de Andalucía.

Monica Ortiz welcomed attendees to the European Heritage Head Forum in Andalucía, Spain, that she described as a region renowned for its rich intangible cultural heritage. She acknowledged the focus on international safety in preserving intangible heritage and highlighted her background as a lawyer with a focus on this subject. Ms Ortiz expressed excitement about the discussions on climate change and intangible cultural heritage in urban contexts, anticipating in these discussions some valuable insights for future policies.

OPENING SPEECH

Isaac Sastre de Diego, Director General Cultural Heritage and Fine Arts

Isaac Sastre de Diego gave a warm welcome to all his esteemed colleagues from across Europe. He highlighted that this 17th EHHF gathering was made with the presence of Andalusian authorities, representatives of the Spanish government, and fellow partners from the troika, Scotland, and Poland. Mr Sastre de Diego emphasized the significance of intangible cultural heritage, noting that it transcends the mere preservation of objects and landmarks. He highlighted how this cultural heritage is about fostering a sense of collective identity, belonging, and memory, which is not confined to grand monuments but extends to humble structures, illustrating the diversity and richness of cultural heritage.

Mr Sastre de Diego opened the 17th EHHF Annual Conference by underlying that he looked forward to enriching discussions and sharing best practices relating to this concept in the respective countries, building upon the progress achieved during the previous European Heritage Head Forum in Edinburgh. As Spain was currently holding the European Presidency, they underscored the importance of culture as a global essential and a public good. In this regard, the persistent efforts of UNESCO have recognized culture as a driver of development, embedded in the 2030 Agenda, deserving its dedicated OS. Mr Sastre de Diego and its team were therefore convinced that these two days of work would further advocate for the central role of culture in our societies, budgets, and state policies.

The director general extended his gratitude to the City of Seville and the Andalusian government for their support, exemplifying the shared commitment to culture, and expressed his appreciation towards the dedication of his teams from the Directorate of Cultural Heritage Management and Coordination, for their instrumental role in organizing this successful event.

Mr Sastre de Diego then officially inaugurated the session, thanked the audience for being here, and expressed his confidence towards a fruitful gathering.



KEYNOTE - Unesco Convention For the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Susanne Schnüttgen, Chief of Unit, Capacity Building and Heritage Policy ICH, UNESCO

Susanne Schnüttgen, the Chief of the Capacity Building and Heritage Policy Unit in the Living Heritage Entity, provided an insightful overview of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, emphasizing the major developments and achievements over its two decades of implementation.



Rationale for creating the Convention and major changes resulting from its implementation

Ms. Schnüttgen highlighted that the Convention represents a paradigm shift in international cultural heritage preservation. It extends the concept of cultural heritage from physical sites and monuments to encompass cultural practices, expressions, and knowledge. The Convention emphasizes the importance of respecting the communities that are the bearers of this heritage and the significance of intergenerational transmission and continuous recreation of these practices. It ensures the compatibility of intangible cultural heritage with human rights instruments and mutual respect among communities and individuals. Moreover, the Convention has gained recognition as a vital player in sustainable development and peacebuilding.

Important milestones and results in the life of the Convention

The Chief of Unit presented various mechanisms and frameworks introduced by the Convention, including the Representative List, the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, and the Urgent Safeguarding List. These mechanisms aim to make living heritage known, promote cultural diversity, and ensure the viability of practices. Ms. Schnüttgen also discussed the growing number of states parties, with 181 countries now ratified. There are 568 elements listed on the Representative List, reflecting the convention's effectiveness in promoting cultural diversity. The Convention has fostered international cooperation and provided international assistance for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The periodic reporting system offers insights into the state of intangible cultural heritage worldwide. Ms. Schnüttgen emphasized the progress made in Europe, with 98% of countries reporting policies related to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

Highlighted milestones

- **Role in Sustainable Development:** Intangible cultural heritage has been increasingly acknowledged as playing a crucial role in sustainable development, including inclusive social and economic development, environmental sustainability, and peacebuilding.
- **Representative List:** The convention has a Representative List, which showcases elements of intangible cultural heritage that demonstrate cultural diversity and contribute to its appreciation.
- **Urgent Safeguarding:** The convention includes mechanisms for urgent safeguarding, aimed at elements that require immediate attention to prevent their disappearance.
- **Register of Good Safeguarding Practices:** There is a register where states can propose innovative practices for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, allowing for shared learning and inspiration.

- Participation of NGOs: Accredited NGOs play an active role in the convention, with 217 accredited NGOs offering advice and contributing to the safeguarding efforts.
- Overall Results Framework: The convention adopted an overall results framework to measure the impact and effectiveness of safeguarding measures, allowing for better policy debates and future planning.
- Regional Analysis: The periodic reporting process has provided insights into the efforts made by countries, especially in terms of integrating intangible cultural heritage into policies and education.
- Global Meetings: International meetings have focused on the relationship between living heritage and sustainable development, as well as the need for a new relationship between human beings and nature.
- Education and Digital World: Integrating intangible cultural heritage into education has the potential to improve learning and connect with communities, while the implications of living heritage in the digital world need further exploration.
- Involvement of Stakeholders: The involvement of all stakeholders, including Indigenous peoples, women, and those working with tangible cultural heritage, is crucial for strengthening the convention's impact.
- Promotion of Gender Equality: The convention explicitly emphasizes the promotion of gender equality in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.
- Synergies and Adaptation: Efforts are ongoing to assess the effectiveness of the convention, promote integration with other cultural heritage areas, and adapt to the changing needs of society.
- Anniversary Campaign: An anniversary campaign is in place to celebrate the convention's achievements and promote its goals

Ways forward

Ms. Schnüttgen pointed out the need for synergy with other conventions and frameworks, especially in areas related to sustainable development, and to improve the effectiveness of periodic reports. She encouraged the involvement of communities, indigenous peoples, and other stakeholders to strengthen civil society's participation and outreach to new audiences. Lastly, our keynote speaker mentioned the importance of assessing the effectiveness of the Convention and disseminating its insights to a broader audience to make intangible cultural heritage protection meaningful and equitable in the 21st century.

This insightful presentation emphasized the convention's transformative impact, its role in preserving cultural heritage, its achievements over the years, and the need for continued efforts in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the modern era.

THEMATIC DISCUSSION – Intangible cultural heritage and climate change

Pier Luigi Petrillo, Professor of Comparative Law of Cultural Heritage at the Sapienza University

In his presentation, Pier Luigi Petrillo, professor of Cultural Heritage Law and UNESCO Chair, delved into the interconnectedness of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate change, and cultural heritage, particularly focusing on intangible cultural heritage. He emphasized how the protection of intangible cultural heritage is instrumental in advancing several SDGs and mitigating climate change.

Sustainable Development Goals, Climate, and Heritage

Mr Petrillo highlighted the strong relationship between sustainable development and cultural heritage, emphasizing that heritage is more than just monuments or tangible relics. It serves as a dynamic resource that preserves memory and plays a pivotal role in achieving sustainable development. He mentioned that climate change is not solely an environmental issue but also a cultural one. By protecting and preserving cultural heritage, we can contribute to the accomplishment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, consisting of 17 SDGs, and particularly those related to climate action.

How Intangible Cultural Heritage Contributes to SDGs - Several examples

Goal 1 - No Poverty

Intangible heritage, including indigenous knowledge and local skills, contributes to poverty reduction by offering traditional services, water and sanitation systems, and local craftsmanship. For instance, the Azerbaijani copper craftsmanship tradition provides livelihoods to a small village, exemplifying how intangible heritage can alleviate poverty.

Goal 2 - Zero Hunger

Diverse intangible heritage traditions support biodiversity and sustainable practices. The Mediterranean diet, inscribed as intangible cultural heritage, represents not just a way of eating but a lifestyle promoting seasonal, local, and sustainable food consumption, thereby reducing emissions and combating climate change.

Goal 3 - Health and Well-being

Intangible heritage fosters well-being, mental health, and social interaction. Traditions like yoga in India and Italian harvesting techniques enhance individuals' self-awareness and physical health, particularly valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goal 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation

Intangible heritage contributes to tangible systems. For instance, Saudi Arabia's traditional irrigation network system, inscribed as intangible cultural heritage, ensures the provision of clean water to rural communities. The intangible knowledge complements the tangible water infrastructure, emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between the two.

Goal 13 - Climate Action

While Goal 13 is explicitly about climate action, Mr Petrillo reiterated that climate change is a cross-cutting issue that impacts all SDGs. Local knowledge embedded in intangible heritage aids communities in adapting to climate change-related challenges. The example of Pantelleria, a small Mediterranean island, demonstrates how preserving traditional agricultural practices can protect against abnormal weather events.

Living Heritages Are Our Lifeline:

Pier Luigi concluded that intangible cultural heritage defines who we are, providing cultural diversity that makes societies unique and resilient. In a globalized world, where products are ubiquitous, this heritage reminds us of our traditions and teaches us to value cultural diversity as a strength. Protecting both tangible and intangible heritage is essential to secure the past and the future, especially in the face of climate change. Living heritage is not just an identity but also a survival strategy.

The presentation underscored that protecting and preserving intangible cultural heritage is critical to achieving sustainability and combating climate change. As our governments formulate policies to safeguard tangible heritage, they should equally focus on intangible heritage, recognizing its essential role in our cultural identity and resilience in the face of environmental challenges.



Q & A SESSION – Questions from the members to the panel

The main discussion during the Q&A revolved around how institutional and practical synergies between different departments and conventions are implemented within UNESCO, emphasizing the importance of strengthening cooperation between various mechanisms.

From the Unesco side, there is ongoing efforts to build such collaborations and it was underlined that the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage is relatively recent. Some concrete steps have been taken, such as **integrating information** from other conventions into capacity-building efforts and conducting **inventories** of intangible cultural heritage related to World Heritage sites. The importance of involving communities and experts in **emergency responses** was highlighted, as well as ongoing discussions about revisiting convention principles.

The significance of preserving the **traditional craftsmanship skills and knowledge** required to maintain historical buildings and landscapes was stressed as a vital aspect of cultural heritage. Another observation was made related to the safeguarding, growth, and promotion of **minority languages**, noting the critical link between intangible cultural heritage and languages.

Focusing on the World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Conventions, it was highlighted that there are already links within the **World Heritage Convention** that allow for the consideration of intangible aspects, particularly through criteria 6. The importance of **community involvement** in maintaining heritage, was made clear and it was suggested that a sense of shared identity within communities is essential for heritage preservation.

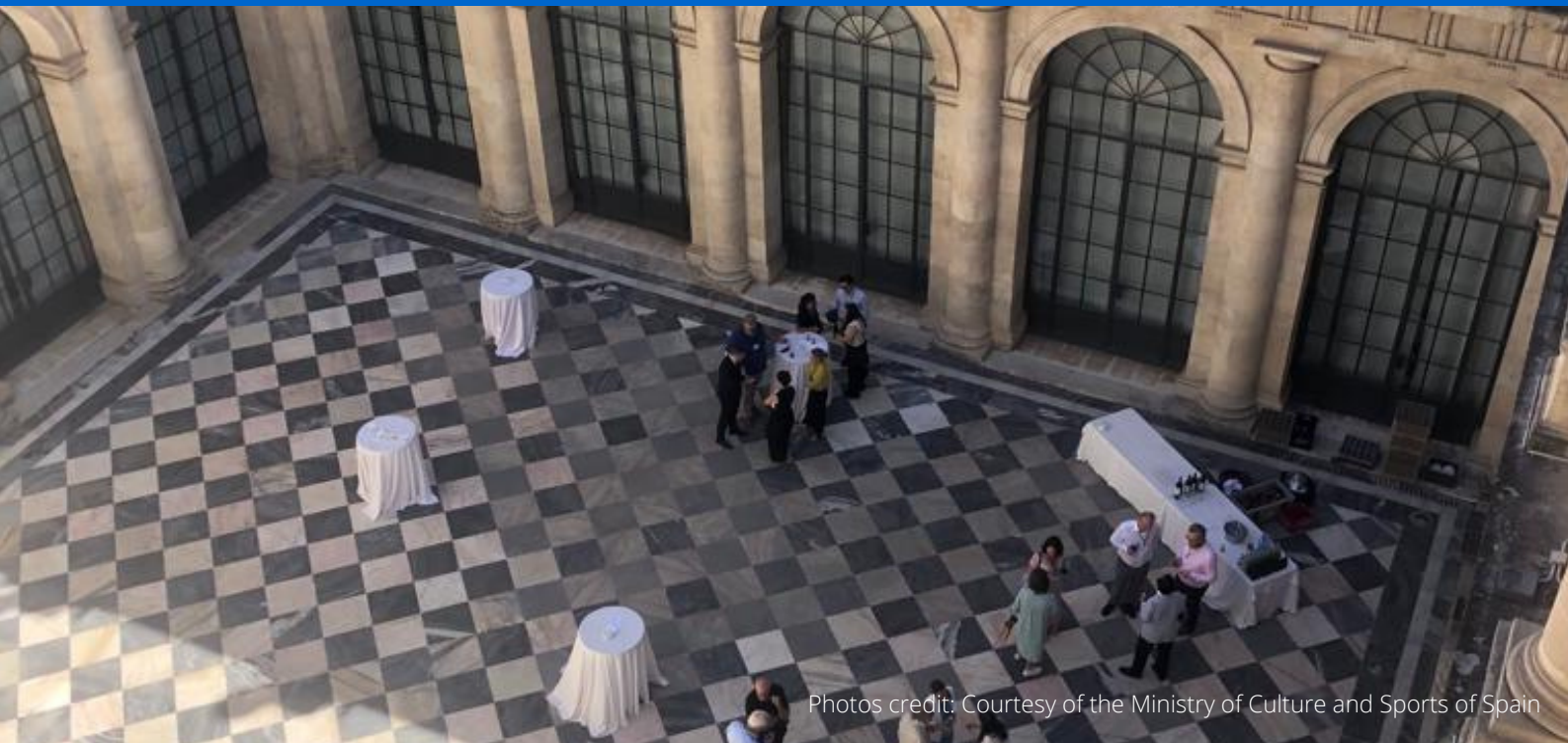
It was pointed out that the concepts of exceptional value and uniqueness in the World Heritage Convention sometimes appear **contradictory** to the concepts of representativeness and identity in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. The suggestion was made that these concepts should be **harmonized** to promote synergies between the two conventions, together with the need for greater connectivity between cultural, agricultural, fishing, environmental, and hydraulic policies in relation to intangible cultural heritage and cultural landscapes.

Collaboration with other United Nations programs were mentioned, as the one with the **FAO's World Agricultural Heritage Systems**. It is the case for example in Spain where a project addressed the interconnection between World Heritage beech forests, natural heritage, and the traditional techniques used in these areas.

Eventually, it was questioned whether UNESCO is actively seeking synergies with other fields, such as **tourism**. The need for a broader perspective in today's society was expressed, hinting at a shift that might emphasize different principles beyond traditional conservation techniques.

The discussion continued with the observation of a growing shift towards prioritizing intangible aspects over the original material authenticity in the conservation of tangible heritage.

This shift towards intangible aspects was not seen by all participants as a problem, as heritage, whether tangible or intangible, should be seen, in their view, as contributing to **society's flourishing** rather than in isolation. The conclusive remark expressed the need to find a balance between conserving monuments and addressing the needs of contemporary society. In this regard, the complexity often arises when discussing the development of this concept and its interaction with **investors**.



TWO MINUTES, TWO SLIDES – Initiatives on Intangible Cultural Heritage communication and diffusion

Examples from national experience

AUSTRIA. The Charterhouse and historic handcrafts

The Austrian example discussed a historic building, the Charterhouse, that underwent various ownership transitions and was transformed into an education center focusing on historic handcrafts. The initiative started in the 1980s to address the need for preserving historic handcrafts, which became crucial during and after World War II. This effort led to European certification as a Maintenance Manager for Cultural Assets, and they have a website showcasing their work.

BELGIUM - BRUSSELS. The Brussels stock exchange and the beer culture

The Brussels Stock Exchange was recently renovated and serves as a gathering place during significant events in the city. It was historically inaccessible and even prohibited for women, but it has been transformed into a publicly accessible space, housing a beer museum and showcasing the beer culture's intangible heritage. The renovation project aimed to reconcile the protection of the building with the promotion of beer culture, which sometimes poses challenges in connecting the two aspects.

BELGIUM - FLANDERS. A community-focused approach to heritage preservation

In Flanders, Belgium, they have a devolved approach to culture, heritage, tourism, and education, with competence resting within the communities. They have implemented various initiatives to promote intangible heritage, including the "Flash" program, scholarship opportunities for craftsmanship transmission, and awareness campaigns. The campaigns highlight various aspects of intangible heritage like manual bell ringing, selling scented flowers, making Belgian fries, and craftsmanship, all emphasizing the cultural importance and connection to daily life. They are transitioning towards a more community-focused approach to heritage preservation.

CROATIA. Safeguarding the living culture of Rovinj/Rovigno

The example from Croatia revolves around a small fishing boat that was not initially considered for inclusion in the cultural heritage practice. However, after World War II, when industrialization threatened such boats, this particular one survived, becoming a significant part of the community's cultural story. The boat represents craftsmanship, fishing traditions, singing, and a way of life for the entire town. It has become part of the local heritage and is also linked to the Mediterranean diet. The museum dedicated to this small boat preserves not only the vessel but also the cultural value and community involvement associated with it, especially among children.

ESTONIA. "People keep the heritage alive" Awards

The presentation discussed the "People keep the heritage alive – ENHB Annual Awards and Museum Rat Awards" initiative in Estonia, which are initiatives launched by the Estonian Heritage Board to promote special laureates: culture comes from within these people, from their hands, their deeds and their thoughts. It was underlined that the categories of the awards have been reviewed and modified this year, with a total of 13 categories. The awards ceremony is scheduled to take place in November of this year, followed by the Museum Rat Awards in February of the next year.

FINLAND. Implementing the Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH

The presentation outlined the efforts of the Finnish Heritage Agency in implementing the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. They discussed having a full-time coordinator for the convention and working with an extensive network of intangible heritage actors and communities across Finland. They highlighted their initiatives, including inventorying living heritage and focusing on sustainable development aspects of intangible heritage, along with their participation in international projects. They also emphasized the importance of cultural heritage in the context of the Agenda 2030.

GERMANY. Modern dance, organisations with shared interests and organs

In Germany, the federal committee is responsible for evaluating and proposing UNESCO inscriptions. The examples of modern dance and the idea of organizing shared interests and cooperatives were presented as elements of cultural heritage that Germany seeks to preserve. Additionally, the connection between organs and architectural spaces in Germany was highlighted, with a focus on specialized knowledge and skills passed down through generations. Funding programs and measures to ensure the long-term security and playability of organs were also mentioned in the context of safeguarding this heritage.

ICELAND. Traditional architectural heritage

The focus was made on Iceland's traditional architectural heritage, characterized by stone, turf, and wooden houses dating back to 1200 years ago, shared with Northern Europe in the Middle Ages. After gaining independence in the 20th century, many of these houses fell into neglect or were demolished. Efforts are being made to preserve and pass down the skills required to build and maintain these traditional houses, with courses offered during the summer and an increasing interest from people in different countries. This initiative aims to ensure the continuity and safeguarding of this architectural tradition.

LATVIA - Latvian Song and Dance Festival

The presentation discusses the Latvian Song and Dance Festival, which was inscribed on the UNESCO Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity list since 2008. It is known as one of the largest choral and dancing events, a significant part of Latvian culture and social life, with a tradition dating back 150 years and more than 40,000 participants nowadays. This event is closely linked to heritage sites and serves as a way to preserve cultural values and affirm the society's identity. The event emphasizes the importance of everyday life and intangible heritage in understanding how heritage works and improves the quality of life.

LITHUANIA - Communicating and Diffusing ICH

Lithuania is working on a communication system for the better protection of intangible heritage. Lithuania has a List of Intangible Heritage that includes projects involving an ongoing process. From 7 to 10 new entries have been included every year since 2017. The National Culture Centre plays a significant role in managing the inventories and conducts an intensive communication program. They involve experts, network specialists, NGOs, and others in the preservation of traditions. New entries are presented through various media, including TV and radio. This communication program extends to local municipalities as well. The protection of heritage and traditions, especially in the context of climate change, is a significant focus in Lithuania's efforts.

MALTA. Promote ICH to the public

Malta identifies with the UNESCO Convention, with the Heritage Board listing 12 tangible cultural heritage assets, two of which are nominated for UNESCO inclusion. They focus on popular folk songs and local feasts to promote intangible heritage. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the UNESCO Convention, Malta aims to involve the public more and highlight endangered cultural heritage practices. Additionally, the Minister for Culture has opened applications for individuals with heritage skills to help preserve the country's intangible cultural heritage. This initiative aims to increase the longevity of these practices.

NETHERLANDS. Saint George and the dragon

The presentation focused on a tradition related to Saint George and the Dragon, which has been ongoing since the 17th century in a small Dutch village called Beesel. While this tradition was listed in the National Inventory of Intangible Heritage in the Netherlands in 2012, they discovered similar traditions in five other European villages in Germany, Portugal, Belgium, Spain, and the Netherlands. These municipalities have signed a letter of intent, aiming to establish a new European cultural route in 2024, bringing together Saint George and Dragon community events. They are also interested in identifying similar traditions in other countries.

NORWAY. Strategy to secure traditional craft

In Norway, there is a shortage of skilled practitioners with knowledge of traditional craft techniques. The directorate is therefore working on a dedicated strategy for traditional craftsmanship. With about 8,500 listed buildings in Norway, there is a substantial market for rehabilitating protected and listed buildings, estimated at around 870 million euros. There is a need to recruit professionals with specialized skills in traditional materials, building structures, and techniques. While Norway currently lacks official educational programs for these skills, they aim to collaborate with educational institutions, museums, churches, the construction industry, and practitioners to find solutions to the issue. The goal is to create a strategy that contributes to the preservation of both tangible and intangible heritage.

ROMANIA. Fostering Intangible Cultural Values: Initiatives and Collaborative Approach

The National Institute of Heritage in Bucharest is working to raise awareness about the importance of intangible cultural values in Romania. They have organized events and workshops addressing Craftsman issues, legal matters, financing, and taxation. Their efforts span various cultural practices, involving students and children. Romania boasts a parliamentary Commission for UNESCO and a Ministry of Culture Commission for safeguarding intangible heritage, working on educational programs and funding sources. They are also aiming to generate economic interest in craft products to attract more young enthusiasts to craft techniques.

SLOVAKIA - Preserving traditional crafts

The presentation highlighted Slovakia's efforts to preserve traditional crafts and intangible cultural heritage. These efforts involve various activities aimed at collecting information and skills to revive dying crafts, providing contemporary designers with this knowledge, and presenting traditional crafts to the public. One example are the popular "Master Craftsman Days," which showcase various crafts and attract a wide audience. The "School of Crafts" and craft courses, workshops, lectures, and seminars aim to pass down traditional skills and knowledge. Collaboration with the Centre for Folk Arts Production is focused on adding traditional building crafts to improve monument conservation quality.

SERBIA. Vernacular architecture conservation

An ongoing project in Serbia links intangible cultural heritage and traditional architecture. The Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments has led this project since 2003, involving the investigation of architectural structures and materials across several municipalities. Over the years, the project has expanded to include collaboration with the Center for Intangible Cultural Heritage of Serbia, which maps and transfers knowledge related to traditional construction techniques. Various activities, such as conferences and documentary films, have been organized to capture and promote the project. Additionally, the project has recently extended to establish collaborations between traditional craftsmanship and creative industries, aiming to revive traditional building crafts and inspire new creative roles while preserving this heritage.

UK - SCOTLAND. Scotland's Urban Past

"Past Forward" is a five-year program in Scotland focusing on intangible cultural heritage, combining both tangible and intangible aspects. The project engaged communities across Scotland and provided tools and guidance, encouraging communities to investigate, record, and celebrate their urban heritage. Over 10,000 people participated, contributing 1,700 additions to the national record. Urban detectives and crowdsourcing played a significant role in involving diverse audiences. The project aimed to create a lasting legacy, increasing awareness of cultural heritage and fostering community engagement.

SWEDEN. Sweden's Heritage Days and the Impact of Public Engagement

The presentation discusses Sweden's efforts to preserve and promote cultural heritage. They emphasize the need for public involvement and cooperation with organizations across the country. One successful initiative mentioned is "Heritage Days," coordinated at the national level but involving local heritage societies. It includes a wide range of activities and attracts thousands of visitors, creating a significant impact and media coverage. This initiative helps spread knowledge and curiosity about cultural heritage, involving the community and serving as a recruitment tool for new members and local engagement.

UK - ENGLAND. High Street Program

The "High Streets" program focuses on celebrating High Streets as important community spaces, incorporating cultural activities into placemaking. This initiative goes beyond building repairs and includes events like parades featuring Mr. Fox, symbolizing cultural heritage. The UK government has invested £100 million in this program, making it the most significant heritage investment in England. Other projects include commemorating community contributors and grants for celebrating working-class histories. There's also a program measuring the economic and financial value of intangible heritage, which can influence funding assessments. Additionally, they're actively working on preserving traditional craft skills.

SWITZERLAND. "Better living" year

The "Better living" year is a project related to climate change and sustainable development goals, with a focus on achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The project explores the importance of reducing consumption, using less energy and resources, and changing behavior to meet these goals. It aims to initiate a broad debate in 2026 by organizing a year called "Better Living" in collaboration with the population. They seek to discuss how to maintain a high quality of life with less, drawing a strong connection to heritage practices that emphasize reuse, sobriety and efficiency, which consume fewer resources and less energy. The project is seen as a way to address the concept of "post-growth" and encourage a more sustainable way of life.

UK - WALES. Preserving Welsh language through *Eisteddfod*

The presentation emphasized the significance of intangible cultural heritage in preserving minority languages and used a Welsh example - the "Eisteddfod" tradition. Eisteddfod is a centuries-old festival celebrating culture, music, poetry, and dance, deeply rooted in Wales' history. Revived in the 19th century, it's vital for Welsh culture and language survival. This tradition is marked by symbolism, ceremony, and competition, with major national events held in different communities every year. They also organize international Eisteddfodau where people from worldwide celebrate their unique cultural traditions. These gatherings play a crucial role in bringing communities together and fostering Welsh language conversations.

SPAIN. From the dawn of the Convention until today

Spain has actively participated in the development of the Convention, ratified it in 2006, and contributed to its guidelines. Spain boasts 19 elements on the Intangible Cultural Heritage list, including four Best Safeguarding Practices records, and eight of these elements are of international significance. The Ministry of Culture celebrated the International Women's Day with a seminar on women as bearers of Intangible Cultural Heritage and organized workshops connecting tangible and intangible heritage in museums throughout the year. Spain is committed to safeguarding and promoting this heritage, believing it transcends borders and belongs to all of humanity.

POLAND. Archive and record traditions within communities

Poland is working on the 'Recording Tradition' project with the Centre of Community Archives, to bridge tangible and intangible cultural heritage. They aim to record traditions within communities and provide them with tools to document their practices. This initiative promotes education and strengthens intangible cultural heritage by empowering individuals and communities to preserve their traditions and knowledge.



GROUP DISCUSSION – Typologies of ICH established by the UNESCO Convention and associated challenges

The group discussion session, titled "Typologies of intangible cultural heritage established by the UNESCO Convention and associated challenges," was introduced by Elena Vázquez, a technical advisor from the Ministry of Culture. The session aimed to explore the role of intangible cultural heritage in achieving sustainable development goals. Although culture is not an explicit objective in the sustainable development goals, it plays a crucial cross-cutting role in many of them. Participants were divided into five groups, each focusing on specific typologies of intangible cultural heritage.

GROUP 1 - Performing arts and the challenges arising from tourism exploitation

The group discussion centered on performing arts and the challenges arising from tourism exploitation. Participants identified several key themes:

1. **Economic Change and Cultural Heritage:** the group highlighted the risk of losing performing arts due to economic shifts, citing the example of Poland's coal mining industry's decline and its associated cultural heritage. This resonated with South Wales' experience of coal mine closures and the subsequent decline of related social traditions.

2. **Changing World and Adaptation:** The conversation underscored that performing arts serve as mirrors reflecting the changing world. Participants emphasized the need to adapt to inevitable changes. Youth culture was recognized as a source of creativity in response to evolving environments, leading to the emergence of new traditions like hip-hop and punk rock.

3. **Politicization of Cultural Heritage:** Participants discussed how intangible cultural heritage can be politicized, with politicians either misappropriating or suppressing certain elements. However, it was noted that it can also be a symbol of resistance, such as singing in Ukraine in response to the invasion.

4. **Marginalized Communities:** A significant challenge discussed was empowering marginalized communities to preserve their performance traditions and provide them with a voice, particularly in a politicized world where they may have less economic power.

5. **Changing Attitudes towards Religion:** The role of religion in promoting or supporting intangible cultural heritage was considered. Non-conformist Chapel traditions in Wales were cited as examples.

6. **Gender Representation:** A slight anxiety was expressed about some performing arts being male-dominated, which could create tensions in certain environments.

In conclusion, the group recognized that performing arts must adapt to a changing world, with some traditions fading and others gaining prominence. Education and awareness raising were deemed crucial tools for promoting mutual respect and recognition for evolving and adapting performance traditions. The discussion highlighted the dynamic nature of cultural heritage and the importance of cultural preservation amid changing global landscapes.

GROUP 2 - Social practices, rituals and festive events and its relationship with the media

This group discussion revolved around the theme of "Social Practices, Rituals, and Festive Events" and the associated challenges, particularly focusing on the relationship with the media and communication. The following key points were highlighted:

1. **Holistic Perspective:** The discussion emphasized that intangible heritage is interconnected with various aspects of life. It should not exist in isolation but be integrated into broader societal contexts.

2. **Local Community Engagement:** Participants identified that local communities' involvement with intangible heritage often suffers from poor communication. For example, the Valletta case was cited as an instance where a lack of communication with local entrepreneurs impacted a festival. Active listening to local communities, understanding their needs, and achieving a balance between residents and visitors were stressed as essential in intangible heritage preservation.

3. **Expert Collaboration:** Marketing and communication were recognized as essential tools for safeguarding intangible heritage, and they should not be stigmatized. Instead, experts in these fields should be sought out and engaged for effective communication strategies. The suggestion was made to collaborate with communication and marketing experts who can help reach target audiences and segments effectively.

4. **Measuring Success:** The group deliberated on how to measure success in communication strategies. They discussed the effectiveness of traditional methods like posters versus modern approaches such as social media and influencer marketing. The need to establish metrics for success was emphasized.

5. **Visitor Management:** In cases like Dubrovnik, where UNESCO World Heritage sites are tourist destinations, effective communication alone may not be sufficient. Visitor management and regulation can also play vital roles in preserving heritage.

6. **Knowing the Audience:** The importance of identifying and understanding the local audience, residents, and visitors was underscored to tailor communication strategies effectively.

7. **Content and Channels:** Knowing the intangible heritage content and finding suitable channels to spread the message were considered integral to successful communication.

8. **Challenges and Filters:** Several challenges related to intangible heritage were discussed, including political and ethical filters. The example of shared heritage between Croatia and Montenegro was cited as a political filter. Other challenges included questions about the sustainability of certain practices, such as coal burning and traditional slaughtering methods, in the face of evolving values and concerns like sustainable energy and animal rights.

In summary, the group recognized the need for effective communication and marketing in preserving intangible heritage but stressed that these should be secondary to engaging with local communities, understanding audiences, and addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by evolving societal values and practices.

GROUP 3 - Knowledge concerning nature and universe and the challenge related to sustainability

In this group discussion, the participants explored various aspects of intangible cultural heritage and its potential contributions to sustainability. Here is a concise summary of the key points discussed in group 3:

1. **Timber Crafting and Restoration:** The group discussed the traditional practice of timber crafting, a unique way of transporting wood through water, which is now used in restoring wooden churches. This practice exemplified the potential of intangible heritage in preservation and sustainability.

2. **Art of Dry Stone:** The art of dry stone construction was recognized for its positive impact on biodiversity, emphasizing the connection between heritage practices and environmental sustainability.

3. **Bonfires:** While acknowledging contemporary ecological concerns about bonfires, the group delved into the historical use of fires to maintain forest health. This prompted consideration of how ancient techniques might be applied to modern fire management and prevention.

4. **Craft of Millers:** The group explored the craft of millers and its role in ensuring water supply, particularly in drought-affected areas. It highlighted the significance of local knowledge that is often not adequately documented or passed down.

5. **Gap Between Academic and Local Knowledge:** The discussion emphasized the gap between academic knowledge and traditional local wisdom, which is not always recorded or transferred to the next generation.

6. **Star Stories and Universe:** The group eventually turned its attention to the theme of the universe, specifically star stories. These stories, often related to navigation and harvesting, were seen as valuable cultural knowledge.

7. **Inspiration over Lists:** While recognizing the importance of knowledge collection and inventories, the group stressed that inspiration is equally vital. Lists alone might not be the most effective tools for inspiring others. Communication, including using modern media like YouTube and bloggers, was highlighted as essential to inspire and engage people.

8. **Legal Regulation:** The participants acknowledged the importance of legal regulations to protect and preserve intangible heritage.

9. **Resilience:** The discussion emphasized the importance of resilience, particularly in light of recent global events like the pandemic. Traditional knowledge, such as fire-making skills, was seen as a valuable source of inspiration for building resilience.

In summary, the group highlighted the potential of intangible cultural heritage practices to contribute to sustainability and emphasized the need for knowledge collection, communication, and legal protections to ensure the preservation and continued relevance of these traditions.

GROUP 4 - Craftsmanship and the challenge posed by marketing handcrafted and traditional products

In the group discussion on Craftsmanship and the challenge posed by marketing handcrafted and traditional products, several key points were raised:

1. **Challenges in the Craft Industry:** The group highlighted various challenges faced by the craft industry, including the need for more craftspeople with specialized skills, issues related to the perception of craftsmanship among young people, and concerns about the value of craftsmanship versus the cost of training and products.

2. **Addressing Challenges:** The discussion explored how different countries are addressing these challenges. Initiatives included the introduction of professional diplomas and master's degrees to specialize in certain areas, the implementation of certification schemes to recognize craftspeople's competence, and strategies to attract adults as potential craft career changers.

3. **Innovative Approaches:** The group shared examples of innovative approaches to promote craftsmanship. These approaches included using reality TV programs to raise awareness and interest in traditional crafts or linking craftsmanship to climate change and the net-zero agenda, and proposing fiscal interventions, such as a small tax on new build properties to fund repairs and retrofits aligned with environmental goals.

4. **Enhancing Awareness and Status:** The participants emphasized the importance of creating awareness about the craft industry, showcasing it as a source of well-paid careers, and enhancing the status of craftsmanship. Certification and additional measures were suggested to achieve these goals. An innovative proposal from Switzerland involved considering fiscal interventions, like a small tax on new builds, to fund repairs and retrofits aligned with environmental objectives.

5. **Linking Craftsmanship to Environmental Goals:** Recognizing the connection between craftsmanship and environmental sustainability, the group discussed the need to position traditional skills and crafts in the context of the climate and net-zero agenda, highlighting their relevance to addressing climate change.

In summary, the group explored the challenges and opportunities in the craft industry, highlighting the importance of awareness, status, and innovative approaches to promote and sustain traditional craftsmanship in a changing world.

GROUP 5 - Intangible heritage in danger and its related challenge of sensitization and awareness-raising

The group discussion on "Intangible Heritage in Danger" delved into several several topics:

1. **Urgency Safeguarding List:** The discussion began by comparing the Urgency Safeguarding List of intangible cultural heritage with the World Heritage in Danger list. It was noted that these two lists serve different purposes and have distinct political and economic implications.

2. **North-South Disparities:** Differences between the Northern and Southern hemispheres in terms of intangible cultural heritage and the 1972 and 2003 conventions were discussed. Northern countries have less intangible heritage on the Safeguarding List but a majority of World Heritage sites. The 2003 Convention aims to balance these disparities.

3. **The Notion of Authenticity:** The concept of authenticity and its role in combining tangible and intangible heritage, particularly in architecture made of perishable materials, was explored. In paralel, the authenticity of intangible cultural heritage often faces endangerment due to factors such as loss of recognition and pride, leading to a transformation from a living heritage to a recorded and preserved one.

4. **Globalization's Impact:** Globalization's impact on intangible heritage was viewed as a double-edged sword. It can both strengthen local customs and lead to conflicting interpretations and identities. The discussion considered the potential for globalization to either preserve or distort heritage.

5. **National Registers vs. UNESCO Representative List:** National registers were seen as reflecting grassroots perspectives, while the UNESCO Representative List operates at the government level, involving political dimensions. The risk of UNESCO inscriptions petrifying or caricaturing intangible heritage was noted. In the same way, the potential negative consequences, such as conflicting interpretations and identities, associated with international representative lists were acknowledged.

6. **Incorporation into Government Policies:** The group emphasized the importance of incorporating intangible cultural heritage into government policies, especially in areas where economic interests align. The discussion recognized that such policies may not explicitly mention intangible heritage but can indirectly support it, particularly through democratic processes that consider local communities.

In summary, the group explored the complex nature of intangible heritage in danger, addressing disparities between regions, the impact of globalization, the interplay between national and international registers, and the challenges associated with incorporating intangible heritage into government policies.



THEMATIC DISCUSSION – Thematic conference on the management of intangible cultural heritage in urban context

Gema Carrera, Andalusian Institute of Historic Heritage

In the session, Gema Carrera, representative from the Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage discussed an example of managing intangible cultural heritage within an urban setting. She initiated the discussion by emphasizing the importance of viewing the city as a unique entity shaped by its spatial and temporal dimensions, topography, form, and historical significance. This perspective helps us understand the city as a **public home** (the urban space) in addition to our **private home** (our households).

Ms Carrera emphasized the need to consider urban space from multiple dimensions, including the physical, socio-cultural, and political aspects. Understanding the city as a "Civitas" and the importance of **community involvement** in shaping its management is crucial. She also noted that the urban environment has been the focus of numerous discussions and reflections in the field of cultural heritage.

The presentation delved into the **risks** and **challenges** facing intangible cultural heritage in urban areas, such as commodification, gentrification, and the loss of identity. Ms Carrera discussed the importance of recognizing and safeguarding traditional practices, urban spaces, and social values.

She explained how the Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage has been actively working to **document** and **preserve** intangible cultural heritage in Andalusia, involving communities and addressing challenges related to modernization, commercialization, and the changing urban landscape.

Ms Carrera emphasized the need for an integrated approach that considers both the physical and social aspects of urban areas. She pointed out the importance of striking a **balance** between preserving cultural heritage and adapting to contemporary urban needs. The **role of citizens** in shaping the future of their cities was highlighted, as well as the significance of achieving inclusivity, safety, and sustainability in urban development, which aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 11 related to cities and communities.

The next part of the presentation focused on the role of movements and social initiatives in addressing issues related to **tourism-driven urban development**. Ms Carrera provided examples of both challenges and successful strategies from cities like Córdoba. In Córdoba, the management of the famous **patios**, recognized as intangible cultural heritage, has been innovative in tackling the adverse effects of tourism while preserving the city's unique identity and fostering a sense of community.

Overall, the presentation underscored the complexity of managing intangible cultural heritage in urban environments and highlighted the importance of a **holistic approach** that considers both material and immaterial aspects while actively involving communities and addressing urban challenges. This approach is essential for creating vibrant, sustainable, and culturally rich urban environments.

EHHF PLENARY SESSION – ANNUAL REPORTS FROM THE EHHF STANDING COMMITTEES AND THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

Note - The content of these presentations can be found in greater details within the EHHF Annual Report



Economic taskforce

- Paul Mahringer

The Chair of the Taskforce on Economy and Statistics, Mr Paul Mahringer, provided an overview of the group's recent activities and future plans:

- 1. Research Studies:** The task force has been engaged in research studies financed by Espon. These studies include examining the impact of material cultural heritage on the economy and studying well-being with a focus on both material and intangible heritage. The results of these studies can be found in the annual report.
- 2. Public Policy Impact:** The group discussed how to make the results of these studies more accessible and relevant to public policies. This involves making the studies more readable, accessible in national languages, and improving the overall clarity of the information.
- 3. Statistical Data Collection:** There is an effort to improve statistical data collection on cultural heritage. Eurostat and ESPN are planning a project to create a satellite account for cultural heritage at Eurostat. The task force aims to be part of this project, and discussions are ongoing to realize this initiative.
- 4. Active Membership:** The Chair expressed gratitude to the active members who participated in the meeting in Vienna. They highlighted that the task force welcomes additional participation and encourages members to join meetings and discussions. This active participation is essential for the success of the project.
- 5. Information Letter of Intent:** Members may be requested to provide a formal letter of intent, which is not a financial commitment but a declaration of willingness to cooperate in the satellite account project. The task force will prepare this if the project moves forward.
- 6. Green Light for Project:** The Chair mentioned that the project appears to have a "green light," but there have been recent developments, and they will keep members informed regarding the progress.
- 7. Membership List:** The Chair acknowledged the active members from various countries and encouraged anyone not listed to reach out to connect and participate in the task force's activities. The group meets online several times a year and maintains an email forum for updates and discussions.

In summary, the Taskforce on Economy and Statistics has been actively involved in research studies and is working on improving the statistical collection of cultural heritage data. They are on the cusp of initiating a significant project with Eurostat and ESPN and welcome more members to participate and contribute to the success of this initiative.



European Heritage Legal Forum

- Tove Elise Ihler

Tove Elise Ihler, the Chair of the European Heritage Legal Forum (EHLF), delivered a presentation summarizing the annual activities and achievements of the EHLF. Tove acknowledged the significant contributions of Mr. Wolfgang, who had been a valuable member of the legal forum and a scout for identifying potential negative regulations concerning cultural heritage.

Tove explained that the EHLF was established in 2008 to support European countries in tracking EU legislation and facilitating the exchange of best practices in national law, particularly when dealing with regulatory challenges related to cultural heritage. This inclusion of best practices has been crucial, especially since many European nations are revising their cultural heritage acts.

The legal forum's primary role includes monitoring EU legislation, identifying potential issues, and producing alternative texts and rhetoric to influence legislative changes when problematic directives are encountered. Tove highlighted the significance of active participation from various cultural heritage fields and the need for coordination to navigate the legislative process effectively.

She emphasized the advantages for member states of joining the legal forum, such as cost-effective collaboration, improved media relations, and effective cultural heritage preservation.

- **Recent successes** of the legal forum in addressing regulations related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, notably thanks to the efforts of Romania and Germany in achieving breakthroughs. The legal forum also addressed issues concerning nitrogen emissions and received exemptions in Norway.
- Work on creating **flexible legal frameworks** to protect both cultural heritage and the interests of heritage property owners, emphasizing vertical cooperation and launching a working group focused on craftsman-owner services.
- **Working Group Initiatives:** The EHLF has initiated various working groups, such as the one focused on craftsman-owner services. This group aims to find solutions to enable restoration work on listed buildings.
- **Future Focus:** The EHLF's future activities include more digital meetings, sharing best practices, emphasis on vertical cooperation, and dealing with exemptions and regulations on the national level.

In conclusion, the EHLF remains committed to supporting European countries in managing their cultural heritage and ensuring that EU regulations are compatible with heritage preservation efforts. They continue to offer their expertise and assistance to address challenges and promote effective heritage conservation.

Troika & Permanent Secretariat

The work of the secretariat can be summarized in four main activities, that would be: ensuring communication; monitoring membership; performing administrative tasks; and bringing support to the two working committees.

COMMUNICATION. The objective is to ensure the circulation of information between the members of the Forum and encourage the exchange of good practices.

- Three main channels: emails, the website and a LinkedIn account, to give visibility to some of the Forum's activities.
- Two novelties on the website, following our discussions in Edinburgh and with the Troika: the ancient online Forum was not really used by the members, but it still appeared relevant to keep an area on the website where the knowledge exchange and the good practices were archived and made available for the members, this is why an online library is now available, displaying all questions that were debated among the members.
- The other novelty is an “event section” on the website so that members can share their events to each other and they can find out about upcoming events.

MEMBERSHIP implies to update contact information for all administrations involved, but also try to establish or re-establish contact with new or lost members.

- Call on members' help to keep the secretariat informed when there are changes in your administration or by sharing the contacts from other countries that would be interested in joining/re-joining the EHHF.
- Another task, is to bring back the administrations who have stopped participating or to look for new members interested in joining the Forum. In this regard we are glad to welcome Croatia and Serbia for the first time.

ADMINISTRATIVE matters concern the organisation of the Annual Meeting and the budget.

- In 2022 we started a new 3-year period and the secretariat collected letters of commitment from members. It is interesting mentioning that eventually 29 member administrations responded positively and committed financially for a total of nearly 51.000 euros.
- Budget-wise, the EHHF is therefore in a good position with an increasing budget adapting to the general rise in prices.

Support the **WORKING COMMITTEES** that is to say the EHLF and Taskforce.

- The secretariat ensured the communication between the committees and the EHHF and supported in organising meetings for the committees, one in Prague and one in Vienna.



NEWS FROM ICOMOS –

Jordi Tresserras, President Icomos Spain

As president of ICOMOS Spain, Mr Jordi Tresserras began by highlighting the historical significance of ICOMOS in Spain. ICOMOS is one of the founding members of the international organization and played a pivotal role in its establishment. It was initially created in 1965 and operated within the Ministry of Culture in Spain. Over the years, it transitioned into a professional association, representing a **wide range of stakeholders**.

Indeed, ICOMOS Spain is distinctive for its broad and diverse membership. Unlike other national committees, it represents not only individual professionals but also institutional members. These institutional members include the Ministry of Culture, the national heritage, the Ministry of Ecological Transition, and even the Ministry of Defense. Furthermore, it collaborates with regional and local governments, resulting in a complex structure.

ICOMOS Spain recently received recognition as a **public utility structure**. This designation has significant implications, as it provides fiscal benefits for the organization's members. Additionally, it enables the engagement of private companies and entities in ICOMOS Spain's initiatives and projects.

ICOMOS Spain operates through various working groups. This includes regional committees, national committees, and scientific committees, each focused on different aspects of heritage preservation. There is also an emphasis on creating regional and territorial committees to address specific local issues and challenges.

Current Key Initiatives and Focus Areas

- ICOMOS Spain is actively working on incorporating **gender and diversity perspectives** into its heritage preservation efforts. Mr Tresserras emphasized the importance of achieving gender parity and supporting emerging professionals within the organization.
- The organization is focused on **integrating intangible heritage**, such as the European Cultural Itinerary of the Roma Culture, into its preservation efforts.
- ICOMOS Spain is committed to integrating **heritage considerations into urban planning**. This involves preserving cultural heritage while addressing contemporary challenges in urban environments.
- ICOMOS Spain **collaborates with international partners**, particularly within Europe and Latin America. They are actively involved in developing European cultural itineraries, which aim to highlight the rich heritage of various regions.
- ICOMOS Spain is dedicated to **preserving the cultural heritage of local communities**. Mr Tresserras used the example of Tossa de Mar, a small town on the Costa Brava, as a case in point. Despite the town having a population of 3,000 residents, it receives an influx of 50,000 tourists during the summer. ICOMOS Spain is working to maintain "living culture" in such areas experiencing tourism pressures, balancing heritage conservation with the demands of tourism.

In general, ICOMOS' President delved into the complexities of ongoing projects, particularly those introducing **disruptive heritage** elements. Examples included addressing the visibility of women in heritage, decolonization, and perspectives on LGBTQ+ issues. Mr. Tresserras incorporated these themes and emphasized the importance of generating **inclusive narratives**.

UKRAINE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE IN WARTIME

Anastasia Bondar, Deputy Minister of Culture and Information Policy for Digital Development, Digital Transformations and Digitalization

The presentation started with a short video clip from the Acting Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, **Mr Rostyslav Karandiev**.

In this address to the EHHF members, Mr Karandiev underlined that the issue of preserving Ukraine cultural heritage is the most crucial factor in shaping not only Ukrainian culture today but also the culture of the future. The challenge of preserving cultural heritage for future generations is indeed a formidable task under the current circumstances. They are confronting with hostile shelling, loss of lives, destruction of cultural sites, and the erasure of their history.

He extended his gratitude to all those who are assisting Ukraine, helping monitor the situation, documenting the aggressor's crimes and providing help in planning the restoration of damaged sites. He expressed confidence that together as a European community we can build a shared and peaceful future. Heritage not just about immovable property, or about foreign funds, the spiritual intangible heritage of a nation is of utmost importance. For Ukrainian the preservation of their past is of paramount importance, it is about preserving those practices that make them Ukrainian. They cherish their traditions in song writing, choral performances, choreography, and they want the global community to have the opportunity to see, hear, and experience Ukraine.



The Forum was then privileged to have **Ms Anastasia Bondar**, Deputy Minister of Culture and Information Policy for Digital Development, Digital Transformations and Digitalization in Ukraine, joining via video to update on the situation for cultural heritage in Ukraine since the war started.

Ms. Bondar discussed the challenges and positive developments related to preserving Ukraine's cultural heritage during times of war. She highlighted that nearly 600 days have passed since the conflict began, and while some aspects have stabilized, the outcomes have not all been positive. Challenges include the shelling of cultural sites, illicit trafficking of cultural treasures, brain drain, and the approaching winter, which presents additional complications. However,

Ms Bondar also noted some positive changes:

- **Identifying Challenges:** Ukraine has a clear understanding of the challenges it faces in preserving cultural heritage, which is the first step toward addressing them.
- **Innovation:** Ukrainians have shown great creativity in finding new ways to preserve their heritage despite the conflict.
- **Solidarity and Cooperation:** There is strong collaboration within the country and with international partners to safeguard cultural heritage.
- **New Cultural Art:** While not directly related to heritage, the development of new cultural art is significant for Ukraine's overall cultural development.
- **International Actions:** Ukraine is taking steps on the international stage that were not taken before, such as listing sites on the Second Protocol of the 1954 Hague Convention. This includes the listing of the city center and sites in Kyiv and Lviv, albeit on the "danger" list, to collect evidence for potential international legal action in the future.
- **Unique Experience:** Ukraine is gaining valuable experience in conflict heritage preservation, which may position it as a leader in this field in the future.



In the last part of her intervention, Ms Bondar identified several key areas for further development:

- **Emergency Preparedness:** With winter approaching, there is a need to address gaps in emergency response for cultural heritage.
- **Expert Assistance and Capacity Building:** Providing online training and capacity building not only for emergencies but also for future peaceful times.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Encouraging visits, learning opportunities, grant programs, and university exchanges to share experiences and expertise.
- **Financial Support:** Supporting experts with the necessary equipment and techniques for heritage preservation.
- **International Support and Pressure:** Ukraine seeks international support and advocacy to address the consequences of cultural heritage loss and to reconsider international protocols in light of the conflict's unique circumstances.

Finally, the deputy minister emphasized that while the situation in Ukraine remains challenging, there is hope for positive change, and international collaboration is crucial in these efforts.

Troïka Handover

...Scotland- Spain- Poland....



The Polish National Institute of Cultural Heritage is greatly honoured to invite the European Heritage Head Forum to meet again **in May 2024 in Krakow, Poland**.

Katarzyna Zalasińska, director of the Polish National Institute of Cultural Heritage, expressed gratitude for the honor, and urged participants to contribute to the meeting's program. To enhance collaboration, an **online survey** will be circulated in cooperation with the secretariat to gauge expectations for the meeting. The survey will aim to gather insights on both the main topic and the agenda organization, ensuring a fruitful and engaging experience for everyone.

Acknowledging the forum's unique format, Ms. Zalasińska emphasized its potential for practical and innovative contributions to the Heads' work. While they had preliminary ideas for the main topic, they decided to wait for **participants' proposals** due to the diverse interests that aroused during the Sevilla event. They valued the richness of the discussions and wanted to tailor the future meeting to address the various relevant themes raised.

A short movie **video** (available on the EHHF website) gave members a foretaste of what the Forum will experience in the second city of the country. The film portrays Krakow from the perspective of its residents, showcasing urban spaces and living heritage. It provided a glimpse into the city's essence, making attendees excited about being part of it for the 3 days of the meeting.

See you there !



Excursion to traditional Almazara

The optional Friday excursion took the Forum to a Visit of the UNESCO's World Heritage traditional olive tree landscape and almazara. During this visit, the members learned about the historical and cultural significance of olive cultivation in Andalusia. This recognition celebrates the enduring relationship between humans and olive trees, which has shaped landscapes, local economies, and culinary traditions for centuries. The almazara, or olive oil mill, stands as a symbol of the age-old practices that transform harvested olives into liquid gold, olive oil. This World Heritage status aims to preserve not only the remarkable natural beauty of olive tree landscapes but also the rich heritage, knowledge, and skills associated with their cultivation and olive oil production, ensuring that these traditions are safeguarded for future generations.

Hacienda Basilippo follows traditional and sustainable olive cultivation methods, including organic farming practices. The olives are harvested by hand and processed with great care to maintain the oil's purity and flavor.

The visit was followed by an olive oil tasting and a traditional Andalusian meal in Molino de la Romera, an ancient mill that still displays its former grain grinder

