

Interreg



CENTRAL EUROPE

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

ARTISTIC

TAKING
COOPERATION
FORWARD

Valorization of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Assets for local sustainable development in CE Regions

-  Intangible Cultural Heritage as a driver of local and regional development
ARTISTIC Project Final Public Event, Online, 7 July 2020
-  What is the meaning of Safeguarding
Intangible Cultural Heritage, after all? A perspective speech
-  Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari, UNESCO ICH facilitator

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1. DEFINING AND RE-THINKING HERITAGE

Setting the stage: Culture and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

Culture has many facets: *“Culture shapes all our thinking, imagining and behaviour”* (1)

Culture and heritage in Europe: *“Europe is a culture or it is not”* (2)

Intangible Cultural Heritage *“means the 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”* (3)

(1) Our Creative Diversity, 1995. Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000101651>

(2) Denis de Rougemont in: A European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World COM/2007/242final

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52007DC0242&from=EN>

(3) Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>



2. EVOLUTIONS: Some key working concepts supporting the evolution toward Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

Holistic: *“tangible, intangible and digital dimensions of cultural heritage are inseparable and **interconnected** ... **people are at its heart**, stimulating access, engagement, promoting audience development, with a focus on local communities, children, young people, as well as people with disabilities, thereby fostering **social inclusion and integration**” (4)*

Safeguard: *“means **measures aimed at ensuring the viability** of the ICH, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage” (3)*

Mainstream: integration into all sectors – economy, society, environment, development, health, education, research, among others. Cultural Heritage *“... **cuts across diverse policy areas**: regional, urban and rural development, education and social cohesion, digital transformation, environment, tourism, accessibility, the sustainability agenda and climate change adaptation, research and innovation and external relations” (4)*

Individuals, Groups and Communities: ICH as living heritage, coming from bottom-up knowledge, skills and practices

Transmission: ICH *“is **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” (3)*

(4) <https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/library/documents/staff-working-document-european-agenda-culture-2018.pdf>



3. ICH IN EUROPE: Finding out the key working concepts of Cultural Heritage and ICH in the European Basic Texts

*“The Union shall respect its rich **cultural and linguistic diversity**, and [...] ensure that Europe’s cultural heritage is **safeguarded and enhanced** ... bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (5)*

*“ ... **mainstreaming** of cultural heritage in national and European policies ... development of a strategic approach to cultural heritage” (6)*

*“Europe’s cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is **our common wealth** - our inheritance from previous generations and our legacy for those to come. It is an irreplaceable repository of knowledge and a valuable resource for economic growth, employment and social cohesion. ... **Heritage has many dimensions: cultural, physical, digital, environmental, human and social**. Its value - both intrinsic and economic - is a function of these different dimensions and of the flow of associated services” (7)*

(5) Treaty on European Union (Consolidated text, 2012) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

(6) Council of the European Union, 2014. 91/29 Council conclusions on **cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe** <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209129%202014%20INIT>

(7) Communication COM (2014) 477: Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0477&from=EN>



4. THE **CONNECTIVE POWER** OF ICH. ICH AND **CULTURAL RIGHTS**: ICH as a catalyst between central institutions and local communities

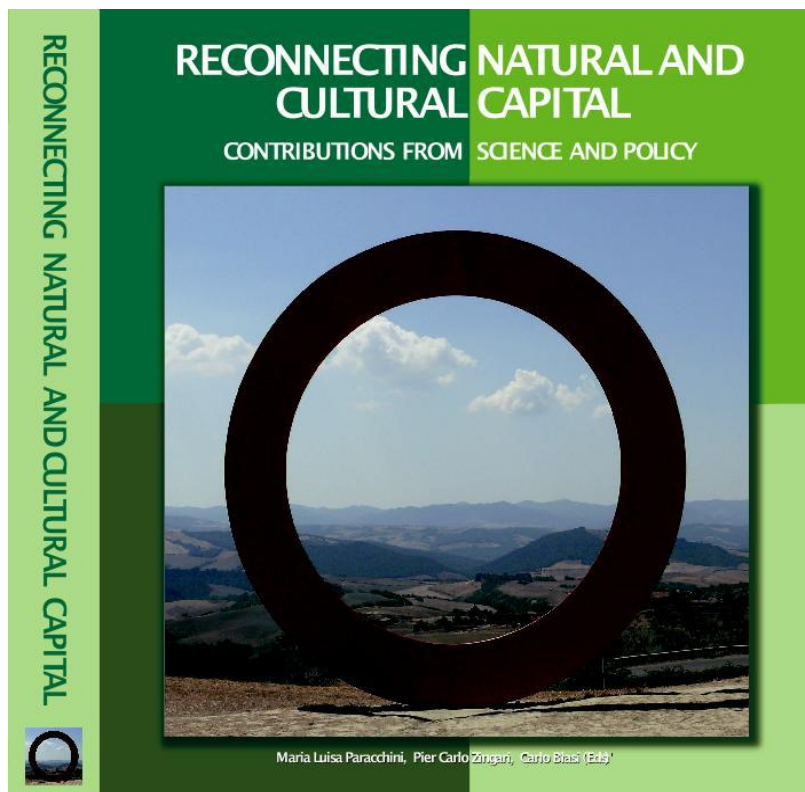
In the democratic context and in the face of growing of **cultural claims**, ICH is a tool of recognition of cultural rights.

Institutions at the national level enter in dialogue with communities, groups and individuals who are the keepers of ICH supporting culture on a living ground.

ICH is a powerful tool to build a constructive **dialogue/compromise** between different and often conflictual interests.

ICH connect cultural diversity to biological diversity: *“knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe”* (3) combining local and scientific knowledge into **new, multiple and innovative perspectives** (9).

(9) Paracchini M.L., P.C. Zingari, C. Blasi (eds.) 2018. Reconnecting Natural and Cultural Capital. Contributions from Science and Policy. European Commission <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/reconnecting-natural-and-cultural-capital-contributions-science-and-policy>



5. ICH as a **driver** of local and regional development

In a global word ICH has a role of **bridging bottom-up and top-down activities providing at the same time traditional-and-innovative solutions** to local and regional economies.

ICH corresponds to **the very fabric of local economic and social living activities** carried on by communities, groups and individuals, transmitted, improved and innovated (e.g. local and regional food traditions).

ICH is a **permanent and productive source of goods and services** sustaining the local and regional development. As a bunch of practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills it produces tangible goods, instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural spaces, dialogue and relations (e.g. tourism).



ICH is one of the major driving forces of development: as the living expression of local communities, groups and individuals, ICH is **not merely “an aspect or means of development but its aim”** (8)

(8) Marshall Sahlins citation in Our Creative Diversity, 1995.
Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000101651>



6. THE **MULTI-LEVEL** LIFE OF ICH

ICH is, by its nature, **local and regional, involving communities, groups and individuals in a participatory and shared process with national authorities** and referring to international conventions (Unesco ICH 2003 and Council of Europe Faro 2005).

ICH practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills **match with a number of priorities of the European Regional Development Fund (10)**, such as, among others:

- Research, technological development and innovation;
- SMEs competitiveness
- Shift towards a low-carbon economy
- Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
- Environment safeguard
- Sustainable and quality employment
- Social inclusion
- Education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning
- Institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders



ICH is a good ground for **territorial cooperation** in:

- Cross-border economic, social, and environmental activities
- Transnational cooperation, including bilateral cooperation between maritime regions
- Inter-regional cooperation, including networking and exchange of experiences between regional and local authorities

(10) Regulation on European Regional Development Fund 2013 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1301&from=EN>



7. **Time of Communities:** community involvement as key-challenge for a sustainable future

ICH bearers and practitioners are **communities and groups with a central role in the identification and definition of their intangible heritage.**

“States should support the widest possible participation and empowerment of communities, groups and individuals that create, maintain and transmit ICH within the framework of their safeguarding activities and actively involve them in its management” (Article 15 ICH Convention).

Unlike decentralisation, which is based on the delegation of political or administrative decisions, **communities participation is the fundamental mechanism** to identify and define ICH, draw inventories, elaborate safeguarding plans, projects and activities on the long term.

Communities are those that permanently produce, safeguard, maintain and re-create ICH (11).

The **ICH “revolution”** consists in putting people first as subjects at the core of activities/policies instead of giving priority to objects, collections, things, goods, artefacts or sites/monuments.

(11) Involvement of communities, groups and individuals <https://ich.unesco.org/en/involvement-of-communities-00033>).





8. The example of Tocatì. ICH: a tool for the **civil-society empowerment**. The battle of Associazione Giochi Antichi (AGA) for Ludodiversity against “*sportive monocultures*”: a challenge of our global world

Since 2008, with the “Manifesto di AGA”, a cultural association in Verona, taking inspiration in the UNESCO Convention, work to a collective definition of “traditional ludic community”, building the first step of a promising **network**.

In these same years, this bottom-up process generate a constructive dialogue with local, regional and national Institutions, reinforcing at the same time the international dialogue in the frame of the European NGO ETSGA (European Traditional Sports and Games Association). This NGO find in the **UNESCO Convention accreditation system** an important tool to empower its action and gain legitimacy at the national/international level.



8. The example of Tocatì. ICH as a tool for the **civil-society empowerment** (*contd.*)



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage



With the “Tocatì international Festival of Games in the streets”, AGA build an **impressive relationship network and cooperation activities around the world.**

The UNESCO ICH frame is the pertinent space to meet other actors (NGOs, heritage professionals, etc) and build, in an international dialogue, an ambitious nomination process involving communities and Institutions from 5 countries, Italy, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus and France: **Tocatì, a shared programme for the safeguarding of traditional games and sports** is sent for evaluation and inscription in the Register of Good safeguarding practices in march 2020.



9. ICH AS A SOURCE OF RESILIENCE DURING THE PANDEMIA

*“Festivals and cultural events are being cancelled or postponed, and cultural practices and rituals are being restricted, causing disruptions in the lives of many people. At the same time we are seeing **how living heritage can be a source of resilience** in such difficult circumstances, as people continue to draw inspiration, joy and solidarity from practising their living heritage”.*

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/news/living-heritage-experiences-in-the-context-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-13261>.

Tocati participated in the Unesco ICH survey, during the pandemic, narrating some community experiences made in dialogue with the Verona Municipality initiative *“Io gioco a casa”*, *“I play at home”*.

The screenshot shows the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage website. The header includes the UNESCO logo and the text 'Intangible cultural heritage'. A search bar is visible with the text 'Search ICH website'. Below the header is a navigation menu with categories: NEWS, EVENTS, CONVENTION, LISTS, SAFEGUARDING, ACTORS, THEMES, and COUNTRY. The main content area displays a news article titled 'Tocati, a shared programme for the safeguarding of traditional games and sports'. The article includes a sub-header 'Emergency situations' and a photo of hands holding walnuts. The text describes the initiative 'Io gioco a casa' in Verona, Italy, which promotes traditional games and sports during the COVID-19 pandemic. A sidebar on the right provides details about the country (Italy), contributor (Associazione Giochi Antichi), and links to the Facebook page and the Tocati website.

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/living-heritage-experience-and-covid-19-pandemic-01124?id=00058>



WHAT IS THE MEANING OF SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE, AFTER ALL?

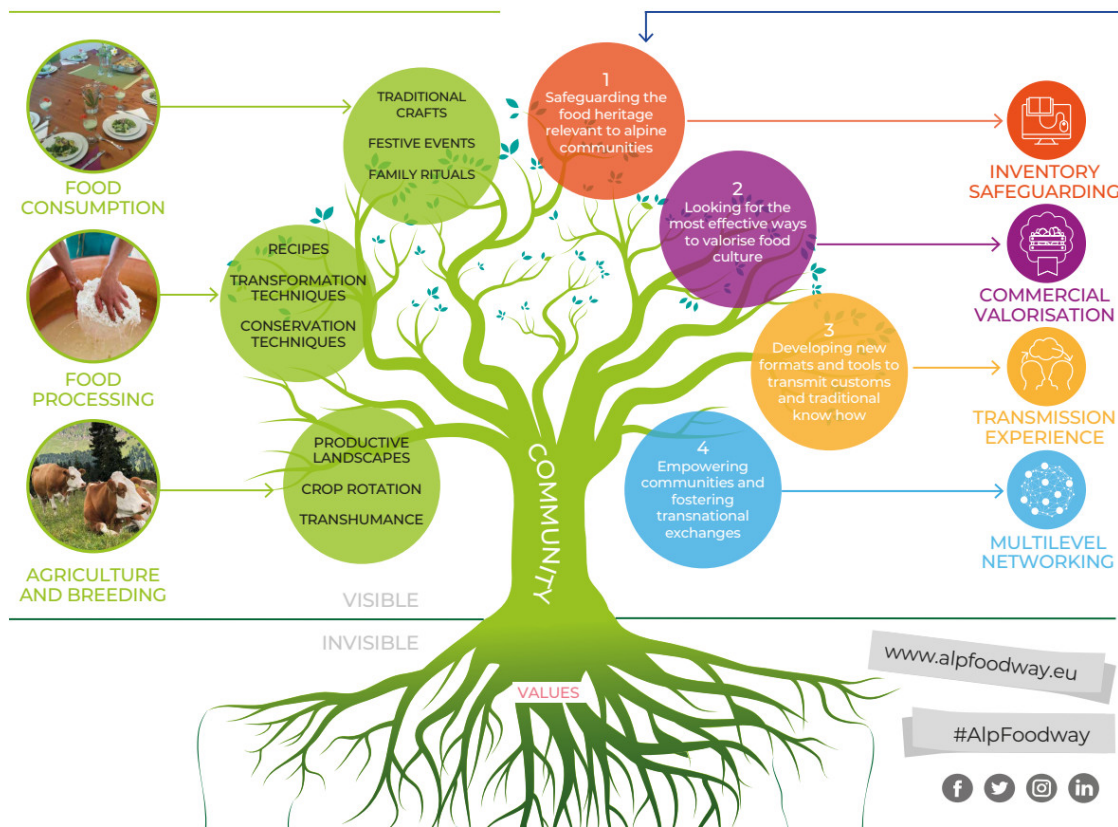
VALENTINA LAPICCIRELLA ZINGARI, UNESCO FACILITATOR

ACRONYM



FOOD HERITAGE, A SOURCE OF ALPINE IDENTITY

HOW TO TURN FOOD HERITAGE INTO AN ASSET FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?



Thank you for your attention!

