Living cultural heritage and sustainable development

**Research papers and the policy
recommendations of the LIVIND project**

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Cover picture: In Koniaków, Southern Poland, is known the bridal ritual called 'czepienie' where married women dress the newlywed to wear a coif with the frontal head-piece of Koniaków lace that is known for its use of fine threads and intricate crochet patterns. Through LIVIND pilot project the lace-making tradition and the bridal ceremony were documented.
Picture: Lucyna Ligocka-Kohut.

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LIVIND Foreword

Acting for a sustainable future is crucial – we all need to ensure the well-being of our planet and future generations. This imperative guided us as we began planning the LIVIND project. Agenda 2030, the UNESCO 2003 Convention, and other conventions showed us the path we need to follow. However, the language is often complex, and the task can seem almost insurmountable.

In the project "LIVIND – Creative and Living Cultural Heritage as a Resource for the Northern Dimension Region," (09/2021-12/2024) we have worked hard for over three years to make a change and take the first steps in understanding, on a very concrete level, what the contribution of living heritage can be in this work.

Coordinated by the Finnish Heritage Agency, the project successfully brought together nine countries from Northern Europe: Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. The Nordic autonomous regions (Faroe Islands, Greenland, and the Åland Islands) and the Saami area have also been part of this project. The project was the first of its kind and scale, strengthening cooperation between these countries and regions, especially in the field of intangible cultural heritage across sectors.

The project preparations started in the middle of the covid-19 pandemic in 2021, and new ways of working online across distances were effectively utilized. Webinars, virtual workshops, and online platforms provided opportunities to share ideas and learn together among diverse actors, including public bodies and NGOs from different countries and areas. Additionally, the 20 supported pilot projects have provided hands-on results on what the work combining living heritage and sustainability can achieve.

We are proud to wrap up the project now with this Research Paper and Policy brief. Furthermore, the resources developed throughout the project, along with case studies and hands-on experiences, are available on the LIVIND.fi website.

We hope the LIVIND project, with its methods and findings, will inspire many other countries to use the tools of living heritage to overcome the biggest challenges of our time.

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1.

Introduction

This Background Paper resulted from the international project LIVIND – Creative and Living Cultural Heritage as a Resource for the Northern Dimension Region (2021–2024), led by the Finnish Heritage Agency and funded mainly by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.[1] Aimed at identifying and developing policies to strengthen the potential of living cultural heritage to support sustainable development, the project brought together stakeholders from public administration, civil society, and the private sector from ten/nine[2] countries in the Northern Dimension Region, being the first of its kind in Northern Europe.

The Northern Dimension (ND) is a joint policy of four equal partners: the European Union (EU), the Russian Federation (suspended), Norway, and Iceland. It was initiated in 1999 and renewed in 2006. The Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) was established in 2010 as the fourth partnership in the Northern Dimension Policy. The overall objective of the Partnership is to serve as a focal point for culture and creative sector practitioners, experts, and policymakers, enhancing the capacity of the sector and its strategic role in sustainable development (Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture, n.d.).

LIVIND was based on the standpoint that living cultural heritage has yet to be fully acknowledged as a resource for sustainable development in the Northern Dimension Cultural Partnership countries. Indicating that the proposed cooperation network for the project already existed and the UNESCO intangible cultural heritage framework was familiar to everyone,[3] it was suggested that there was a development need for capacity building and awareness raising at the intersection of living cultural heritage and sustainable development among the stakeholders already active in the cultural heritage field.

In addition to references to international frameworks under the auspices of the UN and UNESCO, LIVIND aligned with the objectives of the Baltic Sea, Barents and Arctic Cooperation and Northern Dimension Policy by addressing the strategic development needs of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture Steering Group, i.e. increasing the visibility and effectiveness of cultural partnership as the core for cultural and creative development in the region and testing the functioning of cross-border innovation processes in different cultural sectors. In addition, LIVIND aligned with Finnish geopolitical interests by promoting regional cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council's Joint Working Group on Culture (JWGC) and the Finnish Presidency of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in 2021–2023. By exploiting partnerships between the cultural and creative sectors and other sectors, the project could enhance the impact of culture on regional, social, and economic growth, as highlighted by the JWGC. By supporting cooperation and mobility between cultural and creative experts and other actors, it was hoped that the project would also implement one of the five basic principles of the EU's relations with Russia: direct people-to-people contacts with Russian civil society. However, this cooperation was suspended after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on the 24th of February 2022.

Since the very beginning of the project, LIVIND included the research team to carry out research tasks and activities, looking analytically at how living cultural heritage and sustainable development interlink, examining past experiences and best practices, and contributing to the planning and implementation of the project activities. The research team included the UNESCO Chair on Applied Studies of Intangible Cultural Heritage (University of Tartu, Estonia) and the UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy and Law (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia). Until the escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian war in February 2022, scholars from the Faculty of Law (St. Petersburg University, Russia) were also part of the research team.

Research activities were conducted using various methods, such as desk research (including the analysis of project documentation, legal frameworks, national contexts, periodic reports submitted to the UNESCO by the States Parties), semi-structured interviews with project participants, participant observation during online and on-site events, and autoethnography. As a result, the report addresses the prevailing connection between living cultural heritage and sustainable development in the Northern Dimension Region on the policy level, in research, and through concrete actions on the ground. It starts by addressing the conceptual, analytical, and policy frameworks that direct and reflect the work on sustainable development and living heritage in the ND area. Following the analysis of the periodic reports on implementing the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the attention is directed towards the strategies of putting the aforementioned frameworks into practice. After setting the scene for intangible heritage and sustainable development, the focus is set on the LIVIND project's role, aspirations, implementation strategies, and outcomes.

2.

Setting the scene: living heritage and sustainable development

2.1 Conceptual and analytical framework

Living heritage is a term that is often used interchangeably with intangible cultural heritage (ICH), which is directly linked to the UNESCO ICH framework related to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003 Convention). Using it as a cornerstone, LIVIND aimed to broaden the scope and understanding of living heritage by incorporating relevant concepts and ideas from other international frameworks and creating synergies between them, for instance, UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005 Convention) and the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention). As LIVIND initially planned to embrace different regional contexts (including Russia, which has not ratified the 2003 Convention), using "living cultural heritage" to signify the project's focus, attempted to propose a common vocabulary shared by all stakeholders.

Sustainable development is a concept that has been in the focus of international debates for several decades. The Brundtland Commission report provided the now classic definition that development is sustainable if it "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, 16). The original vision of sustainability combined economic growth, social development, and environmental preservation. The three-pillar approach to sustainability is also reflected in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which conceptualises it using three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental (United Nations, n.d.-a). 2030 Agenda introduced 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) without having a stand-alone goal addressing living heritage in particular or culture in general, which remains a missing pillar of sustainability (British Council 2020, 9).

Nevertheless, the interrelations between culture and (sustainable) development have been explored from different angles (Dessein et al. 2015; Duxbury, Kangas, and De Beukelaer 2019; Joffe 2017; Mayor 1999; Soini and Birkeland 2014; Soini and Dessein 2016; Wiktor-Mach 2020) and to represent the complexity of global societal development, a need for the inclusion of culture as the fourth pillar in the sustainable development paradigm was indicated (Hawkes 2001, Mergos 2017, United Cities and Local Governments 2010). Palang et al. (2017, 128) suggest that "understanding how culture can act as a resource to promote sustainability, rather than as a barrier, is the key to the development of cultural sustainability". Acknowledging these interconnections and reflecting on the artificial nature of dividing sustainability into categories, LIVIND considered the cultural dimension as a tool for exploring the many facets of living cultural heritage through the lens of sustainable development. In addition, LIVIND aimed to promote the idea that the cultural pillar needs to be included as a visible goal of the sustainable development agenda to respond to the challenges humankind is facing. With that in mind, cultural sustainability was an overarching theme of the project. On the other hand, it was interpreted in the framework of inclusion and participation, focusing on exploring the cultural rights and values and the social and institutional structures vital for supporting the continuity of cultural practices.

The body of research on cultural heritage, as well as on sustainable development, has been constantly growing throughout recent decades. A number of publications addressed both in relation to each other (Albert 2015; Albert, Bandarin, and Pereira Roders 2017; Auclair and Fairclough 2015; Barthel-Bouchier 2013; Bushell 2015; Gražulevičiūtė 2006; Keitumetse 2009; Labadi and Gould 2015; Labadi 2022; Loulanski and Loulanski 2016; Nocca 2017; Pisolkar 2024). However, discussions focusing specifically on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development are still scarce.

The 2003 Convention Research Bibliography (UNESCO, n.d.-b), hosted by UNESCO and led by an editorial group of independent researchers with the support of volunteer researchers, provides an interactive bibliography of research references related to the 2003 Convention and its implementation. The Bibliography interface gives a possibility to search the database using the "themes" filter, which, among other, includes "sustainable development"[4] and each of the 17 SDGs as keywords.

In recent years, publications on cultural heritage and sustainable development have come as separate thematic volumes, chapters in edited volumes on broader topics, and also articles in peer-reviewed journals. Since 2011, the Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development has provided a forum to promote research on sustainable development of cultural heritage and "to establish links between the two so that they can be mutually inclusive and reinforcing" (Pereira Roders and van Oers 2011, 6). However, the journal's main focus lies on immovable heritage and publications dedicated to living heritage are infrequent.

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[4] 54 entries as of 9 December 2024.

The focus of publications on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development lies, among other, on conceptual frameworks (Erlewein 2015), legal frameworks (Lixinski 2015), human rights (Pineschi 2023), intellectual property (Ubertazzi 2022), practitioners' perspectives (Orr 2023), possibilities of digitalisation (Goussous 2022), tourism (Kim, Whitford, and Arcodia 2019). The topic of tourism has been further explored in the web dossier on intangible cultural heritage and sustainable tourism (ICH NGO Forum, n.d.). The monograph "Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development: The Valorisation of Heritage Practices" by Meissner (2021) explores how heritage practices can contribute to identity formation and act as catalysts for development by creating social and economic advantages. The volume "Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development: Inside a UNESCO Convention", edited by Bortolotto and Skounti (2023), explores the theoretical and practical implications of safeguarding ICH at the local and international levels in relation to sustainable development, paying particular attention to the issues concerning international legal and policy framework, ownership, intellectual property, commons, inclusivity, economic aspect.

2.2 Policy frameworks

2.2.1 Global level

In 2015, 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, n.d.-a). The SDGs follow the earlier Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, n.d.-b), creating the framework for action in different spheres on various levels towards global development. The transition from "development" to "sustainable development", according to Duxbury, Kangas, and De Beukelaer (2019, 214), signified "both a shift in objectives (towards sustainability) and a shift in scope (from 'developing' countries to all countries)" and thus "put sustainability at the centre of global political debate, policy, and programmes for years to come". However, according to Sachs, Lafortune, and Fuller (2024, 15), being already slow before the COVID-19 pandemic, the global SDG progress has stalled since 2020, and none of the 17 SDGs will be achieved by 2030.

Among other spheres, sustainable development has become an integral part of work in education, science and culture, with UNESCO being one of the leading organisations on the global level. UNESCO has been advocating for a culture-based approach to development, recognising the role of culture as an enabler and a driver of sustainable development. Thematic indicators for culture in the 2030 Agenda were introduced, aiming "to measure and monitor the progress of culture's enabling contribution to the national and local implementation of the Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (UNESCO 2019). However, according to UNESCO's 2022 Global Report, even though "63% [of voluntary national reviews] refer to culture in the implementation of the SDGs, only 13% of the submitting countries acknowledge the transversal role of culture" for sustainable development (UNESCO 2022b, 214). To foster structured dialogue and cooperation on culture and sustainable development, in 2021, UNESCO launched an Inter-Agency Platform on Culture for Sustainable Development (UNESCO, n.d.-a). The Platform brings together more than 30 international and regional bodies, including UN agencies, regional

or sub-regional intergovernmental organisations, as well as development banks. The purpose of the Platform is to enhance, monitor and advocate for culture's transformative agency on sustainable development in the context of delivering on the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, steps have been taken to incorporate it into the existing framework on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage that in 2016 resulted in the introduction of a chapter on safeguarding ICH and sustainable development on the national level in the Operational Directives for the implementation of the 2003 Convention (UNESCO 2022a, 80–95). Moreover, SDGs have been integrated with the listing mechanisms of the 2003 Convention, and the visualisation tool "Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage" provides a possibility to explore interconnections between inscribed elements and each of the SDGs (UNESCO, n.d.-c). As part of the global capacity-building programme, UNESCO prepared information materials on addressing the issues of sustainable development in relation to ICH on the national level by facilitators running workshops and capacity-building services (UNESCO, n.d.-d) and an open online course (MOOC) on living heritage and sustainable development (SDGAcademyX)[5]. In addition, UNESCO developed a sustainable development toolbox that explores the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development through examples from around the world (UNESCO, n.d.-e). In 2018, UNESCO (2022a, 157) introduced the overall results framework for the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage as a tool to measure the impact of the 2003 Convention. For each of the 26 core indicators of the Framework relations with SDGs were identified.

UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions explicitly links the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions and sustainable development in Article 13 and cooperation for development in Articles 14–18 (UNESCO 2023).

In 2022, UNESCO organised a World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT), highlighting the importance of the issue in the global agenda. The Final Declaration of the Conference affirmed the commitment "to a reinforced multilateralism that recognises culture as a global public good with an intrinsic value to enable and drive sustainable development" (UNESCO 2022c).

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[5] https://www.edx.org/learn/sustainable-development/sdg-academy-living-heritage-and-sustainable-development

2.2.2 European level

At the European level, cultural heritage is viewed as an important asset that contributes to economic growth, employment, and social cohesion. It is recognised for its ability to enhance the quality of life, help revitalise both urban and rural areas, and support sustainable tourism. While in the EU Member States, regional and local authorities are responsible for policy-making in this domain, the EU has demonstrated its dedication to safeguarding and enriching Europe's cultural heritage through various policies and initiatives (European Commission 2022a). At the same time, based on the analysis of the EU policy documents and actions that introduce "intangible" aspects into the EU heritage discourse, Schreiber (2019, 351) concluded that "there is no coherent EU policy and strategy for the safeguarding of ICH and no real implementation of UNESCO's understanding of ICH within the broader framework of the EU cultural heritage policies and actions". To overcome the existing threats and gaps to the presence of ICH in the EU heritage policies and actions, Schreiber (ibid., 352) suggested turning to the concept of sustainable development.

The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention), which was concluded and signed in 2005 and came into force in 2011. It emphasises the value and potential of cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development and addresses the sustainable use of cultural heritage specifically in Article 9, reframing heritage in relation to its value for society and advocating for an integrated approach and citizen participation (Council of Europe 2005).

In the past decade, there has been a growing call among the European institutions to acknowledge culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development (Council of Europe 2015, Council of Europe 2018) and to strengthen the role of cultural heritage in the context of sustainable development (Council of the European Union 2014). As a result, the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council (2019) adopted a resolution on the cultural dimension of sustainable development, and prioritised "sustainability in cultural heritage" and "culture as a driver of sustainable development" in the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022 (Council of the European Union 2018; 2020). However, even though the Council of the European Union (2022) acknowledges "the role of culture as an integral element in sustainable development and positive societal transformation" in its resolution on the latest EU Work Plan for Culture 2023–2026, it was not named as a separate priority area anymore. This might echo the statement that continuous work on culture and sustainable development would already have led to the "widespread recognition of the interconnections between the cultural and creative sector, social inclusion, cohesion and the transformation of society to ensure sustainable development" (European Commission 2022b, 9).

Talking about (intangible) cultural heritage specifically, the Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2019) recognises the importance of intangible cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development. In addition to drawing up recommendations concerning policy design and implementation at national and local levels, it encourages greater coherency of action between the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and the European Union, stressing the need for a dedicated policy vision highlighting interdependencies between the safeguarding and enhancing ICH and a wider political commitment towards sustainable development that would enhance ICH policies and measures to their full potential.

Moreover, The European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage (European Commission 2019) promotes and puts into practice an integrated and participatory approach to cultural heritage and contributes to mainstreaming cultural heritage across EU policies. With "cultural heritage for a sustainable Europe: smart solutions for a cohesive and sustainable future" as one of its five pillars, the Framework, among other, promotes actions aiming at a) regenerating cities and regions through cultural heritage, b) promoting adaptive re-use of heritage buildings, and c) balancing access to cultural heritage with sustainable cultural tourism and natural heritage (European Commission 2019, 11).

2.2.3 Nordic and Baltic perspectives

On the national level, countries of the Northern Dimension region that joined the 2003 Convention have integrated the UNESCO ICH framework into their national policies (see Annex. Insights into the States Parties analysed). However, talking about localising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, the progress varies from country to country. For instance, the Nordic region represented by the Nordic Council of Ministers strives to be the most sustainable and integrated region in the world in its Action Plan for 2021 to 2024 (Nordic Council of Ministers 2020). At the same time, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (2020, 9) pointed out "the overall lack of awareness about the 2030 Agenda and the lack of political will to address the SDGs among stakeholders in the region."

Formalising interconnections between culture in general and living heritage in particular and sustainable development in the form of heritage-related policies has not yet become a common practice. Already a decade ago, relying on the context of Australia, Witcomb and Buckley (2013, 572) observed "poor connectivity between the perceptions about outcomes of the heritage systems and other pressing social concerns such as sustainability, education, infrastructure and regional development, environmental protection, climate change and community well-being". A similar observation is also relevant in the context of the Northern Dimension region at present. In connection to this the call of the Northern Dimension Institute (2022) to recognise culture as a driver of sustainable development is very timely. At the same time, the Nordic countries should be acknowledged for their pioneering work in strategic planning for culture and sustainability, which has already resulted in several comprehensive documents that establish a solid foundation for further progress in the field. To name just a few examples, Report to the Storting "The Power of Culture – Cultural Policy for the Future" (Norwegian Ministry of Culture, 2018), Government Resolution for the Cultural Heritage Strategy 2023–2030 (Finnish Government 2023), Action Plan for Ecological Transition in Cultural and Creative

Sectors developed by the LuoTo project in Finland (Eskola and Nuora 2023), Action Plan for Intangible Cultural Heritage for 2024–2028 (Finnish Heritage Agency 2024), and Cultural Policy Strategy "Åland's way forward 2024–2030" (Åland Regional Government 2024).

2.3 Approaches at the state level: periodic reports analysis

Part of the LIVIND project research tasks was to take a closer look at those connections between ICH safeguarding and sustainable development dimensions in the periodic reports of LIVIND partner countries on the implementation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The periodic reporting could be considered as an exercise that allows partner countries to evaluate their legislative, regulatory and other capacities and commitments to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. It also works as a mechanism for international cooperation, allowing partner countries and communities to benefit from each other's experiences and to exchange information on effective safeguarding measures and strategies. By the end of 2021, such periodic reports were submitted by the LIVIND partner countries: Denmark, including the Faroe Islands and Greenland, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Finland, including Åland, and Sweden. The reports offer a valuable source for gaining insights into the approaches to ICH safeguarding and sustainable development at the State level in respective countries.

Here, the purpose of the analysis was to provide an overview of a diversity of practices in the project member countries on how sustainable development is enhanced in relation to ICH and how ICH supports sustainable development. The approach to analysis was based on the four dimensions of sustainable development, as conceptualised in the LIVIND project (see further in this Background Paper), namely cultural, social, ecological, and economic sustainability. The analysis of reports has been structured accordingly. The emphasis of the analysis has been on providing a diversity of examples of practices and projects in the region, without the ambition of exhaustivity. This section of the Background Paper includes a summary with a selection of illustrative examples, for a full analysis of reports and references to the periodic reports, see Annex to the Background Paper.

2.3.1 Cultural sustainability

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development highlighted the role of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual respect in safeguarding ICH. Its sub-themes included bridging majority and minority cultures through ICH inventorying, fostering mutual respect and cultural dialogue through education, including in language education, and raising awareness of difficult heritage and stereotypes.

The safeguarding of ICH is strengthened through the media in all the countries of the LIVIND project, and national media (television, radio, online platforms) pay attention to providing inclusive media material that reflects the ethnic diversity of the country. Special attention in ICH safeguarding in the region is paid to national

minorities, to maintain and develop their culture, and to safeguard the essential elements of their identity, language, traditions, and heritage. The safeguarding of minority culture can be facilitated by the recognition of minority ICH in inventories. In some countries, policies and projects regarding the ICH of Indigenous peoples are developed. As acknowledged in the periodic reports, raising awareness of difficult heritage creates understanding and respect between people, and the promotion of ICH can be used to change negative stereotypes on the national minorities. For example, the Ethnographic Museum in Tarnow is committed to safeguarding Roma heritage in **Poland**, building a space for dialogue and cooperation. It also contributes to building the identity of the Roma in Poland and giving them an environment where their history and heritage can be freely cherished.

According to the reports, formal education is another way to work on strengthening cultural dialogues within and across the country. Different levels of formal education often include elements of local ICH and culture. For example, in **Greenland** the drama and performance education is based on a broad insight into cultural history and with particular emphasis on the history of Inuit. For example, part of the curriculum is an extensive introduction to drum dancing and singing (*Qilaatersorneq*) and mask dancing (*Uaajeerneq*). Another approach to enhancing cultural dialogue is through mother-tongue classes organised on a municipal or national level.

Networking among communities, groups and individuals, NGOs, experts, institutions that are active in the field of ICH is a common practice at both the national and the international level too. This is especially important for safeguarding shared ICH. For example, in **Denmark** the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is the body that represents all Inuit from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka on matters of international importance. ICC is currently working on developing Inuit Circumpolar Protocols for the Equitable and Ethical Engagement of Inuit Communities and Indigenous Knowledge. There is a similar network for Sámi culture.

2.3.2 Social sustainability

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development brought at the forefront such aspects as heritage accessibility, inclusion and participation, the involvement of youth, and building heritage awareness in society through education. Its sub-themes featured participation of society in ICH inventorying processes, including through the use of information technologies, public accessibility of inventories established, inclusion of diverse groups of society in decision-making and the diversification of heritage experiences through formal and non-formal education.

According to the reports, the most common way to ensure inclusion of various groups of society in ICH safeguarding, is involving them in decision-making related to their ICH. Also, a key aspect for enhancing the accessibility of the heritage of diverse groups of society is by ensuring that the process of ICH inventorying is open to everyone. That also includes openness to all ethnic communities living in the country, all genders and persons from diverse social backgrounds. Information technologies ensure that the documentation of ICH is carried out and public access to ICH inventories and digital databases is provided. Furthermore, they can also be used for a broader general public to become actively involved. As an example

of the involvement of the general public in the process of documenting the ICH, in **Latvia**, the Archives of Latvian Folklore of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia has an online archive *garamantas.lv*, which is a crowdsourcing example, involving the general public in the transcription of digitised folklore materials, often from their own home territory or the home territory of their family members.

Safeguarding ICH is closely linked to scholarly research and public dissemination of new knowledge. The same principles of openness and accessibility are important in the research field – open science has been a priority area in most of the analysed countries. This includes publishing research results and making them available for further research, through open-access publications and by prioritising digitalization of research data. Furthermore, interdisciplinary research can contribute to ICH safeguarding and also provide a basis for decision-making on ICH issues. For instance, it is recognized that ICH can be used as a positive instrument in maintaining well-being and mental health, and the **Åland** Government promotes culture in healthcare by financing actors that arrange cultural activities within the health sector, based on the research findings that culture promotes health and contributes to a good care environment for both patients and staff.

Social inclusion can also be promoted through learning activities. Thereby, education plays an important role in the transmission of ICH practices. The methods differ based on the education level and format. Some of the tools include integration of ICH into school curricula; preparation of educational books on ICH practices; consultations, informational support and training courses for teachers and schools; methodological materials and recommendations on integrating ICH into the teaching process, as well as providing the necessary resources for schools and students. Besides, many ICH practitioners and bearers have developed their own ICH education programs and are also implementing activities to promote their heritage, and schools cooperate with institutions that deal with the safeguarding of ICH, in order to introduce pupils and students to local traditions and ICH through educational and interactive activities. Higher education also strengthens the cooperation, interaction and participation of the parties involved in the ICH. An example is Viljandi Academy of Culture in **Estonia**, which has become an important centre for ICH-related culture, creative arts and economic education. The academy implements student theses and projects focused on reviving disappearing traditional handicrafts, craft skills and heritage knowledge to communities. As an example can be mentioned the experience that with the help of students of construction speciality, a village chapel was rebuilt in Võru County.

Furthermore, non-formal education programs created by NGOs also play an important role in ensuring the continuity of ICH, being available to persons from various generations. Involvement of practitioners and bearers in educational programs/ courses by actively presenting and transmitting their heritage is a common practice as ICH is often transmitted orally or through observation, imitation, and learning-by-doing methods. Museums, libraries and regional cultural centres also implement various training and educational and informative activities on ICH.

2.3.3 Ecological sustainability

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development highlighted such aspects as raising ecological awareness and responsible behaviour through ICH-related education, promoting sustainable use of natural resources, and addressing climate change. Its sub-themes included the development of ecological literacy through educational activities and public engagement, ensuring sustainable use of resources in various domains of ICH, as well as informing about climate change and reconnecting people to their landscape.

As observed in periodic reports, ecological literacy is being enhanced through education. Environmental protection, climate change and biodiversity are studied in lessons, and various methods are used to explain the connection of ICH with nature. The environment is used as a resource to show the connection between nature and local ICH, as well as to strengthen the protection of nature. Furthermore, ICH skills are recognized and valued as a means of sustainable use of resources. Educational activities are carried out outdoors to transmit knowledge about local ICH, including knowledge about the local environment.

For example, in **Sweden** education for sustainable development is being advanced. Its approach includes teaching about the environment and learning for sustainable development in curricula and syllabuses in various study courses and subjects. Instead of being a subject on its own, the environmental sustainability perspective as well as the historical, international and ethical perspectives are to run through all teaching, irrespective of the course or subject. In **Iceland**, tasks related to addressing the problems of environmental protection, climate change and biodiversity are used in the lessons.

Non-governmental organisations also actively focus on informing the public about ICH and ecological issues. They play an important role in strengthening public participation and transmitting ICH practices to younger generations. Furthermore, some organisations combine ICH practices with activities aimed at social welfare, health, as well as nature protection, and various organisations that safeguard ICH also implement appropriate environmental sustainability measures in their own work. Bottom-up initiatives contribute to reconnecting people with their localities and consequently ICH. **Faroe Islands** historically have a lot of place names linked to stories, sagas, memories – historically, place names have had an important function for people when moving about in the landscapes. However, many place names are forgotten, since they are not widely used anymore. Therefore, communities, groups and individuals with interest and knowledge of Faroese geography, landscapes, history, and oral traditions have initiated a registration of place names in their local municipalities, that way ensuring reconnecting.

2.3.4 Economic sustainability

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development highlighted ICH as a resource for regional economic development, ICH-related economic activities and income-generation, including through cultural tourism, and respective support mechanisms. It also underlined ICH-based livelihoods of heritage bearers and practitioners, and employment. Its sub-themes included inclusivity in economic development in relation to ICH, sustainability and ethical issues in cultural tourism, and labelling of ICH-related products and services.

According to the analysis, in most countries ICH communities, groups and individuals use their ICH as a source of income, especially in rural areas. ICH as an economic activity is also used to ensure inclusion of different groups in society. For instance, the use of ICH for livelihoods of culturally distinct communities, especially indigenous peoples, can be strengthened in legislation. It is a common practice to employ practitioners of traditional crafts in museums. ICH is also widely used in tourism and thus generates income to ICH practitioners and communities, but it has also created challenges, such as inappropriate use of cultural heritage (including its elements, symbols). Therefore, responsible and ethically sustainable tourism based on ICH has been promoted. For example, the Principles for Responsible and Ethically Sustainable Sámi Tourism were adopted by the Sámi Parliament in **Finland**. The purpose is to terminate tourism exploiting Sámi culture and to eliminate incorrect information about the Sámi spread through tourism. The guidelines are intended for tourism workers and operators involved in the production, representation and marketing of Sámi cultural tourism products outside Sámi communities.

In order to promote the safeguarding of traditional Sámi livelihoods and culture, the Sámi Parliament in **Norway** and the Sámi craft sector agree on mutual cooperation and support by revising an agreement every year. The agreement states that the Sámi Parliament in Norway has to provide financial support to the Sámi craft sector through operating, investment and development grants as well as welfare schemes and in market adaptation/ brand building. Also, there several projects in **Latvia** and more broadly in the Baltic States to strengthen the economic development related to the local ICH. Both national and international level projects are implemented to promote the development of cultural tourism, and to help rural tourism entrepreneurs to create, maintain and popularise agrotourism products (in agriculture, fisheries, handicrafts, culinary) through various activities. Furthermore, the Equal Development Program in **Lithuania** finances cultural projects that reflect regional diversity of ICH.

Furthermore, countries assign special labels and use quality schemes (such as EU quality scheme for food products), which confirm the origin, identity, quality of food products (recipes, production methods), and ensure their protection. It also helps the creators of these products to promote themselves and convey information about the added value of their products to the wider public. This ensures product quality control and the identity and recognition of the place where it is produced.

In conclusion, there were also some overarching good practices, which encompass collaborative actions in all the dimensions of sustainability, and this concerns in particular the exchange of experiences, networking and cooperation. In this regard, LIVIND project, and the activities it entails including capacity-building and pilot projects, is another good example.

3.

Overview of the LIVIND project

In recent decades, the growing awareness about living heritage has been fostering numerous safeguarding actions both internationally and locally. However, stakeholders have often been acting individually, and platforms to promote dialogue between different involved parties have been insufficient. Seizing the momentum, in 2019, the Finnish Heritage Agency, in cooperation with other partners, organised the conference "Living Heritage in the Nordic Countries" to address the issues of sustainable development, social cohesion and cultural diversity in relation to living heritage (Finnish Heritage Agency, n.d.-b). The Conference brought together about 150 heritage experts, civil society actors, and heritage practitioners from the Nordic and Baltic countries to discuss living heritage safeguarding, share good practices, and present ongoing projects. Joint discussions highlighted the need to focus on the connections between living heritage and sustainable development in the region, to foster existing networking and to create new connections. LIVIND started with the idea of addressing this need and creating a forum for such collaboration, supported by the Nordic and Baltic Network on Intangible Cultural Heritage[6].

3.1 Aims and development objectives

LIVIND aimed to bring together public administration and civil society actors from the countries of the Northern Dimension region to identify and develop policies to strengthen the potential of living cultural heritage to support sustainable development while increasing their competence in cultural heritage work, digital skills, service design and business.

[6] The Nordic and Baltic Network on Intangible Cultural Heritage was established in 2019 to share good practices on community involvement in the broader scope. Welcoming all stakeholders and domains working in the spirit of the 2003 Convention, the informal network fosters collaboration and highlights good safeguarding practices. (Nordic and Baltic Network. n.d.)

The project was **meant to**:

- strengthen and support the role of living cultural heritage as a resource for the livelihoods and well-being of local communities in the Barents and Baltic Sea areas, thereby promoting the region's development, competitiveness and attractiveness sustainably;

- strengthen civil society responses to challenges such as climate change and the coronavirus pandemic by increasing the capacity and interconnectedness of the regional cultural heritage sector;

- contribute to stronger integration of the Northern Dimension region through transnational cooperation that increases networking and partnerships between different actors and administrative sectors across civil society, culture, education, tourism, business, etc.;

- contribute to the Northern Dimension region's greater cultural, social, ecological and economic sustainability.

The project's **development objectives** were formulated as the following:

- To identify and highlight the cultural diversity and specificities of the Northern Dimension region by building new networks and platforms. This included the Indigenous peoples of the area as well as cultural diversity in cities and other regions. Different age groups were also considered.

- To highlight and build capacity around sustainable development in civil society and the cultural heritage sector through multilateral cooperation and across multiple dimensions, linking cultural heritage work, digital skills, service design, tourism, and sustainable business development. The project was said to pay special attention to the digital leap and address the impact of climate change and the coronavirus pandemic on the cultural heritage field.

- To identify new trends, opportunities, and challenges for creativity and cultural heritage that support the civil society stakeholders involved in the project, especially local communities, thereby promoting resilience and innovation in the Northern Dimension region. To develop pilot projects related to different sectors, test new ideas, and share good practices during and after the project.

- To find new and more effective ways of linking civil society actions, cultural heritage safeguarding, and management work with sustainable development initiatives and goals, integrating sustainability into the work on living heritage.

- To identify and develop cross-sectoral approaches, community-led programs, and measures to strengthen the potential of the living cultural heritage in social, cultural, economic, and environmentally sustainable development.

3.2 Project stakeholders and target groups

Project management

The project was managed by the Finnish Heritage Agency, a government agency under the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, which is responsible for protecting environments with cultural and historical value, archaeological cultural heritage and architectural heritage, and other cultural property. It is also responsible for many heritage-related Conventions. The Agency has been coordinating the UNESCO 2003 Convention since 2013. (Finnish Heritage Agency, n.d.-a).

Project partners

To start the project, a multinational cooperation network was established involving actors from public administration, museums, and NGOs from participating countries and areas. Many project partners, e.g. focal points for the 2003 Convention and members of the Nordic-Baltic ICH network, already knew each other from previous meetings and projects.
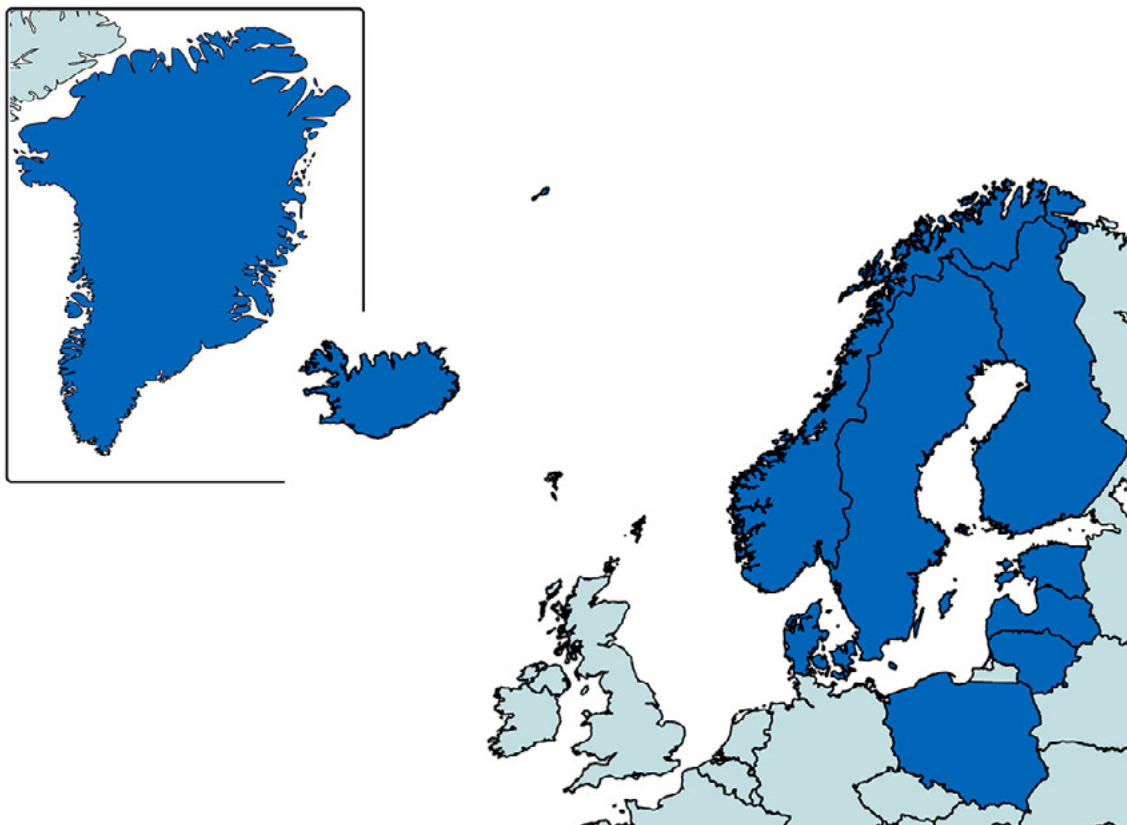
Figure 1: Map of the Northern Dimension region with LIVIND project partners.

List of project partners:

- Finland: Finnish Local Heritage Federation; Association for Cultural Heritage Education in Finland

- Åland Islands: Ålands Museum

- Sweden: Institute for Language and Folklore

- Norway: Arts and Culture Norway

- Denmark: The Royal Library / Danish Folklore Archives, IMMART (NGO), Danish National Commission for UNESCO

- Greenland: National Museum of Greenland

- Faroe Islands: National Museum of Faroe Islands

- Iceland: Technical Museum of East Iceland, Ministry of Culture and Business Affairs

- Estonia: Estonian Centre of Folk Culture; University of Tartu (UNESCO Chair on Applied Studies of Intangible Cultural Heritage)

- Latvia: Latvian National Centre for Culture; Latvian Academy of Culture (UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy and Law)

- Lithuania: Lithuanian National Culture Centre, Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO

- Poland: Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport; National Institute of Cultural Heritage

- Saami Council

- Nordic-Baltic ICH Network

- Northern Dimension Partners: Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDCP), Northern Dimension Institute (NDI) (activities of the NDI ended in Autumn 2022)

From September 2021 until March 2022, LIVIND partners included two parties from Russia: Kizhi State Open-Air Museum of History, Architecture and Ethnography and St. Petersburg State University (Faculty of Law).

Target groups

The project aimed to meet the development needs of public institutions, education and culture institutions (museums, archives, research institutions, etc.), heritage bearing communities, groups and individuals and private sector partners active in the field of living cultural heritage. In addition, NGOs and associations, municipal and state employees, museums, educational institutions, other agencies, foundations and funders, tourism organisations and companies were named among the target groups of the communication activities aimed to make visible and raise the profile of the living cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development and identify and reinforce the cultural specificities of the area that all national, regional and local partners were expected to spread further, widening the circle of potential beneficiaries of the project. Although not called so explicitly, project partners were also one of the key target groups due to their social and cultural capital.

3.3 Implementation strategies

Implementation of the project was divided into four phases:

- mapping and planning;

- competence development and pilot planning;

- implementing pilots and compiling results;

- dissemination and consolidation of results.

Depending on the target group and scope, LIVIND activities were divided into two categories:

- activities with/for project partners (and pilot project managers);

- webinars and workshops for the broader public.

Project partners were invited to participate actively in the project activities, to co-create, among other things, the content of the international webinars and workshops, to spread information about the project, and to organise capacity-building workshops about the interconnections between living cultural heritage and sustainable development on the national and local levels. Their dual position as project partners and beneficiaries offered them more possibilities for testing their skills and implementing the acquired knowledge. Building the timeline and content together was part of the project's rationale.
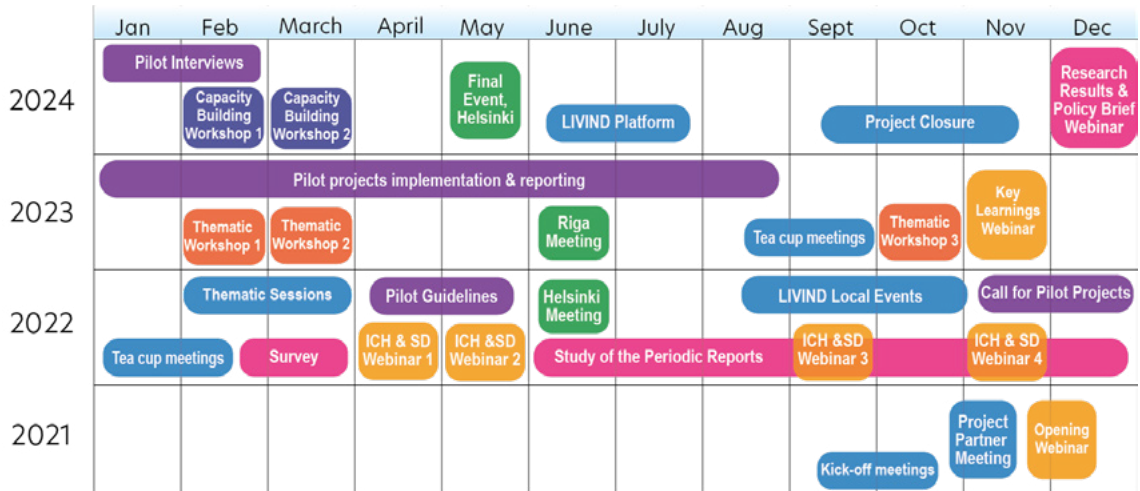
Figure 2: LIVIND project timeline.

Other stakeholders could participate in the project by taking part in webinars on different sustainability themes, learning from others in interactive online workshops, contributing with their examples to the online platform, or joining the process with a pilot project.

Implementation of pilot projects offered a way to develop, test, and share new and/or more effective ways of connecting civil society actions, cultural heritage safeguarding, and heritage management with sustainable development initiatives and goals on the local level.

The project was designed, and its implementation started during the COVID-19 pandemic when regulations and social distancing rules increased the importance of virtual events. The project utilised a number of digital tools: meetings on Teams, planning and compiling work to the Howspace platform and collecting ideas on Padlets, to mention a few. Digital materials created during the project are now being disseminated via the online platform www.livind.fi.

3.4 Mapping the starting point: background survey

To mark the project's starting point in September–October 2021 individual online kick-off meetings with project partners were organised to understand their perspectives on sustainable development, living cultural heritage, and the broader context within their countries and institutions. In addition, in October 2021, a background survey was launched to assess how project partners perceived the link between living cultural heritage and sustainable development in their countries, to identify potential areas for pilot projects, and to guide the development of LIVIND's further collaborative efforts.

The kick-off meetings revealed that the project partners were motivated to participate in LIVIND and were willing to enhance their knowledge and skills about the interconnections between living cultural heritage and sustainable development, to learn about good practices of combining them in practice, to strengthen their (international) networks and cross-sectoral cooperation, to develop approaches for engaging national actors, to share experiences and good practices, to support civil society and local communities in recognising the resources they hold and articulating their concerns and challenges regarding living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

The background survey was compiled and distributed online among the project partners. In addition to collecting information about the respondents' backgrounds, it included 12 questions (multiple choice and open-ended), focusing on three areas: a general overview of living heritage and sustainable development in respondents' countries and organisations, policy frameworks, examples and experiences. Even though 16 replies from 10 countries and areas were received[7] the results of the survey should be approached critically as due to its small size and uneven distribution among the countries, the sample cannot be considered representative. 75% of respondents represented governmental or public bodies, while the rest belonged to the third sector. In general, responses to the survey varied greatly in length and depth, demonstrating the difference in the level of awareness about the interlinks between sustainable development and living cultural heritage among project partners depending on their position and background that affected the way they described the situation in their countries and organisations. The most profound expertise was shown by the national focal points for the 2003 Convention, who, at the time of the survey, were working on the Periodic Reports by States Parties on the implementation of the 2003 Convention[8] (see chapter 2.3 and Annex 1).

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[7] Responses covered the following countries and areas: five from Finland, two from Lithuania and Latvia, and one from Sweden, Norway, Estonia, Poland, Iceland, Åland, and the Faroe Islands). Respondents from Denmark, Greenland, and Saami Council did not participate in the survey.

[8] According to the calendar for the first regional cycle of reporting on the implementation of the 2003 Convention, European countries were supposed to submit periodic reports by 15 December 2021.

The majority of the project partners reported a high level of importance and appreciation of living heritage as a source of identity or a resource for cultural, social, environmental, and economic development. Among the living heritage domains that have gained more attention, crafts, performing arts, and traditions related to food production and consumption were named.[9] Despite the awareness concerning the role of living heritage in identity-building processes, it was noted that the general public has not yet fully realised the link between living heritage and societal development.

A relative majority of project partners indicated that even though sustainable development is addressed in their countries, it cannot be called a topic of broad public discussion. This resonates with the findings regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Baltic Sea region that highlight a lack of stakeholders' awareness about the contribution of their everyday work to the achievement of SDGs (Council of the Baltic Sea States 2020, 10). According to the project partners, existing discourses on sustainable development focus mainly on environmental perspectives and also on economic aspects. In contrast, the social dimension is rarely discussed in the public sphere in relation to sustainable development.

Talking about the integration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs in the sphere of policies on the national level, more than 2/3 of the project partners claimed that they are reflected both in the governmental policy programmes and in guiding documents of their organisations. In addition, they provided references to national laws, policies, and strategies that mention culture in general or living heritage specifically as a source for development. However, it is possible to say that there is still room for improvement regarding the integration of sustainable development principles in the daily work of living heritage professionals, as only 15% of the project partners claimed that they always take them into consideration.

Reflecting on the existing links between living heritage and sustainable development, the majority of the project partners pointed out examples related to traditional knowledge and skills, nature-related living heritage (including agriculture), and tourism. In contrast, social and cultural aspects of sustainability (e.g., equality, health and wellbeing, livelihoods, heritage-sensitive marketing, and intellectual property protection) remained less noticed as sustainable development resources in the Northern Dimension region. One of the issues highlighted by the project partners that could explain insufficient links between sustainability and living heritage is a claim that in the living heritage field sustainability might be treated as a political issue or just a compulsory part of successful project applications. In this regard, the need to domesticate the concept of sustainable development in the living cultural heritage field was expressed in order to "translate" the language of policies into actions and raise awareness about the activities that already contribute to sustainability, even though not seen as such by stakeholders.

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[9] The wording of the survey questions might have impacted the responses by providing examples of the possible answers to open-ended questions, e.g., question 1.1. Is there a type or domain of living heritage that has gained more attention in your country (for example, traditional craft or food heritage)?

3.5 Putting sustainable development into practice

3.5.1 Framing living heritage as a resource for sustainable development

Recognising the complexity of issues concerning the integration of living heritage and sustainable development agenda and the necessity to address the specific needs of project participants and the diversity of local contexts, LIVIND started capacity-building activities with thematic sessions exploring and discussing different aspects of sustainability. In that way, the four pillars of sustainable development were defined and (re)framed together with project partners, relying on the participants' backgrounds and previous experiences. Multidisciplinary webinars and facilitated workshops for a broader audience followed these meetings. In addition, twenty pilot projects were developed and implemented in all project countries to put living cultural heritage and sustainable development into practice.

The LIVIND Pilot Project in Estonia Soomaa region focussed on dugout boats, a local heritage that is continued by only a few people. Through the pilot project, more women and young people were encouraged to learn about dugout boat building in practice. Picture: Aivar Ruukel.

Cultural Sustainability	Social Sustainability	Ecological Sustainability	Economic Sustainability
Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Expressions, Concepts	Education, Health, Wellbeing	Nature-related ICH, Traditional knowledge, Skills	Livelihoods, Tourism, Heritage-sensitive Marketing, IP protection

UNESCO INDICATORS FOR CULTURE IN THE UN 2030 AGENDA

Inclusion & Participation	Knowledge & Skills	Environment & Resilience	Prosperity & Livelihoods
• Culture for social cohesion • Artistic freedom • Access to culture • Cultural participation • Participatory processes	• Education for SD • Cultural knowledge • Multilingual education • Cultural & artistic education • Cultural training	• Sustainable mgmt of heritage • Climate adaptation & resilience • Cultural facilities • Expenditure on heritage • Open space for culture	• Culture in GDP • Cultural employment • Cultural businesses • Household expenditure • Trade in cultural goods & services • Public finance for culture • Governance for culture

Sustainable Development Goals connected

| 9: Industry, Innovation, Technology and Infra-structure
10: Reduced inequality
11: Sustainable cities and communities
16: Peace, justice and strong institutions | 4: Quality education
8: Decent work and economic growth
9: Industry, Innovation, Technology and Infra-structure
12: Responsible consumption and production
13: Climate action | 2: Zero hunger
6: Clean water and sanitation
9: Industry, Innovation, Technology and Infra-structure
11: Sustainable cities and communities
12: Responsible consumption and production
13: Climate action
14: Life below water
15: Life on land
16: Peace, justice and strong institutions | 8: Decent work and economic growth
10: Reduced inequality
11: Sustainable cities and communities |

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT G✪ALS

Figure 3: LIVIND's four dimensions of sustainable development were based on the categories seen in the UNESCO document Culture 2030 Indicators (2019).

To conceptualise the relations between living cultural heritage and different aspects of sustainability for the aims of the LIVIND project and to outline directions for further capacity-building activities, four thematic sessions with project partners were organised in February–March 2022. As a result, combining the thematic indicators for culture in the 2030 Agenda (UNESCO 2019) with matters discussed during the thematic sessions, several points and questions were identified as key issues framing the interrelations between living cultural heritage and sustainable development. These key issues guided all the further activities of the LIVIND project.

3.5.2 Capacity-building activities

Ideas for LIVIND webinars and workshops evolved based on the needs of the project partners, involving them in co-creating the content of the webinars and workshops. The series of public events started with an Opening Webinar, which brought together about a hundred participants from the project countries and beyond. Following the guest speakers' presentations, the participants were invited to discuss and share their ideas regarding the potential of utilising living cultural heritage for sustainable development during the workshop.

During the project's first year, capacity building focused on exploring the different aspects of sustainability. Four webinars with follow-up workshops were organised, with the exception of the webinar on cultural sustainability, which was not followed by a workshop. Each webinar featuring guest speakers was attended by from 60 up to 100 people, while workshops aimed at discussions and interaction attracted fewer participants.

Based on the wishes of the project partners and relying on the additional funding, capacity-building continued in 2023 with workshops dedicated to sustainable tourism, cultural heritage education, and well-being.

To summarise the online capacity-building activities, the last public event, the webinar "Living Heritage and Sustainable Development – What Next?", co-organized with the UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development, CY Cergy Paris Université, invited the participants to take a critical look at sustainable development in the context of safeguarding living heritage and to question the four dimensions of sustainability.

In addition to virtual communication and exchange facilitated by online tools and platforms, three in-person meetings (Helsinki, June 2022; May 2024, and Riga, June 2023) were convened to foster deeper connections among participants and enhance project outcomes. The meetings provided invaluable opportunities for participants to strengthen interpersonal connections, facilitate in-depth reflections on project implementation, acquire new insights, exchange ideas, and outline future goals and objectives.

In the final virtual capacity-building sessions held in January, February, and March 2024, project partners were encouraged to reflect on the project's progression and outcomes, evaluate their learning journey, and consider how sustainability principles had influenced their engagement with living cultural heritage. Additionally, they had the opportunity to develop organisational and personal sustainability strategies, aiming to integrate sustainability practices more effectively into their work.

CONCEPTUALISATIONS ON CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY & ICH

COMMUNITY CONSENT — Obtaining community consent is important for sustainable ICH safeguarding work. Which activities require consent and who can give that? Which methods could and should be used for obtaining it?

VALUES AND RIGHTS — ICH practices base on values that are supportive to or contradictory with sustainability. How would a rights-based approach add awareness and create frameworks to face these issues appropriately?

PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES AND METHODS — ICH can apply different categories based on e.g. gender. Would questioning categories and inequalities also question the practising of certain living heritage? How could ICH practices be more open for all?

LANGUAGE AND POWER OF WORDS — ICH safeguarding builds on practices but also on concepts and words that can have different meanings in different contexts. What should we be aware of about vocabulary and concepts that we use?

INSTITUTIONS AND PATH DEPENDENCIES — Continuity in structures and institutions for ICH is important, but they also benefit from reflecting their work. Which methods would support integrating sustainability considerations in their daily work?

DIVERSITY AND IDENTITIES — While diversity of cultural expressions is a basis, ICH builds on shared practices and recognition. What about limits between common/shared and private/individual or between cultural ownership and personal identity?

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CONCEPTUALISATIONS ON ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY & ICH

RECOGNITION AND VISIBILITY — There are plenty of connections between ecological sustainability and living heritage. In which ways could we make those connections more visible and better recognised among different audiences?

FOOTPRINTS — Several factors can impact the compose of the ecological footprint of different ICH practices. Which aspects should be observed? Use of energy or materials, recycling rates? Could already existing models be applied?

REGULATIONS — Regulations supporting ecological sustainability can be contrary for some practices as not all living heritage is ecologically sustainable. How to make ICH practices more ecological or open possibilities through regulations?

HANDPRINTS — Various ecologically positive impacts derive from ICH practices. How could we create indicators to illustrate the significance living heritage can have for environment? Which aspects should be observed and included?

LOCAL SOLUTIONS — Solutions for more ecologically sustainable practices should be found locally together with communities involving several generations and in a holistic perspective. Which methods would support this approach?

THINKING BEYOND THE OBVIOUS — Nature-related ICH practices are more often connected with ecological sustainability. How about practices that connect with other aspects? Can e.g. multiple practices join to support diffent sustainability aspects?

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CONCEPTUALISATIONS ON ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY & ICH

ECOSYSTEM THINKING — Living heritage practices often are in relation to making livelihoods and to the market. How could we better understand living heritage as an ecosystem and with attention to heritage-sensitive marketing?

INNOVATION AND TRADITION — Living heritage can contribute to innovation processes whereas innovativeness can be supportive to safeguarding living heritage. How can we confirm market-related innovation in ICH is positive? Who decides?

LESSONS FROM CCI ACTIVITIES & DEVELOPMENT — Cultural and Creative Industries, CCI allows an economic approach to living heritage practices. What can we learn from recent CCI developments? What would be good practices, what should be avoided?

ETHICAL ACTION — How to identify and mitigate dangers of over-commercialization and misappropriation of living heritage? How to best raise awareness about ethical issues among consumers?

DECENT WORK — ICH can offer a source of decent work. How can we ensure practitioner communities are appropriately rewarded or supported through the market?

MECHANISMS OF SUPPORT — What mechanisms can support practitioners and community actors in mitigating risks and maximising benefits from living heritage engagement with the market?

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CONCEPTUALISATIONS ON SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & ICH

WELLBEING AND SENSE OF EXPERIENCE — Participating and experiencing ICH practices in social and physical interaction feed to wellbeing. How can we increase awareness about the social and health functions ICH safeguarding can bring along?

DIALOGUE AND INCLUSION — ICH practices can help create dialogue and resolve conflicts —or they can feed disassociation and even spark conflict. In which ways could living heritage suppport dialogue and peace-building?

INTERACTION BETWEEN GENERATIONS — Passing heritage from the old to the young is essential, but transmitting heritage between generations is not always easy. In which ways could sustainable interaction between generations be supported?

PEDAGOGICS AND SCHOOLS — Schools are focal for sustainability education, but teachers often are overloaded with severel duties. Which roles could ICH have in this? How could ICH support teachers in their work?

COMMUNITY STRUCTURES — ICH practices are often considered good for social cohesion and sense of community. Which community structures at e.g village / municipal level would / could support socially sustainable ICH practices?

DIGITAL SPACES AND PLACES — Digital spaces can be significant for building sense of community around ICH. Which solutions have already proved to work? What should we be aware of about digital apps and services regarding ICH safeguarding?

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Figure 4: LIVIND's conceptualisations of the four sustainable development dimensions.

3.5.3 Pilot projects

To put living cultural heritage and sustainable development into practice, LIVIND funded (fully or partially) pilot projects that attempted to test different approaches, methods, and tools to strengthen the links between safeguarding living cultural heritage and various aspects of sustainability. Implementation of pilot projects offered a way to develop, test, and share new and/or more effective ways of connecting civil society actions, cultural heritage safeguarding, and heritage management with sustainable development initiatives and goals on the local level. It also aimed at creating value for community members and other relevant stakeholders by strengthening and supporting the role of living cultural heritage as a resource for local communities in obtaining livelihoods, stability, and well-being in sustainable ways.

Project partners facilitated the development of the pilot project ideas following the guidelines provided in the application form developed by LIVIND. All applications were thoroughly evaluated, and twenty initiatives from nine project countries were selected for implementation.

In Estonia, St. Martin's Day in November brings people together to dress up and join in mumming processions. Through a LIVIND pilot project an awareness raising campaign was organised to activate more people to the experience and to reflect on traditional and contemporary mumming characters and how one could dress up as one making use of second-hand and recycled materials. Picture: Rene Jakobson.

List of pilot projects

1. The Medieval Pottery Hub – Bornholm, Denmark
   Pilot Project Manager: [Bornholms Middelaldercenter](#)

2. Storytelling festival "Ööbikuööd" – Estonia
   Pilot Project Manager: [Estonian Centre of Folk Culture](#)

3. "Let's Get Mumming!" – Estonia
   Pilot Project Manager: [Estonian Folklore Council](#)

4. Dug-out boats masterclass – Soomaa, Estonia
   Pilot Project Manager: [Karuskose OÜ](#)

5. The cultural history of peat as a new resource – Svínoy, Faroe Islands
   Pilot Project Manager: [Útoyggjafelagið](#)

6. Wonderful Wool – Kollafjørður, Faroe Islands
   Pilot Project Manager: [Búnaðarstovan](#) (Agricultural Agency of the Faroe Islands)

7. Let it spin! – Rovaniemi, Mikkeli & Jyväskylä, Finland
   Pilot Project Manager: [Association of Cultural Heritage Education](#) together with [Finnish Local Heritage Federation](#)

8. A Handicraft seminar – Nuuk, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland)
   Pilot Project Manager: [Greenland National Museum and Archives](#)

9. The Land pilot project – Seyðisfjörður, Iceland
   Pilot Project Manager: [LungA School](#)

10. Stories of names – Vidzeme (historical land), Latvia
    Pilot Project Manager: Latvian Storytelling Association

11. Traditions of fermented food – Dienvidkurzeme county, Aizpute, Latvia
    Pilot Project Manager: [Interdisciplinary art group SERDE](#)

12. Sustainability for the Mushroom Festival – Varėna, Lithuania
    Pilot Project Manager: [Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO](#) together with [Lithuanian National Culture Centre](#)

13. Folk dance supporting social sustainability – Røros, Norway
    Pilot Project Manager: [Norwegian Centre for Traditional Music and Dance](#)

14. Polish-Lithuanian tree beekeepers integration – Augustów Forest, Giby, Poland
    Pilot Project Manager: [Bractwo Bartne](#)

15. Treasures of Koniaków lace – Koniaków, Poland
    Pilot Project Manager: Koniaków Lace Foundation

16. Revitalisation of Roma crafts – Skåne county, Sweden
    Pilot Project Manager: Romska Kulturcentret i Malmö (Roma Cultural Centre in Malmö)

17. Fäbod camp activities for the young – Sweden
    Pilot Project Manager: The Swedish Fäbod Culture and Field Farming Association (FSF)

18. Birdhouses to the archipelago – Eckerö, Åland
    Pilot Project Manager: Ålands Jakt- och Fiskemuseum together with Archipelago Pares

19. IP tools for Sámi handicrafts – Sápmi (Jokkmokk, SE), Sweden, Norway, Finland
    Pilot Project Manager: Saami Council

20. Podcast series about ICH and SD – Nordic and Baltic ICH Network
    Pilot Project Manager: Nordic and Baltic ICH Network / Finnish Folk Music Institute

The LIVIND pilot project in Lithuania focussed on developing a sustainability plan for the popular mushroom picking festival held annually in Varėna, Southern Lithuania. Through the pilot project, different stakeholders were brought together to facilitated discussion and development workshops about sustainability issues considering the event. Picture: Broliai Černiauskai.
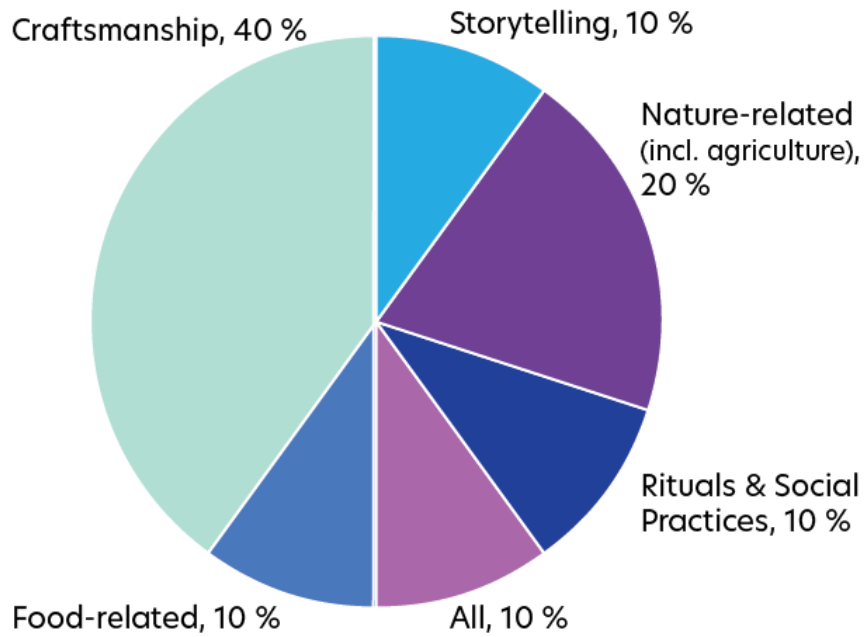
Figure 5: Distribution of the pilot projects across living heritage domains.

Analysing the distribution of pilot projects across living heritage domains (Figure 5), it is possible to identify the prevalence of craftsmanship (8 projects, 40%) over other domains. The crafts covered by the pilot projects included different types of textile production, woodwork, metalwork, and pottery. The second most numerous category was nature-related (incl. agriculture) living heritage (4 projects, 20%). This type of living heritage included traditional farming practices, peat cutting, tree beekeeping, and mushroom picking. Other less scarcely represented domains included storytelling (2 projects, 10%), rituals and social practices (2 projects, 10%), and living heritage related to traditional food (2 projects, 10%). Two projects (10%) focused on living heritage in general without reference to a specific domain.

Analysis of pilot projects' relations with sustainable development[10] (Figure 6) demonstrates the unequal distribution of pilots across sustainable development pillars. For instance, the prevailing majority of pilot projects (17 projects, 85%) addressed the issues related to social sustainability. The second most common sustainable development pillar addressed by the pilot projects was cultural (8 projects, 40%). At the same time, economic (3 projects, 15%) and ecological (5 projects, 25%) sustainability were way less common focuses of the pilot projects.
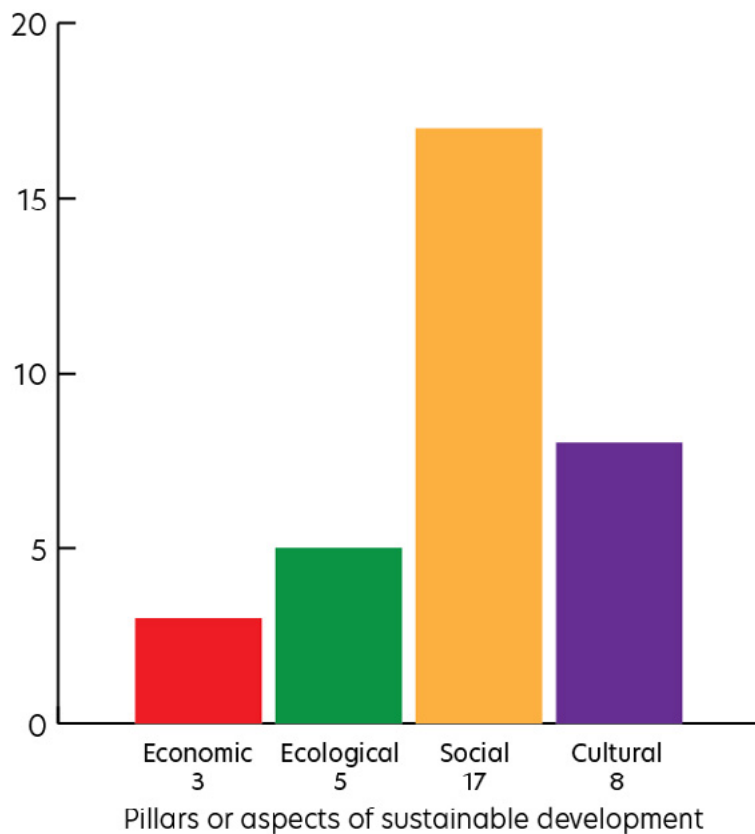
Figure 6: Links between the pilot projects and sustainable development pillars.

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[10] For this graph, the same projects could be counted several times if they addressed different aspects of sustainable development.

The pilot projects utilised several implementation strategies to relate living cultural heritage and sustainable development (Figure 7). Among the most common strategies were the organisation of teaching (6 projects, 30%) and awareness-rising (6 projects, 30%) activities. Teaching the skills related to living heritage and passing down the knowledge was organised through workshops, seminars, and courses. Awareness-rising activities included an advertising campaign, creation of a podcast series, organisation of seminars, presentations, exhibitions, etc. Another type of implementation strategies focused on the organisation of events of practice (3 projects, 15%). Capacity-building (4 projects, 20%) and networking (1 project, 5%) among various living heritage stakeholders represented another direction in linking living cultural heritage and sustainable development.
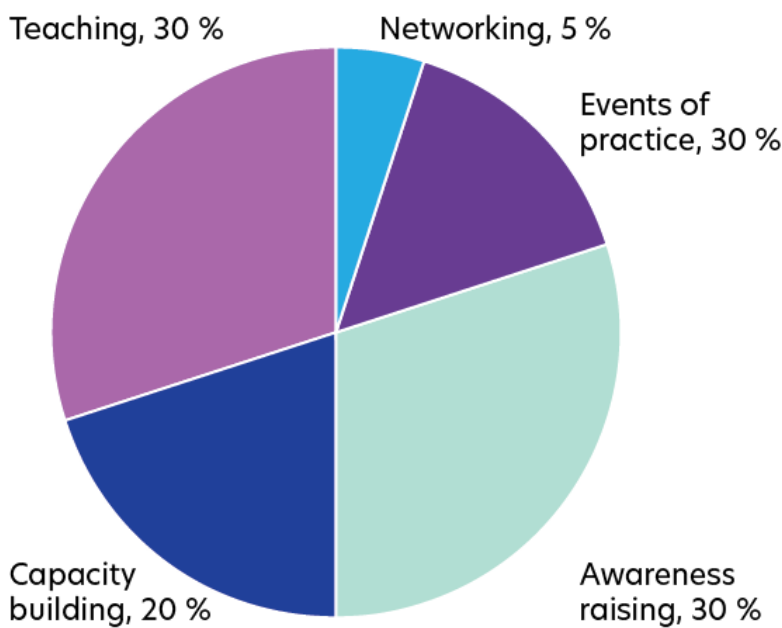
Figure 7: Pilot project's implementation strategies.

To facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences among the pilot projects, LIVIND organised activities (online and on-site) that created an open space for sharing ideas and discussing good practices and challenges of linking living cultural heritage and sustainable development on the ground. Pilot project managers also documented the implementation of the pilot projects with reports supplemented with photos and short videos that were used to disseminate the LIVIND project results to a broader audience.

4.

Lessons learned from LIVIND

4.1 Conceptual and analytical framework

Participation in the project challenged the way participants perceived and worked with living cultural heritage and sustainable development topics. Acquired competencies prepared them to address issues concerning living cultural heritage and sustainable development more comprehensively and integrally. The results of a self-evaluation questionnaire that project partners filled in during one of the last virtual capacity-building sessions demonstrate that, in general, they feel more advanced on the topic than they did at the beginning of the project (Figure 8). However, it is also noticeable that project partners became more knowledgeable about topics directly connected with their area of expertise, living heritage, whereas claiming expertise in Agenda 2030 and SDGs has proven more challenging.

How would you reflect your learning about living heritage and sustainable development compared to your situation in autumn 2021 when we started?

● Average result

Generally, how advanced you feel on this topic compared to when we started?
2,8

And the same, with regard to the SDGs and Agenda 2030?
2,4

Total average.
2,6

Scale from 1 to 5.

Figure 8: A summary of project participants' responses to a self-evaluation questionnaire (state: February 2024).
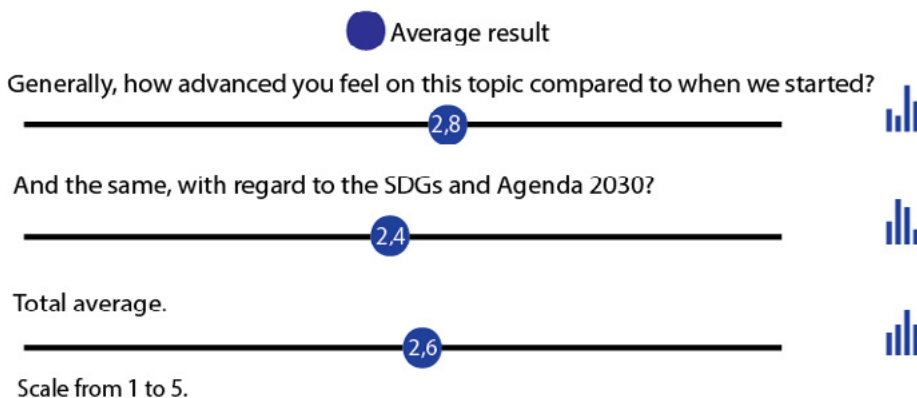
Interdisciplinary collaboration and interaction between experts from various fields encouraged project participants to develop new ideas and implement innovative solutions in their future work in their fields. Considering the specificity of work with living cultural heritage that involves cooperation between various stakeholders, the developed capacities will allow project partners to act as mediators and pass acquired knowledge and skills further, connecting heritage communities with academic experts, business professionals, and policymakers. Cross-sectoral cooperation is vital for achieving the goals of both safeguarding living heritage and sustainable development. That is why an interdisciplinary approach can open up possibilities for addressing both with high expertise.

At the same time, as the sustainability of living heritage practices depends on the communities involved, it is up to community members (heritage practitioners) to develop their expertise in different fields so that they can make efficient decisions independently without relying on third parties (professionals acting as mediators). Learning can happen in different environments (online and on-site, in educational institutions, museums, libraries, outdoors, etc.) and in various forms (formal, non-formal). What matters is to create and offer capacity-building activities to support heritage communities and respond to different communities' capacity needs.

4.2 Networking

The project created an international forum for networking in the living cultural heritage field. It established professional connections between different sectors (public administration, business, academia, cultural and heritage professionals and practitioners), providing an open space (both real and virtual) to discuss and contest the field as a part of the long-term growth strategy. Sharing good practices provided insights and an understanding of how to adapt them to the local contexts. At the same time, discussion of challenges and failures is not less beneficial as it also gives a chance to learn, showcasing not only the festive side and, as a result, strengthening the everyday of cultural heritage.

Inclusion of stakeholders of different scales (heritage practitioners, grassroots initiatives, NGOs, researchers, heritage managers, policy-makers) representing different levels (local, national, international) fostered knowledge exchange and opened up various perspectives complementing each other. Participation in the project was particularly beneficial for stakeholders representing smaller organisations or communities and those from remote areas, as they often feel alone and disconnected from major discussion forums during their daily work with living cultural heritage. Therefore, LIVIND, as an international project, facilitated the transfer of global ideas into local actions.

The project fostered not only professional exchange but also promoted informal communication, contributing to the development of interpersonal relations and community building. The use of dynamic activities during both online and in-person meetings created a safe and respectful environment for the exchange of ideas and opinions.

4.3 Pilot projects

Putting living cultural heritage and sustainable development into practice by implementing pilot projects has the potential to develop and test local approaches to addressing global challenges that can be applied on a broader scale. Guaranteeing a broad involvement of actors of different sizes and on various levels may contribute to the selection of insightful, interdisciplinary, and innovative ideas that will have the potential to go beyond the obvious and evolve into good practices.

Even though every community should be able to get opportunities to safeguard their living heritage, the choice of pilot ideas might include an element of competition to foster critical thinking and use the application and implementation processes as a way of learning and capacity-building. Creating a space for discussion and exchange of ideas and experiences between pilot projects proved to be effective in fostering networking and cooperation between the pilot projects. However, one of the shortcomings of evaluating the effects of pilot projects was the necessity to rely on written documentation of projects and the lack of criteria for assessing the interconnections between living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

However, the project participants' reflexive approach to reporting facilitated the exchange of knowledge and experiences, highlighting not only achievements and success stories but also talking about challenges and failures that are not less (if not more) valuable for developing long-term strategies. Issues like weather conditions or technical problems are beyond one's control but should definitely be considered while assessing the implementation of the projects. At the same time, what needs additional reflection is the difficulties that project partners faced while trying to reach and engage their target audiences in dialogue concerning living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Considering the harsh competition that these important topics face when it comes to battle for people's time, it is crucial to consider how to make them a priority not only for enthusiasts but also for the general public. Another issue is the lack of resources, both human resources and material resources, to advance work on living cultural heritage and sustainable development. In this regard, fostering cooperation between different actors and involvement of various sectors (not only culture) can provide new opportunities and nourish the advancement of the field.

4.4 Holistic approach

Both living cultural heritage and sustainable development are complex matters that should be approached integrally. Even though separating them into domains/dimensions/pillars/etc. might be helpful in practical terms, the reality is such that it is hard to draw a line between them and treat them separately in practice. Having different aspects of sustainability at stake might lead to uneasy choices when prioritising one over another is necessary. However, since these aspects are not mutually exclusive, maintaining the balance between them while addressing living cultural heritage is essential. This requires a negotiation process involving all interested parties to develop optimal solutions. It is hardly possible to focus on sustainability in one domain, disregarding the other; all of them should be combined in long-term strategic planning.

Efforts to link living cultural heritage and sustainable development have already been underway through various activities. However, in some sectors, they are more prominent than in others. For instance, living heritage domains such as craftsmanship, performing arts, and culinary traditions are more likely to address sustainable development issues. At the same time, social and cultural sustainability are the major focuses of work with living cultural heritage. In this regard, it is necessary to identify the blind spots and go beyond the obvious, involving the whole spectrum of living cultural heritage in dialogue on sustainable development. It is also crucial to overcome the bias against engagement of living heritage with the economic dimension that is often seen as a way to pollute/vulgarise/desacralise the heritage value. On the contrary, stepping outside the culture domain can provide possibilities to open up new opportunities for its safeguarding and adoption to the present-day realia where market is unavoidable. This relates to the engagement of stakeholders from the economic sector and the broadest possible involvement of representatives of different sectors in general. As living heritage embraces all spheres of human lives, we all are involved in its safeguarding in this or that way. Acting within the context/environment of a living heritage practice might be a key to its sustainability.

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11 The LIVIND online platform is accessible at https://livind.fi.

4.5 Communication and dissemination

Engaging stakeholders from different sectors on different levels is essential to facilitate dialogue about living cultural heritage and sustainable development. To broaden the discussion in project partner countries and to engage more local stakeholders, LIVIND offered its project partners the possibility to organise national or local events (online or on-site). Detailed guidelines (content, structure, materials, etc.) were prepared to assist project partners, and financial and technical assistance was proposed. In total, nine events were organised. These events disseminated information about the LIVIND project and allowed the project partners to consolidate the knowledge and experience they had acquired during the project by putting it into practice and integrating it into their daily work with living cultural heritage. In addition, it contributed to building and strengthening their networks.

To disseminate experiences and results collected during the project, LIVIND launched an online platform that serves as a multidisciplinary resource bank of data, tools, and good practices from the living cultural heritage field in the Northern Dimension region.[11] It presents case studies and tools from all nine project countries. However, analysing the proposed outreach strategy on the example of recordings of online webinars and workshops that are available on the Finnish Heritage Agency Youtube channel "Elävä perintö", it is possible to conclude that active dissemination strategies should be preferred to communicate with a broader audience successfully. The mere availability of materials online does not mean that they will reach their target audience. At the same time, the examples of experiences from LIVIND demonstrate that communication outlets and strategies should be chosen depending on the target audience and aim (e.g., to address local communities, personal communication and snowball effects proved to be useful, while publicity in media (national, local) ensured public recognition).

Originating during the COVID-19 pandemic, LIVIND actively used online tools to implement its activities. However, restrictions on gatherings and travel were not the only rationale for broader use of the digital environment. It allowed to bring together partners from a vast and diverse region and contribute to sustainability by, for example, reducing the amount of travel. However, the participant feedback and observations of the online and on-site meetings also demonstrate the possible shortcomings of extensive online communication (less engagement, exhaustion, clashing schedules, etc.). Among the positive aspects of using the digital tools were the use of the Howspace platform to facilitate learning and collaboration between the participants, the use of interactive online tools (e.g., Padlet, Mentimeter) to engage the audience during online activities. Social media were used effectively to communicate about the project and to build the community around it. However, the potential of their use for dissemination purposes should be explored as well.

4.6 Living in turbulent times

Working with living cultural heritage and sustainable development, it is vital to consider not only existing challenges but also think about potential risks. Aiming to strengthen civil society's responses to challenges such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, LIVIND designed its activities to increase the capacity and interconnectedness of the regional cultural heritage sector. However, following the developments in the international arena, namely the escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian war in February 2022, the project itself, as well as its participants, found themselves in the face of uncertainty that necessitated rethinking the project design and activities. As a result, several project events were postponed, and the composition of the project partners was changed after the exclusion of Russia. What was later confirmed by the experience of the project partners is that this kind of uncertainty influenced not only the strategic or managerial levels but also the sphere of living cultural heritage that LIVIND was aiming to address in project countries. In the face of uncertainty, it is important to foster resilience but also to be able to imagine the world we want to live in in the future, the role and place of living cultural heritage and sustainability in it, in order to design the present actions in a way so that they will lead to the achievement of the desired outcomes.

Lithuanian pilot project organisers participated the mushroom picking festival in Varėna to observe the event, which also took them to take part in different activities as a team.
Picture: M. Aleksa.

5.

Concluding remarks

As part of the LIVIND project, this Background Paper undertook an ambitious task to study the interconnections between living cultural heritage and sustainable development in the Northern Dimension region. The use of a variety of methodologies and data sources justified itself as they naturally complimented each other and provided a possibility to approach the topic integrally, filling in the gaps in the understanding of the broader picture.

Comparing the state-of-the-art in the field at the project's starting point back in 2021 with the situation in 2024, when the project ended, it is worth noting that interest in the topic grew steadily over time, resulting in the advancement of research, policies, and what is particularly important more actions on the ground with LIVIND being one of the pioneering activities in the region. Whereas previously connections between living cultural heritage and sustainable development were largely theoretical, the move towards practical implementation offers an opportunity to raise more awareness among stakeholders.

As it is possible now to rely on existing experiences, approaching them analytically is helpful in making deliberate decisions concerning the further development of the strategic vision and the choice of concrete tactics to strengthen the potential of living cultural heritage to support sustainable development. At the same time, at present, the countries of the Northern Dimension region are quite diverse in their approaches towards the topic, with Nordic countries (in particular, Finland and Norway) taking the lead and the rest being less proactive. Thus, maintaining existing networks and forums for discussion and creating new ones is vital for the ongoing exchange of ideas and advancement of intersectoral cooperation between different stakeholders on the regional level.

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World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. *Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development.* https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf.

The LIVIND Final Event took place in Helsinki in May 2024. The event brought together LIVIND project partners, research team members and a number of pilot project organisers from the LIVIND partner countries in Northern Europe. Picture: Anna-Mari Raunio.

Annexes

Annex 1. ICH and sustainable development: Practices in the Northern Dimension region in Europe. Analysis of the periodic reports

Approach to the Analysis

This analysis of the periodic reports of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter – the Convention) is part of the LIVIND project 'Creative and living cultural heritage as a resource for the Northern Dimension region' (2021–2024, hereafter – the project). It covers the reports of States Parties to the Convention, members of the project from the Northern Dimension Region in Europe: **Denmark, including the Faroe Islands and Greenland, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Finland, including Åland, and Sweden**. The reports were submitted by the named countries to UNESCO in late 2021/early 2022.

The **purpose of the analysis** is to provide an overview of a diversity of practices in project member states on how sustainable development is enhanced in relation to intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and how ICH supports sustainable development in four dimensions: culture, society, ecology and economy, following the conceptual approach taken in the LIVIND project.

The analysis according to **sustainability dimensions** is based on the division of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where sustainable development is based on and initially viewed in the context of three aspects: social inclusion, economic growth and environmental protection.[1] The fourth dimension – a cultural dimension has been promoted by UNESCO[2], highlighting the contribution of culture to reaching sustainable development goals. The structure of the analysis is based on the division of these four dimensions.

To illustrate the **diversity of practices** of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in Northern Dimension Region, in relation to each of the four dimensions of sustainable development, periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention have been analysed. Indicators of the report form have been divided according to the four dimensions, and a **qualitative content analysis** has been carried out. The emphasis in the present analysis is on providing a diversity of examples of practices and projects in the region that ensure sustainability, without the ambition of exhaustivity in covering all the practices. Therefore, in some cases the analysis references examples of projects in one country, even if there are similar projects in other countries.

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[1] United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Available: https://www.un.org/development

[2] United Cities and Local Governments. *Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development*. Available: https://www.agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/files/documents/en/zz_culture4pillarsd_eng.pdf

The analysis is structured according to the four dimensions and entails **four main sections**. The first section analyses practices within the **cultural dimension**, the second – within the **societal dimension**. The dimensions of culture and society are often intertwined, and it may be problematic to attribute a practice to only one of these dimensions, as it may also include elements characteristic to the other dimension. Therefore, it has been a deliberate choice to focus the analysis the cultural dimension on cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, mutual respect, and the implementation of the cultural rights of communities, whereas the analysis of the societal dimension focuses on inclusion, participation, and the involvement of youth, among other.

The third section examines practices specific to the **economic dimension** of sustainability, while the fourth section analyses ICH safeguarding practices that contribute to the **environmental dimension** sustainability. Each section is **divided into sub-themes** of identified practices. Overall, it can be observed that practices related to the cultural and societal dimensions of sustainability are widely and extensively reported, but practices related to economic and environmental sustainability are less frequently mentioned. This can be explained by the structure of the report form and fewer indicators that directly relate to these topics.

References to concrete sections of periodic reports of countries are provided throughout the analysis. An **Addendum** is attached at the end of this analysis. It provides a comprehensive insight into each of the States Parties covered by this analysis: (a) date of joining the Convention, (b) legislative and other measures taken to implement the Convention, (c) main organisations implementing the Convention and (d) international inscriptions.

Dimension: Culture[3]

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development is focused on fostering (i) **cultural diversity** and (ii) **intercultural dialogue** and **mutual respect**. Its sub-themes include bridging majority and minority cultures, fostering mutual respect and cultural dialogue through education, including language education, and raising awareness of difficult heritage and stereotypes.

Bridging majority and minority cultures in inventorying

Special attention in ICH safeguarding in the region is paid to national minorities, to maintain and develop their culture, and to safeguard the essential elements of their identity, language, traditions, and heritage.[4] In some countries, this includes also policies and projects regarding the ICH of Indigenous peoples.

The safeguarding of minority culture can be facilitated by the recognition of **minority ICH in inventories**, and such examples can be found, for instance, in Baltic and Nordic countries. Several minority communities in **Latvia** who have shown interest in including their traditions in the national inventory of ICH, are provided with consultative and methodical support in the preparation of nomination applications, for instance regarding the traditional Orthodox wedding ritual in Pededze. The communities of inscribed elements can apply for State funding for the study of their traditions, and their heritage is being popularised, along other elements of the national ICH inventory.[5] Livonians, recognized as Indigenous people in **Latvia**, are active and visible through three non-governmental organisations involved in the safeguarding and development of Livonian culture, language, and traditions.[6] Also in **Estonia**, the national inventory includes minority ICH, such as Pysanka – Easter egg decoration in the Ukrainian community. Moreover, it should be noted that it is possible for minorities to submit nomination to the national inventory in Russian language, Russians being the largest national minority in Estonia.[7] Also in **Finland**, several minority practices were among the first elements included in the national ICH inventory.[8]

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[3] Indicators studied: B2; B3; B4; B5; B8; B11; B13.5; B15; B17; B20; C1

[4] Lithuania B 8. Here and hereafter, references to the most recent reports of respective States Parties are given, stating the name of the country and the reported indicator / section of the report.

[5] Latvia B 8.1

[6] Latvia A 7.2

[7] Estonia B 7.1

[8] Finland B 7.1

Beyond inventorying, in **Lithuania** activities aimed at national minorities are in line with the Council of Europe Framework Convention of the Protection of National Minorities. Financial support for targeted projects is provided.[9] That includes **cultural projects** that maintain and develop the culture of national minorities and promote it in public media. Various cultural events, educational activities, including on gastronomic heritage, contribute to the promotion of mutual respect between communities, groups and individuals, different ethnic groups, and social stratums, in particular concerning national minorities.

Enhancing cultural dialogue through education

Formal education is another way to work on strengthening cultural dialogues, and in this regard several examples can be given from the Nordic countries. For instance, in **Sweden** ICH is an integral part of the Swedish **school system**. The curriculum emphasises that awareness of one's own cultural origins and sharing in a common cultural heritage provides a secure identity which it is important to develop, together with the ability to understand and empathise with the values and conditions of others. It highlights that the internationalisation of Swedish society and increasing cross-border mobility place high demands on the ability of people to appreciate the values inherent in cultural diversity.[10] In **Norway**, in order to introduce high school students to minority cultures (e.g. Jewish, Sámi), guides who represent a minority culture (also university students who study its culture and language) visit high schools to talk to young people and to introduce and educate them about the culture and traditions of these communities.[11]

Different levels of formal education often include elements of local ICH and culture. For example, in **Greenland** the drama and performance education is based on a broad **insight into cultural history** and with particular emphasis on the history of Inuit. For example, part of the curricula is an extensive introduction to drum dancing and singing (*Qilaatersorneq*) and mask dancing (*Uaajeerneq*).[12] In Finland, Sámi history, culture, way of life and law are integrated into the **educational content**, the content of the **curriculum** is determined by the Sámi Parliament, which decides on language tuition at the compulsory level of education and certain Sámi culture related subjects in the secondary education stage of the curriculum (reindeer husbandry, the *'duodji'* (Sámi craft) subjects).[13] Several **museums** in **Norway** that work with national minorities and Sámi groups offer programs to schoolchildren, so they can learn about the culture.[14]

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[9] Lithuania B 8
[10] Sweden B 5.2
[11] Norway B 17.4
[12] Denmark B 6.1
[13] Finland B 5.3
[14] Norway B 5.2

It is a widespread practice in many states that a cultural education program in schools (financed by the state) gives every child an opportunity to gain art and culture experience at least once a semester. In **Norway**, special attention is paid in the **'Cultural Schoolbag' program** to include the art and cultural offer of the Sámi and national minorities, which contributes to the **creation of awareness** and the transfer of knowledge about the history, culture and living traditions of these communities.[15] The minimum number of visits to cultural and artistic events, which are provided to students within the school year, varies depending on municipality.

Another approach to enhancing cultural dialogue is through **mother-tongue classes** organised on a municipal or national level. In **Denmark**, mother-tongue classes are taught separately outside of regular school hours. The purpose of mother-tongue education is for pupils to obtain knowledge and skills so that they can understand their spoken and written language and can express themselves verbally and in writing. The education must at the same time develop their linguistic conscience on the basis of using two languages in their daily lives. The education must also contribute to increasing pupils' interest in language and culture in a global perspective.[16] As another practice for organising mother-tongue learning, **Sunday schools** can be mentioned. In **Estonia**, Sunday schools for ethnic minorities are provided with financial support, with the aim of promoting ICH, language learning and safeguarding the culture of national minorities.[17]

For example, in **Finland**, it is possible to **study the culture and language** of minorities (Sámi, Roma) at universities. Furthermore, education programs that prepare teachers who can teach subjects using a Sámi language are provided in Finland.[18] In the context of vocational education, the Sámi Education Institute should be mentioned, which is the only vocational school where it is possible to **learn trades and professions** in a Sámi language.[19]

In **Iceland**, schools implement support measures (counselling, provision of information) for students and their parents who do not speak Icelandic as their mother-tongue, to **promote their inclusion** and ensure opportunities to learn the language, literature and culture. The accessibility of ICH for children and young people is also promoted through the *'List fyrir alla'* project implemented by the state, which allows children and young people to get to know culture, including ICH, and art in various formats.[20]

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[15] Norway B 17.4
[16] Denmark B 5.3
[17] Estonia B 7.1
[18] Finland B 4.4
[19] Finland B 4.2
[20] Iceland B 17.4

Fostering inclusivity and linguistic diversity in media

The safeguarding of ICH is strengthened through the media in all the countries analysed. **National media** (television, radio, online platforms) mostly pay special attention to national language, history and cultural heritage in their **content creation**. In some countries, attention is also paid to providing **inclusive** media material that reflects the ethnic diversity of the country. As an example, in **Norway**, public media (TV, radio, newspapers) have a special responsibility for national and linguistic minorities, therefore special channels have been developed for Kven and Sámi language, culture and news.[21] The media also contribute to the preservation of **local language and dialect diversity** and availability. The example of **Estonia** shows that local dialects are used in a national radio station to inform the public about news.[22]

It is typical that after the inclusion of an ICH element in an ICH inventory or in one of the UNESCO ICH lists, the respective ICH element and its communities are regularly reflected in media. It is common that representatives of ICH communities themselves become involved in the development of the communication content of public media – communities often participate in the creation of **ICH-based radio and TV program cycles**, which are based on creating awareness about the ICH and its communities. As reflected in the reports by **Latvia** and **Estonia**, the media also ensure the availability of information, informing the public about the ICH-related **events and activities** at the state and local municipality levels.[23]

Raising awareness of difficult heritage and stereotypes

Sweden has an example of working with difficult heritage with the purpose to draw attention to it in a critical and constructive way. One of the projects is a seminar on anti-Jewish church art, called 'Painting "the other" on the wall'. The idea was to convey a collective knowledge of how common it is to see anti-Jewish stereotypes in Swedish churches and how the issue concerns the whole society.[24] Raising awareness of difficult heritage **creates understanding and respect** between people.

Furthermore, the collection of the Institute for Language and Folklore in **Sweden** contains older material about the national minorities, for instance the Sámi and Roma people, but it mainly reflects the majority population's often prejudiced view. That is the reason why the Institute nowadays works to add the voices and experiences of national minorities to the historical collections.[25]

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[21] Norway B 18.3

[22] Estonia B 18.2 and B 4.2

[23] Latvia B 18.1 and Estonia B 18.1

[24] Sweden B 15

[25] Sweden B 7.2

Promotion of ICH can be used to change negative stereotypes on the national minorities. For example, the Ethnographic Museum in Tarnow is committed to safeguarding Roma heritage in **Poland**, building a space for dialogue and cooperation. The aim is to integrate Roma by invoking the myth of traveller.[26] It also contributes to building the identity of the Roma in Poland and giving them an environment where their history and heritage can be freely cherished.

Networking and managing shared heritage

One of the ways institutions responsible for the implementation of the Convention encourage the **participation** of communities, groups and individuals in ICH safeguarding, is by **developing networks** of stakeholders that become involved in ICH inventorying. In **Lithuania** such a network connects representatives of municipalities, state protected territories, communities, and NGOs. The aim of the network is to coordinate the activities and consultations among specialists, including communities, groups and individuals in the field of ICH. It also encourages to identify new ICH elements and nominate them to ICH inventories.[27] **Poland** has similar networks that include regional coordinators, who have received a comprehensive training on the Convention.[28]

Networking among communities, groups and individuals, NGOs, experts, institutions that are active in the field of ICH are common on an **international level** too. This is especially important for **safeguarding shared ICH**. For example, in **Denmark** the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is the body that represents all Inuit from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka on matters of international importance. ICC is currently working on developing Inuit Circumpolar Protocols for the Equitable and Ethical Engagement of Inuit Communities and Indigenous Knowledge. The main aim of the organisation is providing an opportunity for sharing information, discussing common concerns, debating issues, and strengthening the bonds between all Inuit.[29] There is a similar network for Sámi culture.

Networking is also promoted between ICH practitioners and researchers, which takes place both through institutions, such as expertise centres, and projects. The **Nordic and Baltic countries** have created a website *safeguardingpractices.com*, where they share their experiences with safeguarding ICH. It is publicly available to all ICH practitioners, bearers and interested parties.[30] Networking with **international cooperation partners** in other countries allows joint projects to be implemented and knowledge to be shared. For example, within the journal #HeritageAlive, ICH NGOs from various countries have published their experiences and knowledge about traditional food and traditional medicine, among other issues.[31]

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[26] Poland B 14.3

[27] Lithuania B 1.3

[28] Poland B 11.2

[29] Denmark B 25.2

[30] Iceland B 7.2

[31] Norway B 25.2

Dimension: Society[32]

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development is focused on: (i) heritage **accessibility**, (ii) **inclusion** and **participation**, and the involvement of **youth**, (iii) building heritage **awareness** in society through education. Its sub-themes include participation of society in ICH inventorying processes, including through the use of information technologies, public accessibility of inventories established, inclusion of diverse groups of society in decision-making and the diversification of heritage experiences through formal and non-formal education.

Enhancing participation through inventorying and research

A key aspect for enhancing the accessibility of the heritage of diverse groups of society is by ensuring that the process of ICH inventorying is **open to everyone**. It means that applicants can be communities, groups or individuals, NGOs working in the field of ICH, as well as municipalities, administrative bodies of state protected areas, national or regional parks, traditional crafts centres, culture centres, and educational institutions, and various other organisations. That also includes openness to all ethnic communities living in the country, all genders and persons from diverse social backgrounds.

Furthermore, the accessibility of ICH to the general public is also ensured through the provision of **open inventories and databases**. It is common that ICH inventories are accessible on the internet, thus providing access to information about the elements inventoried – their functions, communities, history, as well as related activities.[33] The experience of **Finland** proves that the national ICH inventory website – Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage – is able to reach a wide and diverse audience and raise awareness of ICH.[34] Museums, archives, research institutions and other organisations are being designated as responsible for the documentation and data collection of ICH, as well as for the maintenance and availability of collections (e.g. collections of music recordings and artefacts, oral histories, etc.). The same principles apply to the availability of videos on internet resources (Youtube etc.) from courses and seminars organised by the institutions responsible for the implementation of the Convention.[35]

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[32] Indicators studied: B1; B2.3; B3; B4; B6; B8; B10; B11; B15; B16; B17; B21; B22; C5
[33] Estonia B 7.4
[34] Finland B 7.4.a
[35] Finland B 3.1

The same principles are important in the research field – **open science** has been a priority area in most of the analysed countries. This includes publishing research results and making them available for further research, through open-access publications and by prioritising digitalization of research data. In **Iceland**, the website *lifandihefdir.is* focus not only on transmitting diverse materials to the public, but it also includes an annual peer-reviewed journal named *Gripla*, which is dedicated to publishing research within Icelandic and Old Norse studies.[36]

Safeguarding ICH is closely linked to scholarly research and public dissemination of new knowledge. The example of **Denmark** shows that research carried out on ICH contributes to the documentation of practices and testimonies, avoiding a static understanding of the traditions involved.[37] The aim of the research is thus to unfold how culture is practised, transmitted and changed over time, and to gain and **promote knowledge about everyday culture** and aspects of ICH that are not necessarily very visible from an outside view or specially promoted by tradition bearers.

The example of **Finland** demonstrates that interdisciplinary research can contribute to ICH safeguarding and also provide a **basis for decision-making** on ICH issues. An example is a research that focuses on the cultural background of children and youth in rural areas, as well as on developing models for organising local cultural heritage education to promote children's inclusion experiences.[38] It is also recognized that ICH can be used as a positive instrument in **maintaining well-being**, because cultural maturing provides communities and individuals with basic elements of identity that are very important for human well-being and mental health. In this context, **Åland** Government promotes culture in healthcare by financing actors that arrange cultural activities within the health sector, based on the research findings that culture promotes health and contributes to a good care environment for both patients and staff.[39] It is worth mentioning also research practices in **Finland** that address the impact of culture, including ICH, on well-being, including health, in **various scientific disciplines**.[40]

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[36] Iceland B 1.4

[37] Denmark B 1.5

[38] Finland B 1.3

[39] Finland B 15.1

[40] Finland B 15.1

Involving society through information technologies

In **Iceland**, and in most of the analysed countries, **information technologies** ensure that the documentation of ICH is carried out and public access to ICH inventories and digital databases is provided. This allows anyone interested to access the openly available resources of ICH (folklore, music, other materials) and use them in their everyday life. Based on the cooperation among **Finland**, **Norway** and **Sweden**, the Sámi Heritage Archives have developed an easily accessible information search portal on the Sámi heritage for anyone interested. This allows everyone to freely access publicly available materials about the Sámi from various European digital archives in one place.[41]

State and local government heritage institutions, NGOs and individual practitioners are often involved in the process of inventorying the ICH; however, a broader **general public** can also become **actively involved**. As an example of the involvement of the general public in the process of **documenting the ICH**, the website *lifandihefdir.is* in Iceland, managed by the Árni Magnúsons Institute of Icelandic Studies can be mentioned, where the general public can both use the materials already available as well as to share information about their own living traditions.[42] Similarly, in **Latvia**, the Archives of Latvian Folklore of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia has an online archive *garamantas.lv*, which is a crowdsourcing example, and the intention is to involve the general public in transcription of digitised folklore materials. Often volunteers who perform this work of transcription online, choose ICH documentation from their own home territory or the home territory of their family members.[43]

Information technologies and social media play an important role in public involvement, promoting and ensuring the accessibility of ICH. **Social media** sites serve as a **networking platform** for those interested in ICH, where opinions and experiences are exchanged on issues related to this topic. A positive example in **Iceland** is the Facebook page *'Íslensk matarmenning/ islandsk matkultur',* where the community shares recipes and tips for traditional Icelandic dishes. Similarly, on the *'Sundlaugar á Íslandi'* Facebook page, information is exchanged about swimming pool and hot tub culture and traditions in Iceland.[44]

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[40] Finland B 15.1

[41] Finland B 1.3

[42] Iceland B 1.4 and B 4.1

[43] Latvia B 1.4

[44] Iceland B 17.5

There are also examples on an **individual level** of commitment to teaching, promoting and raising general awareness on the traditions, language and history of a specific region. An example from **Denmark** shows the great impact an individual can have – a woman communicates on her Facebook page[45] in her **native dialect** on various traditional crafts, oral histories, songs and much more that concerns the ICH, and thereby she diligently promotes and help to safeguard ICH.[46] **Mobile applications** are also used to share ICH practices. For example, in **Finland**, an NGO has developed an application to share recipes and tips related to home, gardening and crafts, as well as a traditional game application that is widely used in schools.[47]

Fostering social inclusion in decision-making and learning

The most common way to ensure inclusion of various groups of society in ICH safeguarding, is involving them **in decision-making related to their ICH**. An example can be that in **Iceland** national institutions, practitioners and bearers of ICH, as well as the private sector collaborated in ICH mapping to identify the bearers and practitioners of ICH and to find out their views on how they want to safeguard their heritage and traditions. During the mapping process, every interested party had the opportunity to participate in the talks organised across the country to share ideas on how heritage and traditions should be preserved.[48]

Social inclusion can also be promoted **through learning activities**. The Karasjok city school in **Norway** and the nursing home jointly created the Sámi courtyard, which is an outdoor meeting place that represents Sámi culture and which offers various events/activities where people with dementia can learn on their own or impart knowledge and traditions to local children and young people. Thus, it also promotes the strengthening of the connection of the people from nursing homes with the Sámi society.[49] Another approach practised in **Norway** is to include different groups of society in ICH practices is a project 'Dance classes' and 'A dance for the deaf', where deaf people learn traditional dances, but hearing and hearing-impaired participants explore how deaf people learn to move and how they can teach other deaf people to dance.[50]

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[45] See example: mojnasta.dk | Facebook and mojnasta.dk
[46] Denmark B 17.5
[47] Finland B 17.5
[48] Iceland B 11.4 and B 17.1
[49] Norway B 16.1
[50] Norway B 16.1

Diversifying heritage experiences through education

Education plays an important role in the transmission of ICH practices. Educational activities are usually organised by defining goals in **strategies on a national or regional level**. The methods differ based on the education level. Some of the tools include integration of ICH into school curricula; preparation of educational books on ICH practices; consultations, informational support and training courses for teachers and schools; methodological materials and recommendations on integrating ICH into the teaching process,[51] as well as providing the necessary resources for schools and students.[52]

However, many **ICH practitioners and bearers** have developed their own **ICH education programs** and are also implementing activities to promote their heritage. Knowledge is transferred both when practitioners and carriers work in formal educational institutions, and through NGOs and informal education programs.[53] Schools also implement cooperation with institutions that deal with the safeguarding of ICH, in order **to introduce pupils and students** to local traditions and ICH through educational and interactive activities. **Cultural education programs** offer a wide and diverse range of arts and cultural offerings covering a variety of cultures and art forms, including ICH-related activities. As an example, in **Latvia**, the 'Latvian School Bag' program offers museum-pedagogical programs that introduce pupils to ICH practices in an interactive way.[54]

In some countries, special attention is paid to **teacher education** on ICH-related issues. For instance, in **Lithuania**, courses for teachers "Social emotional intelligence learning within the ethnocultural context" focus on how education can be used in developing children's social emotional intelligence.[55] That way the importance of ICH is highlighted in a broader perspective. **Greenland** has teacher training programs for secondary educational training to strengthen teaching in cultural heritage. In non-formal settings, instructor training is provided by institutions such as the sports association, the national acting school, or *'Kalaallisuuliornermik Ilinniarfik'* to include ICH in extra-curricular activities.[56] In **Latvia**, associations provide professional competence improvement seminars and lifelong learning programs for teachers. Seminars for transferring skills and knowledge about ICH, for instance, traditional singing, dancing, musical skills, as well as to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge about documenting, protecting and popularising ICH, are organised.[57] Similar practices can be found in most of the analysed countries.

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[51] Lithuania B 4.4
[52] Finland B 5.3
[53] Iceland B 4.2 and B 4.4
[54] Latvia B 4.3
[55] Lithuania B 4.4.
[56] Denmark B 4.4
[57] Latvia B 2.3

Formal education

Some secondary schools in **Iceland** implement **cultural heritage education programs** where you can learn cooking, sowing, knitting, and crocheting. Several Icelandic secondary education institutions (e.g. Reykjavík Technical College) run programs closely related to ICH, such as furniture and crafts making, house building.[58] In **Iceland**, **folk schools** offer an alternative education where ICH is given special attention. In **Norway** and other countries, **cultural schools** for school-age children have been operating for several generations to introduce them to art and culture. The offer of cultural schools is determined by each municipality individually, but it covers various artistic and cultural projects.[59]

Furthermore, in Sámi schools in **Finland**, school studies are planned in accordance with the local culture and **natural annual cycle**, which allows, for example, children to attend a round-up school in autumn, thus being able to stay with the family during the reindeer round-up season.[60]

The difficulty to engage youth in the activities related to ICH safeguarding has been addressed by some countries. One of the solutions in **Lithuania** is that **pupils** from the 5th year grade are **encouraged to volunteer** for the benefit of their community or broader society. 11-12th year grade pupils are assigned for 30 hours social, ecology related, cultural or other activities within a two-year period. In some schools, pupils choose to collect and disseminate information about ICH of their communities and groups to accomplish such assignments. These can also be accomplished by assisting cultural organisations.[61]

Poland has reported particular emphasis on acquiring knowledge and skills regarding ICH at **all education stages**. The goal is for students to be familiar with elements of the national culture and understand its importance. This practice promotes open and friendly attitude towards culture, encourages conversations about the history and makes youth realise their connection to ICH.[62] It is assumed that such youth are more likely to be actively involved in ICH practices and safeguarding in other stages of life.

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[58] Iceland B 5.2
[59] Norway B 11.2
[60] Finland B 5.3
[61] Lithuania B 17.4
[62] Poland B 5.1 and B 5.2.

Higher education in all analysed countries is seen as a way to guarantee in-depth understanding and continuity of ICH practices. In **Lithuania**, several study programs contribute to understanding, safeguarding and promoting ICH. The studies are based on **learning the basis of elements** of ICH, like traditional music, folklore, folk dance, and practical aspects of it, such as playing music instruments, management of the events related to ICH etc. It also focuses on the knowledge needed **to continue ICH practices**, for example, leading a folklore ensemble.[63] Higher education can also provide knowledge and competences in **ICH related decision-making**. For example, in **Latvia** and **Norway**, master's study programs promote knowledge about cultural heritage, including ICH, communication and governance processes.[64] In **Finland**, study programs provide knowledge and competences in craft and design industries, including textile industry, boat building,[65] and higher education offers courses that combine knowledge of ICH and entrepreneurship in order to promote the understanding of the new cultural heritage work models.[66]

Higher education also **strengthens the cooperation**, interaction and participation of the parties involved in the ICH. An example is Viljandi Academy of Culture in **Estonia**, which has become an important centre for ICH-related culture, creative arts and economic education. The academy implements student theses and projects focused on reviving disappearing traditional handicrafts, craft skills and heritage knowledge to communities. As an example can be mentioned the experience that with the help of students of construction speciality, a village chapel was rebuilt in Võru County.

Non-formal education

Young people are engaged to **collect information** about ICH of their communities in non-formal school activities. In **Lithuania**, **schools** often have their own **museums** of history, ethnic culture, or regional studies, and/or hobby classes or clubs where students gather to study and explore their own region. In such clubs or museums, students collect information about their region – its history, famous persons, geography, traditions and customs. Students write papers, make presentations, organise or contribute to the educational activities for younger students etc. Students also participate in expeditions to ICH-related places, meet various people, for example, ICH bearers and practitioners, traditional craftspeople, or others, collect information, and make exhibits for their school museums.[67]

In **Latvia**, children and youth are involved in amateur art groups and folklore ensembles, and in ICH awareness-raising events, such as folklore festivals, camps, and organisation of traditional holidays. An important role is played by the **non-formal education program** *'Pulkā eimu, pulkā teku'* that engages youth in various activities, such as storytelling, traditional music and singing contests, concerts etc., and promotes the **active participation of children and young people** in the practice of ICH.[68]

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[63] Lithuania B 2.1

[64] Latvia B 2.1

[65] Finland B 5.1

[66] Finland B 2.1

[67] Lithuania B 17.4

[68] Latvia B 17.4 and B 3.1

Non-formal education programs **created by NGOs** play an important role in ensuring the continuity of ICH, being available to persons from various generations. For example, in **Iceland**, they cover the transfer and acquisition of diverse ICH **knowledge and skills** of folk-dressing, crafting, woodcutting, peat house construction, traditional crafts, dance, music and amateur skills, etc. to everyone interested.[69] Non-formal training programs can provide training in ICH **safeguarding and management**. For example, in **Lithuania** such **seminars** can be dedicated to **cultural specialists** and aimed to enhance their competences and motivation to integrate the knowledge into the educational programs and activities implemented by cultural institutions.[70] In the case of a seminar in Lithuania that was dedicated to promotion of ancient and traditional crafts, non-formal training gave the possibility to craftspeople to pass on their knowledge to other persons and to highlight the importance of crafting within the context of national heritage, traditions, and history.

The Sámi Education Institute in **Finland** should be highlighted, as it offers several **vocational qualification study programs** based on the Sámi ICH (handicrafts, reindeer husbandry and tourism, nature guide and cook studies). All programs are based on local needs and livelihoods.[71]

Involvement of practitioners and bearers in educational programs/courses by actively presenting and transmitting their heritage is a common practice as ICH is often transmitted orally or through observation, imitation, and learning-by-doing methods. For example, folk dance and singing are taught through direct observation and imitation, listening to live traditional music, and social dance practices. Folk songs are linked with certain life events, seasonal works.[72] The **master-apprentice model** appears as another popular practice. An example is the winter seine fishing in **Finland**, where the new apprentice is assigned a master for one year, from whom to learn all the fishing techniques in practical training.[73]

Museums, libraries and regional cultural centres also implement various training and educational and informative activities on ICH. Reykjavik City Library, for example, regularly runs a craft cafe session, where people interested in the topic are presented with a variety of craft skills. Courses to transmit knowledge and skills on the construction, maintenance and repair of wooden boats and ships to new generations are being implemented in **Iceland**.[74]

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[69] Iceland B 4.1
[70] Lithuania B 2.3
[71] Finland B 5.1
[72] Lithuania B 4.2
[73] Finland B 4.2
[74] Iceland B 2.2

Learning ICH practices and skills are fostered and complemented by **publishing methodological guides**. For example, in Lithuania 'Methodological guides on restoration and conservation of wooden architecture objects' were prepared and updated.[75] They can be used not only by masters of wooden architecture, but also researchers, architects, cultural heritage protection specialists, restorers and supervisors of the restoration works, wooden building owners and others interested in traditional crafting. **Sweden** has examples of methodological guides that describe not the ICH practices as such, but different forms of documentation and methods for passing on skills.[76] Various books, informative materials, and audio-visual **educational materials** are published for learning and supplementing knowledge of ICH. For example, in **Estonia**, dialect dictionaries have been published, and a modern soundtrack of Estonian fairy tales has been created (available on Spotify), etc.[77]

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[75] Lithuania B 2.3
[76] Sweden B 4.2
[77] Estonia B 4.2

Dimension: Ecology[78]

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development is focused on: (i) raising **ecological awareness** and **responsible behaviour** through ICH-related education, (ii) sustainable use of **natural resources**, (iii) addressing **climate change**. Its sub-themes include the development of ecological literacy through educational activities and public engagement, ensuring sustainable use of resources in various domains of ICH, informing about climate change and reconnecting people to their landscape.

Enhancing environmental education and ecological literacy

Social, cultural, environmental and ecological literacy plays an important role in the education system in **Iceland**, which includes educating students and creating awareness about responsible and sustainable thinking and behaviour towards nature, the values of culture and society. Tasks related to addressing the problems of **environmental protection, climate change and biodiversity** are used in the lessons.[79] Various **methods** are used to explain the **connection of ICH with nature** and the environment: activities, informative materials, research, etc. In **Finland**, non-governmental organisations actively focus on educating and informing the public about **ICH and ecological issues**, for example by introducing how to properly collect plants and mushrooms in nature, as well as how and where they can be used in daily life, thus promoting responsible and sustainable behaviour towards the environment.[80]

Finland operates a List of nationally valuable **landscapes**, which identifies and classifies such landscapes. The list ensures protection and preservation of cultural landscapes whose value is based on their diverse, culturally shaped nature, managed agricultural landscape and traditional building stock. This list includes, for example, **Sámi cultural landscapes**, as the landscape is **characterised by different natural livelihoods** (e.g. reindeer husbandry) and land management. The inventory process also takes into account the importance of ICH in landscapes.[81]

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[78] Indicators studied: B 13.2; B 13.3; B 15.3

[79] Iceland B 5.4

[80] Finland B 15.1

[81] Finland B 11.2

In schools in **Lithuania** ICH is used as a means of explaining or demonstrating other subjects, for example, in **geography** students are introduced to the **distinctiveness** of their own country and region, their native and living area, introducing significant natural and cultural heritage objects, and raising understanding of intercultural dialogues.[82]

Sweden's approach includes teaching about the environment and **learning for sustainable development** in curricula and syllabuses in **study courses** and subjects. It is not a subject in its own – the idea is that the environmental and sustainability perspective as well as the historical, international and ethical perspectives are to run **through all teaching**, irrespective of the course or subject.[83] This approach also sheds light on student's own living and how it can be adapted for sustainable development. Sweden states itself as one of the leading countries in terms of **education for sustainable development**.

In **Finland**, **educational activities** are carried out **outdoors** to transmit knowledge about the local ICH, including **knowledge about the environment**. For example, schools in the Archipelago Sea Biosphere Reserve offer the opportunity to learn knowledge, skills about the archipelago, as well as traditional boat sailing – all of these elements are important components of the cultural heritage in Finland. It is taught in the context of the **sustainable use of natural resources** and learning about the environment.[84]

In **Norway**, non-governmental organisations play an important role in **public participation** and transmission of ICH practices. They are open to anyone who is interested in participating and helping to achieve the goals of the organisation. Many of these organisations maintain and transmit ICH elements based on the community's own needs. They educate the public and transmit knowledge to younger generations, many organisations also **combine ICH practices with** various activities aimed at **social welfare, health, nature protection**, etc. For example, in the Vegas archipelago, volunteers maintain the tradition of collecting eider down.[85]

The environment is used as a resource to show the connection between nature and local ICH, as well as to strengthen the protection of nature. In **Estonia**, the Karula National Park is used as a platform for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage. Activities (training, workshops, seminars, celebrations) are organised, aimed at the **protection of biological diversity and ICH**, as well as introducing the culture and customs of the local population, which are based on the specificity of the surrounding environment and nature.[86]

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[82] Lithuania B 5.1

[83] Sweden B 5.4

[84] Finland A 5

[85] Norway B 21.1; B 21.2 and B 4.3

[86] Estonia A 7

Ensuring sustainable use of resources

ICH skills are recognized and valued as a means of sustainable use of resources. In **Estonia**, as the heritage **food industry** develops, product markets and food exchange networks are becoming more and more active, which contributes to **more targeted products, reducing wastage**.[87] Also, in **Iceland**, a non-formal education program of the Icelandic Turf Builders Guild can be highlighted, where masters share their knowledge and experience in **building traditional** Icelandic peat **houses** from **sustainable resources**.[88] Iceland has also an example of using **sustainable energy resources** as most public swimming pools utilise geothermal energy in an environmentally sustainable way.[89]

Research that contributes to sustainable use of natural resources, related to ICH practices, can be seen as important in the context of environmental sustainability. For example, research is carried out in **Finland** on how to use traditional methods to create a sustainable solution for the **production of textiles** and clothing, **using traditional materials** (linen, hemp, nettle).[90]

Organisations that safeguard ICH also implement appropriate environmental sustainability measures in their work. For example, **museum professionals** in **Finland** through eco-experiments have adopted sustainability thinking in their organisations – they have created a framework for an efficient recycling system, calculate the organisation's carbon footprint and are developing a s**ustainable development action plan**.[91] Museums also **create awareness** of ICH and local use of natural resources in dialogue with the local communities in **Norway**.[92]

It is also important to address these aspects on the national level through legislation. In **Lithuania**, the Government aims to implement **sustainable stockbreeding** and develop **aquaculture**, thus, to reduce the impact of the stockbreeding on the environment and climate and promote aquaculture to **protect fishing resources in natural waters**. The Government seeks to give a priority to traditional fishing crafts and amateur fishing tourism activities (also including local communities into the fishing resources management and protection) vis-a-vis reducing industrial fishing. Economic entities ceasing industrial fishing activity would receive financial support or compensation. Industrial fishing in inland waters and in the coastal area of the Baltic Sea could be prohibited, significantly restricted (for example, through prohibition of certain tools, ways and aquatories) or oriented to traditional small-scale fishing. In 2021, draft amendments to the Law on Fishing and the Law on Amateur Fishing were presented to the Parliament and were discussed.[93]

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[87] Estonia B 15.3

[88] Iceland B 4.1

[89] Iceland B 15.1

[90] Finland B 9.2

[91] Finland B 15.3

[92] Norway B 15.3

[93] Lithuania B 13.2

Addressing climate change

It has been found important to **inform society** about the areas in which the country is affected by **climate change** and how it can be addressed. **Greenland** has a website ClimateGreenland[94] hosted by the governmental institutions that address these aspects using Greenlandic context as the central point. The site is intended to be a **resource** to help find the people, organisations or information needed. The site is structured around four main themes (citizen, municipality, industry, education), in each providing information and links to **central actors** in the field.[95]

Reconnecting people to landscape through place names

Bottom-up initiatives contribute to reconnecting people with their localities and consequently ICH. **Faroe Islands** historically have a lot of **place names linked to stories, sagas, memories** – historically, place names have had an important function for people when **moving about in the landscapes**. The tendency of centralization to larger town areas has had the consequence that many place names are forgotten, since they are not widely used anymore. Therefore, communities, groups and individuals with interest and knowledge of Faroese geography, landscapes, history, and oral traditions have initiated a registration of place names in their local municipalities, that way ensuring reconnecting.[96] Place names are registered on a digital GIS map, and thereby made accessible to the public.[97]

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[94] See: ClimateGreenland (http://climategreenland.gl/en/)

[95] Denmark B 13.2

[96] See example: Staðarnøvn - Sunda kommuna http://sundastad.kort.fo/

[97] Denmark B 15.1

Dimension: Economy[98]

The analysis of this dimension of sustainable development is focused on: (i) ICH as a resource for **regional economic development**, (ii) ICH-related **economic activities** and income-generation, including through cultural **tourism**, and respective support mechanisms, (iii) **livelihoods** of heritage bearers and practitioners, and **employment**. Its sub-themes include inclusivity in economic development in relation to ICH, sustainability and ethical issues in cultural tourism, and labelling of ICH-related products and services.

Strengthening inclusive economic development and creative economy

Governmental support for ICH is one of the mechanisms that ensure **economic equity** in the ICH sector – that usually is organised through funding programs. **Grants** in **Finland** are given to ICH projects with the aim of promoting socially, ecologically, economically and culturally **sustainable cultural heritage work**.[99]

ICH can be a driver of economic development – in most countries ICH communities, groups and individuals use their ICH as a **source of income**, especially in rural areas. A program worth emphasising because of its aim to focus on a regional diversity of ICH, is the Equal Development Program in **Lithuania**. It finances cultural projects in regions and contributes to a more **equal regional development**. The program has three aims: to develop the diversity of cultural expressions, to strengthen local cultural identity, and to enhance cooperation.[100] In **Norway**, several regional municipalities **provide grants** for cultural institutions to stimulate them to safeguard and preserve local/regional ICH (e.g. music, craft traditions).[101] Targeted financial support for local artists and craftspeople is provided also in **Estonia**, where the municipality of Viljandi grants financial support **scholarships to professional artists and craftspeople** from various industries living and working in the municipality. The scholarship is intended to provide **basic income** for the participants of the creative economy, allowing creative persons to fully devote themselves to their creative work and **strengthen the creative economy** at the same time.[102]

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[98] Indicators studied: B 11.3; B 13.4; B 15.3, B 21.3
[99] Finland B 11.2
[100] Lithuania B 11.3
[101] Norway B 13.5
[102] Estonia A 7

In **Latvia**, **cultural events** that use and connect ICH with new forms of cultural expression (large-scale exhibitions dedicated to ICH, original music and innovative video recordings, dance performances and festivals), are seen as successful examples that attract great public interest in ICH.[103] In **Finland**, **ethical guidelines for responsible filmmaking** on **Sámi culture and people** are also created.[104]

In order to promote the safeguarding of traditional Sámi livelihoods and culture, the Sámi Parliament in **Norway** and the Sámi craft sector agree on mutual cooperation and support by revising an **agreement** every year. The agreement states that the Sámi Parliament in Norway has to provide **financial support to the Sámi craft sector** through operating, investment and development grants as well as welfare schemes and in market adaptation/brand building.[105]

In **Finland** and **Norway** activities (seminars, courses, conference) are implemented to promote **awareness of economic and legal issues** faced by heritage bearers. The aim is to teach about protecting their traditional knowledge and to inform about **intellectual property protection** to maintain their economic and strategic interests.[106]

ICH as an economic activity is used to ensure inclusion of different groups in society. Museum-pedagogical programs, courses, training, projects are targeted at different ethnic groups, immigrants, people with special needs etc. The example of **Estonia** proves that ICH can be used to promote the **integration** of people with disabilities **into society and the labour market**. Young people with special needs have the opportunity to learn several **areas of specialisation** related to ICH skills in vocational education institutions.[107]

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[103] Latvia B 17.1
[104] Finland B 21.3
[105] Norway B 13.5
[106] Finland B 17.3 and B 16.1 and Norway B 17.3
[107] Estonia B 16.1

Promoting a sustainable and responsible cultural tourism

In **Lithuania**, ICH is presented to tourists as one of the most important elements of **regional heritage** and tourist activities are dedicated to that.[108] As acknowledged in the report submitted by **Latvia**, stakeholders involved in cultural tourism take care of the **safeguarding and promotion** of the ICH and **earn income** at the same time.[109] As cultural experiences are a big stimulus to travel, culture as a tourism resource has been actively included into national and regional **tourism development plans**. In the context of **Latvia**'s sustainable development programs, ICH is seen as a resource for the development of tourism in the regions and also as a resource that can strengthen local identity and a sense of belonging to the place of residence.[110]

There are several projects in **Latvia** and more broadly in the Baltic States that are aimed to strengthen the economic development related to the local ICH. Both national and international level projects are implemented to promote the development of cultural tourism, including through the EU program 'INTERREG Europe', which has funded several projects and activities, with the aim of **helping rural tourism entrepreneurs** to create, maintain and popularise agrotourism products (in agriculture, fisheries, handicrafts, culinary) through various activities. Furthermore, the Equal Development Program in **Lithuania** finances cultural projects that reflect regional diversity of ICH. As a result, for instance, three manuals for entrepreneurs were created, the tourism brand/label 'Livonian Taste' was developed together with Estonia, and the development of the joint craft offer brand/label 'Tour de Crafts' was started in cooperation with Lithuania.[111]

Furthermore, **Finland** has a program 'Sustainable Travel Finland' that promotes responsible tourism and makes it easy, also for international travel trade, **to identify sustainable tourism providers**. It provides participants with a guide and a comprehensive set of tools (training courses, online manuals, etc.) to help them qualify for the label.[112]

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[108] Lithuania B 15.1
[109] Latvia B 17.1 and B 21.3
[110] Latvia B 15.1
[111] Latvia B 24.1
[112] Finland B 13.4

Although ICH is widely used in tourism and thus generates income to ICH practitioners and communities, it has also created challenges, such as inappropriate use of cultural heritage (including its elements, symbols). As an example of the promotion of **responsible and ethically sustainable tourism** based on ICH, as well as the dissemination of true information, the **Principles for Responsible and Ethically Sustainable Sámi Tourism**[113] were adopted by the Sámi Parliament in **Finland**. The purpose is to terminate tourism exploiting Sámi culture and to eliminate incorrect information about the Sámi spreaded through tourism. It also ensures the safeguarding of the cultural practices and traditions of the Sámi people outside the tourism industry. The guidelines are intended for tourism workers and operators involved in the production, representation and marketing of Sámi cultural tourism products outside Sámi communities.

The **project** 'Responsible Sámi Tourism: Visitor's Guidance and Teaching Material for the Travel Industry to Safeguard Sámi Culture', which is being implemented in **Finland**, supports responsible conduct aiming to improve and/or ensure safeguarding of meaningful life on equal basis also to the part of the **Sámi population that is not involved in tourism** as they are experiencing pressure of constantly increasing tourism and the loss of the natural habitats and resources.[114]

Labelling and promoting products and services

In terms of economic development, **culinary heritage** can also be seen as an important area of ICH. Food heritage is considered an important resource in the context of creative industries and is recognized as a powerful marker of identity and recognition. Countries assign special labels and use quality schemes (such as EU quality scheme for food products), which confirm the origin, identity, quality of the product (recipes, production methods), and ensure their protection. For example, in **Latvia**, **Estonia** and **Finland**, **traditional food products**, which are characteristic to specific regions or communities, are assigned a **geographical indication**.[115] It also helps the creators of these products to promote themselves and convey information about the added value of their products to the wider public.[116] This ensures product quality control and the identity and recognition of the place where it is produced. Every year an Estonian food presentation and popularisation program 'Estonian Food' takes place and focuses on the food culture of one region with various activities that are mainly based on the food heritage of the region.[117]

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[113] See: https://www.samediggi.fi/ethical-guidelines-for-sami-tourism/?lang=en

[114] Finland B 13.4

[115] Estonia B 15.3, Latvia B 14.3 and Finland B 15.3

[116] Latvia B 25.3

[117] Estonia B 19.3

Ensuring employment and livelihoods of heritage practitioners

In **Norway**, it is a common practice to **employ practitioners of traditional crafts in museums**. A large number of building craftspeople (tinsmiths, painters, masons, bricklayers, cabinet makers, roofers, wood carvers, joiners, carpenters and others) are employed to help ensure the preservation and maintenance of protected buildings.[118]

Furthermore, in countries like **Sweden** and **Finland** formal and non-formal **education institutions** are not only important from the standpoint of participants gaining knowledge, skills etc., but they are also a **major employer** of arts workers, small entrepreneurs and craftspeople.[119]

Although Nordic clinker boats in **Iceland** are rarely used today by local farming and fishing communities, the demand for them at **various events** (traditional festivals, sporting events, etc.) is increasing and this **drives demand** for their production and maintenance. Through this heritage, ~1,000 people who produce, maintain or otherwise use the Nordic clinker boat and the knowledge and skills related to this heritage, are fully or partially financially supported by this craft.[120]

The use of ICH for **livelihoods of culturally distinct communities** is also strengthened in legislation. As an example, **Finland** has an act that regulates the financing of reindeer herding and respective livelihoods, and also provides grant schemes for its implementation. With these acts an attempt is made to improve the conditions of **reindeer husbandry** and the other natural industries, as well as to promote the **economic activity** of the local communities, maintaining and developing the extraction of means of livelihood belonging to the Sámi culture, and development in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.[121]

In **Finland**, there is also Sámi Education Institute that has study programs focused on Sámi culture and **promotion of nature-based professions** and employment.[122]

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[118] Norway A 1.5
[119] Sweden B 3.1 and Finland B 4.1
[120] Iceland C 2
[121] Finland B 13.5
[122] Finland B 4.2

Overarching observations

This section provides insights in some cross-cutting aspects, such as (i) the formats of building capacities and **exchanging experiences** on good safeguarding practices, and (ii) **raising awareness** on the connections between ICH safeguarding and sustainable development.

Building capacities on safeguarding intangible heritage

Understanding effective safeguarding measures is often a reference point and guidance for those interested in developing their own safeguarding plans. In **Poland** for this purpose a national list of good practices of ICH safeguarding was launched in 2018 with the aim to promote successful initiatives aimed at safeguarding, as an inspiration. The list supports and strengthens activities undertaken in this area at the community level.[123]

Capacity building seminars for the specialists of ICH are also organised. The seminars described in the report of **Lithuania** mainly focus on such activities as identification, documentation, safeguarding, awareness raising and transmission of ICH. Moreover, such seminars also offer opportunities to share practical skills and knowledge.[124] An important aspect is that the seminars are targeted for a specific audience, for example, youth, teachers or cultural specialists and educators. Separation in different target groups allows one to focus on necessary skills for the audience.

Raising awareness of heritage and sustainable development

To promote awareness and knowledge of ICH and sustainable development and its aspects, the Finnish Heritage Agency in cooperation with partners has developed a Wheel Chart of Sustainability. It is a tool that helps cultural organisations in **Finland** and elsewhere to analyse and develop their activities according to the principles of sustainable development. The Wheel Chart divides sustainable development into four dimensions: cultural, society, economic and ecological. Each dimension section raises questions that stimulate reflection on the sustainable use and development of ICH.[125]

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[123] Poland B 19.3

[124] Lithuania B 2.2

[125] Finland B 15.3

Strengthening regional cooperation and networking

For example, in **Norway** a digital platform 'Safeguarding Practices' has been established and maintained, where various stakeholders from the Nordic and Baltic countries are sharing safeguarding practices.[126] This contributes also to the networking among the organizations involved in ICH safeguarding in the region.

As reported by **Finland**, in order to strengthen the role of ICH in local communities as a source of sustainable development, well-being, and livelihood, an international networking on ICH and sustainable development issues has been developed as part of the international project of Northern European countries LIVIND – 'Creative and living cultural heritage as a resource for the Northern Dimension region'. The project was started in 2021, and partners from all States mentioned in this report participated. The focus of the project was on finding new and practical ways in which ICH can support sustainable development, as well as identifying and recognizing good practices. As part of it, online seminars were held, and platforms developed, where ICH experts, practitioners from different territories and cultures shared their ideas and experiences.[127]

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[126] Denmark B 24.3
[127] Finland B 15.3

Addendum: Insights into the States Parties analysed

State Party[128] (since)	Some policy and legislative measures taken to implement the Convention[129]	Main infrastructure of the organisations implementing the Convention[130]	ICH elements inscribed on UNESCO international lists[131]
Denmark (30.10.2009)	While Denmark describes a growing interest and involvement of civil society actors in response to the ethos and visions of the 2003 Convention, the national legislation and policy development to implement the Convention show that nationally coordinated initiatives (programs, policies and more) are still forthcoming. Safeguarding ICH is often a priority in legislation and policy-making, but it is not necessarily addressed directly. Sometimes, policies indirectly secure safeguarding. That said, the level of public support for ICH related issues can be considered high in Denmark.[132]	The Royal Danish Library has as its primary functions to collect, safeguard, make accessible, research and communicate about cultural heritage in Denmark. It is the task of the archives to document and preserve examples of the ICH in Denmark as this is expressed in the ways of life, ideas, myths, narratives, songs, and music of historical and present population groups. The Faroe Islands National Museum has been designated for the implementation of the Convention and it oversees the development of an ICH inventory. In Greenland curators in *Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu* (Greenland National Museum & Archives) work within their specialised fields towards safeguarding, collecting and disseminating the artefacts and respective ICH elements.[133]	Inuit drum dancing and singing (2021 / RL) Nordic clinker boat traditions (2021 / RL) *Multinational: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden*

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[128] By alphabetical order.

[129] A 1, B 11, B 13

[130] B 1

[131] Until 2023 included, in chronological sequence. Urgent Safeguarding List (USL), Representative List (RL), and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (GSP). Source – UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. Browse the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices. Available: https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists

[132] Denmark A 1

[133] Denmark B 1.1

| Estonia (27.01.2006) | In Estonia, ICH safeguarding is integrated into several national level as well as local planning programs and strategies. Estonia has developed and implemented the Cultural Heritage Restoration Act, which also provides for the preservation and protection of ICH. Also, a national-level guideline document 'Strategic Strands for Safeguarding and Valuing ICH 2030' has been developed, which serves as a basis for the development and implementation of specific action plans for institutions and associations related to ICH.[134] | The Estonian Ministry of Culture has delegated the implementation of the Convention to the Estonian Centre of Folk Culture, whose tasks include administering ICH support programs, organising courses, and participating in cultural policy development and implementation processes. The Estonian Centre of Folk Culture also advises communities, administers the national ICH inventory, and organises activities to raise awareness of ICH in the society.

The Estonian Council for the ICH, which unites about 20 experts in the field, plays an essential role in the ICH safeguarding process. The Council advises the Estonian Ministry of Culture on the safeguarding, development and promotion of ICH, and approves inscriptions on the national ICH inventory.[135] | Baltic Song and dance celebrations (2008 / RL) *Multinational: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*

Kihnu cultural space (2008 / RL)

Seto Leelo, Seto polyphonic singing tradition (2009 / RL)

Smoke sauna tradition in Võromaa (2014 / RL)

Building and use of expanded dugout boats in the Soomaa region (2021 / USL)

Cooking and eating Mulgi puder, traditional mashed potato with barley in the Mulgimaa region (2024 / RL)

Pysanka, Ukrainian tradition and art of decorating eggs, Ukraine – Estonia (2024 / RL) |

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[134] Estonia A 1, B 11.1 and B 11.2

[135] Estonia B 1.1

Finland (21.02.2013)	The implementation of the ICH Convention in Finland is defined by a strategic planning document 'Living heritage! Plan for National Implementation', accepted in 2015. The plan sets general guidelines for the implementation of the Convention in Finland and is complemented by an ICH Action Plan. The initial implementation plan describes the main implementation actors and critical elements: national coordination, ICH inventory and international cooperation. In addition, there is a wide range of policy and administrative instruments as well as several legal instruments that integrate elements vital to ICH and its protection, linguistic and cultural rights, participation and access to culture. In Finland, there are no specific legal acts for the safeguarding of ICH. It is considered that the legislation in force in Finland in the field of cultural heritage, as well as legislation on language, education and environment and minority rights, enable the protection of ICH.[136]	The Finnish Heritage Agency (FHA) is responsible for the implementation of the Convention. FHA, in cooperation with the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, is responsible for ICH inventorying, ensures communication and coordination between the involved parties and promotes international cooperation. The FHA regularly publishes a plan for the national implementation of the Convention and an action plan. An Advisory group on ICH also participates in the ICH safeguarding process. It is appointed by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. It consists of 13 sector representatives who support the implementation of the Convention and provide advice on ICH-related issues. Also, the Advisory group develops methods for recognizing and documenting the diversity of various forms of ICH, and promotes examples of good practice in safeguarding ICH.[137] Åland Museum is actively working with the UNESCO ICH Convention and developing the Åland inventory. Research and documentation is an inherent part of the work, utilised for improving safeguarding.[138]	Sauna culture in Finland (2020 / RL) Kaustinen fiddle playing and related practices and expressions (2021 / RL) Nordic clinker boat traditions (2021 / RL) *Multinational: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden* Knowledge, craft and skills of handmade glass production (2023 / RL) *Multinational: Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Spain*

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136 Finland B 11.1

137 Finland B 1.1

138 Finland B 10.3

Iceland (23.11.2005)	Iceland has policies and legislation in place to protect and promote heritage-friendly practices. In 2013, a cultural policy from 2013 to 2030 (Menningarsókn – öppässäður til 2030) was developed and adopted in Iceland. In 2021, an action plan for this strategy was introduced. Since 2021, Iceland has also introduced a policy of cultural heritage protection (*Menningararfurinn stefna um varðveislu og bijamming*).[139]	The Ministry of Culture and Commerce is responsible for the implementation of the Convention. The Ministry has delegated tasks related to the implementation of the Convention to the Árni Magnússon Institute of Icelandic Studies. The Institute is tasked with managing, distributing and maintaining the ICH inventory in Iceland, as well as maintaining the website www.lifandihefdir.is.[140]	Nordic clinker boat traditions (2021 / RL) *Multinational: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden*

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[139] Iceland A 1 and B 11.1

[140] Iceland B 1.1

Latvia (14.01.2005)	In Latvia, several strategic planning documents have been developed at the national level to promote the safeguarding and development of ICH. In 2016, an Intangible Cultural Heritage Law was adopted to safeguard and protect ICH. In 2021, a Law on Historical Regions of Latvia was also adopted, which provides for the strengthening of the common consciousness, identity and belonging to Latvia of the inhabitants of the local historical regions, as well as the preservation and sustainable development of the cultural and historical environment and cultural spaces of Latvian historical regions.[141]	The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the safeguarding and development of ICH and for the implementation of the Convention in Latvia. The Ministry has delegated the ICH administration and coordination processes to the Latvian National Centre for Culture, which is tasked with 1) coordinating the development of a sustainable development plan of ICH; 2) administering the work of a Council of ICH; 3) managing the compilation of an ICH national inventory and its regular updating; 4) implementing capacity building and education activities for ICH communities and society at large.[142] The Council of ICH participates in the safeguarding of ICH, promotes cooperation between the parties involved and contributes to the national inventorying of ICH.[143]	Baltic Song and dance celebrations (2008 / RL) *Multinational: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* Suiti cultural space (2009 / USL) Timber rafting (2022 / RL) *Multinational: Austria, Czechia, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Spain*

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[141] Latvia A.1

[142] Latvia B 1.1

[143] Latvia B 1.1

Lithuania (21.01.2005)	In 2017, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory was established. The Register of the Products of the National Heritage, Certified Masters and Non-Formal Training Programs of Traditional Crafts has been further developed. An Action Plan of the Program of the National Heritage Products Protection, their Market and Development of Crafts was adopted in 2012. Lithuania also seeks to better integrate ICH in cultural policy documents: Lithuanian Strategy for Cultural Policy 'Culture 2030', Guidelines for the State Language Policy, National Strategy for the Preservation and Promotion of Cultural Heritage and its action plan, and others.[144]	Lithuanian National Culture Centre, a budgetary institution under the Ministry of Culture, is the main body implementing national policies in the field of ICH. It pursues related programs, coordinates the implementation of measures oriented at safeguarding and promotion of the elements inscribed on the Representative List, and is responsible for the development and administration of the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.[145] A Council of the Ethnic Culture and ICH was established under the Ministry of Culture to consult the Minister of Culture and other institutions on ICH safeguarding.	Cross-crafting and its symbolism (2008 / RL) Baltic Song and dance celebrations (2008 / RL) *Multinational: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* Sutartines, Lithuanian multipart songs (2010 / RL) Sodai straw garden making in Lithuania (2023 / RL)

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[144] Lithuania A 1

[145] Lithuania B 1

Norway (17.01.2007)	Norway has national and local strategies for ICH safeguarding. The Directorate of Cultural Heritage has submitted a proposal for the Preservation Strategy, in which the main goal is to preserve the diversity of Norway's cultural environment, which also includes the preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Certain areas of ICH are also mentioned in municipal development plans, where ICH is often linked with material cultural heritage, as well as with various social topics (e.g. social inclusion, welfare promotion). Similarly, strategies for the safeguarding of ICH are developed by organisations representing ICH communities (Sámi, churches).	TArts Council Norway (ACN), an agency of the Norwegian Ministry of Culture, is responsible for the implementation of the Convention in Norway. ACN is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, preparing regular reports, as well as representing Norway in international forums. The Norwegian Parliament (*Storting*) has set the safeguarding and protection of ICH of Indigenous peoples and national minorities as one of the priorities of ACN's activities, as well as promoting public awareness of the Convention. The Ministry of Culture instructed ACN to develop procedures for nominating ICH elements to international lists. Since 2013, ACN has evaluated nomination applications submitted by communities. An Advisory Committee on the work with ICH is involved in ICH safeguarding processes. Various stakeholders work in it, including one appointed member of the Sámi Parliament in Norway. Its task is to examine and evaluate proposals for nominations to UNESCO lists, and it also advises the ACN in the implementation of the Convention. *Sámediggi* (Sámi Parliament in Norway) plays an essential role in the safeguarding of the Sámi ICH. Sámediggi bears administrative responsibility for the preservation of Sámi cultural objects and monuments, as well as Sámi ICH.[146]	Oselvar boat – reframing a traditional learning process of building and use to a modern context (2016 / GSP) Practice of traditional music and dance in Setesdal, playing, dancing and singing (*stev/stevjing*) (2019 / RL) Craft techniques and customary practices of cathedral workshops, or Bauhütten, in Europe, know-how, transmission, development of knowledge and innovation (2020 / GSP) *Multinational: Germany, Austria, France, Norway, Switzerland* Nordic clinker boat traditions (2021 / RL) *Multinational: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden* Traditional costumes in Norway, craftsmanship and social practice (2024 / RL) Summer farming at fäbod and seter: knowledge, traditions and practices related to the grazing of outlying lands and artisan food production *Multinational: Sweden, Norway* (2024 / RL)

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[146] Norway B 1.1

| Poland (16.05.2011) | Poland has national and sub-national strategies and action plans that are designed for ICH safeguarding. Specific elements are safeguarded on a local level or within the scope of activities of designed institutions. These institutions or local governments, as well as ICH bearers, participate actively in the design and implementation of the strategies, as well as apply for grants and financial support offered by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. In 2018, the National register of good practices in ICH safeguarding was launched.[147] | State institutions directly responsible for the implementation of the Convention are the National Institute of Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The National Institute of Cultural Heritage maintains, updates and monitors the inventory – the National List of ICH and the National List of Good Practices. As a research institution the Institute conducts extensive scholarly research on ICH, including field research.

 The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage coordinates activities related to the preparation of nominations to international lists.[148] | Nativity scene (szopka) tradition in Krakow (2018 / RL)

 Tree beekeeping culture (2020 / RL) *Multinational: Poland, Belarus*

 Flower carpets tradition for Corpus Christi processions (2021 / RL)

 Falconry, a living human heritage (2021 / RL) *Multinational: United Arab Emirates, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic*

 Timber rafting (2022 / RL) *Multinational: Austria, Czechia, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Spain*

 Polonaise, traditional Polish dance (2023 / RL) |

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[147] Poland B 11.2
[148] Poland A 1

| Sweden (26.01.2011) | In 2017, the Swedish Parliament passed a Cultural Heritage Bill. With it the Swedish government for the first time took a holistic approach on cultural heritage as its own policy area. The Bill devotes a special section to the work on the ICH Convention.[149] Sweden has a national ICH inventory.[150] | Sweden's implementation of the Convention is coordinated by the Institute for Language and Folklore and is focused on cooperation and the participation of civil society. The work is organised in five 'expert nodes' for different domains of ICH and a special node for the ICH of the Sámi people. Each node consists of one responsible authority and a large network of stakeholders, such as NGOs, practitioners, experts, researchers, educational and cultural heritage institutions. | Land-of-Legends program, for promoting and revitalising the art of storytelling in Kronoberg Region (2018 / GSP)

Nordic clinker boat traditions (2021 / RL) *Multinational: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden*

Nyckelharpa network, an innovative dissemination of a music and instrument-building tradition with roots in Sweden (2023 / GSP) |

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149 Sweden B 11.2
150 Sweden A 1

Annex 2.
Policy Recommendations

Background

Living cultural heritage, including craft skills, performative arts, festivals, agricultural and further nature-related practices, and various other elements, can in many ways support ethical livelihoods and sustainable wellbeing of environment and people in communities. A major topic of international debate for several decades, sustainable development, following the now classic definition,[1] ensures that we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs, balancing economic growth, environmental protection, and social well-being. Living heritage also emphasises the interconnectedness of generations through skills and knowledge that are transmitted from a generation to a generation.

In 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[2] 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ensuring that sustainability remains at the forefront of political discussions, policies, and programmes. Despite the rather all-encompassing SDGs, culture is often recognised missing from planned sustainability efforts. Debate on this shortcoming has won increasing attention. The Final Declaration of the 2022 UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT 2022) affirmed the commitment "to a reinforced multilateralism that recognises culture as a global public good with an intrinsic value to enable and drive sustainable development".[3] In September 2024, the UN Pact for the Future, underscoring the pledge to achieve the 17 SDGs by 2030, detailed the inclusion and role of culture as part of this commitment.[4]

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, steps have been taken to incorporate it into the existing frameworks on culture in general and living cultural heritage in particular. For instance, Operational Directives for the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage call "to recognize the importance and strengthen the role of intangible cultural heritage as a driver and guarantee of sustainable development".[5] UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of

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[1] World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf.

[2] United Nations. n.d. "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." United Nations. Accessed October 28, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda.

[3] UNESCO. 2022. UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022: Final Declaration. https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2022/10/6.MONDIACULT_EN_DRAFT%20FINAL%20DECLARATION_FINAL_1.pdf.

[4] United Nations General Assembly, 20 September 2024. The Pact for the Future. https://undocs.org/en/A/79/L.2 The role of culture and sports is highlighted in Action 11.

[5] UNESCO. 2022. Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/2003_Convention_Basic_Texts-_2022_version-EN_.pdf.

the Diversity of Cultural Expressions explicitly links the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions and sustainable development in Article 13 and cooperation for development in Articles 14–18.[6] The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) emphasises the value and potential of cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development and addresses the sustainable use of cultural heritage specifically in Article 9, reframing heritage in relation to its value for society and advocating for an integrated approach and citizen participation.[7]

Although the connection between living cultural heritage and sustainable development has been recognised internationally in this way, the potential of living heritage as a resource for achieving sustainable development in the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture countries[8] is yet to be fully realised. The LIVIND project, with its focus on the Northern Dimension area, thus aimed to explore some practical ways in which living heritage practice and transmission can support sustainable development and how sustainability thinking can inform living heritage safeguarding.

This policy brief is based on the analysis of LIVIND project documentation, international and national legal frameworks, broader national contexts (including periodic reports on the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage), semi-structured interviews with project participants, participant observation during online and on-site events, and autoethnography. It aims to better inform and assist policymakers on different levels, institutional stakeholders and grassroots initiatives as well as individual professionals and practitioners in their work on living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Our research showed that while some exciting and innovative projects have been done at the local level, awareness about the link between living heritage and sustainability is low in general. Work on living heritage and sustainable development is not well integrated across different sectors and levels of government and society. This means that the impacts of such work are uneven, and not widely known and shared, especially across sectors. Heritage stakeholders often focus on social and cultural sustainability rather than economic and environmental sustainability. Insufficient communication and collaboration, and a lack of effective monitoring and evaluation, hampers strategic planning for the future.

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[6] SUNESCO. 2023. Basic Texts of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388847.

[7] Council of Europe. 2005. Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. https://rm.coe.int/1680083746.

[8] Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture. n.d. "Who We Are: NDPC." Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture. Accessed October 22, 2024. https://ndpculture.org/ndpc.

Greater awareness, collaboration and research can support evidence-based policymaking in this area and foster a holistic approach, acknowledging the interconnectedness of the environmental, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of sustainability. Further experimental and exploratory actions, based on broad individual and community participation in design, implementation, and evaluation of projects can help to develop robust and long-term strategic policy measures to support sustainable development in, with, and through living heritage practices.

Insights and recommendations

Awareness-raising

Insights: Although the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs are reflected both in state policies and in the guiding documents of many organisations, sustainable development principles are so far insufficiently integrated into the daily work of creative and living cultural heritage professionals. This aligns with "the overall lack of awareness about the 2030 Agenda and the lack of political will to address the SDGs among stakeholders in the [Baltic Sea] region."[9]

Recommendations:

– **Encourage** awareness-raising activities about the existing connections between creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development and also the potential of their deeper integration.

– **Promote** proactive communication and dissemination strategies that will reach a variety of audiences, not only those working with creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development on a daily basis.

– **Support** educators and develop tools that can foster learning on creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development across and between different age groups. Integrate creative and living cultural heritage into curricula at all levels of education, using various formats (formal and non-formal).

– **Consider** using various channels and spaces to disseminate information about creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development, as learning can happen everywhere.

– **Explore** the expanding technological potential of digital platforms and digital tools to create sustainable solutions and open up new prospects for creative and living cultural heritage.

– **Ensure** consistency in the usage of terminology in order to maintain a shared vocabulary with stable concepts that are similarly understood by all stakeholders – it shapes compatible actions.

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[9] Council of the Baltic Sea States. 2020. Localising Sustainable Development Goals in the Baltic Sea Region: A Handbook. https://cbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CBSS_SDGs_ENG_4ONLINE.pdf.

Case: LIVIND organised multidisciplinary webinars and online workshops dedicated to different aspects of sustainability and their interconnections with creative and living cultural heritage. Ideas for the webinars and workshops evolved based on the identified needs of the project partners, involving them in co-creating the content of the webinars and workshops. Each webinar featured guest speakers sharing their knowledge and experience from both theoretical and applied perspectives. In total, webinars and workshops attracted more than 600 participants from over 36 countries.

To broaden the discussion in project partner countries and to engage more local stakeholders, LIVIND offered its project partners the possibility to organise national or local events (online or on-site). Detailed guidelines (content, structure, materials, etc.) were prepared to assist project partners, and financial and technical assistance was proposed. In total, nine events were organised. These events disseminated information about the LIVIND project and allowed the project partners to consolidate the knowledge and experience they had acquired during the project by putting it into practice and integrating it into their daily work with creative and living cultural heritage.

To disseminate experiences and results collected during the project, LIVIND launched an online platform[10] that serves as a multidisciplinary resource bank of data, tools, and good practices from the Northern Dimension region's creative and living cultural heritage field. It presents case studies and tools from all nine project countries.

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[10] LIVIND online platform is available at https://livind.fi.

Involvement and collaboration

Insights: Existing cooperation in creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development spheres is centred around specific thematic foci and follows conventional patterns. Stakeholders feel the need to strengthen their (international) networks and cross-sectoral cooperation, to develop approaches for engaging national actors, to exchange experiences and good practices, to support civil society and local communities in recognising the resources they hold and articulating their concerns and challenges regarding creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Recommendations:

– **Foster** two-way communications, exploring how creative and living cultural heritage can contribute to sustainable development and, at the same time, how applying sustainable development principles can ensure the viability of cultural heritage.

– **Create** open, inclusive spaces (both physical and virtual) for dialogue and discussions where different stakeholders could come together to negotiate their positions, and smaller actors lacking organisational capacity in certain spheres could turn to a body of experts and facilitators for advice and assistance.

– **Use** existing networks and **build** new intersectoral networks involving actors of different sizes and on various levels, e.g. heritage communities, academic experts, business professionals, policymakers, and facilitate synergies within and between networks.

Case: *LIVIND created a virtual space for networking among the participants of online webinars, organising follow-up online workshops on the topics covering the relations between different aspects of sustainability and creative and living cultural heritage. The participants were invited to discuss and share their ideas and experiences regarding the potential of utilising creative and living cultural heritage for sustainable development. A separate set of online networking events was organised for LIVIND pilot project managers. Creating a space for discussion and exchange of ideas and experiences between pilot projects proved to be effective in fostering networking and cooperation between the pilot projects, which is not so common under other funding schemes.*

In addition to virtual communication and exchange facilitated by online tools and platforms, LIVIND convened three in-person meetings to foster deeper connections among participants and enhance project outcomes. The meetings provided invaluable opportunities for participants to strengthen interpersonal connections, facilitate in-depth reflections on project implementation, acquire new insights, exchange ideas, and outline future goals and objectives.

One of LIVIND's pilot projects, Sustainability for the Mushroom Festival, developed a sustainability plan for the Varėna Mushroom Festival, organised since 1987 in the Dzūkija region in southern Lithuania. The main organisations and communities involved in the festival's management gathered to reflect on the structure and the process of organising the festival to find new sustainable approaches and to strengthen links among stakeholders for better networking. Professional facilitators invited the participants to interact using various design thinking methods (e.g., storytelling and the world café) to raise creative and sustainable ideas. Workshops led by facilitators proved to be successful, especially for mediating between different points of view and deepening the understanding of sustainability, especially the importance of cultural and ecological sustainability. Through discussions, simulations of different roles, and exchanges of thoughts and ideas from various perspectives, concrete proposals were collected that fed into the recommendations for integrating sustainability ideas into the Varėna Mushroom Festival. The groundwork for more inclusive and sustainable cultural events in the region was laid by fostering dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.

Empowerment

Insights: Stakeholders in the creative and living cultural heritage field are active on different levels. However, stronger conscious connections between creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development on the ground are yet to be established. In addition, actors are often limited in their resources, with grassroots initiatives being in the most precarious position, being strongly reliant on project funding. Existing project funding schemes implicitly encourage celebratory approaches over critical, limiting the innovative potential and discouraging the testing of new approaches.

Recommendations:

– **Encourage** the engagement of local stakeholders and support their agency by building civil society structures that will ensure the integration of creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development on the local level.

– **Develop** local stakeholders' capacities to independently design, implement, and evaluate their activities on creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

– **Provide** funding schemes for local stakeholders to experiment with innovative ideas connecting creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

– **Recognise** the possible challenges and failures, analysing them in detail to use as a learning experience with a great potential for nurturing improvement.

Case: To put creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development into practice, LIVIND funded (fully or partially) 20 pilot projects that attempted to test different approaches, methods, and tools to strengthen the links between creative and living cultural heritage and various aspects of sustainability. Implementation of pilot projects offered a way to develop, test, and share new and/or more effective ways of connecting civil society actions, cultural heritage safeguarding, and heritage management with sustainable development initiatives and goals on the local level. It also aimed at creating value for community members and other relevant stakeholders by strengthening and supporting the role of creative and living cultural heritage as a resource for local communities in obtaining livelihoods, stability, and well-being in sustainable ways.

Monitoring and evaluation

Insights: Data on the relationship between creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development is limited and often fragmented. Currently, assessment primarily focuses on quantifiable aspects, such as economic investments in heritage, while overlooking complex social, cultural, and environmental contributions. Despite progress in tracking expenditures, these efforts fail to fully capture the multifaceted role of creative and living cultural heritage in sustainability, with qualitative measures often excluded from mainstream assessments.

Recommendations:

– **Ensure** efficient implementation of existing policies linking creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

– **Organise** systematic collection and publication of data on the mutual influences between creative and living cultural heritage and sustainable development.

– **Develop** coherent and transparent evaluation mechanisms of integration between sustainable development and creative and living cultural heritage, combining quantitative and qualitative methods that will facilitate comparative measuring.

– **Encourage** active stakeholders' engagement at all stages of the monitoring and evaluation processes.

Case: In 2014, the Åland Parliament unanimously decided that Åland society should develop within the sustainability framework by 2051. To support the regional government's decision, the network bärkraft.ax was created at the initiative of actors from the public, business, and education sectors. In 2016, hundreds of people participated in compiling the local development and sustainability agenda. The efforts to contribute to a viable and sustainable Åland were acknowledged by the European Commission by recognising the Development and Sustainability Agenda for Åland with the European Sustainability Award 2019. In 2024, the regional government submitted to the UN the report "All Can Flourish on the Islands of Peace", a so-called "voluntary review" within the framework of Agenda 2030. As a prominent example of "think globally – act locally", it shares successes and challenges while working with the SDGs.

**Museovirasto
Museiverket
Finnish Heritage Agency**

Living cultural heritage - a resource of Creative solutions for a sustainable future

Policy brief

Introduction

Activities for the safeguarding of living
cultural heritage practices and traditions
can make important contributions to
sustainable development across multiple
sectors and the aspects of cultural, social,
economic, and ecological sustainability.
Sustainable development strategies
can also support heritage practice and
transmission.

The general public often responds
enthusiastically to inclusion of new
sustainability dimensions in heritage
projects, for example by placing a spotlight
on recycling and reusing materials in
heritage festivals.

Heritage sector stakeholders can help
track impacts of their safeguarding work on
sustainable development outcomes, such
as responsible consumption, decent work,
and sustainable cities and communities.

Communities, NGOs and government
agencies can benefit from experimental
collaborations on living heritage
sustainability projects, and share funding
and expertise between projects.

LIVIND Project

The LIVIND project (September 2021 – May 2024), led by the Finnish Heritage Agency and funded in principle by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, explored the links between sustainable development and living cultural heritage. The project organised meetings and a series of webinars, and funded a research study and 20 pilot projects in the Northern Dimension region. Project partners were recruited from communities, culture sector organisations and the public and private sectors in Denmark (including Greenland and Faroe Islands), Estonia, Finland (including Åland Islands), Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, and Sweden.

What is living cultural heritage?

Living heritage or intangible cultural heritage is par of people's everyday lives, in all our daily routines, in work, at hobbies and in times of festivities. Living heritage includes celebrations and rituals, various craft skills, dance, music, and storytelling as well as traditions related to food or nature and the universe.

Example: Tree-beekeeping across the Polish-Lithuanian forest area (Poland & Lithuania)

This LIVIND pilot project focused on organising a collaborative Polish-Lithuanian workshop to exchange knowledge and experiences in tree-beekeeping. The tradition of sustaining nesting logs for wild bees that create their hives in trees is known and continued over generations in both countries, in the Polish Augustow forest area that continues to the Lithuanian side as the Dainava Forest and Dzūkija national park. This element of living heritage was inscribed on the UNESCO ICH Representative list in 2020 together by Poland and Belarus, but the tradition is kept also in Lithuania and Ukraine. The pilot organisers saw it as important to strengthen bilateral and multilateral contacts between the different bearer communities.

The project delivered a three-day workshop that for the first time brought participants from Poland and Lithuania to work together. The project created opportunities and connections for cooperation and mutual support. Indeed, the pilot project worked as an introduction to cooperation, as following the pilot project the organising parties achieved an EU funded cross-border Interreg project.

Find more information about the beekeeping pilot project on the [LIVIND website](#).

Picture: Bractwo Bartne.

Key challenges

A number of key challenges were identified through the LIVIND pilot projects and the analysis of periodic reports from the project countries for the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage:

1. **Policy fragmentation**. In spite of national and international commitments on sustainable development and heritage safeguarding, there is often little synergy between development policies and heritage policy, especially at the national level.

2. **Insufficient awareness and research** about the potential links between living heritage and sustainable development.

3. **Insufficient cross-sectoral collaboration** between the heritage sector and other sectors, especially at the national level. Strong local organisations supported by local government can help foster cross-sectoral links.

Picture: Aivar Ruukel.

Policy recommendations

To fully realise the potential of living heritage to support sustainable development, the LIVIND project identified a number of steps that could be taken by policymakers and sector stakeholders:

1. **Create greater synergy between policies and programmes for living heritage safeguarding and sustainable development** at the national level, particularly in the areas of tourism, creative industries and environmental sustainability. Look to local government for inspiration on how different development agendas could be linked. See for example: Sustainability plan for the Varėna mushroom festival (Lithuania).

2. **Raise awareness** among communities and heritage professionals about sustainable development policies that affect their work and share practical ways in which they can contribute to the sustainable development agenda. At the local level, Indigenous communities provide inspiring examples of community-driven policies and programmes such as ethical guidelines and intellectual property strategies enabling better control over and benefit from their own heritage. See for example: IP tools for Sámi handicrafts (Sámi area in Finland, Sweden, and Norway).

3. **Encourage intersectoral communication and collaboration** through a sustainability agenda, leveraging existing networks where possible among communities, heritage professionals, public and private sector actors in various development spheres, local government, NGOs and other organisations. See for example: New plans at the Medieval centre's summer camps for more kids to join activities (Denmark, Borhnholm Island).

4. **Collect more data** on the impact of living heritage practices on sustainable development, and on the impact of social, cultural, economic and environmental development initiatives on living heritage practices. For example, undertake qualitative and quantitative research, led by local communities, on the contribution of specific traditional handicrafts to the relevant local community's economic wellbeing and cultural identity. Use this data to develop a series of strategic priorities for funding. See for example: Knowledge sharing and a handbook to support *fäbod* farmers to organise activities for the young (Sweden).

5. **Support targeted policies and programmes** through a range of funding opportunities to encourage experimental work and expansion of successful pilot projects. Projects could be supported by a network of experts in specialist areas (e.g. education, environmental sustainability, facilitation, business and sustainable development reporting). See for example: Cooperation with musems to add awareness about folk dance and social sustainability.

Picture: Broliai Černiauskai.

Resources and examples can be found on the LIVIND website, www.livind.fi

Background

Living cultural heritage, including craft skills, performative arts, festivals, agricultural and further nature-related practices, and various other elements, can in many ways support ethical livelihoods and sustainable wellbeing of environment and people in communities. A major topic of international debate for several decades, sustainable development, following the now classic definition,[1] ensures that we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs, balancing economic growth, environmental protection, and social well-being. Living heritage also emphasises the interconnectedness of generations through skills and knowledge that are transmitted from a generation to a generation.

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Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, steps have been taken to incorporate it into the existing frameworks on culture in general and living cultural heritage in particular. For instance, Operational Directives for the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage call "to recognize the importance and strengthen the role of intangible cultural heritage as a driver and guarantee of sustainable development".[5] UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions explicitly links the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions and sustainable development in Article 13 and cooperation for development in Articles 14–18.[6] The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) emphasises the value and potential of cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development and addresses the sustainable use of cultural heritage specifically in Article 9, reframing heritage in relation to its value for

[1] World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf.

[2] United Nations. n.d. "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." United Nations. Accessed October 28, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda.

[3] UNESCO. 2022. UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022: Final Declaration. https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2022/10/6.MONDIACULT_EN_DRAFT%20FINAL%20DECLARATION_FINAL_1.pdf.

[4] United Nations General Assembly, 20 September 2024. The Pact for the Future. https://undocs.org/en/A/79/L.2 The role of culture and sports is highlighted in Action 11.

[5] UNESCO. 2022. Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/2003_Convention_Basic_Texts-_2022_version-EN_.pdf.

[6] UNESCO. 2023. Basic Texts of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388847.

society and advocating for an integrated approach and citizen participation.[7]

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Greater awareness, collaboration and research can support evidence-based policymaking in this area and foster a holistic approach, acknowledging the interconnectedness of the environmental, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of sustainability. Further experimental and exploratory actions, based on broad individual and community participation in design, implementation, and evaluation of projects can help to develop robust and long-term strategic policy measures to support sustainable development in, with, and through living heritage practices.

Picture: Rene Jakobson.

[7] Council of Europe. 2005. Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. https://rm.coe.int/1680083746.

[8] Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture. n.d. "Who We Are: NDPC." Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture. Accessed October 22, 2024. https://ndpculture.org/ndpc.