



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

0157900010

Register of Good
Safeguarding Practices

Le

03 AVR. 2019

ICH-03 – Form

N°

0263

**PROGRAMMES, PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES
BEST REFLECTING THE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES
OF THE CONVENTION**

**Deadline 31 March 2019
for possible selection in 2020**

Instructions for completing the proposal form are available at:
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>

Proposals not complying with those instructions and those found below will be considered incomplete and cannot be accepted.

A. State(s) Party(ies)

For multinational proposals, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.

Albania

B. Contact person for correspondence

B.1. Designated contact person

Provide the name, address and other contact information of a single person responsible for correspondence concerning the proposal. For multinational proposals, provide complete contact information for one person designated by the States Parties as the main contact person for all correspondence relating to the proposal and for one person in each State Party involved.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr, Prof., Phd
Family name: Tole
Given name: Vasil
Institution/position: ODEA/ Head of Director Board,
www.odeacademy.org
Address: Blvd. Bajram Curri, P. 298, ap. 19, Tirana, Albania
Telephone number: 00355692055551
Email address: vasiltole@hotmail.com
Other relevant information: General Secretary of Academy of Sciences of Albania
www.akad.gov.al

B.2. Other contact persons (for multinational files only)

Provide below complete contact information for one person in each submitting State, other than the primary contact person identified above.

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

C. Title

Indicate the official title of the programme, project or activity, in English or French, that will appear in published material.

Not more than 200 characters

"National Folk Festival of Gjirokastra (NFFoGj)-50 years best practice in safeguarding Albanian intangible heritage"

D. Geographic scope

Tick one box to identify whether the geographic scope of the programme, project or activity is essentially national, subregional, regional or international (the last category includes projects carried out in geographically non-continuous areas).

- national (within a single country)
- subregional (more than one country)
- regional (more than one country)
- international (including geographically non-continuous areas)

E. Geographical location

Indicate the locations in which the programme, project or activity was or is being carried out.

Not more than 150 words

NFFoGj is held in the city of Gjirokastra and supported infrastructurally by other municipality of the County. Gjirokastra is located in southern Albania, 220 km away from the Albanian Capital, Tirana. After the 2015 local government reform, the present municipality of Gjirokastra has about 25.000 inhabitants and Gjirokastra County is composed by 7 municipalities (Gjirokastra, Dropull, Libohovë, Tepelenë, Përmet, Këlcyrë, Memaliaj) with total population of about 70,000 in a total area of 2,884 km²

Because of the architecture and the culture monuments, Gjirokastra has gained the status of "museum town" in 1961 and from 2005 is part of UNESCO World Heritage site.

NFFoGj is held at Gjirokastra Castle, by where the city is overseen.

The preparatory stages of the NFFoGj are organized in all administrative districts of Albania. Individual performers and groups from all country regions and abroad have been selected for the final phase of NFFoGj.

F. Status

Tick one box to identify whether the programme, project or activity is completed or in progress at the time the proposal is submitted.

- completed
- in progress

G. Name of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned

Identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the proposed programme, project or activity.

Not more than 150 words

NFFoGj is the most important and largest event of the ICH safeguarding in Albania.

Starting in 1968, NFFoGj is held in the castle of the museum city of Gjirokastra. The organizers of the NFFoGj are: Ministry of Culture, National Center of Traditional Activities, Academy of Sciences, Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies and Local government institutions in Gjirokastra.

Referring to the Statute of NFFoGj, the participants of the festival are:

- Free individuals (singers, dancers and folk instrumentalists).
- Folk groups of cultural-folk associations and culture centers at municipalities and communes, including minority groups.
- Albanian folk groups from diaspora as well as foreign folk groups from other countries

Other communities involved in NFFoGj are also:

- Researchers of the Albanian ICH
- Local communities in Gjirokastra district;
- Printed and audio-visual media;
- Tour operators.

H. Domain(s)

Tick one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage covered by the programme, project or activity, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. If you tick 'others', specify the domain(s) in brackets.

- oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage
- performing arts
- social practices, rituals and festive events
- knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- traditional craftsmanship
- other(s) ()

1. Description

Criterion P.1 requires that 'the programme, project or activity involves safeguarding, as defined in Article 2.3 of the Convention.' Article 2.3 states that "Safeguarding" means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage'.

For sections 1.a and 1.b together, provide succinct descriptions of the programme, project or activity and its main components, describing what actually happened or is underway.

1.a. Background, rationale and objectives

Describe the situation that led to the creation of the programme, project or activity – what safeguarding needs were identified and by whom, and how the priorities were identified and established. Identify the primary objectives of the programme, project or activity.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

After the Second World War, several folk festivals were organized aiming to revitalize the cultural life of the country. Some of them were held at Tirana (in 1947, 1949, 1950, 1952); at Gjirokastra in 1955, at Elbasan in 1966, at Lezha in 1967.

In the 1960's, cultural centers (called Culture's Houses) were established in all the cities of Albania, which attracted the best bearers and folk groups of the area and organized the local folkloric festivals. This situation naturally brought the idea of the establishment of a national folkloric festival where all the diversity of Albanian folklore forms would be presented. At the national level, the Central House of Folk Activities (nowadays National Center for Traditional Activities) was established to coordinate all cultural centers in Albania aiming the organization of folk-artistic life and especially of the folkloric national festival. The Institute of Folk Cultures at the Academy of Sciences was engaged in gathering and studying folklore materials as well as drafting the professional criteria for the presentation and selection of folk groups at the national folk festival.

The museum city of Gjirokastra was selected to host the first National Folk Festival in 1968. The scene of the festival settled in the city's castle that is known as the "symbol of the resistance" of human life and inheritance. Its architecture and space allows the folk groups to perform comfortably as well as a large audience to see the festival.

From the first festival until the end of the socialist system, four other editions were held regularly at Gjirokastra (in 1973, 1978, 1983 and 1988). The main organizers were: the Central House of National Creation (today the National Center of Traditional Activities) Institute of Folklore at the Academy of Sciences (today Institute of Cultural Anthropology at the Academy of Albanologic Studies), Ministry of Culture in cooperation with Albanian Public Radio and Television and local government bodies in Gjirokastra.

After the establishment of the multiparty political system, there were extensive discussions of the organization of the festival with revised criteria not influenced by ideological approaches. The institutional organizers decided the organization of the 6th edition in 1995 at the castle of Berat museum-city. This was welcomed by interest groups and the community, but they preferred the festival to return to Gjirokastra. The four next editions were held again at Gjirokastra respectively in 2000, 2004, 2009 and 2015. After the 2000-s, the folklore traditions are threatened by globalization, immigration, urbanization and the cultural industry. In this condition the collection, documentation, preservation and transmission of these traditions are considered the festival's priorities. The next edition of NFFoGj is forecasted in 2020. The Statute defines the primary objectives of the festival that consist in safeguarding and promotion of the best values of the Albanian intangible heritage, as well as the revitalization the cultural life of the country, particularly in Gjirokastra district, in support of cultural tourism.

1.b. Safeguarding measures involved

Describe the specific safeguarding measures that the programme, project or activity includes and why they were adopted. Identify what innovative methods or modalities were involved, if any.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

In these 50 years, NFFoGj has applied several safeguarding measures that are in compliance with the definitions the Convention 2003 and UNESCO's Recommendation for safeguarding folklore in 1989. These measures have consisted on:

Identification: The preliminary phase of the NFFoGj includes the field expeditions of the scholars and specialists all around the country to identify, collect and select the folklore materials and their bearers for study purposes and next phases of festival. Every festival has brought to the public songs, dresses, dances and folk performers previously unknown.

Documentation and preservation: The heritage presented at the festivals is documented in several forms, mainly in audio, video, photographic material etc. The Festival Archives have been created by several institutions such as the Institute of Cultural Anthropology, Film Archive, Public Radio and Television, Telegraphic Agency, Radio Gjirokastra and after 1990 even in some private archives.

Research: The scholars have scientifically documented the traditions presented at the Gjirokastra festival, such as all form of music, oral telling, clothing, performances arts, rituals etc. During and after the festival, scientific conferences are organized with the participation of scholars from our country and the world playing an essential role in researching heritage. Some of these studies have been published regularly in the most known scientific magazine "Folk Culture", a publication of the Academy of Sciences ect.

Promotion and Enhancement: The festival has promoted the moving heritage and folk artists. By participating in the festivals, individuals and folk groups are already recognized nationally and internationally. Various forms of appreciation such as decorations and financial support are provided for them. The festival has reshaped the role of intangible heritage in society as an element of our european identity.

Transmission: the Festival supports and encourages all forms of sharing traditional knowledge and skills between generations. The festival has served as a forum for the recognition and transmission of all forms of intangible heritage expressions throughout the country and in the diaspora as well as in ethnic minorities in Albania.

Creating of institutional network: After 2000 in Albania, a network of annual national festivals dedicated to intangible heritage typologies such as: Iso-Polyphony in Vlora, Sazet in Korca, Rhapsody in Lezha, Urban Music in Elbasan and Folk Dance in Lushnja have been established. In addition, some regional folk activities are organized at the local level. All these activities create the basis of the network that culminates in the organization of the National Folk Festival of Gjirokastra, which remains the most important activity in promoting the principles of the UNESCO Convention 2003

Revitalization: Being an attractive activity in terms of tourism and sustainable development of the area, the Festival serves as a catalyst for the revitalization of the inherited heritage. Many folklore models have inspired artists for new artistic works, especially in the field of music, literature, visual arts and cinematography. New creative models in the field of fashion have also been inspired by the folk costume. Musical folk instruments are introduced in contemporary music creativity.

1.c. Competent body(ies) involved

Provide the name, address and other contact information of the competent body(ies), and if applicable, the name and title of the contact person(s), responsible for the local management of the programme, project or activity.

Name of the body: Prefect of Gjirokastra

Name and title of the contact person: Mr. Astrit Aliaj

Address: Gjirokastra, Albania

Telephone number: 00355697018111

Email address: astritaliaj.prefektigj@hotmail.com

Other relevant information: <https://www.facebook.com/prefektiaqarkutgjirokaster/>

2. Coordination at the regional, subregional and/or international levels

Criterion P.2 requires that 'the programme, project or activity promotes the coordination of efforts for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage on regional, subregional and/or international levels'. Explain, if applicable, how the programme, project or activity has promoted such coordination. If the programme was or is conducted exclusively at the national level and has not involved such coordination, state so clearly.

Not more than 500 words

Because of the national status, NFFoGj is the result of the coordination of the efforts at the local, regional and national level. The Statute of the festival clearly defines the responsible structures,

their compositions and duties. Referring the Statute, central and local government institutions, scientific and media institutions, cultural centers and associations, NGO-s, tourist associations and operators as well as free individuals cooperate and assist in organizing the festival.

At the beginning, the festival aimed at recognizing and exposing the cultural diversity of the various areas represented at the national level. In other editions, the festival aimed at highlighting the typologies of folklore within each area and spreading them in different generations, from children to elders. The creativity of contemporary folklore also received special attention at that time.

From the 3rd edition of 1978, the festival began to represent the values of Albanian heritage abroad, starting with the Arbëresh of Italy and the Albanians of Turkey. This tradition continued in the next festivals with the representation of the heritage of Albanians wherever they live and work, from Europe, the USA and Australia.

The values of minority inheritance were introduced from the first festival in 1968 through the representation of the Greek ethnic minority in Albania. Today the inclusion of representative groups of other minorities, such as Vlachos, Macedonians, Gypsies, etc., is a reality.

After 2000, the organizers have given space to the presentation of the folk groups of various European countries and beyond.

Coordination at the international level is also reflected in the dimension of scientific research. As a rule, after the festival, conferences and scientific roundtables are held. The observations made during the festival are presented in reports at scientific forums at home and abroad.

For example, at the Symposium held after the III Festival in 1979, 35 papers by local and foreign authors presented the observations and conclusions of the 1978 National Folk Festival. Discussions of field scholars and experts were focused on the current state of traditional heritage and on measures for its safeguarding.

Foreign scholars have attended the festival since the 1st edition of 1968 and their number has been growing from one edition to another. At the 5th festival (1988), scholars from East and West Germany, Greece, Bulgaria, the former Yugoslavia, Turkey, Italy, Denmark, England, Sweden have presented their opinions published in the magazine "Folk Culture" No. 1/1989.

NFFoGj has an extraordinary attraction being included as part of cultural tourism tour. There is an increased interest in attending festival not only by locals but also by foreign visitors. A significant part of the tourist inflow comes from the neighbouring country, Greece where a large number of Albanian emigrants live. On the other hand, in Gjirokastra County there is the largest part of the Greek ethnic minority. The other tourists come from the Balkan and all the countries where Albanians live. The beauty of folklore invites tourists to become an active audience of songs, dance and rituals of the festival.

3. Reflection of the principles and objectives of the Convention

Criterion P.3 requires that 'the programme, project or activity reflects the principles and objectives of the Convention'. Identify the specific principles and objectives of the Convention that are addressed by the programme, project or activity and explain how it reflects those principles and objectives in its conception, design and implementation.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

Even the most editions were held earlier than the Convention was adopted in 2003, NFFoGj addresses its principles and objectives as follows:

Promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, National Folkloric Festival of Gjirokastra provides a site for exposure of all forms of traditional practices, expressions, knowledge, skills-as story-telling, singing, playing, dancing, children games, rituals, as well as the folk costumes, instruments, objects, artefacts, – that Albanians and minorities recognize as part of their cultural heritage. Gjirokastra brings the generations together in interaction with nature and their history providing them with a sense of identity and continuity.

Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage; By organizing periodically with a framework

already defined in regulatory acts and with a set of safeguarding measures (as mentioned in Section 1b), NFFoGj contributes in continuity and viability of the intangible cultural heritage.

Participation and involvement of communities, groups and individuals concerned. The framework of the festival stages and activities ensures the wide and free participation of communities, groups and individuals of any age, gender or minorities that create, bear and transmit such heritage. The communities are involved actively by sharing their skills and experiences in training and selecting of the representative groups in NFFoGj. It is important the involvement of the local communities of Gjirokastra County as a host and infrastructural potential.

Raising awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage. NFFoGj has offered contributes in recognition, respect and enhancement of the Albanian intangible cultural heritage as well as "places of memory" through free access of audience from the country and abroad; mass media and promotion; capacity-building activities particularly in management and scientific research; etc. There has been a broad institutional involvement in drafting a regulatory framework and policies supporting the festival and promoting cultural heritage as an important element in the sustainable development of tourism.

Providing international cooperation to gain the best models and experiences in organizing of the folk festivals, safeguarding ICH and enhancing the audiences. Through networking of contacts at the individual and individual levels, there is an increased number of scholars, performers and audience from other countries, as well as more extensive exchange of the representative groups in regional and international festivals etc.

The importance of ICH in sustainable development. Since 2005, the museum-city of Gjirokastra is part of the UNESCO World Heritage List and one of the most attractive tourist sites of the country. The organization of the National Folklore Festival is an added value for ensuring provisions for sustainable development of the region. The revitalization the cultural life of the country, particularly in Gjirokastra district, in support of cultural tourism is one of the primary objectives of the NFFoGj.

Monitoring and reporting through the establishment of a comprehensive system at all stages of the festival that aims at collection and documentation of ICH; selection and competition of representative groups at the festival; keeping the performers register and digitalization of all the publicistic and scientific articles about the festivals over the years.

4. Effectiveness

Criterion P.4 requires that 'the programme, project or activity has demonstrated effectiveness in contributing to the viability of the intangible cultural heritage concerned'. Describe how the programme, project or activity has demonstrated such effectiveness and how it has contributed concretely to the strengthened viability of the heritage.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

In five decades, the NFFoGJ has contributed significantly to the viability of the Albanian and Minorities intangible cultural heritage by the application of the safeguarding measures mentioned in the previous sections.

The festival has demonstrates effectiveness mainly in identifying and presenting all forms of traditional practices, expressions, knowledge, skills-as story-telling, singing, playing, dancing, children games, rituals, as well as the folk costumes, instruments, objects, artefacts, that Albanians and minorities recognize as part of their cultural heritage. In the the preliminary stages, thousands participants (on average over 50.000) have been presented and numerous new ICH forms and performers have been identified.

Some of ICH manifestations identified in the festival are already part of the "National List of ICH" announced by the Ministry of Culture. After the selection stages, on average about 2000 participants have joined the festival scene in each edition. After the year 2000, there has been a reduction of the participants' number in the festivals due to immigration and urbanization (about 1700 participants in the 2015 edition). Today's appreciation system provides a higher motivation

for the participants in the festival. After 2004, besides the medals for the district representative groups and the participants' certificates, several prizes for individuals and ensembles are given.

The Festival of Gjirokastra has also contributed concretely to the documentation and research of ICH. 12 scientific-research expeditions were carried out in the ethno-cultural areas of the country, the results of which are archived. During and after the festival, scientific conferences are organized with the participation of scholars from our country and the world playing an essential role in researching ICH. From 1980, some of these studies have been published regularly in the scientific magazine "Folk Culture" or in special editions. A concrete contribution to NFFoGJ heritage preservation are photo archives, audio and video created at public and private institutions.

The promotion of festival and ICH has traditionally been carried out through the print and broadcast media. "Festival Newspaper" published daily reflects the activities held during the festival days at the Gjirokastra. The festival programs have been transmitted live by Albanian Radio-Television. There is no detailed statistics about festival audiences, but it is estimated that the direct audience is on average over 20,000 in each edition. Over 1,500,000 followers are accessed by live broadcasts. After the announcement of the city-museum of Gjirokastra as part of the World Heritage List, UNESCO in 2005, the local and foreign visitors have been increased by 50%.

After 2000 in Albania, a network of annual national festivals by typologies and regional folk festival are established based on the organizational model of the Gjirokastra Festival and cooperation scheme created between institutions-scholars-bearers-communities. Therefore, this network spread all over the country throughout the year may be seen as a concrete contribution of NFFoGj' to the transmission and viability of heritage. While the indicator of revitalization may be the fact that many folklore models have inspired artists for new artistic works, especially in the field of music, literature, visual arts, cinematography and fashion.

5. Community participation and consent

Criterion P.5 requires that 'the programme, project or activity is or has been implemented with the participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.

5.a. Participation of the community, group or individuals

Describe how the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated in the programme, project or activity at all stages of its planning and implementation, including the role of gender.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

There is a broad involvement of the community, group and individuals concerned at all stages of the festival's planning and implementation that can be categorized into 2 groups: 1) performers and 2) organizers:

In reference with the Statute of the NFFoGJ (Article 5) the following are invited to perform and compete:

- Free individuals (singers, dancers and folk instrumentalists).
- Folk groups of cultural-folk associations.
- Folk groups of culture centers at municipalities and communes, including minority groups.
- Albanian folk groups from diaspora as well as foreign folk groups from other countries (out of competition)

As the articles of the festival's Statute define, its organizers in all its stages are:

- Ministry of Culture is the institution that announces, finances and organizes the festival. It sets up the Steering Committee which approves the program, budget, organizational platform and scientific criteria of the festival.

- National Center of Traditional Activities conduct the implementation of all organizational and financial decisions that the Steering Committee issues in every stage of the festival. This Center carries out the tasks of the technical secretariat of this body.
- The Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies are responsible for drafting the criteria for participation, setting up the selection commissions and organizing the scientific activities that accompany the festival.
- Local government institutions in Gjirokastra district (Prefect, County and Municipality) have been the hosts and co-organizers of the festival. Referring to the Statute of the Festival, they organize the Opening Ceremony and other activities at the historic sites of the city and around it, in support of the cultural tourism of the area. The Regional Directorate of National Culture in Gjirokastra cares for all the facilities of cultural monuments where NFFoGj activities are organized and for their promotion aimed at attracting domestic and foreign visitors
- Cultural Centers at Municipalities organize festivals at the local level and prepare the program and representative groups competing at the National Folk Festival. It's their responsibility to finance the activities during the preliminary stages
- Albanian National Radio and Television - record and broadcast live all the festival concerts. After the festival, the recordings become part of the permanent archive fund of this institution.

The following are the communities that play a supporting role that is very important in the performance of the festival:

- Researchers and institutions in art and ICH field
- Local community of Gjirokastra and areas around supports the local organizers in hosting the participants and promoting the festival activities
- Media and tour operators support local organizers in carrying out the post-program activities in promotion of cultural tourism and the economy of the area.

5.b. Free, prior and informed consent to this proposal and involvement in its preparation

Submitting States Parties shall involve the community, group or, if applicable, individuals whose intangible cultural heritage is concerned in the preparation of the proposal. Describe below how they have participated actively in preparing the proposal at all stages, including in terms of the role of gender. States Parties are reminded that the communities are essential participants throughout the conception and preparation of nominations, proposals and requests, as well as the planning and implementation of safeguarding measures, and are invited to devise creative measures to ensure that their widest possible participation is built in at every stage, as required by Article 15 of the Convention.

The free, prior and informed consent to the submission of the proposal from the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent in preference to standard or uniform declarations. Evidence of free, prior and informed consent shall be provided in one of the working languages of the Committee (English or French), as well as in the language of the community concerned if its members use languages other than English or French.

Attach information showing such consent and indicate below what documents you are providing, how they were obtained and what form they take. Indicate also the gender of the people providing their consent.

Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words

The free, prior and informed consent for the nomination of NFFoGj from the community, group and individuals concerned is demonstrated through written declarations of support attached this proposal's file. Because of the broad range of participants involved directly and indirectly in carrying out the 50 year-old NFFoGj, the process of providing the support evidences was realized through a fruitful collaboration between the project team and experts of Ministry of Culture, the National Center for Folklore Activities and local government institutions of Gjirokastra County. All targeted communities and individuals were contacted and informed directly or via internet about the initiative and the importance of the support declarations for the

proposal's submission and a sample of the declaration text drafted in Albanian and English was sent to them. Groups and communities were encouraged to freely modify the declaration text so that they fully express their attitudes and opinions. This initiative has the support of thousands of communities, groups, and individuals through signing the declaration text. Some of the declarations are signed by representatives of the corresponding organizations; others are accompanied by a list of their members' signatures. Declarations have been received from three main categories of targeted communities and groups:

- Festival's institutional organizers at central and local level
- Cultural centers and associations which are composed by bearers and performers of folk festivals
- Involved communities and groups in supporting the festival as the local community as well as the groups and individuals in the field of ICH research, education, tourism and media.

5.c. Community organization(s) or representative(s) concerned

Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative, or other non-governmental organization, that is concerned with the element such as associations, organizations, clubs, guilds, steering committees, etc.:

- a. *Name of the entity*
- b. *Name and title of the contact person*
- c. *Address*
- d. *Telephone number*
- e. *Email*
- f. *Other relevant information*

- a) Name of the entity: National Center of Traditional Activities
- b) Name and title of the contact person: Dr. Armanda Hysa, Director
- c) Address: Kinostudio, street "Gezim Erebara", near p.31, Tirana, Albania
- d) Telephone number: 00355674153653
- e) Email: armanda.kodra@gmail.com

The subscription of the NFFoGJ in UNESCO's Register of Best Safeguarding Practices has supports of thousands of people from all around the country and abroad. Because of the high number of support declarations that were intended to be received in a relatively short time, the contracted expert of the Culture's Ministry focused mainly in providing the consensus of the artistic communities and groups as performers and bearers of ICH. Through the network of the cultural centers of the city municipalities as well as the various non-profit associations, the expert contacted their representatives to inform about the initiative and asked for the communities' supports. In the most of cases, the representatives have distributed and gained the support letters accompanied by a list of the corresponding members' signatures. A similar approach was applied for all target groups, such as the institutional organisers and researches; media and tour operators as well as for local communities. For the consensus of the local community of Gjirokastra district, the Prefect of Gjirokastra County distributed sample texts of the declaration among local residents, presenting it also to representatives of local authorities and public institutions. The documentary evidence attached this proposal ensures the list of the organizations and/or representatives that were involved in providing the support for the subscription of the NFFoGJ in UNESCO's Register of Best Safeguarding Practices.

6. Regional, subregional and/or international model

Criterion P.6 requires that 'the programme, project or activity may serve as a subregional, regional or international model, as the case may be, for safeguarding activities'. Describe how the programme, project or activity may serve as such a model for safeguarding activities, identifying the particular components, methods or practices that would be relevant in other contexts.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

As shown in Section 3, National Folkloric Festival of Gjirokastra complies with the principles and objectives of heritage safeguarding of Convention 2003. Thus, NFFoGJ may serve as a good model for other countries and regions, particularly in the following components:

Existence of an approved regulatory framework that supports the organization and continuity of the festival. Since the beginning in 1968, NFFoGj is organized as a partnership model between state institutions, researchers and communities. By this fruitful active cooperation, actually in Albania there is a legal framework that supports the realization of NFFoGJ and defines the responsible institution in its organization (The Law 27/2018 "For Intangible Heritage and Museums". Article 33.5). The Minister of Culture approves the Statute of NFFoGj that clearly sets out the primary objectives; organizational scheme and procedures; the division and coordination of the tasks of each bodies involved in all stages of the festival. This regulatory framework and the accumulated experience of the 10 editions in five decades already guarantee the success of NFFoGj in the future.

Broad participation of communities and cultural diversity. NFFoGj provides the wide and free participation of communities, groups and, individuals of any age, gender and minorities that create, bear and transmit in all possible forms of ICH (oral traditions, music and dance, practices and rituals, craftsmanship, etc). Gjirokastra brings the generations together in interaction with nature and their history providing them with a sense of identity and continuity. The cooperation of central and local government institutions and involvement of the local communities as a host and infrastructural potential are very important.

Direct involvement of scholars and research institutions at all stages provides the credibility and quality of the festival. The Institute of Cultural Anthropology drafts the scientific criteria of the festival. The scholars and ICH experts are included in the field expeditions and juries to identify, collect and select heritage materials and performers for study purposes and next phases of festival. The participation of scholars has been significant in research and documentation of the folk tradition, playing an essential role in preserving heritage and generating several archival funds. The festival archives have also been created by Institute of Cultural Anthropology, Film Archive, Public Radio and Television, Telegraphic Agency, Radio Gjirokastra, in several forms, mainly in audio, video, photographic material etc. On the other side, the festival give the opportunity of creating and updating the national ICH inventories and performers registers.

Promoting the intangible cultural heritage. Such a festival with a broad media reflection helps to maintain vital and to promote ICH, as a significant element of national identity. The festival also promotes the performers through a fair appreciation system and participation certificates. The one-week holding of the festival at the Castle of museum-city of Gjirokastra, is a very good model for the promotion of intangible cultural heritage, in support of cultural tourism and sustainable economic development of the area.

7. Willingness to cooperate in the dissemination of best safeguarding practices

Criterion P.7 requires that 'the submitting State(s) Party(ies), implementing body(ies), and community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned are willing to cooperate in the dissemination of best practices, if their programme, project or activity is selected'. Describe their willingness to cooperate in such dissemination.

If you attach supporting evidence demonstrating such willingness, especially expressed by the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned, indicate below what evidence you are providing and what form it takes. Such evidence, if any, shall be provided in one of the working languages of the Committee (English or French), as well as in the language of the community concerned if its members use languages other than English or French.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

The 50-year-old NFFoGj may be considered undoubtedly as the best model in the safeguarding

of ICH in Albania in compliance with the objectives and principles of the UNESCO Convention 2003.

The festival continues to be the most popular and most important folk activity among Albanians and minorities living in Albania. The festival ensures the accomplishment of accepted standards in preservation and transmission of the values of the ICH through its well-defined objectives; the comprehensiveness of ICH forms and performers, its organizational scheme and clear-setting professional criteria. That is why the state institutions and the communities have cooperated over the years in the dissemination of the Festival activities through several traditional forms of mass communication such as print and broadcast media, vinyl record, documentary and artistic films ect.

In recent years, the means of electronic communication such as website, social networks are widely used in promotion of the festival as the one of the best practice not only in safeguarding ICH but also in developing the cultural tourism of the area. "Festivali Folklorik Kombetar i Gjirokastrës ("Gjirokastra Festival"), is a very popular searched phrase in Google, YouTube...

The heritage presented at the festival has been also promoted through its reinterpretation and revitalization by folk ensembles and Albanian National Folk Song and Dance Ensemble professionals at their concerts in and out of the country. In these activities have been invited to perform the most prominent individuals and folk groups of different editions.

NFFoGj is also a good model in terms of international cooperation. A significant number of scientific activities and publications in several foreign languages have contributed in increasing the international interest for the festival and Albanian heritage. Although an isolated country in the socialist system, the festival succeeded in presenting the values of intangible cultural heritage through the radio broadcasts as well as the contacts with foreign journalists and scholars. After the 1990s, dozens of foreign folk groups from different countries have participated in the NFFoGj's editions, sharing and promoting its best experiences in the international level.

The implementing body, ODEA Academy, has already reflected on its website its engagement in the preparation of file proposal for nomination of NFFoGj as a best practice in UNESCO's Register and if the NFFoGj is selected, ODEA Academy is willing to cooperate in the dissemination of the best practices through a measure plan including numerous forms of personal and massive communication.

In the attached Letters of consent, the organizers and the communities have expressed their willingness in such disseminations in the form of a special statement. This supporting evidence as well as the accumulated experiences in promoting the festivals' values guarantee the future cooperation in sharing the best practices through popular dissemination forms such as: public forums, presentations, workshops, exhibitions and displays, printed and audiovisual materials, mass-media etc. The cooperation with other countries in sharing NFFoGj as a good practice would help for an even wider implementation of the principles and objectives of 2003 Convent in safeguarding ICH and sustainable cultural tourism development.

8. Assessing the results

Criterion P.8 requires that 'the programme, project or activity features experiences that are susceptible to an assessment of their results'. Provide concrete examples of assessments that have been or are being carried out.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

As shown in the above sessions, during and after the festival, scientific conferences are organized in researching ICH and assessing the results of the festival. From 1980, some of these studies and assessments have been published regularly in the scientific magazine "Folk Culture" or in special editions. The following are some of the assessments carried out:

- Participation of the performers in the festival by representative groups and districts, by age and gender, by ICH element presented.

- Structure and duration of the program presented by groups, districts, ICH forms
- Identification of new performers and elements of ICH, which are rare or not known before
- Participation of the scholars from the country and abroad, NGO-s and concerned groups
- Scientific conferences, articles and study publications that refer to the festival
- Media and reflections of the Festival in local, national and international publications
- Nature and quality of accumulated archival funds
- Structure of the audience

There have been numerous evaluations and opinions by foreign scholars and visitors who have participated in the festival, which have been public and published over the years in the print media and scientific journals. Some of them are given below:

“This is a festival of people to people”-Helga Shtajn, Germany

“If I compare the festival of Gjirokastra with similar activities taking place in Europe and elsewhere, I would say that this is unrepeatable”- Aleksander Vaigl, Germany

“The festival was perfect and the choice of the place and the environment is very good. The Castle of Gjirokastra is the ideal setting for a folklore festival”- Dimitris Themelis, Thessaloniki University, Greece

“I think that the festival like the festival of Gjirokastra is at a national level and may serve as a basis for the creation of a modern national culture”- Jurgen Elsner, Humboldt University, Germany

“Earlier I knew that Albanian folklore is alive, ancient, original and rich. But now I saw him, I can say that he is richer than I thought”- Teodor Djidjev, Bulgaria

“I think the festival was organized very well. The programs were designed fairly and at the same time carried out the presentation of the character and essence of the folklore of each region, as well as the education of people from different regions, who may not be familiar with one type, being at the same time very attractive to the viewers” - Mirjana Dvornic, Beograd, Serbia

“In Gjirokastra I saw that Albanian folk is very rich, alive, exciting and very diverse, which can attract the attention of the world through its features”. Nazif Hoxha, Istanbul, Turkey

“I like the interest shown in your country for the traditions of the people, and especially the great support and assistance provided by the Albanian state for the organization of such activities”- Kirsten Rone, Denmark

“Such folklore events are of great value. They make folk creativity known to everyone and increase the interest not only of the participants, but also of the public”- Mats Nilson, Sweden

9. Model for developing countries

Criterion P.9 requires that ‘the programme, project or activity is primarily applicable to the particular needs of developing countries’. Describe how the programme, project or activity may be relevant to the needs of developing countries and appropriate to their circumstances, identifying the particular components, methods or practices that would be relevant to them.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

After Albania emerged from 50 years of socialist system, the economy has transited from a centrally planned to a market-oriented. According to the public reports of World Bank, Albania has been one of the poorest countries in Europe in the early 1990s and nowadays an upper-middle-income country. So the activities of Gjirokastra Festival may be widely applicable to particular needs of developing countries. The Festival offers methods and practices that can be

easily reviewed and adapted in the different countries.

For the developing countries, the National Folkloric Festival of Gjirokastra may serve as a model aimed at two aspects:

- 1) ICH safeguarding and transmission
- 2) Promoting the cultural tourism of the area.

The following might be considered as possible components that would be relevant to them:

- Drafting a regulatory framework that supports the organization and continuity of the festival.
- Ensuring coordination between public institutions at any level with communities.
- Ensuring the wide and free participation of communities, groups and, individuals of any age, gender or minorities that create, bear and transmit all forms of intangible cultural heritage
- Promote multiculturalism and open society, where bearers and types of folklore are not discriminated because of their origin
- Involving the scientific institutions and scholars in direct observation, selection and research during all stages of the festival.
- Preserving heritage through the creation of archival funds and inventories
- Raising awareness and taking measures for increased threats to cultural heritage
- Promoting the festival activities through print, audio-visual and social media.
- Promoting the performers through a fair appreciation system and participation certificates
- Involving the local communities as a host and infrastructural potential
- Raising awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage not only as a statement form of national identity but as an impact factor in sustainable development of the region.
- Promoting the folk festivals as a key to the socio-economic and cultural life of the communities through developing new audiences.
- Developing the synergy between performers and audience to learn and enjoy themselves together.
- Promoting the natural spaces and places of memory for expressing the intangible cultural heritage. Keeping the festival at the Castle of the museum town of Gjirokastra is a good practice for promoting the cultural heritage and tourism of the region.

10. Documentation

The documentation listed below is mandatory and will be used in the process of evaluating and examining the proposal. It will also be helpful for visibility activities if the programme, project or activity is selected. Tick the following boxes to confirm that related items are included with the proposal and that they follow the instructions. Additional materials other than those specified below cannot be accepted and will not be returned.

- documentary evidence of the consent of communities, along with a translation into English or French if the language of community concerned is other than English or French
- ten recent photographs in high definition
- grant(s) of rights corresponding to the photographs (Form ICH-07-photo)
- edited video (from five to ten minutes), subtitled in one of the languages of the Committee (English or French) if the language utilized is other than English or French
- grant of rights corresponding to the video recording (Form ICH-07-video)

11. Signature(s) on behalf of the State(s) Party(ies)

The proposal should be signed by an official empowered to do so on behalf of the State Party, and should include his or her name, title and the date of submission.

In the case of multinational proposals, the document should contain the name, title and signature of an official of each State Party submitting the proposal.

| | |
|------------|---|
| Name: | Mrs. Elva Margariti |
| Title: | Minister of Culture of Republic of Albania |
| Date: | March 2019 |
| Signature: |  |



Name(s), title(s) and signature(s) of other official(s) (for multinational proposals only).

| |
|--|
| |
|--|