



**An Roinn
Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta**

Reçu CLT / CIH / ITH

**Department of
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**

Le

26 MARS 2018

N°

0113

National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage

In December 2015, following a Government Decision, Ireland ratified the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. As a result, the Convention is in force for Ireland since 22nd March 2016.

As a first step, the Department convened an interim advisory group to advise on the implementation of the Convention in Ireland. This group, recommended to the then Minister to approve Uilleann Piping and Hurling for inclusion on the interim National Intangible Cultural Inventory. Accordingly, since February 2016, Uilleann Piping and Hurling, have been registered as elements of our national intangible cultural heritage.

In November 2017, the new Minister for Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht Ms Josepha Madigan TD extended the deadline for response to an open call for expressions of interest from communities, and individuals across the country, who wish to register intangible cultural heritage or living heritage onto the new National Inventory. Over 70 applications were received by February, 2018. The call to all communities to submit expressions of interest remains as an open invitation on the website of the Department.

In March, 2018 the Expert Advisory Committee convened to review the expressions of interest and make recommendations to the Minister. Irish Harping is the first of the next tranche to be recommended for inclusion on the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Consequently, with effect from 17th March, 2018 Irish Harping is now the third element of Ireland's rich living cultural heritage inscribed on the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Date	Reference	Element
22 nd February 2016	NIICH – 001	Uilleann Piping
22 nd February 2016	NIICH – 002	Hurling
17 th March 2018	NIICH – 003	Irish Harping

Dated 22 March 2018

National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Reference No. NIICH - 003

Name of the Element:
Irish Harping / Cruitireacht na hÉireann
Geographical location and range of the Element:
Irish Harping has an intrinsic role in the ritualistic aspects of Irish culture and life, and as well as being played extensively across the island of Ireland, with a key role in State and Civic ceremonies, it is also played in the US, Scandinavia, Europe, Japan, Russia, Canada and Australia, where players share a fascination for its Irishness, its sound, its history and distinctive repertoire.
Identification and definition of the Element:
Domain manifested by the element: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> performing arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social practices, rituals and festive events <input type="checkbox"/> knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> traditional craftsmanship <input type="checkbox"/> other
Description of the Element:
Irish Harping resonates deeply in the Irish psyche over many centuries. It plays an intrinsic role in the ritualistic aspects of Irish culture and life, echoing the duties of the ancient harper for his patron: celebrating birth and marriage, honouring valour in warfare and lamenting warrior death. Harpers today meet in many ways; performing for, and with one another, and their communities. They perform at State occasions, in concert, at social gatherings or music sessions, at weddings, funeral ceremonies, connecting people and communities at times of heightened emotions, its music reflecting joy, celebration or sadness, and thus affirming their sense of Irish identity.
Bearers and practitioners of the element:
Since the 1960s, the individual organisations within Harp Ireland have adopted a common approach, as well as working individually, to safeguard the tradition of

harp playing through teaching, publication, concerts and the making of recordings, harp making, research and publication of academic articles, organisation of festivals and harp events, and performance and transmission. This activity is tangible proof of our commitment to the heritage of the harp.

Transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element today:

The bearers and practitioners of the element number around 1500 individuals, and these numbers are growing steadily. Harp players are distinguished by their ability to interpret and perform the music and are held in high regard nationally. Exponents of the early harp are bearers of a precious legacy of music composed solely for their wire-strung instrument. Contemporary harp players have embraced this, and have also integrated with traditional music practice; responding to evolving harp styles in a mutually supportive way, as well as maintaining their indigenous harping tradition.

Safeguarding Measures:

Irish harping has been funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht through the Arts Council of Ireland, on a project basis for the past thirty years. The Arts Council supports harp festivals and harp-related initiatives. Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, the national voluntary traditional music organization and Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, the major traditional Irish music, song and dance event held annually feature the harp in many of their activities. Other State supported institutions, support the harp by offering performance platforms, research opportunities, and storage for harp-related materials. The Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht, the Department of Education and Skills, and the Arts Council collaborate together to promote culture and creativity for children and youth in particular. This includes normal education at Primary and Post Primary schools together with initiatives outside mainstream school hours, such as the Music Generation programme and new initiatives under the Creative Youth Programme.

Concerned Community organisation(s) or representative (s)

Harp Ireland / Cruit Éireann

Date

17 March 2018