



Representative List

ICH-02 – Form

unesco

Intangible Cultural Heritage

Reçu CLT/LHE	
Le	25 SEP. 2023
N°	0490

REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

**Deadline: 31 March 2023
for possible inscription in 2024**

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

A. State Party or States Parties

Albania

B. Name of the element

B.1. Name of the element in the languages and scripts of the community(ies) concerned

K'cimi i Tropojës

B.2. Name of the element in English

K'cimi Dancing of Tropojë

C. Name of the communities, groups or individuals concerned

The element concerns the inhabitants (some 20,000) of the largely agricultural and pastoral Tropojë municipality in Kukës county in northeast Albania and Tropojans who have migrated to other parts of Albania and abroad. It is practiced by most if not all Tropojans, regardless of

gender, age, social background, education, or faith. Practitioners also include musicians who accompany the dance, male or female, and women who create costumes. NGOs dealing with the element and/or broader cultural matters, such as the Association of K'cimi i Tropojës (hereon 'AKT'), the Shkëlzeni Association (a community-based organization based in Tropojë with over 3000 members which represents wide-ranging community concerns, activities – cultural and other) and Bytyçi Association (an association based in Tirana representing Tropojans who have migrated from the region whether within Albania or among the diaspora) include members who belong to the practitioner communities, and all play a role in promoting the element within Tropojë as well as among Albanians from other regions interested in the dance. Mr Skënder Haklaj and Mr Ali Mula are well-recognized elders and practitioners from Tropojë, and are involved in the transmission and raising awareness of the K'cimi dancing of Tropojë (also referred to in this file only as 'K'cimi').

1. General information about the element

For Criterion R.1, States shall demonstrate that 'the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention'.

1.1. *Provide a brief description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.*

Not to exceed 200 words

The element is a popular, festive dance performed all year, whether in spontaneous gatherings or during traditional ceremonies such as weddings, birthdays, initiation ceremonies, village celebrations and other occasions. The dance is performed by men, women and children of all ages and usually in multiple couples, with partners changing according to the occasion and dancers' choice. Its rhythm builds momentum, becoming fast and joyful. People do not touch one another but perform face-to-face. The torso is vertical, with dancers making swooning movements, outstretched arms rising and falling as they move around one another. The dance may involve restricted movements and stable partners depending on the context, and always involves improvisation and expressive freedom. Some meanings associated with the dance relate to springtime celebrations, mountainous landscapes, and the flight of eagles - a symbol of strength and of collective identity. Today, the element's social functions associated with friendship and socializing are increasingly pronounced. The drum accompanies the dance, though the çifteli, a 2-string instrument or the flute may also accompany it. Community members wear traditional costumes on some occasions, though non-traditional attire is increasingly common. Women may also wave a handkerchief during the dance, traditionally red in color.

1.2. *Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element? Are there any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of the element? If so, who are they and what are their responsibilities?*

Not to exceed 100 words

The bearers and practitioners of the K'cimi are mainly the inhabitants of Tropojë and people originating from Tropojë who have migrated. Increasingly, practitioners include people from other parts of Albania who practice and feel attachment to the dance. There are also dance groups that perform during festival within Tropojë and in other parts of Albania. Some practitioners also give courses in Tropojë to youth from the region and beyond. There are no specific gender roles or firm responsibilities associated with the dance, which is highly inclusive and adaptive by nature.

1.3. *How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?*

Not to exceed 100 words

K'cimi dancing of Tropojë is transmitted through observation and participation during social and ceremonial occasions, whether formal or informal. During family celebrations in particular, elders show and teach children and youth the dance. In recent years, interest among youth has grown. The AKT has branches in Tropojë and Tirana and offers classes in both cities. These are becoming increasingly popular spaces for socializing, with the transmission of skills and

knowledge occurring among youth around the same age. The classes, like other occasions for dancing the K'cimi, reinforce a sense of social unity.

1.4. *What social functions and cultural meanings does the element have nowadays for the communities concerned?*

Not to exceed 100 words

For the people of Tropojë, the movements of this dance relate to their native environment. The vertical jump-like movements represent mountain peaks, while the arm movements are associated with eagles, which symbolize bravery and honesty, spreading their wings. The dance evokes a sense of shared identity and belonging. Having no specific dance leader, the element enables much freedom of expression, and community members often refer to it as 'contagiousness'. This expressive freedom encourages tolerance, appeals to youth, and enables the element to compete with other leisure activities for their attention, and is key to maintaining interest in this living heritage.

1.5. *Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element is incompatible with existing international human rights instruments?*

Not to exceed 50 words

The K'cimi is compatible with international human rights laws. It does not violate, diminish, or discriminate against any communities, groups or individuals.

1.6. *Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals?*

Not to exceed 50 words

Nothing in the dance could be perceived as not compatible with mutual respect among communities, groups, and individuals. The dance encourages tolerance of community members' own interpretations of the dance and their creative expression, as well as inter-community dialogue, as it is increasingly practiced by other communities country wide.

1.7. *Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of sustainable development?*

Not to exceed 50 words

Nothing in the element is incompatible with the requirements of sustainable development.

1.8. *Are there customary practices governing access to the element? If yes, describe any specific measures that are in place to ensure their respect.*

Not to exceed 100 words

There are no customary practices governing access to the element.

1.9. *Audiovisual materials about the element*

- 10 recent photographs in high definition are submitted
- Form ICH-07-photo is attached to grant rights for the 10 photos submitted
- A video is submitted
- Form ICH-07-video is attached to grant rights for the video submitted

2. Contribution to visibility, awareness, dialogue and sustainable development

For **Criterion R.2**, the States **shall demonstrate that ‘Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity’**. In addition, States are encouraged, with reference to Chapter VI of the Operational Directives, to recognize the interdependence between the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Given its extensive nature, criterion R.2 will be assessed based on the information provided in the nomination file as a whole including the answers provided in this section.

Do communities concerned consider that the element contributes to the following?

- Food security
- Health care
- Quality education
- Gender equality
- Inclusive economic development
- Environmental sustainability including climate change
- Peace and social cohesion
- Others (please specify):

Provide explanations in support of the statement(s) made above, as appropriate.

Not to exceed 200 words

Inscription, by conveying appreciation of traditional dance practices, would address the general tendency of youth in lesser populated rural areas to doubt the value of and hence lose interest in expressions of living heritage. It would draw attention among youth and bearer communities to the inherent value of the element and similar practices traditional, collective and popular dancing practices. An inscription would contribute to greater appreciation of the creative dynamism of folk dancing and its capacity to constantly integrate influences, including those due to population migration to urban contexts, while keeping more constant the element’s social functions such as unifying people and communities in a shared spirit of joy that reinforces cultural identity and a sense of belonging in fast-changing contexts. The element contributes to social cohesion, fostering bonds through the act of dancing. It is worth noting that preparing this nomination inspired communities to participate in cross-border dance festivals and other events with similar ICH in the Balkans and internationally. The nature of K’cimi, with men and women, boys, and girls, encouraged to dance with technique and spontaneity, also contributes to gender equality by encouraging – for females in particular – expressive creative freedom.

States are encouraged to submit audiovisual materials that convey the communities’ voice in support of the statements made above.

- Materials (written, audio-visual or any other way) are submitted

3. Safeguarding measures

For **Criterion R.3**, States **shall demonstrate that ‘safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element’**.

What safeguarding measures are put in place to protect and promote the element? Include in your answer the communities’ role in the planning and implementation of measures described.

Not to exceed 500 words

The safeguarding of K’cimi is ensured largely because it is still an engrained and widespread practice, transmitted during the frequent celebrations around life-cycle events (births, birthdays,

marriages), traditional holidays and informal social gatherings, rather than more formal safeguarding measures. There are however safeguarding measures in place organized by the AKT and other associations dedicated to the promotion of Albanian cultural heritage with community members being part of these associations. Some involve collaboration with government agencies (MOC, Ministry of Education (MOE), the Academy of Sciences, and the National Centre of Traditional Activities (hereon 'NCTA').

These measures include:

- The participation of K'cimi in local and regional festivals and seminars, support classes for youth in local community centres, often with the participation of the Shkëlzeni and Bytyçi Association networks.
- Ongoing programs run by the AKT documenting the element for the purpose of updating of the inventory entry in the National Registry.
- The creation of the Secretariat for Intangible Heritage within NCTA, which collaborates with AKT to organize activities including dance festivals, which include:
 - March 2017 and June 2018: a local folk concert named "K'cimi i Tropojës" in Bajram Curr (Tropojë)
 - May 2019: the festival "K'cimi dancing of Tropojë, a masterpiece of Albanian Cultural Heritage" in Bajram Curr ((Tropojë)
 - Annual participation of AKT participated in each National Folk Festival of Gjirokastër since 2004.

(Note: from 2020 the activities and festivals were interrupted due to COVID-19 pandemic).

- The creation of the National Register of Cultural Property housed in the State Database, that holds the K'cimi inventory entry and supports efforts to document the element with community participation. These include working with the International Assistance project at the time of preparing the nomination: 'Community-based Inventorying in Albania with a View to Safeguarding and Transmitting to Future Generations' (2018-2022), and since, the ongoing documentation of K'cimi following the project's community-based methodologies.
- Integration of the element in the ongoing MOC and the Ministry of Education programs, 'Education through Culture,' and 'Arts and Crafts', established in 2013 and under preparation for 2022 at the time of preparing the nomination, to teach curricula relating to living heritage in primary schools in the Tropojë region. While regional in scope, this ongoing program includes regular practical demonstrations by dancers from Tropojë and workshop-style discussions with the classes on the dance's cultural meanings.
- Seminars organized by the AKT practitioners, MOC and the Academy of Sciences and held in Tropojë addressing the meanings, symbols and transmission of the element, to inform strategies to document/inventory and manage the inventory.
- The inclusion of K'cimi in the curricula of the National Dance School and the University of Arts in Tirana, and discussions with both institutions with regard to supporting the AKT with future classes for secondary students combining dance practice with the study of its meaning and adaptations in the present.
- Extensive and ongoing consultations for the preparation and submission of the present nomination at the request of the communities from Tropojë, which included extensive community consultations in the region throughout July and August 2017, July 2018, and March 2021.

4. Community participation in the nomination process and consent

For Criterion R.4, States shall demonstrate that ‘the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent’.

4.1. *Describe how the communities, groups or individuals concerned have actively participated in all stages of the preparation of the nomination.*

Not to exceed 300 words

The nomination was initiated by community members from the AKT, notably during a 2016 seminar held in Tropojë involving diverse stakeholders (regional and national association representatives, local schoolteachers, the Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Albanian Studies, among others) to launch the discussions. Planning and preparations evolved gradually, with the ready cooperation of practitioners and other bearers from the communities at all stages, and a series of fieldtrips conducted by a team established to facilitate community consultations, in 2017, 2018 and 2021. In 2019, the MOC responded to the requests from the community for further support in compiling the nomination, engaging cultural anthropologists to assist in the process, organizing a series of consultations and a final drafting session in early 2021 in situ with communities, until constraints due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to online discussions. At all stages, community members have been directly involved in discussions on the file content. The AKT played a key role in maintaining communications about the nomination’s progress with the communities concerned; an important task given their widespread distribution in Albania and abroad. It worked extensively to collate documentation with community participation between 2017 and 2018, to compile the first inventory entry, and then to manage its entry into the National Registry in 2018.

The AKT, with the support of the wider communities and of associations such as Bytyçi and Shkëlzeni, and the NTCA, organized activities including dance festivals and competitions, such as local folk concert named “K’cimi i Tropojës” that took place in Bajram Curr, during which the nomination was discussed with community members in small, informal group meetings.

Consent (written, audio-visual or any other way) to the nomination of the element from the communities, groups or individuals concerned is attached in support to the description above

4.2. *Community organizations or representatives concerned*

Contact person for the communities:

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr

Family name: Haklaj

Given name: Skënder

Institution/position: Association K’cimi i Tropojës, Chairperson

Address: Salla e k’cimit, Pallati i Kulturës, Bajram Curr, Albania

Telephone number: +355 685 761 326

Email address: skenderhaklaj6@gmail.com

Other relevant information: AKT is the main dedicated association concerning the element. Others work in support of K’cimi among other wider expressions of heritage.

Contact information for main community organizations or representatives, non-governmental organizations or other bodies concerned with the element are attached, and their details can be published on the website of the Convention as part of the nomination

5. Inventory

For **Criterion R.5**, States shall demonstrate that the element is identified and included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) in conformity with Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention.

5.1. Name of the inventory(ies) in which the element is included

National Register of Cultural Property

5.2. Name of the office(s), agency(ies), organization(s) or body(ies) responsible for maintaining and updating that (those) inventory(ies), both in the original language and in translation when the original language is not English or French

Instituti Kombëtar i Regjistrimit të Trashëgimisë Kulturore / National Institute for Cultural Heritage Registration

5.3. Reference number(s) and name(s) of the element in the relevant inventory(ies)

197658 K'cimi i Tropojës / K'cimi dancing of Tropojë

5.4. Date of the element's inclusion in the inventory(ies)

22 June 2018

Is the information concerning the updating and periodicity of the inventory(ies), as well as the participation of communities, groups and NGOs concerned to the inventorying process, included in the periodic report on the implementation of the Convention?

- Yes, the information is included in the periodic report. Specify in the box below the year in which that report was submitted
- No, the information is not included in the periodic report. Provide information in the box below

Not to exceed 200 words

The updating of the inventory is mentioned briefly in the 2022 Periodic Report for Albania, with reference to a previously used name for the element, 'The Kcimi i bjeshkës - (mountain dance) accompanied with 'tupan' (local instrument) in Tropoja.' However, reference is not made to the participation of communities, groups and NGOs concerned with the inventorying process. Hence the information is incomplete and hence we have ticked the second box above.

- An extract of inventory(ies) in English or in French and in the original language, if different, is submitted

6. Correspondence and signature

6.1. Designated contact person

Provide the contact details of a single person responsible for all correspondence concerning the nomination. For multinational nominations, provide complete contact information for one person designated by the States Parties as the main contact person for all correspondence relating to the nomination.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mrs

Family name: Kumbe

Given name: Meri

Institution/position: ICH Focal Point for Albania

Address: Ministry of Culture, Rruga Aleksandër Moisiu, Ish. Kinostudio, Tirane,

Albania

Telephone number: +355692131092

Email address: meri.kumbe@mfa.gov.al; meri.kumbe@yahoo.com

Other relevant information:

6.2. Other contact persons (for multinational nomination only)

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

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):

Family name:

Given name:

Institution/position:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Other relevant information:

6.3. Signature on behalf of the State Party or States Parties

Name: Mrs. Elva Margariti

Title: Minister of Culture

Date: 25. 09. 2023

Signature:

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