



Representative List

ICH-02 – Form

Reçu CLT/LHE	
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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

Bosnia and Herzegovina

B. Name of the element

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

Sevdalinka, sevdah

B.2. Name of the element in English

Sevdalinka, traditional urban folk song

C. Name of the communities, groups or individuals concerned

The main bearers of sevdalinka are individual performers: singers, instrumentalists and composers. Both men and women alike, both professional and amateur, they are coming from different ethnic, social and religious backgrounds and consider sevdalinka a part of their cultural

identity and artistic expression.

Sevdalinka is also an important segment of stage folklore. Many folklore ensembles and associations (KUDs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, have an important role in practicing sevdalinka. These associations gather a great number of admirers and bearers of this ICH element. Bosnian and Herzegovinian diaspora throughout the world considers this element a part of their own identity.

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

Sevdalinka/sevdah is a form of traditional urban singing spread throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH). It originated from a long process of acculturation, in a Muslim urban environment, that occurred when traditional oral poetry of South-Slavic population of BIH, workings of which were best described by Albert Lord in his study "Singer of Tales" (1960), merged with musical influences prevalent during the time of Ottoman empire's rule of the country (15th-19th Century.). Even though the very name of the genre is coming from the Turkish word "sevda" (meaning "love" and, etymologically - "melancholy"), sevdalinka has always been performed in local South-Slavic vernacular (Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian).

Sevdalinka is based on monophonic singing. It can be performed a capella or with the accompaniment of tambura (saz), violin, accordion and/or different instrumental ensembles. The attributes of sevdalinka are: a musical sentence of wide breath and range, melismatic style and typical intervals that are considered influences of the Ottoman makam culture.

These attributes provide the musical context for sevdalinka singers to perform their main function: to tell a story! Precisely because of this storytelling function, sevdalinka is proving continually relevant for different communities as a part of their identity expression.

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

Practitioners of sevdalinka are primarily individual performers. They are interested in the element for different reasons and they invest their own time, talent and efforts in learning and performing sevdalinka. Some of them socialize through Cultural-Artistic associations (KUDs) or (semi)professional folk groups, others build their own professional performing careers domestically and internationally. Another important group of sevdalinka bearers are promoters, researchers and archivists who are dedicated to safeguarding different facets of the genre. Some of them become prominent as connoisseurs of sevdalinka and are serving an important function in transmission of audio recordings, manuscripts and stories about the genre.

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

Not to exceed 100 words

A common traditional way of transmitting sevdalinka occurs within family circles. Younger family members learn it from older family members through direct imitation by ear. Then, individual variations are added and new versions of songs are continually being created. Sevdalinka has

been an object of educational work in different institutions over the last seventy years: Radio Sarajevo, Academy of Music, different KUDs, formal education in the schooling system. The latest generation of sevdah performers are bringing new educational ideas through individual lessons and group workshops of sevdalinka singing.

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

Not to exceed 100 words

Sevdalinka has a clear integrative social function. The performance of sevdalinka gives a sense of belonging to the same community, that is, sharing of mutual social reality. Together with the strengthening of a collective cultural identity among the members of the otherwise multi-layered society in BiH, sevdalinka enables a spontaneous sense of connectivity among individuals who might not know each other very well. Participation in various festivities and gatherings provides skilled singers with a possibility to express their performative creativity and to the listeners a free enjoyment in the songs and socializing.

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 State Party confirms that there is nothing in sevdalinka that is incompatible with existing international human rights instruments.

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

Being a love song, sevdalinka does not have components that provoke hate and discrimination, and its performance brings together people of all gender, and of all ethnic, religious and social backgrounds. The State Party confirms that performance of sevdalinka contributes to tolerance, mutual understanding and cohabitation of different communities.

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

The State Party confirms that there is nothing in sevdalinka that is incompatible with the requirements of sustainable development. Sevdalinka is proved to be adoptable to different economic contexts while still keeping its traditional storytelling function. As a performance practice, it does not have a negative influence on the environment.

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 that would limit anyone's access to the element or prevent distribution of knowledge about it. Sevdalinka does not contain aspects which the bearers would like to keep secret. Furthermore, foreigners who perform sevdalinka and international researchers are usually met with interest and approval by the local bearers and communities.

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

Mental health aspect of sevdalinka has been recognized by many and it is of a particular importance to the BIH diaspora.

Besides informal transmission performed by the bearers within families or through workshops, sevdalinka is integrated into formal educational system on all levels - from primary schools to universities.

Historically, sevdalinka has been an important form of cultural expression that over the course of 20th Century provided a way of women's socialization in traditionally male performing context. The focus of new research on sevdalinka is female interpretation of this genre, among other things.

Cultural heritage plays a huge role in tourism and cultural industries, which, in turn, contribute to economic development. Many persons from all walks of life find their way to economic security by the way of obtaining skills in sevdalinka performance. Sevdalinka bearers hope that the inclusion of sevdalinka as an element in the UNESCO's ICH Representative list would further help this process.

In the deeply divided post-conflict society, sevdalinka is an important cohesive factor, accepted, appreciated and promoted by people from all ethnic groups and minorities, class and gender,

including members of the LGBT community, few of which are some of the most prominent performers of sevdalinka today.

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 performance of sevdalinka is a constituent part of organizing private and public celebrations in the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Traditionally sevdalinka has been transmitted from one generation to the next within intimate family ambient for centuries. Since mid 20th Century, cultural associations, which are active as part of cultural centres or founded as independent associations, have taken more prominent role in transmission of this element. Cultural associations, through direct engagement of bearers, have been systematically preserving, promoting and presenting sevdalinka to wide audience.

Viability of sevdalinka has been ensured by organizing local and regional festivals and competitions with participation and support of the local communities and institutions. There is a number of sevdalinka festivals (in Tuzla, Ilidža, Vogošća, etc.) that have a decades long tradition.

Sevdalinka festivals, concerts and competitions on local and national level are well visited and gather prominent interpreters, young performers, members of orchestras and so on. Those programs include intensive cooperation with institutions and experts who, as advisors on preparation of the events or as members of the jury, contribute to the expansion of knowledge on sevdalinka songs, as well as on other elements of cultural heritage (traditional instruments, traditional costumes and so on).

The federal, cantonal, municipal and local authorities support the events that contribute to the safeguarding and transmission of sevdalinka through financing of specific programs. Some of the most popular events that include the presentation of sevdalinka have been organized with the continuous financial support from the public funds. The knowledge on sevdalinka is gained through the regular educational system. As a traditional form, it is especially studied in high school and various pre- and post-graduate institutions. A significant number of student work at the Musical Arts Departments of the faculties of University of Sarajevo and University of Mostar is dedicated to the research of sevdalinka in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology of the Academy of Music of University of Sarajevo organizes education of experts and researchers.

Sevdalinka has been researched and documented by experts from the most significant state institutions (*Zemaljski muzej BiH*, Institute for Folklore Research, Language Institute of University of Sarajevo, Academy of Music of UNSA), which have been continually preparing the necessary documentation on this element of ICH and ensured its presence in the scientific community.

Especially significant for safeguarding sevdalinka are educational, cultural and entertainment programs broadcast by radio and TV, which present documentary data, promote the most popular performers and present the rich opus of sevdalinka songs.

The organization of individual and group workshops by non-governmental organizations and new young musicians, who in this way promote new ideas and ways of interpretation, is of particular importance for the transmission of sevdalinka in recent times.

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 initiative to inscribe sevdalinka on the UNESCO Representative List came from the Association of Musicians of Tuzla in 2017. After the National Commission of BiH for UNESCO supported the initiative, it was sent to the Federal Ministry of Culture and Sport for coordination of the preparation of the nomination file. The work on the nomination started with establishment of the expert group, comprised of the prominent bearers of sevdalinka (individual performers and representatives of different associations), representatives of the institutions that research and document, as well as those which promote and affirm sevdalinka. The meetings of the Expert Group were also attended by the representatives of the associations which gather the bearers of sevdalinka in local communities, as well as those which organize festivals and various competition programs.

The meetings were held in different places of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina so that a direct contact, data collection and continual communication with the bearers of the element was made possible. This also initiated many projects on local level which were organized by local institutions and associations of the bearers (exhibitions, round tables, gatherings, concerts) during which local communities gave support to the drafting of the nomination file.

After the Expert Group finished their work, a public meeting was held in April 2019 during which the nomination file of sevdalinka was presented to the interested participants, and the freely given written consents were gathered to nominate sevdalinka for the inscription on the UNESCO Representative List.

During the updating of the nomination file for the 2024 cycle, community representatives were again consulted and engaged in preparation of letters necessary for the new revised nomination form.

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: Galijašević
Given name: Damir
Institution/position: Fondacija SEVDAH, president
Address: Brčanska 15, 71 000 Sarajevo
Telephone number: +387 61 987 690
Email address: fondacija.sevdah@gmail.com

Other relevant information:

- 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

The Preliminary Open List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (The ICH List of FBiH)

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

Federalno ministarstvo kulture i sporta
Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports

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

At the 9th place of the Preliminary Open List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (The ICH List of FBiH) - Sevdalinka, gradski muzičko-poetski oblik

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

2011

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

2022

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.):	Ms.
Family name:	Miličević Šečić
Given name:	Mirela
Institution/position:	Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports
Address:	Obala Maka Dizdara 2
Telephone number:	+387 33 254 187
Email address:	Mirela.secic@fmks.gov.ba
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:	Dubravka Bošnjak, PhD
Title:	Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date:	20 September 2023
Signature:	

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

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