**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Open-ended intergovernmental working group
in the framework of the global reflection on the listing mechanisms**

**Online**

**25 and 26 April 2022 (Part III)**

**Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Towards a reformed listing system (Part III)**

**Issues linked to the annual number of files**

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| **Summary**The main mandate of Part III of the working group concerns issues linked to the annual number of files to be examined by the Committee. The present document provides an analysis of problems related to the current system and proposes two options (to continue ‘at least fifty-five and no more than sixty files per cycle’ or to go above this current *de facto* ceiling), each with possible implications. |

**Introduction**

1. The main mandate given to the Part III meeting of the Open-ended intergovernmental working group relates to the annual number of files to be examined by the Committee. This concerns nominations to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (hereafter the ‘Urgent Safeguarding List’) and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (hereafter the ‘Representative List’), proposals of programmes, projects and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention (hereafter ‘the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices’), and International Assistance requests greater than US$100,000.
2. The issue of the annual number of files to examine dates back to the beginning of the listing mechanisms. The first set of Operational Directives (2008) did not include any limitation or provisions concerning the number of files. For the first nomination cycle in 2009, the fourth session of the Committee was asked to examine as many as 130 files, including 111 nominations to the Representative List (for which three States Parties submitted sixty-five nominations altogether, more than half of which were submitted by Electoral Group IV). In addition to the discussion by the Committee at its fourth session, the experience of the first nomination cycle prompted an expert meeting[[1]](#footnote-2) (2010), three working group meetings[[2]](#footnote-3) (2010) and one open-ended intergovernmental working group meeting[[3]](#footnote-4) (2011) dedicated to the issue of the annual number of files to be treated.
3. As a result of these reflections, the Operational Directives were amended in July 2012, establishing the current system that makes it possible for the Committee to adjust the number of files in a given cycle according to a ceiling and a set of priorities, while recognizing the prerogative of States Parties to submit any number of files for a given cycle.
4. A list of nominations to be treated in a given cycle is established based on the following general principles:

**a. Annual overall ceiling**: Since 2012, the Committee has been determining the number of nominations to the four above-mentioned mechanisms that it can treat for the two following sessions, as indicated in paragraph 33 of the Operational Directives.

**b. Priorities**: When more files were offered than the number established as the overall annual ceiling, the Committee has endeavoured, since 2012, to follow the priorities as defined in paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives. In addition, in 2014 the ninth session of the Committee decided for 2016–2017 that at least one file per submitting State should be processed over a two-year period which has become known as ‘priority (0)’; this decision has been renewed every two years to date[[4]](#footnote-5). In summary, the files are treated according to the following order of priority:

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| (0) files from States which had no file treated during the preceding cycle;(i) files from States having no elements inscribed, good safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 approved, as well as nominations to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;(ii) multinational files; and(iii) files from States with the fewest elements inscribed, good safeguarding practices selected or requests for International Assistance greater than US$100,000 approved, in comparison with other submitting States during the same cycle. |

**c. Equity**: In addition, the Committee decided that, for each cycle since 2015, flexibility may be exercised if it would achieve greater equity among submitting States with equal priority under paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives. In other words, if several States have the same number of inscribed elements or selected good practices, they will all become priority States, even if the total number of files would exceed the annual ceiling, as was the case for the 2016 and 2019 cycles.

**A. Reflection topics**

1. The topics that the working group is asked to consider under Item 10 during its Part III meeting are listed below, as determined by the sixteenth session of the Committee (see paragraph 14 (c) of ‘Ways forward’ in Annex I of Decision [16.COM 14](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/14)). It is proposed that the working group focus on Topic 1 as the main subject of discussion, since Topics 2 to 5 may be considered as dependant to the outcome of the discussions on Topic 1.

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| * + *(Topic 1)* ‘Reviewing the adaptability of the composition and the working methods of the Evaluation Body to allow for a higher number of files per cycle to be evaluated, keeping in mind geographical representation’.

*\*\*\*** + *(Topic 2)* ‘Examining two files per State every three years, alternating between a nomination to the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List or the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices’.
	+ *(Topic 3)* ‘Moving all International Assistance requests to the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage’.
	+ *(Topic 4)* ‘Whether the transfer requests from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List be treated as part of the annual ceiling approved by the Committee’.
	+ *(Topic 5)* ‘Whether the requests for extension be treated as part of the annual ceiling of files for examination and the priorities as defined by paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives’.
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**B. Problems related to the current system**

1. Inscription on the Lists and the Register has been taking place under the same conditions for over a decade. However, a trend in recent cycles has put into question the sustainability of the current system (document [LHE/20/15.COM/9](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-20-15.COM-9-EN.docx)).

Increasing number of national files under the priority (0) category and of multinational files

1. In recent years, an increasing number of national files falling under the priority (0) category are submitted by a correspondingly high number of States Parties. A warning was raised in 2018 at the thirteenth session of the Committee that the Convention could face a situation wherein it would be impossible to treat all multinational files under the priority (ii) category (see document [ITH/18/13.COM/15](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-18-13.COM-15-EN.docx) and [Annex I](#_Annex_I:_Number) of the present document). This prediction came true for the 2021 cycle.
2. For the 2019 cycle, there were thirty-eight files under priority (0), representing seventy-two percent of the files treated; while all files under priorities (0), (i) and (ii) could be treated, only five of the twenty files under priority (iii) could be included in the 2019 cycle.
3. For the 2020 cycle, the thirty-five files under priority (0) represented sixty-six percent of the files treated; in addition, sixteen multinational files were submitted for this cycle. Therefore, only files under priorities (0), (i) and (ii) could be included in the 2020 cycle.
4. For the 2021 cycle, an unusually high number of new nomination files (70) were received from a higher-than-normal number of submitting States (81). The number of national files under priority (0) alone (53 files) exceeded the annual ceiling of fifty nominations set for that cycle, and therefore all the files falling under other categories, including sixteen multinational files, would not have been considered. In the end, the Secretariat decided to include sixty files in the 2021 cycle by treating national files from submitting States with no elements inscribed, nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List under priority (i), and part of the multinational files under priority (ii), giving priority to those multinational files which included submitting States with no elements inscribed. Even with this effort, eleven multinational files could not be treated under that cycle.
5. For the 2022 cycle, once again a high number of new nomination files (60) were received from a high number of submitting States (64). Following the same approach as for the 2021 cycle, a list with fifty-nine files was established (while the request by the Committee was to treat ‘at least fifty-five’ files), including nineteen multinational files. Once again not all multinational files submitted for this cycle could be treated, however, and four multinational files were brought forward for the following cycle.

Backlog files

1. Files that could not be treated due to the annual ceiling and the priority system are called ‘backlog’ files and stay in the pipeline. When priority (0) applies to a State, that State is asked if it wishes one of its backlog files to be considered for the upcoming cycle regardless of a newly submitted file. If the State in question choses a backlog file, after a technical completeness check/assessment by the Secretariat, the State is given a chance to update the file before it is passed on to the Evaluation Body. As shown in Table 1 (summary) and [Annex II](#Annex2) (country-based information), the number of backlog files (currently 129 in total – as at the end of the sixteenth session of the Committee in 2021) are distributed unevenly over electoral groups, with the highest proportion (57.4%) being found in Group IV. An even closer analysis reveals that three States Parties in Group IV have fifty-seven files in the backlog, accounting for 44.2% of all backlog files.
2. This situation may imply that States Parties with one or more backlog files are at a certain advantage for future inscriptions, since they are unlikely to let pass the opportunity to have their files examined every other year when the priority (0) applies to them. It must also be reminded that backlog files submitted many years ago require significant updating, since the elements concerned, their contexts, and the technical requirements for nominations tend to evolve over time.
3. At its tenth session in 2015, the Committee encouraged States Parties to ‘retrieve at the Secretariat the files submitted four years ago or more that have not been examined by the Committee’ (Decision [10.COM 13](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/10.COM/13); paragraph 10). So far, only six States Parties have withdrawn backlog nominations (corresponding to 36 files). In 2021, the sixteenth session of the Committee expressed the wish to find ‘dynamic solutions to the backlog of nominations with a view to improve regional representation’ (Decision [16.COM 8](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/8), paragraph 12).

**Table 1: Backlog files per Electoral Group**

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|  | **Group I****(22 States)** | **Group II****(24 States)** | **Group III****(32 States)** | **Group IV****(40 States)** | **Group V(a)****(44 States)** | **Group V(b)****(18 States)** |
| **Number of files in the backlog****(129 in total)** | 16 | 15 | 4 | 74 | 5 | 15 |
| **Percentage****(%)** | 12.4% | 11.6% | 3.1% | 57.4% | 3.9% | 11.6% |

**C. Composition and the working methods of the Evaluation Body**

1. The issues of the annual number of nominations to be treated cannot be separated from considerations concerning the composition and working methods of the Evaluation Body and the costs associated to the nomination process:

**a. The composition and working methods of the Evaluation Body**: The Evaluation Body is composed of six experts representing States Parties and six experts representing accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs), taking into consideration equitable geographical representation. All members are elected by the Committee. The working group will recall that the current composition of the Evaluation Body results from a significant reform that started with the fifth session of the Committee in 2010 (Decision [5.COM 7](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/5.COM/7), Resolution [4.GA 5](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Resolutions/4.GA/5)) and formalized through the revisions to the Operational Directives by the fifth session of the General Assembly in 2014 (Resolution [5.GA 5.1](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/5.GA/5.1)). The reform essentially consisted of merging the two previous bodies – the subsidiary body and the consultative body - into one and balancing the representation of experts presented by States Parties and that of accredited non-governmental organizations.

* + According to the established procedure, the Evaluation Body members evaluate each file individually before discussing the files collectively to arrive at a consensus for each criterion for every file. The discussions within the Evaluation Body are conducted on the basis of a ‘checks and balances’ system, as exchange of views take place amongst twelve members from different regions and with different expertise on subject matters as well as varying degrees of experience with the evaluation process itself. In this way, the Evaluation Body can apply a global, or universal, perspective through a consensus-based methodology for the evaluation of each criterion of every nomination file. Over the years, the Evaluation Body has established a credibility with this working method, which allows it to report to the Committee with one voice.
	+ The working group during its Part I and Part II meetings, discussed reforming the evaluation body to redistribute the workload, including by considering a possibility whereby, i) a second Evaluation Body composed of twelve members be established to assess an additional number of files or (ii) the number of Evaluation Body members remain at twelve, with two groups of six members separately evaluating a different set of nominations. Whilst this distribution could preserve a global and consensus-based approach, it brings two significant complications with it. The first concerns the difficulty to maintain a consistency and coherence in quality and approach within a given cycle between two bodies working separately (indeed this is one of the reasons the previous two body system – the consultative body and subsidiary body – was merged into one). Secondly this would effectively double the organizational workload of the Secretariat should it be expected to provide the same level of support to the Evaluation Body that currently does.
	+ In addition, the production of the substantial report of the Evaluation Body is labour-intensive and must take place in about three months in order to meet statutory deadlines. The quality of these reports is of utmost importance to the current and future credibility of the Convention, and it would not seem possible to do justice to the richness of the debates of the Evaluation Body if the time for the report had to be halved in order to accommodate two bodies. In that sense, it simply does not seem possible to include considerably more files in the yearly cycle and expect that the same quality of recommendations be delivered to the Committee within the same timeframe.

**b. Workflow and timeline**: The nomination process takes up to twenty-one months from the submission of the file to the decision by the Committee (see paragraph 54 of the Operational Directives). The detailed workflow can be seen in [Annex III](#Annex3), which indicates the different steps from the preparatory assistance phase to the submission of nominations, the establishment of the list of files for each cycle, the processing of the files by the Secretariat, the work by the Evaluation Body (including a possible dialogue process), and the examination of nominations by the Committee with its post-inscription administrative phase.

* + The preliminary analysis indicates that the changes in the composition of the Evaluation Body – either doubling in number or divided into multiple smaller groups – would mean that (i) the workload of the Secretariat would be doubled, making it extremely difficult for the Secretariat to accompany the work of the Evaluation Body in the same way and under the same timelines, and (ii) it would not allow the report of the Evaluation Body, or bodies, to maintain both consistency and quality should the process continue to be kept within the current overall twenty-one-month period. It would almost certainly imply making the process longer.

**c. Resources**: Each nomination is estimated to cost around US$20,000, financed by the Regular Programme of UNESCO (69%) and the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund (31%), from the time that the files are submitted to the Secretariat (and for some nominations also including the administration of preparatory assistance) until the examination by the Committee. This amount includes approximately US$10,000 for the treatment, assessment and examination of each nomination, as well as around US$10,000 per nomination file for the coordination by the Secretariat of the entire evaluation process and its associated meetings. The costs incurred by submitting States are additional to this costing, which seem to vary significantly depending on the context specific to each country.

* + This means that around 1 to 1.2 million US dollars have been expended in recent times every year to support the listing mechanisms. As indicated in [Annex III](#Annex3), a team of at least five to eight persons in the Secretariat are closely involved in the nomination process. The technical nature and the complexity of the tasks are such that the engagement of permanent staff is required for the core business; this staff cannot be replaced by temporary staff or secondment personnel as frequent turnover makes it difficult to ensure quality and consistency of the operations of the Secretariat.
	+ Should (i) a second Evaluation Body composed of twelve members be established to assess an additional number of files or (ii) the number of Evaluation Body members remain at twelve, with two groups of six members separately evaluating a different set of nominations, additional costs would be incurred for the treatment, assessment and examination of each additional file to be assessed (estimated at US$10,000 per file) and, perhaps more significantly, the coordination of the evaluation process and associated meetings would need to be outsourced given the current human resource constraints of the Secretariat.
	+ Should the number of files and in consequence the number of meetings be doubled, the Secretariat would need to be substantially and proportionately reinforced in order to have the capacity to absorb such an increase and have the means to adequately support the Evaluation Body. The only other option seems to be to outsource the organization of the work of the Evaluation Body which would raise a series of other concerns: to whom would the tasks be entrusted and how much would that cost? How to ensure the continuity and quality of evaluations, as well as their coherence with the principles of the Convention? Would it entail risks in terms of fairness of treatment?

**D. The annual ceiling and the order of priorities – two options and their implications**

1. In moving forward, the working group may consider the following two options in order to conclude its recommendation on the issue of the number of nominations to be treated per cycle. These two options consider Topic 1 as well as Topics 2 to 5 as entrusted for the consideration by Part III of the working group.

Option A. Continue the current *de facto* system (**at least fifty-five and no more than** **sixty files** **per year**) with a revised prioritisation system

Why continue the current *de facto* system?

1. The results of the global reflection process on the listing mechanisms so far do not allow for a decrease in workload. This is because all criteria for the Lists and the Register (with the exception of criterion P.9, which is proposed to be deleted) would remain unchanged. In other words, even with numerous technical adjustments such as lighter forms, the reformed system would not liberate time and resources currently engaged by submitting States, the Evaluation Body, the Committee and the Secretariat.
2. Following from the above, a ceiling may continue to be fixed at ‘at least at fifty-five and no more than sixty files per year’ without requiring a major overhaul of the setup supporting the nomination process nor a significant increase of resources. Similarly, this scenario requires no structural change to the current composition of the Evaluation Body and its working methods. This would be a continuation of the current *de facto* practice, as the number of files treated per cycle has been at or near sixty since 2021 (see [Annex I](#_Annex_I:_Number)). At the same time, the capacity-building approach should be reinforced to support States Parties in preparing nominations.
3. This scenario would allow for a reasonable distribution of the already limited resources to develop different aspects of the Convention, beyond the listing system. In 2021, UNESCO’s Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS; previously called Internal Oversight Services) conducted an evaluation on the implementation of the Convention and pointed out precisely the need to establish priorities for the use of the resources of the 2003 Convention’s Secretariat (document [LHE/21/16.COM/10 Rev.](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-21-16.COM-10_Rev.-EN.docx), Recommendation 1). This scenario would also permit the coexistence of the listing system with the continuation of capacity-building efforts, the engagement in response to emergency situations, the contribution to sustainable development, the development of ongoing or emerging thematic initiatives, as well as the undertaking of other operational activities. Even with this approach, it must be taken into account, however, that additional resources would be required (see paragraph 24) to implement the adjustments to the new procedures recommended so far through the global reflection (such as the transfer of elements between the Lists and to the Register, the removal of elements and inscription of elements on an extended or reduced basis).

Adjustments to the order of priority

1. It is very likely that a high number of files will continue to be presented every year, and with 180 States Parties on board, the prediction is that it will not be possible to continue to respect the principle of treating one file per State Party every two years, let alone to respond to the priorities set out in paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives. Measures would have to be introduced to replace or adjust the current system. The main aim would be to deal with the increasing number of submitting States, while including as many, if not all, multinational nominations submitted to enhance international cooperation.
2. With reference to Topic 2 of the reflection, increasing the interval of the priority (0) from two to three years, while alternating between a nomination to the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List or the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices would not provide a solution to the issues identified. This proposal may be understood as a means of encouraging the submissions for the Urgent Safeguarding List, both through the priority (0) and the priority (i) categories, but the overall number of submitted files under priority (0) would probably be increased in such a way that it would still not be possible to treat nominations under other categories.
3. Alternative measures could include:
	* + - 1. Continuing the current system of priorities but also allocating, if needed, a set number within the overall ceiling to be dedicated to multinational files (for example, ten files), and therefore also to national files (45 to 50 files), and establishing a prioritization system within the allocated multinational files quota. At the same time, should there be a high number of national files submitted under priority (0) category (more than 45 or 50 files), then a further prioritization, based on already inscribed elements, would also have to be established within the national file quota under the priority (0) category. Should there be a low number of national files under the priority (0) category, it would be possible to absorb multinational files above the allocation.
				2. Discontinuing the principle of one file per State Party every two years and only applying the priorities as set out in paragraph 34 of the Operational Directives. This option would mean that States Parties will no longer be guaranteed a place on a regular basis, but it may encourage submissions from States Parties without any inscribed elements or with a low number of inscribed elements, as well as the use of the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. This approach would also likely help to achieve a balanced representation on the Lists.

Option B: Set the annual ceiling at a number higher than sixty files per year

What would be the implications?

1. Some States Parties have proposed considerably or slightly increasing the number of files to be treated per cycle, while others have cautioned against placing too much emphasis on the listing system at the expense of other safeguarding operations that the 2003 Convention should be focusing on. In discussing this issue, the Convention finds itself at an important crossroads which will determine its future direction, in the sense of the 2021 IOS evaluation (see paragraph 13) that pointed to the need for the governing bodies of the Convention to clarify the priority areas to be pursued.
2. The ceiling that has been applied for the listing system has been steadily increasing, from fifty files per cycle to ‘at least fifty-five’ files, to, more recently, *de facto* sixty files. It should be considered that the proportion of multinational files is on the rise and that such files usually significantly exceed national files in terms of workload. In other words, sixty files per cycle represents a hard cut-off line; if a higher ceiling were to be adopted, radical changes to the current system would have to be foreseen.
3. If the current mechanism remains unchanged, increasing the number of files to be treated would also proportionally raise expenditures (from approximately 1 to 1.2 million US dollars for sixty files, to approximately 1.25 to 1.56 million US dollars for seventy-five files, and to approximately 1.5 to 1.8 million US dollars for ninety files; see paragraph 9.c above). This upsurge of expenditure may be difficult to justify, and a difficult issue to address would be to identify the resources of activities that would have to be cut in order to finance the increase.
4. Moreover, if the annual ceiling of files is to be set higher than at sixty files per year, it would no longer be possible to rely on the current working methodology of the Evaluation Body. Increasing the number of members of the Evaluation Body or splitting it to allow the Body to work in parallel groups would increase the risk of inconsistent evaluations within a cycle. The time constraints related to the evaluation calendar and the current capacity of the Secretariat mean that the Secretariat would not be able to support two groups of the Evaluation Body at the same time. It would then be necessary to outsource the work (see paragraph 9.c), through a coordinating platform and without the administrative and substantive support that is normally given to the Evaluation Body by the Secretariat, including the assistance with the preparation of the recommendations of the Evaluation Body.
5. Under this scenario, the current funding priorities (Decision [16.COM 12](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/12)) of the Convention would certainly need to be re-defined. Alternatively, it would be necessary to significantly increase the human resources capacity of the Secretariat if all the current operations are to be maintained.

The order of priority

1. Under this scenario, the ceiling and the order of priorities would need to be considered depending on whether the increase proposed is of a slight or considerable nature. Theoretically speaking, the current prioritisation system could continue if the ceiling is raised considerably, as the new ‘spots’ would absorb the increasing number of national and multinational submissions. It would be possible to envisage the adjustment to the order of priority in the sense of Topic 2 of the reflection (increasing the interval of the priority (0) from two to three years, while alternating between a nomination to the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List or the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices). However, if the increase is modest, it may be necessary to make adjustments by choosing one of the two measures proposed for Option A (see paragraph 16).

Considerations common to Option A and Option B

1. Regardless of whether the limit per cycle remains at sixty files or is increased, the idea to move all International Assistance requests to the Bureau of the Committee (Topic 3) would not be problematic. However, the impact of this measure for the overall prioritisation system is expected to be minimal, since in recent years an average of three such requests have been received. Nevertheless, the working group is encouraged to suggest capping each request at US$100,000 (in line with the number of requests that the Bureau is authorised to examine) so as not to exhaust the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund with a few steep requests, except for emergency situations as is currently the case.
2. As regards Topic 4 and Topic 5 of the reflection, it is difficult to estimate at this stage the number of requests that might be received for transfer and removal of elements and the inscription on an extended or reduced basis. A preliminary estimation of the costs involved is between US$18,000 to US$20,000 per request for each of these new procedures, which includes multiple steps. An experimental approach for both Option A and Option B could be to include these requests as part of the annual number of files to be treated and to re-evaluate the situation in a few years, after having gained practical experience with the new procedures.
3. The working group may consider recommending adjusting the backlog system so as to send any existing or future backlog files back to submitting States if they were submitted four or more years ago. The submitting States may then resubmit the updated files under a future cycle.

**E. Conclusion**

1. For the ease of comparison and to facilitate the working group’s discussion, the following tables summarize the two options for setting the annual ceiling:

**Option A**

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| **Continue the current *de facto* system (at least fifty-five and no more than sixty files per year) with a revised priority system** |
| The order of priority:* Choose one of the two options under paragraph 16, while also moving all International Assistance requests for examination by the Bureau (Topic 3); the suggestion made in the sense of Topic 2 is not to be pursued.
* Consider the new procedures (regarding transfer, removal and inscription on an extended or reduced basis) within the annual ceiling, on an experimental basis (Topic 4 and Topic 5).
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| → The budget requirements estimated to remain stable, allowing for a reasonable distribution of the already limited resources to develop different aspects of the Convention beyond the listing system (i.e. capacity-building efforts, response to emergency situations, contribution to sustainable development, thematic initiatives as well as other operational activities). |
| → Additional resources are required (US$18,000 to US$20,000 per request under the new procedures for transfer, removal, extension and reduction). |
| → The Evaluation Body composition remains unchanged, keeping the global and consensus-based methodology applied to each criterion of every nomination file. |
| → Backlog files older than four years will be automatically returned to the submitting States. |

**Option B**

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| **The annual ceiling is to be set at a number higher than sixty files** |
| The order of priority:* Choose one of the two options under paragraph 16 or envisage the adjustment proposed under Topic 2, while moving all International Assistance requests for examination by the Bureau (Topic 3).
* Consider the new procedures (regarding transfer, removal and inscription on an extended or reduced basis) within the annual ceiling, on an experimental basis (Topic 4 and Topic 5).
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| → Significant increase of resources required depending on the level of increase (from approximately 1 to 1.2 million US dollars for sixty files, to approximately 1.25 to 1.56 million US dollars for seventy-five files, and to approximately 1.5 to 1.8 million US dollars for ninety files).  |
| → Additional resources are required (US$18,000 to US$20,000 per request under the new procedures for transfer, removal, extension and reduction). |
| → The current working methodology of the Evaluation Body would be discontinued, and the evaluation of nominations would need to be outsourced to an external body whose operation would need to be supported financially. |
| → Without a significant increase of the resources, the Secretariat would not be able to undertake operations other than administering the listing mechanisms (i.e. capacity-building efforts, response to emergency situations, contribution to sustainable development, thematic initiatives as well as other operational activities) and the funding priorities of the Convention would need to be re-defined. |
| → Backlog files older than four years will be automatically returned to the submitting States. |

# **Annex I: Number of files by priority since the 2015 cycle**

The table below summarizes the number of files treated by order of priority.

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| **Cycle** | **Number of files by level of priority** | Total number of files treated | No. of States for which no national file could be treated | No. of multi-national files that could not be treated |
| (0) no national file treated during the preceding cycle | (i) no national element inscribed and Urgent Safeguarding List (USL) files | (ii) multi-national files | (iii) fewest national elements inscribed |
| **2015** | Not applicable | 14 (no element)9 (USL) | 7 | 20(up to 7 elements) | 50 | 11 States[[5]](#footnote-6) | 0 |
| **2016** | 11 States having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2015 | 12 (no element)6 (USL) | 3 | 19(up to 3 elements) | 51 | 12 States[[6]](#footnote-7) | 0 |
| **2017** | 11 States[[7]](#footnote-8) having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2016;11 States[[8]](#footnote-9) which did not submit a national file for the 2016 cycle | 5 (no element)3 (USL) | 3 | 17(up to 10 elements) | 50 | 5 States[[9]](#footnote-10) | 0 |
| **2018** | 5 States having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2017;20 States[[10]](#footnote-11) which did not submit a national file for the 2017 cycle | 3 (no element)4 (USL) | 6 | 12(up to 3 elements) | 50 | 14 States[[11]](#footnote-12) | 0 |
| **2019** | 14 States having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2018;24 States[[12]](#footnote-13) which did not submit a national file for the 2018 cycle | 2 (no element)3 (USL) | 5 | 5(up to 1 element) | 53 | 20 States[[13]](#footnote-14) | 0 |
| **2020** | 20 States[[14]](#footnote-15) having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2019;15 States[[15]](#footnote-16) which did not submit a national file for the 2019 cycle | 2 (USL) | 16 | 0 | 53 | 27 States[[16]](#footnote-17) | 0 |
| **2021** | 27 States[[17]](#footnote-18) having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2020;26 States[[18]](#footnote-19) which did not submit a national file for the 2020 cycle | 2 (national files, no element)5 (multinational files including a State with no element) | 0 | 0 | 60 | 21 States[[19]](#footnote-20) | 11 |
| **2022** | 20 States[[20]](#footnote-21) having submitted a national file which could not be treated in 2021;18 States[[21]](#footnote-22) which did not submit a national file for the 2021 cycle | 2 (USL)5 (multinational files including a State with no element) | 14 | 0 | 59 | 22 States[[22]](#footnote-23) | 4[[23]](#footnote-24) |

**Annex II: Backlog files per Electoral Group (as at 31 March 2022)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of files** | **Group I****(22 States)** | **Group II****(24 States)** | **Group III****(32 States)** | **Group IV****(40 States)** | **Group V(a)****(44 States)** | **Group V(b)****(18 States)** |
| **No file** | Andorra, Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Monaco, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden Switzerland (16 States; 72.73%) | Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia (15 States; 62.50%) | Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay(28 States; 87.50%) | Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Vanuatu (29 States; 72.50%) | Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe (40 States; 90.91%) | Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen (9 States; 50.00%) |
| **1 file** | Belgium, France, Malta, Netherlands (4 States; 18.18%) | Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Hungary, Ukraine (6 States; 25.00%) | Colombia, Grenada, Panama, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (4 States; 12.50%) | Cambodia, Philippines. Viet Nam (3 States; 7.50%), | Madagascar, Mali, Zambia (3 States; 6.82%) | Mauritania, Oman, Sudan, Tunisia (4 States; 22.22%)  |
| **2 files** |  | Uzbekistan (1 State; 4.17%) |  | Afghanistan, Malaysia, Thailand (3 States; 7.50%) | Nigeria (1 State; 2.27%) | Algeria. Egypt, Morocco, United Arab Emirates (4 States; 22.22%) |
| **3 files** |  | Tajikistan (1 State; 4.17%) |  |  |  | Saudi Arabia (1 State; 5.56%)  |
| **4 files** |  | Azerbaijan (1 State; 4.17%) |  | Japan, Kazakhstan (2 States; 5.00%) |  |  |
| **6 files** | Italy. Turkey (2 States; 9.09%) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **12 files** |  |  |  | Iran (Islamic Republic of) (1 State; 2.50%) |  |  |
| **22 files** |  |  |  | India (1 State; 2.50%) |  |  |
| **23 files** |  |  |  | Republic of Korea (1 State; 2.50%) |  |  |
| **Number of files in the backlog****(129 in total)** | 16 files | 15 files | 4 files | 74 files | 5 files | 15 files |
| **Percentage**  | 12.4% | 11.6% | 3.1% | 57.4% | 3.9% | 11.6% |

**Annex III: Nominations process to the listing mechanisms of the 2003 Convention**



This visualisation is from the Evaluation of UNESCO’s action in the framework of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (final report); document [LHE/21/16.COM/INF.10 Rev.](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-21-16.COM-INF.10_Rev.-EN.pdf)

1. . <https://ich.unesco.org/en/events/expert-meeting-on-the-2003-convention-00129> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. . <http://ich.unesco.org/en/events/5.COM-3.WG-00131>; <http://ich.unesco.org/en/events/5.COM-3.1.WG-00133>; <http://ich.unesco.org/en/events/5.COM-4.WG-00134> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. . <https://ich.unesco.org/en/events?categ=2015-2011&country=&keyword=&field_office=&domain=&safe_meas=&text=> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. . Decisions [8.COM 10](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.COM/10), [9.COM 12](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/9.COM/12), [10.COM 13](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/10.COM/13), [11.COM 12](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/11.COM/12), [13.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/15), and [15.COM.9](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/9) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. . Belgium, China, Croatia, France, India, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Spain, Turkey, Viet Nam. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. . Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Mongolia, Morocco and Peru. All these countries had a national file treated in 2015, except Bolivia, Brazil and Morocco. In April 2015, the Secretariat considered that States Parties had to have submitted a national file for the 2015 cycle to be a priority State for the 2016 cycle. As Bolivia, Brazil and Morocco did not submit any file for the 2015 cycle, the files they submitted for the 2016 cycle were not considered under the priority category (0). Each of these States Parties had more than three inscribed elements and thus were situated low under the priority category (iii) and their files were not treated. In April 2016, the Secretariat changed this approach and considered that from then on it would not be necessary to have previously submitted files to be a priority State under the category (0); this is to dissuade States Parties from submitting a file every cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. . Although Brazil was a priority country for the 2017 cycle (no file treated in 2016), it decided to withdraw its file. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. . Bosnia and Herzegovina, Côte d’Ivoire, Ireland, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Netherlands, Panama, Serbia, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Zambia. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. . China, France, Japan, Republic of Korea, Spain. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. . Albania, Bahamas, Belarus, Cambodia, Croatia, Czechia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Georgia, Jamaica, Jordan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. . Armenia, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Mongolia, Morocco, Peru, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. . Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Colombia, Congo, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Germany, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritius, Montenegro, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Samoa, Seychelles, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. . Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Croatia, Czechia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, France, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Mexico, Oman, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, United Arab Emirates. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. . Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, France, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Mexico, Oman, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, United Arab Emirates. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. . Albania, Argentina, Bangladesh, Central African Republic, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Namibia, Paraguay, Romania, Singapore, Tunisia, Zambia. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. . Armenia, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Kenya, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. . Armenia, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Kenya, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. . Bahamas, Bahrain, Cameroon, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Estonia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, Myanmar, Netherlands, Palestine, Poland, Senegal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. . Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Czechia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Zambia. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. . Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Czechia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Zambia. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. . Afghanistan, Albania, Belarus, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Germany, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Jordan, Kuwait, Malawi, Mozambique, Oman, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. . Armenia, Belgium, Ethiopia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), India, Italy, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. . Three separate groups of submitting States – Azerbaijan and Turkey (three files), the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tajikistan (two files), the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Saudi Arabia (two files) – submitted multiple multinational files for the 2022 cycle. Given the ceiling of at least 55 files per cycle (Decision [15.COM 9](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/15.COM/9)) and with an effort to contain the number of files treated below 60, each group of submitting States was invited to identify one multinational file to be included in the 2022 cycle. This exercise meant that Four multinational files could not be treated and were added to the backlog. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)