**'Other Measures for Safeguarding' Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Public Lecture, November 23, 2017, Umeå

The adoption of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) has rapidly raised a global interest, having reached the number of 175 States Parties. This certainly witnesses a motivation of States to cooperate for reaching common objectives and respecting agreed principles. However, the decisive factor within the implementation of the Convention is its impact on the processes that are on-going at national and more closely local level. In other words, Convention's significance lies in its interpretation and application by States. And it is meaningful that we find a chapter with title 'Safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage at the national level' before the one concerning international level, within the text of the Convention.

The Convention prescribes only a few obligations to the States Parties, including to 'identify and define' intangible cultural heritage (ICH) present in its territory, which leads towards the obligation to draw up one or more inventories; and to 'take the necessary measures' to safeguard the ICH identified; and to do so with participation of communities, groups and individuals concerned. In addition, the Convention includes an article named 'Other measures for safeguarding'.[[1]](#footnote-1) It opens up a broad range of policy-making approaches that all may contribute to ICH safeguarding, including the one to 'foster scientific, technical and artistic studies, as well as research methodologies'. Instead of using the formulation 'shall', this article specifies that States Parties 'shall endeavour to', thus leaving a margin for sovereign decisions of States to adopt their own approaches towards ICH safeguarding.

The lecture will examine what is the scope of diversity of measures that may be developed under the concept of 'other measures for safeguarding', what are their limits, and what thinking grounds the international expectations in relation to these? The talk will bring forward some observations drawn from the experience acquired at the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and will refer to case studies of the international research project 'Osmosis' on national ICH legislations. The findings and conclusions of this study are nevertheless expected only in the upcoming spring.

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1. Article 13 – Other measures for safeguarding

   To ensure the safeguarding, development and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory, each State Party shall endeavour to: (a) adopt a general policy aimed at promoting the function of the intangible cultural heritage in society, and at integrating the safeguarding of such heritage into planning programmes; (b) designate or establish one or more competent bodies for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory; (c) foster scientific, technical and artistic studies, as well as research methodologies, with a view to effective safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular the intangible cultural heritage in danger; (d) adopt appropriate legal, technical, administrative and financial measures aimed at: (i) fostering the creation or strengthening of institutions for training in the management of the intangible cultural heritage and the transmission of such heritage through forums and spaces intended for the performance or expression thereof; (ii) ensuring access to the intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage; (iii) establishing documentation institutions for the intangible cultural heritage and facilitating access to them.

   UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)