



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Urgent Safeguarding List Report

ICH-11 – Form

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF AN ELEMENT INSCRIBED ON THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING

**DEADLINE 15 DECEMBER 2017
FOR EXAMINATION IN 2018**

*Instructions for completing the report are available at:
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms>*

A. COVER SHEET
A.1. State Party
Latvia
A.2. Date of deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession <i>This information is available online at www.unesco.org/culture/ich.</i>
14 January 2005
A.3. Element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List that is the subject of this report <i>For multinational elements, please indicate the other States concerned.</i>
Name of element: Suiti cultural space
Inscribed in: 2009
A.4. Reporting period covered by this report <i>Please indicate the period covered by this report.</i>
Beginning date: 1 October 2013 Ending date: 1 October 2017
A.5. Other elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, if any <i>Please list all other elements from your country inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, together with the year of inscription; for multinational elements, please indicate the other States concerned.</i>

A.6. Executive summary of the report

Please provide an executive summary of the report that will allow general readers to understand the current status of the element, any positive or negative impacts of inscription, the implementation of safeguarding measures during the reporting period and their possible update for the following years.

Between 400 and 600 words

Cultural traditions which are practiced in an area populated by the *suiti* community and are of significance to *suiti*, alongside the traditional drone singing, folk songs, and *suiti* dialect, also cover annual festivities, cooking, wedding rituals, playing of musical instruments, dances, wearing traditional costumes, and also the Catholic faith. The annual festivities related to the Catholic faith – Festivity of Saint John the Baptist in Gudenieki, Saint Anne's Day in Basi, Herb Day (*Zāļu diena*) in Jūrkalne and especially Saint Michael's Festivity in Alsunga every autumn – unite different generations and facilitate a strong link between popular traditions and the Catholic faith and inheriting thereof.

The number of people residing in the *suiti* cultural space which, at the time of submitting the nomination for UNESCO, was estimated to be approximately 2000 people has decreased, and also the number of newborn infants is small. Reduction in the *suiti* community causes justified concern regarding inheriting of the *suiti* traditions and safeguarding of the cultural space. *Suiti* reside in the western part of Latvia, near the Baltic Sea, and after the administrative reform the *suiti* cultural space has been divided into three municipalities – Alsunga municipality, Gudenieki rural territory (or *pagasts*) in Kuldīga municipality, and Jūrkalne rural territory (or *pagasts*) in Ventspils municipality. There are still different opinions in the community as regards the decision to divide the community into separate administrative units. This spatial division has resulted in far-reaching consequences. Currently it affects the everyday life of the community in such essential issues as education.

The links between different generations of the community are strengthened by ethnographic ensembles and folklore groups. Moreover, their range has diversified, and men have joined *suiti* women in singing and playing of musical instruments. Ensembles *Suitu vīri* ("*Suiti* men") and *Suitu dūdenieki* ("*Suiti* bagpipers") have been created, master classes have been implemented in order to improve the knowledge and experience in playing bagpipes, and several members of the group have mastered making of the bagpipes and play self-made instruments. *Suiti* have purposefully and successively looked for opportunities to restore several traditions which have historically discontinued. Concurrently with playing bagpipes, also the skills of playing *kokle*, making traditional costumes and wedding traditions are being restored. *Suiti* have managed to have continuous progress towards achieving the selected objectives by individual initiatives and initially local small-scale projects, and currently *suiti* may be proud of self-made traditional musical instruments and costumes. Restoration of several traditional trades – tailor, shoemaker, hatter, and jewellery designer – is still intended, and the subsequent steps of safeguarding the *suiti* cultural space will be dedicated thereto. It is also intended to strengthen the co-operation of local entrepreneurs and to promote recognisability of products created in the *suiti* cultural space and rooted in its traditions.

As recognised by representatives of the *suiti* community, inclusion in the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding has provided a significant take-off for resolution of the community to become more knowledgeable of their own cultural heritage and to preserve it, to share their experience, and to become acquainted with experience of other communities in safeguarding their culture both in Latvia and in other countries. Over the course of time it has also meant significant strengthening of their abilities for successfully defending the *suiti* cultural space safeguarding initiatives both in national and international cultural, regional development and cross-border co-operation programmes. *Suiti* are characterised by relentless attempts to safeguard their cultural environment, and it can be also seen in restoration works of secular and sacred heritage; Alsunga medieval castle which is located in the *suiti* cultural space is still waiting for its restoration.

A.7. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning the report. If an e-mail address cannot be provided, indicate a fax number.

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B. STATUS OF ELEMENT INSCRIBED ON THE URGENT SAFEGUARDING LIST

Refer to the nomination file or to previous reports, if any, as basis for reporting on the current status of the element and report only on relevant changes since the date of inscription on the List or since the last previous report. Nomination files, specific timetables and earlier reports, if any, are available at www.unesco.org/culture/ich or on request from the Secretariat.

The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of this report, and is asked in point D below to describe how it has done so.

B.1. Social and cultural functions

Please explain the social and cultural functions and meanings of the element today, within and for its community, the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners, and any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element, among others. Attention should be given to any relevant changes related to inscription criterion U.1 ('the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention').

Between 200 and 500 words

The meaning of the *suiti* cultural space and its cultural function for the community is mainly related to being aware of *suiti* cultural identity, and belonging to the *suiti* community. Both the expressive and splendid *suiti* traditional costume worn on special occasions and the use of the characteristic linguistic dialect in everyday life, as well as singing and other traditions serve as symbols attesting to such belonging. *Suiti* identity is concurrently a source of strong self-confidence which is related to resolution and perseverance characteristic to the *suiti*, and also concern over well-kept cultural environment.

Alongside the meaning of cultural identity the *suiti* cultural space has a significant social function in promoting a link among different generations, the sense of responsibility and respect towards the knowledge and experience of the older generation in inheriting cultural traditions. Ethnographic ensembles and folklore groups of the *suiti* community are mainly based on experience of the older generation, and concurrently it means permanent involvement of the older generation in the public life of the community. Stable roles of different generations have emerged within the community where the older generation provides advice, opinions, evaluations, and shares experience. In turn, the middle and younger generation contributes its energy in planning and implementing different activities of safeguarding traditions. The youngest members of the community are involved in especially designed events of becoming acquainted with the *suiti* culture. Owing to active participation of the younger generation in the cultural life, revitalisation of *suiti* traditions is taking place – the customs which had disappeared from the everyday use are returning in families. Therefore, representatives of each generation have a significant role in activities of inheriting cultural traditions as they provide a different contribution for continuation of traditions.

The cultural heritage in the *suiti* community serves as the cultural identity and co-operation support, and also as a development resource. The community is becoming increasingly aware of its significance and possibilities of its diverse application. It adds an economic function to this heritage by promoting welfare of the community which, in turn, is of crucial importance to safeguarding of the cultural space of the community.

Safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space is a personal responsibility of each *suits*. In turn, persons who have a special role in relation to joint cultural events of the community are participants of *suiti* ethnographic ensembles and folklore groups, also non-governmental organisations and interest groups, and members of *suiti* Catholic parishes.

B.2. Assessment of its viability and current risks

Please describe the current level of viability of the element, particularly the frequency and extent of its practice, the strength of traditional modes of transmission, the demographics of practitioners and audiences and its sustainability. Please also identify and describe the threats, if any, to the element's continued transmission and enactment and describe the severity and immediacy of such threats, giving particular attention to any strengthening or weakening of the element's viability subsequent to inscription.

Between 200 and 500 words

Significant events which have received a positive feedback from the community, for example, restoration of several cultural traditions (singing of men, playing of bagpipes) and gradually increasing number of participants, achievements of the community in researching their traditions (history of wearing and making of the traditional costume), as well as deepening of the knowledge and acquisition of the necessary practical skills (strengthening of weaving skills), may be observed in safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space. Gradually the interest of *suiti* in their wedding traditions has increased, and they have been implemented several times in the *suiti* cultural space during the preceding years.

Also children and young persons display interest in mastering *suiti* traditions (school of *suiti* traditions, dance camp), and inheriting of traditions among generations can be observed. Activities of formal and non-formal education (mastering of *suiti* dialect, drone singing) offer to once again make the traditions as part of the family life. Also co-operation between persons tending to different traditions (playing music by *suiti* as accompaniment to dances), as well as co-operation in selling products related to the heritage (craft and designing of a uniform mark of product identity) is developing. There is also a support of *suiti* Catholic priests to care for the cultural environment and local traditions.

However, several risks identified in the previous report are still current.

(1) Reduction in the number of inhabitants can be still observed in the *suiti* cultural space, and it can be explained with the young generation leaving for cities and regional centres and negative natural growth.

(2) Economic development of the community depends on the State regional policy which is still oriented towards population of regional centres, disregarding rural areas which are not concentrated around such regional centres.

(3) Development of the *suiti* cultural space depends on the State education policy which envisages closing schools in which the number of pupils is small, without taking into account the significance of such schools as the local culture centres.

(4) The financial support, particularly for implementation of large-scale projects, is inconsistent and insufficient. Apart from individual target programmes, it is mainly granted according to the procedures of project tenders, creating sense of insecurity as regards planning future activities.

Alongside the abovementioned aspects which were topical also during drafting of the previous periodic report, additional risk aspects have been recognised by the *suiti* community.

(5) Secularisation of the society, as the number of active members of *suiti* Catholic parishes keeps decreasing, and the number of *suiti* children attending Sunday schools is quite small. However, the community keeps emphasising the Catholic faith as the pillar of its cultural identity.

(6) Segregation between the persons actively practising *suiti* traditions and the part of the community which is passive in this regard and for which belonging to the *suiti* community is determined by other considerations can be observed in the community.

B.3. Implementation of safeguarding measures

Please report on the safeguarding measures that were described in the nomination file, and previous report, if any. Describe how they have been implemented and how they have contributed substantially to the safeguarding of the element during the reporting period, taking note of external or internal constraints such as limited resources. Include, in particular, information on the measures taken aiming to ensure the viability of the element by enabling the community to continue its practice and transmission. Include the following detailed information concerning the implementation of the set of safeguarding measures or safeguarding plan:

B.3a. Objectives and results

Indicate what primary objective(s) were addressed and what concrete results were attained during the reporting period.

Between 200 and 500 words

According to the nomination submitted to the UNESCO (2009) and the first report prepared on safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space (2013), five primary objectives were chosen for the plan (they have been taken as the basis for sections B.3b, B.3d and B.3e of this report). Upon implementing activities subordinate thereto, the following results have been achieved.

(1) To promote and ensure the safeguarding and transfer of intangible cultural heritage of *suiti* at the level of pre-school education, general education, vocationally oriented education, interest education, and lifelong education.

Integration of *suiti* traditions in education process has taken place at different levels, starting from becoming acquainted with the *suiti* dialect and traditional instruments in a pre-school education institution and ending with acquisition of new skills within the scope of adult lifelong education. The school of *suiti* traditions has become a popular event among *suiti* and gathers children of the *suiti* municipality.

(2) To ensure measures for restoration, acquisition, transfer and promotion of endangered *suiti* traditions or their elements.

Resuming the traditions of playing bagpipes and *kokle*, as well as their making, also singing of men has been purposeful and successful. Weaving skills and other skills of fancywork which are necessary for making the traditional costume of *suiti* have been promoted. It has been the result of an extended and successive work owing to the interest of the community.

(3) To promote the exploration, research and promotion of *suiti* intangible cultural heritage.

Suiti children and young persons are involved in studies of local history, while representatives of the middle and older generation of the community have prepared new publications regarding different aspects of *suiti* traditions. Two festivals of *suiti* drone singing took place as striking events. Success has been achieved in paying special attention to the *suiti* traditional costumes.

(4) To ensure the recovery and restoration of cultural and historical monuments of significance to the *suiti* community for activities related to the safeguarding and promotion of the *suiti* intangible cultural heritage.

The work of restoring Alsunga medieval castle is being continued gradually, carrying out individual works of preservation and restoration. Also the knowledge has been acquired in the *suiti* community regarding storage of antique textiles which is of use in the work of the *Suiti* Heritage Depository established by the ECC "*Suiti*".

(5) To ensure the safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space in long-term, thus promoting economic viability and development of the *suiti* cultural space.

The sacred heritage of the *suiti* cultural space has been restored, and dozens of church art objects of the *suiti* cultural space have obtained the status of State protected cultural monuments, and exploration of the liturgical vestments of *suiti* Catholic churches has been promoted. An extensive multiannual co-operation between *suiti* and Liv communities in Latvia,

as well as *Seto* community and community of Kihnu Island in Estonia has been commenced for promoting the economic development and entrepreneurship with the intention of developing tourism in the territories populated by the communities.

B.3b. Safeguarding activities

List the key activities that were carried out during this reporting period in order to achieve these expected results. Please describe the activities in detail and make note of their effectiveness or any problems encountered in implementing them.

Between 500 and 1000 words

(1) The largest number of activities has been implemented in the field of education at different levels. In a pre-school education institution children are acquainted with the traditional musical instruments and playing them, drone singing, *suiti* traditional costume and fancywork. Teachers keep using the publications *Suitu Miķeliša mazā ābece* ["Little ABC of *Suiti* Miķelītis"] and *Darba lapas suitu Miķeliša draugiem* ["Worksheets for Friends of *Suiti* Miķelītis"] dedicated to the *suiti* dialect. Lessons on the subject of local history continue in the primary school in the form of interest education, and the book *Suitu novada mācība* ["Study of *Suiti* County"] created by teachers from Alsunga and published in 2014 is used in lessons. Upon initiative of teachers *suiti* traditions are also being integrated in the content of other study subjects. Alsunga Secondary School is actively participating in the UNESCO Associated Schools Project.

The course of *Suitu tradīciju skoliņa* ["Little School of *Suiti* Traditions"] every summer is continuous and gathers 30 *suiti* children from different places. At present, the number of children who would like to participate in camps exceeds the number which can be enrolled. Every year a camp for acquisition of playing the traditional *kokle* and pipe is organised, and in 2017 also a dance camp was organised. Alongside the *suiti* camps, joint camps for *suiti* and *Setos* children and young persons have been commenced in 2014 and organised every year, and they have become a pleasant tradition for children and young persons.

(2) The skills of making and wearing the traditional costume has been restored. Training in making of the traditional costume has been implemented for adults, children and young persons, and special attention has been paid to weaving, colouring of yarn and embroidery techniques. Training was conducted upon initiative of the *suiti* community, inviting competent researchers, organising exhibitions, as well as trips of exchange of experience to other locations in Latvia. In order to promote revitalisation of craft traditions, restoration of premises in the creative workshop *Austuve* ["Weaving mill"] in Alsunga was carried out. Also, since 2015 lessons in playing *kokle* are being organised for all persons interested.

(3) Children and young persons have implemented municipality study expeditions (2017), the *suiti* heritage depositories in Alsunga and Jūrkalne have been supplemented, as well as the site of the *suiti* cultural space www.suitunovads.lv is being continuously improved, trips of exchange of experience and giving concerts have taken place both in Latvia and in other European countries. Within a time period of four years traditional festivities have been celebrated and international drone singing festivals organised by the *suiti* community have taken place – in 2014 and 2017 gathering together both Latvian and foreign folklore groups and ethnographic ensembles. Special attention is also being paid to restoration of the dancing tradition and promotion of *suiti* choreographic heritage. In autumn 2015, *suiti* dance festival was organised in Alsunga. Also, association *Vēju seta* ["Court of Winds"] from 2013 to 2015 has organized yearly plein air art events for interpreting *suiti* traditions.

Several publications prepared by representatives of the *suiti* community, as well as co-operation partners have been published, for example, the publication *Suit'drān's. Suitu novada mantojums* ["*Suiti* Vestments. Heritage of *Suiti* Municipality"] (2014) which was later updated and supplemented (2017), *Suitu kāzu tērps un tā valkāšanas tradīcijas 19. gadsimtā* ["*Suiti* Wedding Attire and Traditions for Wearing It in the 19th Century"] (2017, the publication was prepared for eight years creating a full replica of the historical wedding attire preserved in the Finnish National Museum). Continuing paying of special attention to the topic of wedding traditions, part of the *suiti* folklore material is the album of audio recordings *Suitu kāzas. Precību un kāzu dziesmas* ["*Suiti* Wedding: Betrothal and Nuptial Songs"] issued in 2016. Each publication has

promoted exploration of *suiti* traditions both in the *suiti* community and also to a wider extent in Latvia and abroad, also it has promoted the sense of belonging of *suiti* to their community. A collection of *suiti* folklore materials has been published in the digital archives of the Latvian folklore depository Garamantas.lv. However, representatives of the community recognise that there is a lack of in-depth academic studies regarding *suiti* and their culture.

(4) It has been possible to implement only urgent works as regards restoration of immovable cultural monuments. Research, preservation, and restoration of individual parts of Alsunga castle have taken place. However, substantially larger financial contribution is necessary for complete restoration of the castle. Training in preservation and restoration of antique textiles has been successfully implemented in 2015 for restoration of cultural and historical objects. The knowledge and skills acquired are particularly important for the *suiti* heritage depository in Alsunga where stock consisting of 300 units, including textiles, is being stored.

(5) In order to preserve the *suiti* cultural environment, special attention is being paid to restoration of sacred heritage. On the basis of a personal initiatives by priests of the Catholic parishes of the *suiti* cultural space, the list of State cultural monuments was supplemented in 2014 and 2015 with 31 units of art objects from *suiti* churches (for example, 18th century textiles), an exhibition of 19th and 20th century liturgical vestments of Catholic priests was created in 2015 in Alsunga municipality museum, and *Suitu lūgšana* [“*Suiti* Prayer”] was created which has become a part of the liturgy in *suiti* churches.

Restoration of the road covering is a non-implemented intention as regards improvement of the infrastructure. In 2017 a transboundary co-operation project between Estonia and Latvia “Development and Promotion of Small Ethno-cultural Regions as Tourism Destinations – UNESCO Tourism” was commenced, promoting exchange of experience between *suiti*, Liv communities in Latvia and Setos, Kihnu Island communities in Estonia in relation to the promotion of entrepreneurial development and tourism based on local and cultural traditions. Measures of exchange of experience have gradually promoted more active use of cultural traditions as a resource for the development of the local entrepreneurship, and it is planned to continue such exchange of experience also in the subsequent years.

B.3c. Participation of communities, groups or individuals in the safeguarding activities

Describe how communities, groups or, if appropriate, individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations have effectively participated in the safeguarding measures. Describe the role of the implementing organization or body (name, background, etc.) and the human resources that were available for implementing safeguarding activities.

Between 200 and 500 words

Safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space depends on the *suiti* community on the whole. During the last years the number of cultural activities organised has increased, however, a comparatively small part of the community participates in them. Members of non-governmental organisations want a more extensive and active involvement of the community in the events organised. Meanwhile, others acknowledge that *suiti* cultural identity should be viewed more widely, as part of the everyday life of *suiti* and as a sense of belonging. In comparison with the previous report (2013) the number of those members of the community who are actively involved in safeguarding of *suiti* traditions has changed.

(1) Participation of children and young persons in ensembles and folklore groups has decreased. It is caused both by reduction in the number of children and also their going to study at schools which are located outside the *suiti* cultural space. The folklore group in Basi *Krētainie suiti* (2002) has discontinued its operation from 2017. The number of dancers in dance collectives has decreased from 60 to 43 participants. The number of participants of the folklore group *Suitiņi* (1985) has decreased from 8 to 6 participants. Without doubt the range of activities implemented has been extensive and intense for the ensembles which continue their operation.

(2) Reduction in the number of participants has also been observed in several middle generation ensembles – in rural band *Suitu muzikanti* (2010) 5 of 8 musicians keep playing, the in ethnographic ensemble *Maģie suiti* (1959) in *Jūrkalne* there was a decrease from 13 to 6

participants. In turn, the number of participants in ethnographic ensemble *Gudenieku suiti* (1965) in Gudenieki has decreased from 16 to 12 participants.

(3) The number of participants in the ethnographic ensemble *Suitu sievas* (1955) has remained unchanged – 17, and 9 participants continue involvement in the traditions ensemble *Basu suiti* (2011). There are continuously 6 participants in the creative workshop *Austuve* (2009) and 6 weavers in the weaver's workshop (2013) in Jūrkalne. Increase in the number of participants, particularly in relation to *suiti* dancing traditions and involvement of men in singing and music-playing traditions, can also be observed – in the middle generation dance group *Suiti* (1982), from 18 to 22 participants, the middle generation dance collective *Jūrkalne* (2017) has resumed its operation, and (mainly middle generation) *suiti* groups *Suitu vīri* (2013, 10 participants) and *Suitu dūdenieki* (2014, 7 participants) have joined, restoring the tradition of playing bagpipes in the *suiti* cultural space and becoming the largest group playing traditional bagpipes in Latvia.

Number of participants of non-governmental organisations of the *suiti* community (see section C.3 of the report) is relatively small, however the events organised by them are open to the whole community, as well as other persons interested. Contribution to preservation of the *suiti* cultural heritage is also provided by parishes of the Roman Catholic Church – parish of St. Michael's Alsunga Roman Catholic church, parish of St. Joseph's Jūrkalne Roman Catholic church, and parish of St. John the Baptist's Gudenieki Roman Catholic church.

B.3d. Timetable and budget

Indicate in a timetable when each activity was implemented and the funds that were used for its implementation, identifying the source of funding for each (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).

Between 200 and 500 words

Safeguarding activities of the *suiti* cultural space are based on self-initiative and self-contribution of *suiti* to which co-financing is being attracted. Activities (see section B.3b of the report) are mainly implemented with small-scale projects, and each of them obtains financing from several sources. Projects have been implemented throughout the period presented in the report. State funding for implementation of projects is being granted via project tenders of the State Culture Capital Fund (hereinafter – SCCF). Concurrently with project-based attracting of financing there is a continuous local government and State financing in the form of earmarked grants which is provided to educational and cultural education institutions, also to culture institutions and remuneration of the directors of ethnographic ensembles and folklore groups. The following budget refers to the primary objectives of the safeguarding plan (see section B.3a of the report).

(1) Self-financing of the *suiti* community (including associations) – 4 100 (hereinafter in EUR, rounded in full hundreds), municipalities (hereinafter – local governments of Alsunga, Kuldīga and Ventspils municipalities) – 61 400, SCCF – 7 600, State budget and earmarked grants – 11 600, European Regional Development Fund – 4 800.

(2) Self-financing of the *suiti* community (including associations) – 2 900, municipalities – 79 200, SCCF (including Kurzeme regional culture programme) – 30 300, European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund (LEADER Programme) – 44 700.

(3) Self-financing of the *suiti* community (including associations and entrepreneurs) – 11 200, municipalities – 53 900, SCCF – 39 400, State budget (Latvian National Culture Centre) – 3 400, UNESCO Participation Programme – 2 800. Currently significant financial resources from the State budget and European Union are being granted to digitalisation of the cultural heritage and provision of digital access, and it also includes the *suiti* cultural heritage.

(4) Municipalities – 31 300, SCCF – 17 200, State budget (State Inspection for Heritage Protection) – 7 100, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund – 39 700.

(5) Self-financing of the *suiti* community (Catholic parishes) – 21 000, municipalities – 12 200, SCCF – 19 600, State budget and earmarked grants (including the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Ministry of Culture, the State Inspection for Heritage Protection) – 39 400, European Regional Development Fund – 6 500.

Distribution of the financing from different abovementioned sources during the time period of four years has been even, and in general financing in the amount of 551 300 has been utilised for safeguarding activities concurrently with the contribution of the community which cannot be fully measured in material terms: A) *suiti* community – 39 200 (including financing from the associations, parishes, and entrepreneurs), B) local governments of municipalities – 238 000, C) State budget – 175 600 (including earmarked grants – 61 500, SCCF – 114 100), D) European Union funds – 95 700, and UNESCO Participation Programme – 2 800.

B.3e. Overall effectiveness of the safeguarding activities

Provide an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the activities taken to achieve the expected result and of the efficiency of use of funds for implementing the activities. Please indicate how the activities contributed to achieving the results and whether other activities could have contributed better to achieving the same results. Also indicate whether the same results could have been achieved with less funding, whether the human resources available were appropriate and whether communities, groups and individuals could have been better involved.

Between 400 and 600 words

Inheriting of *suiti* cultural traditions takes place both in families and everyday life of *suiti* (use of the dialect of the Latvian language, celebrating festivities, fancywork, etc.) and in joint initiatives which are based on the operation of culture and educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, and interest groups. All these organisations have a small aggregate of human resources. Safeguarding activities of the *suiti* cultural space have been implemented with limited, however, gradually increasing financing which is directed towards all objectives set.

(1) Efficiency of integrating *suiti* traditions in formal and non-formal educational programmes depends on the State education policy, as well as on the demographic situation (low birth rate) and individual choices of parents in educating their children. Only Alsunga Secondary School has remained from the three schools of the *suiti* cultural space. Jūrkalne Primary School was closed in 2016, and Basi branch of Kuldīga Primary School was closed in 2017. In 2017 there was no one to start studies in grade ten of Alsunga Secondary School, therefore, the option of closing the secondary school is under review, intending to leave primary school grades only.

(2) Restoration and continuation of several traditions and skills has been successful (playing and making of bagpipes and *kokle*, making and wearing of the traditional costume). However, continuation of traditions primarily depends on individual likings of people (traditional music is only part of the repertoire of the local music band) or personal preferences (ancient wedding traditions have been restored in some wedding ceremonies).

(3) Involvement of children and young persons in work of documentation has been of significance. Publications and seminars supporting knowledge regarding *suiti* traditions have helped to continue the skills (making of traditional costumes). Alongside the accomplishments of *suiti* themselves, promotion of the *suiti* cultural space as external initiative has turned out to be influential (documentary *Ručs un Norie*, TV series and national e-services advertisement).

(4) The knowledge acquired as a result of training regarding preservation and restoration of cultural objects (antique textiles) has been a purposeful benefit which is of significance for the work with the *suiti* material heritage depository. In turn, a significantly larger investment of resources is necessary for restoration of cultural monuments (Alsunga medieval castle).

(5) Initiatives for establishment of protection of movable cultural objects, also small restoration projects have been fruitful for preserving the sacred heritage. In turn, preservations of immovable cultural objects (*suiti* churches) demands further investment. It will be possible to evaluate efficiency of activities related to the economic development (creation of a joint brand of *suiti* products, exchange of experience by local entrepreneurs) only after a longer period of time.

The financial resources available have been utilised purposefully and thoughtfully, and most probably it would not have been possible to achieve the same results by other means or smaller resources. Although it has not been possible to implement everything within the scope of the human resources and financing available, *suiti* community evaluates the work carried out as

useful and necessary. Challenges were observed in areas where development does not directly depend on the community, but is related to a more extensive regional and national development.

Alongside the processes attesting to the viability of traditions, the community still recognises safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space as urgent because of the risks endangering identity of *suiti* and inheriting of traditions.

C. UPDATE OF THE SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

C.1. Updated safeguarding plan

Please provide an update of the safeguarding plan included in the nomination file or in the last previous report. In particular provide detailed information as follows:

- a. *What primary **objective(s)** will be addressed and what concrete results will be expected?*
- b. *What are the key **activities** to be carried out in order to achieve these expected results? Describe the activities in detail and in their best sequence, addressing their feasibility.*
- c. *How will the **State(s) Party(ies)** concerned support the implementation of the updated safeguarding plan?*
- d. *Provide a **timetable** for the updated safeguarding plan and estimate the **funds required** for its implementation (if possible, in US dollars), identifying any available resources (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).*

Between 500 and 1000 words

The updated safeguarding plan of the *suiti* cultural space continues the previously commenced direction, and principal objectives have been selected: (1) to ensure regular and methodical documenting and research of the *suiti* intangible cultural heritage, promoting co-operation between educational and research institutions and the *suiti* community; (2) to promote educational, practical, and transfer activities of all kinds in all levels of education, particularly among children and young persons, in order to ensure the sustainability of the traditions characteristic to the *suiti* cultural space and the co-operation of generations in their transfer; (3) to promote recognisability of the heritage characteristic to the *suiti* cultural space in Latvia and abroad; (4) to use the creative potential of the *suiti* cultural space for the development of new products and services with added value, ensuring that representatives of the *suiti* community are the main beneficiaries; (5) to ensure the support infrastructure necessary for safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space, particularly promoting recovery and restoration of cultural and historical monuments and artefacts of significance to the *suiti* community. In order to achieve the objectives defined, the foreseeable results and activities have been determined:

(1) Research and documentation

Co-operation with the institutions of higher education and research will ensure that expressions of the *suiti* cultural heritage and the persons practising them will be studied. It is planned to pay special attention to the research of traditional celebrations. Several activities will promote access to the *suiti* heritage online: registers of local parishes will be digitalised, *suiti* folklore materials will be aggregated and made available, and place names of the *suiti* cultural space will be mapped. Alongside successful operation of the *suiti* heritage depositories, it is planned to open tourism and information centres. It is envisaged to ensure issuing of publications in *suiti* dialect with the objective of promoting the number of persons knowing and practising it in everyday life.

(2) Practising, transfer, education

It is planned to continue integration of *suiti* culture elements in the process of lessons in pre-school educational institutions, in study subjects in Alsunga Secondary School, as well as in interest education in Alsunga Music and Art School. Several of the planned activities continue successfully commenced practices: acquisition of the music and dance traditions, and wearing the traditional costume. Summer camps for *suiti* children are planned to be proposed also to

diaspora. It is intended to continue the research and to organise training for adults, particularly with the intent of restoring the craft skills of a tailor, shoemaker, hatter, and jewellery designer, and traditions of making musical instruments – bagpipes, *kokle*, and violin.

(3) Promotion of recognisability

Essential role in forming the identity of *suiti* is played by traditional festivities and celebrations of *suiti* which also promote recognisability of the *suiti* cultural space. The international drone singing festival will continue the promotion of *suiti* culture. The visual identity of *suiti* is being considered – it is intended to create a brand for recognisability of products of *suiti* craftsmen and domestic producers. It is also planned to promote the recognisability of *suiti* with the help of audiovisual materials. Henceforth digital information resources will also be taken care of: website www.suitunovads.lv, as well as profiles of the *suiti* cultural space in social networks.

(4) Entrepreneurship and creative industries

In order to improve safe socio-economic grounds concurrently safeguarding the cultural environment characteristic to the *suiti* cultural space, it is intended to develop domestic production and craftsmanship based on *suiti* traditions and principles of organic farming. Development of entrepreneurial skills is planned with the help of general educational programmes and measures of lifelong education. It is planned to promote the establishment of cooperative societies and to ensure trade in articles of *suiti* craftsmen, creating an online platform *Suitu amatu māja* [*Suiti* crafts house].

(5) Infrastructure

In order to safeguard the *suiti* cultural space in long-term, the infrastructure must be developed and tending to the cultural environment must be continued. It is planned to renew roads in order to ensure the reachability of the *suiti* cultural space. Also work on restoration and renewal of *suiti* churches and historical buildings of parishes and objects related thereto, as well as of Alsunga medieval castle will be continued. For the purpose of promoting tourism it is planned to create nature and recreational parks, a centre of creative workshops and a *suiti* ethnographic farm, promoting exploration of the traditional farming and fisheries practices. For attracting entrepreneurship and financing a support fund for the *suiti* cultural space is to be established.

The safeguarding plan has been developed for 2017 to 2019, with the intent of updating it, upon co-operation of the association ECC “*Suiti*” with the local governments, the Latvian National Culture Centre, the UNESCO Latvian National Commission, and the Ministry of Culture. Involvement of all the abovementioned parties is intended in implementation of the plan. Alongside the abovementioned institutions, the plan also provides for involvement of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, and the Nature Conservation Agency, also the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Transport, co-operating in implementation of the policy related to the maintenance of the cultural environment.

State funding for safeguarding *suiti* cultural space is planned in the form of yearly State budget earmarked grants for cultural education – 57 450, folk groups and ethnographic ensembles – 3 630, ECC “*Suiti*” – 10 000. For or a three year period it is 213 240, with possibility of its gradual increase. In turn, for restoration and renovation of the Alsunga medieval castle 281 000 are planned (2018–2019). Concurrently with contribution of State institutions substantial support is expected from the local governments. There is also an attributed funding of the European Union funds – 23 020 for developing entrepreneurship in tourism (2017–2020). Other potential resources are to be attracted based on projects, including from the State Culture Capital Fund.

C.2. Community participation

Please describe how communities, groups and individuals, as well as relevant non-governmental organizations have been involved, including in terms of gender roles, in updating the safeguarding plan, and how they will be involved in its implementation.

Between 200 and 500 words

The safeguarding plan has been developed on the basis of the memorandum of co-operation which was signed on 17 August 2016 between the association ECC “*Suiti*”, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia, the Latvian National Culture Centre, UNESCO Latvian National Commission, and three local governments – Alsunga Municipality Council, Kuldīga Municipality Council, and Ventspils Municipality Council. The present memorandum of co-operation is in effect until 31 December 2020. It was elaborated in order to promote implementation of cultural activities, formal and non-formal education and of economic activities which would ensure safeguarding of the *suiti* intangible cultural heritage. The first such memorandum of co-operation was signed on 20 January 2010, and the second memorandum attests to the continuation of the co-operation already commenced.

In order to update the safeguarding plan, three meetings were organised in September and October 2016 with participation of representatives of the *suiti* community from ECC “*Suiti*”, priest of Catholic parishes of the *suiti* cultural space, teachers from Alsunga Secondary School, and representatives of the local governments, as well as representatives from those State institutions which signed the abovementioned memorandum of co-operation. The plan developed was approved by the board of the association ECC “*Suiti*” in which representatives of the community individually and the local governments involved are participating. According to the memorandum of co-operation, the parties involved, including representatives of the association ECC “*Suiti*”, meet once a year in order to evaluate the implementation of the plan and the results achieved and to agree on the next action directions and planned activities.

In relation to gender roles, the operation of the association ECC “*Suiti*” is characterised by gender equality. The board of the association is periodically re-elected, and concurrently representatives of different genders of the society participate therein. Gender equality is also characteristic to other non-governmental organisations which operate for safeguarding of the *suiti* heritage and are involved in implementation activities of the plan. Similarly gender equality may be observed in the management and representation of local governments.

C.3. Institutional context

Please report on the institutional context for the local management and safeguarding of the element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, including:

- a. the competent body(ies) involved in its management and/or safeguarding;*
- b. the organization(s) of the community or group concerned with the element and its safeguarding.*

Not to exceed 150 words

Local governments of three municipalities – Alsunga, Kuldīga (Gudenieki rural territory), and Ventspils (Jūrkalne rural territory) – are involved in the management and safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space. Culture houses operate in all three municipalities. Each of them implements activities for safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space. Also Catholic parishes are related to safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space (see also section B.3c of the report).

The association ECC “*Suiti*” implements safeguarding activities and promotes co-operation of the community with local governments and State institutions. *Suitu amatnieki* [“*Suiti* craftsmen”] promote craftsmanship in the *suiti* community. Several other local associations stimulate the interest in *suiti* cultural heritage. *Suitu novads* [*Suiti* County] and *Suitu kultūras mantojums* [*Suiti* Cultural Heritage] contribute to the research and recognisability of *suiti* cultural history.

D. PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNITIES IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

Describe the measures taken to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of this report.

Between 150 and 250 words

Preparation of the report was planned and implemented upon co-operation between the Latvian National Centre for Culture, the Latvian Academy of Culture and the association ECC "Suiti". Participation of the *suiti* community in development of the report took place with the support of the association. The written report on safeguarding activities of the *suiti* cultural space prepared by the association served as informative basis.

In order to evaluate the current situation in safeguarding of the *suiti* cultural space, the initial meeting for planning the development of the report with representatives of the association ECC "Suiti" was followed by more extensive discussion. It gathered representatives of the community from different fields of activity – directors of ethnographic ensembles, representatives of local governments, priest of the *suiti* Catholic parishes, local entrepreneurs whose activity is related to the *suiti* cultural heritage – to a conversation at Alsunga Culture House on 2 November 2017. During development of the report several interviews were conducted and individual written opinions were received.

The initial version of the report was prepared in Latvian and disseminated through the ECC "Suiti" to community members. *Suiti dižsapulce* [Suiti Grand Meeting] was organised by the association on 20 November 2017 at Alsunga Culture House for discussing it, inviting all interested parties from the *suiti* community, as well as representatives of the local governments and State institutions. The opinions expressed at the meeting were taken into account in developing the final version of the report.

E. SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY

The report should conclude with the original signature of the official empowered to sign it on behalf of the State, together with his or her name, title and the date of submission.

Name: Dace Melbārde

Title: Minister for Culture of the Republic of Latvia

Date: 15 December 2017

Signature: