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**Measures Focusing on the Safeguarding of the
Intangible Cultural Heritage in the
Republic of Macedonia**

The protection of the intangible cultural heritage in the Republic of Macedonia until recently had not been included in the system for protection of cultural heritage. This equally applies to both a lack of policy for protection of this kind of heritage, as well as to the practice of securing standards for the identification, documentation and use-presentation of this kind of cultural goods. Intangible cultural heritage in Macedonia was researched and published, but without appropriate policy addressing its protection and cultural circulation. This condition was changed with the passing of the **Law on Culture** of 1998 which provided for the protection of the intangible cultural heritage. In the meantime, the **Law on Copyright and Other Related Rights** (1996) was passed which regulates, among other things, the use of folklore goods and appropriate measures for their protection. Also, **The Law on the Macedonian Language Use** (1998) was passed which states that the Macedonian language is an intangible cultural heritage with exceptional cultural and historic importance.

But the complete legal framework for the protection of intangible cultural heritage was provided by the **Law on Cultural Heritage Protection, enacted March 19th 2004, entering into force January 1st of 2005**. With this Law, intangible heritage is integrated in the system for protection of the entire cultural heritage. As with the other cultural heritage, the protection of the intangible heritage in the Law is organized on two levels. The **Cultural Heritage Protection Office** was established as a body under the Ministry of Culture for carrying out the administrative, expert and other functions in the domain of protection of the cultural heritage. This office started working on 01.01.2005. For carrying out tasks such as identifying, documenting, evaluation, categorization, nurture and other forms of expert protection of the intangible cultural heritage, specific authorities - institutions for the protection of this kind of cultural heritage were established. Therefore, since March 2005, the authorized body for the protection of the folklore goods is the **Institute of Folklore “Marko Cepenkov”**, and for the language and toponyms – the **Institute of Macedonian Language “Krste Misirkov”**

From the previous it can be seen that the intangible cultural heritage in this law is introduced as the following three types of goods: **folklore goods** (the habits, rituals, traditional tales and stories, folklore songs, legends, adages, riddles, dances, plays, old and rare crafts, traditional skills and other intangible expressions - Art. 24); **language** (the standard language and its alphabet and the local speeches - dialects - of the same language – Art.25) and **toponyms** (all names which are subject to the toponymy of the Republic of Macedonia).

Part of the folklore goods in the system of the safeguarding of the intangible heritage in Macedonia belongs to the traditional Turkish folklore and intangible heritage preserved in our country until present days.

The Law provides two main categories of values of cultural heritage which deal also with intangible heritage:

1. Cultural heritage of exceptional value, divided into two categories:
 - Cultural heritage of extraordinary value
 - Cultural heritage of great value
2. Important cultural heritage

Cultural goods from the first category are awarded their status with a decision by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, while the second category with an act passed by the **Cultural Heritage Protection Office**. Besides these main categories, an additional category of endangered cultural heritage is provided with appropriate instruments for urgent protection.

After the founding of the **Cultural Heritage Protection Office**, the process of passing of certain policy measures is actively being worked on. These regulations with the power of legal bylaws need to provide for the implementation of the legal measures and the expert standardization of the procedures involved in the protection of the cultural heritage. A statute is being prepared for the **National Registry of Cultural Heritage**.

The legal obligation for the creation of a unified system of identification and taking inventory of cultural heritage, as well as creating a database of information for different kinds of cultural goods, resulted in the preparation of the **National classification of cultural heritage**. A part of this Classification are the goods which belong to the intangible heritage mentioned above. The above mentioned types and groups of intangible heritage are organized and classified in the National classification in a hierarchical model of functional and genre-driven division which concludes with a typological specification of individual goods. The specific character of the goods of the intangible heritage and the lack of experience in the practical application of scientific research into the field of protection, led to dilemmas and difficulties in establishing of the model for classification, even after using the standard methodological apparatus for ethnological and linguistic science.

The dilemmas and difficulties are pronounced particularly in the preparation of other two Acts that are derived from the Law on protection of cultural heritage, pertaining to the identification and inventarisation, and to the evaluation/re-evaluation with categorization of cultural heritage, which are expected to be passed soon. These Acts need to offer applicative solutions for conversion of scientific research into expert procedures for protection. This will mean the codifying and 'cataloguing' by using specific administrative forms and patterns even for the types of intangible heritage such as parts of folklore goods, and especially the language, dialects and toponyms. The same problems, but in more pronounced form, will exist in preparation of the Act-bylaws for the type, content, standards, norms and procedures for documenting of cultural heritage and using documentation for cultural heritage, specifically in the part that refers to the intangible heritage. This Act is expected to be passed in the very near future.

Because of the need for overseeing, creating and developing the protection and use of cultural heritage, The National Council for cultural heritage is being founded, as an advisory and coordinating body of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. This body is constituted and

will start with its activities soon. As a part of the National Council there will be a separate Board for the protection of intangible heritage.

In the near future is expected that the National strategy for the protection and use of cultural heritage will be passed. The Convention for the protection of intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO was ratified in the Republic of Macedonia in April, 2006.