

# REFERENCE FRAMEWORK, KEY TEXTS AND NETWORKS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY



## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS (ICOM)

[Learn more →](#)

Museum definition

2004 Seoul Resolution  
Resolution on museums and  
intangible cultural heritage

Code of Ethics  
for Museums

Object ID



## EUROPE

The Treaty on European Union states that the Union shall 'ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

[Learn more →](#)

Focus on heritage & participatory governance, integrated approach, and cultural diversity in a social Europe



NEMO

Network  
of European  
Museum  
Organisations

2005

Convention on the  
Value of Cultural  
Heritage for Society  
(Faro Convention)  
*Council of Europe*

2014

The Council of the European Union cites 'cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe'  
*Tangible and intangible (and digital) cultural heritage are side by side in a vision on heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe*

## WORLDWIDE

[Learn more →](#)

MUSEUMS

INTANGIBLE  
CULTURAL HERITAGE

SUSTAINABLE

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UN Agenda 2030 > 17 goals to transform our world

2019

Resolution – Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe  
*Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly*



## UNESCO

[Learn more →](#)

### 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Basic Texts

Basics of  
the 2003  
Convention

Operational  
Directives

Ethical  
Principles

Overall Results  
Framework



ICH  
NGO Forum



Global network  
of facilitators &  
Global capacity-  
building  
programme

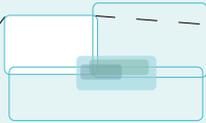
1972

Convention Concerning  
the Protection of the World  
Cultural and Natural Heritage  
(World Heritage Convention)

2015

Recommendation  
concerning the Protection  
and Promotion of  
Museums and Collections,  
their Diversity, and their  
Role in Society





[← Back to overview](#)

## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS (ICOM)



### International Council of Museums

ICOM is an international organisation of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the research, conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

[More info](#)

### Museum definition

Since ICOM's creation in 1946, the ICOM definition has played a central role for museums and museum professionals, and became a reference in the international museum community.

According to the ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria, on 24 August, 2007:

**'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.'**

In the aftermath of the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan, a new Standing Committee has been appointed to study the current definition. The Committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP, 2017-2019) explores the shared but also the profoundly dissimilar conditions, values and practices of museums in diverse and rapidly changing societies. Combining broad dialogue across the membership with dedicated expert fora, the Committee is addressing the ambiguous and often contradictory trends in society, and the subsequent new conditions, obligations and possibilities for museums.

[More info](#)



### Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO)

NEMO is an independent network of national museum organisations representing the museum community of the member states of the Council of Europe. Together, NEMO's members speak for more than 30.000 museums in 43 countries across Europe.

[More info](#)

### 2004 Seoul Resolution

The ICOM *Seoul Resolution* on museums and intangible cultural heritage, was adopted by ICOM's 21<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (2004 - Seoul, Korea). It raised awareness about the importance of intangible cultural heritage for cultural diversity, and gathered 1.462 participants from more than one hundred countries. One of the long-term

outcomes of the Conference is the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, published by the National Folk Museum of Korea since 2006.

[More info](#)

### Code of Ethics

The ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* is a reference text setting standards for the practice of museum professionals. It sets minimum professional standards and encourages the recognition of values shared by the international museum community. This reference tool provides guidance and is presented as a series of principles supported by guidelines detailing expected professional practice.

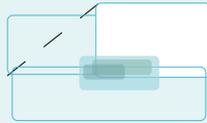
[More info](#)

**'Museums are responsible for the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage. Governing bodies and those concerned with the strategic direction and oversight of museums have a primary responsibility to protect and promote this heritage as well as the human, physical and financial resources made available for that purpose.'**

### Object ID

Object Identification is an internationally recognized standard conceived to document and identify cultural goods.

[More info](#)



[← Back to overview](#)

## EUROPE

### Treaty on European Union

In legal perspective, cultural policy and care for cultural heritage are the responsibility of the Member States. Even so, Article 3(3) of the *Treaty on European Union* states that the Union shall 'ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

[More info](#)

### 2005 Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention)

*Council of Europe*

The 2005 *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* defines an all-embracing framework ensuring that cultural heritage has its rightful place at the centre of a new vision for sustainable development.

It recognises that cultural heritage is valuable for its own sake and for the contribution it can make to other policies. It promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society.

The convention highlights the link between cultural heritage and the development of

a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

[More info](#)

**'A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.'**

### 2019 Resolution – Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe

*Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly*

Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly votes the resolution *Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe*.

[More info](#)

### 2014

#### The Council of the European Union

cites 'cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe'.

Tangible and intangible (and digital) cultural heritage are side by side in a vision on heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe:

[More info](#)

**'Cultural heritage consists of the resources inherited from the past in all forms and aspects – tangible, intangible and digital (born digital and digitized), including monuments, sites, landscapes, skills, practices, knowledge and expressions of human creativity, as well as collections conserved and managed by public and private bodies such as museums, libraries and archives. It originates from the interaction between people and places through time and it is constantly evolving. These resources are of great value to society from a cultural, environmental, social and economic point of view and thus their sustainable management constitutes a strategic choice for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.'**

#### > *Focus on heritage and participatory governance, integrated approach and cultural diversity in a social Europe*

**2014** – The Council of the European Union calls for participatory governance of cultural heritage in their Council conclusions.

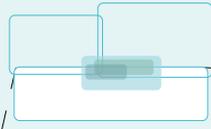
[More info](#)

**2017** – The Rome Declaration identified the preservation of cultural heritage, together with the promotion of cultural diversity, as an element of a social Europe.

[More info](#)

**2015** – The European Parliament adopts the resolution *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe*.

[More info](#)



[← Back to overview](#)

## WORLDWIDE

MUSEUMS

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

#### UN Agenda 2030: 17 goals to transform our world

The SDGs are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They were adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit and then entered into force until 2030. The SDGs address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The Goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each Goal and target by 2030.

[More info](#)

### Operational Directives

The text of the Convention is unchangeable. The *Operational Directives* are the adjustable and dynamic tools for making the Convention work in its implementation. Article 7 of the Convention stipulates that one of the functions of the Committee is to prepare and submit to the General Assembly for approval Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention.

The General Assembly adopted for the first time the Operational Directives in June 2008, and amended them in June 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018. It will continue to complete and revise them in future meetings.

Among other things, the Operational Directives indicate the procedures to be followed for inscribing intangible heritage on the lists of the Convention, the provision of international financial assistance, the accreditation of non-governmental organizations to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee, or the involvement of communities in implementing the Convention.

[More info](#)

## UNESCO 1/2 [go to next part >>](#)

### 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Preamble of the Convention positions the importance of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as a mainspring of cultural diversity and as a guarantee for sustainable development. The Convention came about after the analysis that globalisation and social transformation often create situations in which intangible heritage declines or disappears, given that there is a lack of resistance and means of help that can protect and strengthen ICH in these circumstances.

[More info](#)

### Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention

The *Basic Texts* are conceived as a practical tool for all those concerned – government officials, policy makers, NGOs and international organizations – to better understand the functioning of the 2003 Convention to ensure optimum implementation.

They are periodically revised to reflect the resolutions of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention.

[More info](#)

### Basics of the 2003 Convention

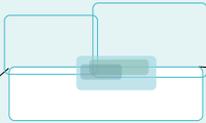
According to the definition in the UNESCO 2003 Convention, the intangible cultural heritage concerns practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, transmitted from generation to generation, and constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history.

The Convention sums up that ICH is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

- A. oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- B. performing arts;
- C. social practices, rituals and festive events;
- D. knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- E. traditional craftsmanship.

The ICH definition of UNESCO concludes with the words that 'consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.'

**'Safeguarding' means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.'**



[← Back to overview](#)

### Ethical Principles

The *Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage* represent a set of overarching aspirational principles that are widely accepted as constituting good practices for governments, organizations and individuals directly or indirectly affecting intangible cultural heritage in order to ensure its viability, thereby recognizing its contribution to peace and sustainable development.

These Ethical Principles are intended to serve as a basis for the development of specific codes of ethics and tools adapted to local and sectoral conditions, complementary to the Convention text and the Operational Directives, the implementation of the Convention and national legislative frameworks.

[More info](#)

### Overall Results Framework

The *Overall Results Framework* for monitoring the global implementation and outcomes of the 2003 Convention has been launched in 2018. To this aim, it monitors eight thematic areas, such as 'transmission and education', 'engagement of communities,

groups and individuals as well as other stakeholders', 'policies (...)'.  
[More info](#)

[More info](#)



### Global network of facilitators & Capacity-building programme

The facilitators network is a dedicated and competent partner for countries and stakeholders that seek guidance and training for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This network is trained by UNESCO and supports countries to

safeguard intangible cultural heritage and harness its potential for sustainable development, while promoting broad public knowledge and support for the 2003 Convention.

[More info](#)

### 1972 World Heritage Convention

The 1972 Convention concerns the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. This Convention is probably the best-known international instrument regarding heritage, famous for its World Heritage List.

Its most significant feature is that it links together in a single document the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties. The convention recognizes the ways in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.

[More info](#)

### 2015 Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity, and their Role in Society

This Recommendation, formally adopted at the 38th session of the General Conference on 17 November 2015, originated from the desire to supplement and extend the application of standards and principles laid down in existing international instruments referring to the place of museums, and to their related roles and responsibilities. This issue was increasingly called for, noting especially that the last international instrument wholly dedicated to museums dates to 1960.

[More info](#)



### ICH NGO Forum

NGO's – numerous – accredited under the UNESCO 2003 Convention have set up a (global) ICH NGO Forum since 2009, aiming at fostering deliberation and cooperation processes among NGOs, as well as offering a contact point for third parties. The Forum is developed as a platform for sharing information and experiences internationally, and as a general programme for NGOs to engage in ongoing networking and skills sharing at a regional and national level.

[More info](#)

**IMP TOOL KIT** This tool was realized in the context of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project (IMP).

Main funding and support



**Flanders**  
State of the Art

Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union



*The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

**IMP partners**

Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed | Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders (BE), Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland | Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage (NL), Maison des Cultures du Monde – Centre français du patrimoine culturel immatériel (FR), Società Italiana per la museografia e i beni demotnoantropologici (IT) and Verband der Museen der Schweiz | Swiss Museums Association (CH) & Swiss Confederation - Federal Office of Culture