

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

**DEADLINE 15 DECEMBER 2021
FOR EXAMINATION IN 2022**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE REPORT ARE AVAILABLE AT:
[HTTPS://ICH.UNESCO.ORG/EN/FORMS](https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms)

A. COVER SHEET
A.1. State Party
Name of State Party: Latvia
A.2. Date of deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession <i>This information is available online.</i>
14 January 2004
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
Submitting State(s): Latvia
A.4. Reporting period covered by this report <i>Please indicate the period covered by this report.</i>
Beginning date: 1 October 2017 Ending date: 30 November 2021
A.5. Other elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, if any

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.

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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

The safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space is based on the identity of the Suiti community which makes one proud of their own culture. The Suiti cultural space is characterised by its own dialect, drone singing, playing of bagpipes and other traditional musical instruments and making of such musical instruments, craft skills, making and wearing of one's own national costume during festivities, celebration of joint festivities, culinary heritage, and also the Catholic faith. The sense of belonging to its cultural space is important for the Suiti community. Participants of ethnographic ensembles, folklore groups, dance collectives, craft workshops, groups of amateur theatre, etc. from different generations, part of the community involved in the operation of non-governmental organisations, and personal contribution of each person to the development of the Suiti community have a special role in inheriting of the cultural traditions.

As recognised by the Suiti community (survey and discussions, see Section D), inclusion of the Suiti cultural space in the Urgent Safeguarding List has provided such benefits as strengthening of the self-confidence and local identity of the Suiti community, research of its history, stimulation of the interest of children and young persons, renewal of the traditional knowledge and skills, more extensive participation of the community in the safeguarding of its cultural heritage, development of artisanal production and entrepreneurship, and popularisation of the Suiti culture both at local and international scale. Concurrently several risks for the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space still remain and representatives of the community have pointed out the reduction in the number of inhabitants, the necessity to promote the sense of belonging of the new generation, to continue integration of the Suiti culture in education, to promote economic development of the community, and also to strengthen the unity and cooperation in the community and to involve as extensive part of the local society in achievement of the different safeguarding objectives as possible as the most significant risks.

A range of measures which were based on the initiative of the community and which have been implemented with self-investment of the community, and also financial support of the State, local governments, and the European Union funds has been implemented during the reporting period. In relation to the safeguarding objectives selected – (1) the research and documentation of the culture of the community have been actively continued by the community, resulting in publishing of several books and digital materials; (2) the offer of non-formal education for children, young persons, and adults has been continued for the acquisition of the traditional skills related to the Suiti culture; (3) the recognisability of Suiti has been promoted at national and international level; (4) tourism development, educating of different generations in entrepreneurship has been promoted and weekly occurrence of the Suiti market has been commenced, thus promoting economic activity related to artisanal production and crafts in the community; and also (5) investments have been made in the cultural and natural heritage infrastructure. Under the circumstances of

COVID-19 pandemic, several activities have been postponed, implemented at a later time, or taken place in digital format, but, in general, inheriting of the Suiti culture was continued.

The Updated Plan for the Safeguarding of the Suiti Cultural Space provides for the continuation of the commenced activities in four action directions: (1) documentation and research; (2) practising and transfer; (3) education; (4) entrepreneurship and infrastructure. In 2022, the Suiti Cultural and Historical Heritage Centre established by the Kuldīga municipality government will commence operation. Financing of the State, local governments, and also European Union funds is planned for the implementation of the intended activities.

A.7. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning the report.

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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 the 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 previous report. Nomination files, specific timetables and earlier reports, if any, are available at <https://ich.unesco.org> or from the Secretariat, upon request.

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 preparing this report, and is asked to describe how it has done so in point D below.

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 150 and 500 words

The Suiti cultural space encompasses the cultural features characteristic to the Suiti – dialect, drone singing, playing of bagpipes and other traditional musical instruments and making of such musical instruments, craft skills, including weaving, making and wearing of one's own national costume during festivities, celebration of joint festivities, culinary heritage, and also the Catholic faith. Although the significance of the Church has decreased in the community and currently less than a third of the surveyed members of the community (see Section D) attend services or are active in the congregation of the Church, the Catholic faith is still being recognised as the support for the cultural identity of the Suiti. The sense of belonging to its cultural space is important for the Suiti community and it is essential not only for the part of the community actively involved in cultural occurrences, that part of the community being participants of ethnographic ensembles, folklore groups, dance collectives, different craft workshops, amateur theatres, and other groups from different generations (see Section B.3c), or also the part of the community actively involved in the activity of local non-governmental organisations (see Section C.5), but also to a wider range of inhabitants.

The Suiti identity serves as the grounds for being proud of their culture and belonging to it, and also having knowledge of their own history. Alongside with the cultural functions of the Suiti cultural space – to inherit cultural traditions, knowledge and skills, to educate children and young persons, to form the sense of identity –, its social functions are also essential – for Suiti culture to serve as a resource for sustainable development of the community and for community to cooperate for achievement of the objectives selected by the community itself. However, strengthening of cooperation does not exclude a difference of opinions which can be observed in the community both in the issues of the management of its cultural heritage and the development of the community and the territory populated thereby (see Section B.2).

Personal contribution of people both in inheriting of traditions, proposing of new community initiatives, protection of the community interests and in the development of such projects and exchange of experience which provide a more extensive contribution to the safeguarding and also recognisability of the Suiti cultural space is essential in the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space.

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 150 and 500 words

The viability of the Suiti cultural space largely depends on the safeguarding and active cultivation of the Suiti cultural traditions, the improvement of the traditional knowledge and skills, the use of the Suiti dialect which is taken care of by different groups and organisations of the community, and on the ability of the representatives of the community to develop their entrepreneurship which would allow to live in the territory populated by the Suiti and to continue the inheriting of the cultural traditions.

At the mark of 10 years since inclusion of the Suiti cultural space in the UNESCO List, representatives of the Suiti community have particularly highlighted the reduction in the number of inhabitants as a risk, the necessity to promote the sense of belonging of the new generation, to continue integration of the Suiti culture in the offer of education, to promote the economic development of the community, and also to strengthen the unity and cooperation in the community, to involve a more extensive part of the society in achievement of the different objectives of safeguarding, also to continue exchange of experience among communities of cultural heritage both in Latvia and internationally. Concurrently the increasing support of local governments to the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space was appreciated.

The survey and discussions conducted for the preparation of the report (see Section D) confirmed the abovementioned findings and attested that the risks identified previously in the report of 2017 are still topical in the opinion of the community. It should be added that, in the opinion of the community, the conversion of Alsunga Secondary School into a primary school (from 2021) has a negative impact on the possibilities for inheriting the Suiti traditions among young persons, and also part of children of primary school age go to schools outside the Suiti cultural space. The community is of the opinion that the financial support continues to be insufficient and available for short-period projects. In general, it should be recognised in relation to the decision on the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space (13.COM 7.b.8) taken by the Intergovernmental Committee during its session of 2018 that paying of special attention to the development of education and entrepreneurship and the diversification of the sources of financing should be continued. The community is of the opinion that more should also be done in relation to the safeguarding of the Suiti dialect alongside with the abovementioned aspects.

There are significantly different opinions in the Suiti community on the administrative territorial reform implemented in 2021. One part of the community sees their future only under the wing of a separate local government. In turn, the other part of the community appreciates the opportunity to obtain support from two local governments – of Kuldīga and Ventspils municipalities – in the territory of which the Suiti cultural space is located. Regardless of the differences in political positions, the initiative, participation, and cooperation of the local inhabitants in the development of their living environment has been strengthened.

B.3. Implementation of safeguarding measures

Please report on the safeguarding measures described in the nomination file, and previous report, if any. Describe how they have been implemented and how they have substantially contributed 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 to ensure the viability of the element by enabling the community to continue to practise and transmit it. 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

Five primary objectives were chosen for the Updated Plan for the Safeguarding of the Suiti Cultural Space: (1) to ensure documenting and research of the Suiti intangible cultural heritage; (2) to promote educational, practice, and transfer activities, particularly among children and young persons; (3) to promote recognisability of 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; (5) to ensure the support infrastructure necessary for safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space. The following most significant results have been achieved in the reporting period in relation to these objectives (compared to Section C.1 of the report of 2017):

(1) Research and documentation – activities (see B.3b) were mainly initiated by the community, the site www.suiti.lv was created, and digital availability of the research results was ensured, and the significance of this aspect has been especially emphasised by Suiti youth. As planned, special attention was paid to the survey and inheriting of the Suiti dialect by dedicating several publications thereto. Similarly, Alsunga Tourism Information and Historical Heritage Centre was established as a substitute for Alsunga Museum.

(2) Practising, transfer, education – non-formal education activities have been offered starting with children of pre-school age, summer schools and camps were offered for children and youth audiences. In Alsunga Secondary School, the Suiti cultural heritage has been integrated in the acquisition of study subjects and an optional subject on Suiti culture has been offered. In turn, the acquisition of playing the instrument *kokle* has been continued at Alsunga Music and Art School, and adults developed their skills and abilities in weaving and playing and making of bagpipes, *kokle*, and drums.

(3) Promotion of recognisability – celebrating of the Suiti traditional festivities was continued, and local and international projects for exchange of experience were successfully implemented, including by attracting the financing from the European Union funds. As planned, the Suiti visual identity was developed, including a brand for the articles made by the Suiti artisans has been created. The possibilities of digital communication have been extensively used.

(4) Entrepreneurship and creative industries – youth and adult education in entrepreneurship has been promoted, and also demand for the articles made by the Suiti artisan producers and artisans has increased. Owing to the initiative and knowledge of local inhabitants, a digital application promoting the cooperation of local entrepreneurs and the availability of products and services has been created. The

weekly Suiti market in Alsunga has become a permanent occurrence and the development of tourism has been promoted.

(5) Infrastructure – the rebuilding of roads, the restoration of St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic church in Jūrkalne, the maintenance of St. Michael’s Roman Catholic church in Alsunga, the arrangement of nature parks and recreation parks were implemented. A centre for the operation of non-governmental organisations has been established in Alsunga, and it is planned to continue the investments, particularly for the restoration of the Alsunga Medieval Castle.

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) Research and documentation

Owing to the local libraries, materials and stocks of the study of local history have been supplemented, digitised, and promoted (see also B.3d). Jūrkalne Community House has conducted a study of the Suiti song repertoire, and the association “Suitu kultūras mantojums” [Suiti Cultural Heritage] continues documenting of the Suiti life stories. *Etniskās kultūras centrs “Suiti”* [Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti] supplemented “Suitu mantojuma krātuve” [Suiti Heritage Depository] with objects and digital materials, especially focused on documenting of mittens and *villaine* [shoulder shawl], collected and published folklore materials on the site www.suiti.lv, and issued several important research-based publications on place names, drone singing and stories. Similarly, the history of St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic church in Jūrkalne and its priests from 1865 until nowadays was researched and published. Pupils were involved and the historical building was researched during the expedition “Suitu novadpētnieki” [Suiti Students of Local History] organised by the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti. Alsunga Secondary School and the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti paid attention also to the inheriting of the Suiti dialect, and the significance of the dialect has been particularly highlighted by Suiti youth. In 2020, the first part of the Latvian-Suiti dictionary was developed and published on the website www.suitunovads.lv.

(2) Practising, transfer, education

Children of pre-school age are being familiarised with Suiti traditions, also through specially dedicated workbooks. The Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti continued to organise the annual summer school “Suitu tradīciju skoliņa” [Little School of Suiti Traditions] for children and young persons. It did not take place in summer of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic; in turn, it took place for the tenth time in 2021, as per usual attracting a large interest amongst the children, young persons, and their parents. Also the annual dance camps for children and young persons were organised. The association Suiti Cultural Heritage published several publications for children on Suiti stories, traditions, legends, recipes, and traditional costumes. Alsunga Secondary School has participated in events organised by the UNESCO Associated Schools Network in Latvia, including within the scope of the UNESCO International Day of Education, and has organised field trips for pupils to learn about the Suiti cultural space. In turn, six pupils have acquired the skills of playing *kokle* at Alsunga Music and Art School. Suiti children and adults participate in ethnographic ensembles, folklore groups, dance collectives and other amateur art collectives (see B.3c) and participate in events – concerts, master classes, annual and religious celebrations, etc. in the Suiti cultural space, and also elsewhere. The skills in crafts and playing music in the Suiti community were developed through trainings, and the Suiti culinary heritage has been safeguarded; trips for exchange of experience have been

implemented, and each year the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti organises exhibitions of traditional textiles.

(3) Promotion of recognisability

At local scale – exhibitions have been organised and publications regarding the Suiti traditions have been published. In cooperation with the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia, audio recordings of Suiti ethnographic ensembles have been made available in the digital archives of the Repository of Latvian Folklore www.garamantas.lv. In 2020, the 6th International Drone Singing Festival was planned, however, it was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In turn, in 2021 the drone singing celebration was implemented in Jūrkalne. In 2021, the Latvian National Centre for Culture organised the yearly cycle of events “Satiec savu meistarū!” [Meet Your Master!] within the scope of which presentations about the traditions of wearing Suiti national costumes were made (due to the COVID-19 pandemic – online). At international scale – the project “Network of UNESCO Recognised Values” (2018–2019) was implemented with the support of the European Union programme Erasmus+ in which the cooperation partners from Estonia, Georgia, and North Macedonia participated, mutually familiarising with examples of good practice in safeguarding of the cultural heritage. In 2019, the middle generation dance collective “Suiti” and the folklore group “Suitu dūdenieki” participated in the folklore festival organised in Kaustinen, Finland, with two concert programmes. Similarly, the participation of the representatives of the Suiti community in activities organised by the Nordic-Baltic-ICH Network has continued.

(4) Entrepreneurship and creative industries

Within the scope of the Latvian-Estonian cross-border project “UNESCO Tourism” (2017–2020) financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the development of tourism products and the entrepreneurship of the local tourism in the Suiti and Livonian communities in Latvia and the Setos and Kihnu Island communities in Estonia have been promoted. Organising of single-day cafés at the local Suiti households commenced within the scope of the project became very popular. In 2021, the day of such cafés took place for the second time with the participation of 22 local households, attracting a large number of visitors. The association “Alsungas viedais ciems” [Alsunga Smart Village] has implemented initiatives for the development of entrepreneurship. In turn, Alsunga Secondary School has been offering an interest-related educational programme in entrepreneurship to pupils. During the reporting period, artisan producers have participated in tourism exhibitions and have promoted the culinary heritage. Demand for national costumes made by the Suiti artisans and their elements which are also used in the design of modern clothing has increased.

(5) Infrastructure

Investments have been made in the rebuilding of public road surfaces in the territory of the Suiti cultural space. An interactive stand has been installed next to Jūrkalne Community House, facilitating the availability of information to tourists, the restoration work of Jūrkalne Roman Catholic church building and territory development have been carried out. With the co-financing of the European Regional Development Fund (for the achievement of the specific support objective “Preserve, protect and develop significant culture and natural heritage and promote the services related thereto” implemented by the State), Nature Recreation Park in Jūrkalne has been developed and restoration of Alsunga Medieval Castle has been continued. Recreational park for children and seniors has been created in Alsunga, several nature paths have been arranged, and St. Michael’s Roman Catholic church in Alsunga has been maintained.

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, including in terms of gender roles, 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

Founding of new non-formal associations and non-governmental organisations (see Section C.5) attests to the active participation of the Suiiti community, groups, and individuals, including young persons, and to their capacity to successfully attract the financing for providing a greater benefit for the community. Operation of local entrepreneurs also promotes the development of the community.

Taking into account the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the operation of amateur art collectives has been limited in 2021, therefore, the data of the report of 2017 have been compared to the data of 2020. In general, the number of participants in Suiiti collectives has been stable. Constant number of participants has remained in Alsunga ethnographic ensemble "Suitu sievas" [Suiiti Women] (founded in 1955, 17 female participants) and in the weaving workshop "Austuve" (2008, 12 female participants). An increase in the number of participants was observed in several collectives until the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 – in Alsunga folklore group "Suitu dūdenieki" [Suiiti Bagpipers] (2014, from 7 to 11 participants), in Alsunga folklore group "Suitu vīri" [Suiiti Men] (2013, from 10 to 13 participants); however, the number of active regular participants is smaller than the number of registered participants. An increase can be periodically observed in the band of Alsunga Culture House "Suitu muzikanti" [Suiiti Musicians] (2010, from 5 to 6–7 participants) and in Gudenieki ethnographic ensemble "Gudenieku suiti" (1965, from 12 to 14–16 participants). Moreover, since 2017 the middle generation dance collective "Jūrkalne" has resumed activity in Jūrkalne (2017, 10 participants). In turn, in 2017 the Suiiti handicraft group "Kangas" was founded. A small decrease in the number of participants has been observed in the tradition ensemble of Basi Community House "Basu suiti" (2011, from 9 to 6 participants) and in Jūrkalne ethnographic ensemble "Maģie suiti" (1956, from 6 to 5 participants). Also in the middle generation dance group "Suiiti" (1982, from 22 to 19 participants).

The participation of children and young persons in ensembles and folklore groups keeps decreasing. The folklore group for children and young persons in Basi "Krētainie suiti" (2002) has discontinued its operation from 2017. The youth dance collective has discontinued operation in Alsunga Primary School (previously – Secondary School); in turn, a folk dance collective for children from 7 to 10 years of age continues its operation. Currently, Jūrkalne amateur theatre for children and young persons "Jampadracis" (2008) is being active. In turn, the number of participants of Alsunga folklore group for children "Suiitiņi" (1985) during the reporting period has varied from 7 to 20 participants, and 12 children were actively participating in 2020. The explanation for the low participation and involvement of children in Suiiti ethnographic collectives could be the decrease in the total number of children in the territories populated by the Suiiti, and also the closing of Basi school in 2017, the conversion of Alsunga Secondary School into a primary school in 2021, and the going of children and young persons to schools in other towns and municipalities.

B.3d. Timetable

Indicate, in a timetable, when each activity was implemented.

Between 200 and 500 words

The majority of activities (see Section B.3b) have been regularly implemented throughout the reporting period, however, several events should be especially highlighted in the time plan.

(1) Research and documentation

In December of 2017, an exhibition “Vētru muzejs” [Museum of Storms] was created in Jūrkalne Community House which introduces to artefacts washed ashore at Kurzeme seaside, drawing attention to underwater cultural heritage.

In 2018, the Alsunga Tourism Information and Historical Heritage Centre was established, and it has organised exhibitions and also other events.

(2) Practising, transfer, education

Every year the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti organised training in playing of the traditional *kokle* and the association Suiti Cultural Heritage organised get-togethers of Latvian bagpipe players, besides in 2020 and 2021 it implemented training and master classes, improving the skills of making and playing of traditional bagpipes and drums in the Suiti community.

From 2019 to 2021, the association Suiti Cultural Heritage implemented the project “Suitu jaunieši var!” [Suiti Youth Can!] with the support of the European Social Fund, developing active participation of the local youth in everyday life. The implementation of the project was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it was necessary to adjust the planned activities.

In 2021, international cooperation projects “Network of UNESCO Cultural Spaces” (see Section C.2) and “One voice, many stories: storytelling as a vehicle for social inclusion and active citizenship” (partners from Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Latvia – association Suiti Cultural Heritage –, and Slovakia) have been commenced with the financial support of the European Union programme Erasmus+.

(3) Promotion of recognisability

In 2018, in the 100th year since the founding of an independent State of Latvia, collectives and representatives of Suiti amateur art participated in the XXVI Nationwide Latvian Song and XVI Dance Celebration, their programme also included the performance “Suitu kāzas” [Suiti Wedding], and Suiti collectives also participated in the International Folklore Festival Baltica which was organised in Latvia in that year, and Latvian diaspora was introduced to the Suiti culture.

In 2020, the website of the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti www.suiti.lv was created, and Suiti artisans started to use the logo “Tapis suitos” [Created in Suiti community] for recognisability of their products, and guidelines for the use of the Suiti flag and logo of the Suiti cultural space were developed.

(4) Entrepreneurship and creative industries

An initially non-formal association, created in Alsunga in 2018 and registered in 2021 as the non-governmental organisation Alsunga Smart Village, initiated in 2020 the weekly “Suitu tirgus” [Suiti Market] in Alsunga as economic and also social event.

(5) Infrastructure

In 2018, Suiti non-governmental organisations and artisan workshops based in Alsunga started to operate at a single place – in a renovated local government

building. The creative workshop “Suitu ķēķis” [Suiti Kitchen] has been created for the safeguarding of the Suiti culinary heritage.

In 2019, a nature concert hall “Vējturu nams” was created in Jūrkalne, becoming a new place for open-air concerts and bringing together both performers of the traditional music and other genres of music.

B.3e. Budget expenditures

Provide the detailed amounts of the funds used for the implementation of each activity (if possible, in US dollars), identifying the funding source for each (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).

Between 200 and 500 words

The budget is indicated by years and sources of financing. The local government financing includes support to the operation of amateur art collectives, the projects of non-governmental organisations, the development of the cultural environment, and cultural events. The State Culture Capital Foundation supports, by invitation to tender, projects implemented by non-governmental organisations. In turn, the State budget and earmarked grants include an annual direct financing allocated for the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space and an earmarked grant for amateur art collectives. The State and local governments ensure the operation of educational institutions, however, this financing has not been indicated separately. The National Cultural Heritage Board has supported the maintenance of tangible heritage in the Suiti community by allocating funding for sacral heritage and for the conservation and restoration of cultural monuments.

The total financing in 2018 – EUR 235 979. Self-financing of the Suiti community (including non-governmental organisations, church parishes, and donors) – EUR 8690, financing of local governments (Alsunga municipality, Kuldīga municipality, and Ventspils municipality) – EUR 196 303, the State Culture Capital Foundation – EUR 17 260, the State budget and earmarked grants – EUR 13 726.

The total financing in 2019 – EUR 258 125. Self-financing of the Suiti community (including non-governmental organisations, church parishes, and donors) – EUR 8947, financing of the abovementioned local governments – EUR 221 747, the State Culture Capital Foundation – EUR 14 750, the State budget and earmarked grants – EUR 12 681.

The total financing in 2020 – EUR 298 227. Self-financing of the Suiti community (including non-governmental organisations, church parishes, and donors) – EUR 9836, financing of the abovementioned local governments – EUR 196 492, the State Culture Capital Foundation – EUR 33 800, the State budget and earmarked grants – EUR 38 099, the National Cultural Heritage Board – EUR 20 000.

The total financing in 2021 – EUR 126 848. Self-financing of the Suiti community (including non-governmental organisations, church parishes, and donors) – EUR 856 (until August 2021), financing of the abovementioned local governments – EUR 65 674, the State Culture Capital Foundation – EUR 29 700, the State budget and earmarked grants – EUR 18 618, the National Cultural Heritage Board – EUR 12 000.

In the time period from 2018 to 2021, the State and local government financing for the safeguarding and development of the Suiti cultural space has been in total EUR 890 850 (USD 1 008 219).

The European Union financing has been attracted by non-governmental organisations in total amount of EUR 366 614 (USD 414 915). From the European Regional Development Fund – EUR 225 766, the programme of the European

Commission Erasmus+ – EUR 87 349, the European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund – EUR 18 899, the European Social Fund – EUR 4600. The abovementioned international financial resources are being acquired in the time period from 2016 until 2023. The self-financing of the Suiti community the evaluation of which to full extent is mostly impossible has been essential.

B.3f. Overall effectiveness of the safeguarding activities

Provide an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the activities undertaken to achieve the expected results and of the efficiency of the 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

Each year the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti compiles a summary of the implemented activities which has served as the basis for the development of this report. In addition thereto, opinions of representatives of the community have been aggregated in order to evaluate the changes stimulated by these activities in the community and their impact on the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space (data of the survey, see Section D). In general, a positive evaluation regarding the activities implemented by the Suiti community itself has been observed as they have strengthened the sense of self-confidence, pride, and local identity of the community, and concurrently active involvement of the representatives of the community in the operation of their non-governmental organisations is observed. Opinions on the support provided by the State are more critical, however, the majority of the persons surveyed recognise that a sufficiently large number of activities for the safeguarding and development of the Suiti cultural space has been implemented since inclusion of the Suiti cultural space in the UNESCO List.

The most efficient activities in the opinion of the community have been implemented in (1) research and documentation, and also in (2) practising and transfer, using a small amount of funding. Concurrently it would be necessary to supplement the current emphasis on the Suiti traditional culture with more diverse cultural occurrences and innovative approaches to organising them in order to involve as extensive range of local inhabitants as possible. The activities implemented for (3) the promotion of recognisability have been efficient both in Latvia and internationally. Similarly, increasingly efficient use of digital communication is observed. Such social network platforms as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube are being actively used for the safeguarding and popularisation of the Suiti cultural space. Communication with the public mainly occurs on Facebook which is a popular and active tool of communication for non-governmental organisations, amateur art collectives, and also Suiti entrepreneurs, including joint platforms, for example, “Suitu tirgus” [Suiti market] and “Suitu Rija”. Comparatively less activities have been performed for (4) the development of entrepreneurship and creative industries. Organising of the single-day cafés and the weekly Suiti market in Alsunga have been referred to as the most efficient activities in this area. In turn, more effort should be put into recognisability of the created logos and a greater support to the development of entrepreneurship in the Suiti community would be necessary. (5) In terms of development of the infrastructure, all activities were highlighted as efficient.

The activities for the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space have been mutually supplementing, and the financial resources have been used in a thought-out, purposeful, and efficient manner. It is very likely that it would not have been possible to achieve the results achieved with other measures or lesser financial resources.

Regardless of the implemented activities, the majority of the community recognises that the Suiti cultural space is still not being safeguarded to a sufficient extent. Moreover, the Suiti community has also expressed critical opinions, recognising the insufficiency of activities in order to retain and develop the Suiti cultural space. In 2021, the non-formal association of the part of the community “Suitu parlaments” [Suiti Parliament] (see Section C.5) turned to the Ministry of Culture and the *Saeima* (parliament) of the Republic of Latvia, and also to the UNESCO Secretariat and other addressees, and there is an ongoing dialogue regarding the possibilities of financial support for further safeguarding activities, including in relation to policy-making for the safeguarding of Latvian historical lands and cultural spaces (see Sections C.1 and C.3).

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 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?*

Between 200 and 500 words

The Updated Plan for the Safeguarding of the Suiti Cultural Space (2021–2024) has four primary objectives: (1) to ensure documenting, research, and popularising of the Suiti cultural heritage; (2) to promote practising and transfer in all target groups and (3) to promote education and inheriting of traditions for children and young persons; (4) to use the creative potential of the Suiti cultural space for the development of new products and services and to ensure the necessary infrastructure. Foreseeable results and activities:

(1) Documentation and research

It is intended to continue the surveying and research of the Suiti cultural heritage, to ensure its digital availability, to issue publications of studies, to create audiovisual materials, to document the cultural occurrences, and to establish a Suiti museum.

(2) Practising and transfer

Celebrating of the traditional Suiti festivities, organising of festivals, inheriting of Christian traditions, cooperating with other communities in Latvia and internationally, creating of Suiti ethnographic homesteads and supporting of the operation of amateur art collectives will be continued.

(3) Education

It is intended to continue the familiarisation of local children with the Suiti traditions, to continue the provision of possibility to learn Suiti culture at Alsunga Primary School, to ensure the learning of playing traditional musical instruments at Alsunga Music and Art School, to maintain the existing creative workshops and to create new ones, and to promote non-formal education and lifelong learning.

(4) Entrepreneurship and infrastructure

It is planned to promote crafts and artisanal production, to develop cultural tourism, to popularise the Suiti brand, to develop the digital infrastructure, to continue the protection of tangible heritage, to restore the Alsunga Castle and to ensure the development of the Suiti cultural centre therein, to continue the rebuilding of the road infrastructure, and to safeguard the cultural landscape.

Support for the implementation of the plan is linked to the Cultural Policy Guidelines (2021–2027). An action plan for the introduction of the guidelines will be developed in 2022 by which specific measures for the achievement of these objectives and the financing available for their implementation will be specified. In turn, the Plan for the Safeguarding and Development Measures of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2021–2027) has been developed on the basis of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law (2016). Under the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the approval of the plan has been delayed and currently it is being reviewed by the government. The plan provides for the State financing for the safeguarding of the elements included in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Law on Latvian Historical Lands has been adopted in 2021 with the purpose of guaranteeing the safeguarding and sustainable development of the cultural and historical environment and cultural spaces. A plan for seven years with the financing from the annual State budget will be developed for the implementation thereof in 2022 (see Section C.3), and it will serve as an instrument also for the implementation of the safeguarding activities of the Suiti cultural space.

C.2. Timetable for future activities

Provide a timetable for the updated safeguarding plan (within a time-frame of approximately four years).

Between 200 and 500 words

Most of the safeguarding activities of the Suiti cultural space will be implemented continuously and during several years, therefore only the upcoming initiatives are highlighted, with an emphasis on municipal support and undertaken international partnerships. Alongside with the planned State support (see Section C.1), the local government – Kuldīga and Ventspils municipalities – development plans have a significant role in the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space.

In the Cultural Development Programme of Kuldīga Municipality (2021–2028) the local government support is planned for the following in relation to the Suiti cultural heritage: (a) surveying, historical research, and publications; (b) transfer at all levels of education and to all target groups; (c) celebrating of traditional festivities, festivities, annual celebrations, and organising of festivals and other events; also (d) international cooperation and exchange of experience with heritage communities in Latvia and internationally. It is planned to continue the restoration of the Alsunga Castle and to form the castle as the Museum of Suiti Cultural Heritage. The Kuldīga municipality government has commenced the establishment of the Suiti Cultural Heritage Centre which would encompass the safeguarding of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Such Centre as a unit of the local government will be located in Alsunga, and it is planned to commence its operation in 2022 with three employees, in three fields accordingly: (a) renovation of the Alsunga Castle and creation of the exhibition content; (b) inheriting of the intangible cultural heritage; (c) popularisation of the cultural heritage for the development of tourism. The local government has planned the necessary investments for the commencement and ensuring of the work of such unit.

The Development Programme of Ventspils Municipality (2020–2026) includes the safeguarding and development of the intangible cultural heritage as one of the action directions, dedicating separate attention to the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural and historical heritage. It is planned to implement it through the support to non-governmental organisations and the popularisation of the Suiti traditions at cultural events. For the promotion of active lifestyle and tourism in the Suiti cultural space, the development of a local or regional cycle lane in the neighbourhood of Jūrkalne and also between Jūrkalne and Alsunga is planned.

Owing to the active operation of non-governmental organisations of the Suiti community, international cooperation projects are being implemented, facilitating exchange of experience amongst the cultural heritage communities. For example, in 2022 the project for exchange of experience and strengthening of capacity “Network of UNESCO Cultural Spaces” will continue which is supported by the European Union programme Erasmus+ and joins eight organisations (NGOs, professional organisations, local governments, research and educational institutions) from seven European countries: Latvia, Estonia, the Republic of North Macedonia, Georgia, Italy, Croatia, and Portugal. The Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti is the project leader. It was planned to implement the project by October 2022, however, its implementation might be extended due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

C.3. Budget for future activities

Provide the estimates of the funds required for implementing the updated safeguarding plan (if possible, in US dollars), identifying any available resources (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).

Between 200 and 500 words

The State support is planned in the form of annual earmarked grants for the operation of amateur art collectives in the amount of EUR 3645 and to the projects of non-governmental organisations in the amount of EUR 15 000, for the period of the subsequent three years EUR 55 935 (USD 63 304) accordingly. The regular project tenders of the State Culture Capital Foundation will be continued, and so will its target programme for the safeguarding of the elements included in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage commenced in 2021.

The Ministry of Culture has planned EUR 97 100 each year in the budget from 2022 to 2024 for the secretariat of historical lands and cultural spaces, for the remuneration of three employees. The decision on the amount of the financing for the implementation of the development plan of historical lands and cultural spaces starting from 2023 will be taken in mid-2022, concurrently with the approval of the plan in the government; the Ministry of Culture has marked, in a preliminary manner, EUR 2 million per year for the implementation of the measures of such plan. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development has planned the financing in the amount of EUR 1 118 600 for the construction of parts of two road sections located in the Suiti cultural space.

The support of local governments is planned for the operation of the Suiti amateur art collectives. The Kuldīga municipality government is planning to ensure the operation of the Suiti Cultural and Historical Heritage Centre in Alsunga, with remuneration for three employees (see Section C.2), and approximately EUR 126 700 for the restoration work of the Alsunga Castle in the budget of 2022. In turn, according to the Investment Plan of the Ventspils Municipality Government for 2021–2027, it is planned to continue the improvement of the infrastructure of the coastal territory of the Baltic Sea in Jūrkalne, and to attract the co-financing from the European Union funds for this purpose. Similarly, the renovation of the part of Jūrkalne library is also planned.

International financing is planned for the projects of non-governmental organisations (see Sections B.3e and C.2), and also State and local government institutions are planning to attract an additional external financing, including from the resources of the European Union Funds.

The Ministry of Culture has received and taken into consideration an estimate submitted by the non-formal association Suiti Parliament in January 2020 regarding the necessary financial support (2021–2025) to safeguard the Suiti cultural space. The necessity of supporting entrepreneurship, educational institutions, the maintenance of cultural objects has been emphasised therein, indicating the establishment of the Suiti museum and research centre in the Alsunga Castle as the most sizeable investment. Mutually complementary State and local government support within the limits of financial possibilities of the annual budget is planned in these action directions, also planning attraction of international financing as is currently ongoing for the carrying out of the restoration of the Alsunga Castle.

C.4. 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 150 and 500 words

The Updated Plan for the Safeguarding of the Suiti Cultural Space (2021–2024) is based on the plan of activities developed by the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti together with other Suiti non-governmental organisations and local governments. It has been adjusted in cooperation with State authorities in order for the link with the Plan for the Safeguarding and Development of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2021–2027) to be transparent. The issues related to the Plan were discussed on 7 October 2021 when representatives of the organisations Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti, Suiti Parliament, and Suiti Cultural Heritage and representatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Latvian National Centre for Culture, the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, and the UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy and Law at the Latvian Academy of Culture met.

Subsequent electronic signing of a memorandum of cooperation was initiated in December 2021, with each of altogether 14 parties undertaking to cooperate in the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space according to its competence and within the limits of its possibilities. This is the third memorandum of this kind, with the previous ones being signed in 2010 and 2017. Currently, the range of the parties involved from the community has been expanded, the community being represented by several non-governmental organisations, and from the State authorities, the Ministry of Culture and several cultural institutions being joined by educational and research institutions, an institution representing the field of natural heritage and a tourism organisation. The role of the Suiti community and its non-governmental organisations will be of critical importance in the implementation of the Plan and the memorandum of cooperation.

In October 2021, a survey of the Suiti community which was organised by the Latvian National Centre for Culture in cooperation with the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti also included collecting of the current opinions of the community on the most essential objectives for the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space in the next period and the necessary activities. Replies to the questions of the survey were examined before adjusting the updated plan for the safeguarding of the Suiti cultural space. Opinions of women were mostly represented in the range of the replies received (73 % respondents, see Section D), however, in general, gender-related roles are not observed in the development of the updated plan.

Alongside with the development of the updated plan for safeguarding, the preparation of State and local government planning documents (see Sections C.1 and C.2) has taken place, and the possibility of public participation was ensured for each of them. When thinking about the subsequent involvement of the community, the Kuldīga municipality government is planning to establish the Advisory Council by 2023 which would decide on solving of issues of importance to the Suiti culture. It is planned to involve representatives of non-governmental organisations in the work of the Council.

C.5. 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 175 words

After the administrative territorial reform was completed in June 2021, the Suiti cultural space is located in Kuldīga municipality (including the previously separate Alsunga municipality, with the rural territory administrations in Alsunga and Gudenieki) and Ventspils municipality (with the rural territory administration in Jūrkalne rural territory). The Alsunga Culture Centre, Basi Community House, and Jūrkalne Community House continue their operation as the local centres of cultural occurrences which are financed by local governments.

Several new organisations have been established – the association Alsunga Smart Village (17 members) and the youth association “Liepu ielas radošais kvartāls” [Creative Block of Liepu Street] (13 members). Suiti Parliament has been established as a non-formal association of a part of the community (300 members who elect 14 representatives). Non-governmental organisations the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti (59 members, amongst them the local governments), Suiti Cultural Heritage (20 members), “Suitu amatnieki” [Suiti Artisans] (20 members), “Suitu novads” [Suiti County] (5 members), “Alsungas keramika” [Ceramic Art of Alsunga] (15 members), “Vēja sēta” (3 members), and “Maģie suiti” (6 members) continue their operation.

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 preparing this report.

Between 150 and 300 words

Preparing of the report was initiated on 19 May 2021 in the meeting of the representatives of the Latvian National Centre for Culture, the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti, the UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy and Law at the Latvian Academy of Culture and the non-governmental organisation “Serde” accredited to the UNESCO 2003 Convention, and a respective plan was approved at the meeting of the board of the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti on 6 July 2021.

Interviews were conducted on 28 and 29 September 2021 with 5 representatives of the community – heads of several non-governmental organisations and non-formal associations. In order to find out, as extensively as possible, the opinion of the representatives of the Suiti community, an electronic survey was performed from 14 October to 4 November which was developed in cooperation with the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti and distributed in different groups of social networks (Facebook and WhatsApp) of the community. In total, 74 respondents from 15 to 78 years of age

(the average age – 50 years) were reached, 73 % of respondents were women. The majority (57 %) of respondents were inhabitants of Alsunga rural territory. From 18 to 29 October 2021, 5 online discussions of focus groups were organised with Suiti artisans, leaders and participants of ethnographic ensembles, Suiti young persons, entrepreneurs of Jūrkalne rural territory, and activists of the association Alsunga Smart Village. In total, 24 representatives of the Suiti community participated.

The first version of the report was provided for examination to the non-governmental organisations of the Suiti community, local governments, and other parties involved, and the suggestions and opinions received have been taken into account for updating and supplementation of the report, and the final version of the report was prepared on the basis of the proposals received.

E. SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY

The report should be signed by an official empowered to do so on behalf of the State, and should include his or her name, title and the date of submission.

Name: Nauris Puntulis

Title: Minister of Culture

Date: 10.01.2022

Signature: