**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE  
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Meeting of the Bureau**

**Online**

**23 June 2022**

**9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Paris time)**

**Item 5 of the provisional agenda:**

**Request by Ukraine to examine the nomination   
‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’** **as a case of extreme urgency**

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| **Summary**  Following [decision 17.COM 3.BUR 3](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-22-17.COM_3.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx), this document takes stock of the progress made to process the request by Ukraine to examine the nomination ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’ for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List as a case of extreme urgency, reviews the recommendation of the Evaluation Body for this nomination and discusses the next steps to bring the nomination to the Committee for its examination.  **Decision required:** paragraph 11 |

**Background**

1. This document concerns the request by Ukraine on 21 April 2022 to inscribe as soon as possible the nomination ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’ on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (hereafter, ‘the Urgent Safeguarding List’), in reference to Article 17.3 of the 2003 Convention. In accordance with paragraphs 1 and 32 of the Operational Directives, the Bureau of the seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage met online on 6 May 2022 to consider the request and establish a procedure, on a case-by-case basis, to treat the request with particular focus on inscription criteria U.2(b) and U.6 (document [LHE/22/17.COM 3.BUR/3](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-22-17.COM_3.BUR-3-EN.docx) and [Decision 17.COM 3.BUR 3](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-22-17.COM_3.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx)).
2. The Bureau invited Ukraine to submit any additional information to what had been provided, particularly as regards inscription criteria U.2(b) and U.6, and requested the Secretariat to include this information in the nomination form and to give this nomination to the 2022 Evaluation Body for their evaluation during its June meeting ([Decision 17.COM 3.BUR 3](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-22-17.COM_3.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx) paragraphs 4 and 5). Taking this recent progress into account, this document presents the recommendation of the Evaluation Body to the Bureau and discusses possible next steps to bring, as soon as possible, the nomination to the Committee for its examination.

**Update on progress**

Constitution of nomination dossier

1. The nomination dossier ([no. 01852](https://ich.unesco.org/en/ukraine-request-17com-3bur-01252)) was originally submitted by Ukraine, using Form ICH-02, in March 2021 for possible inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (hereafter ‘the Representative List’). As discussed during the third meeting of the Bureau in May, as the nomination was initially prepared against the inscription criteria for the Representative List (criteria R.1 – R.5), there was a need to adjust the file to demonstrate that the nominated element qualified as a case of extreme urgency in fulfilment of the inscription criteria for the Urgent Safeguarding List.
2. The Secretariat notified Ukraine in a letter on 10 May 2022 of the Bureau’s decision on how to process the file on an accelerated basis and accordingly invited them to submit any additional information to what had already been provided, particularly regarding inscription criteria U.2(b) and U.6. The Secretariat received the additional information on the nomination from Ukraine (an additional letter on 14 June 2022 and the Form ICH-01 with photos on 15 June 2022) and included this information to constitute a composite nomination dossier, comprising information from both the original request submitted by Ukraine for possible inscription on the Representative List in March 2021 and the additional information subsequently provided by Ukraine following the Secretariat’s request on 14 and 15 June 2022. The dossier was made available on the following webpage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ukraine-request-17com-4bur-01262>.

Assessment by the 2022 Evaluation Body

1. Following [the](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-22-17.COM_3.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx) decision by the Bureau meeting in May, the Evaluation Body was formally requested on 13 May 2022 to examine the nomination ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’ as a case of extreme urgency for the Urgent Safeguarding List in reference to Article 17.3 of the Convention. The Secretariat made the nomination dossier available online to the Evaluation Body in English and French through its dedicated monitoring interface on 16 June 2022. The nomination dossier was presented in a ‘booklet’ format, comprising relevant documentations received and exchanges with the submitting State in chronological order.
2. The request was included in the agenda of the second meeting of the 2022 Evaluation Body taking place *in presentia* in Paris at UNESCO Headquarters from 20 to 25 June 2022. The second meeting of the Evaluation Body has a particularly heavy workload where the Body must reach a consensus in its recommendations for all fifty-six files under examination in the 2022 cycle and their criteria, as well as cross-cutting issues. In view of the exceptional nature of this case, the Secretariat and the Evaluation Body made concerted efforts to integrate the examination of the request into the already dense six-day agenda.
3. The file was presented during the meeting on its first day on 20 June 2022 and, following the same working method used for evaluating the files of the 2022 cycle, the members discussed their evaluations, based on their individual written evaluations that they had entered in the monitoring interface. During its deliberations, the Evaluation Body assessed the nomination against each of the required criteria for inscription to the Urgent Safeguarding List, with specific consideration of inscription criteria U.2(b) and U.6, to arrive at a consensus.
4. In light of the extremely urgent nature of the request, the draft decision was prepared in English overnight on 20 June 2022 by the Rapporteur and translated by the Secretariat into French that same evening. The draft was then shared with the Evaluation Body in English and French the following morning and reviewed during the second day of the Evaluation Body meeting on 21 June 2022. The draft decision was finalized by the Evaluation Body during the meeting and subsequently validated by the Chairperson that same day. Through these exceptional efforts, and under extremely tight deadlines, the Evaluation Body was able to complete a full evaluation of the file on an accelerated basis.

Recommendation by the Evaluation Body

1. The recommendation of the Evaluation Body is provided in Annex. According to the recommendation, the nomination can indeed be considered to constitute a case of extreme urgency, in accordance with Article 17.3 of the Convention and with reference to criterion U.2(b), which demonstrates the various factors related to the ongoing armed conflict that threaten the viability of the element and its transmission.

**Ways forward**

1. Taking into account the Evaluation Body’s recommendation, and in line with paragraph 32 of the Operational Directives, the Bureau may wish to consider the following two options to bring the nomination to the Committee for its examination as a case of extreme urgency:

* **Option A:** The Bureau may propose that the Committee examine the request at its fifth extraordinary session of the Committee, which is scheduled to take place on 1 July 2022. This option would take advantage of the extraordinary session of the Committee being organized in relation to the global reflection on the listing mechanisms of the Convention. In this way, it would ensure an expeditious treatment of the nomination by the Committee, within ten weeks of its submission by the State Party, demonstrating an effective first use of Article 17.3 of the Convention to treat a nomination on an accelerated schedule. This option would require an electronic exchange with Committee members (24 to 28 June 2022) to include this item in the extraordinary session of the Committee mentioned above to be held on 1 July and an agreement of at least two-thirds of the Committee members to do so, pursuant to Rule 2.2 and Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.
* **Option B:** The Bureau may propose that the Committee examine the request at the seventeenth session of the Committee (28 November to 3 December 2022). In this scenario, the nomination would be examined by the Committee thirty-one weeks after the request by the submitting State to examine the nomination as a case of extreme urgency. This option would also represent the treatment of the file on an accelerated basis, compared to the usual twenty-month schedule required to process a nomination to the Lists of the Convention under ordinary circumstances.

1. The Bureau may wish to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION 17.COM 4.BUR 5

The Bureau,

1. Having examined document LHE/22/17.COM 4.BUR/5 and its Annex,
2. Takes note of the additional information provided by Ukraine, particularly as regards inscription criteria U.2(b) and U.6, in relation to its request to examine the nomination ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’ for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding as a case of extreme urgency in line with Article 17.3 of the Convention;
3. Thanks the Evaluation Body and the Secretariat for its efforts to respond to the Bureau’s request in a timely and efficient manner and for its evaluation of the nomination during its June meeting, as per the process established by the Bureau, in reference to paragraphs 1 and 32 of the Operational Directives;
4. Further takes note of the recommendation of the Evaluation Body, as included in annex, to inscribe ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’ on the Urgent Safeguarding List as a case of extreme urgency;
5. Considers that the nomination indeed constitutes a case of extreme urgency in line with Article 17.3 of the Convention and underscores the importance of bringing this request to the Committee as quickly as possible after its submission;

**Option A**

1. Requests the Secretariat to initiate an electronic exchange to seek the agreement of at least two-thirds of the Committee members to include the item on the request by Ukraine in the fifth extraordinary session of the Committee (Online, 1 July 2022).

**Option B**

Requests the Secretariat to inscribe an agenda item on the request by Ukraine for the examination by the seventeenth session of the Committee (28 November to 3 December 2022).

**Annex**

**Recommendation of the 2022 Evaluation Body**

1. **Recommendation**
   1. The Evaluation Body recommends that the Committee inscribe the following element on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding as a case of extreme urgency:

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| **Draft Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Nomination** | **File No.** |
| XXX | Ukraine | Culture of Ukrainian Borscht Cooking | 01852 |

1. **Draft Decision** 
   1. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

**DRAFT DECISION XXX**

The Committee

Takes note of the request that Ukraine made on 21 April 2022 to process the nomination **Culture of Ukrainian Borscht Cooking** (No. 01852) for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, as a case of extreme urgency, as foreseen under Article 17.3 of the Convention and paragraphs 1 and 32 of the Operational Directives:

Ukrainian borscht is a traditional dish that is cooked with broth combined with beetroot, sugar beet or fermented beet juice. There are many versions, and the practice entails the recipe, cooking method and occasion, according to which a certain variety is prepared. Borscht is cooked in a large pan or pot and typically served with bread or garlic buns. It is prepared primarily by women, although many men also prepare it as an everyday dish. The practice dates back centuries and is passed on within families, with children participating in the preparation. An expression of hospitality, Ukrainian borscht unites people of all ages, genders and backgrounds at the table. It is also used in ritual practices, such as in the region of Podillia, where the third day of the wedding has maintained its ritual name *do* *nevistky – na borshch*, meaning ‘visit daughter-in-law to eat borscht’. It is lauded in tales, folk songs and proverbs and viewed as a lifestyle and identity marker. The viability of the element, however, is threatened by various factors since the beginning of the armed conflict in February 2022, including the displacement of bearers from their communities of origin and from the cultural contexts necessary for the cooking and consumption of borscht in Ukraine. Moreover, destruction to the surrounding environment and traditional agriculture has prevented communities from accessing local products, such as vegetables, needed to prepare the dish. Despite these difficulties, communities across Ukraine have united around the element.

Further takes note of the procedure that the third meeting of the Bureau of the Committee established on 6 May 2022 to treat the request (Decision 17.COM 3.BUR 3);

Considers that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:

U.1: The borscht in Ukraine is a traditional dish with a long history and diverse variations. The culture of borscht cooking and consumption is widespread in all regions of Ukraine. Women and men participate equally in the practice of the element. The knowledge and skills of the element are transmitted within families, from elder members of the family to younger ones by way of cooking together. The element is also transmitted in catering establishments and educational institutions, and during borscht festivals and events held in different regions of Ukraine and abroad. Borscht performs a function of social integration and cohesion amongst all people in Ukraine. Borscht in Ukraine is an indispensable part of social events, holidays and ritual practices. The element fosters mutual respect and trust among groups of people and individuals. The element is in line with human rights instruments, the principle of mutual respect amongst communities and sustainable development.

U.2(b): The nomination file explains that the armed conflict has threatened the viability of the element. The displacement of people and bearers threatens the element, as people are unable not only to cook or grow local vegetables for borscht, but also to come together to practice the element, which undermines the social and cultural well-being of communities. As such, the transmission of the element is also threatened. The armed conflict destroys the environment (fauna and flora), which in turn, seriously threatens the diverse nature of the element. The armed conflict leads to the loss of the everyday contexts associated with practicing the element, and has significantly affected the holding of cultural events, in particular festivals dedicated to traditional food, including borscht. All of these factors justify the need for urgent safeguarding of the element as a case of extreme urgency.

U.3: The nomination file provides information on past safeguarding measures involving local, regional festivals and cultural events related to the element. The proposed safeguarding plan includes a list of key activities to address the situation of urgent safeguarding. These include efforts to monitor the situation concerning the bearers, raising awareness of the element among the general public, promotion of the element through specialized literature and festivals, etc. The safeguarding measures will be implemented in close cooperation with national, public, state and municipal institutions, as well as practitioners from all regions of Ukraine. The timetable of the activities and detailed budget breakdown were provided in the file. Nevertheless, the ability to implement the safeguarding plan is likely to be subject to the evolving nature of the armed conflict.

U.4: The nomination file as originally compiled for the Representative List demonstrated a broad involvement of bearers and stakeholders and provided evidence of free, prior and informed consent for the nomination of the element. The element is practiced in the form of public access and there are no secret aspects or restrictions on the basis of age, race or gender. The working group, involving bearers of the element, cooperated in making the film, compiling promotional materials and writing the nomination dossier. The text of the dossier was open for discussion and agreed with the bearers of the element, including the safeguarding measures. Following the outbreak of the armed conflict, communities, experts and the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine worked together to develop a security plan which the inscription is expected to support.

U.5: The element was listed on the National List of Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ukraine on 13 October 2020. The inventory is maintained by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. The element was identified for inclusion on the inventory at the initiative of the NGO “Institute of Culture of Ukraine” and with the support of bearers from across Ukraine. The inventory is updated twice a year. The monitoring of the viability of the elements on the inventory is conducted by specialized cultural agencies, the NGOs concerned and the Ukrainian Centre for Cultural Research (UCCR).

U.6: The State Party made the request to inscribe the element, as a case of extreme urgency on the Urgent Safeguarding List and in reference to Article 17.3, in a letter to the Secretariat on 21 April 2022. Following the request by the Bureau of the Committee ([Decision 17.COM 3.BUR 3](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-22-17.COM_3.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx)), additional information was subsequently provided by the State Party on 14 and 15 June 2022, particularly with regards to criteria U.2(b) and U.6 using Form ICH-01.

Decides to inscribe **Culture of Ukrainian Borscht Cooking** on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, as a case of extreme urgency as stipulated in Article 17.3 of the Convention;

Further considers that the implementation of the proposed safeguarding plan will need to be reviewed in view of the evolving context of the threats concerning the element and invites the submitting State to revise the safeguarding plan accordingly;

Further invites the submitting State to report on the viability of the element and the safeguarding situation of the element, including any adjustments to the safeguarding plan, for examination by the eighteenth session of the Committee in 2023.