

# Teaching and Learning with Living Heritage

## Pilot Survey on the UNESCO ASPnet Schools in the European Union

Summary of Key Findings



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



European Union



Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through formal and non-formal education contributes to attaining Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Quality Education.

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# List of abbreviations

<b>ASPnet</b>	UNESCO Associated Schools Network
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>ICH</b>	Intangible Cultural Heritage, as defined by the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Throughout the text, intangible cultural heritage, living heritage and the acronym ICH are used interchangeably.
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>SDGs</b>	2030 Sustainable Development Goals
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

# Executive Summary

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This survey on teaching and learning with living heritage represents an initial effort to document the **integration of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in school-based learning** among the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) across the European Union, and to identify possible opportunities and challenges for teachers and learners when working with living heritage **in curricular or extracurricular activities**.

Intangible cultural heritage,<sup>1</sup> or living heritage, refers to the knowledge, practices and expressions that are passed down from generation to generation, in families and communities everywhere around the world. Living heritage is continuously recreated in response to an ever-changing environment and provides communities with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. Intangible cultural heritage includes oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and the knowledge and skills related to craftsmanship. **Schools can play a key role in the intergenerational transfer of knowledge** through activities that integrate the living heritage present in their communities. In addition to safeguarding this heritage, these efforts help to **increase the quality of education by making it more relevant to students' realities**, thus contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education. As the results of this survey make clear, these activities also create links between the school and students'

families and communities, as well as fostering an appreciation of diversity.

The groundwork for this survey was laid by a joint UNESCO – EU pilot project 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage: Engaging Youth for an Inclusive and Sustainable Europe. Through this initiative, the Living Heritage Entity of UNESCO and the UNESCO ASPnet carried out a series of activities to map how ASPnet schools across the European Union **teach and learn about and with living heritage**. The survey was sent to approximately 2,000 schools throughout the EU by ASPnet National Coordinators, who assisted schools in filling it out. The survey was designed and implemented by a team of researchers from the UNESCO Chair on Education, Citizenship and Cultural Diversity at the Lusófona University in Lisbon, Portugal in close cooperation with the Living Heritage Entity.

## Survey Findings

Survey respondents provided information on a variety of activities that integrate living heritage in the school environment. Overall, over half of the teachers reported that they integrate intangible cultural heritage in their school-based activities, with about two thirds of such activities taking place in the regular classroom. In schools where teachers integrate ICH into their activities, 53% of teachers reported that their classes include learners from minority or migrant backgrounds, contributing to discussions of **living heritage and cultural**

<sup>1</sup> The exact definition of intangible cultural heritage can be found in Article 2 of the [Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#). To learn more about elements inscribed on the lists established under the 2003 Convention, see the ['Dive into intangible cultural heritage'](#).

**diversity.** Indeed, several teachers discussed activities that dealt with living heritage from other regions: a class in Poland learned about Celtic traditions in their English classes, while a group of Somali students in Cyprus taught their classmates about their cultural practices.

Importantly, educational activities involving living heritage **build bridges to the communities** in which they are carried out. Of the activities reported, 58% involved practitioners and bearers of intangible cultural heritage elements from within the community, while 25% involved local public authorities. These activities therefore serve to **raise awareness** of ICH and show appreciation for local bearers of living heritage. Over 80% of the activities employed technology and new media, including mobile phone applications and audio-visual features such as photo and video editing. Teachers also reported integrating ICH in a **broad variety of subjects**: while language and arts were the most frequently reported, experiences ran the gamut from social sciences and history to biology and physics.

## Benefits, Challenges and Recommendations

For students, the benefits of learning with living heritage were clear. Not only did they increase their awareness of their intangible cultural heritage and **learn new skills**, but these experiences also fostered **greater self-awareness and social cohesion** while **stimulating learners' creativity and curiosity**. In classrooms where students from different backgrounds shared their own experiences with living heritage, all students gained a greater **appreciation for cultural diversity**.

At the same time, a number of challenges keep teachers from integrating ICH into their lessons in a more systematic manner. Many teachers mentioned that the curricula with which they work do not include mentions of living heritage, while others highlighted a lack of awareness and a

paucity of opportunities for training. Perhaps most crucially, limits on teachers' time and resources made it difficult to invest effort in creating new activities and materials.

The survey findings highlight the need to support teachers' ability to integrate living heritage into their lessons. This can be done through **increased training opportunities** relating to intangible cultural heritage and the **creation of online resources** that showcase successful examples. Awareness-raising activities among school heads and administrators will also help to **encourage the devotion of time and resources** to developing these activities. Furthermore, efforts to encourage the integration of living heritage in school activities should emphasize the local and community dimensions of living heritage, as well as its inclusive nature. Understanding that living heritage exists in their communities and can be taught in partnership with local bearers and practitioners can help teachers to contribute to safeguarding local expressions of ICH while also making education more relevant to their students' lives.

## Case Studies

Finally, this report highlights **ten short case studies** from ASPnet schools in which teachers effectively integrated living heritage into their classroom activities. From learning about elastic collisions in physics class while gaining an appreciation for their grandparents' games of marbles to experiencing local ecology first-hand with local farmers, teachers and students have shown enthusiasm and ingenuity in creating lessons that involve living heritage. Moreover, these experiences underscore **the importance of networks of teachers and schools** that can share experiences and materials in order to help their peers adapt these techniques to their own local context.

# Introduction

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In January 2019, UNESCO and the European Union launched the joint pilot project **2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage: Engaging Youth for an Inclusive and Sustainable Europe**, designed to explore new ways of strengthening the connections between cultural heritage, youth and education in Europe. Initiated within the context of the **European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 (EYCH 2018)**,  the project focused on encouraging and stimulating young people to explore their cultural heritage and actively participate in safeguarding and transmitting this heritage in new and innovative ways.

As part of this initiative, the Living Heritage Entity of UNESCO, in close collaboration with the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet), carried out a series of activities in the countries<sup>2</sup> of the European Union to foster learning *about* and *with* intangible cultural heritage in schools.

The project started by mapping existing experiences of integrating living heritage in primary and secondary UNESCO ASPnet schools (with children and youth aged 11 to 18) across the European Union. This document synthesizes the key findings of a survey of about 2,000 ASPnet schools in the EU, which was carried out from July to September 2019. ASPnet National Coordinators in the EU Member States disseminated the survey among school directors and teachers and provided support in filling it out. The survey was designed and implemented in collaboration with a team of researchers from the UNESCO Chair on Education, Citizenship and Cultural Diversity at the Lusófona University in Lisbon, Portugal.

This publication is structured around three main parts. The first describes the **pilot survey design**, explaining the data collection methodology and the instruments used. The second discusses the **survey results**, offering an analysis of the information collected through this pilot mapping exercise. It begins with an overview of the integration of ICH in school-based education in the ASPnet schools in the EU, followed by the specific ways in which living heritage has been integrated into educational activities and subjects. The third part highlights some **opportunities and common challenges** that teachers identified in the survey, as well as provides a set of **recommendations for possible measures** to be taken at different levels to strengthen the integration of intangible cultural heritage in primary and secondary school-based teaching and learning across the European Union. In addition, an Annex to this document provides a selection of 10 examples of how intangible cultural heritage has been integrated into existing curricular and extracurricular activities identified through the survey, as well as the survey questionnaire used in this study.

Based on these survey results and a series of pilot projects carried out in 10 UNESCO ASPnet schools, a set of resource materials for teachers has been developed, which includes short films, case studies and additional online tools that aim to inspire teachers to make living heritage part of their everyday pedagogy. All of the materials produced within the project, including the survey and the resource kit, are available on the webpage of the joint UNESCO-EU project.

<sup>2</sup> The survey was conducted in 2019 among the UNESCO ASPnet schools in the 28 Member States of the European Union, before the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union on 31 January 2020.

# Pilot survey design

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The survey was conducted using a questionnaire, which was developed and made available online through the Lime survey platform, as well as in a Word document. To facilitate the participation of teachers, the questionnaire was translated and disseminated in English, French and Spanish (the official UNESCO languages), as well as in Portuguese. In addition, some of the ASPnet National Coordinators translated the questionnaire into their national languages before distributing it among their networks.

Since the concept of intangible cultural heritage may have been new to some teachers, the questionnaire included a short introductory text about living heritage and key concepts under the 2003 Convention. It also provided concrete examples to ensure a better understanding of the theoretical notions.

The questionnaire (see Annex II) consisted of 34 questions, most of which were closed-ended, with around 10 open-ended questions that allowed teachers to expand their answers. The open-ended questions aimed to elicit deeper reflections on individual experiences of integrating ICH in school-based education and to identify possible opportunities and challenges for teachers and learners when working with living heritage in curricular or extracurricular activities. The questionnaire also collected different quantitative and qualitative data, from basic information about the school and the profile of the responding teacher to the teacher's connection with ICH and

a description of the activity that involved living heritage. It also asked about the participation of communities, the presence of bearers and the use of new technologies. Respondents were requested to provide pictures, internet links or social media pages to further document the activities that integrated living heritage.

The number of responses varied among the 28 countries. Six of the countries each provided over 5% of all responses and, taken together, accounted for more than half of the responses – Czechia, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Slovenia. Meanwhile, no contributions were received from Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Malta or Sweden. The selected methodology may have influenced the level of responses, since the ASPnet National Coordinator in each country was responsible for distributing the survey. Interestingly, however, the findings from the six most active countries did not differ from the answers received from the remaining countries. Although the number and quality of responses does not allow for country-specific inferences to be made, broad overall patterns can be observed.

The study considered only complete responses.<sup>3</sup> For example, some respondents provided general overviews of their country's policies without specifying a particular school project. Others included only attachments. These contributions were not included in the research sample, although the information they contained did help inform the overall observations in various ways.

<sup>3</sup> Of the 524 responses submitted surveys, a selection of 250 were considered for the purposes of this study, distributed as follows: 179 secondary schools (71.6%), 50 primary schools (20%), 19 primary and secondary schools (7.6%) and 2 that did not identify as either secondary nor primary (0.8%).

A qualitative data analysis was also carried out on a subsample of the 97 questionnaires that had the most complete answers with the aim of understanding the integration of living heritage in school-based education in greater detail. This in-depth analysis focused on aspects related to collaborating with practitioners, community members and cultural organizations, using new technologies, and working in culturally diverse classrooms.<sup>4</sup>

Upon completing an analysis of the survey, the research team identified the most inspiring experiences, and conducted further online research as well as follow-up phone interviews with the individual teachers. These efforts led to the identification of initiatives that are presented

as examples at the end of the document and can inspire new activities in different environments, as well as encourage other teachers to use intangible cultural heritage in their classrooms.

The study presented here is a first attempt to explore the ways in which living heritage has been incorporated into primary and secondary schools in the European Union. As such, it does not represent an exhaustive approach towards this topic, nor was it carried out with strict statistical rigor. However, by providing a general overview of how teaching and learning activities in ASPnet schools in the EU integrate living heritage, its findings can inspire further reflection, inform programmes at the national and international levels and contribute to future policy measures.



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<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this pilot study, culturally diverse classrooms are those that include pupils of minority or migrant background.

# Survey Results

## Overview on the Integration of Living Heritage in School-Based Education in the ASPnet schools in the European Union

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Intangible cultural heritage is defined by the 2003 Convention as ‘...practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills... that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage’. It is ‘transmitted from generation to generation, [...] constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity’.<sup>5</sup> This research project therefore represents an effort to identify intangible cultural heritage initiatives that encourage the appreciation of cultural diversity in formal educational spaces, based on the responses of ASPnet teachers.

Efforts to integrate living heritage into educational content and pedagogical practice can help improve the quality of education, teaching methods and learning outcomes in schools – directly contributing to attaining **SDG 4 on Quality Education**. When it plays a role in school-based education, living heritage can also strengthen the links between schools, families and communities and reinforce relations between children, their parents and grandparents, while also stimulating students’ curiosity, promoting the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and strengthening the

appreciation of cultural diversity. Especially for young people, it can foster an understanding of matters related to identity. Teaching and learning with living heritage highlights the importance of ICH for practitioners and local communities alike, as well as the need to ensure its continuity.

### Teacher profiles

Teachers play an essential role in the integration of intangible cultural heritage in schools, as they are the ones responsible for initiating and organizing such initiatives.

Table 1 below demonstrates that women make up a clear majority of teachers who took part in this pilot study, representing over three quarters of respondents. In Slovenia, for example, all the respondents were women, though the majority of study participants from the Netherlands were male. The average age of respondents was 47, with 43% falling between the ages of 40 and 50. Interestingly, over 80% of respondents indicated that they had over a decade of experience as educators. The major exception in this regard is Slovakia, where about one-quarter of the respondents had an education career spanning less than five years.

<sup>5</sup> Unesco (2003). The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Country	Gender		Age	Working experience as a teacher in years			
	Female	Male		1-2	3-5	6-10	10+
Czechia	72.00%	28.00%	49	4.00%	4.00%	16.00%	76.00%
Germany	60.87%	39.13%	46	0.00%	18.18%	22.73%	59.09%
Greece	85.37%	14.63%	50	0.00%	0.00%	7.32%	92.68%
Netherlands	28.57%	71.43%	46	6.67%	6.67%	13.33%	73.33%
Slovakia	68.75%	31.25%	40	6.25%	18.75%	18.75%	56.25%
Slovenia	100.00%	0.00%	43	6.25%	0.00%	6.25%	87.50%

In addition, the qualitative data shows that not all teachers were familiar with the concept of living heritage. This even includes some who organized activities that may be considered as relevant to ICH and contributing to its safeguarding, involving local communities and cultural organizations.

included fields such as anthropology, economics and pedagogy.

There is a noticeable overlap between the teachers' areas of expertise and the subjects in which they develop ICH initiatives. The major exception to this trend is the arts: while only 10% of teachers reported having a background in this area, ICH activities integrated into the curriculum of this subject was four times higher, at 42.16%. One explanation could be related to the ludic nature of artistic practices, which involve working with different materials and producing decorations, creating objects, etc. Another reason might be the flexibility normally found in arts curricula, which allows activities related to living heritage to be more easily integrated. Yet, this also means that the arts may end up being solely responsible for activities considered to be 'different', which may contribute to a devaluation of the field.

Figure 1 below provides an overview of the disciplines associated with intangible cultural heritage. It includes the field that the teacher studied at the post-secondary level as well as the subject(s) that they teach. The graph also includes the subject into which the ICH activity is integrated when considered an intra-curricular initiative. About half of the respondents have an academic background in languages, while a further 24% graduated in history. A large number of respondents indicated their academic background as 'other', which

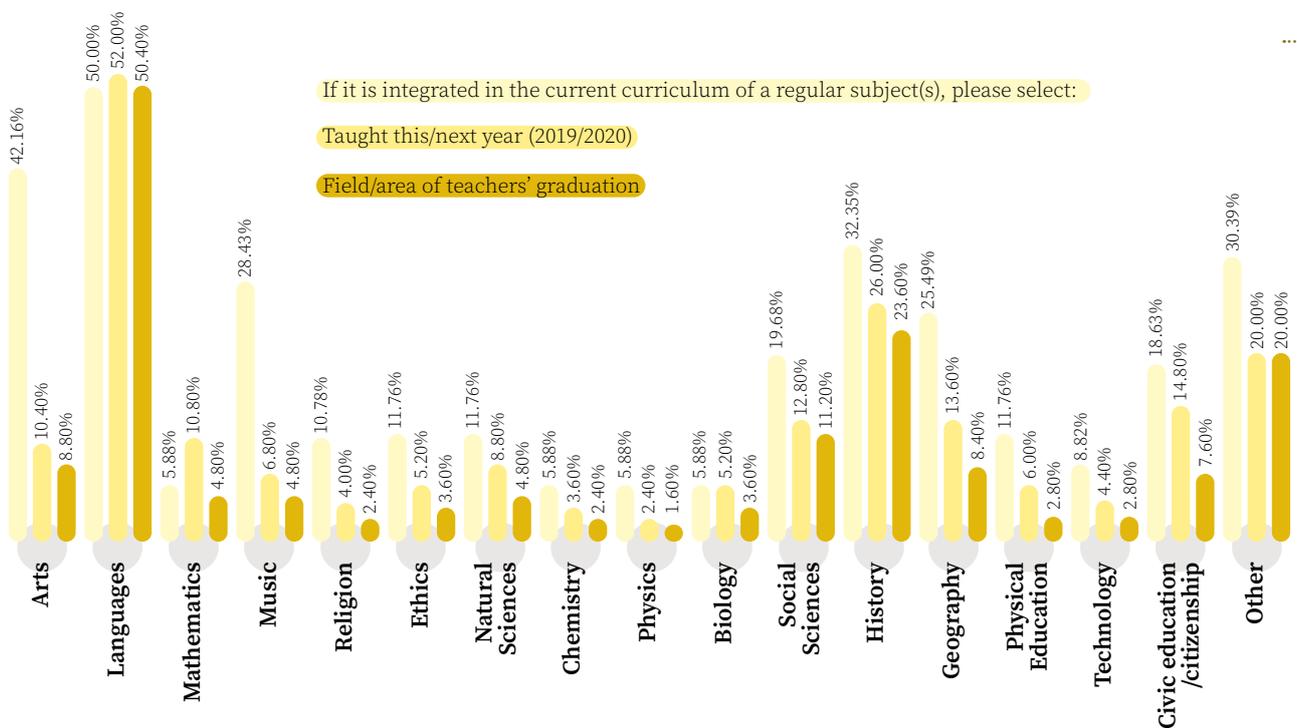


Figure 1

## School profiles

One interesting aspect of the data is the predominance of schools in an urban environment, as seen in Table 2. In 2015, just over one-quarter (28%) of the EU population lived in rural areas<sup>6</sup>, but these accounted for less than one-sixth of the responses. It should also be noted that over 80% of the schools in which respondents carry out their activities are public, with some differences in terms of whether they are supervised by national, regional or local structures.

## Teacher training on Living Heritage

There is significant variation in the percentage of survey respondents who use ICH in their teaching activities. As seen in Table 3, this figure varies from 13% in the Netherlands to over 75% in Czechia. Furthermore, there appears to be a correlation between the teachers who have received training on ICH and those who use living heritage practices in their teaching activities.

Table 4 shows that the percentage of teachers who have received training on ICH is rather low,

Country	Type of environment:		
	urban	semi-urban	rural
Czechia	72.00%	20.00%	8.00%
Germany	43.48%	39.16%	17.39%
Greece	70.73%	19.51%	9.76%
Netherlands	53.33%	33.33%	13.33%
Slovakia	81.25%	12.50%	6.25%
Slovenia	37.50%	18.75%	43.75%

as is the percentage of teachers who use ICH in their teaching activities, though both figures are higher in rural environments. In spite of efforts to provide educators with training related to

Country	Have you ever participated in any specific training on ICH?		Are you active in any club, group or NGO dedicated to any kind of ICH practice, such as traditional songs or dances, woodwork, music, embroidery, traditional sports, ceremonies, etc.?		Do you involve ICH in any of your school-based teaching activities?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Czechia	24.00%	76.00%	24.00%	76.00%	76.00%	24.00%
Germany	18.18%	81.82%	13.04%	86.96%	47.83%	52.17%
Greece	24.39%	75.61%	29.27%	70.73%	57.50%	42.50%
Netherlands	6.67%	93.33%	6.67%	93.33%	13.33%	86.67%
Slovakia	12.50%	87.50%	18.75%	81.25%	56.25%	43.75%
Slovenia	18.75%	81.25%	6.25%	93.75%	75.00%	25.00%

<sup>6</sup> Statistics on rural areas in the EU (2017), accessible online at [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_rural\\_areas\\_in\\_the\\_EU](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_rural_areas_in_the_EU), accessed on 3 August 2020

ICH, this study shows that few respondents have been involved in any training on ICH, with only about one-fifth of respondents indicating that they had participated in specific training activities in this area. Of the respondents who had never received training on ICH, about half indicated that they integrated ICH in their pedagogical activities. Meanwhile, 80% of respondents who did receive ICH training integrated it into their teaching. Prior training on ICH thus appears to have a meaningful effect on the integration of ICH into teaching activities.

majority of such activities is organized **within the structure of a regular class subject**. Other kinds of activities represent less than 35% of the sample.

Table 4

Type of environment:	Have you ever participated in any specific training on ICH?	
	Yes	No
Rural	30.77%	69.23%
Urban or semi-urban	20.10%	79.90%

Type of environment:	Do you involve ICH in any of your school-based teaching activities?	
	Yes	No
Rural	69.23%	30.77%
Urban or semi-urban	55.71%	44.29%

How is this activity being organized?

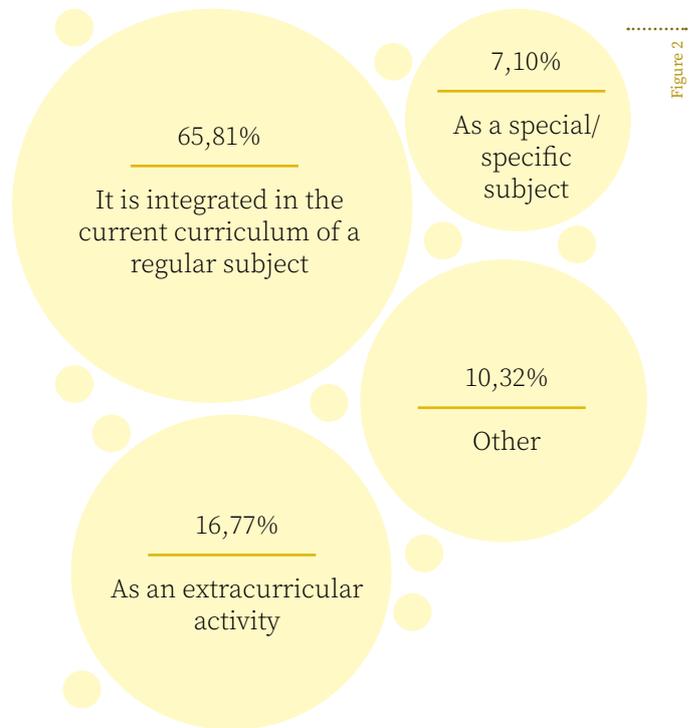


Figure 2

### Types of school activities that involve living heritage

The types of activities that teachers organize provide indications of how ICH is integrated into school-based education. Considerations include whether the activity is part of the regular curriculum or if it is an extracurricular or special activity not related to any specific subject. Figure 2 shows that the large

In order to examine the activities themselves in greater detail, a subset of 97 questionnaires was selected based on their high level of clarity and detail of the responses (see Table 5 for an overview). These responses were overwhelmingly concentrated in **urban and semi-urban environments**. In particular, very few extracurricular activities were carried out in rural areas, representing less than 10% of the total. Most of the initiatives in this subsample were held in secondary schools.

Following the general trend, **most of the ICH experiences identified took place in urban secondary and general schools, mostly as intra-curricular activities**. The absence of extracurricular activities in ‘specialized’ schools<sup>7</sup> is, however, somewhat surprising. Finally, the large number of activities classified as ‘other’ may need further investigation in order to identify the characteristics of such activities.

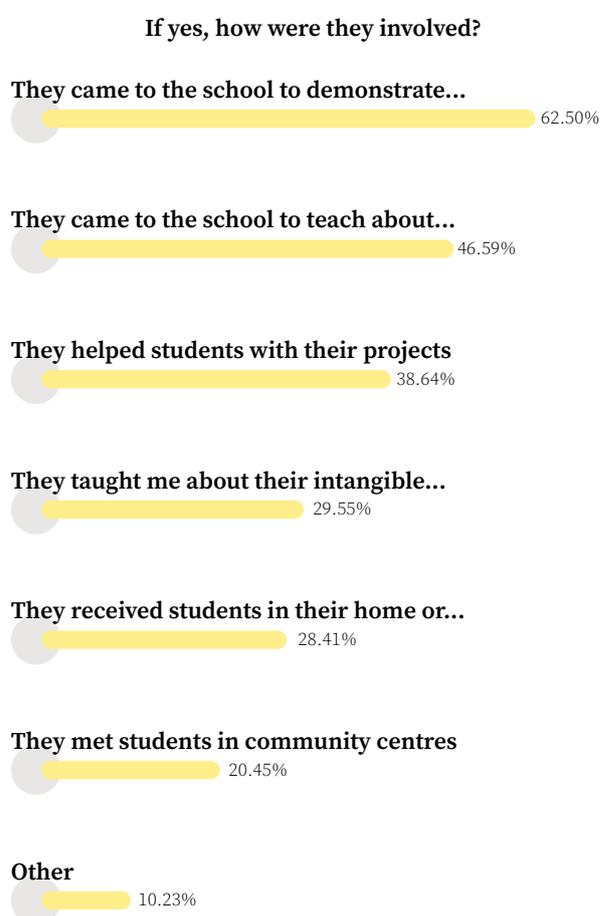
<sup>7</sup> In the context of the survey, specialized schools refer to those institutions that are not identified as TVET but offer special training in areas such as art, education and training, apprenticeship courses etc. The classification used in the survey was based on national education systems in the European Union, accessible online at [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/national-description\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/national-description_en), accessed on 17 November 2020.

How is this activity being organized?	Type of environment:			Educational Level		Please, specify:		
	urban	semi-urban	rural	Primary	Secondary	General	Specialized	TVET
It is integrated in the current curriculum of a regular subject (e.g. in arts, literature, sports, etc.)	64.21%	16.84%	18.95%	35.79%	73.68%	74.74%	20.00%	12.63%
As an extracurricular activity (e.g. a Club of young falconers, folklore ensemble, embroidery group, etc.)	58.33%	33.33%	8.33%	29.17%	75.00%	83.33%	0.00%	20.83%
As a special / specific subject (e.g. Folklore, Traditional culture, Traditional woodwork, etc.)	60.00%	20.00%	20.00%	60.00%	60.00%	80.00%	20.00%	20.00%
Other	46.67%	20.00%	33.33%	26.67%	80.00%	86.67%	6.67%	13.33%

## Involvement of tradition bearers and practitioners of ICH

The **participation of local communities is essential** for the successful integration of living heritage in school-based education. The survey data indicates that 58.28% of school activities involved individual practitioners or groups of practitioners. In most cases, practitioners were in direct contact with the learners, which allowed pupils to recognise practices as living heritage. These personal encounters helped them to understand the importance of ICH safeguarding and connected them to their local communities while fostering intergenerational dialogue. Figure 3 shows how these encounters occurred

Although collaboration with practitioners occurred in **half of the activities integrated into curriculum subjects**, their participation was much more common in the other three categories, which may indicate that independence from a curriculum

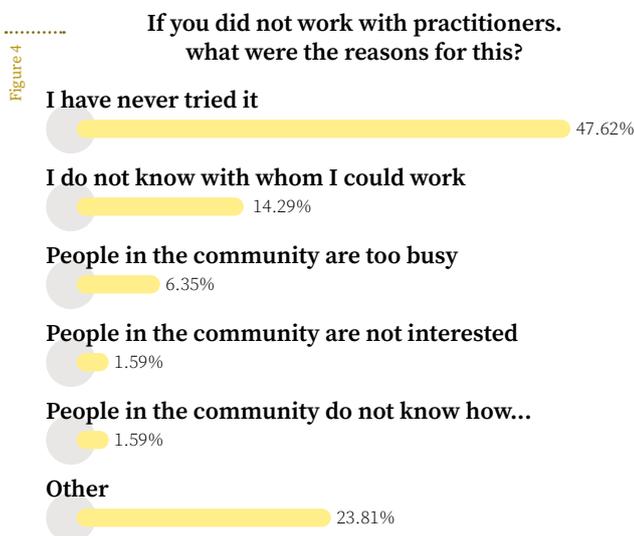


encourages cooperation with practitioners (see Table 6). It may also suggest a difficulty in including practitioners in curricular activities that are part of the schools' daily activities. It therefore seems that the involvement of practitioners in the activities relies more on the initiative of the teacher, rather than the institution, to contact external individuals and organizations.

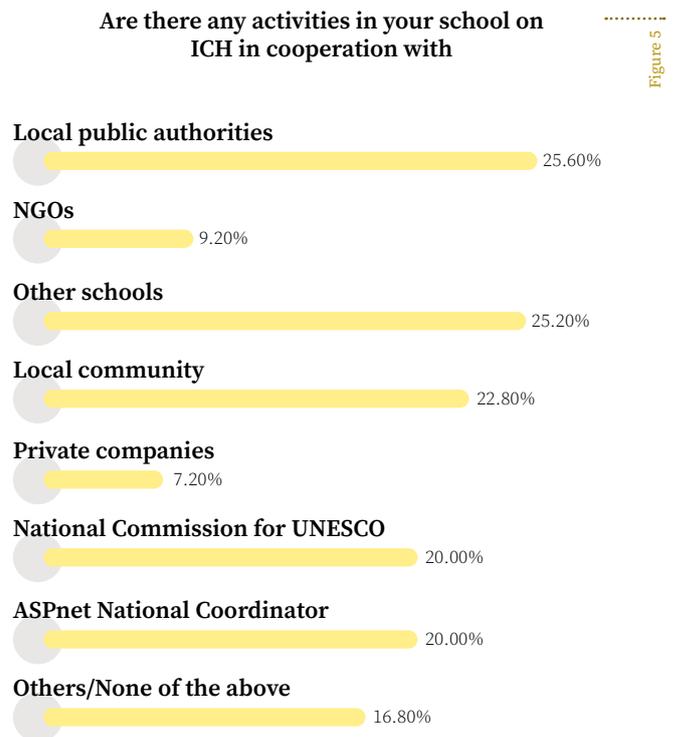
Table 6

How is this activity being organized?	Did you collaborate with practitioners to prepare or implement this activity?	
	Yes	No
It is integrated in the current curriculum of a regular subject (e.g. in arts, literature, sports, etc.)	50.00%	50.00%
As an extracurricular activity (e.g. a Club of young falconers, folklore ensemble, embroidery group, etc.)	75.00%	25.00%
As a special / specific subject (e.g. Folklore, Traditional culture, Traditional woodwork, etc.)	80.00%	20.00%
Other	61.54%	38.46%

Respondents noted, however, that a lack of information and necessary conditions made it difficult to involve external actors, implying that most respondents never even managed to try.



Crucially, very few teachers indicated a lack of interest or ability of local community members to take part in school activities that involve living heritage (Figure 4). This suggests that a scarcity of structured partnerships or available contacts is behind the low involvement of practitioners, which schools and other local organizations could make efforts to remedy.



As seen in Figure 5, around 25% of activities were carried out in collaboration with local public authorities and other schools. Local community members, the National Commissions for UNESCO and the ASPnet National Coordinators were also involved, to a lesser degree, alongside NGOs and private companies.

## Online resources and new technologies in teaching and learning with living heritage

Respondents reported widespread use of technology in activities related to intangible cultural heritage, with over 80% of activities involving technology ranging from mobile phones to social media and smartphone applications. In extracurricular activities, these technologies are

used 90% of the time, while they are slightly less common in curricular activities (78.72%) and in activities classified as ‘other’ (69.23%) (see Table 7).

Online training and audio-visual materials are the main platforms involved in training and collecting information about living heritage. The internet and other new technologies were also common in school activities integrating ICH.

Contrary to what might be expected, teachers in rural and urban environments use technology at roughly equivalent rates (see Figure 6). In fact, teachers in rural areas reported a slightly greater use of new technologies. Mobile phones were particularly prevalent in these activities (see Figure 7), while computers were used to conduct research about living heritage. Other reports on educational experiences highlighted the use of video, photo editing and the creation of online content. Several teachers declared the use of WhatsApp groups and other social media to communicate and share information. While little use of electronic games was noted, one of the respondents noted that the development of specific applications was likely helpful. The use of online communication channels was especially common in extracurricular activities.

In one Spanish experience involving Flamenco, the teacher described how technologies were used as follows:

New technologies help us in the study of the Flamenco, as well as in the dissemination of our project through our website, Facebook page and YouTube channel. Without these tools, we would not be able to share our activities with other people, nor would we benefit from learning about the work of other centres and flamenco artists who are indirectly part of our classes thanks to new technologies.<sup>8</sup>

These new technologies, therefore, make it possible to access and disseminate content related to living heritage, whether this is done for research

How is this activity being organized?	Do you use new technologies for your activities involving ICH?	
	Yes	No
It is integrated in the current curriculum of a regular subject (e.g. in arts, literature, sports, etc.)	78.72%	21.28%
As an extracurricular activity (e.g. a Club of young falconers, folklore ensemble, embroidery group, etc.)	91.67%	8.33%
As a special / specific subject (e.g. Folklore, Traditional culture, Traditional woodwork, etc.)	90.00%	10.00%
Other	69.23%	30.77%

Table 7

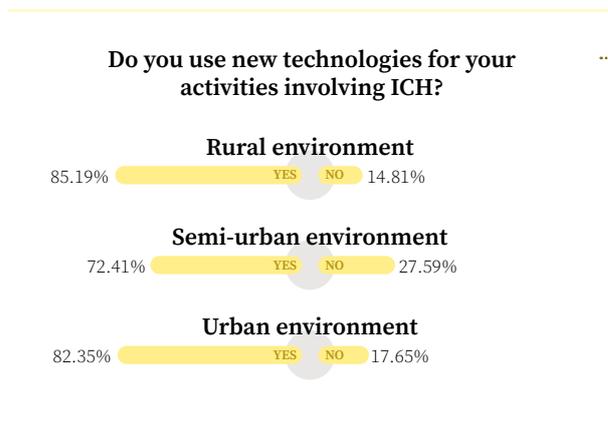


Figure 6

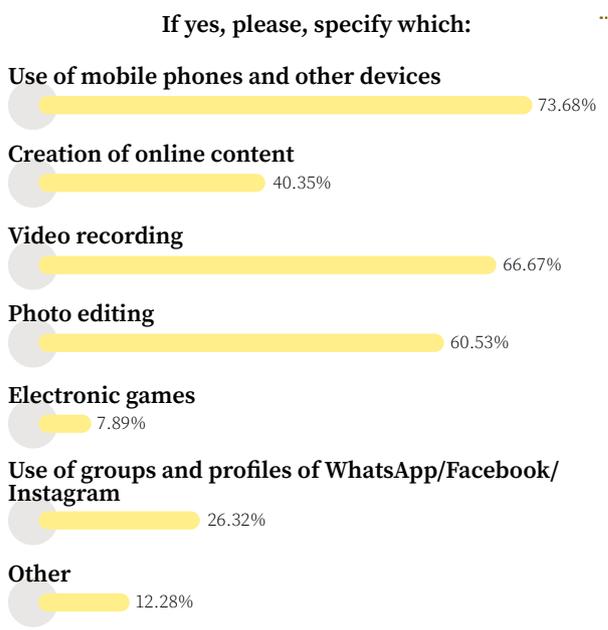
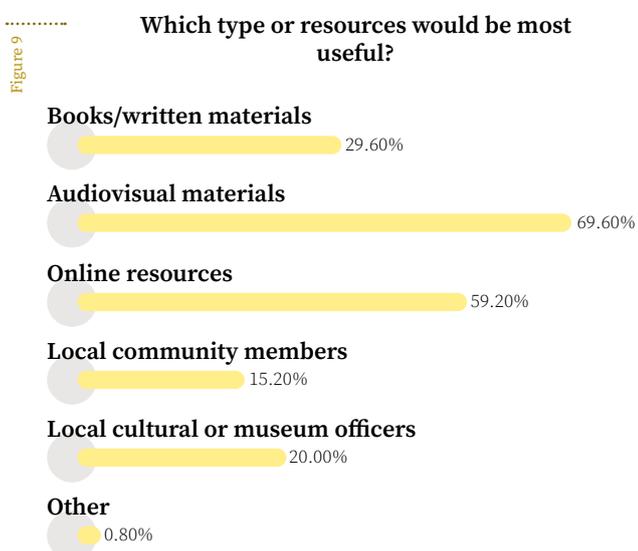
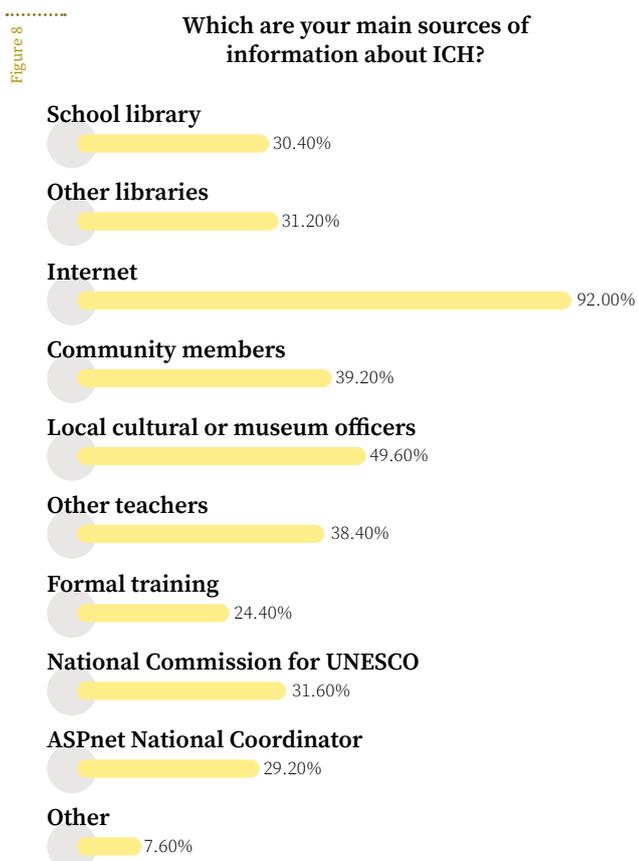


Figure 7

<sup>8</sup> For more information about the Flamenco project, see Annex I.

purposes or to share the school activities with other teachers and students.

As seen in Figure 8, the internet was identified as the main source of information by 92% of teachers, with a diverse array of other sources accounting for much smaller numbers. This variety points to a significant interest amongst teachers to find information on practices and expressions of living heritage; a result that is also informative for future initiatives aimed at raising awareness and



enhancing training opportunities for teachers on ICH. Moreover, this is an important lesson learnt for cultural heritage practitioners, should they be interested in collaborating with schools.

Teachers identified audio-visual and online resources as the most promising for use in training and professional development as it is easier and more convenient to access online materials (Figure 9). Meanwhile, local resources such as community members and cultural institutions, including museums, hold the least appeal. This suggests that the potential of local collaborations with communities, cultural organizations and other teachers is underutilized, as are the National Commissions for UNESCO and the ASPnet National Coordinators.

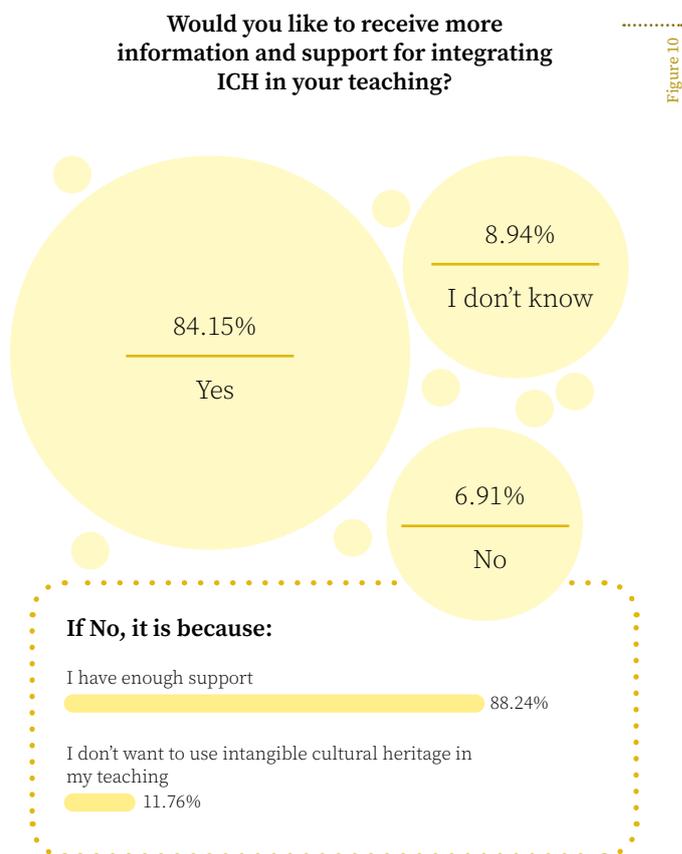


Figure 10 shows that teachers expressed a **strong interest in improving their understanding of living heritage** in school-based education, with less than 10% responding negatively. Of those who claim to have no interest in further information, almost 90% stated that they already have sufficient support for their initiatives. Even so, these teachers could

benefit from an approach that seeks to advance discussions of novel activities with ICH, since such dialogue can help them to deepen and broaden their understanding, exposing them to new ways of working with living heritage in schools.

## Teaching with living heritage in culturally diverse classrooms

For the purposes of this pilot study, culturally diverse classrooms are those that include pupils with minority or migrant backgrounds. The latter group encompasses migration between regions within the same country or from different countries, including refugees and asylum seekers. Diversity was not defined in terms of age, class or gender, though these may be interesting facets to examine in future surveys.

The presence of learners with diverse cultural backgrounds was consistent across curricular, extracurricular and other activities (see Table 8

below). Over half of respondents (53.28%) reported the presence of learners with diverse cultural backgrounds, of whom 67.69% reported integrating some elements of their learners' culture into the teaching process. Among this group, 76.47% did so in curricular activities, 100% in special subjects, 85.71% in activities classified as 'other' and 54.55% in extracurricular activities.

This **broad recognition of diversity** is an unequivocal indication of the need to discuss and work towards creative ways to address the cultural diversity that exists in school communities. Indeed, integrating intangible cultural heritage into school-based education may lead to an even greater recognition and appreciation of students' diversity.

Teachers who worked with diverse classrooms reported that they primarily encouraged students to present their cultural heritage and traditions to their peers. These traditions included customs, religious practices, food or sports, as well as their

How is this activity being organized?	Do your learners come from diverse cultural backgrounds (such as minorities, migrants – including from other regions within the country, refugees, etc.)?		If yes, are any aspects of their diverse ICH integrated in any way in your classroom?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
It is integrated in the current curriculum of a regular subject (e.g. in arts, literature, sports, etc.)	50.00%	50.00%	76.47%	23.53%
As an extracurricular activity (e.g. a Club of young falconers, folklore ensemble, embroidery group, etc.)	45.83%	54.17%	54.55%	45.45%
As a special / specific subject (e.g. Folklore, Traditional culture, Traditional woodwork, etc.)	55.43%	44.57%	100.00%	0.00%
Other	53.85%	46.15%	85.71%	14.29%

Table 8

family biographies. In some schools, parents were invited to present aspects of their culture of origin to the classroom. In others, the multicultural environment was celebrated by organizing a small festival that brought all the different cultures together. Some teachers integrated their students' cultural diversity into a discipline such as languages or international studies.

Several examples of the inclusion of diversity in ICH activities were reported. In Germany, students of Turkish descent shared traditional songs and musical instruments with their German classmates. Spanish teachers discussed how their schools fully integrated learners from Romani communities and acknowledged their customs. Teachers in Estonia reported their experience of working with students who come from different parts of the country. One teacher specifically referred to a pupil from New Zealand who presented Māori customs in the classroom. Another instructor from Cyprus shared the following:

One of the units in our English book is on emigration. A group of our students visited a centre for asylum seekers and collected personal stories to create an emigration album. We also interviewed Somalian students

who enrolled in our school. The same group of Somalian students were present during an event to commemorate the European day of Human Rights and gave presentations and discussed the right to education.

It is important to mention, however, that these activities, though reported as having taken place in the school communities, were not shared by the teachers as examples of teaching *about* and *with* living heritage. They were mainly organized as parallel activities with the aim of establishing an openness to diversity in some form, with or without living heritage.

Finally, the pilot project revealed that 32.31% of the teachers who recognize that cultural diversity is present in their school do not incorporate it into any of their activities.

# Ways of Integrating Living Heritage in Education

Teachers choose to integrate living heritage into the pedagogy and educational content of a variety of subject areas. Figure 11 provides a general overview, though it should be noted that the selection was not exclusive and many of the experiences reported were inter- or transdisciplinary. Arts and languages were the most common subjects, encompassing the majority of activities. The number of subjects classified as ‘other’ is also noteworthy. These included baking, international relations, philosophy, weaving and costume design, to name just a few examples.

In general, teachers who integrated living heritage into their pedagogy across disciplines did so as an alternative way of improving their teaching methods and involving students to a greater degree in school activities.

## Integrating living heritage in core curriculum subjects

A considerable number of experiences that were connected to the arts and languages had a certain degree of crossover with other subjects. Numerous activities were also related to religious or traditional festivities such as Christmas, Easter or carnivals, which involved making ornaments such as wreaths, decorating eggs, or creating carnival masks. These activities were organized in various ways, including in regular lessons, field trips and school events. This suggests that many of the activities were limited to a certain occasion related to seasonal celebrations rather than occurring throughout the school year.

Various experiences involving ICH were transversal in nature, combining several subjects at once. Such projects sometimes involved a wide range of topics,

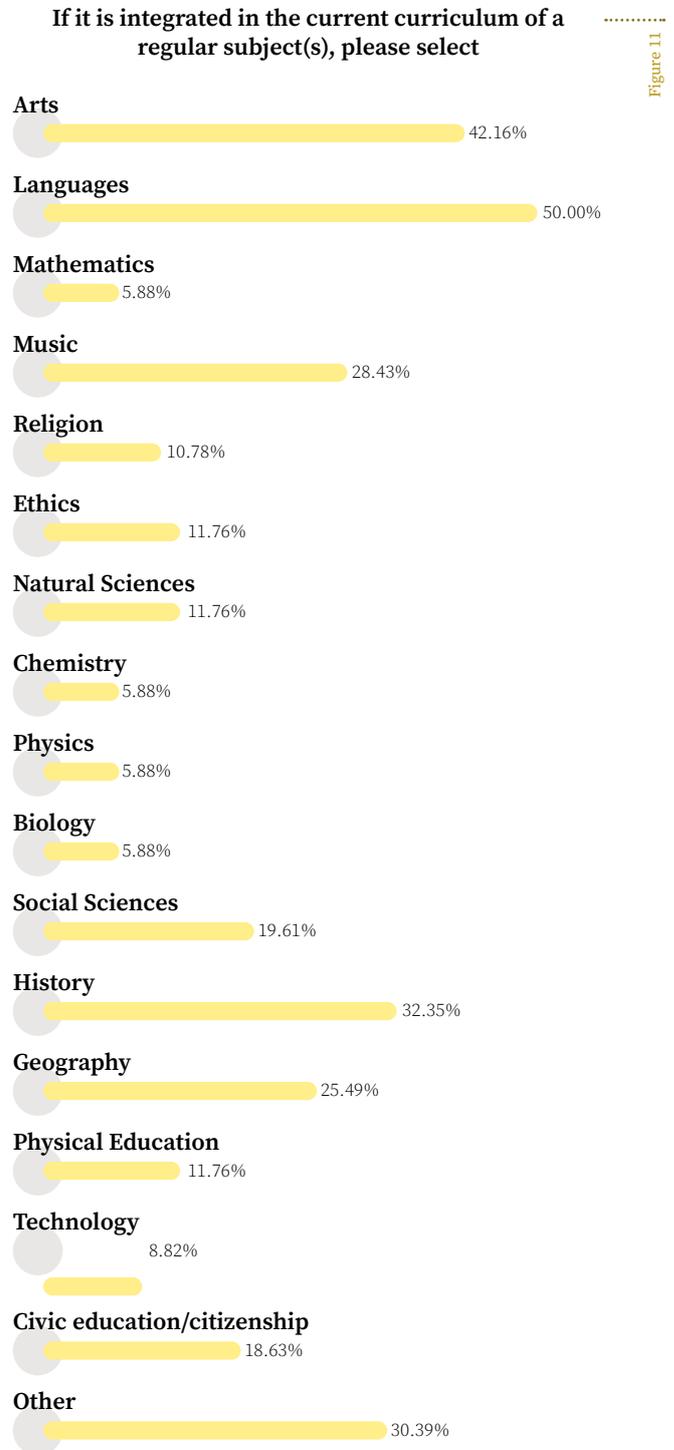


Figure 11

referred to as ‘national cultural heritage’, and other times were more specific, focusing, for example, on traditional arts and crafts, food, design, dances

or chants. Examples include the Tatsia dance from Cyprus, brickmaking in Portugal and traditional games used in activities to connect different generations. In Spain, one activity involved traditional sewing techniques that are transmitted by grandmothers. In this instance, an intra-curricular activity that linked different subjects was able to facilitate a bonding between learners and their families, while also involving practitioners to teach a technique and help students to learn traditional methods that they can easily use in their everyday lives.

The experiences respondents mentioned were closely related to the subject in which they were integrated, which included **arts, languages, maths, religion, ethics, music, biology, natural sciences, chemistry, physics, social sciences, history, geography, physical education, technology, civic education**, or those classified as 'other'. Interestingly, not many activities were identified as being associated with the subject of religion, even though respondents reported activities involving religious festivities. The simple activity of painting eggs for Easter, for example, was considered a way to bring learners together and formed part of efforts to foster an appreciation of different identities, especially those of students with diverse backgrounds. Activities classified as belonging to the subject of ethics were often interdisciplinary in nature and included attempts to connect parents with their children in pastimes such as traditional folk dances, choir singing and storytelling. Many activities also had students work with practitioners under the coordination of the teacher.

Although some activities were concentrated in a single school subject, these clearly had a **direct relevance for the safeguarding of living heritage**. For instance, in Slovakia, an experience classified under the 'arts' subject category involved the creation of puppets using traditional methods of embroidery and fabric painting. This process encouraged students to contribute to the safeguarding of living heritage by learning about its history and acquiring new skills.

Activities integrated into the subject '**languages**' included poems and folktales, which sought to connect learners to traditions that were very meaningful to the elderly generations. Several activities also involved arts and crafts, such as the traditional Bulgarian ornament, the *Martenitsa*. According to the teacher:

This tradition is popular, and the benefit was that everyone was happy to share the knowledge of making these handmade adornments with younger students, share positive emotions and exchange different ideas about making these adornments within families. It was voluntary and some students worked in teams of three or four, others individually.

One German example showed how the **music** teacher integrated various traditional elements to give learners useful components to analyse and create songs. The same teacher also worked with practitioners, in this case expert musicians, who met with the students in the school or in other cultural or community centres. Although the example did not clearly identify the specific living heritage elements, the pedagogy exemplifies a simple way of integrating traditions – in this case traditional songs, singing and playing instruments – and working with practitioners to familiarize students with these practices.

Integrating traditional practices into school subjects can also occur during **physical education** through traditional sports. One example from Slovenia went even further by connecting traditional sports to subjects such as natural sciences and biology during a week-long extracurricular camping trip in the mountains. Another example from Slovenia revolved around the myth of the forest elf Trepetikelj, which was the subject of a day trip with learners of different ages aiming to acquire knowledge about the myth as well as the forest, nature, plants and animals. Working with elders, students gained new knowledge, stimulated their creativity, interacted with each other and improved their social skills.

In Portugal, a **geography** teacher used a canoeing activity to help students understand the river of their region and the traditional economic practices associated with it, such as fishing and pottery making. The activity also touched on traditional environmental care and aspects related to gender by examining jobs traditionally held by women. Students collected testimonies from people in the villages to study local biodiversity and customary practices. Multiple teachers from Czechia, Germany and Slovenia also reported using geography to discuss living heritage. Integrating customs, food-related and social practices from across Europe allowed learners to expand their knowledge of other cultures.

**History** was another popular subject for teaching and learning about and with living heritage, as it is intimately connected with the past. In Latvia, for example, Midsummer Festival traditions brought secondary students together to discuss and compare the different traditions among their families and the festival's relevance today.

Three examples, classified under the subject '**social sciences**', involved the topic of food. In Germany, students gathered around food and music and discussed traditional food preparation across Europe. Two examples from Spain were related to the traditional making of el gofio (a type of flour) and olive oil as living elements. Students learned about the knowledge and skills that go into preparing these products, from cultivation to processing and cooking, from the past to the present. They gained an understanding of these practices and their long history and importance for the people in their region. At the end of the activity, learners had the chance to taste these products.

Several experiences shared in this pilot survey were classified as being part of **chemistry, physics, math or biology** lessons. For example, a chemistry teacher from Estonia introduced natural dyeing techniques based on plants extracts. Another experience from Greece recounted how the game of marbles was used to teach about movement and

collisions in physics. One of the few mathematics-related examples, also from Estonia, involved using traditional patterns from Christmas decorations to learn about geometric figures and measurements. This gave students a new perspective on mathematics that involved local traditions.

The integration of intangible cultural heritage into subjects such as **technology, civic education** or those classified as 'other' highlight a number of interesting considerations. A teacher in Poland, for instance, used information and communication technologies (ICT) within a much broader project that involved not only the school but several local stakeholders in sharing aspects of Polish culture with different regions of Europe. The teacher explained the organization of the activity as follows:

For this project, we have formed a team of partner schools from different parts of Europe. Each partner has included local stakeholders in the project activities: parents, a local tourist office, a museum, archives, a library, a gallery, a folk group, associations dealing with culture or similar. We have identified the need to utilize modern technology to teach *about* and *with* cultural heritage. Through this cross-curricular project, we will bring cultural heritage into the classroom using ICT and by creating digitized educational materials. Teachers and students from partner schools present digitally their cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, raise awareness about its importance, create digital educational materials, and discuss different ICT-based methods, tools and applications used in the process of teaching and learning.

Another project from Czechia, related mainly to the subject of **civic education**, was carried out in a close connection with a museum and local practitioners. This brought learners into contact with traditions and related museum objects, while also pushing them to think of ways to safeguard the traditional knowledge and skills that go into producing such pieces.

The activities associated with 'other' subjects included a number of inspiring projects. In one example from Spain, traditional songs, legends and carnivals were integrated into the teaching of **marketing and web design**, within the subject 'professional training'.

About one-quarter of the teachers who implemented ICH-related activities that were directly integrated in the core subjects of school curricula had received training in the area of living heritage. These teachers reported that they had completed training and capacity building programmes provided by UNESCO, by regional groups in the fields of architecture, customs and social practices or folk dances, or from cultural organizations related to ethnography and visual anthropology. Meanwhile, around one-fifth of respondents were connected to NGOs or other ICH-related groups, which included orchestras, sports and UNESCO clubs, and groups that practiced traditional songs, dances or theatre.

### Extracurricular activities with living heritage

About half of the teachers responsible for extracurricular activities that involved ICH had some training in ICH. This training generally came from UNESCO, though some teachers had been trained by other institutions. Meanwhile, around half of teachers were themselves involved with groups related to ICH, including folkloric, artistic or sports groups. There was no pattern in terms of teachers' age or the number of participants. Various activities reported the use of electronic games, international cooperation, activities in folkloric museums, external activities related to festivals and dances, group work and meetings outside the school.

Extracurricular activities that involve ICH have certain differences from those carried out within a curricular framework. The specific ICH elements involved, however, are largely consistent with the curricular activities. Examples include traditional sewing, Mediterranean food, folk dances,

traditional folk songs, dances, instruments, costumes and customs, the use of traditional stories, thematic theatrical performances, the use of theatrical masks, museum visits to see traditional costumes and objects, learning about the life of previous generations, traditional dances and songs related to a specific territory, festivals for children to acknowledge ancestry and the meaning of traditions, spinning, weaving, yarn-binding, felting, national-band bindings, traditional blueprint making, traditional dishes and recipes for the Christian fast, Christmas decorations and carols, painting eggs for Easter, and Jewish traditions.

### Living heritage in special or specific subjects<sup>9</sup>

The activities organized as part of special subjects generally involve initiatives by individual teachers who are involved or connected to ICH-related groups, or in some cases work with technology. These groups are active in areas such as folklore, traditional dance, traditional literature and poetry. The classes integrate elements such as folklore, social practices related to celebrations and festivities, traditional toys, etc.

The main characteristic of ICH in special subjects is the specificity of the content and ICH elements used in each project. Since these activities are not related to any subject, they can be very open to new practices as long as the ICH element is clear and serves a purpose. An example from Spain illustrates how special and specific subjects can be developed. The teacher in question trained in the Didactics of Plastic Arts and is involved with a programme in Uruguay that seeks to strengthen arts, crafts and trades. The activity was described as an 'analysis of handmade techniques, protocols and procedures to establish **programming algorithms**'. In the instructor's words the activity consists of the following:

The master proposes a craft activity. The student group establishes the sequence of well-

defined, ordered and finite steps, describes the steps to create an object, decomposes the data into a sequence of simpler steps that can be carried out, defines the precise algorithm that simulates the creation. Then a computer program performs the following actions: with the input of the starting information, the process continues with all the operations to be carried out and the output are data and results obtained from the simulation.

The collaboration with the practitioners in their specific activity took place at their workshop, where they received the students. In the process, learners from diverse backgrounds were encouraged to share similar aspects of the process that take place in their own countries. New technologies such as mobile phones played a key role in this activity since they were used for photo editing, videos and games.

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## Other types of integration of living heritage in school-based education

Respondents were given the option of classifying activities that could not be described as belonging to any of the three categories above as 'other'. These activities did not differ greatly in terms of either content or the elements of living heritage chosen. As in the other categories, the motivation of the teachers was essential in initiating and organising the activity, in some cases influenced by previous training or membership in an ICH-related group. The number of participants varied considerably from activity to activity and mainly took place with secondary-school age children.

Activities involving living heritage classified as 'other' were generally part of extended, flexible or autonomous curricula, with some being related to international student exchanges such as the European Union Erasmus programmes. Several respondents stated that it was part of the subject

they teach, with the activity being organized independently by the teacher. In other cases, it was part of a student exchange programme or a project related to students' cultural expressions, such as a play, performance, or exhibitions of objects such as musical instruments. One activity was part of a parade and a greater regional project involving UNESCO, aimed at promoting regional cultures abroad.

The activities covered a wide variety of themes related to ICH. Some revolved around performing arts such as music, dance and theatre, and were mainly linked to traditional, folk and other regional music, dances, instruments, songs, plays, folktales, riddles or proverbs, with the aim of understanding the value and meaning of these expressions. Other activities concerned traditions related to Christmas or Easter, such as painting eggs, baking cookies, making candles and other decorations such as bags, calendars, wreaths, etc. In some cases, the teachers integrated the presentation of various traditions in their classes. The activities were mainly led by the teacher, sometimes involving practitioners or cultural organizations.

One teacher from Poland, for example, included living heritage from other parts of the world alongside local practices in her English language and culture class:

When teaching about Scotland, we read tales and legends of Celts, watch videos of Celtic dances, draw Celtic patterns, listen to Celtic music; when teaching about Australia, we watch documentaries about the Aborigines, listen to their songs, write in their alphabet; we learn about different accents of the English-speaking countries. [...] we learn about the intangible heritage in Krakow and its broader region in Polish, such as Easter traditions, we go and see Nativity scenes (*szopki*) in Krakow, which has been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural

<sup>9</sup> In the context of the survey, special or specific subjects refer to subjects directly related to ICH practices such as folklore, traditional culture, traditional woodwork etc., as well as subjects that are not included in the usual curricula like global citizenship or education for citizenship.

Heritage of Humanity, we go to see traditional folk dances in Krakow, etc.

In another activity identified in the Netherlands, in the teacher's own words:

There are no specific materials needed besides a computer. Students work in groups and make mind maps of all the things they consider to be their intangible cultural heritage. Later, the mind maps are discussed in class. Then all groups can choose one specific cultural heritage example that has been mentioned and do some research on this. They need to present this to the rest of the class. The teacher mentors the students and helps them, if necessary. This activity takes approximately 50 minutes.

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In this approach, learners were thus inspired to reflect on ICH rather than coming into direct contact with specific ICH elements and practitioners.



# Opportunities, Challenges and Recommendations

## Benefits and Challenges of Teaching and Learning with Living Heritage

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The survey also examined the benefits and challenges of teaching and learning with living heritage, as identified by teachers. The integration of ICH was reported to contribute to the professional development of teachers by challenging them to embrace new approaches and educational methods.

The main benefits for learners were **increased awareness about their intangible cultural heritage**, as well as **gaining self-awareness**, which helps to **reinforce identities and social cohesion**. Living heritage in school-based education was observed to enable learners to acquire **new knowledge and abilities**, such as manual work, in addition to **stimulating their creativity and curiosity** and creating ways for them to **better express themselves** and to discover and show their talents. Most importantly, respondents reported that learning processes and outcomes improved in regular curricular subjects such as chemistry, mathematics and physics. Working with living heritage also **stimulates teamwork** in the classroom and in learners' daily life, **improving their social skills** and enriching school life.

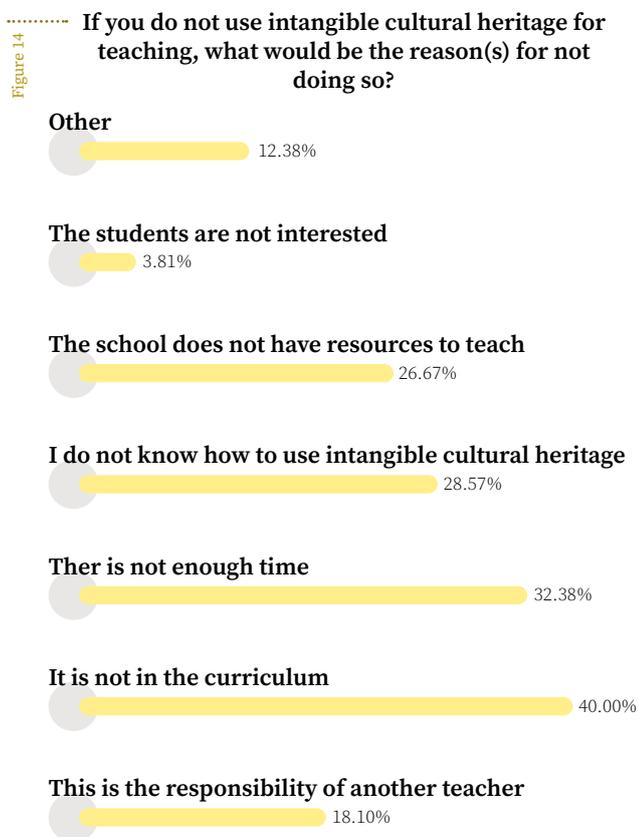
In general terms, respondents mentioned that ICH helps learners to realize that traditions are still alive today, **strengthening their self-identification** as well as their connection with the past. Their increased understanding of their own roots

and heritage also contributes to self-knowledge and **empowerment**, thus increasing pride in safeguarding practices. Teachers noted that they saw a change in students' mindsets. As additional benefits, teachers mentioned the **promotion of dialogue** by integrating other groups and people outside the school. Students were also presented with the opportunity to **better understand local realities**. Furthermore, knowing more about one's own living heritage allowed exchange over elements with others, thus **facilitating intercultural dialogue**.

Exposure to living heritage practices from other regions, such as lessons on Australian Aboriginal culture in English classes, was also reported to increase openness to diversity. The benefits of increased self-identification and awareness were reported to be especially important for minorities who were able to learn about their own heritage. As one respondent noted, 'through activities related to living heritage, pupils learn how to respect history, different aspects of heritage and how to safeguard it for future generations.' The diversity of social and cultural backgrounds was seen as an opportunity for all learners to value their own heritage. As one respondent said, 'the awareness of the importance of knowing one's living heritage for understanding the present helps to unveil a "dormant" or "lost" cultural identity.'

The responses collected in this pilot survey demonstrated, however, that intangible cultural heritage is a **rather unclear concept for teachers**, as it involves abstract notions that may cause confusion when put into action. Although the definition proposed by UNESCO - stated in the beginning of the report - is clear, the direct connections with specific school subjects (e.g. mathematics, physics, art, etc.) and the often-interdisciplinary character of some ICH-related activities led some teachers to describe elements that cannot, in fact, be considered living heritage. For example, some respondents referred to the work of nationally recognized artists, the staging of plays, the filming of tangible heritage and other artistic practices, the use of archaeology, or discussions of historical periods such as the medieval times as living heritage. These and other school activities were thus not, in reality, connected to ICH.

Although access to training and information on the subject is undoubtedly an important condition



for integrating ICH in teaching, instructors also reported other reasons for not doing so. Specifically, about 30% of instructors cited simply **not knowing how to do it** (Figure 14). The remaining reasons had to do with both individual and institutional aspects such as the absence of ICH in the curriculum, lack of time or material resources and the distribution of responsibilities in school (Figure 14).

This shows that an expansion of ICH in schools depends on improvements to general conditions as well as the knowledge available to educators on the subject.

When not formally in the curriculum, such activities demand extra time and budgeting, representing a challenge for teachers seeking to organize them. Teachers often mentioned, however, their **interest in integrating ICH-related activities and subjects in the regular curricula**.

It is worth emphasizing that less than 4% of respondents believed that their pupils were not interested in learning with living heritage in the school context. However, it was also reported that some learners showed a lack of confidence due to a misperception that they do not have the skills needed for such activities. Several teachers mentioned that encouraging greater participation of learners can be challenging, while others highlighted difficulties in ensuring the continuity of activities related to ICH due to student turnover or their own overloaded schedules.

A more general concern expressed was that of keeping traditions alive. The disregard and permanent devaluation of local heritage, both tangible and intangible, and a lack of awareness about its importance was seen as a challenge: 'Society becomes busier and traditions are neglected.'

## Preliminary Recommendations

The integration of living heritage in primary and secondary school-based education is of interest to all organizations working on cultural heritage, education and other related sectors. Living heritage incorporates a wide variety of cultural manifestations and expressions in communities across all regions and countries. Private and public institutions must join forces to raise awareness of the importance of living heritage in order **to achieve quality education (SDG 4), build appreciation for cultural diversity and contribute to its safeguarding** at the local level for future generations.

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Although this survey represents an exploratory pilot effort and is not a thorough exploration of the topic, some preliminary observations can be drawn. Specifically, the results highlight potential measures and programmes that could be implemented by schools, public authorities, cultural organisations and international bodies to support the integration of ICH in schools.

### Acknowledging the local and community dimension of living heritage

The survey findings indicate that living heritage can seem intimidating for some teachers, who may associate it only with those practices inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It is therefore important to raise awareness of the **local dimension of living heritage**, practiced by communities everywhere in the world. Teaching and learning with living heritage has the **potential to make a major contribution to achieving quality education**. It can also help safeguard living heritage, especially if the school activities are implemented in close partnership with local

bearers and practitioners. Teachers who are interested in integrating living heritage into their everyday pedagogy should be encouraged to do so by adapting existing examples to their local contexts.

### Acknowledging the inclusive nature of living heritage

The pilot survey showed the importance of **recognizing living heritage as an inclusive concept**, offering the opportunity to recognize similarities and not simply differences. Indeed, living heritage practices can be a way of bringing people together and appreciating forms of expressions and traditional knowledge passed down for generations.

It is also noteworthy that even though teachers mentioned that they seek to work with ICH from different regions (e.g. integrating the living heritage of students of migrant backgrounds), this appeared only occasionally in the examples provided by the respondents. Specific measures are needed to encourage and provide examples of how intangible cultural heritage can be integrated into curricular subjects or in extracurricular activities, with full respect and appreciation for students' diverse backgrounds. To this end, it is important to ensure that teachers have access to relevant information and instruments to approach cultural diversity through living heritage.

### Need for continuous training opportunities for teachers

The survey results clearly show a strong relationship between teachers' training in ICH and the integration of living heritage in school-based teaching. This highlights the need for continuous

training and capacity building opportunities for teachers and other school professionals who might be involved in carrying out ICH-related activities. Future trainings could focus on familiarizing teachers with the meaning of living heritage and its importance for local communities and pupils' development, while also equipping them with methodologies and tools to effectively integrate ICH into their pedagogy. Such trainings could also draw connections between local practices and global debates and build teachers' networks, which may lead to strengthening exchanges.

Because subjects such as the arts, languages and history featured prominently in the examples, a stronger focus on other curricular subjects such as mathematics, physics, chemistry or biology may also increase the integration of living heritage in school education.

In addition, the high presence of experienced female teachers among the respondents indicates not only a need to encourage teachers at *all* stages of their careers but also to establish a more equal balance in terms of gender.

## Creating online resources and integrating new technologies

Teachers reported that the internet and other technological resources were their main sources of information on living heritage. Availability of online written and audio-visual resources may therefore improve the integration of ICH into the school environment. Interactive platforms for teacher training and capacity building activities could also help in this regard. Likewise, providing examples and guidance on the use of new technologies in integrating ICH in school activities may facilitate and encourage further integration in both urban and rural schools. On the side of cultural heritage practitioners, it would be relevant to raise awareness about the importance of an online presence, both in terms of enhancing their visibility among the younger generations and in view of potential collaborations with schools.

## Encouraging heads of schools and administrators to welcome the integration of ICH into their programmes

Teachers found that one of the difficulties they encountered when working with living heritage was **lack of time and institutional support**. Schools therefore need to become more open to such initiatives by dedicating material resources and training as well as creating the necessary conditions for the integration of living heritage into the school environment. These include more flexible curricula, increased openness of school programmes and joint actions by teachers from different subjects.

One of the most important supports for teachers would be **granting them time** to plan and implement ICH-related activities, as well as **providing incentives** that recognize their efforts to improve their pedagogy and learning outcomes with living heritage.

Schools can also encourage teachers who are interested in integrating living heritage into their pedagogy by **creating institutional partnerships** with cultural institutions, NGOs, practitioners, local public administration, UNESCO National Commissions and ASPnet National Coordinators.

While the survey focused on both primary and secondary schools, the former had a more modest response rate. This suggests the need to increase efforts to engage primary school teachers.

## Supporting networks of schools and teachers engaged in bringing living heritage closer to learners

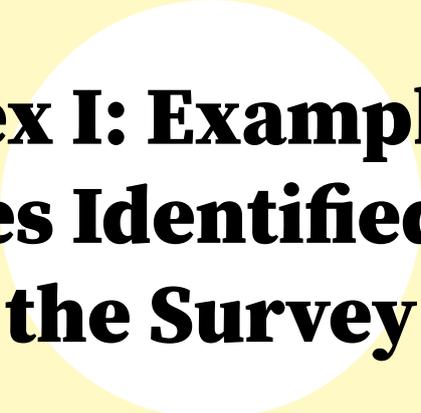
Networks of schools and teachers with experience working with living heritage are able to share knowledge and methodologies and pool resources for joint initiatives. Given that teachers already use the internet as their main source of information

on living heritage, online resources can also play an important role in the creation and maintenance of partnerships. Schools, cultural organizations and public authorities can encourage and support such partnerships through planning, preparing, developing, financing or publicizing initiatives. Such actions can help overcome the limitations of individual efforts on the part of teachers to introduce living heritage into school life.

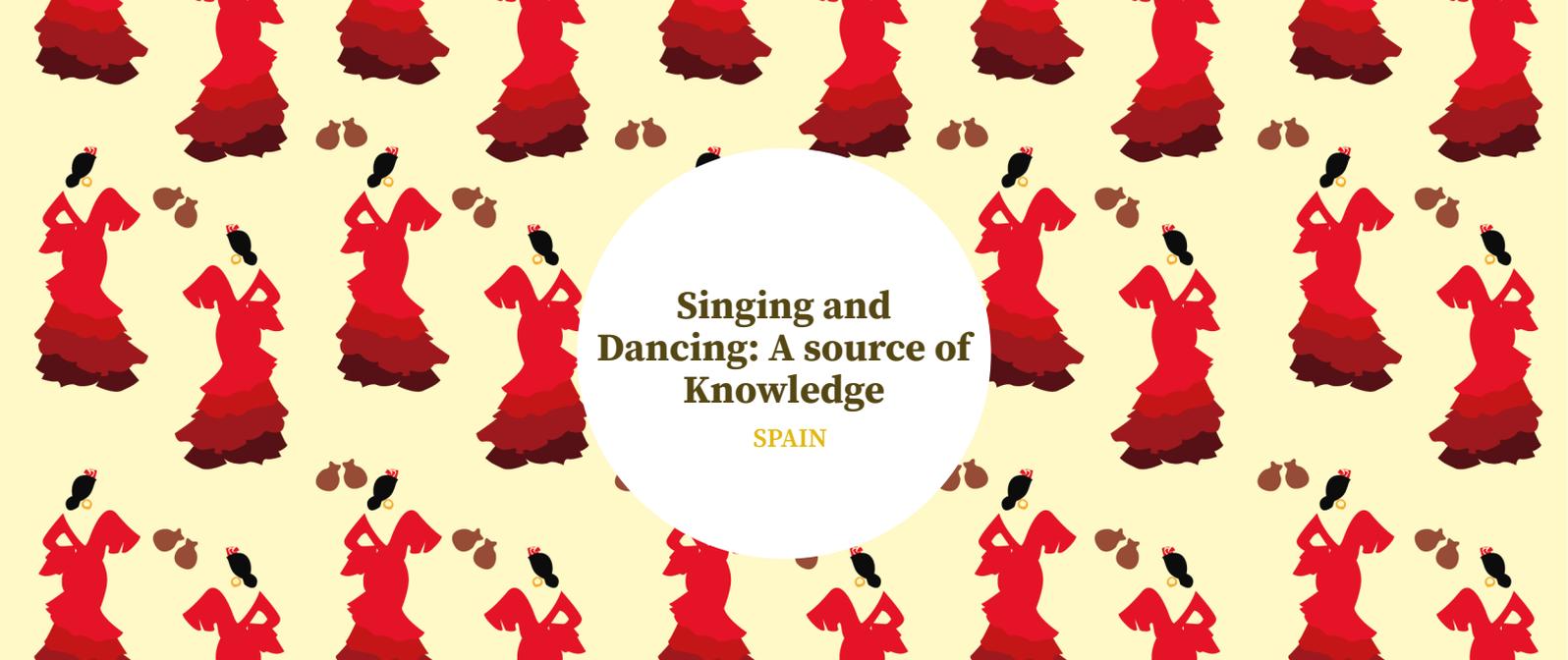
## Expanding the present research

This study was a pilot initiative to map the current practices of teaching and learning with living heritage in primary and secondary UNESCO **ASPnet schools in the EU**. Although it helped to identify some characteristics of this new approach, which can inform future programmes and policy measures, there is a **clear need for further research and analysis**.

Specifically, future research should more closely examine the situation of schools in rural areas. The findings here could also be further nuanced by involving a wider range of actors in the research sample, including school principals, living heritage practitioners, cultural organisations and especially learners. The engagement of students, in particular, would allow for direct feedback on the implemented actions and would empower pupils by involving them first-hand in the research process.



**Annex I: Examples of  
Activities Identified during  
the Survey**



## Singing and Dancing: A source of Knowledge

SPAIN

33

**ICH element:** Flamenco music and dance

**Subject areas:** Arts, music, mathematics, physics, history, geography

**Students' age:** 6–12

Flamenco music and dance are important aspects of cultural life in different regions of Spain. Inscribed on the **UNESCO Representative List in 2010**, Flamenco is often played in informal settings and features improvised instrumental solos accompanied by dance performances. The integration of flamenco into the school environment embraces the concept of community-based expression and the continuation of this art form, passed down from one generation to the next. Public institutions have a key role to play in highlighting the value of flamenco as a source of wisdom and well-being.

The project at CEIP San Plácido, an elementary school in the province of Seville, primarily incorporates flamenco into arts and music classes. Students compose lyrics to new songs and learn flamenco dances, which they later perform for their peers. In doing so, the groups feel like they are actively contributing to writing the history of flamenco and understand that this element of their living heritage continuously transforms along with society.

At the same time, flamenco also helps spark an interest in other subjects. Its rhythms can aid in examinations of patterns and sequences, important aspects of mathematics and physics. By studying the lyrics to flamenco songs, students can learn about topics in Spanish history and geography. This multifaceted curricular approach thus builds an appreciation for local cultural values while also helping students to recognize the richness of relationships and forms of expression, as well as fostering teamwork, creation and motivation.

The local community and bearers are actively involved in teaching the schoolchildren about this ICH element. The project coordinator called upon flamenco teachers and professionals, who have helped to develop the project as well as performing and teaching in the school. Information and communication technologies have also been used to promote and share the programme over social media, allowing to build connections with groups from different regions.



## Forest Elf Trepetikelj

SLOVENIA

**ICH element:** Stories of Elf Trepetikelj

**Subject areas:** History, natural sciences, social sciences, geography, ethics, civic education, sports

**Students' age:** 6–14

34

Through a series of interdisciplinary activities built around the legendary figure of the forest elf Trepetikelj, students learn more about their natural environment, history and culture through oral traditions. The farmers who live in the area's forests have a distinct way of relating to nature, using traditional knowledge to identify plants and animals and build trails. Experiencing their day-to-day lives allows children to learn about the forest and its ecology through hands-on tasks and exercises while also gaining an appreciation of local traditions.

During a field day called 'In the Footsteps of Trepetikelj', students spend four hours learning from the farmers who tend the trails and care for the forest. Local farmers and elders teach children about traditional lifestyles through activities such as building small houses, part of a traditional children's game. By using the resources of the

forest in their activities and learning the names of the plants and animals they encounter, students gain an understanding of the local ecology, history and culture. Older children, who took part in the activities in previous years, help prepare the activities and guide their peers through the day.

The activities contribute to nearly each curriculum subject: the oral traditions are integrated in history, geography, social sciences and natural sciences as a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the relationship between humans and nature. The excursions, which include walks through the woods, incorporate elements of physical education, while some of the myths hold relevance for ethics and civic education. Students also learn about the relationship to the natural world in other settings, such as in Māori culture in New Zealand. In the process, learners gain new knowledge, experience nature, make new friends and develop their imagination and creativity based on myths that are part of the cosmovision of their ancestors. Local living heritage thus plays an important role in school-based education.



## What do We Know about Olive Oil?

SPAIN

35

**ICH element:** Olive oil production and consumption

**Subject areas:** Social sciences, mathematics, physical education, sciences, geography, ethics, civic education, sports

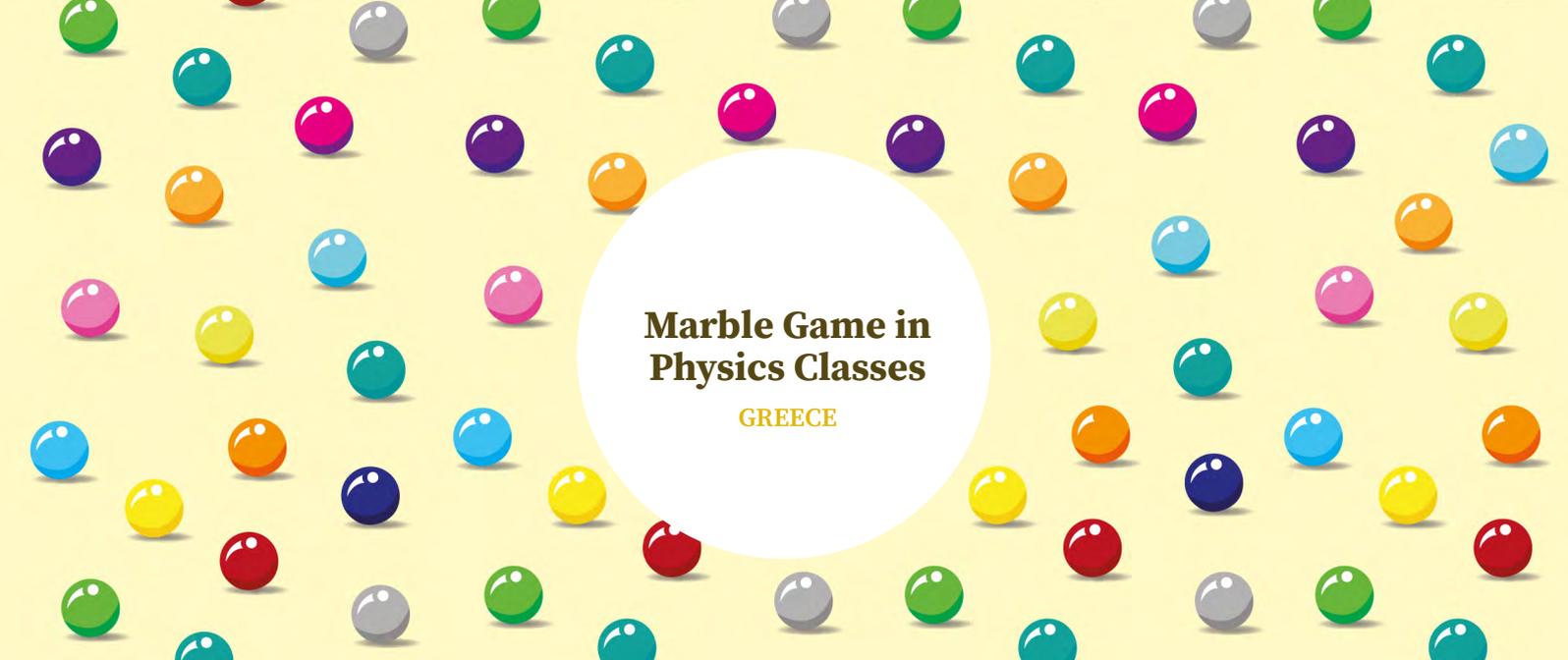
**Students' age:** 3–11

Although the modern production of olive oil is largely an industrial process, the millers that continue to produce oil in the traditional manner are an important element of the living heritage of their communities. Olive oil is an essential part of the regional gastronomy and, indeed, part of the culture and diet of the wider Mediterranean region.

In a public school in Zaragoza, Spain, the traditions related to olive oil lie at the heart of a transdisciplinary approach that includes social sciences, mathematics, and physical education. While social studies lessons focus on the process by which olives are produced and transformed into oil, the recipes are used in mathematics classes to study proportions and calculate ratios. Physical education activities include hikes to olive groves, while students also use olive oil in crafts such as soap making.

Local elders, as ICH bearers, explain the methods of producing olive oil to the students, who interview them to learn about traditional local gastronomy. Learners gain first-hand experience of olive groves, oil mills and the production process. The activities foster curiosity relating to traditional practices while helping to safeguard and disseminate knowledge on the community's living heritage. Involving elders in the process deepens the understanding of information that students might otherwise only gain from limited classroom materials.

At the same time, learners use a variety of technologies to document and present their experiences. They record videos and prepare audio-visual presentations to showcase the processes they witness while also incorporating other elements such as local songs or information on olive oil production in other Mediterranean countries. The initiative therefore builds an understanding of the local history and culture, as well as a connection to the wider region and the importance of the area's living heritage.



## Marble Game in Physics Classes

GREECE

**ICH element:** Marble game

**Subject areas:** Physics

**Students' age:** 14–15

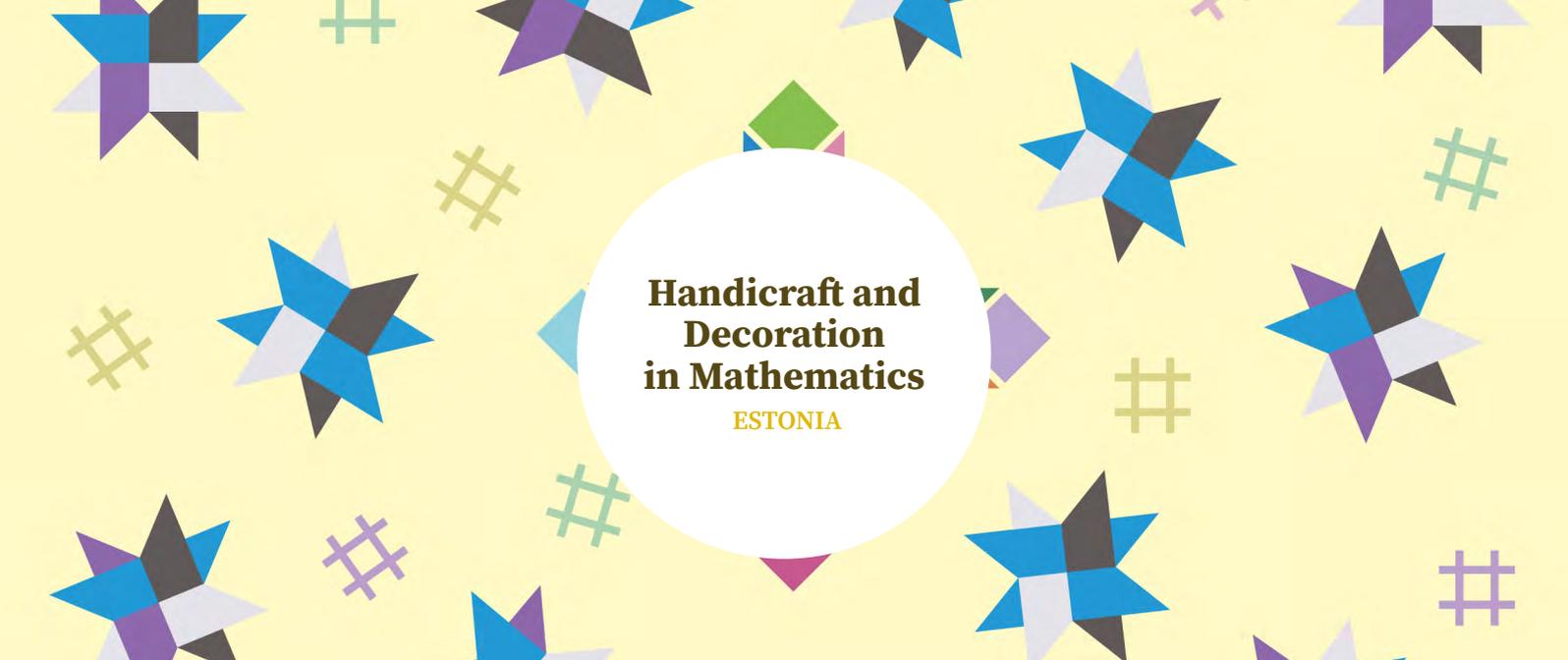
36

Marbles, a popular children's game involving glass balls, has been a favourite pastime for generations of young people. While the rules change from place to place, the game always features collisions between the balls and different types of strategies. The simplicity of the game makes it popular and easy to integrate into classroom lessons, as only a flat space and marbles are needed.

One high school in Thessaloniki, Greece, uses the traditional game to teach concepts in physics. The bumping and scattering of the marbles in different directions allows students to learn about the notions of elastic collisions and momentum. Specifically, students discuss how the angles of the impacts and the force with which the marbles hit one another affect their subsequent motion. The teacher explains the rules of the game and the

physics concepts, while students observe these notions play out in real life while engaging in a traditional pastime.

In addition to providing an enjoyable way for learners to experiment with the concept of momentum, playing marbles creates a connection to the world of the students' parents and grandparents; one where electronic forms of entertainment played less of a role. In the words of the instructor, 'The students had the opportunity to interact, collaborate and have a different physical activity. They also learned a game that their parents used to play, which gives them an idea of how we were entertained in the past'. This activity thus shows how a simple traditional game can provide a fruitful opportunity for students to connect with their own families and identity, as well as to understand the ways their living heritage relates to their everyday lives and a subject like physics.



## Handicraft and Decoration in Mathematics

ESTONIA

37

**ICH element:** Estonian handicrafts

**Subject areas:** Mathematics, history, arts and technology

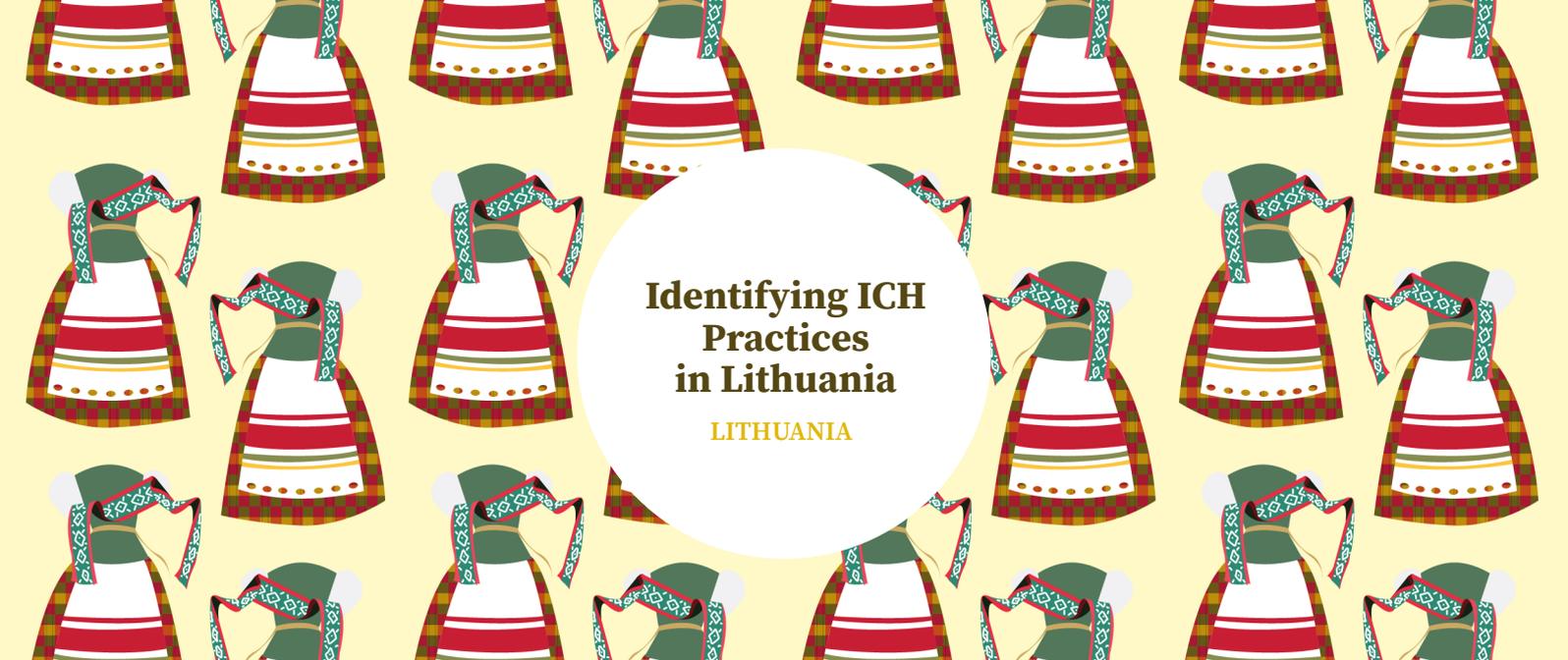
**Students' age:** 7–15

Traditional handicrafts play an important role in national celebrations throughout the year in Estonia. As elements of living heritage, they incorporate local textile craftsmanship knowledge along with stewardship of natural resources, such as the reed grass from which designs are woven. The geometric patterns employed are typical of the region and can be fruitfully incorporated into lessons on shapes and patterns.

In mathematics classes, students develop their own designs by learning about the geometric forms and configurations involved in the traditional crafts. They practice measuring and manual skills as they cut out figures and build arrangements. Meanwhile, students learn about the history of reed harvesting and the traditional practices involved to prevent

damage from fungus, as well as how these textiles were used in the past and how they have come to be used in the present day. In arts and technology classes, pupils are shown how the reeds are used for Christmas decorations and for Estonian Independence Day.

As a practitioner, the teacher already had all the knowledge, skills and experience needed to impart the main aspects of these handicrafts. Working on the preparation of the project with other teachers has helped build up a body of knowledge and experience within the school itself, which will continue to be used in the future. An enhanced understanding of these handicrafts has led to a greater appreciation of this living heritage and increased awareness of its use in other celebrations, including Mother's Day, Easter, and Grandparents' Day, allowing the students to make connections between traditional festivities and living heritage in Estonia.



## Identifying ICH Practices in Lithuania

LITHUANIA

**ICH element:** Textiles and handicrafts in Lithuania

**Subject areas:** Extracurricular, Lithuanian culture, history

**Students' age:** 7–10

Intangible cultural heritage is transmitted from one generation to the next. Educational institutions can contribute to this intergenerational transfer by facilitating connections and conversations between elders and students that expose younger generations to traditional knowledge, crafts and ways of living.

The Alytus Dainava Basic School in Alytus, Lithuania, has partnered with local museums to enable such exchanges as part of the school's extracurricular activities. Students and elders identify ICH elements that are of interest, such as spinning, weaving, yarn-binding, felting and band bindings. Discussions and interactions take place in local museums, and involve elders sharing

their knowledge with the students. Experiences gained in these encounters also inform classroom discussions of Lithuanian history and culture. In addition, the school organizes fairs that bring ICH bearers and learners together, who then showcase and share their traditional knowledge with the wider school community.

The aim of these activities is to create intergenerational connections and an appreciation for local living heritage. Through conversations with their grandparents and other elders, learners are exposed to traditional local textiles and handicrafts. The school environment is then used as a space to explore the knowledge gained and understand how these ICH elements are practiced and continue to be safeguarded. School-organized workshops and festivals provide an additional means for younger generations to safeguard these practices as their living heritage.



## Canoeing and ICH studies

PORTUGAL

39

**ICH element:** Local ecological knowledge and traditional practices relating to the Tagus Estuary

**Subject areas:** Languages, history, geography, civic education

**Students' age:** 13–15

Life in the Portuguese towns of Bobadela and Loures is intricately connected with the two rivers that they border, the River Tagus and the River Trancão. The region's living heritage and its relationship with nature are thus interwoven with these rivers, which provide food, water and transportation. Students learn about these connections through a variety of activities including canoe trips, classroom research and interviews with local elders at retirement homes, day centres and elsewhere in the community.

The canoe trips organized by the school provide an opportunity for students to see first-hand the role that the rivers play in the community. This includes observing local biodiversity and learning about the use of natural resources by local fishermen and the ceramics industry. Students also use these outings to explore the relationships between local cultural

practices and the river. Local bearers are invited to come to the school to speak about different practices involving the rivers, including those relating to women's traditions and knowledge. Such discussions help to highlight the intersection between gender equality and living heritage.

In doing these activities, learners observed a diminished awareness of the importance of heritage and its safeguarding, with a consequent impact on the culture and values of the community. In response, students have used a number of technological tools to document the relationship between local inhabitants and the rivers, including cell phones, social media, photo and video editing, and the creation of online content. Going forward, this initiative seeks to reinforce living heritage by involving community members in generating additional information on local traditions, occupations and industries, as well as highlighting themes of gender equality and environmental protection.

# The Bread of Joy and the Bread of Sadness

CYPRUS

40

**ICH element:** Bread as a window into Cypriot culture

**Subject areas:** Languages, history, transdisciplinary, extracurricular

**Students' age:** 15–16

Food can be a unifying component across generations and historical periods, as shown by a school in the Cypriot city of Paphos. The project uses traditional stories involving bread to both trace moments of joy and sadness in the country's history, as well as highlight the cultural diversity of societies. In a transdisciplinary approach that underlines the social aspects of bread production and consumption, students reflect on the differences and connections between societies using bread as a common element.

The activity, called 'The bread of joy and the bread of sadness', brings learners into contact with local living heritage through a variety of hands-on activities, including discussions with their grandparents and workshops at the Folk Art Museum. The activities are built around good and bad times in Cypriot history, all of which relate to bread in some way. Under a teacher's supervision, students work in groups to gather stories from

their grandparents and the literature. Other local institutions have also become involved, including the municipal government and youth centres, in addition to the folklore museum and learners' families.

The language teacher who has carried out these activities reports that one limiting factor is the amount of time available, with learners frequently having to use their free time to work on the project. Learners have shown themselves to be adept at using new technologies such as mobile phones and social media to document the traditional stories they hear and read, sharing them and completing group work using Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

The presence of bread across different societies has also allowed to increase awareness of the region's cultural heterogeneity as well as students' openness to other practices and places. Moreover, the teacher reported that the learners' attitudes to these 'learning by doing' activities has made them more receptive to lessons about the country's diversity and has contributed to the integration of learners from different backgrounds.

## Lavrion Traditional Poems and Songs

GREECE

**ICH element:** Traditional poems and songs

**Subject areas:** Literature, history

41

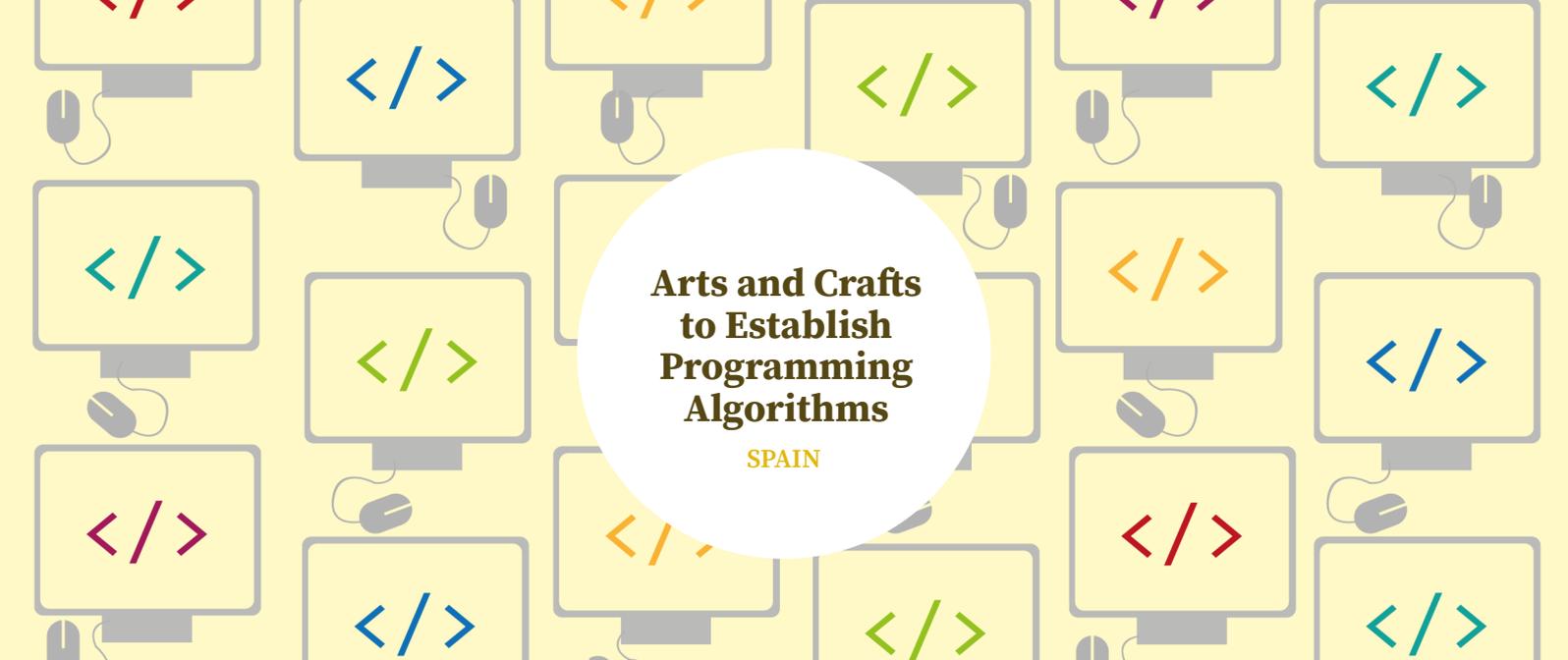
**Students' age:** 16

Songs, poems and dances have been part of the living heritage of Greece since ancient times. In a semi-urban high school in Lavrion, a city in the south of Greece, students are learning about ICH elements through independent study and performance of traditional dances. These participatory lessons are integrated into the literature curriculum, with learners reading traditional poems and songs and performing dance routines. Artists from Lavrion and elsewhere in the country have also been invited to perform and discuss in the classroom.

The activity begins with classes of about 25 learners discussing aspects of traditional poems and songs in their literature lessons. These include Homeric poems and traditional dirges, songs of mourning and lamentation. The activities demonstrate the way in which such expressions have been part of daily life in Greek culture from antiquity to the

present day. Videos of contemporary concerts and performances and documentary films show the transformations of these artforms through the ages. Finally, students perform the works that they are studying based on what they have learned.

The integration of traditional poems and songs into contemporary lessons presents certain challenges, with students reluctant at times to engage with material that they view as obsolete and outdated. That said, these practices allow to build connections to other parts of the world or the country with similar practices. This was the case when members from the local cultural club were invited to participate, some of whom shared cultural elements from different parts of Greece. Ultimately, this activity fostered awareness of learners' own cultural identity and an appreciation of cultural diversity, as well as helped connect the past with living heritage in the present.



## Arts and Crafts to Establish Programming Algorithms

SPAIN

**ICH element:** Traditional arts and crafts

**Subject areas:** Technology, computer programming

**Students' age:** 12+

42

A rural primary school in Spain is integrating local arts and crafts production in teaching students about programming algorithms. Pupils learn how to break down a traditional craft activity into well-defined, ordered and finite stages. This data is then further reduced to a sequence of simple steps that allow to define a precise algorithm. Based on these inputs, a computer program continues the process, with the outcome being data and results from a virtual simulation.

ICH bearers share their traditional knowledge and help provide content needed for the technology class. These practitioners often receive learners

in their homes and workshops and guide them through the processes by which they prepare their traditional crafts. In addition to gaining the information necessary for their programming protocols, students thus gain awareness of local living heritage.

By integrating traditional handicrafts into computer programming, the school seeks to engage the students' interest in both technological applications and the region's traditional arts and crafts. This process raises the profile of these practices and their bearers among students and the wider community. It may therefore help contribute to safeguarding by increasing the appreciation of ICH and its practitioners.

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