

Children and Living Heritage: Inspiration and Good Practices

Museovirasto
Finnish Heritage Agency

ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S CULTURE IN FINLAND

KANSALAIS-FOORUMI

Association of Cultural Heritage Education in Finland

European Heritage Days
Journées européennes du patrimoine

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Finnish National Commission

In support of the International Day of Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Intangible Cultural Heritage

Photo: Risto Savolainen, Kaustinen 2019

PROGRAMME 13.00 -15.30 CET (14 - 16.30 EET)

- **Welcome and introduction**, Leena Marsio, Finnish Heritage Agency
- **Tell It On! – Children, Oral Storytelling and Living Cultural Heritage,** Mia Vickell, Sagobygden (SE)
- **Children as Heritage Makers: Lessons from PNO!** Laura García, Ponte… nas Ondas! (ES/PT)
- **Get Inspired by Cultural Heritage!** A Handbook for Living Cultural Heritage in Children's Culture Activities, Annina Ylikoski, Association of Children's Culture in Finland / BARK (FI)
- **Learning through heritage + art = HEART**, Annamari Martinviita, Kansalaisfoorumi (Citizens' Forum, FI)
- **From generation to generation: Varenas living heritage,** Kamila Antaneviciute, Varėna Cultural Centre (LT)
- **WOOL-Lab, from Wool Knowledge to Sustainable Innovation,** Wendy Van Leuven, Workshop Intangible heritage (BE)
- Commentary, Ira Vihreälehto, Association of Cultural Heritage Education in Finland.
- Discussion and questions
- End of the webinar 15.30 / 16.30

Children and living heritage

Some examples from Finland working with the UNESCO 2003 Convention

Leena Marsio
Senior Adviser

Finnish Heritage Agency



Children and Living Heritage

- **Living heritage (intangible cultural heritage = ICH) can survive only through transmission to new generations.**
- The **UNESCO 2003 Convention**, now ratified by **185 States Parties**, highlights education, awareness-raising and intergenerational transmission as key safeguarding measures.
- Children and young people are not only future bearers of heritage but also active creators who keep traditions relevant in changing societies.
- This makes **partnerships with bearers of living heritage, associations, ICH institutions + early childhood education, schools, youth organisations and children's culture professionals** essential for safeguarding living heritage.
- This is why we are here today!



Photo: Leena Marsio

Defining intangible cultural heritage (ICH)

"the **practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills** – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that **communities, groups** and, in some cases, individuals **recognize** as part of their cultural heritage.

This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from **generation to generation**, is 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." (UNESCO 2003)



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- oral traditions and expressions
- performing arts
- social practices, rituals and festive events
- traditional craftsmanship
- knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe

Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2003)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · Intangible Cultural Heritage

185 state parties

317 accredited NGOs

Communities in the heart of the Convention

”Sister” to the World Heritage Convention (1972)

UNESCO 2003 Convention as a tool

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Intangible Cultural Heritage

1. **Inventory the ICH**
2. **Adopt legal, administrative and financial measures for safeguarding the ICH**
3. **Raise awareness and foster respect for ICH**
4. **Encourage communities to undertake safeguarding activities**
5. **Support communities to ensure that they benefit from safeguarding of their ICH**

Add languages

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WIKI-INVENTORY FOR LIVING HERITAGE

This site shows examples of living heritage in Finland. Our living cultural heritage is being identified and documented as part of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The page's content is produced by communities and maintained by the Finnish Heritage Agency.

Join us in making intangible cultural heritage visible, and add elements to the wiki-inventory. Let's work together, safeguard our heritage, and ensure that it is passed on.

Come and contribute!

National Inventory of Living Heritage













Main menu hide

- Main page
- Introduction
- Map
- Our heritage

Categories

- Festivities and practices
- Music and dance
- Performing arts
- Oral traditions
- Crafts
- Food traditions
- Games and playing
- Nature and the universe
- Good practices

Participate

- Instructions
- Add an element
- Add a good practice
- Upload file

The National Inventory

- About

living HERITAGE

280 examples from over 480 communities across Finland!

OUR HERITAGE

- 39 articles by children and youth in the wiki
- Highlights the role of younger generations in **safeguarding, maintaining, and renewing** intangible cultural heritage
- Articles are inspired by the website **“Learn Intangible Cultural Heritage” (Opi Aineeton kulttuuriperintö)** educational materials
- Children and young people are not just heritage learners — they are active bearers and creators of living heritage and they should be part of the inventorying process



We LOVE Tools!















Living Heritage in Finnish Early Childhood Education

Article coming up by Marsio & Ikäheimo in 2026

Part of everyday life!

- **Stories, songs and rhymes:** Children hear stories from the *Kalevala*, sing traditional circle games such as *The Bear Is Sleeping* (*Karhu nukkuu*), and learn rhymes passed down through generations.
- **Food traditions:** Everyday meals and seasonal treats introduce children to Finnish food culture, from porridge and Karelian pies to gingerbread cookies and Lucia buns.
- **Nature and outdoor life:** Weekly forest excursions, learning in all weather conditions, observing the seasons, and exploring local nature are central parts of daily life.
- **Crafts and creativity:** Children use natural materials such as pine cones, sticks and leaves in arts and crafts while learning traditional skills.
- **Traditional play:** Role-play, building games, tag games, playground games and singing games remain an important part of children's culture.
- **Seasonal celebrations:** The rhythm of the year is marked through harvest traditions, winter festivities, spring celebrations and summer customs.

Kiitos! Thank you!





www.aineetonkulttuuriperinto.fi/en

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Photos : Tivoli Seiterä, Rosamaria Bolom, Interkult