



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

# NGO Review of Accreditation

ICH-08 Report – Form

## REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**DEADLINE 15 FEBRUARY 2021  
FOR EXAMINATION IN 2021**

File may be downloaded at:  
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>

Please provide only the information requested below. Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.

### A. Identification of the organization

#### A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report

A.1.a. Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.

МИД - Македонско Истражувачко Друштво  
MID - Makedonsko Instražuvačko Društvo

A.1.b. Name of the organization in English and/or French.

MRS- MACEDONIAN RESEARCH SOCIETY

A.1.c. Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated in all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)

NGO-90218

#### A.2. Address of the organization

Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, email address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In the case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.

Organization:      МИД - Македонско Истражувачко Друштво  
                          MID - Makedonsko Instražuvačko Društvo

Address: Kej Dimitar Vlahov br. 15  
1000 Skopje  
*Republic of North Macedonia*

Telephone number: +389 70 311 502

Email address: *snezanamdamjanovska@gmail.com*

Website: <https://midorgmk.wordpress.com/>

Other relevant information: Our website and e-mail are currently in process of migration towards more advanced platform for the needs of future projects, full version will be available very soon.

### **A.3. Contact person for correspondence**

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

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): *Ms.*

Family name: *Mirchevska Damjanovska*

Given name: *Snezhana*

Institution/position: *member/ contact person*

Address: Luka Gerov 5/11  
1000 Skopje  
*Republic of Macedonia*

Telephone number: +389 70 311 502

Email address: *snezanamdamjanovska@gmail.com*

Other relevant information: /

## **B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national level (Chapter III of the Convention)<sup>1</sup>**

*Distinguish between completed activities and ongoing activities. If you have not contributed, this should be indicated. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.*

- B.1.** *Describe your organization's participation in State efforts to develop and implement measures to strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) (Article 13 and Operational Directive (OD) 154), e.g. in the drafting of ICH-related policies or legislation, in the establishment of national ICH committees or in other government-led processes.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Macedonian Research Society (hereinafter "MRS") continued on its path for preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Macedonian nation, especially in the field of "knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe" (Article 2, 2d of UNESCO 2003 Convention). Activities commenced in the past period reported in 2017 report, related to the introducing the category ethnoastronomy in the National Register of intangible cultural heritage of Macedonia, in cooperation with the Institute of Folklore "Marko Cepenkov", resulted with the official Decision by the Ministry of Culture of Republic of North Macedonia (Official Gazette of RNM No.150/2019 from 23.07.2019) for approval of the category "ethnoastronomy/The sky map of the Macedonian people" in the National Register of intangible cultural heritage in the category of "heritage of exceptional meaning", subcategory "heritage of very important meaning". However, political instability faced by the country in the period 2015 – 2017, postponed the process of governmental proclamation, so the final act and Government's Decision was announced and received in July 2019. This very important act is due to the advocacy undertaken by MRS members. Once the Act and the Decision were made, MRS continued to and is still very much active in building capacities of relevant institutions for further implementation of practices and measures for the preservation and presentation of the intangible cultural heritage. Still activities were of limited scope and impact due to the outbreak of the world pandemic of Covid-19.

- B.2.** *Describe your organization's cooperation with competent governmental bodies for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (Article 13), including existing institutions for training on and the documentation of ICH (OD 154).*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MRS continued and increased the cooperation and correspondence with all national bodies, institutions and NGO's working on the protection of intangible cultural heritage. Beside the core partners such as the Ministry of Culture, the National Commission of UNESCO, Cultural Heritage Protection Office, the Institute of Folklore "Marko Cepenkov", cooperation was initiated also with the Institute of Ethnology at the University of Natural Science, Macedonian Academy of Science and Art, National Library "Cyril and Methodius" – Skopje, Non-governmental Organization "HAEMUS". Capacity building and information sharing activities were undertaken in order to share research information and methodologies applied by MRS on preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

- B.3.** *Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the State's Periodic Report (OD 152).*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MRS is obliged to provide specific information and documentations and thus participate in the preparation of State's Periodic Report. In that context, MRS remains active in the preparation of the next State Periodic reporting on the Convention of Republic of North Macedonia which should be submitted at the end of 2021. Previous such participation was done with the State Periodic reporting on the Convention at the end of 2016.

- B.4** *Describe your organization's participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Good Safeguarding Practices.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Due to the circumstances and delays by external factors mentioned in paragraph B.1, the nomination of Ancient Sky Map of the Macedonian People at the Urgent Safeguarding List at the beginning of 2017 was

<sup>1</sup>. In case your organization operates in several States, please indicate clearly which State or States are concerned by your answers when filling in parts B, C and E.

not submitted to the Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Still, further activities and efforts are currently employed for meeting all local and UNESCO requirements, that will enable MRS as an organization to submit the nomination of Ancient Sky Map of the Macedonian People to the Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

**B.5.** *Describe your organization's participation in the identification, definition (Article 11.b) and inventoring of ICH (Article 12, OD 80 and OD 153). Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MRS' members continuously undertake field research on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia, interviewing elderly people who are carriers of intangible cultural heritage associated with the "knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe". These field researches are accompanied with steps such as identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of this and other forms of cultural heritage. Still, most of the activities in this segment were carried out prior the outbreak of the world pandemic of Covid -19. In order to overcome the impact of Covid-19 and adjust to new circumstances, MRS piloted communication over IT means with certain individuals, communities and groups where it was possible.

**B.6.** *Describe your organization's participation in other safeguarding measures, including those referred to in Article 13 and OD 153, aimed at:*

- a. *promoting the function of ICH in society.*
- b. *fostering scientific, technical and artistic studies with a view to effective safeguarding;*
- c. *facilitating, to the extent possible, access to information relating to ICH while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of it.*

*Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

- a. Continuing with the previously established partnerships, MRS worked closely with local and regional media for promotion and presentation of ICH in the society. In the past period, a public campaign was commenced in cooperation with the only Planetarium in the country. As part of the campaign, MRS invited journalists from different media and present their role in and importance of reporting on ICH on their broadcast platforms. This resulted with the presentation of ICH in written medias (newspapers: Dnevnik, Sloboden Pechat), TVs (Macedonian Television, One TV), radio stations (Macedonian Radio, Kanal 77).
- b. Following publications mentioned in the previous 2017 report, members of MRS are undertaken preparations for reprint of the Sky Map of the Macedonian people, with plans are this map to be published and distributed in the 2021. Acknowledging the limited capabilities of the Planetarium in Skopje in manner of audience and technical equipment, MRS started projects for digital presentation of the relevant ICH through educational VR platform in cooperation with software company located in Skopje. Once completed, further plans are to expend this activity to local and regional educational facilities in Republic of North Macedonia.
- c. MRS is also actively building capacities among young for further translation in English language and for digitalisation of the materials of ICH gathered through field researches on the territory of Republic of North Macedonia. This is in line with developing a centralised online platform for presentation of this ICH materials connected, that MRS plans to connect with its web site.

**B.7.** Describe your organization's involvement in measures to ensure greater recognition of, respect for and enhancement of ICH, in particular those referred to in Article 14, ODs 105 to 109 and OD 155:

- a. educational, awareness-raising and information programmes aimed at the general public, in particular young people;
- b. educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned;
- c. capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of ICH;
- d. non-formal means of transmitting knowledge;
- e. education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing ICH.

*Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

- a. Cooperation with free online astronomy platform Stellarium continued. Short presentations on the platform were presented to the young generation and general public. Efforts are being made to introduce the Sky Map of the Macedonian people on the Stellarium mobile platform.
- b. Cooperation with Planetarium in Skopje continued in 2017-2019, prior its closure due to the pandemics. Along with regular educational activities as part of the primary and high-school programme of Astronomy and lectures in the Planetarium, MRS's members were presenting the Sky Map of the Macedonian people as ICH to the wider auditorium.
- c. Campaigns for the general public organized in 2017- 2019, for presentation of the Sky Map of the Macedonian People lasting for 5 days per year with 2 presentations per day. Around 600 people annually were enlisted as audience, showing the interest and the necessity for this ICH to be presented to the general public. This activity will continue once the pandemic is over.
- d. MRS's members are using each possible opportunity to spread the knowledge and practices and raise awareness of this ICH that is threatened by extinction.
- e. Documentation and researched of the rituals in v. Tekija connected with the sacred stone and sacred tree continued each year on the day of St. Gjeorgjija (St. George). Members gathered enough video and written materials to start firstly local procedures for protection and further presentation of this ICH. Local authorities are partners and in future actions for preservation and developing tourism opportunities are to be discussed.

## **C. Bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation**

*Report on any activities carried out by your organization at the bilateral, subregional, regional or international levels for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives, as referred to in Article 19 and OD 156. You may, for example, consider the following issues:*

- a. sharing information and documentation concerning shared ICH (OD 87);
- b. participating in regional cooperation activities including, for example, those of category 2 centres for ICH established under the auspices of UNESCO (OD 88);
- c. developing networks of NGOs, communities, experts, centres of expertise and research institutes at subregional and regional levels to develop joint and interdisciplinary approaches concerning shared ICH (OD 86).

*Not to exceed 250 words*

- a. MRS cooperation with the Inter-City Intangible Cultural Cooperation Network (ICCN) now based in Algemesí, Valencia, Spain continued. Acting as associate member in the ICCN network, MRS contributes to this initiative by sharing ideas and practices concerning protection and promotion of ICH.
- b. MRS in the past few years did not had opportunities to be present to regional cooperation activities for ICH under the auspices of UNESCO.

- c. MRS communicates with NGO's and relevant factors from the region and wider in the manner of promotion and sharing knowledge, experience, practices, research information on ICH. This communication involves NGO's and communities from Serbia, Albania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Poland and a lot of other countries where diaspora of Macedonian nationals is established.

## D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

- D.1 *Has your organization participated in the Committee meetings or those of the General Assembly? If so, please indicate which meetings you attended and describe the nature of your contribution to the Committee's work.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

In the past four years MRS did not had the opportunity to participate in the Committee meetings nor the General Assembly meetings due to lack of funds. However, we are hoping for near future opportunity to be present at these gatherings.

- D.2 *Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (OD 26 to 31), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012 and 2014)? If so, please indicate the period.*

*Not to exceed 100 words*

No

- D.3 *In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (OD 96) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?*

*Not to exceed 500 words*

MRS members are experienced in the field research and in documenting information from local groups and individual residents of rural areas of Republic of North Macedonia connected with nature and the universe. This experience dates back to the year of 1982 spanning a huge timeline of collected knowledge and inventory. Members of MRS are willingly available to share this experiences and knowledge of ICH concerning nature and the universe with other relevant and interested parties of the UNESCOs ICH network including the Committee. MRS through local and regional involvement on the current topics have established itself as known factor in the region willing to cooperate also with other initiatives, NGO's and institutions for sharing experiences and knowledge on matters concerning ICH. Although the loss of our founder and prominent researcher and member Mr. Gjore Cenev limited our capacities related to publications in some of well-known specialized scientific media, MRS is consolidating its capacities to overcome this issue by active and constant search and recruitment of new members specialized in the areas such as Astronomy, EthnoAstronomy, Meteorology etc. Current members of MRS working as a team can provide to advisory services to the Committee.

## E. Capacities of your organization to evaluate nominations, proposals and requests (as described in OD 27 and OD 96):

- E.1. *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff have a very good command of English or French? If so, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MRS members are mostly fluent in Slavic languages. Few of our members are fluent in English so in regard to the evaluation of the nominations, proposals and requests, as a team we can participate even in such activities in the area of our interest (ICH concerning nature and the universe).

**E.2.** *Does your organization have experience in working across several ICH domains? Please describe your experiences.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MRS's members have expertise in various domains of cultural heritage, including vast knowledge and experience in the domain of "knowledge related to Nature and the Universe" (Article 2, 2d of UNESCO 2003 Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage). In addition, MRS's members have extensive experience on the terrain and in the area of scientific analysis of the intangible and tangible cultural heritage, especially in the area of archaeoastronomy. One of the greatest achievements in this domain is the discovery, scientific analysis and publication of scientific papers related to the Megalithic Observatory Kokino. In 2005, NASA ranked Megalithic Observatory Kokino on the 4th place on the List of World's Ancient Observatories, and since 2009 as archaeoastronomical observatory, this site is on the Temporary List of Material Cultural Heritage of UNESCO (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5413/>).

**E.3.** *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MRS was not involved in such activities in the reporting period.

**E.4.** *Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Several of our members are experienced in writing and publishing research papers in various scientific fields. These fields include Ethno-astronomy, Archaeo-astronomy, Anthropology, Ethnology, Sociology, Old Slavic Language and Literature. Most of the publications are done in Macedonian and Serbian and some of it upon request translated also into English and Slovenian.

**E.5.** *Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to apply local experience to an international context? Please describe such experience.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Members of MRS in the past were present to international conferences concerning ICH, where they presented publications, research data and knowledge. As described previously MRS is taking part in the ICCN network being involved in sharing experiences and at one occasion taking part in joint publication with article about ICH concerning nature and the universe. Relevant information and articles were also shared and published in international and local publications and internet portals covering the topics of ICH.

## **F. Cooperation with UNESCO**

*Report on activities carried out by your organization in cooperation with UNESCO (both direct cooperation with UNESCO as well as activities carried out under the auspices of UNESCO or for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention, or financial support, such as funding from the Participation Program).*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

In the past 4 years no such cooperation with UNESCO was initiated. However, MRS is looking forward to change such as status in future.

## G. Membership in the ICH NGO Forum

Indicate below whether your organization wishes to (continue to) be part of the ICH NGO Forum. Please note that membership is contingent upon the decision of the Committee to maintain the accreditation of your organization.

For more information on the ICH NGO Forum and its activities, please see: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ngo-forums-00422>.

Yes

No

## H. Signature

The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of the organization.

Name: *Vancho Stojkoski*

Title: *President of MRS - Masedonian Research Society*

Date: 12.02.2021

Signature:

