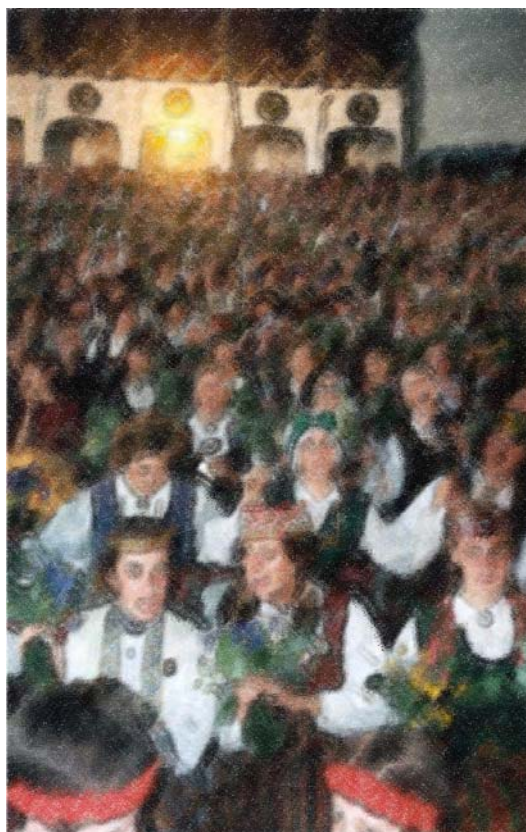


Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity

**MULTI-NATIONAL
CANDIDATURE FILE**



**Tradition and Symbolism
of the Song and Dance Celebration Process
in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania**

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Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity

MULTI-NATIONAL CANDIDATURE FILE

1. IDENTIFICATION

a. Group of Member States

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (multi-national candidature)

b. Name of the form of cultural expression

**Tradition and Symbolism of the Song and Dance Celebration Process
in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania**

c. Name of the communities

Practitioners of song and dance as an organized, regular cultural expression, as well as custodian communities safeguarding the continuation of the cyclical celebrative tradition in all three Baltic countries.

d. Geographic location

The three Baltic countries on the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea, which are situated from north to south as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Communities of the practitioners of the described cultural expression are located all over the territories of these small countries. *(Please see attached map)*



e. Frequency of this form of cultural expression

The Baltic practice of song and dance in organized performative communities is an on-going process, which culminates cyclically with a general nationwide celebration in every fifth year in Estonia and Latvia, and in every fourth year in Lithuania.

f. Persons and organizations responsible

In separate Member States:

1. ***Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation***

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Fax: +372 6449147

E-mail: laulupidu@kul.ee

www.laulupidu.ee

Head: Mr *Ilmar Moss*, Chairman of the Council: Mr *Riho Raave*

Estonian Choral Society

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Chairman: Mr *Aarne Saluveer*

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2. ***Latvian Folk Arts Centre***

Address: Pils laukums 4, Rīga, LV 1050, Latvia

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g. *Co-ordinator*

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2. DESCRIPTION

a. Description of the form of cultural expression

The current multi-national candidature file proposes the Song and Dance Celebration Process in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as **a cultural expression uniting those three Baltic countries**, where it holds great traditional value and symbolic significance in building and reaffirming these communities, to be proclaimed as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. This application to the international community is determined by the **necessity to sustain the continuous safeguarding and revitalization of this cultural expression** which, in its historical perspective has served as **a vital tool in nation-building** in all three countries, while evolving into **the most massive and inclusive communal event** to celebrate Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian cultural identity. This has been a parallel socio-cultural phenomenon testifying in its process form to remarkable unity and creative diversity in the Baltic countries.

Today **the Baltic tradition of Song and Dance Celebration is a continuous process** of social practice and a system of numerous events highlighting performing arts, involving various aspects and numbers of the practising communities. Those communities include voluntary practitioners of song and dance who participate in amateur choirs and dance groups, **collective performative groups engaged in sustaining that particular cultural expression and joint historical repertoire** in their respective countries. This on-going process consists of regular choir and dance practices of hundreds of individual groups (sustaining the grass-root level), performative venues such as concerts, recurrent local community or district or regional reviews and festivals, choir reunions and joint events of practice (sustaining the community level: local, national and multi-national). Practitioners of song and dance include different genders and age groups (among them seniors): mixed, women's, men's, children and youth choirs, or dance and instrumental music groups. The repertoire features and enhances the musical tradition of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania respectively, focusing on musical expression from most ancient styles to recent arrangements and creative works of art concurring with the aesthetic and symbolic values of the communities represented, and retaining traditional songs and dances as its inspirational backbone.

The Baltic Celebration Process of Song and Dance is **structured as a pyramid and has a cyclical character**. The **communities of practitioners** in choirs, dance and instrumental music groups form the basis of the pyramid, while the **culminating celebrative events** compose its top in parallel occasions in the three countries: in Estonia *Eesti laulu- ja*

tantsupidu, in Latvia *Latviešu Dziesmu un Deju Svētki*, in Lithuania *Lietuvos Dainu Šventė* – the nationwide celebrations of song and dance, occurring every four or five years and lasting for several days in the Baltic capitals of Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius at specially created, historically and symbolically valuable venues. At these major general celebrations 20 to 30,000 singers and about 10,000 dancers perform to an audience of hundreds of thousands in each country, affecting thus the cultural space of about 20% in each Baltic country. Historically such practice of joint musical expression, and particularly the cyclical major celebrations have performed a significant role in nation-building and in sustaining cultural identity since the 19th century, which regained and enhanced its symbolic empowering effect during periods of cultural hegemony in the 20th century, providing these small Baltic nations with mechanisms to sustain performative and ritual practices linked to their cultural tradition. This cultural expression carries **deep symbolic value** in the Baltic countries, it has served as a major factor in integrating society, this tradition contributes to the common world outlook of humanist values, it provides a complex link between archaic cultural heritage and artistic creation of contemporary national culture.

b. History, development and social, symbolic and cultural functions

In the three Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania singing in organized performative choirs and arrangement of cyclical celebrations that feature joint performances of traditional repertoire has evolved into **a massive and inclusive cultural and social practice to represent and enhance communal identity** of these small nations. The **Baltic cultures are characterized by this parallel phenomenon**, which has historically carried the same functions and similar features, while presenting separate occasions and repertoire.

Brief overview of socio-political history

Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian are three distinct cultures on the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea. However, they present many similar cultural and historical traits, rising from their geographic proximity and especially due to the relatively identical socio-political experience in the 20th century.

Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians speak three separate languages, but their political and cultural history have held both differing and unifying features. The latter included socio-political oppressive hegemonies by different major European empires, which by the 19th century was Czarist Russia, with regional German dominance in Estonia and Latvia, and historical affinities to Poland in Lithuania. In the course of the second half of that century emerged the so-called national awakening movement, where socio-political emancipation closely intertwined with the powerful emergence and significance of all types of cultural societies as well as singing activities.

With the fall of the Russian Empire following World War I and the empowerment of emancipating aspirations, political independence was proclaimed by three separate

republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1918. However, in 1940 the Soviet Union occupied those independent Baltic States and for the following 50 years these countries were under the Soviet totalitarian regime, with its levelling suppression of historical traditions and cultural individuality.

At the end of the 20th century with the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new national awakening took place in all three Baltic countries, of which the most memorable, non-violent forms of protest were the unifying human chain of the Baltic people, symbolically linking the territories of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania under the joint movement of "The Baltic Way", and impressive mass rallies, characterised by spontaneous singing with all the thousands present participating. Consequently, this period of national awakening in the Baltic countries is historically known as the Singing Revolution, through which Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania restored their independence. Today they are small, yet dynamically developing countries with a total population of 7.2 million (1.4 in Estonia, 2.3 in Latvia, and 3.5 in Lithuania). At present, the cultural diversity in the Baltic States is both a wealth of cultural traditions and openness towards contemporary forms of artistic expression and possibilities. The Baltic region is rich in musical and creative activities – there are hundreds of choirs and brass bands as well as music and dance groups. The Baltic States have a similar system of music education – a well-developed national school of choir singing, talented composers, conductors and group directors. Public singing en masse as a symbolic form of national identity is the most characteristic and unifying cultural tradition in those three Baltic countries.

The tradition of public celebration of songs and dances in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania developed historically in concurrence with the empowerment of the indigenous communities, which was based on local edifying and cultural practices. **Communal singing that has been rooted in ancient traditions**, orally preserved and performed as part of everyday life, played a significant role in the Baltic cultures in creating a traditional village community. These ancient traditions were enriched by many-part choral singing that was introduced starting from the 18th century via Christian religious institutions and the educational system. Consequently choir singing spread in rural and urban regions, inspired by the upsurge of choral music, singing societies and song festivals in Western Europe. Indigenous intellectual activists launched quite a massive movement of cultural activities in the Baltic countries, where **choir singing appeared also as an agency for socio-cultural awareness**, markedly in Estonia and Latvia, while in Lithuania collective expressions of national aspirations were more gravely oppressed. Following the international inspirational example of communal celebration of singing in choir groups, such an arrangement became adopted with a simultaneous musical as well as cultural-political agenda.

Based on **active singing communities** in various locations of their respective countries, **the first nationwide celebration of Estonian singing was arranged in Estonia in 1869 and of Latvian singing in Latvia in 1873** with about thousand singers and musicians (about 50 choirs) participating at both occasions. Due to local hegemonic suppressive measures by the

Czarist government, the nationwide celebration of choir singing was postponed **in Lithuania and could occur only in 1924**. These major celebrations and their preparatory process by **practising communities promoted Estonian and Latvian (and eventually Lithuanian) musical expression as well as encouraged manifestations of cultural identity**, while outlining the objectives of national advancement, national unity and cultural independence. This development created a basis for cultural self-esteem and conviction that aspirations for political independence and freedom could be enhanced and attained through the action of singing. The **symbolic value of communal choir singing** has been enormous in the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cultural space.

The evolvement of the communities of practitioners of this cultural expression will be most effectively illustrated by the **brief histories of** the most significant massive and symbolic events, **the nationwide general celebrations**. Through these arrangements **developed the structure and mechanism of that combination of social practice, communal cooperation and cultural performance**:

In the 1800s, 6 national celebrations of *laulupidu* were arranged in Estonia, which included also competitions of singing and brass band music. At first only choir groups of men performed, to the 4th festival in 1891 mixed choirs were introduced, in 1896 women's choirs were accepted to singing competitions. In Latvia occurred four *Dziesmu svētki* in that period. By 1910 the estimated number of performers had grown to 10,000 singers and musicians, including also children's choirs (Estonia). In Lithuania, at the 1924 *Dainu šventē* participated 77 choirs with approximately 3,000 singers and brass band musicians. These celebrations of singing provided communicative scenery for **manifestations of ethnicity and cultural unity** with the special objective to demonstrate and experience particular identity and the richness of indigenous cultural heritage.

After gaining political independence, the aim of the massive singing celebration was perceived as **the strengthening of national unity and promoting of respectively Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian music**. The Association of Estonian Singers and the Society of Latvian Song Festivals managed the organizational arrangements. Special stages and festival grounds were constructed for the occasions. In the 1930s women's choirs were included to the official programme; in 1938 by the 11th festival the total number of performers was more than 17,000 in Estonia and about 15,000 in Latvia. In Lithuania, 6,000 singers participated at the 3rd celebration. Singing in choral groups had become **a massive cultural activity**. Choral groups gathered usually to sing at rural and urban community centres and society houses.

Annexed to the Soviet Union, cultural activists of **the Baltic countries managed to sustain the song celebration phenomenon**, largely due to the tradition being firmly rooted in the communal cultural expression. In Lithuania the general nationwide celebration *Dainu šventē* was revitalized in 1946, Latvian *Dziesmu svētki* and Estonian *laulupidu* in 1948. Though the song celebrations were forced to externally adapt to the Soviet regime, under the official conceding surface those celebrations **retained their major objective of preserving and promoting cultural identity and national unity**. Despite the banning of the festival enumeration, in 1969 was celebrated the centennial of the Estonian *laulupidu* tradition and in 1973 that of Latvian *Dziesmu svētki*

tradition. The largest number of performers has reached about 30 to 35,000 at the respective events in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. New permanent, special open-air stages were built in Riga in 1955, and in Tallinn and Vilnius in 1960. The performers and the audience had developed particular **symbolic rituals** for catering the expression and perpetuation of ethnic values by preserving the singing traditions, by **wearing traditional costumes**, or by **singing together songs of symbolic value** and ethnic significance, often outside the official programme. Song festivals remained to serve as a **collective cultural expression that sustained traditional cultural values, sense of communal belonging and maintenance of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cultural identity under oppressive hegemonies**. Thus public celebration of singing managed to preserve through times of predicament values of cultural tradition, communal cultural expression and the maintenance of artistic standards of collective musical expression, and the artistic and creative potential of the people.

In 1947 in Estonia, 1948 in Latvia and 1950 in Lithuania, following the process of establishing organized folk dance groups and the emergence of large-scale performative festivities of the 1930s, the song celebrations were accompanied by a **concurrent folk dance celebration**, becoming a parallel event of cyclical nature to celebrate dance traditions. On the other hand, the communal activities and the general celebration expanded to such an extent that a **conscious effort for generational continuity** was applied, which testifies to the viability of the tradition and its firm embeddedness in the national space of cultural expression. A separate regular Youth Song and Dance Celebrations were introduced successfully in 1960 in Latvia, 1962 in Estonia and 1964 in Lithuania, and those events occur in an alternate cycle with the general nationwide celebrations of song and dance.

The empowering effect of this process of cultural expression is evident also in the fact that the **diaspora communities** of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians – most notably those who were forced to leave their homelands to avoid the persecution of the Soviet occupation – retained the choir singing and dance group activities to safeguard their ethnic traditions and revitalized general celebrations of song and dance in their new host countries.

To date, the following **quantitative statistics bear witness to the development of the tradition**. Singing in choir communities and dancing in local organized dance groups has continued to be massive cultural expression until the previous decade. The numbers of practitioners become evident in the **attendance at the general nationwide celebrations**. Besides regular, usually annual local or regional celebrations between neighbouring communities, the 23rd *laulu- ja tantsupidu* took place in Estonia in 1999 with about 32,000 participants. In 1998 the 22nd *Dziesmu svētki* in Latvia had 28,864 participants and the 15th *Dainų šventė* in Lithuania took place in 1999 with about 30,000 participants.

Over the course of time, **the general celebrations have developed and diversified both in terms of expression and repertoire**. While preserving the large mass choir (both joint and alternating genres) as the dominant aspect of the event, a variety of other genres have been included from traditional artistic expressions: folk dance performances, instrumental music and brass bands, folklore groups, exhibitions of traditional arts and crafts. These regular

public celebrations of song and dance gave people deep symbolic impetus to make and wear **traditional costumes**, and also to preserve particular **handicraft skills**. It also played a certain role in preserving regional diversity. In 130 years the tradition of public celebration of singing has **branched into new events** of this cultural expression: activities and events for men's or women's or mixed or boys' or children's choirs, folk music orchestras and brass bands. The song festival traditions in the Baltic States have influenced the creation of **multi-national celebrations** including all three Baltic countries – the Baltic Students' Song and Dance Celebration “Gaudemus” in 1956, which now takes place once every five years in each of the Baltic States in rotation. In addition the first similar Song Celebration of Northern and Baltic countries took place in 1995 and continues to take place once every two years, thereby encouraging active inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation between countries in the Baltic Sea region.

This tradition of **joint musical expression has unique qualities of transgressing communal boundaries and providing an empowering voice of cultural expression to different communities**. Today that expressive means of affirming one's identity and cultural heritage has been **adopted by minority groups** in the Baltic countries. The language of music and song helps to celebrate one's native cultural heritage as well as bring different communities together in mutual understanding to share the exaltation of cultural expression that reaches across boundaries, bringing peoples and communities closer together. Through unique manifestation of expressive cultural identity, the song festival phenomenon simultaneously enhances the maintenance of cultural diversity.

The **social, symbolic and cultural functions** of this Baltic cultural expression can be **summarized** as follows:

This tradition

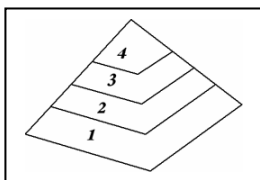
- brings the community together on local, regional and nationwide level;
- provides an interactive communicational framework for the community and its individual members through collective cultural expression;
- serves as an important form of social participation of the population, which becomes apparent in the huge number of participants, the development of group network, local government initiatives in organizing public celebrations;
- represents involvement of various social, age and ethnic groups, which greatly contributes to the integration processes in society;
- continues to be the most massive manifestations of cultural identity; shapes and strengthens national self-confidence and serves as a symbol of national identity;
- promotes awareness of cultural heritage and the inheritance of traditional cultural values; it promotes preservation of traditional culture and popularises it in modern society;

- it ensures development of cultural diversity which manifests itself both as a diversity of ethnic representation and richness of the repertoire;
- reflects and enhances the communicative system of the Baltic cultures, providing an arena for a complex of performance events;
- enhances the education of society, especially the younger generation and plays a part in the development of a civil society; the messages of repertoire concern the shared experience of the community and multiple interpretations of that experience;
- encourages inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation in the Baltic Sea region.

c. Technical description, historical development, style, genre, influential schools

The Baltic **practice of song and dance in organized performative communities** is an on-going process, which culminates cyclically with a general nationwide parallel celebrations in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This tradition has a common, historically developed structure in all the three Baltic countries, but the practicing process occurs separately, being thus a cultural expression of simultaneous similarity and difference. The activities and repertoire of the practicing communities are on a large scale defined by the cycle of organized joint celebrations: usually annual gatherings on district or regional level, and the major nationwide gatherings in a four or five-year interval.

Thus in all three countries **the structure of this process** could be illustrated with a pyramid:



4. the major performative event on national level
3. performative events on regional level
2. performative events on local level
1. local choir communities and dance groups

The **continuous activities** include regular (usually weekly) **practising in local small-scale choir communities and dance groups**, which are augmented with various performances and joint events on local, or regional, or national level. Choirs and dance groups practise usually in local cultural or educational centres in their local villages or towns; larger joint events occur on special arenas either in rural areas, district centres or major towns. Starting with the smallest units, **the practitioner communities are essential in the process of the transmission of the social activities and repertoire, which integrate and sustain local communities and their traditional cultural expression.** The cultural and social highlight of large-level celebrations is the experience of joint performance of highly meaningful and symbolic repertoire. The musical expression is augmented by the transmission of traditional

costumes as a ritual dress worn by the practitioners at festive occasions. This in turn serves as an impetus for handicraft communities to retain their traditional skills.

In addition to practitioner communities function **active custodian communities** who form a necessary element in the organizational framework of this cultural expression. The artistic performance of choirs and dance groups are maintained by choir conductors and dance instructors respectively. Choir conductors and dance instructors are required to obtain either long- or short-term special training in their field of artistic expression. Due to the prerequisite to master a joint repertoire of General Celebrations of Song and Dance, they participate in instructive cycles for acquiring particular repertoire.

The **repertoire practised is largely defined by the traditional repertoire of the general nationwide celebration**, which demands the skills to master many-part singing. The **repertoire** performed includes choir (up to 4 parts, i.e. voices) arrangements of ancient traditional songs, popular compositions dating from the earliest days of the celebration tradition, and more recent original compositions created particularly for this celebration tradition. Traditionally, the performance of the choirs is unaccompanied; musical arrangements in recent compositions may exceed even 8-parts. The dance groups maintain a repertoire of traditional dances, stylised arrangements for group performances and dances choreographed for the general celebrations, for large-scale performance by joint groups.

For the **local, regional or national level celebrations** are formed organising committees from custodian communities of cultural workers on respective levels. While the practitioner and custodian communities function relatively similarly in all three Baltic countries, there occurs significant diversity in repertoire (which celebrates either Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian cultural traditions). The major massive general celebrations present both unity and diversity in their **structure**, which includes:

- ritual opening and closing ceremonies;
- festive parades of performers with a cultural representation of each region, manifesting diversity of rich heritage and folk dress;
- a main 4–5 hour concert of choirs who perform joint repertoire:
 - as a joint, inclusive and massive choir;
 - in separate groups of mixed, men's, women's or children's choirs;
 - brass bands or folk musicians or symphonic orchestras;
- communal singing with the audience;
- joint dance performances on a large-scale arena;
- massive audience exceeding to hundreds of thousands;
- continuation for 3 to 5 days;
- in Estonia: ignition of symbolic fire, its route through all regions;

- in Latvia: separate events for competition of songs; exhibitions of folk handicraft and applied art;
- in Lithuania: separate events for competition of songs; a folklore day, an ensemble night; folk art exhibit;
- differences in the arrangement of dance celebration events.

The **repertoire** performed is **different in content** in all three countries, though **similar in its symbolic value** and rootedness in the particular cultural tradition, and in its agency in creating and reaffirming the respective cultural space. These celebrations are also united by a special **emotional atmosphere** created through joint cultural expression, which reaches either local or larger national communities.

d. Practitioners

Practitioners of song and dance as an organized, regular cultural expression, as well as custodian communities safeguarding the continuation of the cyclical celebrative tradition in all three Baltic countries.

The **practitioner communities in their structure, age and gender specifics are interactively connected to the specifics of the general celebrations**. There is a choir or a dance group in nearly all larger villages and towns; in more densely populated areas there can be several. Practitioner communities define and organize their activities in accordance with those celebrations, which provide them the most significant and symbolic performative arena. Therefore also the current information on practitioner communities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is based on the **statistics** provided in connection with their respective general celebrations.

Estonia:

1. Approximately 25,000 singers and musicians
 - a) singers in the joint choir about 18,000, among them mixed (6–7,000) women's (2,500), men's (1,500), children's (6,000), boys' and junior's (first to third graders; 6,000) choirs;
 - b) 1,500 brass band musicians

2. Approximately 10,000 dancers

Together with the audience 250,000 people (19% of the whole population)

3. Youth Celebration of Song and Dance: 19,000 performers

Together with the audience 160,000 people (12%)

Latvia:

1. Approximately 32,000 singers and musicians
 - a) singers in the joint choir about 18,400, among them mixed (9,500), women's (2,400), men's (1,500), chamber and children's (4,000), boys' (4,000) choirs.;
 - b) about 2,500 musicians
2. Approximately 18,000 dancers

Together with the audience 400,000 people (17 %)

3. Youth Celebration of Song and Dance: 50,000 performers

Together with the audience 200,000 people (8,6%)

Lithuania:

1. Approximately 15,000 singers (400 choirs) and musicians
 - a) 149 mixed, 99 women's, 40 men's, 91 children's and 70 youth choirs;
 - b) 84 brass bands
2. Approximately 9,000 dancers (250 groups)
3. Approximately 4,000 participants in the Folklore Day and 3,000 in the Ensemble Night; about 500 artists participate in the folk art exhibition

Together with the audience 340,000 people (10.6 %)

The **particular custodian communities** include about fifteen hundred conductors and instructors in all three Baltic countries, who in Estonia, for example, fall into 550 choir conductors, 120 bandleaders and 500 dance instructors.

On the **grass-roots level** the number of the artistic practitioners could be **nearly twice as much**, because the general celebrations in all three countries are organized through selection process based on the acquisition skills of the joint repertoire, and the capacity of the performance arena. At the same time, the audience is enlarged through national radio and TV broadcasts.

e. Sustainability and possible risks

The Song and Dance Celebration Process is a **viable and unique living cultural expression** in the Baltic countries. The main precondition for the song and dance celebration tradition to persist is the **continuous activity of the local communities of performative art**. Up to now, there has existed a firm organizational body and strong institutional framework, which has been called for to sustain the continuation of the excellent skills and technical qualities

necessary to carry on this tradition. Tens of thousands of singers, brass band and folk musicians, as well as folk dancers form various local groupings and societies, which in turn are joined by larger volunteer bodies and associations to represent their needs and interests. Together all those practitioners cover a large variety of age groups, gender, social class and minority groups. On the other hand, this collective form of cultural expression relies on the mentor skills and genre-expertise of choir conductors, bandleaders and dance instructors. The majority of them have experienced special professional training, thus maintaining excellence in the application of the artistic skills and technical qualities required for such forms of collective cultural expression.

Sustainability of this cultural expression is based on the following factors:

- Developed local and regional infrastructure that promotes it. The general song and dance celebrations include the entire nation where all the regions take part, thus representing local cultural developments;
- Scope of the process. The massive scale and quality of representational celebrations is based upon the work of thousands of voluntary practitioners and custodians;
- Each individual's personal motivation. The wish to participate in the process and celebrations at all times has been one of the most powerful factors for developing joint singing and musical expression;
- Sustainability of the tradition has been influenced by exterior social and political factors. Historically the massive singing events have served as a form of non-violent protest and as an opportunity for self-assertion of the nation;
- In an artistic sense the sustainability of the tradition relies also on its ability to combine the mutual impact of traditional and contemporary cultures;
- A stable musical education system ensuring the development of the skills necessary for particular artistic expression;
- A continuous system of the preparatory processes and events in connection with celebrations on various levels.

However, those representing that unique cultural tradition feel **threatened by the current processes of rapid social, political and economic change** Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and their people have undergone during the last decade. The socio-political transformation of the whole society and the economic transition to market economy has affected the most vulnerable age groups of youth and seniors, who at the same time provide the core group of tradition-carriers. The everyday lives as well as mental and cultural space have become vulnerable to commercialisation, which has a negative effect on the maintenance of local traditions under the overwhelming globalisation.

Perceivable risks of disappearance:

- vulnerability of traditional cultural expression to dramatic economic and social change, leading to the destruction of the essential structure of the process on all levels;
- economic and social hardships affecting practitioner communities (lack of resources due to poverty and unemployment, negative urban concentration), which most painfully affects the grass-roots level;
- invasion of commercial culture and negative aspects of globalisation with particular negative effects on the transmission of cultural expressions, where youth present an especially vulnerable group;
- inability of Baltic national cultures to resist their impact, due to incompatibility in social, cultural, human and economic resources;
- decrease of the role of music in general educational system, which is determined by the previously listed aspects;
- rapid decrease in the numbers of young practitioners, both in urban and rural areas as a combined result of previously listed aspects;
- lack of legislative acts to protect this cultural expression, in order to guarantee its continuation in the future, regardless of socio-economic inconsistencies.

The unique phenomenon in the Baltic countries could be retained and developed by **uniting the efforts** of all three countries and their inhabitants, as well as by gaining an international recognition of the Baltic Song and Dance Celebration Process.

A major step towards the objective to promote and revitalize that unique phenomenon, which unites the Baltic people, has been the establishment of the current multi-national Baltic committee to safeguard and revitalize the Song and Dance Celebration Process. Cultural activists engaged in this work from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have learnt a lot from the on-going international co-operation, and drawing of the current multi-national candidature file.

Consequently, the representatives of practitioner and custodian, as well as research communities involved have come to the conclusion that a wider, highly qualified international recognition (as provided by UNESCO) would greatly enhance our cause. Therefore, the representatives of this unique cultural tradition consider it vital to present an application for the Proclamation of Masterpieces, which would provide that extraordinary form of cultural expression, the Song and Dance Celebration Process, **an international recognition and worldwide acknowledgement**. It should be stressed here that **this cultural expression has never been and could not ever become a commercial enterprise**.

3. JUSTIFICATION OF THE CANDIDATURE

The process of the national song and dance celebrations in the three Baltic countries – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – is **a unique cultural phenomenon of particular historical, cultural, aesthetic, and social significance**. It has presented an outstanding value in **building the national communities in the Baltic countries**; it has retained a continuous significance in strengthening particular identities and **enabling social cooperation**, in providing **historical continuity**, while enhancing particularly Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian (and simultaneously jointly Baltic) musical expression. This parallel process **involving various communal levels** in three different neighbouring countries provides a remarkable instance of **cultural and creative unity and diversity in similar framework**. Through its history since the 19th century, this cultural expression has evolved into an **essential and symbolic instrument** of cultural affirmation and revitalization for the three Baltic nations.

Yet, due to the rapid economic and social changes these countries have experienced in the last decades, as well as feeling the risk of aggressive commercialisation and levelling globalisation, the agents of the communities responsible for the continuous enactment of the process of that particular cultural expression are **aware of a serious risk of its decay and disappearance** in the future.

a. Outstanding value for the communities concerned

- The organized practice of Baltic song and dance traditions with regular celebrations on local, national and regional level is unique due to its massive and inclusive character.
- Its agency in retaining and preserving cultural identity in manifestations reaching all members of the community, and the significance of this cultural expression of communal singing and dancing in uniting Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians through the turbulent periods of history under oppressive hegemonies.
- The General Celebrations of Song and Dance were the major events of long tradition and deep symbolic value that brought together people from all over the three Baltic countries for a marvellous cultural expression of joint music making of singing and dancing.
- The unique value of these celebrations (as a result of a regularly repeated cyclical process) has been their common repertoire, participating in and performing together songs and dances that present a fusion of traditional folk culture and special modern music culture.
- This form of communal singing and dancing has been recognized all over those countries, it is practised by all age groups and genders. It is a form of shaping the community from various levels, starting from the family and through, local, regional and national, and also to the international level, as a powerful means of inter-cultural dialogue.

- The artistic performance requires the maintenance and training of particular skills that simultaneously enrich the daily life of practitioners and enhance enjoyment especially through the cultural and social experience of major celebrations.
- This is the most massive means of transmitting Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cultural and musical traditions within those communities: the repertoire includes a cross-section of cultural heritage; the choirs and dance groups function as the main preservers of traditional dress in its rich regional varieties; there exists a ritual significance for practitioner communities.
- The major celebrations present a concentration of the empowerment of musical expression that creates a sacred moment, through the synergy of various factors of sensation, like form, colour, sound, and rhythm, which evolve into a special sacred cultural space. Traditional ritual elements combine with singing and transform the massive performance into a process of purification, exaltation and renewal. The following quotation from a Latvian poet describes the atmosphere which unites all three Baltic nations:

“Latvia has a unique, centuries – long experience in maintaining its identity through the song. The word “dziesma” (song) in Latvian is very capacious. It is linked to the words “dzimt” (to be born) and “dzīvot” (to live). It is used as a synonym for the word “kultūra” (culture). Often we heard such concepts as “dziesmu vara” (the power of song) and “Dziesmu gars” (the spirit of song). These phrases boil down information about a battle against physical and moral violence that has gone on for centuries. Song festivals are not just singing festivals. At these festivals, we celebrate the victory of Song, Culture and Light over destruction. We rejoice at the most humane weapon of battle in the world – we rejoice at the Song.”(Māra Zālīte, 1993).

b. Its roots in the cultural tradition or cultural history of the community concerned

- The source of the tradition is the collective life style and customs of the ancient Baltic agrarian local communities, characterised by communal singing together in the daily working process, at familial celebrations and recreational occasions. The tradition of collective singing is supplemented by communal dances, and music making in groups.
- The Baltic song and dance celebration tradition has formed the main bridge between archaic communal cultural expression and the transforming modern, more individual creative art. Historically the national song and dance celebration tradition encouraged the study and implementation of traditional folk songs and dances, as vital source of meaningful and symbolic repertoire, provided an incentive to modify national music instruments and promote folk music bands.
- Choir singing and song festivals are the most refined traditions of Baltic culture that are closely related to the first national awakening of the 19th century, served as a vital agency in reaffirming Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian cultures in the period of independence, as well as safeguarding and revitalizing it during occupational hegemonies.
- It has played a decisive role in enhancing the music education and cultural development of children and youth, introducing them to traditional repertoire and cultural expression.

c. Its role as a means of affirming the cultural identity of the peoples and cultural communities concerned, its importance as a source of inspiration and intercultural exchanges and as a means of bringing peoples and communities closer together, and its contemporary cultural and social role

- The Baltic Song and Dance Celebration tradition promotes preservation of traditional culture and popularises it in modern society. It is simultaneously uniquely Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian expression, and at the same time a general Baltic cultural heritage, uniting people and cultural traditions.
- It ensures development of cultural diversity which manifests itself both as a diversity of ethnic representation and richness of the repertoire. It encourages cultural expression deriving from regional traditions and from general national perception of culture.
- It serves as an important form of social participation of population, the testimony of which is the huge number of participants, development of group network, local government initiatives in organizing festivals. It is a major means of reaffirming local communities, regional or national communities through joint musical expression and cultural activities.
- The involvement of various social, gender, age and ethnic groups greatly contribute to integration processes in society. This tradition could involve and is passed on by whole families. It provides occasions for gender empowerment both for women and men. It reaches across age groups in its inclusive character. The combination of active practitioner communities, custodian communities arranging public celebrations and audiences of public performances covers a cross-section of the general population, providing a vital reaffirmation for those three small nations.
- The song and dance celebration tradition as a cultural and organizational activity, as well as a carrier of traditional musical expression, is a valuable factor unifying the society on the basis of collective co-existence, re-enforcing national identity and developing a world outlook important in the educational process of the youth.

d. Excellence in the application of the skill and technical qualities displayed

- Common singing and music making requires each participant in a choir to master performing a many-part (voiced) song mainly without musical accompaniment. The big arena of public song celebrations can draw about 20,000 singers simultaneously, providing a great challenge in a complicated form of performance.
- The singing skills of the participants are based on the general educational system with music as a prerequisite of the syllabus, introducing also basic skills for singing in choirs.
- The artistic quality of musical expression of massive singing at major general celebrations is guaranteed by the experience and competence of especially talented leading conductors, evolving through practice and chosen by the custodian organizations.
- Dancing skills are developed in organized voluntary practice under the guidance of experienced instructors, who master the required repertoire.
- For the major General Song and Dance Celebration, a huge organisational network that requires outstanding skills to organise and stage mass-scale events, combines their effort to secure an artistically high quality performance of a large number of participating groups, where each participant's individually developed singing, dancing and music playing skills have to be combined.

- The main and most significant instruments of the Song Celebration Process are the voices of the singers, which combine different genders, generations, social and ethnic voices from all regions of the Baltic countries.

e. Its value as a unique testimony of a living cultural tradition

- The Baltic Song and Dance Celebration Process denotes years long voluntary work of the tens of thousands of participants and their readiness for sacrifice for the benefit of song, music and dance.
- It is an uninterrupted process, where the regular preparation for annual or longer cyclical events, particularly the general celebrations – *Eesti laulu- ja tantsupidu* in Estonia, *Latviešu Dziesmu un Deju Svētki* in Latvia, and *Lietuvos Dainu Šventė* in Lithuania – encourage, enhance and ensure the continuation of the tradition of communal singing and dance by practitioners.
- The unique character of this tradition lies in its capability to change and develop alongside with the modern trends, at the same time maintaining the core values of that cultural expression, rooted in ancient intangible heritage.
- An important element for preserving this cultural expression have been Baltic ancient song traditions as an inspirational source, while common singing traditions and public celebrations have served as means of safeguarding and transmitting of folk songs to next generations. Over the course of time, these celebrations have developed and incorporated other forms of folk expression: folk dance, instrumental music, arts and crafts exhibitions.

f. The risk of its disappearing due to processes of rapid change, lack of means for safeguarding and protecting

- rapid changes in the society, particularly in traditional system of values and habits;
- commercialisation by economic orientation to consumerism and financial gain, where participation in singing and dancing communities becomes economically and socially incompatible with the invasion of more aggressive international trends;
- globalisation and the incapacity to its resistance by small, vulnerable cultures and their traditional cultural expression;
- changes in educational system leading to the discontinuation of tradition transmission;
- negative impact of urban concentration;
- negative influence of market economy on the practitioner and custodian communities, leading to rapid decrease in their numbers, affecting most strongly peripheral and poor regions and population groups;
- lack in legislative instruments to protect and promote this tradition;
- no stable system of collecting, documenting, recording and carrying out research of different expressions of the tradition.

4. MANAGEMENT

a. Co-ordinator

Baltic Co-ordinating Committee on Safeguarding and Revitalization of the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition

Address: Pils laukums 4 –206, Riga, LV 1050, Latvia

Phone: + 371 7325109

Fax: + 371 7222762

E-mail: office@unesco.lv

Contact person:

Ms. Dace Neiburga, Secretary – General of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO

In cooperation with

Estonian National Committee on Safeguarding and Revitalization of the National Song and Dance Celebration Tradition

Address: J.Vilmsi 55, 10147 Tallinn, Estonia

Phone: +372 6009291

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e-mail: aino@vilmsi.ee

Contact person:

Ms.Aino Arro, Director of the Estonian Folk Culture Development and Training Centre

Latvian National Committee on Safeguarding and Revitalization of the National Song and Dance Celebration Tradition

Address: Pils laukums 4, Riga, LV 1050, Latvia

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e-mail: pasts@tmc.gov.lv

Contact person:

Mr.Janis Kurpnieks, Director of the Latvian Folk Art centre

Lithuanian National Committee on Safeguarding and Revitalization of the National Song and Dance Celebration Tradition

Address: B.Radvilaites 8, 2600 Vilnius, Lithuania

Phone: +370 5 612607

Fax: +370 5 2124033

e-mail: lfcc@lfcc.lt

Contact person:

Mr. Juozas Mikutavicius, Director of the Lithuanian Folk Centre

b. Responsible organizations

No.	Responsible organizations	Legal status	National competence of the organization	Contacts	Sources of funding
	ESTONIA				
1.	Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation	NGO	sustainable, process-based organisation of the Song and Dance Celebrations	Suur-Karja 23 10148 Tallinn Phone: +3726449262 Fax: +372 6449147 laulupidu@kul.ee Manager: Mr Ilmar Moss	governmental support, sponsors
2.	Estonian Choral Society	NGO	to maintain and develop the tradition of choral singing and the high level of artistic performance of Song and Dance Celebrations	Suur-Karja 23 10148 Tallinn Phone: +3726441849 Fax: +372 6449147 Chairman: Mr Aarne Saluveer	sponsors, fund-raising, small governmental support
3.	Estonian Folk Dance and Folk Music Association	NGO	to co-ordinate the folk dance and folk music movement	Vilmsi 55, 10147Tallinn Phone: +372 6009176 errs@vilmsi.ee Chairman: Mr Kalev Järvela	governmental support, sponsors
4.	Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Estonia	State	to organize and coordinate the cultural policy of Estonia	Suur-Karja 23 15076 Tallinn, Estonia Phone: +372 6282250 Fax: +372 6282200 kul@kul.ee Minister: Mrs Signe Kivi	governmental
5.	Ministry of Education of the Republic of Estonia	State	to organize and coordinate the educational policy of Estonia	Munga 18 50088 Tartu Phone: +372 7350222 Fax: +372 350250 hm@hm.ee Minister: Ms Mailis Rand	governmental
	LATVIA				
1.	Latvian Folk Arts Centre (since November 2002 State Agency)	State	To implement the state cultural policy in the field of folk art, to provide the development and continuity of the folk art in Latvia	Pils laukums 4, Riga, LV 1050, Latvia Phone: +371 7228985 Fax: +371 7227405 e-mail: pasts@tmc.gov.lv Director: Mr. Janis Kurpnieks	governmental
2.	Song Festival Foundation	NGO	Administration and fundraising	Pils laukums 4, Riga, LV 1050, Latvia Phone: +371 7228985 Fax: +371 7227405 email: Anna.jansone@km.gov.lv Contact person: Anna Jansone	sponsors

No.	Responsible organizations	Legal status	National competence of the organization	Contacts	Sources of funding
3.	State Youth Initiative Centre	State	To implement the state policy in youth affairs, to organize children and youth activities, to manage the Youth Song and Dance Celebrations	Strugu Street 4, Riga, LV 1003 Phone: +371 7228987 strugu@vjic.apollo.lv Director: Mr.Ringolds Beinarovics	governmental
4.	The Union of Local and Regional Government	NGO	to promote and provide balanced and sustainable development of folk culture at the county and local level	Maza Pils Street 1, Riga, LV 1050 Phone: +371 7226536 Fax:+ 371 7212241 e-mail:lps@lps.lv Head: Andris Jaunsleinis	self-governmental
5.	Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia	State	To organize and coordinate cultural policy, cultural-educational policy for safeguarding and revitalization of the folk art	K.Valdemara street 11a, Riga, LV 1010, Latvia Phone: +371 7078122 Fax: +371 7078107 Minister: Mrs. Karina Petersone	governmental
6.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia	State	To work out and implement the educational and youth policy for safeguarding and revitalization of the folk art	Valnu street 2, Riga, LV 1050, Latvia Phone: +371 7222415 Fax: + 371 7213992 Minister: Mr. Karlis Greiskalns	governmental
LITHUANIA					
1.	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre	State	To promote the cultural programs; to support the activities of song, dance, and folklore companies	Barboros Radvilaitės g. 8, 2600 Vilnius, Lithuania Phone: +370 285611190 Fax.: +370 285612607, 2124033 E-mail: lfcc@lfcc.lt Head: Mr. Juozas Mikutavicius	governmental
2.	Lithuanian National non-governmental committee set up to foster and develop the National Song and Dance Celebration tradition	NGO	To make proposals to the Ministry of Culture regarding regional and national Song and Dance Celebration activities	Barboros Radvilaitės g. 8, 2600 Vilnius, Lithuania Phone: +370 285611190 Fax.: +370 285612607, 2124033 E-mail: lfcc@lfcc.lt Contact person: Mr. Juozas Mikutavicius	governmental support, county governments and local governments
3.	The World Lithuanian Song Festival Fund	NGO	Fund-raising; implementing Song and Dance Celebration tradition programmes	Barboros Radvilaitės g. 8, 2600 Vilnius, Lithuania Phone: +370 285611190 Fax.: +370 285612607, 2124033 E-mail: lfcc@lfcc.lt Contact person: Mr. Juozas Mikutavicius	sponsors

No.	Responsible organizations	Legal status	National competence of the organization	Contacts	Sources of funding
4.	Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania	State	To promote the cultural policy	J. Basanavičiaus g. 5, LT-2600, Vilnius, Lithuania Phone: +370 285 619486 E-mail: culture@muza.lt Minister: Mrs. Roma Dovydenienė	governmental
5.	Ministry of Education of the Republic of Lithuania	State	To promote the cultural and educational policy	A. Volano 2/7, LT-2691, Vilnius, Lithuania Phone: +370 285743125 E-mail: smiin@smm.lt Undersecretary Mr. Dainius Numgaudis	governmental

c. Measures

Legal measures

1. Constitutions of the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The constitutions of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania underline the obligation to maintain the nation and its culture.

2. Laws on Local Governments (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania).

The functions of local governments include among others the organization, in the rural municipality or city, of the maintenance of hobby schools and community cultural centres often providing necessary means and conditions for the choral and dance groups to function.

3. Cultural policies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania;

The main objective of the national cultural policies is to preserve our cultural traditions. The national cultural policies stipulate that the tradition of the Song and Dance Celebrations will continue and it lies upon the state and the local governments to preserve and develop the network needed.

4. Estonian National Culture Act.

The Act has been drafted and is expected to be adopted soon to ensure better sharing of functions and responsibilities in the field of national culture

5. Latvian National Programme “Culture 2000 –2010”.

6. Law on Principles of State Protection of Ethnic Culture adopted by the Republic of Lithuania in 1999.

7. Republic of Lithuania Government Resolution on the Continuity of the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition. Adopted in 2000.

8. Republic of Lithuania Government Resolution № 542 „On the cultural policy’s rules”. Adopted in 2001.

Legal protection against exploitation and protection of practitioners

1. Constitution of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.
2. Republic of Lithuania Government Resolution on the Continuity of the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition.
3. Copyright Laws in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Measures to guarantee transmission of the skill or know-how

1. Process-based cyclical nature of the tradition. There are perspective plans until 2019 in Estonia, until 2013 in Latvia, until 2019 in Lithuania.
2. Regular (basic, advanced and in-service) training of music instructors, folk dance instructors and choir conductors at the institutions of music education.
3. Regular practicing of choral groups, folk dance groups and brass bands, regular work on repertoire, regular participation in the local and county performances and concerts, annual local or district song and dance celebrations.

Perspective plan for the next 10 years in a nutshell:

Year	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania
2002	IX Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Tallinn	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations
2003	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	XXIII Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration in Riga	XVI Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration in Vilnius
2004	XXIV Nationwide Song Celebration and XVII Nationwide Dance Celebration in Tallinn	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances	Song Day and conference to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Kaunas
2005	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances	IX Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Riga	Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Vilnius
2006	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations

Year	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania
2007	X Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Tallinn	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	XVII Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration in Vilnius
2008	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	XXIV Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration in Riga	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances
2009	XXV Nationwide Song Celebration and XVIII Nationwide Dance Celebration in Tallinn	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances	VIII Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Vilnius
2010	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances	X Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Riga	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations
2011	preparatory process for the Youth Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing and various performances	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	XVIII Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration in Vilnius
2012	XI Youth Song and Dance Celebration in Tallinn	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations	preparatory process for the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration: work on repertoire; regular practicing, various performances and local celebrations

5. ACTION PLAN

a. Title of the project

Tradition and Symbolism of the Song and Dance Celebration Process in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

b. The co-coordinating organization or body for the group of Member States submitting the candidature file

Baltic Co-ordinating Committee on Safeguarding and Revitalization of the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition

Address: Pils Laukums 4 –206, Riga, LV 1050

Phone: + 371 7325109

Fax: + 371 7222762

E-mail: office@unesco.lv

Contact person: Ms. Dace Neiburga, Secretary – General of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO

The Baltic Committee includes representatives of ministries supervising Song and Dance Celebration Tradition, specialists of national folk culture centres as main organizers of this process and representatives of national commissions for UNESCO of all three Baltic countries. The Central Secretariat of the Baltic Committee is located at the office of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO.

c. The organization or body responsible for the implementation of the action plan in each Member State:

Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation in co-operation with:

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Internal Affairs (regional level)
- Estonian Choral Society
- Estonian Folk Dance and Folk Music Association
- Estonian Folk Art and Craft Union
- County governments (15) and local governments (247)

Latvian Folk Art Centre in co-operation with:

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia
- Riga City Council
- County (33) and local governments (540)

Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre in co-operation with:

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education and Science
- County governments (10) and local governments (60)

d. The detailed description of the involvement of the individuals who are recognized as practitioners of the technical skill or know-how of the communities concerned:

The Song and Dance Celebration process involves the bearers of the tradition – performers and practitioners, instructors, creative artists and cultural workers at local, regional and state level. Everybody has their own role and function to ensure a common aim – preservation and development of the living Song and Dance Celebration tradition.

Altogether Song and Dance Celebration process involves ca 400–700 thousand (depending on country) people – performers and audience. It makes about 10–19 % of the whole population of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania taken separately.

The Nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations are transmitted live through TV and radio channels in all three countries.

The population of Estonia is 1,4 million. The area of Estonia is 45,000 sq.km.

The population of Latvia is 2,3 million. The area – 64,589 sq.km.

The population of Lithuania is 3,5 million. The area – 65,200 sq.km.

Estonia:

1. Approximately 25,000 singers and musicians
 - a) singers in the joint choir about 18,000, among them mixed (6–7,000) women's (2,500), men's (1,500), children's (6,000), boys' and junior's (first to third graders; 6,000) choirs;
 - b) 1,500 brass band musicians
2. Approximately 10,000 dancers

Together with the audience 250,000 people (19% of the whole population)

3. Youth Celebration of Song and Dance: 19,000 performers

Together with the audience 160,000 people (12%)

Latvia:

1. Approximately 32,000 singers and musicians
 - a) singers in the joint choir about 18,400, among them mixed (9,500), women's (2,400), men's (1,500), chamber and children's (4,000), boys' (4,000) choirs;
 - b) about 2,500 musicians
2. Approximately 18,000 dancers

Together with the audience 400,000 people (17 %)

3. Youth Celebration of Song and Dance: 50,000 performers

Together with the audience 200,000 people (8.5%)

Lithuania:

1. Approximately 15,000 singers (400 choirs) and musicians
 - a) 149 mixed, 99 women's, 40 men's, 91 children's and 70 youth choirs;
 - b) 84 brass bands.
2. Approximately 9,000 dancers (250 groups)
3. Approximately 4,000 participants in the Folklore Day and 3,000 in the Ensemble Night; about 500 artists participate in the folk art exhibition

Together with the audience 340,000 people (10.6 %)

The following table describes the involvement of different co-actors (bearers of artistic know-how as well as bearers of technical and organizational know-how) in more detail:

The involvement of different co-actors

Representatives of communities	Form of participation	Tasks
<i>Possessors of artistic know-how</i>		
<u>Performers/ practitioners</u> singers dancers brass band musicians	choir, folk dance, brass band rehearsals, competitions and concerts	to cherish the power of song and dance, to refine skills and acquire a repertoire of Song and Dance Celebration
<u>Leaders of hobby-groups</u> a. choir conductors b. folk dance instructors c. brass band conductors	forming and managing the hobby-groups, approbation of the repertoire, conducting rehearsals	to teach the co-repertoire of Song and Dance Celebrations, To prepare hobby groups for the artistic participation in Song and Dance Celebrations.
<u>Hobby-groups (NGOs)</u> a. choirs b. folk dance groups c. brass bands	regular practicing, various performances on a district level, joint rehearsals and concerts	to unite practitioners, training, to improve the level of artistic performance, to improve the quality of life
<u>Artistic sub-unions:</u> Women's Song Societies Men's Song Societies Mixed Choirs' Unions Chamber Choirs' Unions Wind Band Music Unions Associations of Music Teachers Associations of Choral Conductors Folklore Band Societies	organizing joint rehearsals; various performances and concerts; singing, dancing, music days of the counties - thus paving way to the nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations taking place every four or five years	provide methodological guidance and develop the artistic skills in a given sub-union's field
<u>Central Societies</u> National Choral Societies National Folk Dance Associations National Folk Music Associations National Folk Art and Craft National Brass Band Associations	methodological guidance; artistic co-ordination; evaluation of various choral and dance groups in order to determine the level of artistic performance	to develop a given field at the state level as well as at the international level, to organize in-service training and refresher courses, to make proposals concerning the repertoire of Song and Dance Celebrations, its artistic directors and artistic concept, evaluation

Representatives of communities	Form of participation	Tasks
<i>Possessors of technical and organizational know-how</i>		
Culture managers of villages and towns	development and managing local amateur art movement, communication and organizing practitioners and performers for Song and Dance Celebrations	to provide necessary means and conditions for local amateur music and dance groups to function (training facilities, salaries for hobby-group leaders, support for cultural activities, in-service training) ; to organise and provide finances to prepare local hobby groups for the participation in the Song and Dance Celebrations
Song and Dance Celebrations district managers Culture specialists of district Conductors-in-chief of district	Co-ordination of joint activities on a district level, elaboration of funding principles	to ensure balanced development of a region; to organize song and dance festivities on a district level; to organize pre-rehearsals for the nationwide event; to provide training
Chief specialists in every amateur art genre Chief managers of nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations	co- ordination of preliminaries, evaluation and info dissemination fund-raising; establishing and assisting artistic committees for nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations; establishing and assisting working groups in charge of various administrative functions for the nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations (transport and accommodation of the participants, catering, preparing the training- and festival fields etc.)	to promote networking of folk culture specialists on a district level; to provide salaries for involved specialists; to elaborate the funding principles of each Nationwide Celebration and to prepare the overall budget of revenues and expenditures; to provide the necessary conditions for each committee and working group to function; to keep track of all choral and dance groups and brass bands wishing to participate in the Nationwide Song and Dance Celebration; to establish in consultation with competent organizations a schedule of activities making up the nationwide Song and Dance Celebration cycle

e. The administrative or legal mechanisms for safeguarding the form of cultural expression or the cultural space concerned

Legal Acts:

- Constitutions of the Republics of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Law on Self-Governments in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Non-Profit Associations Act in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Foundations Acts in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Education Acts in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Youth Policy Acts in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Law on Principles of State Protection of Ethnic Culture adopted by the Republic of the Lithuania in 1999
- Resolution on the Continuity of Song and Dance Celebration Tradition adopted by the Republic of Lithuania Government in 2000
- "Resolution on the cultural policy's rules" № 542 adopted by the Republic of Lithuania Government in 2001

Other legal regulations:

- General principles of the cultural policy in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Development plans of Ministry of Education in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Development plans of Ministry of Culture in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Development plans of districts in the field of culture in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Development plans of rural municipalities in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Development plans of Central Societies in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

f. The sources and level of funding

- state and municipalities (district and local) – *human resources, technical assistance and logistics, budgetary funds*
- private supporters and sponsors – *technical and financial assistance*
- international organizations and assistance programmes – *financial assistance*

g. The human resources available (their competence and experience) and the opportunities for training in projects related to safeguarding, revitalization and dissemination

Estonia

Aino Arro, Director of Estonian Folk Culture Development and Training Centre; Head of Expert Committee set up by the Minister of Culture in order to prepare the submission of the candidature of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition to the UNESCO List of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity

Ilmar Moss, Manager, Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation

Kalev Järvela, Senior Specialist, Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation

Aet Maatee, Deputy Head, Arts Department, Ministry of Culture

Jaan Laidmets, Head, General Department, Ministry of Education

Helle-Mare Kõmmus, Folk Culture specialist, Folk Culture Development and Training Centre of Hiiumaa Island

Kalev Lindal, Conductor, Tartu Male Choir

Aarne Saluveer, Chairman, Estonian Choral Society

Kaie Tanner, Executive Secretary, Estonian Choral Society

Margit Siim, Deputy Secretary-General, Estonian National Commission for UNESCO

Aivo Toomistu, Senior Specialist, Education and Culture Department of Järva County Government

Kristin Kuutma, Senior Researcher at Cultural Archives of Estonia

Latvia

Imants Kokars, Prof., Choir conductor, Initiator of the Song Festival of Nordic-Baltic countries

Sigvards Kļava, Artistic Director, Latvian Radio Choir

Lolita Fūrmane, Musicologist, Assoc. Prof., Latvian Academy of Music

Martin Boiko, Ethnomusicologist, Head of the Archives of Latvian Folklore, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of Latvia, Professor of Latvia University

Oļģerts Grāvītis, Prof., Latvian Academy of Music

Pēteris Laķis, Prof., Rector, Latvian Academy of Culture

Arvīds Platpers, Prof., Head of Chair, Latvian Academy of Music

Roberts Zuika, Chief conductor of the Latvian Song Celebration in the emigration

Aira Birziņa, Senior Expert, Latvian Folk Arts Centre

Ilma Grauzdiņa, Prof., Latvian Academy of Music

Jānis Purviņš, Choreographer, Latvian Folk Arts Centre

Arnolds Klotiņš, Dr art, musicologist, Riga City Council

Tālis Tīsenkopfs, sociologists, University of Latvia

Lithuania

Vytautas Jakelaitis, Professor, choreographer, Klaipeda University

Rimantas Gudelis, Associate Professor, musicologist, Klaipeda University

Algirdas Vyžintas, Professor, musicologist, Lithuanian Music Academy, Head of the Division of Folk Instruments at the Lithuanian Folk Centre

Ona Narbutiene, musicologist, winner of the National Prize

Aleksandras Šidlauskas, culturologist, Head of the Division of Regional Cultural Sectors at the Lithuanian Folk Centre

Salomonas Sverdiolas, choreographer, ex-organizer of Song and Dance Celebrations

Juozas Gudavičius, Professor, choreographer, Klaipeda University

Boleslovas Zubrickas, Doctor, Lithuanian Music Academy

Vytautas Miškinis, Professor, Choir conductor

Opportunities for training in projects related to safeguarding, revitalization and dissemination

All participants of the Songs and Dances Celebrations acquire basic skills in music, choir singing and folk dancing through general education programmes provided in every country. Further training is ensured taking part in the regular (2 to 3 times a week) choir, folk group and brass band rehearsals taking place in local culture centres, educational establishments, children and youth centres.

The leaders of hobby-groups - choir conductors, folk dance instructors, brass band conductors are trained in the following institutions:

- in music academies and universities (Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Academies of Music, Tallinn Pedagogical University, University of Tartu, University of Latvia, Latvian Academy of Culture, Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy, Liepaja Pedagogical Academy, Daugavpils Pedagogical University, Klaipeda University);
- in music colleges and music schools (Viljandi Cultural College, J. Medins Riga Music College, E. Darzins Music School of Latvian Music Academy, Vilnius Conservatoire, Panevezys Conservatoire, Klaipeda Conservatoire);
- in children music schools in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania – preparatory phase for entering higher music schools;
- in training courses (Estonian Folk Culture Development and Training Centre, Estonian Academy of Music, Association of Estonian Music Teachers, Estonian Choral Society, Latvian Folk Art Centre, National Youth Initiative Centre of Latvia, Lithuanian Academy of Music).

h. A detailed plan

General aim of the Action Plan

To preserve and revitalize the Tradition of the Song and Dance Celebration Process in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as an outstanding value of the human creative genius deeply rooted in the cultural traditions of community and having a great potential to inspire the development of national culture, bring people closer together and affirm their cultural identity.

Long-term objectives of the Action Plan

- 1) To ensure the organizing of the National Song and Dance Celebrations as a continuous cyclic process based on the nationwide amateur art movement and creative activities.
- 2) To strengthen children's and young people's interest and motivation to take part in the Song and Dance Celebration process involving, educating and training them in music, choral singing and folk dancing.

- 3) To recognize and protect the practitioners of the technical and organizational skills and artistic know-how of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition and take necessary measures to guarantee transmission of their experience and knowledge.
- 4) To sensitise and mobilize public opinion and support in favour of the recognition and promotion of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition as a symbol of national identity in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the unique cultural phenomena of these small nations in the cultural diversity of the world.
- 5) To record and systemize archive materials related to the Song and Dance Celebration tradition and develop and support their scientific and academic research and publication.
- 6) To encourage national and local authorities to take and improve legal and administrative measures in the field of safeguarding and revitalization of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition as a cyclical process thus ensuring its inheritance to the next generations.
- 7) To foster exchange of experience and information among practitioners, specialists and institutions involved in safeguarding and revitalization of the Song and Dance celebration tradition among Baltic countries in order to ascertain the common and different trends of the tradition and strengthen intercultural dialogue and understanding among nations.

History and Rationale

Because of the **risk, experienced** in gradual amplification in the three Baltic countries that the relatively well-structured and established process of Song and Dance Celebration has become greatly threatened, and could even disappear, in the rapidly changing economic and socio-cultural situation in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the following measures have been foreseen **for the future**. This community-building and symbolic tradition could be retained and developed by **uniting the efforts** of all three Baltic States and their inhabitants, as well as by gaining an international recognition of this tradition.

Since 2001, **Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been closely co-operating**, while taking the UNESCO programme on safeguarding and revitalization of the intangible cultural heritage as a general frame to encourage their governments and society to intensify activities in preserving and promoting this unique cultural expression and to recognize its importance as a part of the heritage of the whole humanity. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania also **consider this programme as a platform for new partnerships among UNESCO Member States**.

In order to discuss and identify the perspectives of collaboration among the Baltic States in the frame of safeguarding and revitalization of oral and intangible heritage, the **Regional Seminar** “Song Festival – Tradition in Change” was held in Riga, on 28 – 29 July 2001. During these days music specialists, experts, traditional song festival organizers and representatives of national commissions for UNESCO from Norway, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia discussed different aspects and issues of song and

dance celebration tradition in the Baltic region touching its historical roots, evaluating its role and forms of expressions in current multicultural environment, as well as making forecasts for perspectives of sustainability of the tradition in the future.

In conclusion, the participants unanimously accepted the Final Resolution of the Seminar, where the definition of the National Songs and Dances Celebration Tradition in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania was given and next steps of further activities determined. The participants of the seminar expressed conviction that the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition of the Baltic States is in line with the status of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

As the tradition crosses the political and geographical borders of three Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, they all came to an agreement **to join their efforts and prepare a Multi-National Candidature File** on the Songs and Dances Celebration Process to be submitted in UNESCO for the Proclamation of Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Common Baltic **initiative to develop closer cooperation in safeguarding and revitalization of the Song and Dance Celebration Process** responds also to the Agreement between the Ministry of Culture and Education of Estonia, the Ministry of Culture of Latvia and Ministry of Culture of Lithuania on Co-operation in the Field of Culture signed by ministers of culture of all Baltic countries in Vilnius in 1994 and aimed at common intentions to preserve and promote traditions of national culture and organize joint festivities and exchanges of artists and professionals, as well as to the resolution Concerning Preservation of Ethnic Culture in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania adopted by the Baltic Assembly (a common structure for co-operation among the Parliaments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) adopted on December 4, 1999.

A prerequisite for the primary Nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations is a continuous process and a system of on-going activities and numerous events. Regular practicing, various performances, singing, dancing and music days on local and district level, nationwide singing days for different kinds of choirs constitute a united system, culminating in a nationwide Song and Dance Celebration every four or five years.

The following table gives a more detailed overview of the **Multi-National Action Plan** designed to safeguard, protect and revitalize the song and dance celebration tradition as a **collaboration between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.**

Detailed Multi-National Action Plan

for the preservation and revitalization of the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
1.	<p>Recommendation on the Preservation and Safeguarding of the Song and Dance Celebrations in the Baltic countries.</p> <p>Phase I – elaboration of the joint document; national and regional round tables;</p> <p>Phase II- submission for approval to the Baltic Parliamentary Assembly</p>	to prepare a joint document concerning the preservation of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania	Ministries of Culture in cooperation with the folk culture centres in Lithuania Latvia and Estonia	10,000 USD	2003 - 2004	An appropriate legal measure would ensure the preservation and promotion of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition
2.	<p>International Conference “Song and Dance Celebration Tradition: Historical, Cultural Significance and Contemporary value”:</p> <p>Phase I - Preparation of the documentation (projects of laws, legal acts, other judicial documents or amendments) on the conference themes, national round tables.</p> <p>Phase II – Organisation of the Conference</p> <p>Phase III – Follow-up of the Conference, implementation of the decisions made at the Conference, publishing of the information bulletin of the Conference.</p>	to hold an international conference to bring together experts, parliamentarians, other decision- makers with a view to discuss the risks of disappearance and the lack of means of safeguarding the cultural manifestation concerned	Folk culture centres in cooperation with the National Commissions for UNESCO in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia	25,000 USD	2005-2006	An appropriate measure would mobilise public and official opinion in favour of the recognition of the cultural phenomenon concerned and would encourage the formulation of adequate policies.

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
3.	Creation of the CD-ROM including documentation, historical research, audio, video and photo material related to the Song and Dance Celebration tradition. Phase I – compiling data; Phase II – release of CD-ROM	to review historical development of the tradition concerned and to facilitate access to data of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition through systematic digitalisation	Folk culture centres in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia	15,000 USD	2004– 2007	Interactive access to information and sharing of knowledge promoted and broadened on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition through created CD-ROM
4.	Sociological research on the tradition of Song and Dance Celebration. Phase I – founding of Baltic regional working group of experts, researchers; collecting data; research; Phase II – publication of sociological research on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition.	to carry out sociological Song and Dance Celebration research using the same methodology to determine the significance of the tradition, its influence on the development of the cultures.	Folk culture centres in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia	30,000 USD	2005 – 2006	Improving existing data base and archives on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition.
5.	Documentary on the Song and Dance Celebration Tradition	Produce a documentary on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition thriving in the Baltic States and its impact on the culture of those countries.	Folk culture centres in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia	30,000 USD	2005-2006	Song and Dance Celebration promoted at the international and national levels
6.	Practical workshops for the members of the custodian community at the Baltic regional level (conductors, dance instructors, handicraft masters)	to discuss the issues of repertoire, to transmit skills and know-how to new generations involved in the process	Choral societies, folk culture centres in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania	15,000 USD	annual	continuation of good co-operation, exchange of experience
7	Regular joint research seminars	to analyse the process and discuss future perspectives	cultural research institutions in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania	15,000 USD	in every two years	future-oriented activities based on realistic situation assessment

Appendix to Action Plan

The following table presents an Appendix to illustrate separate plans drawn by respective countries individually for continuing the process

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
	ESTONIA					
1.	Organizing singing days and small scale song and dance celebrations in all counties and regions in the years between the nationwide Song and Dance Celebrations and Youth Song and Dance Celebrations.	To motivate practitioners to keep up the tradition and a good level of artistic performance	Estonian Choral Society, Song and Dance Festival Foundation, local governments, NGO-s	60,000 USD	2003-2012	Communities of practitioners are empowered to carry on the tradition
2.	Creation of a programme supporting folk culture identity	introduction of traditional culture topics into the school curricula	Ministry of Education	30,000 USD	2005	promotion of awareness of our roots
3.	Development of the regionally functioning network of Song and Dance Celebration tradition	joint activities on a county level	Folk Culture Development and Training Centre, Council of Regional Cultural Policy; Song and Dance Festival Foundation, Ministry of Culture	93,000 USD	2003	guarantee of song and dance celebration activities in the regions
4.	Creation of positions of field consultants	15 choir leaders, 10 dance leaders	Choral Society, Estonian Folk Dance and Folk Music Association	170,000 USD	2003-2004	methodological work throughout the country
5.	Higher recognition of the work of the instructors and providing conditions for their work	paying tribute to the recognized practitioners of the tradition, educational opportunities, in-training courses, graduate studies ordered by state	Estonian Choral Society, Estonian Folk Dance and Folk Music Association, Folk Culture Development and Training Centre	50,000 USD	2003-2008	guarantee of transmission of the tradition
6.	Preparation of traditional culture specialists in accordance with the renewed needs	creation of databases, organization of statistics	Folk Culture Development and Training Centre	16,000 USD	2003-2004	qualitative and quantitative data relevant to Song and Dance Celebration used for outlining future perspectives

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
7.	Legal regulation of the field	drafting of the National Culture Act	Ministry of Culture, Council of Regional Cultural Policy, Estonian Song and Dance Festival Foundation with all other agencies concerned by law	10,000 USD	2002	legal protection for the practitioners of the tradition
8.	Sustainable development of repertoire	contests for new works encouraged by symbolic traditional repertoire	Estonian Choral Society	7,000 USD	2004 and onwards	natural evolution of the form of cultural expression concerned
9.	Reconstruction of Song Celebration Grounds and Arena	reconstruction of the Arena	Tallinn City Government, Ministry of Culture	500,000 USD	2002-2003	safety guaranteed, better conditions for participants ensured
	LATVIA					
1.	National Song and Dance Celebration: Phase I –Preparing of co repertoire Phase II- Joint practices, district and local celebration Phase III- Organizing of 23 rd National Song and Dance Celebration Phase IV- evaluation of the 23 Song and Dance Celebration results and launching preparation for the next celebration	To ensure the continuity and revitalization of tradition as a symbol of national identity	Latvian Folk Arts Centre, Song Festival Foundation, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Science, Union of Local and Regional Government	1, 200, 000 LVL	2002 –2003	23 rd National Song and Dance Celebration is held, the tradition at the local and national levels strengthened; 24 th National Song and Dance Celebration is going on and the continuity within the cyclical process ensured.
2.	Regular local and county Song and Dance Celebration	To promote tradition as prerequisite for local and county continuity	Union of Local and Regional Government, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Science	100, 000 LVL	2002 -2008	Revitalize and support local amateur movement; Guaranteed improvement of the skills acquired co repertoire

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
3.	Youth Song and Dance Celebration Phase I –Preparing of co repertoire Phase II- Joint practices, district and local celebration Phase III- Organizing of 9 th Youth Song and Dance Celebration Phase IV- evaluation of the 9 th Youth Song and Dance Celebration results and launching preparation for the next celebration	To ensure the regularity of the song and dance celebration tradition for children and youth	State Youth Initiative Centre, Ministry of Education and Science, Latvian Folk Arts Centre, Song Festival Foundation, Ministry of Culture, Union of Local and Regional Government		2002 –2004 2005 -2010	9 th Youth Song and Dance Celebration is held as well as different other events of the cyclical process organized, acquiring and strengthening artistic tradition and spiritual values of the tradition; Raised national consciousness as a sense of national cultural identity
4.	Providing traditional culture and folk art education through formal and non-formal education	To improve the skills of choir singing, folk dancing and other folk arts through hobby and further education; To ensure musical education as an integral part of general compulsory educational system	State Youth Initiative Centre, Ministry of Education and Science, Latvian Folk Arts Centre, Song Festival Foundation, Ministry of Culture, Union of Local and Regional Government		2003 - 2004	Promote tradition and strong governmental support for hobby education system; Role of music education is strengthened in school curricula
5.	Higher recognition of and support to the work of conductors and instructors of Song and Dance Celebration	To pay tribute to the recognized practitioners of the tradition; To provide educational and further education training opportunities	State Youth Initiative Centre, Ministry of Education and Science, Latvian Folk Arts Centre, Song Festival Foundation, Ministry of Culture, Union of Local and Regional Government	40, 000 LVL	2003-2007	Raised prestige of the Song and Dance Celebration practitioners; Guaranteed transmission of the skills and know-how

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
6.	Legal and administrative measures for the Song and Dance Celebration tradition	To improve management, system and legislative bases of the tradition	Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Science	10, 000 LVL	2002 – 2007	Folk art acts elaborated and adopted by the Parliament; Responsibilities and competences of government, self-government and NGO's are concretised for the safeguarding and revitalization of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition; Status and creative work of the practitioners are protected and supported; Governmental financial programme for the ensuring the tradition is approved
7	Scientific publication on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Latvia	To promote and support scientific research of Song and Dance Celebration tradition in the forming of national culture and national identity	Latvian Music Academy, Latvian Cultural Academy, UNESCO Latvian National Commission	25, 000 LVL	2003	Contemporary evaluation of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition Comprehension of the multi- ranged role of the tradition Involvement of the students and post-graduates in research activities
8	Museum of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Latvia	Systematically collect, record and present the history, development course of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Latvia	Riga City council, Latvian Folk Arts Centre, Rainis Museum of Literature and Art	300, 000 LVL	2002 -2003	Song and Dance Celebration Tradition Museum established in Riga City, historical, visual and audio materials exhibited and available for general public
9	Sociological research on the tradition of Song and Dance Celebration.	to carry out sociological song and dance celebration research; to determine the significance of the tradition, its influence on the development of the cultures.	Ministry of Culture	8, 000 LVL	2002	Improving existing data base and archives on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition

No	Activities, projects	Short-term objective	Agencies implementing the project and partners	Estimated budget	Work schedule	Expected outcomes
	LITHUANIA					
1	Hold a Song Day and conference to commemorate the 80 th anniversary of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Kaunas	To commemorate the beginning of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition	Local government of Kaunas; the Ministry of Culture	95,000 USD	2004	To enhance the prestige of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition
2	Hold regular municipality and regional song, dance, folklore festivals and craft days, etc. Following the provisional programme	To guarantee the creative activity and the dissemination of song, dance, folklore etc. companies	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, local governments	2% of the budgets of local governments	2004-2010	The continuation of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in regions
3	To collect and systemise all the publications on the Lithuanian Song and Dance Celebration tradition	To analyze the content of publications on the Song and Dance Celebration tradition	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, Choral Union, Folk Instrumental Music Union, Folk Dance Union	6,000 USD	2003-2004	To improve the organization of the events of the Song and Dance celebration tradition; to provide preconditions for academic research
4	To carry out a scholarly research on the significance of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition for the Lithuanian culture, continuity of the amateur art tradition	A more profound reflection of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, Klaipėda University	12,000 USD	2004-2005	A modern evaluation of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition and outlining future perspectives
5	To create website in the Internet	To ensure equitable access to the general public	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre	4,000 USD a year	2003	To make the Song and Dance Celebration tradition accessible for the international community
6	To open a display on the development of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Vilnius	To present the visual history of the Song and Dance Celebration tradition	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, Ministry of Culture	80,000 USD	2004-2005	To create conditions for educational purposes
7	To open a permanent Lithuanian folk costume exhibition	To emphasize the significance of the folk costume	Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, the museums	55,000 USD	2003	To guarantee permanent access to the historical development and cultural diversity of folk costumes of Lithuania

ANNEX 1

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ESTONIA

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LATVIA

The events of Latvian Song Festival tradition in the course of more than 130 years and the original sources related to it (repertoire music sheet collections, programmes, articles and Latvian and foreign periodical editions, books, studies, not to mention photo and film records stored in public and private archives) have created such an extensive branch of music bibliography, that it is almost impossible to cover it, therefore it is impossible to present an exhaustive and comprehensible bibliographical index, an overview of the most significant groups of publications will follow.

A) ORIGINAL BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

1. The most important source is the bibliographical publication *Latviešu zinātne un literatūra* [Latvian Science and Literature} initiated by Augusts Ginters and continued after his death, this yearbook (but after the World War II - 12 annual parts) under the corresponding entries (MUSIC, SONG FESTIVAL, SONG DAYS, SOCIETIES, etc.) indicates yet not precisely quantified tens of thousands publications on the theme of song festival (starting with the 60s of the 19th century): newspaper and magazine articles, overviews, reviews, criticism, polemics, information, as well as titles of poems, stories and other literary works touching upon the theme of song festivals.
2. A. Jansons - former bibliographer of the Latvian National Library - compiled an index *Latviešu dziesmu svētku bibliogrāfijas materiāli* [Bibliographical Materials on Latvian Song Festivals], in which he thematically grouped the records of the aforementioned source (A-1) and together with the numerous chronological lists of the song day joint choirs repertoires sheet music made available to the public in 1944 (Kārlis Rasiņš Publishing House hectograph edition). This unique index holds bibliographical information on more than 6500 (!) publications on the song festival themes published from 1860 till 1943.
3. O. Straume in the edition commissioned by the State Library of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic *Dziesmu svētku simtgade (1873 - 1973. Literatūras rādītājs* [One Hundred Year's Anniversary of Song Festival (1873 - 1973). Index of Literature] used as the basis the two aforementioned original sources (A-1, A-2). In this brochure, for obvious reasons, the records of the periodical editions of the pre-revolutionary period and especially of the 20s and 30s are kept to the minimum. The greatest part of this publication is taken up by records of press materials of the post World War II period. It is also a rich source of information on press articles in Russian. In comparison to the *Bibliography* of 1944 the number of entries in this Soviet edition is very humble indeed – 1190.
4. Ēriks and Margarita Biezaiši *Mūzikas krātuvē savākto izdevumu rādītājs* [The Index of Publications of the Music Library Collection] (Adelaide, Australia, 1989) is presently the forth most significant bibliographical collection. Its final part - *Song Festival* (263 - 284 pp.) holds a selection of original sources of the Republic of Latvia and Soviet Latvia held in the private collection of Biezaiši (that was created in exile, in Australia, but now has been transferred and is functioning in Riga). The editions of *Latvian exile* song days and song festivals from 1946 till 1989 are of special importance. These recordings of exile Latvian music life need a more comprehensive bibliographical edition that would cover all exile Latvian musical events. Presently outlines of such an edition can be seen in the numerous card indexes of Latvian archives, museums and libraries, the most comprehensive one is at the Museum of Latvian Music Culture, founded and managed by Elmārs Zemovičs, as well as in the collections of culture materials at the National Archive supervised by Māris Brancis. These have been enriched and are constantly supplemented by the owners of private

collections from Latvia and from exile, as the museum, library and archive collections more often receive donations of previously unknown valuable documents.

Tens of thousands published and similar amounts of unpublished testimonies on Latvian Song Festival is the background for the original sources, and against this background a short survey of the most important publications will be given. It will be subdivided into four parts:

B) SONG FESTIVALS IN LATVIA AND IN EXILE,

The most important publications dedicated to the history of these events:

1. Bērzkalns Valentīns. *Latviešu dziesmu svētku vēsture (1864 – 1940)* [History of Latvian Song Festival] – Grāmatu Draugs, ASV, 1965.
2. Bērzkalns Valentīns. *Latviešu dziesmu svētki trimdā* [Latvian Song Festivals in Exile] – Grāmatu Draugs, ASV, 1968.

Two most substantial basic works of song festival history research, especially B-1, which is still used by musicologists in establishing detailed factual material of this period.

3. Grauzdiņa Ilma, Grāvītis Oļģerts. *Dziesmu svētki Latvijā. Norise. Skaitļi. Fakti. 1873 – 1990* [Song Festivals in Latvia. Events. Numbers. Facts. 1873 - 1990] - Izdevniecība “Zinātne”, R., 1990.

A “*crash course*” of the song festival history, based on the materials collected by the Department of Music History of the Latvian State Conservatoire and B-1 source, its target audience is mainly students of musical education establishments, offering encyclopaedical knowledge on Latvian music culture.

4. Grauzdiņa Ilma, Poruks Arnis. *Dziesmu svētku garā gaita* – [The Long Path of Song Festivals] E. Melngaiļa TMN izdevums, R., 1990.

Collection of data on Song Festivals I-XX, for the first time (partly inspired by B-1) giving an alphabetical list of all Latvian composers who wrote songs for the joint choir and the subsequent performance of their songs by the joint choir. A unique Index that was later continued by the publication B-6.

5. Grauzdiņa Ilma, Poruks Arnis. *Taisīšu tiltu pār plašu jūru. Latviešu dziesmu svētki pasaulē* ['ll Build a Bridge across the Vast Sea. Latvian Song Festival in the World] - E. Melngaiļa TMC izdevums, R., 1998.

An expert summary of original sources B-2, B-8, B-9, periodical collection of articles “*Latvju Mūzika*” and exile Latvian Song Festival guide “*Vadonis*”. A valuable contribution of Latvian musicology towards the first comprehensive documentation of exile Latvian music culture events.

6. Grāvītis Oļģerts. *Dziesmu svētku brīnums* [The Miracle of Song Festivals] – Valsts tautas mākslas centra izdevums UNESCO pasūtinājumā – R., 2002. – latviešu valodā, ar angļu valodas teksta variantu.

Encyclopaedic summary of facts on the Latvian National Song Festivals, from 1873 till the planned National Song Festival of 2003. Lists of composers, chief conductors, joint choir repertoire. Short surveys of the historical background of the song festivals and the global ramification of this Latvian music phenomenon.

7. Krieviņš Juris *Mani dziesmu svētki*. [My Song Festival] *Ar Imanta Ziedoņa vaicājumiem ievadā. Ar Oļģerta Grāvīša apceri un komentāriem noslēgumā*. “Latvijas Vēstnesis”, R. 1998.

A photo album of the Song and Dance Festivals of 70s -90s. Alongside half a hundred artistic expert, historically unique photos by Juris Krieviņš brief information on conductors, composers and many other personalities seen in the photos.

8. *Latviešu Kultūras Dienas Austrālijā 1951 – 1970*. [The Days of Latvian Culture in Australia 1951 - 1970] Sastādījis V. Dulmanis. Austrālijas Latviešu Apvienības Kultūras Fonda izdevums 1971.
9. *Latviešu Kultūras Dienas Austrālijā 1971 – 1995*. [The Days of Latvian Culture in Australia 1971 - 1995] Sastādījusi Margarita Biezaite.

ALA KF izdevums 1996.

These two monumental books record annual culture events of Latvians in Australia, give an insight into the obligatory joint choirs concerts - Australian “little song festivals”. These books offer a more complete view on the ramification of the Latvian song festival tradition and its continuation in the diaspora of exile Latvians abroad.

10. Mediņš Klements. *Latviešu dziesmu svētki. Monogrāfija (1873 – 1955)* [Latvian Song Festivals. Monograph. (1873 -1955)]– R., LVI 1955.

A vivid example of the shameless Soviet ideology lies regarding the so-called “bourgeois Latvia” festival history. Distorted descriptions of the I- V, as well as X-XII Festivals. The book, though, is valuable in one respect, i.e., for the first and thus far the only time a comprehensive records with rich factual data of the events of the post-war song festivals (1948, 1950, 1955) and song days (1949) were published.

11. Peņģerots Visvaldis *Seši latvju vispārējie dziesmu svētki 1873 – 1926*. [Six Latvian National Song Festivals. 1873 - 1926] “Latvju Kultūra”, R. 1928.

Rare photo documents with short descriptions of six song festivals. The second half of this book -album is quite unique - the photos of all the participants- choirs of the VI Song Festival (1926), although not all the singers seen in the photos are named in the captions.

C) TESTIMONIES ON I -XXII LATVIAN SONG FESTIVALS

The books -albums covering the previous 22 National Song Festivals and the Festival of the 2001 dedicated to the 800 year’s anniversary of Riga, the humble brochures of the post-war years, pre-war “Vadoņi” (as well as expanded programmes of the numerous Regional Song festivals, male and female choirs, as well the so called Folk Choirs Gatherings) share on thing - these are all historically authentic records of separate musical events.

In the booklets of the first period of history of the Song Festival (I Festival, 1873 - V Festival 1910), especially in the descriptions by Rihards Tomsons (I Festival) and Lautenbahs Jūsmiņš (II, III), the greatest value is the list of singers of all the choirs published in addition to the eye-witnesses’ testimonies. This tradition was continued by four “Vadoņi” of the four National Song Festivals of the second period (VI 1926 - IX, 1938). VIII (1933) “Vadonis” is especially noteworthy - it is a vivid example of the original literary talent of the chief conductor of the festival, composer Emīls Melngailis.

Notwithstanding the fact that the numbers of singers were increasing, all the festival booklets included exhaustive lists of their names. Such editions presently hold a double value: it is interesting to obtain precise information about the events included the song festival programs and events accompanying them, at the same time getting a chance to study the sociological composition of the joint choir. It turns out that many people who later became outstanding personalities of Latvian culture participated in these festivals from the very beginning of the tradition. For example, Festival I - poet Auseklis, next to him - future music classics Jurjāņu Andrejs, Vīģneru Ernests, Festival VII - Jānis Ivanovs, Jānis Ķepītis, Arvīds Žilinskis and many other future celebrities, at the time - students of the Latvian Conservatoire.

The programs - brochures of the third period of the history of the festival - during the Soviet occupation (X 1948 - XIX 1985) as to their print quality are rather pathetic (especially the records of the 1948, 1950 and 1955 festivals). Even the edition dedicated to the hundred years’ anniversary of the festival tradition (XVI, 1973) in comparison to the editions de luxe of “Vadoņi” (programs books with photos of the participants) of the hundred years’ anniversary festival held in exile looks rather sad.

The situation improved dramatically with the beginning of the fourth period in the history of song festivals (1990) and all the following beautiful editions of programs -books.

Regretfully in none of these historical publications the previous tradition of printing whole lists of the joint choir singers has been renewed. Since XII Festival (1960) only choirs, dance groups and brass bands are listed according to the districts and regions. It is said that presently in order to publish all the names of the coming XXII national Song Festival and XIII Dance Festival participants, an edition similar to phone directory would be needed. This argument is not valid, especially because by leaving the names of the festival participants only in the archive collections, we are putting at a disadvantage the future generations of song and dance festival tradition researchers...

D) TESTIMONIES ON EXILE LATVIAN SONG FESTIVALS AND SONG DAYS

The separate editions dedicated to every festival already during the harsh refugee years in Germany (1946 -1949) as to their documentary contents are more valuable than the publications of the same period in the Soviet Latvia. For example, the rather simply printed brochure of the Song Festival (the first event of the many exile Latvian concerts of joint choirs that was denominated as *f e s t I v a !*) held in Esslingen on May 28, 1947 documents all the events of this historical happening, including and exhaustive list of all the choirs, their conductors and - most important of all! - 1000 singers.

After Germany the wave of song festivals and song days in 1949 moved on to England, later to Australia (since 1951), later - North America (first of all to Canada - 1952, the USA in 1953, as well as West Coast of the USA - 1962), then returned back to Europe (since 1964), not to mention Garezers Song Days in the USA, Youth Song Festival in Canada, Song Days of the Free Latvians of the World, and religious festivities. Latvian diaspora abroad has held concerts of joint choirs at least during 175 large-scale events. These all are documented by publications of the festivals, the earliest editions of which have already become rare collectors' pieces. The more recent "Vadoņi" of the exile Latvian song festivals - *ASV Rietumkrasta Latviešu dziesmu dziesmu svētku grāmata* (1998), *XII Kanādas latviešu dziesmu svētku programma* (2001), *XI ASV latviešu vispārējo dziesmu svētku Vadonis* (2002) are excellent not only as to their print quality, but also their valuable contents: photo portraits and biographical data of the chief conductors, composers, writers, participants of the festival programs. They also offer various historical informative materials and photos of all the participants (choirs, dance groups, theatre groups). Regretfully, not always the previous tradition of providing the list of the names of all singers and dancers has been continued. However, many exile festival books "Vadoņi", photo albums of a kind, do continue this tradition.

E) SPECIALISED PERIODICALS

As the bibliographical indexes enumerated in part A of this survey show one person is no longer capable of reading or studying all the Latvian periodicals that during the 130 years of the history of song festival tradition have published articles dedicated to it. However, special attention should be paid to the specialised magazines dedicated to the issues of song festivals: first of all the monthly publication of the Latvian Song Festival Society *Mūzikas Apskats* (1933 -1939; editor Jēkabs Vītoliņš, editor-in-chief Jāzeps Vītols). Other pre-war Latvian music magazines are also noteworthy, especially the weekly edition *Mūzikas nedēļa* (1923 - 1928). By making use of the indices A-2, a researcher would be able to find in these authentic eyewitness testimonies on the beginning of the Latvian Song festival movement, on the first five national Song Festivals, their participants, details on the events, also unusual incidents (for example, in the autobiographical articles by Mārtiņš August, Ādams Ārgalis, Bebru Juris, Kaudzīšu Matīss, Lautenbahs Jūsmiņš, Emails Melngailis, Jānis Poruks, Straumes Jānis, Tīrzmalietie, Jāzeps Vītols, Varaidošu Zanders and other outstanding personalities of Latvian culture).

It is a sad fact that during all the long period following World War II specialised musical periodicals have been very rare in the history of Latvian journalism. Noteworthy are only the

newspaper *Dziesmu svētki* (1989/1990) connected to the preparation of the festival and the events, as well as the magazine *Dziesmusvētki* published under the auspices of National Folk Art Centre since the autumn of 1997 till the present day. The most recent periodical *Mūzikas Saule* has also shown interest in the issues of song festival.

Latvian exile periodicals such newspapers as *Laiks*, *Brīvā Latvija*, *Latvija Amerikā* have continuously reported on activities of cultural life and song festivals, after 1968 when Valentīns Bērzkalns' monograph was published (See B-2), all the most comprehensive descriptions of exile joint choirs events are to be found in the collection of articles *Latvju Mūzika* published in the USA, Kalamazoo (No. 1 -8, editor Valentīns Bērzkalns, starting with No.9 till the most recent - No. 28 in 2001, under the supervisions of the admirably self-denying Roberts Zuika). Similarly to other exile editions, these collections once were included in the lists of literature officially prohibited in Latvia. After the restoration of state independence these are now widely accessible both to foreign and local readers. I recommend the beautifully published and rich as to the photo documents and comprehensive content collections of *Latvju Mūzika* to everyone interested in the well-documented history of song festival abroad.

What do we find in the old and the more recent publications (not only in Latvian, but also in foreign press)? Both friendly liking for the festival in neighbouring Lithuanian, Estonian, Finnish and Swedish publications, as well as outspoken hatred towards Latvian song festival culture - one of the most potent weapons in the national awakening (the press of the Czarist Russia at the turn of the 19th/20th centuries), scepticism and disbelief in the newspapers of Baltic Germans (the same turn of the 19th/ 20th centuries). For the young generation of musicologists, studying Latvian culture history, it is an excellent source of cognition. Especially when reading the views of professional critics Ernests Brusubārda, Jānis Cīrulis, Emīls Dārziņš, Volfgangs Dārziņš, Jēkabs Graubiņš, Jēkabs Poruks, Jūlijs Sproģis, Jānis Sudrabkalns, Jēkabs Vītoliņš, Jānis Zālītis and others on the artistic maturity of the song festival concerts of the first half of the 20th century. Sometimes also doubts regarding the performance of joint choirs and interpretations given by the chief conductors. These opinions of the contemporaries are the more interesting, knowing that the describers of the post-war song festivals - the immense "army" of journalists with different professional qualifications - had the responsibility to admire all and any of the Soviet song and dance festivals. At that time critical evaluation of song festival concerts was deemed to be indecent. Therefore the music specialists of the older generation now feel friendly envy reading the formerly inaccessible Latvian exile periodicals and the articles by exile music specialists - Longīns Apkalns, Valentīns Bērzkalns, Alberts Jērumis, Tāivaldis Ķēnins, Knuts Lesiņš, Helmers Pavašars, Arvīds Purvs, Imats Sakss, Arnolds Štrums, sometimes critical and controversial, about the post war Latvian song days and festivals held abroad. No powers had stifled the vivid individualities and sovereign judgements of these authors. It is probably one of the conclusions we may come to after in-depth studies of the rich heritage of Latvian musical periodicals.

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ANNEX 2
Photographs

These photographs are selected to illustrate the Song and Dance Celebration tradition in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.



Tradition and Symbolism
of the Song and Dance Celebration Process
in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania





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