



## Cultural Heritage Education: Towards New Skills and Competences

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### Abstract

*Subject matter of this article is the education in the field of safeguarding and protection of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge as intellectual property. In recent years, the cultural heritage has received an increased recognition as an essential resource for economic, cultural, social and environmental development, and as an important tool to mobilize innovative and culturally appropriate responses to the various challenges of contemporary life. The globalization, digital and social transformation, climate change present serious challenges for the transmission and safeguarding of cultural heritage. Digitization and new technologies provide new opportunities for safeguarding, promoting access and use of cultural heritage, which requires the acquisition of new cross-sectoral knowledge, competencies and skills and thus the development of new educational models for training the future professionals in the sector. The article will present the teaching model used in the course "Cultural heritage and business" delivered to student studying intellectual property and business. The aim of the course is students to acquire:*

- *Theoretical knowledge about the cultural heritage and the national system for safeguarding;*
- *Theoretical knowledge and practical skills for protection of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge as intellectual property;*
- *Theoretical knowledge and practical skills about commercial use of cultural heritage as economic resource for development of cultural and creative industries, to identify heritage-based products with market potential and understand heritage-based entrepreneurship;*
- *Comparative analysis, presentation and teamwork skills.*

The aim of the course is to prepare professionals with knowledge and skills to understand, valorise and manage cultural heritage and to transform it as a resource for the sustainable development of communities, cities and regions.

**Keywords:** *cultural heritage education, traditional knowledge, sustainable development, intellectual property*

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, the cultural heritage (CH) has received an increased recognition as an essential resource for economic, cultural, social and environmental development, and as an important tool to mobilize innovative and culturally appropriate responses to the various challenges of contemporary life. The heritage is becoming a main topic of the political and public debate and together with his recognition as a catalyst for sustainable development goes his appreciation as non-renewable, non-replaceable and non-interchangeable resource that needs strategic approach towards his safeguarding and management [1]. The globalization, digital and social transformation, climate change present serious challenges for the transmission and safeguarding of cultural heritage. In the same time, digitization and new technologies provide new opportunities for safeguarding, promoting access and use of cultural heritage, which requires the acquisition of new cross-sectoral knowledge, competencies and skills and thus the development of new educational models for training the future professionals in the sector. Generally, the higher education in the field of cultural heritage is concentrated in the humanities programmes and faculties such as archaeology, ethnology, history, architecture, and art history. These programmes focus on acquiring knowledge and skills for CH preservation, but not exploring and preparing the students for the possibilities of using cultural heritage as a resource for the sustainable development of communities, cities and regions. Considering the new role of cultural heritage in the contemporary society, there is a need of professionals working in the creative industries and culture heritage sector who have new knowledge and skills about not only the safeguarding and protection but also for intellectual property, socialization, valorization and strategic management of CH for economic and social benefit for the local communities.

An innovative and interesting opportunity to fulfill this gap of knowledge and skills for managing cultural heritage as an economic and social resource is provided by the course "Cultural Heritage and business", which is taught at the Institute of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer (IIPPTT), unit



of the University of National and World Economy to final year students majoring in Intellectual Property and business. In this bachelor programme at the IIPPT students obtain in-depth knowledge of economic fundamentals, the intellectual property systems and cultural and creative industries.

## 2. Theoretical Basis

At the beginning of the course „Cultural heritage and business“, the students are acquainted with the terminological terms in the field of cultural heritage, as well as contemporary policies and practices for safeguarding and management of cultural values. The concept of cultural heritage is constantly evolving and encompasses an increasing variety of artefacts from different periods of time. The course provide theoretical knowledge about the specificities and scope of the cultural heritage values, the main criteria and characteristics of the three main categories of heritage – immovable tangible, movable tangible and intangible heritage and the application of different approaches towards identification, preservation, socialization, management and economic use. The course continue with introduction of the international policy in the field of cultural heritage and the role of the UNESCO, Council of Europe and European Union. The students are introduced with the standard- setting instruments such as conventions, resolutions and regalement, which lay down the framework of the international relations in the field of heritage and the basic requirements to the national systems for protection and management. After that, the national policy is presented with detail information about the main normative acts and regulations, institutional infrastructure and the role of competent bodies. Identification of all the stakeholders (such as museums, galleries, archives, “chitalishte” - cultural centres and organizations, NGO, bearers and private owners) involved in the process of safeguarding and management is made. Bulgaria is a country with very rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage that provides enormous potential for development of heritage-based cultural industries, but also bears great responsibility for the institutions engaged in its safeguarding which must balance between its effective protection for future generations and its economic use in benefit of communities and society. Special attention is paid to the WIPO policies and activities for protection of traditional knowledge (TK) with the intellectual property (IP) system. The constantly changing social, economic and cultural environment caused by globalization and the growing use of new information and communication technologies pose new challenges to the protection of traditional knowledge. TK is appreciated as rich source of creativity and innovation and could became a resource for the development of certain cultural and creative industries therefore, the question of its protection as a new object of intellectual property is becoming increasingly urgent [2]. Students are acquainted with the specific status of traditional knowledge in the intellectual property system, the IP protection of traditional knowledge in Bulgaria and are encouraged to explore the development of various sui generis regimes in other countries. One of the important topics included in the theoretical part of the course is related to the digitization of cultural heritage. Students gain knowledge about digitization as a process of safeguarding, access and promotion of cultural heritage especially about intangible cultural heritage, intellectual property issues related, stakeholders involved in the process and economic, social cultural aspects of the digitisation.

The theoretical part of the course is delivered by combining lectures, seminars, presentations, online sources and audio-visual materials. During the teaching of the theory, the lecturer also presents specific case studies to facilitate the understanding of the theoretical knowledge.

The evaluation of the students consist final test, which allows assessing the theoretical knowledge acquired during the semester.

## 3. Practical exercise

In addition to the theoretical knowledge, the students have the opportunity to consolidate what has been learned through practical exercise during the course. They could develop individual and group tasks on different topic from the curriculum.

For example one of the basic practical exercise for the students includes several steps, based on the theoretical knowledge they have learned during the semester:

- The student should identify cultural value/element from Bulgaria and/or abroad and to describe it. This step shows the student's understanding of terminology knowledge and understanding of the specificities of the different categories of cultural heritage.
- After that the student should explore and evaluate the safeguarding and management measures set in the legislation and policy acts, concerning the identified cultural value/element. This step is based on the acquired student's knowledge of how to understand and apply regulations and strategic documents in the field of cultural heritage and intellectual property.



- Next step of the task is to evaluate the economic potential of the cultural value/element for the development of cultural industries. This is based on skills for valorization of cultural heritage and information gathered from case studies presented during the course.
- The student should present his research in front of his colleagues followed by stimulated discussion by the lecturer. This step encourages students to analyze and systematize information from different sources and to present it in an intriguing way sometimes not so easy to understand information and to build skills for presentation and discussion.

Other practical task aims identification of business model/idea / initiative / practice / industry based on cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) and traditional knowledge from both Bulgaria and abroad and exploration and evaluation how the economic and social potential of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge can be used. The research task should include:

- Short description of the cultural value / element / traditional knowledge;
- Identification of the contemporary use and the way of adaptation/creation of derivative work;
- Identification of the ownership and management approach, including management of intellectual property;
- Determination of how and by whom the economic potential is realized;
- Evaluation, presentation and discussion.

#### 4. Conclusion

The aim of the course is to prepare professionals with knowledge and skills to understand, valorise and manage cultural heritage and to transform it to a resource for the sustainable development of communities, cities and regions. The course „Cultural heritage and business” is taught at the Institute of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer (IIPTT), unit of University of National and World Economy and includes both theoretical and practical exercise, use of case studies and interactive seminars. This the only one course delivered in Bulgaria, which offers interdisciplinary approaches, combining knowledge and skills from the area of cultural heritage and intellectual property.

The course is innovative and filling the gap of new specific knowledge and skills for:

- enhancing the role of cultural heritage as important resource for sustainable development;
- identification and management of economic potential and economic use of cultural heritage, considering the ethical principles of safeguarding;
- protection of traditional knowledge as intellectual property object and forms of management of „special rights”;
- stimulating heritage-based cultural entrepreneurship;

In 2020 the course was updated in online modality format, which allows the use of more visual materials and the sharing of more information resources;

#### References

- [1] Council conclusions of 21 May 2014 on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe 2014/C 183/08
- [2] Borisova, V., Traditional knowledge as Intellectual Property, PC Stopanstvo, 2006