

CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Fifth session
Nairobi, Kenya
November 2010

NOMINATION FILE NO. 00403 FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN 2010

A. STATE(S) PARTY(IES)
<i>For multi-national nominations, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.</i>
Belgium
B. NAME OF THE ELEMENT
B.1. Name of the element in English or French
<i>This is the official name of the element that will appear in published material about the Representative List. It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters, including spaces and punctuation. The name should be transcribed in Latin Unicode characters (Basic Latin, Latin-1 Supplement, Latin Extended-A or Latin Extended Additional).</i>
Houtem Jaarmarkt, annual winter fair and livestock market at Sint-Lievens-Houtem
B.2. Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned, if applicable
<i>This is the official name of the element in the vernacular language corresponding to the official name in English or French (point B.1.). It should be concise. Please do not exceed 200 characters in Unicode (Latin or others), including spaces and punctuation.</i>
Winterjaarmarkt van Sint-Lievens-Houtem, 48 uur feest en erfgoed ervaring, inclusief openlucht dierenmarkt in een plattelandsgemeenschap (steeds op 11/11 en 12/11).

B.3. Other name(s) of the element, if any <i>In addition to the official name(s) of the element (B.1.) please mention alternate name(s), if any, by which the element is known, in Unicode characters (Latin or others).</i>
Houtem Jaarmarkt De Vlaamse Land- en tuinbouwdagen van Sint-Lievens-Houtem
C. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ELEMENT
C.1. Identification of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned <i>According to the 2003 Convention, intangible heritage can only be identified with reference to communities, groups or individuals that recognize it as part of their cultural heritage. Thus it is important to identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the nominated element. The information provided should allow the Committee to identify the communities, groups or individuals concerned with an element, and should be mutually coherent with the information in sections 1 to 5 below.</i>
Population of the village of Sint-Lievens-Houtem and surrounding area; (mostly) Belgian professionals in agriculture (especially live stock breeders and dealers).
C.2. Geographic location and range of the element and location of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned <i>This section should identify the range of distribution of the element, indicating if possible the geographic locations in which it is centred. If related elements are practiced in neighbouring areas, please so indicate.</i>
Geographic location: 50°55'0"N 03°52'0"E Sint-Lievens-Houtem is situated in the south-east of the Belgian province East-Flanders (ca. 40 kms from of Brussels). The annual fair "Houtem Jaarmarkt" takes place in the heart of the community. Epicentre is the large village square and its surrounding streets. In the past, similar agricultural fairs were not uncommon in Belgium. One might even say they were widespread. However, in scale, size and historical credentials "Houtem Jaarmarkt" has surpassed the others throughout time. Today, this fair includes the last substantial open air market in Flanders/Belgium for trading cattle and purebred horses, which makes it special for the local and professional communities, but also for the region. Houtem Jaarmarkt is a trading fair which takes place in the village of Sint-Lievens-Houtem on the 11th and 12th of November. It can be considered as the most important event in the year cycle, that is crucial for the identity of the village and the region. It attracts hundreds of dealers in cattle and purebred horses, who proudly display their animals in open air. Sharing cold and commotion with these animals for two whole days and nights, the participants enjoy the contact and interaction with fellow tradesmen, farmers and ten thousands of enthusiastic visitors. Not only buyers but a wide variety of people attend this event every year, to witness and experience the special atmosphere of the tradition of the trade. But Houtem Jaarmarkt is also a major ritual and festive occasion for the whole local community and their guests. At the heart is the traditional trading fair but it involves all kinds of recreation. It is an interesting example of a small village opening up, trying to cultivate the heritage aspects of an event and welcoming a group of guests and visitors that is more than ten times larger than the total population.

C.3. Domain(s) represented by the element

Identify concisely the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. (This information will be used primarily for visibility, if the element is inscribed.)

Houtem Jaarmarkt resorts under the category of social practices, rituals and festive events, cfr. article 2 of the 2003 UNESCO convention. Though an economical ground underlies the ritual (farmers trading animals), Houtem Jaarmarkt is perceived and experienced as a celebration for all. Thus it is in essence an annual ritual and social event, which keeps alive the rituals and tradition of the agricultural trade.

D. BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENT

The brief description of the element will be particularly helpful in allowing the Committee to know at a glance what element is being proposed for inscription, and, in the event of inscription, will be used for purposes of visibility. It should be a summary of the description provided in point 1 below but is not an introduction to that longer description.

Houtem Jaarmarkt is an annual trading fair which takes place in the village of Sint-Lievens-Houtem on the 11th and 12th of November. It can be considered as the most important event in the year cycle, that is crucial for the identity of the village and the region.

It attracts hundreds of dealers in cattle and purebred horses, who proudly display their animals in open air. Sharing cold and commotion with these animals for two whole days, the participants enjoy the contact and interaction with fellow tradesmen, farmers and ten thousands of enthusiastic visitors. For not only buyers but a wide variety of people attend this event every year, to witness the special atmosphere of the tradition of the trade.

But Houtem Jaarmarkt does not merely comprise a fair for tradespeople. Quite the contrary, it is a ritual and festive occasion which brings life to the whole of the community. At the heart is the traditional trading fair - but it brings all kinds of recreation. It is an interesting example of a small village opening up and welcoming a group of visitors that is 10 times larger than its local population.

1. IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF THE ELEMENT (CF. CRITERION R.1)

This is the key section of the nomination to satisfy criterion R.1: “The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention”. A clear and complete explanation is essential to demonstrate that the nominated element meets the Convention’s definition of intangible heritage. This section should address all the significant features of the element as it exists at present, and should include:

- a. an explanation of its social and cultural functions and meanings today, within and for its community,*
- b. the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners of the element,*
- c. any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element,*
- d. the current modes of transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element.*

The Committee should receive sufficient information to determine:

- a. that the element is among the “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith —”;*
- b. “that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize [it] as part of their cultural heritage”;*
- c. that it is being “transmitted from generation to generation, [and] is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history”;*
- d. that it provides communities and groups involved with “a sense of identity and continuity”; and*
- e. that it is not incompatible with “existing international human rights instruments as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development”.*

Overly technical descriptions should be avoided and submitting States should keep in mind that this section must explain the element to readers who have no prior knowledge or direct experience of it. Nomination files need not address in detail the history of the element, or its origin or antiquity.

Houtem Jaarmarkt is an annual event celebrated on the 11th & 12th of November. The event involves a fair in which agriculture plays a key part: livestock are being shown, judged and sold in traditional fashion. As such it is both a testimony and living monument of a once widespread custom in the country, now cultivated as a form of intangible cultural heritage. It is an interesting example of a small village opening up and welcoming a group of visitors that is 6 to 10 times larger than its local population.

The origin of the ritual lies with the devotion to Saint Livinus, an early preacher of Christianity in the region. The village is named after the saint. The emergence of the fair is linked to the medieval pilgrimage from the city of Ghent to Sint-Lievens-Houtem, connected to the legend of Livinus. In its margin a flourishing business developed: the fair was born. Although references to a thousand years old fair abound, the first reliable sources referring to a fair in the village date from the 14th Century (1339). The summer and winter fairs in Sint-Lievens-Houtem became quite popular in the region in the 15th and early 16th century. In the Early Modern Period and the 19th and the 20th century, the winter fair of Sint-Lievens-Houtem gradually evolved but survived throughout the centuries. As a huge regional fair, organized in a small rural village, it should be clear it had and has huge impact on the local community: the recurrent November ritual provides a perception of centuries old continuity. Private houses turn into public venues where one can enjoy music, drinks and food, turning the whole village into an open, welcoming space. Most local residents would not dream of missing out on Houtem Jaarmarkt, they look forward to it and celebrate it as a crucial part of the local identity and history. But also many visitors return year after year, sometimes even generation after generation.

The same applies to the agricultural professionals and trades people. They do not only attend the fair for business but also, and increasingly so, because it is celebrated as a tradition or intangible cultural heritage. Their parents attended it, so did their grandparents. For professionals in the livestock trade, this fair marks a crucial time and place in the year and in their collective professional identity.

Organizing this major event is an occasion for all kinds of groups in the community to interact and to activate social networks. Close contact with agriculture or livestock, in particular on such a scale, is an experience which for many people in Flanders/Belgium has become exceptional. The function of the fair has changed for many people coming from elsewhere to this special space.

The fair comprises of 38 000 m² of entertainment, composed of 3 850m² of market stalls, a length of 450m of agricultural machinery and tools, 500m of horses and 940m of cows. It attracts hundreds of dealers in cattle and purebred horses, who proudly display their animals in open air. Yearly, more than 1200 cows and 600 horses are up for sale. Sharing cold and commotion with these animals, the participants enjoy the contact and interaction with fellow tradesmen, farmers and ten thousands of enthusiast visitors. Not only buyers, but all kind of people yearly attend this event, to witness the special atmosphere of the tradition of the trade.

For the local community, the joy starts weeks before, when the merchant organisation announces its activities around the fair and a special theme, which often relates to another region of a European country. The whole community waits for the tents to go up, the fairground attractions get installed and for the opening ceremony with 500 or more invited guests to take place.

The 11th. of November traditionally starts with the judging of 7 types of purebreds. The spectators support the different teams and move on to the tent (1500m²) where they familiarise with the habits and the customs of the invited region. Others specifically watch the unloading of the animals (in accordance to the national and European laws and regulations, managed by 15 vets and a dozen of volunteers). This process continues until 3 AM. In the meantime, thousands of visitors pass by to see the unique setting and experience.

Every year, November 11th and 12th, Sint-Lievens-Houtem turns, for 48 hours, into a “village that never sleeps” with tradesmen guarding their precious livestock and other people celebrating the event. People from all over the country travel to Sint-Lievens-Houtem to visit the 500 stallholders and other tradesmen to experience, to see, touch and buy big agricultural machinery or animals or being a witness to this transaction and negotiation. The trade of animals still uses some old techniques, like handclapping while trading the price.

Remarkable are the market stalls, with stallholders amusing the crowd, stimulating and prompting them to buy funny, decorative or useful items.

Simultaneously, visitors discover the educational projects (related to the stock and the cultural aspects of the fair), the cultural activities as organised by various associations (youth organisations, charities, national organisations ...). The last few years, special exhibitions, workshops or publications offer the framework or story of what is happening as a form of intangible cultural heritage.

In the 21st century, Houtem Jaarmarkt is a large-scale annual social event to embrace the rituals the products, personal networks and customs of the agricultural world. In interviews of participants, over and over again the notion of “sfeer” (“good atmosphere”) is mentioned as one of the reasons to go there, a genuine “communitas feeling” (Victor Turner) for some, an experience that addresses all senses for many visitors, and the peculiar sensation of large groups of people and livestock sharing a cultural experience during 48 hours on the same spot in a rural village. The perception and, more and more, celebration of what is going on as intangible cultural heritage provides an extra dimension to the value(s) the fair has for the community.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO ENSURING VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS AND TO ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE (CF. CRITERION R.2)

The nomination should demonstrate (Criterion R.2) that "Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity".

Please explain how the element's inscription on the Representative List will contribute to ensuring visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and will raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of its importance. This section need not address how inscription will bring greater visibility to the element, but how its inscription will contribute to the visibility of intangible cultural heritage more broadly.

Explain how inscription will promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity, and will promote mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals.

Since 15 years the organizers and the local community explicitly opt for and invest in an international dialogue. Since 2003/2004, directly inspired by the 2003 UNESCO convention, the notion of intangible cultural heritage has been identified in Sint-Lievens-Houtem as a key to this endeavour. Each year a foreign region is invited to present its attractions, regional products and craftsmanship at the fair. In this manner livestock breeders, farmers, artisans and other people of different nations meet and interact. This exchange is made possible with the help of the Economic Council of the Province of East Flanders. But the ambitions now go far beyond purely economic motives. In 2003 a project started called 'Identity, Heritage and the Countryside'. This resulted in 2004 in an exhibition (with 10.000 visitors on 11 and 12 November 2004) in the village, in 2005 in an artistic-ethnographic documentation effort by one of the most famous press photographers in Belgium, Michiel Hendryckx, the publication in 2006 of the book *Sfeer!* (2006, see documentation, based on oral history, historical research and with a selection of photographs made by Hendryckx) and in-depth academic research and publication (2007, see documentation). In this process, a dialogue was started with national institutions like VCV, now FARO. Flemish Interface for Cultural heritage. A website has been activated, presenting the history of the fair in Dutch, French and English (<http://www.houtemjaarmarkt.be>). In 2008 a film crew made a film for documentary purposes and in preparation of the UNESCO file (film included in documentation). In this phase and with these tools, the local community, but also provincial and Flemish policy makers, were sensitized and convinced to consider and appreciate the winter fair from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. This resulted in a successful application for inclusion on the Flemish inventory of intangible cultural heritage in 2008. All of these undertakings contributed to a spreading awareness that it is interesting to explore the possibilities of celebrating and documenting Houtem Jaarmarkt as a form of intangible cultural heritage. It also stimulated interest in similar forms of culture elsewhere. The regional and national press has published positive reports about these initiatives, partly changing the perception of the event in Flanders. The launch of the national Week of Taste in 2008 from the central space of the Houtem Winter fair, with the presence of the Flemish minister of culture, was covered by national television stations, radio and newspapers. The application for inclusion on the representative list of UNESCO is the following logical step, both from an international and local perspective, to make people aware of the cultural dimensions of such an annual fair, to celebrate the legacy of previous generations and to reflect on what it means to transmit and constantly recreate intangible cultural heritage in response to the changing environment and nature.

In the coming years the municipal council of Sint-Lievens-Houtem, together with the retail organisation and other interest groups, will further accommodate the organisation of Houtem Jaarmarkt. The council appointed an additional member of staff, in order to support the coordination and communication about the winter fair, with specific attention for issues of safeguarding intangible heritage. All measures will be executed in harmony with the primary goals of raising quality and ensuring sustainability. Doing historical research about the evolution of the winter fair is high on the agenda, together with the implementation of a safeguarding plan. Recently, the local municipal council joined forces with 3 nearby municipal communities to develop a joint policy for cultural heritage of the region and to apply for funding by the Flemish

government. If the application is approved, it will make it easier to reinforce the efforts as part of the emerging cultural heritage policy of the Flemish community.

As to the international collaboration, more attention will be given to expanding cultural additions to the programme. This will enhance the broader attraction of Houtem Jaarmarkt and will help to open up the experience of its heritage to a larger public.

Including a 21st century festive annual open air livestock market and fair with medieval roots on a list of intangible cultural heritage, both in Flanders or in UNESCO context, can work as an eye-opener for other communities and organisations in Europe and worldwide. In the local plans emphasis is not only put on the history but also on the present-day and changing functions and how to negotiate about the heritage and social values involved. Including "Houtem Jaarmarkt" on the representative list of ICH will add to the understanding and inclusion of cultural dimensions of fairs and customs in the world of agriculture but also, forms of festive culture involved to the semantic field of intangible cultural heritage, focussing on a manifestation with an age-old history. This will yield debates on how to deal with change and continuity, helping to understand and digest both.

A special point of interest is that this large-scale, yet very old event, takes places in a rural context. While cities used to be the obvious point of attraction in medieval times, small villages hosting such gatherings are rarer. Despite of recent tendencies of urbanisation in this region, Sint-Lievens-Houtem remains relatively rural, therefore the current spatial context of Houtem Jaarmarkt still reflects the uncommonness of its origin.

Interesting in this case is also the issue of how to manage cultural spaces and the question of sustainability. Over a long period a format has been developed in the cultural space of this rural village to allow for the participation of vast numbers of people in this festive occasion in a peaceful manner. They participate in the collective ritual while sub rituals (of selling and buying animals and exchanging information) take place. Including this item on the list of ICH will offer unique possibilities to make comparisons with or even links to similar manifestations elsewhere in the world. It also provides an interesting case of how the story of a historical legend (about Livinus - car. supra) has changed (and kept) functions over time.

3. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES (CF. CRITERION R.3)

Items 3.a. to 3.c. request the elaboration of a coherent set of safeguarding measures as called for in Criterion R.3: "Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element". Such measures should reflect the broadest possible participation of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned, both in their formulation and in their implementation.

3.a. Current and recent efforts to safeguard the element

Please describe the current and recent efforts of the concerned communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals to ensure the viability of the element. Describe efforts of the concerned State(s) Party(ies) to safeguard the element, taking note of external or internal constraints, such as limited resources.

Each year the municipal council guarantees the organisation of Houtem Jaarmarkt and thus contributes to the safeguarding. Many efforts have been made as part of an expediently outlined policy to reinforce the experience and quality of the annual fair. The past decades all national and European regulations on animal safety were implemented without diminishing the heritage aspects of the event. Providing shelters and temporary roof structures in order to be in line with regulations, without having to abandon the location took a major investment. The local government takes great care to allow for evolution of the event, by facilitating the participation and interaction of all groups and networks. Even local schools are closed so children can attend the fair every year. The council, the organizers and committees, try to ensure that the event can still take place in times of ever changing national and international regulations on public life (ensuring public safety, animal welfare and practical comfort). To keep the community's participation vibrant and due to growing commercialization of the festive part of the event, the

local government decided mid 1980s to inquire about the public's opinion and interests concerning the fair by means of a widespread survey via a questionnaire. As a result the agricultural element, especially the showing and trading of the animals, received a more central place than it had during the previous decades and special efforts were made to put the artisans and farmers in the centre of the event. The public in general understood the threats and dangers for these practices, considered by some commentators as outdated and old-fashioned, being shifted to the background in modern times, and explicitly demanded to devote more attention, e.g. by an adequate policy about the allocation and use of space during the fair.

Since 15 years Sint-Lievens-Houtem and its fair organizers invest in international dialogue. Each year a European region was and is invited to present its attractions, especially regional produce and craftsmanship. In this manner stock breeders, farmers, artisans and other traditional trades people meet across the border. This exchange is made possible with the help of the Economic Council of the Province of East Flanders.

The news that UNESCO took initiatives to develop a policy about forms of intangible cultural heritage and adopted the Convention for the safeguarding of intangible cultural had a significant impact in the community. A growing network of people decided to examine the potential for safeguarding aspects of the November fair. From 2003 onwards the cultural project 'Identity, Heritage and the Countryside of the Winterfair of Sint-Lievens-Houtem' has been developed and implemented, resulting in exhibitions, a special book around the question if the fair and its special atmosphere was intangible heritage as UNESCO defined it (the answer was positive), press conferences, discussions, and policy plans, and a website has been activated, with information in Dutch, French and English (<http://www.houtemjaarmarkt.be>). In 2008 a film was made for documentation purposes and to tell the story of this special fair..

3.b. Safeguarding measures proposed

For the Representative List, the safeguarding measures are those that may help to solidify the element's current viability and to ensure that its viability is not jeopardized in the future, especially as an unintended result of inscription and the resulting visibility and public attention.

Identify and describe the various safeguarding measures that are elaborated that may, if implemented, protect and promote the element, and provide brief information concerning, for example, their priority, scope, approaches, timetables, responsible persons or bodies, and costs.

1. The municipal council of Sint-Lievens-Houtem, together with the retail organisation and other groups, guarantee the organisation of Houtem Jaarmarkt. They have joint forces and efforts to continue and expand the policy of cultivating the fair as an important form of intangible cultural heritage. The work of a full time coordinator is financed since 2009 by the local government, with the specific task of facilitating interaction and communication between all groups, organisations, institutions and persons in and outside the village, coordinating the preparation of the event and, in doing this, keeping the challenge of safeguarding the event as a manifestation of intangible cultural heritage on the agenda. Negotiations will be continued with the provincial government to support the local heritage initiatives around the annual fair. The formula of a so-called "heritage covenant" (a policy instrument of co-regulation and co-financing of heritage plans of local and central government, regulated by the Flemish cultural heritage decree, 23/5/2008) makes it possible to apply for subsidies in order to employ cultural heritage specialists and to set up heritage projects. In 2009 an alliance with 3 neighbouring municipalities was established in order to develop a policy for cultural heritage of the region. The goal is to obtain a cultural heritage covenant for five years from 2010 (or 2011) onwards. When it is approved and the subsidy granted (at least 200.000 Euros every year), this will allow for further reinforcing the structures and to finance specific heritage projects. This will also facilitate for working together with other heritage cells and emerging national structures and existing organisations, in order to explore methodes of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This will result in publications, workshops, participation in communities of practice. The inscription on the UNESCO representative list will put the theme of safeguarding intangible heritage, in particular for the Houtem annual fair, very high on the agenda and projects of the covenant. Among the priorities are then working on translations of recent studies about the history and contemporary practices of the fair and exploring possibilities to exchange experiences with international actors, faced with similar

challenges.

2. A formal “safeguarding committee” will be appointed and will start to be active in 2010. The committee will meet at least four times every year. It consists of at least four selected experts and professionals.

The committee will be charged with the tasks to:

- monitor the effects of the inscription of the representative list by UNESCO and by the national/Flemish government and propose appropriate actions if necessary. Informing the local population and participants about these processes and ensuring an open dialogue about these issues has highest priority,
- develop a programme and/or forum with other parties concerned with ICH, to exchange experiences and examples,
- outline the best practices in safeguarding this type of element,
- ensuring sustainability by raising the quality of the event,

Seeking advice and considering the advantages and disadvantages of developing forms of sustainable heritage tourism and exchanging information with networks around other items on the national and UNESCO list,

- develop operational directives for safeguarding the core elements of the event.

3. The relation between sensibility for issues of animal welfare and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage practices involving living animals has to be explored, both on the local level as on a international scale. Regular meetings with the action groups for animal welfare (GAIA & BLID) and the vets are organised before the event in Sint-Lievens-Houtem. These groups meet with the organising parties before the event to discuss and analyse the (if applicable) new European and federal legislation and regulations on animal welfare and update the local policy on the loading, unloading and welfare of the animals at the market. After the event, an evaluation meeting is scheduled. Together with other organisations, the heritage networks in the region and organizers hope to participate before 2015 in the organisation of a colloquium or platform discussing the relation between safeguarding and animal rights, in order to identify best practices. The goal is, to have the experience and solutions developed in Sint-Lievens-Houtem, recognized as a good practice, both from the perspective of animal welfare as from a safeguarding ICH perspective.

4. For “Houtem Jaarmarkt” an emergency and intervention plan is made and presented for approval by the province to ensure and guarantee the safety of residents and visitors. The plan is developed in cooperation with different services (Red Cross, the hospitals’ emergency Dept., the fire Dept, the vets, the different security forces...). During the event an operational head office is installed to coordinate the different operations. The plan embraces and outlines the different situations and scenarios to follow in case of an emergency. From 2010 onwards, the effects of the inscription on the UNESCO lists will be included in the process (multilingual solutions, increased numbers of visitors...) and a chapter in the emergency plan added, if needed, as a complement to plans to develop sustainable heritage tourism.

5. Traffic & parking. The municipality will continue to guarantee access to the event and to monitor the potential effects of increased numbers of visitors. The following measures are taken:

- a. To the point, clear and effective direction boards at main in & out roads,
- b. Different roads to be followed by visitors and animal dealers and controlled parking vehicles,
- c. Reserved parking spaces for disabled people close to the centre of the event,
- d. All residents having derelict land open this up as a temporary parking,
- e. All local companies open up their parking for visitors,
- g. Additional parking spaces under construction to serve the needs of the event and which will guarantee a total of 1000 additional parking spaces,
- f. Shuttle service from agreed places (neighbouring municipalities),
- g. Negotiations are ongoing in 2009-2010 for shuttle service from Flanders Expo to Sint-

Lievens-Houtem (additional 5000 spaces, if needed),

j. Agreement in place with the national bus company to guarantee specific lines and timetables from and to the municipality from major national train stations.

3.c. Commitment of communities, groups or individuals concerned

The feasibility of safeguarding depends in large part on the aspirations and commitment of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned. This section should provide evidence that the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned have the will and commitment to safeguard the element if conditions are favourable. The best evidence will often be an explanation of their involvement in past and ongoing safeguarding measures and of their participation in the formulation and implementation of future safeguarding measures, rather than simple pledges or affirmations of their support or commitment.

As described under 1., farmers, the wide range of tradespeople and the local population in the broadest sense, are the main participants of the event. Each year they commit themselves to participation, thus passing on the tradition of their forefathers before them. Collaboration between these groups and the council as official organising body is instigated by the so-called "Market Board": a formal body which assembles representatives of stall holders, local businesses, and agricultural professionals. The authorities' commitment to secure the organisation has amounted to an individual department of municipal administration. Also, an individual member of the local council is appointed to concentrate fully on the element and ensure all needed practical support is given to the communities involved

However, whatever the input of the council may be, in no way will this interfere with the individual initiative of the local population. Quite the contrary, it is the explicit intention to give every individual person the possibility to participate in the festivities in their own way. The organisation has grown in its own natural way throughout the centuries. These days the council aids in practical safety measures where needed. But the local community is for sure the most considerable group involved in the realisation of Houtem Jaarmarkt.

3.d. Commitment of State(s) Party(ies)

The feasibility of safeguarding also depends on the support and cooperation of the concerned State(s) Party(ies). This section should provide evidence that the State Party concerned has the commitment to support the safeguarding effort by creating favourable conditions for its implementation and should describe how the State Party has previously and will in the future demonstrate such commitment. Declarations or pledges of support are less informative than explanations and demonstrations.

As to the commitment of the State, the Flemish Community is currently in full development of a policy in the field of ICH. As a result, during the past decade the amount of organisations specialised in cultural heritage and the number of projects realised have already increased considerably. The Flemish interface centre for cultural heritage FARO subsidized by the Flemish government aims to strengthen and support the cultural heritage field in Flanders, within the framework of the Flemish Cultural Heritage Decree. FARO helps with the safeguarding of cultural elements such as Houtem Jaarmarkt by offering professional advice and guidance.

4. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT IN THE NOMINATION PROCESS (CF. CRITERION R.4)

This section asks the submitting State Party to establish that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.4: 'The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.

4.a. Participation of communities, groups and individuals in the nomination process

Describe how and in what ways the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated actively in the nomination process at all stages, as required by Criterion R.4. States Parties are further encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of other concerned parties, including where appropriate local and regional governments, neighbouring communities, NGOs, research institutes, centres of expertise and other interested parties. The participation of communities in the practice and transmission of the element should be addressed in point 1 above, and their participation in safeguarding should be addressed in point 3; here the submitting State should describe the widest possible participation of communities in the nomination process.

The desire for recognition came directly from the heart of the participating groups, communities and individuals and resulted in a valuable interaction between the municipal council of Sint-Lievens-Houtem and other actors by means of public consultation (meetings) on the one hand and informing the broader public on the other hand through various media: tv-reports on the nomination and inscriptions on the Flemish list of intangible cultural heritage, special announcements in the local information magazine, announcement via internet and via the website of the community, etc. As a token of support of the communities involved, it was the (democratically elected) council who took care of official matters and administrative aspects by preparing the application. In the previous parts the efforts to support, coordinate and safeguard the fair have been highlighted. The financial cost of this regulation was quite high to the municipality (hence the local taxpayers) but to ensure the safeguarding of their heritage, different communities made it clear they wanted concrete actions.

The council received letters from the local cultural movements, the youth organisations, the association of pensioners, the association of self-employed people, the local restaurants, bars and pubs, the sellers of the stock, the visitors of the fair, to ensure the safeguarding of the heritage and not to let this unique element disappearing because of strict regulations and additional costs and investments. The same applies to the investments made to guarantee the safety of the people visiting the fair. Based on, in fact the whole community's concern, the local government organised an open forum and the participants agreed that it was important to invest in order to be in line with the required legislation and to guarantee the safeguarding of the element for the future. Via the forum, and based on the consultation rounds with the parties involved, the municipality agreed to take on, and to continue, its (attempts to support) efforts for

of guaranteeing the safeguarding of the element with its traditional values, which are the safeguarding of trading animals in open air, the traditional handclapping to agree on the price, the direct selling from breeder to consumer & to try and keep the whole good atmosphere around the element. The rules and regulations required a big financial effort from the municipality, which also resulted into the request of an entrance fee to the fair. Visitors now pay an entrance fee of 2,5 EUR, as a contribution to ensure continuity and to help safeguarding of the heritage. It is clear that the democratic elected council would not take decisions as such (high investments + entrance fee) if the whole community is not behind the element.

Since 2002-2003 local government officials, the local mayor and aldermen and local volunteers have communicated with relevant research institutes, NGOs and the provincial and Flemish government about their conviction that the definition of intangible cultural heritage and of safeguarding proposed by UNESCO in the 2003 convention described what the winter fair in their village is (ICH) and which policy they wanted to be developed ("safeguarding"). Intensive contacts and frequent meetings were set up with the Vlaams Centrum voor Volkscultuur (from 2008 FARO. Flemish interface for cultural heritage) from 2002-2003 onwards to discuss and explore the possibilities. The plans and wishes were communicated both in the village orally, in meetings and explicitly in the book *Sfeer!* published in 2004. It has been on the agenda of many meetings of groups and organisations since 2003. The most significant discussions, interactions, interviews and consultations took and take place every year since 2003 in Sint-Lievens-Houtem on... 11 and 12 November. The understanding of difficult notions like "safeguarding", "inventories" or "intangible cultural heritage" has grown gradually. These efforts and bold plans of a small rural community to not only recognize their winter fair as 'intangible cultural heritage' but also to have it officially recognized and respected as such by the Flemish government and by the world (UNESCO) resulted already in the inscription on the Flemish inventory of ICH at the first possible occasion (hence in 2008, as soon as the operational guidelines of the 2003 convention were finalised). The aforementioned plans to go for a heritage covenant in 2010 with neighbouring villages testify to the steady but continued effort to not just be inscribed on a list, but to develop safeguarding intangible heritage as part of a broader heritage policy. The nomination for and, we hope, inscription on the representative list of intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO in 2010 is in line with the wishes and initiatives of all partners involved and in the spirit of the 2003 UNESCO convention and the operational guidelines adopted. It is a logical next step in the collective wish in this local community and other parties concerned to try and develop a 21st century practice of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

4.b. Free, prior and informed consent to the nomination

The free, prior and informed consent to the nomination of the element from the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent in preference to standard or uniform declarations..

Please attach supporting evidence demonstrating such consent and indicate below what evidence you are providing and what form it takes.

Awareness of the aspect of intangible heritage is vividly present in the involved communities. Today, there still is a proudness in the knowledge of handing down tradition from generation to generation: attending Houtem Jaarmarkt to trade, and to celebrate. This awareness and this given is not only understood but it is cherished. Since 2003 the plans for a nomination for the representative list of article 16 of the 2003 convention have been communicated every year and they were the object of free, prior and informed debate during the event and in the cultural space where it all takes place. The official recognition in 2008 by the Flemish Community of the winter fair as being an important form of intangible cultural heritage was widely appreciated. The intention of taking this further and submitting a request to UNESCO was welcomed with even greater enthusiasm. Since so much time and effort have been invested by the local people in valorizing this rural heritage for years, recognition of this commitment proves to be rewarding in the sense that history lives on through their growing support.

4.c. Respect for customary practices governing access

Access to certain specific aspects of intangible cultural heritage is sometimes restricted by customary practices governing, for example, its transmission or performance or maintaining the secrecy of certain knowledge. Please indicate if such practices exist and, if they do, demonstrate that inscription of the element and implementation of the safeguarding measures would fully respect such customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage (cf. Article 13 of the Convention). Describe any specific measures that might need to be taken to ensure such respect.

The event of Houtem Jaarmarkt has always been and today remains a public event, open to all. There are no customary practices in need of the discretion of restricted access.

5. INCLUSION OF THE ELEMENT IN AN INVENTORY (CF. CRITERION R.5)

This section is where the State Party establishes that the nomination satisfies Criterion R.5: "The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) as defined in Articles 11 and 12".

Identify the inventory in which the element has been included and the office, agency, organization or body responsible for maintaining that inventory. Demonstrate that the inventory has been drawn up in conformity with Articles 11 and 12, in particular Article 11(b) that stipulates that intangible cultural heritage shall be identified and defined "with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations" and Article 12 requiring that inventories be regularly updated.

The nominated element's inclusion in an inventory should not in any way imply or require that the inventory(ies) should have been completed prior to nomination. Rather, a submitting State Party may be in the process of completing or updating one or more inventories, but has already duly included the nominated element on an inventory-in-progress.

"Houtem Jaarmarkt" is duly included since 2008 in the official inventory of intangible cultural heritage of Flanders/Belgium (published on <http://www.kunstenerfgoed.be> > erfgoed > immaterieel cultureel erfgoed > inventaris Vlaanderen > register). The Arts and Heritage agency of the Flemish Ministry for Culture is responsible for maintaining the inventory (Arenbergstraat 9, 1000 Brussels, Belgium). The official inventory is kept by the Arts and Heritage agency and can be consulted at the offices in Brussels.

In conformity with articles 11 and 12 of the Convention, the following procedure has been developed. Communities can submit proposals regarding the item of intangible cultural heritage they want to be included in the inventory. There is an official call via the media and via several websites. These submissions (in Dutch) have to point out the extent of the community and safeguarding actions for which the requesting community has to co-operate with an official heritage institution that is recognised/funded within the scope of Flemish Decree on Cultural Heritage (2008). These submissions are advised by a departemental commission, composed by Flemish and Dutch experts in order to examine the applications and to give advice to the Flemish minister responsible for culture. After the ministerial decision the (new) items that are included on the inventory are communicated by official press communication and by means of websites.

The communities that submitted the elements that are included in the inventory are to report on a yearly basis on the safeguarding activities that have been undertaken. These reports are examined by the aforementioned departemental commission.

Hence the nomination satisfies criterion R.5.

DOCUMENTATION
a. Required and supplementary documentation
Required documentation provided.
b. Cession of rights including registry of items
Required cession of rights provided.
c. List of additional resources
Rzoska (B.) and others, Sfeer! De winterjaarmarkt van Sint-Lievens-Houtem, Sint-Lievens-Houtem: Gemeentebestuur Sint-Lievens-Houtem, 2004 (with photo-essay by Michiel Hendryckx). Stalpaert, Christel e.a. (eds.), Met het hoofd onder de arm: een cultuurhistorische blik op de Livinusverering in Sint-Lievens-Esse en Sint-Lievens-Houtem, Gent: Academia Press, 2007. Handelingen der Maatschappij voor de Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent, LXI, 2007. Audiovisuals: S.n., Atmosphere of the Event, Sint-Lievens-Houtem, 2009.

CONTACT INFORMATION
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b. Competent body involved
Municipal council of Sint-Lievens-Houtem Mr. Lieven Latoir, Mayor of Sint-Lievens-Houtem Mrs. Gwendoline Quipor, Secretary of the council of Sint-Lievens-Houtem Address: Marktplaen 3, 9520 Sint-Lievens-Houtem, Belgium Telephone number: 00 32 53 60 72 25 Fax number: 00 32 53 60 84 14 e-mail Lieven Latoir: burgemeester@sint-lievens-houtem e-mail Gwendoline Quipor: secretaris@sint-lievens-houtem.be

c. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)
Marktcommissie Att.: Mr. Peter De Temmerman Hemelveeldreef 7 9420 Erondegem Belgium
SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY
Name: Marina Laureys Title: Head of the Division, Cultural Heritage, Arts and Heritage, Ministry of Culture of the Flemish Community Date: 25 August 2009 Signature: <signed>