

TOCATÌ FESTIVAL

International Forum of ludic culture



....Palazzo Giuliari.....
FRI 18..SEPTEMBER
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Under the patronage of



INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF LUDIC CULTURE 2026

Friday, September 18, 2026

Scaligeri Hall – Palazzo Giuliani, Via dell'Artigliere, 10.
Rector's Office of the University of Verona

In person and online

The *International Forum of Ludic Culture*, together with the Symposium *Tocati: A Shared Heritage*, celebrates its **tenth anniversary this year** with a renewed format, first tested in 2025 thanks to the participation of a Māori delegation from New Zealand.

The presence of the Māori community in Verona in 2025 brought a powerful new perspective, rooted in the principles of hospitality and in the recognition of Indigenous peoples as custodians of living heritage. Their participation encouraged us to rethink both the Forum and the Symposium. They joined us not only in sharing their ludic culture and living heritage in the streets and squares of Verona, but also in shaping our collective reflection during the International Symposium. Ten years after the launch of the UNESCO nomination process, the Forum and Symposium are therefore reassessing their role, purpose and identity.

For this reason, we have chosen to introduce a new working model that more closely reflects the spirit of the Tocati Festival and the experience gained through UNESCO's Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. Each year, the Festival's guest community will be invited to contribute its own perspective to Tocati's participatory process and, more broadly, to the international dialogue on the future of traditional games and sports as expressions of living heritage. This year, we are honoured to welcome **Ireland through the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA)**, an organisation deeply rooted in cultural and sporting values, whose experience offers valuable inspiration.

As in 2018, for the European Year of Cultural Heritage, in the context of Ireland's current Presidency of the Council of the European Union, we are also honoured to welcome the Deputy Director-General of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth,

Sport and Culture. This contribution will guide our reflection on the **European Union's Culture Compass** and its implications for heritage policies.

The 2026 Forum will also welcome a **national Guest of Honour**. To inaugurate a new phase of collaboration, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of **Urbino** and its surrounding territory—rich in cultural traditions and home to vibrant Intangible Cultural Heritage communities—will join us. The World Heritage Management Plan of Urbino will enter into dialogue with that of Verona, offering an opportunity to reflect on integrated approaches to heritage management. This exchange will address highly relevant issues, including the relationship between living heritage and World Heritage sites, urban planning, and the safeguarding of the cultural spaces that sustain community life.

Through these developments, we aim to strengthen the Forum's role, enhance its international visibility, and foster greater coherence across all dimensions of the Tocati project. In doing so, we also seek to expand opportunities for collaboration between international and Italian networks dedicated to the safeguarding of living heritage, addressing common challenges.

How to Access Live Translation and Subtitles / Real-Time Interpretation Service

For the sessions of the International Forum of Ludic Culture, the AGA (Associazione Giochi Antichi) /Tocati organisers have set up an artificial intelligence-based system called **Wordly** to provide **real-time translations** of audio and subtitles.

Participants can quickly access the translation in just a few steps (see below) via a QR code or a URL using their computer, mobile device or tablet.

From their own devices, participants will be able to both view and listen to the real-time translation, from Italian to English and vice versa. There is *no need* to create an account or download anything to access the translation and subtitles.

We therefore recommend bringing your own wireless or wired headphones to connect to your device so that you can listen to the real-time translation in your chosen language.

Please note: you will need to enable Bluetooth on your device to listen to the audio translation directly through your headphones (wireless or wired). Participants are strongly encouraged to bring their own fully charged device.

TOCATI A SHARED HERITAGE

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2026

Europe of Traditional Games and Sports. Safeguarding experiences in dialogue

Scaligeri Hall, Palazzo Giuliari, Via dell'Artigliere 10. Rector's Office of the University of Verona

Friday, September 18, 2026, 9:00 – 13:00

Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89688708944?pwd=uEVpjwb7qQ2VRiCgY74ARaXjhp7GJV.1>

ID meeting: 896 8870 8944

Access code: 829686

9:00 AM. Opening remarks

Moderation of the Symposium by Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari (AGA).

Matteo Ballottari, Pro-Rector for Knowledge, Transfer and Outreach, University of Verona

Diego Caloi, President of the Associazione Giochi Antichi (AGA)

Marta Ugolini, Councillor for Culture, Tourism and Relations with UNESCO, Municipality of Verona

Mara Tognon, Senior Officer, Culture Département, Veneto Region

Davide Pacca, Head of Cultural Heritage Structure. General Directorate of Culture, Lombardy Region

Leandro Ventura, Director of the Central Institute for Intangible Heritage (ICPI), Italian Ministry of Culture

Contributions by:

9:30

Normunds Popens. Deputy Director General European Commission. Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Reflecting on the EU Culture Compass and the safeguarding of Traditional Sports and Games during the Irish Presidency of the European Union*.

9:45 – 10:40 – the Irish delegation

Traditional Games as Living Heritage: Community, Identity and Cultural Transmission

Ireland's contribution to the Forum of Ludic Culture will present complementary perspectives on how traditional games continue to shape communities, identity and cultural life. The programme will explore both the internationally recognised success of the Gaelic Athletic Association and the growing movement to revive Ireland's lesser-known traditional games through grassroots action.

9:45

Jarlath Burns, President of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) Ireland. *The GAA model and its impact on cultural life in Ireland*

10:05

Seán Ó Coistealbha, Poet and community activist. *When sport is a language that transmits culture*

10:15

David Keohan and Tom Fabian, University College Dublin (UCD) *Reviving Play from the Ground Up: Community-Led Renewal of Ireland's Traditional Games*

10:30-10:40

Discussion

10:40-10:50

Coffee break

10:50 – 13:00. Round table and debate

10:50

Kazimierz Waluch, European Association of Traditional Games and Sports (AEJeST). *The AEJeST network for the safeguarding of Traditional Games and Sports. Comparative reflections*

11:10

Thomas Mouzard, Directorate-General for Heritage, French Ministry of Culture, *SportReso. A model for safeguarding traditional/indigenous sports?* **Pepe Pastor and Daniele Ortiz**, Association Île du Monde. *Safeguarding Traditional Sports Heritage through a Collaborative Network between Overseas Territories and Mainland France.*

11:40

Pieter-Jan Vantilborgh, VLAS - Vlaamse Traditionele Sporten vzw. Vlas. Belgium. *Innovation and participation in Safeguarding Traditional Games and Sports is key.*

11:50

Rut Carek, Secretary General of the National Commission for UNESCO of Croatia, Ministry of Culture and Media; **Milivoi Pacenti**, President of IPS, and Vice President of AEJeST, *Safeguarding traditional games and sports through collaboration between institutions and civil society organizations. The case of Croatia*

12:10

Antigoni Poliniki, National Commission for UNESCO of Cyprus. *Traditional Games as Drivers of Rural Revitalisation: Playing Together, Growing Together*

12:30 – 13:00

Q&A - Discussion with the audience

Concluding Remarks by **Dario Nardini**, University of Padua

13:00

Shared Lunch in Chioistro San Francesco – Polo Zanotto, Università di Verona. Viale Università 4, 37129 Verona (3 minutes walking)

Round Table

IN – TANGIBLE

Living Heritage as a Resource for the Sustainable Management of Heritage Sites.

Verona and Urbino in Dialogue

Scaligeri Hall, Palazzo Giuliari, Via dell'Artigliere 10.

Rectorate of the University of Verona

Friday, September 18, 2026 – 14:00 – 17:00

Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81770364954?pwd=uW3OoKvW2DaxL4hcWQTnX8jjJ6rsqE.1>

ID meeting: 817 7036 4954

Access Code: 802727

In light of ongoing developments that increasingly encourage dialogue between tangible and intangible heritage, the Forum will reflect on two case studies: the **city of Verona**, a cultural space for the Tocati communities as well as for other ICH communities inhabiting the World Heritage Site (WHS) throughout the year; and the **WHS of Urbino** and its surrounding area, cultural spaces for the Urbino kite flyers and Schieti stilt walkers, both part of our Tocati network, and today's speakers.

Particular attention will be given to the active involvement of AGA/Tocati in the management plan of the UNESCO site of Verona, while inviting the city of Urbino to join the discussion. Urbino and Verona are working to integrate intangible heritage as a renewable and strategic resource for the future of World Heritage Sites. The meeting will bring together representatives of Italian ludic communities and countries participating in the Tocati UNESCO partnership, with the aim of exploring living heritage as a tool for managing and revitalising heritage sites and cultural spaces.

14.00 – 14.45

Opening remarks and introduction:

Giuseppe Giacon, Vice-president Associazione Giochi Antichi (AGA)

Marta Ugolini, Councilor for Culture with UNESCO delegation, City of Verona

Ettore Napione, UNESCO Office, City of Verona

Mara Tognon, Senior Officer, Culture Département, Veneto Region

Introduction and moderation:

Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari (AGA) – *Living heritage for the future of our places. A shift in perspective*

Contributions by:

14:45

Diego Caloi, President of AGA. *Tocati Festival and Casa Tocati as elements of a Good Practice in action. Living heritage in urban spaces: reflections on history and perspectives.*

15:00

Katia Basili, Senior UNESCO World Heritage Expert. Scientific and Technical Coordinator of the new Management Plan of the World Heritage property "City of Verona", in collaboration with PTS.

Integrating World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Methodologies, Tools and Governance.

15:20

Luana Alessandrini, Head of Management Plan for the City of Urbino, *Integrated and Sustainable Management of the World Heritage Site Historic Center of Urbino - Emotional Engagement and Communication for the Conservation and Promotion of Tangible and Intangible Heritage*; and **Massimiliano Sirotti**, Councilor for Educational Policies, Municipality of Urbino, *Between Urban and Rural - Living Heritage and Places of Belonging. Dialogues and Perspectives*

15:45 – 16:00

Coffee break

16:00

Alessia Villanucci - Central Institute for the Intangible Heritage (ICPI), Ministry of Culture. *Implementing the Faro Convention. Possibilities and Perspectives between Management of Cultural Spaces and Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage.*

16:15

Micol Roversi Monaco and **Francesco Trovò**, University IUAV of Venice, *Intangible heritage and civil society. Safeguarding techniques, regulatory tools, and co-management perspectives.*

16:30

Kia Tsakiridis, Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders (Be), *Safeguarding Living Heritage in Urban Contexts. Capacity building perspectives*

16:45 – 17:00

Concluding Remarks by **Tamara Nicolich Djerich**, UNESCO ICH facilitator and Director of Batana ecomuseum

5:30 PM. Inauguration of the Tocati Festival – Piazza Santa Toscana (Piazza Irlanda)