



Annual Report: 2021

1. Administrative Details

1.1 - Name of National Committee: Macedonian National Committee of Blue Shield

1.2 - Date Report Completed: 11.02.2021

1.3 - Reporting period covered: January 2021 – December 2021

1.4 - Names, positions and emails of all those who were the governing body/ trustees / principal officers on the date the report was approved or who served during in the reporting period:

Olivera Djartovska Tachevska, President
Danijela Trajkova Krstic, Secretary
Gordan Nikolov, President of the Assembly

1.5 - Address of the main office:

Museum of the City of Skopje
Str. Saints Cyril and Methodius bb
1000 Skopje, North Macedonia

1.6 - Website and social media (if applicable):

www.blueshield.org.mk

2. Income:

What is the total income of your committee? What are the primary sources? (Donations, grants, etc?)

Main financial supporter is the Ministry of Culture of Republic of North Macedonia. In 2021 the total income of the Committee amounted 1.500,00 Euro.

3. Report of Activities: Achievements & Performance

Explain the activities & projects carried out over the year under the Areas of Activity

The annual report should tell the story of the organisation and put into context what was achieved in the reporting year against the achievement of its longer-term strategy. The annual report under this section should Provide a clear review of the organisation’s performance for the relevant year as well showing how the current year’s strategic performance links to the achievement of the longer-term strategy of the organisation.

These could include: grants applied for; talks given; conferences held; training courses run; work to support new legislation; working groups attended, etc.

Please provide as much detail as possible – for example, length of event, audience, and so on.

3.1 - Law, policy development and implementation:

- In the first half of the year we were working on the implementation of statutory changes in accordance with the changes of the presidency and headquarters as well as in accordance with the requests for reaccreditation of the national committees.
- Annual General Assembly of Blue Shield North Macedonia took place on 24th April 2021. Elections for the board were held in accordance with the Macedonian National Committee Statute. New Executive Board of Blue Shield North Macedonia was elected. Olivera Djartovska Tachevska was elected as president, Danijela Trajkova Krstic was elected as a secretary, Gordan Nikolov as a deputy president of Assembly and the five members of executive board are: dr. Davorin Trpeski, Sunchica Veselinovska, Branislava Mihajlova, Milan Pejovski, Ilija Vasilevski.

3.2 - Education, training, and capacity building:

On September 2021 Macedonian National Committee of Blue Shield promoted its publication - “Legal Protection of the Macedonian Cultural Heritage – Views on Protective Awareness in the Post Socialist Period” , written by Jovan Ristov.

The book was posthumously published by the Macedonian National Committee of the Blue Shield as a collection of Jovan Ristov’s activities in the Blue Shield as an especially active member since the establishment of the Association in 2002 and as a first Chairman of the MNC Blue Shield Assembly (2002-2005). Jovan Ristov (1949-2018) was one of the greatest experts in the field of legal protection of cultural heritage. He gave the idea for the establishment of the Head Office for Protection of Cultural Heritage and served as its first Director, and his contribution as an author of the 2004 Cultural Heritage Protection Law is significant. With his professional focus on the legal protection of the cultural heritage and the international legal protection and comparative monument law, he set high professional and scientific standards in the protection of cultural

heritage.

The editor of the book is Prof. Davorin Trpeski PhD. The book is a collection of articles written and presented by Jovan Ristov at the forums and meetings organized by the Macedonian National Committee of the Blue Shield, published in the international electronic publication “E-Shield” in the period between 2013 and 2018. The book was promoted by Aleksandar Jordanoski, MSc.

It is consisted of 6 articles: “Normative Framework for care of Museum goods – preventive protection”, “Significance and application of the Hague Convention 1954”, “The Second protocol of 1999, its significance and the degree of its normative and actual implementation in Republic of Macedonia”, “Legal protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Republic of Macedonia”, “Application of regulations for the protection of cultural and natural goods in the event of natural and man – made disasters – position of the local government, protective awareness and professional ethics”, “The law and professional ethics in the realization of the protection of museum goods in Republic of Macedonia”. The promotion was held at the Daut Pasha Bath, National Gallery Skopje on the 29th of September 2021

October 2021 FORUM: THEFTS OF MUSEUM OBJECTS AND ILLEGAL TRADE WITH CULTURAL

GOODS. This year, the Macedonian National Committee of the Blue Shield focused on the topic of theft and illicit trade in cultural goods. The theft of cultural property from museums and sites and the illicit trade with them, impoverishes the cultural heritage of the Republic of North Macedonia. Such a situation requires studying the causes of these phenomena, taking into account the institutional organization, professional ethics of the museum experts, the legal framework in which the activities take place, as well as the attitude of the authorities towards this phenomena. During the preparation, MNC Blue Shield established successful cooperation with the Public Prosecutor's Office and the police. Research has shown that criminal groups have the biggest interest in the illegal trade in archeological artifacts, which are often excavated directly from the ground, and medieval icons, considering the fact that Macedonia has a long tradition of icon painting schools and has one of the most valuable collections of icons in the world.

The Forum: “Thefts of Museum Objects and Illegal Trade with Cultural Goods”, organized by the Macedonian National Committee of the Blue Shield in cooperation with MNC ICOM was held in the Museum of Old Skopje Bazaar in Suli An, Skopje on 07.10.2021. Pero Ardjanliev, MSc, and the Public Prosecutor Maja Konevska were keynote speakers.

The first keynote speaker was Pero Ardjanliev, MSc who spoke about the “Archeology vs. Illegal Excavation, System Failure and Possible Solutions.” He made comparisons regarding how the modern archeology attempts to inflict as little as possible harm to the excavation probes. Archeologists in our country also start to use advanced geo-raders and Leader technology to make laser images of the contours of the localities, using non-invasive techniques in order to preserve the cultural context in obtain information about the locality. Unlike them, the illegal excavations are characterized with devastating actions and destroying of the cultural environment and information of the archaeological probe which causes enormous damage. In addition to stealing artifacts directly from the ground, the damage is even bigger since the devastating actions also destroy the context and the cultural information of the probe. In his presentation, Pero Ardjanliev, MSc pointed the weaknesses of the protection against such illegal actions, where the system fails,

stating the following:

- Inappropriate Cultural Heritage Protection Law, which does not define the archaeological locality.
- Lack of implementation of ratified conventions for protection of unexcavated cultural heritage.. Namely, he emphasized that the revised 1992 Valetta Convention on Protection of Unexcavated Archaeological Cultural Heritage of Europe was ratified in Macedonia in 2006, but nothing was implemented.
- Low level of valorization of the cultural localities and museum collections. Namely, currently, only 7% of the archaeological localities and 20% of the museum collections are valued which equals to not having any records about the status of the cultural heritage in Macedonia. It was stated that the situation is such as it is because the Rulebook on Valuation is complex and large, and nobody attempts to do that. The Valuation and Revaluation Commission was advised to simplify the forms following the example of the Bulgarian forms which are much simpler, but there was no positive answer to that.
- Lack of State Unified Database.
- Lack of inter-institutional and inter-sector cooperation.

The conclusion of this speech was that ways have to be found to resolve the above-mentioned weaknesses and to improve the cooperation and coordination between the Cultural Heritage Protection Office, museums, Customs Administration, courts, and public prosecution office.

The second keynote speaker of the Forum was the Public Prosecutor Maja Konevska who spoke about the “Protection of the Cultural Heritage from the Aspect of Criminal Law”. She provided summary of all the cases she had about the illegal trade with cultural heritage, starting from the “Phalanx” case in 2006 until now. These operations include: Phalanx 1 in 2006, covering around 5,500 archaeological objects, the operation Phalanx 2 on 01.05.2013 which covered archaeological items from IV century B.C., items from the Macedonian bronze, coins, middle ages icons etc., the Apollon case on 21.03.2014 which prevented an attempt for export and illegal trade with many archaeological artefacts and seized very sophisticated equipment for illegal excavation, the Spear case on 05.10.2018, again with seized many coins, archaeological items and middle age crosses and icons and very important church books with 8 arrests. In her speech she also emphasized that in addition to archaeological items, the valuable icons from Macedonia are especially interesting for the illegal traders. All these actions completely erase the history and the identity of the Macedonian people. In all operations for seizing artifacts, the police also found catalogues of European auction houses which were the target destinations of these actions. Despite the problem with the ethics of many people employed in the cultural heritage protection sector She said that they detected a problems in the European legislation which allows the auction houses to sell cultural heritage ignoring the origin and the way how it came to the auction. She spoke about this on the Regional Conference for Combating Illegal Trade with Cultural Heritage in Munich, Germany in May 2019 where after many presentations and cooperation they managed to establish greater control over the European auction houses and the artefact displayed there. Conclusion of her speech:

- It is necessary to educate the population about the importance of the cultural heritage

<p>value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education of the professional services who play a significant role in the cultural heritage protection - Intensifying of the inter sector cooperation - Stricter legal measures and penalties for illegal trade with cultural heritage - Intensifying the international cooperation for suppression of the illegal trade with cultural heritage since that in the world it has been established that the profit realized by these illegal actions is usually used for financing of terroristic actions and acts.
<p>3.3 - Proactive protection and risk preparedness:</p> <p>No activities</p>
<p>3.4 - Emergency response in disaster, domestic emergencies, and armed conflict:</p> <p>/</p>
<p>3.5 - Stabilisation, post-disaster recovery, and long-term/ongoing support:</p> <p>/</p>
<p>3.6 - Co-ordination (of Blue Shield and with other relevant organisations):</p> <p>Blue Shield North Macedonia this year had a good coordination with many relevant organisations.</p> <p>May 2021 we received invitation by the Head Office for Protection of Cultural Heritage to make suggestions for the creation of a National Strategy for Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage (2021- 2025), to which we responded by emphasizing the importance to the elaboration of the cultural heritage database, and the priority of preparation / finalization of the inventory lists that should be published to be available to the public. We are talking about the following lists: The list of national cultural heritage whose export is prohibited;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National inventory of dispersed cultural heritage under the regime of permission for export ; - National inventory of dispersed cultural heritage; - National inventory of protected goods in case of armed conflict and - National list of collectors and private collections. <p>We emphasized the urgency of finalization of these lists because they should be the basis for the prevention of unlawful acts and of the management of risks in the event of armed conflict and natural disasters. On the basis of fully prepared and defined registers / lists, communication and coordination between the Office for Protection of Cultural heritage and representatives of the Ministry of Interior and the customs services can be done successfully.</p> <p>On June 14 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, at the initiative of the Network of Local Museums, a meeting (debate) was held with the participation of MNC Blue Shield, MNC ICOM and ICOMOS, a delegate from the Ministry of Culture and the Network of Local Museums. This meeting discussed: questions about the annual program of the Ministry of Culture decentralization of cultural institutions and introduction of a new model of financing of local</p>

museum institutions, creation of national software etc.

We also had very good cooperation with Public Prosecution Office, Police and Macedonian National Committee of ICOM.

4. Main issues faced:

What are the main issues faced by your committee?

The biggest problem are the finances, i.e., limited funding by the Ministry of Culture of the RN Macedonia.

5. Future goals

- Continuation of the series of trainings of employees in the museums of Macedonia for action in case of fire
- Preparation of new edition of the electronic journal where we'll publish the articles presented on the Forum Thefts of Museum objects and Illegal trade with cultural goods.
- Efforts to establish cooperation with all institutions for the protection of Cultural Heritage in the event of Armed conflict
- Preparation of a brochure with the Regulation on the special measures of protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict and emergency

6. Other

Through its connection to Newcastle University, BSI is sometimes able to access funding that can be shared with research institutions to further the work of Blue Shield. Does your national committee have any connections with research institutions interested in its work (e.g. in risk management, heritage protection, etc.). If yes, please supply the names and contact details here.

No at this point.

Olivera Djartovska Tachevska
President of Macedonian National Committee of Blue Shield
11.02.2022