ANNEX No. 3
to the Procedure for registering Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage and for updating it

TECHNICAL SHEET
for the registration/ update of the data of the element ***Traditional Tatar Wedding*** in the ***List of Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Danger of Extinction***

A. Domain/domains (according to the 2003 UNESCO Convention, so the element must fit into the definitions of the 2003 UNESCO Convention, Art. 2 https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/67741)

a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
b) performing arts;
c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
e) traditional craftsmanship.

B. Standard term: **Traditional Tatar Wedding** (*Nunta tradițională tătară*)

C. Local / regional names: ***Toy***

D. Area of occurrence: The traditional Tatar wedding was and is still celebrated, mainly in Dobruja, in rural and urban communities with Tatars from Constanța County (Constanta, Medgidia, Valea Dacilor, Valu lui Traian, Mangalia, Techirghiol, Murfatlar, Cobadin, Agigea, Lazu, Topraisar, Biruința, Movilița, Ovidiu, Ciocârlia, Ciocârlia de Sus, Eforie Nord, Eforie Sud, 23 August, Moșneni, Lumina, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Tuzla, Independența, 2 Mai, Hagieni, Cumpăna, Castelu, Mereni, Amzacea, Casicea, Tătaru, Năvodari, Albești, Nazarcea, Siliștea, Negru Vodă, Nicolae Bălcescu) and Tulcea County (Tulcea, Babadag).

1.a. General information about the element (brief history, performance context, social functions, connection with elements of material cultural heritage, the element's contribution to sustainable development):

In Dobruja, the Tatar wedding was documented unsystematically, with various works presenting some information about the event, alimentation, and related musical heritage, without an exhaustive perspective that would capture local and historical variations. In Romanian scientific literature, some of the first ethnographic records regarding the Tatars and their wedding

ceremony can be found in Ion Dumitrescu's study, "Notes on the Tatars from Pervelia", published in 1921 in the *Annals of Dobruja*, Year II, No. 1.

The traditional Tatar wedding (*toy*) belongs to the rites of passage, constituting a spectacular ceremonial complex that stages numerous ritual sequences, with meanings assumed by the community, through verbal formulas, gestures, actants and ceremonial instruments. As a ceremonial performance, it presents patterns similar to the Turkic peoples, but not only, but also certain ethnic or local particularities. Moreover, this ICH element highlights the crystallization of social relations, the solidarity of the community to share the joy of the newlyweds and to help the new family, while also expressing the cultural and religious identity of the Dobrujan Tatars (customs, craft techniques, alimentation, folk songs and dances, etc.)

The Tatar wedding, both socially and religiously, is an act of extraordinary importance, being carefully planned as a family event, celebrated with joy by the entire community. The ceremonial gear has a profound meaning, reflecting the customs, values and mentality of the Tatars. In this complex ceremonial context there is a social balance, an experience and a series of particularities specific to each community. Beyond the aesthetic valence, the observance of these nuptial traditions emphasizes the respect of a couple for the heritage of the community to which they belong. Embracing traditional cultural elements also offers the opportunity to raise awareness among young people about the ICH element and to celebrate with participants from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, promoting a sense of unity and inclusion.

Staging of the wedding (contexts, ceremonies), actors, actions and ritual gestures

The entire community is involved in the preparation of the wedding, with the extended families of the bride and groom playing important roles. Of this entire ceremonial complex, four moments are cardinal: the matchmaking, the engagement, the wedding itself, and the meeting of relatives (*qudağıylıq*).

In the past, before the matchmaking, there was the **search** (*soraştırma*), when a woman with prestige in the community was sent by the groom's family to the houses of girls to be married, to find a hardworking bride and to find out the intentions of the girl's parents. The next phase was the **matchmaking** (*ayttırıp barmak, ayttırmak, kız ayttırmak, cauşılık*). If the lad was considered worthy and if he was accepted by all the girl's relatives, a positive response was sent to his family, through a herald/ *ceauş* (*çavuş*).

Usually, a week after the matchmaking, the **ceremony to establish the final agreement regarding the marriage** took place. Close relatives, elderly men and women, as well as the boy's parents, participated. Reciprocal gifts were prepared, symbolizing the new bond established between the two families. At the ceremony, the boy's father himself asked the girl in marriage for the last time for his son by *the command of Allah and with the will of the Prophet*. On this occasion, the date of the engagement was set.

The engagement (*nışan toy*) took place at the girl's house. The *quda*, male delegates from both families, were present. They had the role of exchanging gifts called *nışan boqşası* (engagement bundles). The ritual act of placing the engagement rings on the fingers of the future bride and groom took place either at the engagement or at the official wedding.

Also, between the engagement and the wedding, various gifts were sent. Great emphasis was placed on the dowry (*çıyız*), which was taken to the groom's house before the bride left her parents' house. It was arranged in the groom's room, displayed in full view, especially the objects made by the bride.

In the past, young men on horseback **announced the marriage**, speaking certain verbal formulas. Before the wedding, one or two older sisters-in-law, from the bride and groom's side, would go from door to door with drums and trumpets, inviting everyone to the wedding. Among the Nogais, one of the sisters-in-law would carry a tree branch in her hand. The woman invited to the wedding tied a handkerchief, a cloth or a towel to it, as a sign that she will come to the wedding.

The wedding took place separately for the girl (*qız toy*) and the boy (*ul toy*).

In the **first day**, the *kawe tüymek*, the grinding of coffee, took place at the girl's home, which was then served to the match makers. The wedding began, accompanied by musicians, with the folk song *Toy kayırlı bolsun* (May the wedding be lucky).

The **religious wedding** (*nikâ*) was officiated in the presence of seven or eight participants called *quda*, without the groom being present. The bride and the groom were represented by an bailiff (*vekil*) or two witnesses. Before the ceremony, held at the bride's house, prayers were said and forgiveness was sought for the souls of the dead. The girl was prepared in a specific way, holding in her hands or having next to her elements of symbolic value (the Quran, mirror, salt, coin, bread, flour, vessel with water). The bride and the women stood behind a paravane, responding to the request for consent to the marriage. Subsequently, the imam, together with the *vekil* and witnesses, established the final amount of money that represented the payment for the bride, before the final prayer of blessing. The imam obtained the agreement of the two families regarding the right of the bride, and he concluded the religious wedding.

On the **second day of the wedding**, prayers were said for the blessing and happiness of the bride and groom. In this temporal context, the Night of Henna, *Qına toy*, took place on the night following the religious wedding day. The host (*konakbay*) prepared henna outside, which was later used to anoint the bride's fingers, palms, heels and hair. This night is also called *the night of meeting and acquaintance*, as the young people had the opportunity to communicate, through *şın*, spontaneous melodies created by boys and girls, guarded by *kart agası*, who made sure that the two groups did not get too close, cracking his whip. During the *qına toy*, the *şıraq toy* (candle wedding) took place at the groom's house, followed by the *qoraz tellemesı* (rooster decoration).

On the last **day of the wedding** (*üyken toy*/ the big wedding), the groom's shaving ceremony (*kiyew tıraşı*) took place, after he had performed his ritual washing. The ceremony was led by two people and there were two groups of participants: the group of young men and the group of married men, signifying the fact that the groom was moving from one social status to another. A shaving fee was established from the beginning (collected by an actant called *kırciman*), followed by a playful period, when various entertaining commands were given to the barber. After this event, the groom's dressing sequence followed, on which occasion specific songs were performed. There was a game similar to the one at the shaving.

On the same day, the bride was taken to the groom's house by his heralds, the *quda* and the *qudagıy*. The bride, accompanied by two married women, their faces being covered with a velvet shawl, rode in a beautifully decorated carriage (*mögedek, bögedek, catolai*). Two young men

rode on horseback and waved a silk flag called *şimildik* above the bride's carriage, the paravane for the wedding ceremony. The bride's road was blocked, demanding payment for trampling the earth (*topraq bastı*). If they were from different localities, the young men from the groom's family waited on the roadside and as soon as they saw the bride's procession, they mounted and went to meet the wedding (*toy aldı*). To the groom's horse was tied to a *tokuz*/ *toqız*, nine gifts wrapped in an embroidered cloth.

In the bride's cart there was also a boy holding a Quran. The child was rewarded and the imam from the groom's village took this Quran and said prayers and welcomed the bride. The bride remained with her head and face covered until she entered the house. Those who accompanied the bride brought some gifts for the father-in-law, having a symbolic value and constituting the reward for the hospitality and food. They were not offered directly, but were placed in front of the door. Among the Nogais, when she arrived at the groom's house, the bride passed through a symbolic gate. It was believed that she would never break her mother-in-law's word.

Nowadays, after entering the house, the bride rests for a while. Then, the bride and groom go out into the yard and start dancing. The father-in-law joins in and give gifts to the bride and groom. The mother-in-law follows, and gives them gifts, then the rest of the guests.

After the bride entered the groom's house, several competitive games were performed: folk wrestling (*küreş*, called in this context *toy tuşken küreşı*), horse races, shooting competitions, pole climbing. After the *toy küreşı* was finished, the bridal chamber was decorated. Two sisters-in-law, *cenge*, relatives by alliance, dressed the bride with the gifts and adornments offered by the groom and covered her face with a red cloth, a symbol of chastity. The bride gave to her mother-in-law a shirt, and to her father-in-law a *toqız* (shirt to which nine other gifts are attached). Each of the members of the groom's family received gifts. Also at this time, the ceremonial sequence of *tanış* (acquaintance) took place. The mother of the groom gave to the bride a gold coin, tied with red thread, lifted the cloth and saw her face. *Ulkum* soaked in sherbet, broken in half, were eaten by women from both families, starting with the mothers of the groom and bride.

On the last day of the wedding, in some cases on the second, the ceremony of offering gifts and adornments for the bride and groom took place. This ceremony was held separately at the bride and groom's house, if both lived in the same village. When they were from different villages, the ceremonies took place at the groom's house. Over time, the two ceremonies merged. In the context of living together with the Romanians, the **Great Table** (*Masa mare*) became part of Tatar weddings from 1950-1955, on the last night of the wedding. The godfather and the godmother, who substitute or double the *vekil* and the *vekil*'s wife, were also borrowed.

In the past, on the **wedding night**, the groom was led to the bridal chamber just after midnight, and after 1950, after the Great Table was over. At this moment, *ilaye*, religious songs, were sung in choir. In the wedding chamber, the bride's face could only be uncovered by the groom, otherwise it was considered that the religious wedding had been broken. Until 1950, on the wedding night, a gathering, *kiyew canı*, also called the groom's speech/conversation (*kiyew qonuşmaşı*, *güvey qonuşması*, *qonışmaq*), took place, having elements of folk theater in its structure. The ceremony was led by *kart agası* (the lord of the elder), who was joined by such actors as: *sol bey* (left bey)/ *sol kol* (left hand), *on bey* (right bey)/ *on kol* (right hand), two kureğegi bey, two *ayaqşı bey*, two *kapuği bey* (door guards), the instrumentalists/ *karatorgay bey*

(black sparrows). At midnight the groom was led to the wedding chamber. After that, the gathering was resumed. When the sun rose, *kart agası* announced to everyone that both the wedding and the gathering were over.

On the **first day after the wedding night**, the bride started her household activities and prepared a soup of dumplings, in order to have many children. Among the Nogais, this day was called *bet aşar toy,* when one of the bride's sisters-in-law came with a little boy in her arms, who removed the bride's veil, revealing her face, with the help of two wooden spoons. The women on the groom's side gave her jewelry and money. The mothers-in-law gave each other gifts.

On the Friday of the week following the wedding, the groom would go to the **mosque for prayer**. Also, on the first Friday after the wedding, the **bride's Friday** was organized, to which married women were invited to admire the dowry. The following week was the **girls' Friday**. In both contexts, the guests were feasted. In the period following the wedding, **walks and reciprocal visits** of the newlywed families took place, with the participation of relatives: at the bride's house, then the groom's, uncles, aunts and other close relatives. The bride prepared gifts in a bundle for the owners of the respective house in which she put shirts, towels, gloves, scarves, slippers, etc. In turn, she received a gift or money. Fun games were performed, punishments, teasing were done and ransoms were offered, all with the role of bringing the two families closer together.

The Tatar matrimonial ceremony has links with various other categories of intangible and tangible cultural heritage. In this regard, we mention, first of all, **alimentation**, with certain gestures, practices and ceremonial moments such as: drinking sherbet together, at the time of the agreement and engagement; offering the *katlama* pie by the groom side; eating the *geantık* pie prepared by the girl's mother, also at the engagement; the aid consisting in food products by the wedding guests; grinding coffee, the day before the wedding; welcoming guests with sweets; the feast on the occasion of the Henna Night (*toy şorbası*/wedding soup, *sarma*, *köbete*, *kurabiye*, *saraylı*, *baklava*); eating a donut dipped in sherbet, broken in half, by the mother of the groom and the mother of the bride, on the occasion of the ceremonial sequence of *tanış* (acquaintance); sharing the şuberek that marked the end of the wedding, etc. Even today, a wedding meal typically consists of seven or nine courses. Also, the **folklore of the wedding ceremony** emphasized the social function of the event, marking the rites of passage of young people into the category of married people. In this context, several folklore categories stood out: *şın* (improvised songs with antiphonic execution); melodies for *şerıpteş* and *omalı*, performed by girls after the bride's departure to the groom's house; religious *illahi* songs that accompanied the groom's shaving and his way to the wedding room; the song of the decorated rooster (*tellı qoraz*), the melody dedicated to the mother-in-law (*qaynana hawası*), *taqmaq şapaz*, etc. The increasingly important presence of instrumentalists is a contemporary characteristic. They replaced the songs performed vocally. On the other hand, they introduced new instrumental songs: road songs (*gol hawası*) or songs for welcoming guests (*şekırtıw hawası*), etc. Various musical instruments were used: *zurna* (a double-reed wind instrument from the oboe family), *dawul* (a large drum with two membranes and two sticks: *čiubuk*, thinner, and *čiakmar*, thicker, with a pipe-shaped ending), *dare* (drum-tambour).

2. a. Description of the keepers/bearers/creators of the element: (age, profession, ethnic group) (Representative keepers/ bearers will be appointed, recognized as such in the community, with contact details obtained with the consent of those concerned and benefiting from their support for the inventory of the element and the public communication of information):

The Tatar wedding ceremony, in its traditional form, has been performed naturally, over time, by members of the Tatar community, with it having a broad manifestation in the situation of marriage within the same ethnic group or, at least, between people of the Muslim religion.
This complex social moment sometimes highlighted actors with precise roles and specific knowledge of the practice: the bride and groom (the main beneficiaries of this rite of passage); the imam (the officiant of religious ceremonies); the parents of the bride and groom (the organizers of the various moments of the wedding); *konakbay* (the host who prepared the henna), *vekils*, later the godparents (who ensured the good process of certain ceremonial sequences); the groups of girls and boys who performed certain ritual and ceremonial gestures and actions; *quda* (the representatives of the families); the barber (the performer of the shaving ritual); *kırciman* (the one who collected the money for the shaving); the musicians (who punctuated certain essential moments and ensured general goodwill); *kazanbaş* (the head cook), but also a multitude of characters who have now lost their importance: the matchmakers, the advisors, the heralds (*ceauş*), the guards, etc. The preservation and transmission of tradition was achieved within and through the wedding itself. Knowledge was transmitted in the community, from generation to generation, orally, through actual participation. Currently, the ritual and meaning of the traditional wedding are known to the elderly or those involved in the hoarding of Tatar cultural heritage, but also to the few young people who get married and choose to keep certain ceremonial moments of a traditional nature. In this context, the intra-community transmission of the ICH element is starting to lose its natural resources, so that an intervention is needed as soon as possible in order to safeguard the traditional Tatar wedding, including with the help of the academic world that has turned its attention to Tatar culture.

2. b. Contribution of institutions and non-governmental organizations to the inventory and safeguarding of the element (the full name of the institutions, address and contact details of a representative of them will be mentioned):

- **National Heritage Institute:** Ienăchiţă Văcărescu Street, No. 16, Sector 4, Bucharest 040157, PhD Daniela MIHAI, e-mail: daniela.mihai@patrimoniu.ro;
- **"Gavrilă Simion" Eco-Museum Research Institute**: Progresului Street, No. 32, Tulcea, PhD Alexandru CHISELEV, e-mail: chiselevalexandru@yahoo.com.

3. a. Current situation of the element, description of the risks of extinction and motivation of the need for urgent safeguarding: The ratio between the information existing in previous sources of information, documentation and those recently obtained through this approach will be specified. The frequency and extension of the practice of the element will be described, the

capacity of the bearer communities to transmit it, the risks that the element faces for socio-demographic reasons (decrease in the number of bearers, performers, admirers, public). The risks will be described as concretely as possible, in direct connection with the specificity of the element, and not generically.

Traditional Muslim weddings in Dobruja were extensive, lasting three-four-five days or even a week. Depending on the time period, the locality and the agreements between the families, the wedding lasted: from Friday to the following Friday; from Tuesday afternoon to Thursday; from Monday or Tuesday to Sunday; from Thursday to Sunday; from Sunday or Monday to Thursday, etc. Currently, the wedding lasts two-three days (or less), being organized on weekends: Friday, Saturday, Sunday. In the context of the condensed ceremonial period, the evolution of mentalities and the transformation of the socio-economic framework, rituals considered retrograde were abandoned, others diluted their meanings or simply became entertaining moments.

Before 1930, parents were the ones who chose their children's spouses, and young people had few opportunities to meet and get to know each other. Over time, marriage strategies have changed, with contemporary weddings based on free choice and direct understanding between the bride and groom, including between young people of different religions and cultures. Thus, the precursor moments to the wedding, such as the search (*soraştırma*) and matchmaking (*ayttırmak*), have lost their importance.

Before 1930, during or after the final marriage agreement ceremony, in the absence of the groom, the boy's family had to provide the payment for the bride (*mehir*). After the amount was determined, an elder from the boy's side would pay a share of the total. This amount was called the right of milk (*sut-akkı*) and was due to the girl's mother. After 1950, the future groom also participated in this ceremony.

The exchange of gifts during the ceremonial moments before, during and after the actual wedding strengthened the closeness between the families. If *Kurban Bayramı* took place between the engagement and the wedding, it was sent to the bride a ram, decorated with colored threads and with apples hung around its neck. If *Ramazan Bayramı* took place during this period, were sent to the bride headscarves, skirts, shirts, shoes, coffee, and for the groom underwear, stockings, shirts, etc. In the past, the groom's representatives brought silk or velvet bundles with gifts (clothing, shoes, towels, gold objects: earrings, rings) to the engagement for the bride, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, etc. After 1945, the number of bundles gradually decreased. In time, gifts (clothes, underwear, nightgowns, stockings, etc.) were placed in a suitcase, returned to the groom's extended family with other gifts. Over time, the mutual exchange of gifts between the groom and the bride, between their parents and the most important wedding participants has been maintained in some places. Also, *tellı şıraq* (two large candles decorated with gold thread, ribbons, colored paper and flowers), *tellı qoraz* (a rooster decorated with gold thread), *şuberek*, money, etc. can be given.

In the past, there was a very clear segregation by gender, but also an ordering and hierarchy of the wedding guests, at different ceremonial moments, the delimitation sometimes being defined by dividing constructions. Separate weddings were organized at the girl's house, then at the boy's house. At these weddings, women were seated on the right side, little girls - behind their mothers, and boys - behind their fathers. Also, on the second day of the wedding, a wooden or brick

dividing wall was built in the middle of a closed room. Men sat on one side, and women on the other. Two young men defended the two ends of the wall. Dances were performed separately by gender and rarely mixed, in the case of very close relatives. Currently, there are certain contexts in which special respect is given to older men and women, by giving them priority seating at the table or by offering them ceremonial roles.

Before 1945-1950, fragments of the Mevlid and the Quran were read at the engagement. Along with other prayers, fragments of the Quran were also read for the souls of the dead. The imam also participated in the engagement, who recited prayers and wishes for the happy future of the two young people. After 1945, the ceremonial sequence of the Mevlid reading was lost in some places.

Before 1950, the bride and groom did not meet before the religious wedding, so this ceremony was performed a day or two before the wedding night. The representatives of the boy's family who came to the religious wedding were brought, from the boys of the girl's family, a piece of meat named *kaburga kol* (rib and arm). This symbolized that from now on the groom was part of this family and could come to this house at any time. After 1950, the date of religious wedding varies, it can be done before the wedding or during the wedding.

In the traditional Tatar village, the bride left her parents' house in a procession of carts. There was a custom that she would not be seen by strangers, so her head would be covered with a shawl, and she would be accompanied by two married women, who would also be covered. At the head of the bride's cortege was the cart with the young men who also had a protective role against those who blocked the way. Arrived at the groom's house, she got out form the cart after a series of hesitations, promises, gifts and money. These gifts were intended to gain his goodwill and to mark her entry into a new family, into a new social environment. A sister-in-law of the bride or an elderly woman took a white hen or a rooster, put its head under its wing, circled the bride three times, blew against the evil eye and threw a few handfuls of sugar over her head. This practice was named *kakma*, *horoz kakması* or *horoz tellemesı*. When entering the groom's house, the bride stepped on a towel, a sheepskin, etc. She became subject to a new absolute authority, so she kissed the hand of her mother-in-law and the feet of her father-in-law. In the past, after the bride got off the cart, she kissed the hands of her in-laws according to a certain ritual. Upon entering the groom's house, certain ritual gestures were performed: stepping with the right foot, anointing the interior and exterior of the house with oil, sprinkling water from a kettle and saying a prayer, reciting some Surahs from the Quran for abundance in the house, pouring water on the bride's feet. These traditions, as well as the games organized after the bride entered the groom's house, such as the *küreş* and horse racing, began to disappear from the wedding ceremony after 1950. The prizes were offered by the father of the groom and consisted, according to financial possibilities, of: one or more bulls, rams, money, a flag (*bayraq*), a tree branch decorated with nine items of clothing.

The ceremony of the groom's entry into the bridal chamber began after the evening prayer. He was led by the imam, elderly people and the groom's friends, along the way religious songs were performed and the frequent exclamation *Allah is great!*. In the groom's way, when he entered the bridal chamber, an embroidery, *şewre*, was spread, taken by a young man, who was believed to be the new groom. The imam prayed for the newlyweds, and the groom publicly repented for his sins, as did the bride, who answered from behind the door of the bridal chamber. Then, the first

or second religious wedding was performed, depending on local customs. During this period, in some localities, the gathering (*kiyew qonuşmaşı*) took place, which began around four in the afternoon and lasted until midnight. The participants were divided into two groups, on the left and on the right, each led by a *bey*. One member of each group spoke in turn after obtaining approval, resulting in a long verbal duel. During this time, members of the two groups discreetly stole food from a tray, without being seen by any member of the opposing group. If caught, the thief was denounced and punished. *Kart agası*, sometimes advised by advisors, would give a punishment. The games, full of fun, continued for hours.
After the wedding, on the first Friday, a ceremonial sequence dedicated to the bride and the women of the respective community was held, with the purpose of the bride's appearance in public, receiving the appropriate congratulations and publicly announcing, once again, the fact that the bride was a virgin. On this occasion, the prestige of the bride and the new family was consolidated. After a week, the ceremony was repeated, with the girls being invited.
In the modern period, Tatar weddings took over, following coexistence with Romanians, but also the evolution of the entire society: the institution of the godfathership (initially the godfather and godmother were Romanians); the Small table (*Masa mică*) for the bride; the Great table (*Masa mare*); white wedding dress, with veil; organizing the wedding at a restaurant and not at the bride and groom's houses or in a tent; Romanian folk dances (*Hora*, *Perinița*), etc. In this context, the *vekils* lost their role, who had clear obligations in the community, financially, symbolically and actantly ensuring the founding of the new family. Some magico-religious practices have been lost or are very rare (e.g. *qaqtırma*/ shaking, sprinkling the groom with flour, spinning a hen or a rooster on the bride's head, to drive away evil spirits; lighting two candles, one for the groom, the other for the bride, to find out who will have a shorter life) and some key moments of the wedding (dowry; the procession with the bride's carriage/ *moghedek*; decorating the bridal chamber with *şewre*, towels, *kıse*; hiding the bed behind a curtain/ *gerdek*; offering *qabırga qol*/ the ribs and forelimb of the sheep, by the men delegated by the groom; checking the bride's chastity and displaying the sheet).

Currently, there are several types of risk factors that can affect the viability of the traditional Tatar wedding. A first category is represented by demographic factors. On the one hand, according to Census data, a demographic decrease can be observed: According to the 2021 census, 18.156 Tatars declared themselves at the national level, of which 16.918 in Constanța County. In 2011, 20.282 ethnic Tatars were registered, in 2002 – 23.935 Tatars, and in 1992 – 24.596 Tatars. At the same time, the community is affected by the phenomenon of population aging, amid a decline in the birth rate. In this context, the age at which Tatars get married has increased, the number of marriages has decreased, and in relation to mentality transformations, so that the opportunities to perform such an event are increasingly rare.
On the other hand, from a linguistic point of view, the number of native Tatar speakers has decreased. In 2021, 13.805 people in Romania declared this language as their native language, of which 13.071 in Constanța County. In fact, Crimean Tatar and Nogai are included in the Atlas of the World's Endangered Languages, being classified as "critically endangered languages". (https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026). The decline in linguistic skills has a direct impact on the verbal elements associated with the wedding ceremony, the folkloric

repertoire being simplified, sometimes disappearing from use certain categories of artistic creations (e.g. *şın*-type songs).
To these factors are added the socio-economic, identity and mentality factors, but also more complex processes: the migration of young people to urban centers, employment (and the need to reconcile ritual and legal free time), the modification of marriage strategies and the departure from the canons of tradition (the probationary period, concubinage, interethnic and interreligious marriages, the "dream wedding", which no longer respects community norms), the significant financial implications, acculturation, globalization, the modernization of the community, in all its aspects, corroborated with the loss of interest of young people for the traditional element, the elimination of traditions considered anachronistic, the compression of the number of days dedicated to the wedding and the condensation of some ceremonial sequences. Only the elderly still have knowledge of the entire ritual complex, the meanings of the gestures and the multitude of ceremonies that constitute the Tatar marriage.
The inclusion of this ICH element in the *National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage* will not have negative consequences on the practice, in the sense of its folklorization or museification. The inscription can constitute the basis for arguing the need to carry out programs or projects for the conservation and transmission of the element, counteracting the decline of the tradition, with the possibility of revitalizing some ceremonial components that have passed into the latent fund.

3. b. Plan for the urgent safeguarding of the element through specific actions (in the next 4 years):
The main types of safeguarding measures recommended by the international implementation mechanism of the 2003 UNESCO Convention will be described: documentation, transmission particularly through formal, non-formal and informal education, dissemination of information about the element in different contexts and through different means. The general and specific objectives pursued each year, the activities that will be carried out to achieve them and the human resources involved for each activity will be described.

a) Legislative and organizational framework

- By the Order of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage No. 2436/08.07.2008 the **National Program for the Safeguarding, Protection and Enhancement of Intangible Cultural Heritage** is approved.
- Law no. 33/1995 for the incorporation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), enacted in Strasbourg on February 1, 1995, by which persons belonging to national minorities have the opportunity to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.
- The existence of **Tatar cultural and ethnic associations**, which have in their statute the objective of preserving cultural heritage. These, through funds allocated from the state budget, through own funds, sponsorships or national/ international financing, but especially due to their

prestige in the community, have the opportunity to financially and logistically support safeguarding actions and to attract as many people as possible to implement the safeguarding plan.

b) Objectives, activities and resources

The specific activities will be designed and implemented by Tatar ethnic and cultural associations, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, the Department for Interethnic Relations, the National Institute of Heritage, relevant cultural and scientific institutions (museums, libraries, cultural centers, research institutes), non-governmental organizations and public authorities. **This approach requires a concerted effort by all involved actors, in the event of the element being inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, in collaboration with Tatar communities from different States**.

Objective No. 1: Documenting the Tatar wedding through ethnological and anthropological research in representative Dobrujan communities (Years I-IV)

Activity 1.1: Inventory and mapping of the *Traditional Tatar Wedding* in Dobruja, in order to identify local/ community specificities, standard ICH carriers and endangered/ disappeared elements.

Activity 1.2: Creation of a multimedia database on the ICH element, with the active participation of local communities, specialists and cultural activists.

Objective No. 2: Promoting the traditional wedding (toy) with the role of consolidating the identity of the Tatar community, with the possibility of developing links with Tatar communities in other States. (Years II-IV)

Activity 2.1: Publishing specialized and popularization studies, articles, thematic volumes or those that address various issues about the wedding complex.

Activity 2.2: Organizing conferences, cultural events, exhibitions to promote the traditional Tatar wedding.

Activity 2.3: Dissemination of information in the media and virtual social space, in collaboration with local/ national media, cultural and educational institutions, NGOs.

Objective No. 3: Encouraging the transfer of knowledge about traditional wedding between generations and communities. (Years II-IV)

Activity 3.1: Organizing seminars, workshops and thematic educational activities addressed to young people, in collaboration with the bearers of the ICH element, school and cultural institutions and cultural associations.

Activity 3.2: Organizing the *Toy Festival*, a platform for promoting the ICH element and exchanging knowledge and good practices.

4. Bibliography and online sources of information on the element:

AKMOLLA, Güner, *The Tatars of Dobruja. Essay*, Constanta, NewLine Publishing House, 2005.

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DUMITRESCU, Ion, "Notes about the Tatars from Pervelia" in *Annals of Dobruja*, Year II, No. 1, Constanța, Institute of Graphic Arts "Victoria", 1921, pp. 115-128.

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MUSTAFA, Sevim, Customs and traditions of the Turks and Tatars of Dobruja, Constanța, Muntenia Publishing House, 2017.

ÖNAL, Mehmet Naci, *From the folklore of the Dobrujan Turks. Traditions regarding birth, marriage and death*, Bucharest, Ed. Kriterion, 1997.

SULIȚEANU, Ghizela, *From the musical folklore of the Dobrujan Tatars*, Cluj-Napoca, Kriterion Publishing House, 2014.

SULIȚEANU, Ghizela, "The wedding ceremony in the musical-poetic folklore of the Dobrudja Tatars", in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, T. XLII, Z. 2, 1982, pp. 65-86.

https://ghiuneracmola.blogspot.com/2015/02/guner-akmolla-obiceiuri-tatare-crimeene.html

https://miras.gov.ro/1/viata-si-spiritualitate/nevzat-si-nerminyusuf-despre-traditiile-si-obiceiurile-tatarilor

5. a. Element inventory and safeguarding coordination team:

Coordination group from the Tatar community

5. b. Responsible for monitoring the safeguarding plan of the element:

Monitoring group from the Tatar community

Monitoring group established by NCSICH

6. Date of completion of the inventory sheet:

25.08.2025

All fields are mandatory!

Recently recorded photo/video/audio materials that demonstrate the viability of the element and the relevance of the element to the local cultural identity will be attached (video recordings in which community members describe the element and explain its importance from a personal perspective are encouraged).

Photographic witnesses

Preparing *sarma* for *Kına toy*, Tulcea, 2014, photo: Al. Chiselev

Hand marking with henna, Tulcea, 2014, photo: Al. Chiselev

Sequence from *Kına toy*, Tulcea, 2014, photo: Al. Chiselev

Clothing with Tatar accents, preparation for the wedding day,
Tulcea, 2014, photo: Al. Chiselev

Kıse, used in the past to decorate the bridal chamber, EFAM Collection

1. Rochie de mireasă, Muzeul de Etnografie și Artă, Tulcea, jud. Tulcea, catifea cu fir de aur

2. Rochie de mireasă, Colecția Muzeului de Etnografie si Artă, Tulcea, jud. Tulcea

3. Batistă de nuntă și punguța Muzeul de Etnografie și Artă Constanța

4. Baldachin de nuntă, Muzeul Casa orientală Panaghia, Babadag, jud. Tulcea

5. Batistă de nuntă, comuna Albești, jud. Tulcea, Culturalia.ro

Lista figurilor:

Figura I. Cingătoare purtată de mireasă- Kawkaz kuşak din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan.

Figura II. Elemente din zestrea miresei din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan. Ceyrek, mileuri și Kuran Kap, o traiste specială pentru Coran.

Figura III. Elemente din zestrea femeii din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan. Terlici.

Figura IV. Elemente din zestrea femeii din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan. Broderia de la Toban Yastık.

Figura V. Fesuri purtate de mire și mireasa din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan.

Figura VI. Voal purtat de soacra mare din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan.

Figura VII. Decorațiuni de pe costumul mirelui din colecția privată a lui Nurgian Kürtasan.