



SOUND OF DIVERSITY

15.-17.05.2026
Bârlad , Romania

Unity in Diversity: The Bârlad Experience

The main objective of this international event is to improve the quality of community services, policies and programs for diversity and inclusion on the local level in the partnered towns. The 40th edition of the Bârlad Cultural Days represents the largest and most important annual event for the local community, bringing together a wide audience and a diverse range of cultural and social initiatives.

The programme is closely aligned with the main theme of the Sound of Diversity project, contributing to the development of more inclusive communities through culture, dialogue and participation. Bringing together a wide range of cultural, educational and community-based activities, the programme creates opportunities for intercultural exchange between international partners and local stakeholders. Events such as workshops, exhibitions, performances and community initiatives highlight how culture can support diversity, inclusion and social cohesion at the local level.

At the same time, the programme offers a practical framework for sharing experiences, good practices and local approaches to diversity management, involving public institutions, NGOs, artists and citizens. With a strong community dimension and a large and diverse audience, the event serves as a living example of how cultural initiatives can foster dialogue, mutual understanding and inclusive development.

„Sound of Diversity” is a large-scale Network of Towns initiative aimed at strengthening the role of local authorities in advancing diversity, combating discrimination, and fostering the inclusion of mino-

rities. The network brings together municipalities that host prominent community events, including the Gaming Village Festival in Óbidos (Portugal), the Khamoro Romani Festival in Prague (Czechia), the Multitude Festival in the County of Seine-Saint-Denis (France), the Festival of Various Arts in Aleksandrów Łódzki (Poland), the Festival of Tolerance in Croatia, the Cultural Days of Bârlad (Romania), the People’s Feast in Molfetta (Italy), the Greek Dance Fest in Kileler (Greece), and the Epicentrum Festival in Poland. These events will go beyond traditional town network formats—such as conferences, training sessions, seminars, study visits, and capacity-building workshops—by introducing the „Sound of Diversity Stage.” This open-air community space is designed to engage directly with local residents, youth, activists, minority representatives, and experts. It will serve as a dynamic platform to explore key issues related to diversity management, anti-discrimination, inclusion, and the broader EU policy context. The project aims to contribute meaningfully to EU-wide discussions and initiatives, particularly in the framework of EU Diversity Month 2026. It will also support locally hosted Sound of Diversity actions aligned with existing events such as the Cultural Municipal Days in Budapest and Novi Sad, and the „Play with Me” International Inclusive Festival in Ljubljana. Among the expected outcomes of the project are a practical Guidebook on diversity, inclusion, and belonging, as well as tangible improvements to local policies in the participating towns.



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Agenda

15.05.2026 | Arrival and Welcome

14:00 – Accommodation and lunch

Address: Hotel Moldova, 1 December Street, no. 1

15:00 – 17:00 – City Tour.

Presentation of the locations where the project activities will take place
(optional)

17:00 – 21:00 – Sound of Diversity Stage.

United in Diversity – Celebrating Cultural Dialogue through Music.

Opening Anniversary Concert of the 40th Bârlad Cultural Days. Traditional music and dances.

18:00 – 18:50 – Building Local Commitment for Diversity and Inclusion.

Welcome message from local authorities. Introduction to Bârlad as a multicultural community.
Address: 1 December Street, no. 21.

19:00 – 19:55 – Official dinner and networking.

(for participants arriving late, they will get the take-away dinner)

20:00 – 21:00 – Dialogue through Art: Identity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Opening of the “N. N. Tonitza” Biennale. Location: Museum „Vasile Pârvan”
Address: Vasile Pârvan Street, no. 1.

21:00 – 22:30 – Classical Music as a Universal Language – Building Cultural Bridges.

Classical music concert. Location: Pavilionul Expozitional „Marcel Guguianu”.
Address: Marcel Guguianu Street No. 4 – 6.



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16.05.2026 | Collaboration and Intercultural Exchange

8:30 – 9:30 – Breakfast. Location: Hotel Moldova

Location: Hotel Moldova

9:30 – 10:30 – Introduction to the agenda.

Partners' Getting-to-Know Workshop.

Interactive team-building activities, facilitated by Natasa Heror (Festival of Tolerance, Serbia).

10:30 – 11:00 – Coffee break & Gastronomic Diversity Corner.

Thematic corner with traditional sweets from participating countries

11:00 – 12:30 – Inclusive Communities in Practice – A World Café on Culture, Diversity and Local Policies.

Focus: community services, policies and programs for diversity and inclusion on the local level in the partnered towns, current priorities, plans, their focus, what is changing – to facilitate reflection on their own work and share it with others. A session for SoD partners and activists, NGOs, decision makers from Bârlad.

Address: Republic Avenue, no. 250.

12:40 – 13:50 – Lunch. Traditional Romanian cuisine.

14:00 – 15:30 – Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage as a Tool for Social Inclusion Pottery workshop – local traditions.

Art, Identity and Diversity – Interactive Workshop at the “Marcel Guguianu” Exhibition Pavilion. Participants will explore the artistic works of Romanian sculptor Marcel Guguianu through a guided visit combined with a short interactive reflection activity. Using selected artworks as inspiration, participants will discuss how art reflects identity, cultural diversity, and shared European values, and how artistic spaces can contribute to inclusive community dialogue.

Address: Marcel Guguianu Street No. 4 – 6.

15:30 – 17:00 – Traditional Crafts and Cultural Diversity – Interactive Workshop & Community Exchange.

This activity brings together traditional craftsmen from different ethnographic regions of Romania, offering participants an opportunity to explore local heritage through hands-on experiences. The workshop will highlight how traditional crafts contribute to cultural identity, intercultural dialogue, and inclusive community development, creating a space for exchange between international partners, local artisans, and the community.

Location: Sf. Ilie Square



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17:00 – 19:20 – Sound of Diversity Stage.

United in Diversity – Celebrating Cultural Dialogue through Music.

Opening Anniversary Concert of the 40th Bârlad Cultural Days. Traditional music and dances.

We will have with us on the stage:

- Orchestra of Folk Instruments „Vlăstărașii Cahuleni”
- Folkloric Ensemble „Firicel de iasomie”
- Aerophone Instruments Ensemble
- Folk singer Walter Ghicolescu
- Local folk group Dracii Liberi
- Dance Troupes Bimbo and Splendid - Students' Club „Spiru Haret” Bârlad
- Hesperis Ensemble Greek Community Bârlad
- Friendship Fanfare - Roma community
- Roma Dance Troupe Ilo Romano

19:30 – 21:00 – Dinner. Traditional Romanian cuisine.

17.05.2026 | Conclusions and Departure

8:30 – 9:30 – Breakfast. Location: Hotel Moldova

Location: Hotel Moldova

9:30 – 10:30 – Feedback and Reflection Workshop.

Evaluation of the visit in Romania. Next steps in the project.

11:00 – 12:00 – Comic Art Workshop – Visual Storytelling, Identity and Cultural Diversity.

This workshop explores comic art as a form of visual storytelling and cultural expression. Guided by a renowned expert, participants will discover how comics can reflect identity, diversity, and social themes, while encouraging creativity, dialogue, and inclusive perspectives. Guest: Mr. Dodo Niță, historian and comics specialist.

Address: Republic Avenue, no. 250.

12:00 – 14:30 – „Andreea Răducan” Gymnastics Cup.

Promoting Inclusion through Sport . (optional)

This sporting event celebrates excellence, discipline, and fair play, bringing together young athletes in a spirit of respect, inclusion, and community engagement. It highlights the role of sports in promoting equal opportunities and strengthening social cohesion.

12:00 – 14:30 – Intercultural Learning Visit: Spiritual Heritage and Community Dialogue – Bujoreni Monastery. (optional)

Participants will explore the role of religious heritage in shaping local identity and community values. The visit will encourage reflection on religious diversity, tolerance, and the importance of spiritual traditions in fostering inclusive communities. Traditional lunch at monastery.



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Contact of the host:

Cristina +40 767 185 283

All meals—breakfast, lunch, and dinner—along with transport from the airport and to any needed locations, will be organized by the hosts, so you can fully focus on the festival and exploring the city's sights.



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