

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.



Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Sound of Diversity – Network of Towns
Participant:	Barlad Municipality
PIC number:	937313426

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	7
Event name:	„United in Diversity: The Bârlad Experience”
Type:	In person gathering, workshops, field visits and public events, festival
In situ/online:	in situ
Location:	Barlad, Romania
Date(s):	15-17.05.2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://aleksandrow-lodzki.pl/sound-of-diversity/
Participants	
Female:	95
Male:	31
Non-binary:	1
From country 1 [Poland]:	2
From country 2 [Slovenia]:	2
From country 3 [Germany]:	1
From country 4 [Italy]:	3

From country 5 [Spain]:	2		
From country 6 [Romania]	90		
From country 7 [Portugal]	3		
From country 8 [Hungary]:	2		
From country 9 [France]	1		
From country 10 [Croatia]	3		
From country 11 [Czechia]	1		
From country 12 [Greece]	3		
From country 13 [Republic of Moldova]	5		
From country 14 [Netherlands]	2		
From country 15 [Belgium]	1		
From country 16 [Ukraine]	6		
Total number of participants:	127	From total number of countries:	16
NON CERV country: [Turkey]	4		
Total number of participants:	131	From total number of countries:	17
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
1. Target groups: City practitioners, civil society organizations, cultural activists, local activists, youth, ethnic and national minorities, community members, local actors, organizers of community events, policy makers. 2. Description of the event and its activities/ context. The Cultural Days of Bârlad is a festival that takes place every year in May and lasts about 14 days. It includes cultural, sports, and artistic activities, fairs, and outdoor concerts. This year, as part of this event, the Cultural Days included the 'United in Diversity' Festival within the Sound of Diversity Project, with its international participants who joined and enriched the festival between 15 and 17 May 2026.			

For 3 days, the SoD partners and local actors from Bârlad, tried to develop methods for inclusion and promoting diversity using examples of good practices from each partner's communities using various methods of consultation and participation: a Public World Café workshop, a clay working workshop, classical music concerts and traditional music and dances outdoors. Local authorities, volunteers, and minorities were involved in a collective effort to support the spirit of diversity in our city.

The event took place in several locations, depending on the nature of each activity: Bârlad City Hall, Victoria Cinema, 'Marcel Guguianu' Museum Pavilion, St. Elijah Square.

3. Agenda of the event.



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 minorities. 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.

 Co-funded by the European Union

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SOUND OF DIVERSITY

15.-17.05.2026
Bârlad , Romania

Unity in Diversity: The Bârlad Experience

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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SOUND OF DIVERSITY

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 „Măstărașii 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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4. Main take aways/ findings from the event

The event was intense, with lots of activities planned and community involvement. The partners at the event were really engaged, eager to explore the local culture and learn new things. Still, the time was too short; we felt there wasn't enough time for all the planned activities, also because of the flights and the fairly long trip from the airports.

We believe that we had a good time together, that we learned a lot from each other, our community was delighted with the participation of our partners and wants us to hold such events again.

Some parts of the agenda were recorded with more attention, due to their interactive nature. These were:

1. The introductory session on May 16th:

The Introductory session was led by Nataša Heror, Media Pont, Serbia

Since we had several new people at the Romanian event, we had a circle where each participant was saying something about her/himself and about the organization/municipality which is represented. After that it was a short overview about the first year of our project and the fact that we are entering the final phase of the project, with a special point to the contribution of the Guidebook we are working on. We reminded partners to actively work on the EU Diversity Month and to register their event/campaign spots.

After that, they have got the papers and writing the answers:

- Looking at today's program in Barlad, what will you pay particular attention to? What are you most curious or interested in?
- Considering your professional background, what would you personally like to take away from today? (For example: inspiration for working with the community, engaging with minority groups, designing inclusive events, etc.)

What participants want to experience during the festival

Intangible cultural heritage & traditions

- Interactive workshop on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage as a tool for social cohesion (pottery, local traditions) (*Portugal*)
- Explore Romanian culture (*Croatia*)
- Learn about Roma culture, folk instruments, and dance (*Another group*)
- Better understand traditions through music, dance, food, clothing, language, and crafts (*Greece*)
- Experience the cultural diversity of European countries, especially the host country (*Italy*)
- Attend the **Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage** workshop and the **Sound of Diversity** stage (*Greece*)

Inclusion, diversity & social cohesion

- See how cultural heritage supports social inclusion (*Portugal*)
- Observe how festival spaces are physically accessible for people with mobility needs (*Croatia*)

- Learn how minority communities (ethnic, religious, age, disability, gender/sexuality, etc.) are represented and made visible (*Croatia*)
- Discover ways to include all parts of society in cultural events (*Croatia*)
- Explore diversity, social inclusion, and identity intersections in work with people with special needs (*Another group*)

Authentic local experiences

- Experience gastronomic diversity and social gatherings around food (*Portugal*)
- Enjoy the "full premium local experience" and feel the authentic Bârlad (*Another group*)

Networking & intercultural exchange

- Meet people from different backgrounds (*Greece*)
- Connect with one another (*Croatia*)
- Exchange international experiences and build lasting partnerships (*Portugal*)
- Find inspiration for new ways of working with culture and the public (*Croatia*)

What participants hope to take home

Good practices & inspiration

- New ideas and good practices for building more inclusive communities (*Portugal*)
- Practical knowledge that can be adapted to their own region or country (*Portugal*)
- Inspiration for working with culture, heritage, and the public in different ways (*Croatia*)
- New approaches to diversity and inclusion in their own organisations (*Another group*)

Greater appreciation of diversity

- A stronger sense of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (*Croatia*)
- Appreciation of different cultures (*Greece*)
- Understanding how different cultures bring people together (*Greece*)
- Better understanding of diversity and inclusion (*Another group*)

Community & belonging

- A stronger sense of community, local pride, and cultural vitality (*Croatia*)
- Feeling welcomed and being part of something diverse (*Greece*)
- Better understanding of the festival atmosphere and shared experiences (*Greece*)

Memories & connections

- Memories of the experience (*Greece*)
- New connections that can support future local initiatives (*Portugal*)

2. Inclusive Communities in Practice – World Café

Session Facilitation Report

On May 16, 2026, between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM, in Bârlad, as part of the Sound of Diversity project, the Bârlad team, supported by the Future Communities Association, organized a World Café session for a group of approximately 40 participants, including 22 international participants. The session was conducted according to the design agreed upon with the organizers, with the café structured into five discussion tables and featuring three participant rotations.

The session began with opening remarks from the hosts and a presentation of the main projects and inclusion-related actions implemented by organizations and institutions in Bârlad. This was followed by a brief introduction outlining the purpose of the session: to create a space that encouraged the exchange of ideas, concrete examples of actions, activities, and projects, discussions about challenges and obstacles and how they can be overcome, as well as opportunities for networking and the development of new collaborations.

For the session, five volunteers had been requested in advance to act as table hosts. By the start of the session, two volunteers had confirmed their participation: Jana from the Czech Republic and Maria from Hungary. Before participants split into teams, three additional volunteers were recruited, including two participants from Romania and one from Slovenia.

The division of participants into discussion groups proved to be a challenge, as not everyone present initially wished to become actively involved. A few participants declined to join the discussions due to language barriers or concerns that the activity might be too complicated. However, as the

exercise progressed, they gradually approached the tables and integrated into the discussions. The Romanian participants included librarians from Bârlad and other libraries across the country, members of local NGOs, representatives of the Roma Party, and officials from local public institutions.

For each table, flipchart sheets had been prepared in advance with the discussion topic clearly indicated, while the discussion guidelines for each round and rotation were printed on A4 sheets. These materials enabled the table hosts to facilitate the discussions effectively, without confusion or ambiguity. The first discussion round lasted 20 minutes, while the following two rounds lasted 15 minutes each. An additional five minutes were allocated for the preparation of the final presentations. The presentation of conclusions from the five tables ranged between three and five minutes, depending on the extent to which each host wished to elaborate.

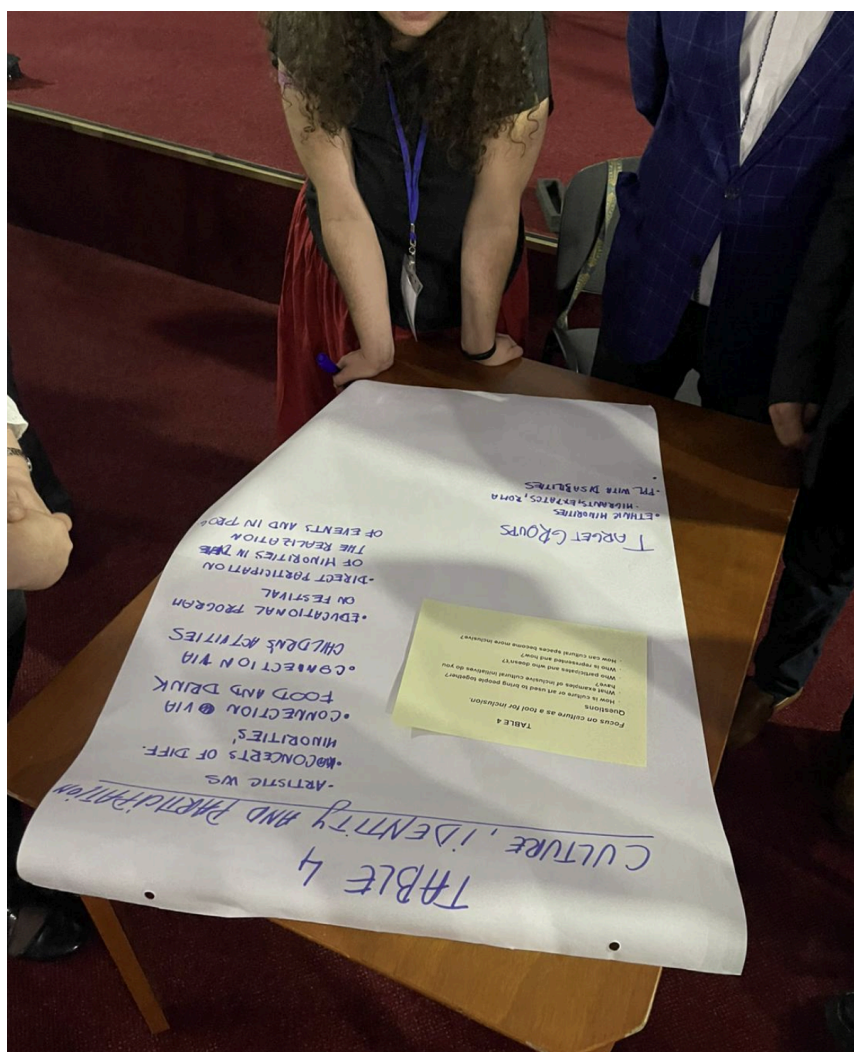
Participants identified numerous similarities between their communities, particularly regarding the groups most in need of inclusion, the services, projects, and actions addressing these needs, and the public policies supporting inclusion. Common features were also observed in the organizations, institutions, and stakeholders that form local inclusion ecosystems. Discussions highlighted the importance of directly involving minority groups in decision-making processes, the central role of education in fostering inclusion, the need for sustainable funding, the importance of overcoming stereotypes, and the necessity of redesigning inclusive events and activities to make them more engaging and attractive.

At the conclusion of the presentations, Maria, the host of Table 5, demonstrated the importance of the concept of "fun" by inviting all participants to create waves with their arms. This interactive activity provided an energetic and positive conclusion to the session. While concrete collaboration opportunities were identified only at a general level during the discussions, the event successfully created a foundation for further exchanges and future cooperation. The overarching conclusion was that people—through what they create, invent, and the ways in which they

act—are the most important element of the inclusion ecosystem and have the capacity to drive meaningful change.

Although no formal feedback form was available and time constraints prevented the collection of written or structured verbal feedback, informal conversations among participants indicated that the session had been positively received. Participants expressed appreciation for both the discussion format and the opportunity to exchange experiences with colleagues from different countries, suggesting that the World Café methodology effectively facilitated dialogue, networking, and the sharing of good practices.

5. Graphical elements and photos of the event

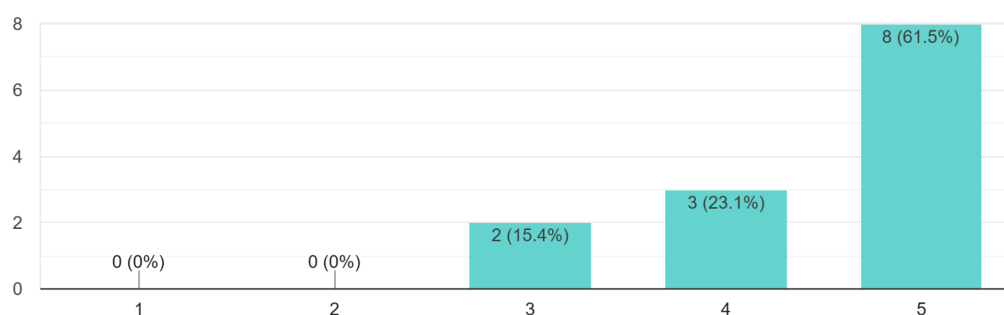




6. Feedback from participants

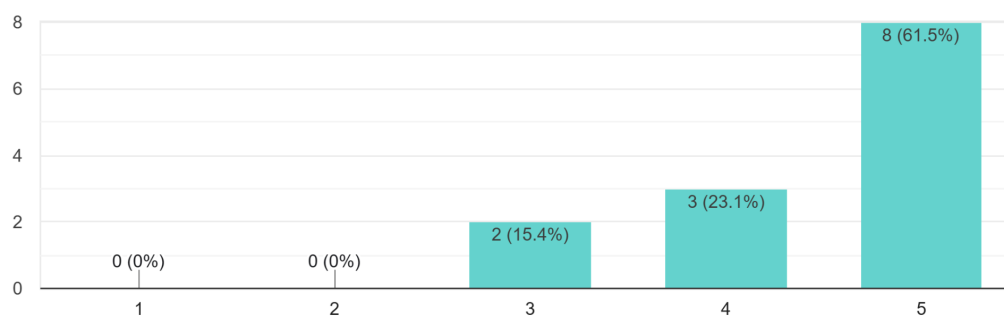
2. How satisfied are you with the event:

13 responses



3. To what extent did the event support the aim of improving the quality of community services, policies and programs for diversity and inclusion on the local level in the partnered towns?

13 responses



HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).