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:	Aleksandrów Łódzki municipality
PIC number:	937313426

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	4
Event name:	CITIZENS IN DIALOGUE: NAVIGATING EU POLICIES THROUGH ART
Type:	- Round tables - Exchanges of good practices - Hands-on sessions with town/city practitioners and local activists
In situ/online:	in situ
Location:	Aleksandrow Łodzki, Poland
Date(s):	20-22.10.2025
Website(s) (if any):	Sound of Diversity – Oficjalny serwis internetowy Aleksandrowa Łódzkiego
Participants	
Female:	127
Male:	86
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Poland]:	184
From country 2 [Slovenia]	2
From country 3 [Germany]:	2

From country 4 [Italy]:	5		
From country 5 [Ukraina]:	1		
From country 6 [Romania]	4		
From country 7 [Portugal]	2		
From country 8 [Hungary]:	2		
From country 9 [France]	1		
From country 10 [Croatia]	2		
From country 11 [Czechia]	4		
From country 12 [Greece[]	2		
From country 13 [Serbia]	2		
Total number of participants:	213	From total number of countries:	13

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

1. Target groups:

City practitioners, civil society organizations, cultural activists, local activists, youth, ethnic and national minorities, community members, local actors, LGBTQI, organizers of community events, policy makers.

2. Description of the event and its activities/ context.

“Citizens in Dialogue: Navigating EU Policies Through Art”, organised between 20th and 22nd September 2025, as part of the **21st Festival of Diverse Arts in Aleksandrów Łódzki**, the lead partner of the Sound of Diversity Network of Towns, placed art at the heart of civic engagement. This event highlights how artistic practices can challenge, interpret, and humanise European Union policies, making them more accessible and relevant to citizens’ lives. Art is not only a form of expression—it is a language of participation. Through visual arts, performance, storytelling, and interactive installations, the programme explored how creativity can open new pathways for dialogue on:

- Equality and anti-discrimination – confronting exclusion, celebrating diversity, and imagining inclusive futures.
- Migration and integration – amplifying the voices and experiences of people on the move, and building empathy across borders.

- Fundamental rights and democratic values – defending freedom, dignity, and civic agency through artistic resistance and representation.

By bringing together artists, activists, and audiences, the event demonstrates how art can act as both a mirror and a motor for European democracy—reflecting social realities while inspiring collective imagination and action.

3. Agenda of the event.

20-22.09.2025

Aleksandrów Łódzki (Poland)

Day 1 – Saturday, September 20th, 2025

Arrivals at Warsaw or Łódź (Lodz) airport

Transfers to the hotel organized by the Polish host
Subject to change depending on travel plans
Meeting points at the airport: TBA

Transfers to the hotel in Łódź - M Hotel

12:00 - 15:00 - Transfers to the hotel in Łódź - M Hotel

15:00 - Transfer to Łódź city centre

15:00 - 19:00 - Visiting multicultural Łódź

Guided tour of the Łódź city center - Piotrkowska street

- Welcome to the Sound of Diversity Project Partners with the EU context of the cultural policy
- Networking and SoD Partners' integration meeting with a traditional Polish **dinner**

21:00 – **Transfer to the hotel in Łódź** - M Hotel

Day 2 - Sunday, September 21st, 2025

Location: M Hotel conference room

9:00-10:00 - Opening workshop for SoD partners (facilitated by the SoD Project Manager, Gosia Wochowska)

10:00-10:15 - Coffee break

10:15-12:30 - Expert talk for SoD Partners "Art as a tool for diagnosing the state of society" and "Mind Map" workshops (facilitated by Piotr Fąka, Doctor of Humanities in the field of linguistics, University of Lodz)

12:30 - Transfer to Aleksandrów Łódzki for 21st Festival of Diverse Arts

13:00 - 14:00 – Lunch at Kamienica nr 6

14:15 - 15:00 - "Around the World" - concert by students of the Youth Cultural Center of Aleksandrów Łódzki and the Lutnia choir at Sound of Diversity Stage Biblioteka publiczna

15:00 - 15:45 - The Lucyan Group - multicultural journey through ethnic music, live concert at main stage Park 200 - lecia Aleksandrowa Łódzkiego

16:05 - 16:45 - Senior fashion show Park 200 - lecia Aleksandrowa Łódzkiego

Prepared by Aleksandrów Senior Council and "Wrzos" Day Care Home

17:00 - 18:00

Sound of Diversity Stage - Biblioteka publiczna in Aleksandrów Łódzki

Moderated discussions with the participation of the Mayor of Aleksandrów Łódzki, District Head of Zgierz County, the Chairwoman of the Council of the Łódź Voivodeship and the Director of the Social Welfare Home in Aleksandrów Łódzki:

1) The history of three cultures / three nations in Aleksandrów Łódzki

2) Migration crisis in time of russian aggression on Ukraine

18:30 - 19:30 - Dinner Kamienica nr 6

20:00 - Justyna Steczkowska concert

The main concert of the evening, by the Polish representative of this year's Eurovision contest. Main stage: Park 200 - lecia Aleksandrowa Łódzkiego

21:30 - Transfer to the Hotel

Day 3 - Monday, September 22nd, 2025

Location: M Hotel conference room

8:30 - 10:00 - Debriefing meeting for the Sound of Diversity partners (facilitated by Tomasz Barszcz and Gosia Wochowska). Part 1: What are the take-aways from the event in Poland? Part 2: Festivals meet the Sound of Diversity: hosting approaches, challenges and successes.

13:00 - Lunch at the Hotel's restaurant

Transfers to the airport(s) organized by the Polish host

SOUND OF DIVERSITY

20.-22.09.2025
Aleksandrów Łódzki, Poland

Sound of Diversity – Citizens in Dialogue: Navigating EU Policies Through Art

"Citizens in Dialogue: Navigating EU Policies Through Art", organised as part of the 21st Festival of Diverse Arts in Aleksandrów Łódzki, the lead partner of the Sound of Diversity Network of Towns, places art at the heart of civic engagement. This event highlights how artistic practices can challenge, interpret, and humanise European Union policies, making them more accessible and relevant to citizens' lives. Art is not only a form of expression—it is a language of participation. Through visual arts, performance, storytelling, and interactive installations, the programme explores how creativity can open new pathways for dialogue on:

Equality and anti-discrimination – confronting exclusion, celebrating diversity, and imagining inclusive futures.
Migration and integration – amplifying the voices and experiences of people on the move, and building empathy across borders.
Fundamental rights and democratic values – defending freedom, dignity, and civic agency through artistic resistance and representation.
By bringing together artists, activists, and audiences, the event demonstrates how art can act as both a mirror and a motor for European democracy—reflecting social realities while inspiring collective imagination and action.

Co-funded by the European Union

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SOUND OF DIVERSITY

21.09.2025

Location: M Hotel conference room

9:00-10:00 - Opening workshop for SoD partners
(facilitated by the SoD Project Manager, Gosia Wochowska)

10:00-10:15 - Coffee break

10:15-12:30 - Expert talk for SoD Partners
"Art as a tool for diagnosing the state of society" and "Mind Map" workshops
(facilitated by Piotr Fąka, Doctor of Humanities in the field of linguistics and communication science, WSB Merito Universities)

12:30 - Transfer to Aleksandrów Łódzki for 21'st Festival of Diverse Arts
Location: Aleksandrów Łódzki

13:00 - 14:00 – Lunch
Location: Kamienica Nr 6

14:15 - 15:00 - "Around the World" - concert by students of the Youth Cultural Center of Aleksandrów Łódzki and the Lutnia choir at Sound of Diversity Stage
Location: Sound of Diversity Stage

15:00 - 15:45 - The Lucyan Group - multicultural journey through ethnic music
Location: main stage

Visiting the festival area in the meantime

16:05 - 16:45 - Senior fashion show
Prepared by Aleksandrów Senior Council and "Wrzos" Day Care Home

17:00 - 18:00 - Moderated discussions:
„The history of three cultures / three nations in Aleksandrów Łódzki"
„Migration crisis in time of russian aggression on Ukraine"
Location: Sound of Diversity Stage

With the participation of the Mayor of Aleksandrów Łódzki, District Head of Zgierz County, the Chairwoman of the Council of the Łódź Voivodeship and the Director of the Social Welfare Home in Aleksandrów Łódzki

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SOUND OF DIVERSITY

20.-22.09.2025
Aleksandrów Łódzki, Poland

Sound of Diversity – Citizens in Dialogue: Navigating EU Policies Through Art

Agenda

20.09.2025

Transfers to the hotel organized by the Polish host.
Subject to change depending on travel plans.
Meeting points at the airport: TBA

12:00 - 15:00 - Transfers to the hotel in Łódź
M Hotel, św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus 111, 91-222 Łódź

15:00 – Transfer to Łódź city centre

15:00 - 19:00 - Visiting multicultural Łódź

Guided tour of the Łódź city center - Piotrkowska street

Welcome to the Sound of Diversity Project Partners with the EU context of the cultural policy

Networking and SoD Partners' integration meeting with a traditional Polish dinner

21:00 – Transfer to the hotel in Łódź
M Hotel , św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus 111, 91-222 Łódź

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4. Main take aways/ findings from the event

Transnational events' evaluatory session and lessons for the next steps of the project (22.09, 9.00-10.00 CET)

In the session we discussed combining Sound of Diversity and festivals from the hosts' perspective. We called it: "**Festivals meet the Sound of Diversity: hosting approaches, challenges and successes"** and the plan was to set the stage for the hosts of the SoD events in 2025 (Obidos - Portugal, Prague - Czechia, Seine Saint Dennis - France and Aleksandrow Lodzki - Poland) and looked at the project from their point of view.

The hosts were asked to share on these two questions:
-2–3 most important difficulties they faced
- 2–3 successes they noticed which resulted from combining an SoD international event and their regular festivals?
With the participants' group, in an open discussion, we talked about what recommendations could be given to future hosts (logistics, planning the agenda, gender and anti discrimination mainstreaming) and what are the requests to the project partners participating in the events.

Summary of key points

1. **Success factors**

1.1 Approach to diversity and inclusion:

- Showcasing a particular cultural focus (e.g. Romani in Prague, diasporas in Seine DSainFrance, Ukraine in Poland).
- Encouraging learning about cultural roots and impacts (eg. Prague 2025).
- Combining diverse tools, methods, and means of expression (concerts, exhibitions, etc.), e.g. Obidos
- Engaging diverse publics.
- Addressing strong stereotypes.
- Working closely with the community (e.g. France)

1.2 Impact on the consortium:

- Build meaningful connections among partners.

- Create synergies between SoD, urban projects, and ICC (France).
- Showcase approaches to festival planning with community involvement (mobilisation).
- Integrate more non-formal education into activities.

2. Challenges

- Coordination issues:
    - Aligning agendas of SoD and festivals.
    - Combining the dual role of hosting the Sound of Diversity (SoD) and the festival.
    - Requesting partner confirmations (arrivals & departures) early.
    - Securing exact locations in advance (for orientation of international partners, if festivals occupy big areas).
- Community engagement:
    - How to effectively promote the project to the public.
    - How to ensure meaningful participation and visibility.

Considerations:

- Partners: recognise the context and effort invested.
- Ensure space for introductory and closing sessions.
- Internally within hosting teams: strengthen hosting team's capacity, delegate a person responsible only for SoD, engage your colleagues in the project at an early stage so they can help you when the SoD event occurs,.
- Try new, creative options for connecting agendas of SoD and the festival.
- Improve logistics coordination with partners (travel, arrivals, departures) - request these details early in advance and you may set a hard deadline for providing these information
- Clarify exact locations early on.
- Organise a structured introduction session, going through the agenda of the event, answering all logistical questions.

Overall outlook

The discussions emphasise the importance of:

- Balancing organisational complexity between SoD and the festival.
- Strengthening partner cooperation through meaningful connections and synergies.
- Engaging communities actively in planning and delivery.
- Promoting diversity through cultural expression, education, and stereotype reduction.

‘’For me, the key takeaways were seeing how generational gaps are also a form of diversity we need to include, and realizing that even when people come from a similar culture — like Ukrainians — integration is still a process that engages the whole community’’.

‘’The reality of our social situation is really different between each country. For example, the refugee issues about Ukrainian people are almost non-existent in France, and it is really interesting to see how local authorities and NGOs find solutions, because at the end it concerns us all. We really need to see what is the reality in our country's partners to try to make a difference in our own country’’.

‘’That it was a very important event for a small local community and that the local administration is able to actively engage community members through the participation of minorities through local cultural, social, and inclusion initiatives’’.

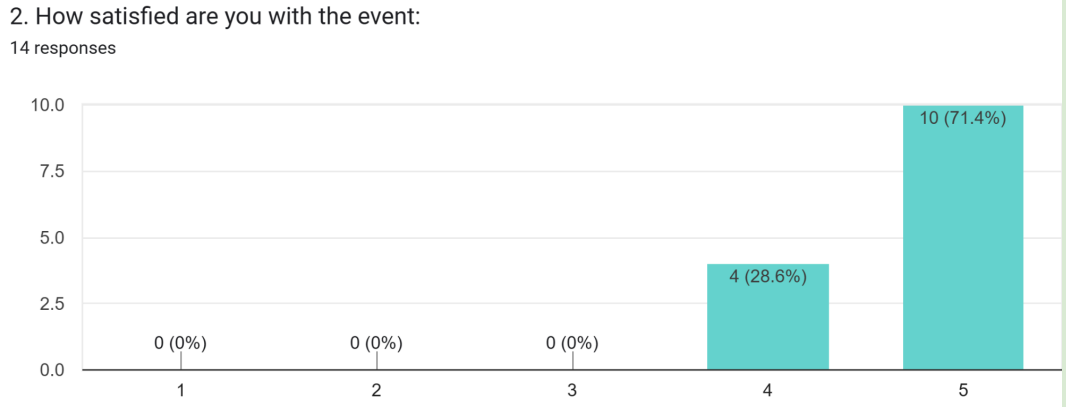
‘’I think we need more time to discuss between each others about how we can manage diversity policy all together through our European commitment, what can we do to embrace a real cultural policy about diversity’’

''To improve future Sound of Diversity events, it may be essential to transform communication from one-way to dialogic, creating structured spaces where **citizens and partner representatives can engage on equal terms**. The adoption of participatory methodologies such as world cafés, open-space technology, and design thinking would foster the active involvement of all participants, overcoming the passive dynamics of traditional frontal presentations. A fundamental shift would involve the involvement of people with diverse and/or migrant backgrounds, who should be recognized as co-facilitators and bringers of specific skills, not just as beneficiaries of inclusive policies. Their direct experience represents a valuable resource for understanding the real challenges of integration and designing more effective solutions. To ensure a concrete and lasting impact, events could generate pilot projects that participants can implement in their communities, supported by a structured follow-up system that monitors the progress of the initiatives launched. This approach would transform the event from an isolated moment of reflection to a catalyst for concrete and measurable action. Finally, the integration of local artists from minority communities should not be seen as cultural decoration, but as a methodological strategy to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers, creating universal languages that foster shared narratives and a deeper understanding of issues of diversity and inclusion''.

5. Graphical elements and photos of the event

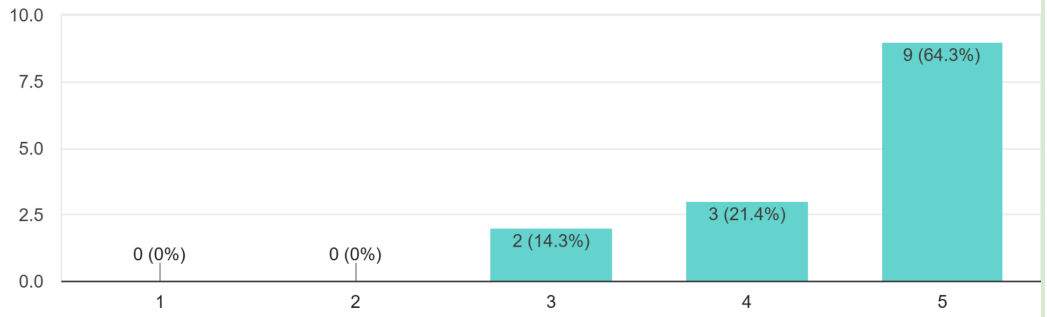
WP 4 - Selected photos (host) - Google Drive

6. Feedback from participants



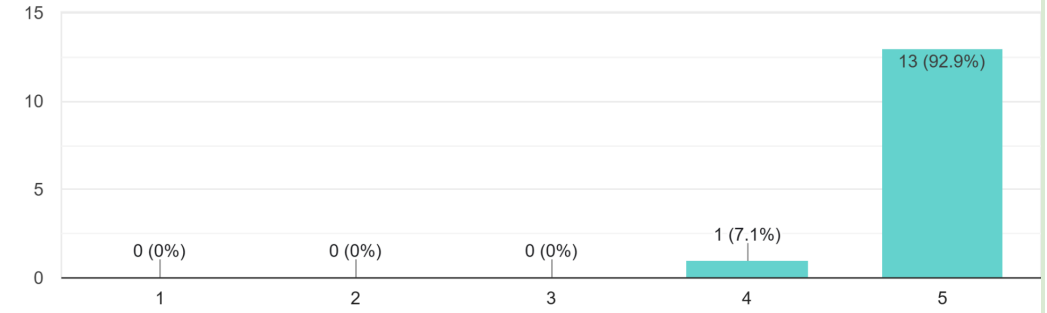
4. To what extent did the project support the exchange of models and tools that promote diversity, fight discrimination, and foster minority participation...gh local cultural, social, and inclusion initiatives?

14 responses



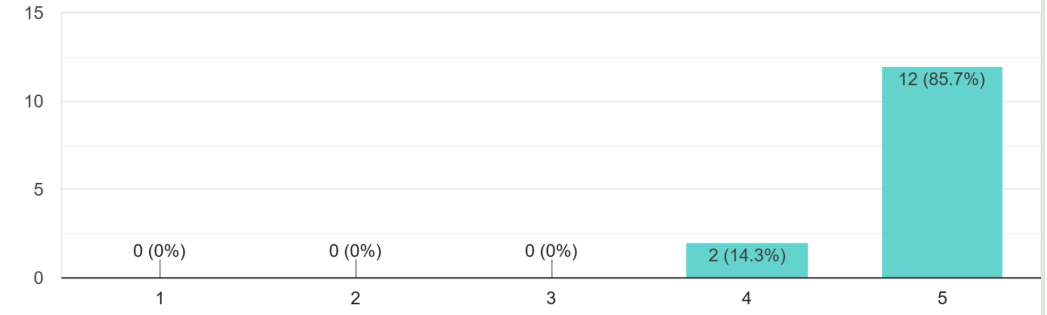
5. Moderation of the meeting/facilitation methods used:

14 responses



6. Logistics

14 responses



Testimonials:

I really enjoyed the event and felt everything was organized with great care. The logistics were smooth — from the shuttles and accommodation to food and overall coordination, we

felt very well taken care of. The workshops and lectures were engaging and sparked good discussions, even if they didn't always lead to a clear conclusion. For me, it was still valuable to exchange ideas and hear different perspectives. What I especially appreciated was the chance to see how the hosts work with their community. There was a real sense of connection, openness, and diversity in the way they brought people together. The atmosphere was warm, inclusive, and inspiring — it made the whole experience not just informative but also very human. The team is great, and their experiences are so valuable.

First of all, the organization was really great. The program was very diversified, and it was really interesting to discover and learn about political commitment due to diversity issues in this locality. However, I think we need more time to discuss between each other about how we can manage diversity policy all together through our European commitment, and what we can do to embrace a real cultural policy about diversity.

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