

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	
Participant:	[[Razvojno informacijski center Bela krajina] ([RIC BK])
PIC number:	[891209326]
Project name and acronym:	[Without the Schengen border, by creating cultural content, we would encourage stronger connections among the citizens of both countries across the border and create a shared cultural space] — [JURKA 24 - 25]

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	[4]		
Event name:	[Activity supporting cultural exchange in Karlovac/Croatia]		
Type:	[workshop]		
In situ/online:	[in-situ]		
Location:	[Croatia], [Karlovac]		
Date(s):	[Saturday, May 10, 2025]		
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.ric-belakrajina.si/sl/aktualno/uspesno-izveden-cetrti-dogodek-projekta-jurka-24-25/		
Participants			
Female:	58		
Male:	29		
Non-binary:	-		
From country 1 [name]:	Slovenia (total 51)		
From country 2 [name]:	Croatia (total 36)		
From country 3 [name]:			
...			
Total number of participants:	87	From total number of countries:	2
Description			
Provide a short description of the event and its activities.			

On Saturday, May 10 2025, we held the fourth event within the JURKA 24–25 project, co-funded by the European Union through the CERV program (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values). The project is based on collaboration between partners from Slovenia and Croatia, including RIC Bela Krajina, the Municipality of Črnomelj, the City of Karlovac and the Karlovac County Tourist Board.

The event titled “Celebrating Diversity – Folklore is in Our DNA” took place at the Atrium of Science in Karlovac. We organized the event on the first Saturday (May 10) after the celebration of Europe Day, as we wanted to highlight the importance of this day, celebrated on May 9th, when we honour peace and unity in Europe. The programme began with welcome addresses by Ms. Kristina Medarić, vice president of CIOFF International, and Mr. Jaka Birkelbach, deputy mayor of the Municipality of Črnomelj. Mr. Birkelbach emphasized the importance of cultural cooperation between Slovenia and Croatia within the framework of the CERV programme. He underlined the value of cross-border cultural exchange and the role of CERV-supported initiatives in fostering mutual understanding and long-term collaboration between the two countries.

Mrs. Kristina Medarić highlighted unifying role of cultural heritage and expressed satisfaction with the successful implementation of joint projects that promote folklore and shared traditions.

This was followed by a presentation prepared by Tadej Fink. During an animated presentation, members of the Dragatuš Folklore Group delighted the audience with performances of traditional Bela Krajina dances and songs. Kristina Zajc, a member of the group, then presented the traditional Bela Krajina costume and its development through the time. This was followed by a demonstration of playing traditional Bela Krajina instruments. As part of a workshop, visitors also had the opportunity to try playing the traditional instrument called Gudalo.

The promotion of the cultural heritage of Črnomelj and Bela Krajina included an exhibition of local crafts, prepared by Bela Krajina artisan Tončka Jankovič. She showcased bobbin lace, crocheted products, and woven items made from sheep's wool. With Tončka's help, visitors also got to try knitting with XXXL-sized needles. The event continued with a dance workshop, where visitors could join the folklore games and folklore dances and learn the basic steps of Bela Krajina dances.

After the cultural programme, there was a presentation and tasting of typical Bela Krajina dishes. Baked goods such as Bela Krajina flatbread (pogača), povitica, buckwheat potica and Črnomelj pretzels were prepared by Bernarda Kump. Meat products were provided by Bojan Čadonič, and wine came from the Metlika Wine Cellar. After that, participants went on a guided tour of the town of Karlovac, where they learned about the town's historical and cultural landmarks.

At the conclusion of the event, a survey was conducted among the attendees to gather feedback on their experience and the impact of the event.

Dear visitors,

Thank you for attending the event "Celebrating Diversity – Folklore is our cultural DNA." To better understand how today's content impacted your experience, we kindly ask you to complete a short survey. Thank you for your time!

How would you rate your overall experience at the event?

- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied

Did you gain new knowledge about Slovenian folklore heritage at the event?

- ☐ Yes, a lot
- ☐ Yes, some
- ☐ No, I didn't gain any new knowledge

Which part of the program impressed you the most? Multiple choices possible.

- ☐ Demonstration of local crafts
- ☐ Presentation of Slovenian folklore heritage and costumes

- ☐ Demonstration of playing traditional Slovenian instruments
- ☐ Slovenian dance workshop
- ☐ Presentation of typical Slovenian cuisine
- ☐ All equally

Did today's presentation of Slovenian heritage give you a better understanding of Slovenian culture?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Would you like to attend similar events in the future?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for improving the event?

Key Findings from the Visitor Survey (Sharing of insights: Reflections on the experience):

The feedback from visitors to the event "Celebrating Diversity – Folklore is our cultural DNA" indicates a high level of satisfaction and engagement. Here are the key findings:

Participants expressed satisfaction with their experience at the event. 75% respondents stated that they had acquired new knowledge about Slovenian folklore heritage, while 25% said they had gained some knowledge.

The most impressive aspects for them were the presentation of Slovenian folklore heritage and traditional costumes (22,4%), Slovenian dance workshop and the label "all listed activities" (each selected by 19% participants), the demonstration of playing characteristic instruments and the presentation of typical Slovenian cuisine (15,5% participants), and the presentation of traditional crafts (8,6% participants).

All survey participants indicated that the presentation of Slovenian heritage at the event helped them gain a better understanding of Slovenian culture. 88,9% of them stated that they would like to participate in similar events in the future, while 11,1% answered "maybe."

In the section for additional comments and suggestions, they wrote that they would like to have informative brochures about the presented costumes and instruments and more interactive folklore workshops for children in the future. Comments included that it was nice to see such strong neighbourly relations being built, that it was a great event with outstanding people. Knitting with large needles was a lot of fun, and that they were thrilled and encouraged organizers to continue – "more events like this, keep it up!"

Description of the programme, Karlovac (CRO), May 10, 2025:

8.00 Departure from Črnomelj (Metlika border crossing)

10.00 Participants arrival from SLO to Karlovac (CRO), registration and welcome coffee

10.30 Presentation of the programme and welcome speeches

- Mr. Jaka Birkelbach, Deputy Mayor of the Municipality of Črnomelj

- Ms. Kristina Medarić, Vice President of CIOFF International

10.40 Workshop: Importance of preserving cultural heritage and tradition as a means of safeguarding cultural diversity and fostering community pride

Programme »Celebrating diversity - Folklore is our cultural DNA«

- Sharing experiences by folklore group from Slovenia:
- Presentation of Slovenian dances - traditional folk dance and music demonstration,
- Demonstration of the local craft,
- Traditional folk costume presentation,
- Interactive activity – Dance workshop,
- Presentation of typical food and tasting,
- Distribution of workshop materials,
- Old town guided tour

15.00 Lunch

17.00 Sharing of insights

Conclusion of the event

Alignment with EU CERV Programme Objectives

The fourth event of the JURKA 24–25 project successfully addressed several key priorities and objectives of the European Union's CERV (Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values) programme.

Fourth event matches the general objectives of the call:

To promote exchanges between citizens:

The primary aim was to foster exchanges between citizens from Slovenia and Croatia, enriching their understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage shared on the event. The event was attended by 87 participants, 51 came from Slovenia. A positive atmosphere was created among the attendees, who actively participated in presentations, discussions and networking activities.

To give citizens the opportunity to discover the cultural diversity of the European Union and to make them aware that European values and cultural heritage constitute the foundation for a common future:

The event served as valuable educational tools, including citizens. It allowed them to appreciate the importance of preserving traditions while also respecting and learning from those of others. Cultural event provided opportunities for individuals to meet and build friendships with people from other country.

To guarantee peaceful relations between Europeans and to ensure their active participation at the local level:

By eliminating the Schengen border, project facilitating greater mobility and interaction between citizens. By bringing together citizens, the event encouraged cross-border cooperation and the exchange of ideas, which are essential for a well-functioning democracy within the European Union. By fostering cultural exchanges and interactions, event contributed to a more integrated and cohesive European community.

To reinforce mutual understanding and friendship between European citizens:

The event promoted opportunities for civic engagement. Cultural event provided a platform for citizens to actively participate in the workshop. Participants expressed their cultural identities through dance, music and art, contributing to a vibrant democratic culture, where all participant could participate and learn about and appreciate different cultures, fostering a sense of understanding and respect.

The event addressed gender equality. The event promoted the equal participation of women and men in cultural activities. The event emphasised the importance of cultural rights as fundamental human rights. It promoted inclusivity.

To encourage cooperation between municipalities and the exchange of best practices:

The partnership between Črnomelj and Karlovac on implementation of joint event is a powerful means of enhancing European unity and citizen connectivity. The event fostered collaboration between the partner municipalities as well as local and regional authorities.

Local citizens were actively involved in discussions throughout the JURKA 24–25 event, contributing their thoughts, insights and personal experiences. Their involvement helped create a dynamic, inclusive atmosphere that encouraged deeper engagement and mutual understanding.

Mr. Fink conducted an active presentation of cultural heritage, in which the event participants actively took part.

The main topic of the event was "The importance of preserving cultural heritage and tradition as a means of safeguarding cultural diversity and fostering community pride," based on which participants discussed specific topics related to the presentation:

Geographic and historical framework

Participants gained insight into the geographical and historical framework of Bela Krajina, region in the southeastern part of Slovenia.

Cultural framework

Folklore and Folklorism in Črnomelj and Bela Krajina

Folklore activity encompasses the (re)creation of dance, vocal, musical and other forms of intangible heritage, as well as material heritage through costumes, musical instruments and props.

Folklore is often called "theatre of history".

The multilayered nature of folklore in Bela Krajina – musical and dance heritage

The costume image of Bela Krajina

Presented are the garments, footwear, headwear and accessories that form part of the clothing heritage of the people of Bela Krajina. This heritage is extremely diverse and usually presented in coordinated ensembles. The whiteness of the clothing is often emphasized, although the so-called "white costume" is just one of many traditional styles worn by the people of Bela Krajina.

Folk music of Bela Krajina

At the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, the musical landscape was shaped mainly by folk musicians playing at various gatherings, celebrations, weddings, religious festivals and village festivities.

The leading and foundational instrument was the diatonic accordion, though musicians often played in combinations that included a bassist, violinist and clarinetist.

Tamburitza players performed songs and melodies in instrumental ensembles, but only after World War II did they begin to accompany dances (especially within folklore groups).

Simple traditional instruments also once played an important role. These were easily accessible, portable, and simple to learn, such as the harmonica, comb, flute, fiddle, zither, oprekelj, drumljica, nunalca, okarina or "whistling bird," etc.

Folk songs

One of Bela Krajina's greatest folkloric treasures is its abundance of folk songs, which vary widely and, due to a turbulent history and many cultural influences, are rich in colour and polyphony, offering a vibrant expression of this cultural crossroads.

Folk tales

Folklore tales as legends, fairy tales, anecdotes, stories, and recollections, as well as historical, social, and humorous narratives, also form part of the mosaic of Bela Krajina's heritage.

They are often a source of inspiration for preparing folklore programs and performances.

Modern life trends are changing values, lifestyles, social interactions, and ways of thinking.

Folklore activity should not be seen as something old-fashioned, regressive, or inferior. Rather, it should be regarded as a respectful preservation of values that elevate our dignity, self-image, and quality of life. A quality stage performance and the professional rule for folklore (re)creation require that all elements (dances, songs, tunes, musical accompaniment, costumes) align with the chosen historical period and be thematically and regionally coherent.

Interactive workshop participation

The dance workshop involving Slovenian folklore dances gave participants, including locals, a hands-on opportunity to experience another culture. The workshop made it easy for citizens to ask questions and exchange thoughts, deepening their understanding of Slovenian cultural practices.

Informal conversations during activities

During the activities, participants from both countries engaged in discussions. The participants discussed the importance of preserving folklore and cultural heritage through dance, songs and traditional customs. They emphasized that folklore is not just a stage performance, but a way to maintain a connection with the past and local identity. There was also conversation about how to bring these traditions closer to younger generations so they can experience them as part of their own story, not just something old and distant.

The guided tour of the old town of Karlovac allowed participants to engage in discussions about the town's historical significance. Local guide shared stories and insights about the historical sites.

Conclusion

Participants played an essential role in making the JURKA 24–25 event an enriching and inclusive experience. Through their active involvement in discussions, workshops, tours and feedback sessions, they contributed their unique perspectives and ideas on preserving and promoting cultural heritage. This active participation reflected the project's goals of fostering mutual understanding and building a sense of shared European identity.

The JURKA 24 - 25 project engaged local citizens extensively, promoting active participation and inclusive dialogue through various activities. Fourth event provided a platform for Croatian and Slovenian citizens to engage with each other. By involving partner municipalities and regional organizations, the project promoted best practices in organizing cultural events that foster mutual understanding among all participants.

About project: <https://ric-belakrajina.si/sl/projekti/>;

About fourth event with photos: <https://ric-belakrajina.si/sl/aktualno/uspesno-izveden-cetrti-dogodek-projekta-jurka-24-25/>

Jurjevanje festival (slo): <https://jurjevanje.si/sl/novice/uspesno-izveden-cetrti-dogodek-projekta-jurka-24-25/>

Jurjevanje festival (eng): <https://jurjevanje.si/en/news/successfully-held-fourth-event-of-the-jurka-24-25-project/>

Municipality Črnomelj: <https://www.crnomelj.si/sl/o-obcini/projekti-in-investicije/2024070210202912/jurka-24-25>

Karlovac City: <https://www.karlovac.hr/grad-karlovac/eu-projekti/projekti-u-tijeku/>

Press articles:

Local media: <https://radiokrka.svet24.si/clanek/kultura/promocija-kulturne-dediscine-bele-krajine-na-dogodku-jurka-2425-v-karlovcu-1818443>

https://lokalno.svet24.si/novice/promocija-kulturne-dediscine-bele-krajine-v-karlovcu-1820797#google_vignette

Local newspaper : Belokranjec, maj 2025

Local newspaper: Karlovački tjednik, maj 2025

Social Media:

Facebook RIC Bela krajina:

<https://www.facebook.com/ricbelakrajina/posts/pfbid02x5jk6EQyjKY4MNJwywvi1zZBA4dQg5Gm8dtfbd9GnHMsEDYzDkWzbinTaNGZ1qf>

Instagram RIC Bela krajina: https://www.instagram.com/p/DJlZYScoZ1Q/?img_index=1

Facebook Karlovac County:

<https://www.facebook.com/VisitKarlovacCounty/posts/pfbid02WpTy138oo1B7Vk4E62fuyHVE5ykiFYyAiWBXUoXzLiDRHRCtEFQmLZzwan9aiCcdI>

Črnomelj municipality Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/obcina.crnomelj/posts/pfbid02CjimvpR4fJKqmTwDCbEditTZssnhS1dDEp6E5jLufUmkGrVx2ztL8oStNjn2YW7pl>

Jaka Birkelbach, Deputy Mayor:

<https://www.facebook.com/birkelbach/posts/pfbid0z8T4fkiAJLb8CFxM4Qy6ufdXrSLWZNZWHqodwwAZh7SzwNohYr1aYkkVyQ7pFeI>

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