



INCLUSION IS BEING ASKED TO DANCE

TOOL FOR EDUCATING DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION THROUGH
TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCES



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1. WELCOME NOTES

Diana Yeghiazaryan

Co-founder, CEO of Information and Education Development Network NGO



Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this special booklet, a reflection of the inspiring journey we shared during the "Inclusion is being asked to Dance" project implemented in Debet village, Armenia, on November 6-13, 2023.

Within these pages, you will find glimpses of youth laughter, the rhythm of traditional dances, and the treasure of diverse cultures and enthusiasm of Erasmus projects woven together. This booklet gathers the spirit of our collective efforts, aiming to bring together the values of diversity and the inclusive power of folk dance.

This project holds a special place in my heart, as it represents the combination of my two passions - youth work and the enriching world of dance. Crafting this initiative during a challenging and hard period personally for me, I found meaning in the belief that dance is not just a tool for building an inclusive society but also a power for enhancing mental well-being among young people.

As you explore the pages within, you may sense the dedication and care infused into every aspect of this project and may it inspire you to embark on your own transformative journey. Let this booklet be a source of inspiration, encouraging you to continue advocating for diversity and inclusion in your own societies and communities. Thank you for joining me in this dance towards a brighter, more inclusive future for Europe and the globe.

I want to thank the European Youth Press, which trusted me with this work and supported all the participants for being part of this journey. Let's keep dancing towards a future where everyone is not just invited to the party but also asked to dance.



**Warm regards,
Diana Yeghiazaryan
Project Lead and Author
on behalf of EYP**

2. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The origin of the project idea

We observed that learning each others' dances in-depth and practising them makes young people closer and more inclusive and tolerant towards each other, changes their attitudes towards different cultures and builds cultural dialogue. Our idea is to show the cultural differences and highlight our similarities to become the ones who are united in diversity.

The connection between inclusion and folk dances, the tool we want to create, lies in their capacity to bring people from diverse backgrounds together, encourage cultural understanding and respect, break down barriers and stereotypes, and promote unity in diversity. By engaging in these cultural activities, individuals can build bridges, change their attitudes, and foster a more inclusive and tolerant society.



Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this project is to support the creation of an inclusive, just, and diverse society, to foster dialogue and social cohesion, and combat discrimination and segregation through non-formal learning, sharing and practicing traditional folk dances and cultural exchange.

01.

To facilitate learning on values of inclusion, diversity, non-discrimination, intercultural dialogue and equity among young people.

02.

To encourage sharing and experiencing different traditional folk dances as cultural exchange and connection.

03.

Promote the method of using traditional folk dances as a tool for inclusion, tolerance, and diversity in non-formal education.

2. ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project's Timeline

01

Preparatory meetings with partners, coordinators and group leaders
October 2023, Online

02

Implementation of the Youth Exchange
November 6 - 13, 2023, Debet, Armenia

03

Follow-Up Local Actions implemented by the participants
Two months after the project, in Armenia, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Italy

04

Evaluation Meeting with group leaders, coordinators, active participants
January 2024, Online



Project's Slogan

**"Diversity is being invited to the party.
Inclusion is being asked to dance"**



3. PROJECT PARTNERS



www.youthpress.org



www.inednet.com



www.bulgarianyf.eu

InfinityGreece

www.infinitygreece.com



www.scambieuropei.info

EUROPEAN YOUTH PRESS

European Youth Press (EYP) is a network of youth media organisations in Europe. The mission of the European Youth Press is to strengthen the role of youth media and promote freedom of press in Europe.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Information and Education Development Network is an information-consulting organization, which acts as a network of media makers, non-formal educators and youth workers.

BULGARIAN YOUTH FORUM

Bulgarian Youth Forum is a youth organisation, which supports the young people in their efforts to be complete and active persons in the society.

INFINITY GREECE

Infinity Greece is an awarded social enterprise that empowers youth in media literacy, digital and entrepreneurial upskilling.

SCAMBIEUROPEI

Scambieuropei is an organisation aiming to support young people's personal, educational and professional development through the promotion of interculturalism, exchange of good practices, and active European Citizenship.

4. DANCE AND INCLUSION

In the following videos the participants depicted how we can overcome exclusion and discrimination using dance as a tool.



Xenophobia

fear or hatred of people from other countries or cultures



Homophobia / Transphobia

discrimination against individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity



Ableism

discrimination against individuals with disabilities



Sexism

discrimination and prejudice based on an individual's sex



Ageism

discrimination based on a person's age



Racism

racial or ethnic exclusion

Note: please click on video titles to watch the videos.

5. DANCE TUTORIALS

Below are the original video tutorials created by the participants of the INCLUSION IS BEING ASKED TO DANCE Erasmus+ youth exchange.



Armenian Karno Kochari



German S´ Muhlrad



Italian Tarantella




Greek Sousta




Bulgarian Shirto and Gankino Horo




Note: please click on video titles to watch the videos.


Country	Armenia 
Dance name	Karno Kochari
Background	<p>Kochari is the oldest and most popular dance in Armenia. Nowadays, Kochari is widely performed throughout Armenia during holidays, festive celebrations, family ceremonies and other social events. It is open to all participants, irrespective of age, gender or social status. Kochari provides a sense of shared identity and solidarity, and fosters mutual respect among community members of all ages.</p> <p>Every region in the Armenian Highlands had its distinct style of Kochari dance and music. Karno Kochari is a particularly captivating one, which originated in the historical region of Karin. The traditional dance preserves ancient elements like unique movements, spirited expressions, leaping, and symbolic portrayals of rams and goats. It captures the essence of ram-like movements in its swift, forceful steps, and weight shifts, as if ready to strike a pose.</p> <p>Kochari is danced by holding hands and moving in a row or dancing in line. Generally, the main dancer announces the figure change in a loud voice or by waving the handkerchief. The movements in the dance are springy - some of them appeared over time when the cult of animals was widely spread, and that's why they remind the jumping of horned animals.</p>
How to dance	<p>Position: Hold each others' hands by palms, making sure that one person's left hand is always over the other's right. Stand in a straight line as tightly as possible, shoulders touching each other.</p> <p>Movements: In the first part of the dance, we go two steps to the left and two to the right. Important to note, on EVERY step throughout this dance we do springs (bending the knees). You can count 1 to 8 going to the left, and the same coming back. In both cases, on 7th and 8th counts you should put your last stepping leg on tiptoes. In the second part, the right leg steps to the front (holding the body weight) and we do 1 deep and 2 small springs - two times leaning forward and two times back in the straight position.</p> <p>Tempo: Karno Kochari has 3 different tempos (slow, medium, fast). Try to feel the music: start with the slow tempo, do the medium with small hopes on your feet and finally the fast with more intense hopes.</p> <p>Improvisation: There is also an improvised (optional) element in Karno Kochari, where we do the same movements until the very last step. Here instead of the standard springs, the right leg raises and then hits the floor meanwhile lifting the left one. At the next count, the left leg hits the floor while the right one raises on tiptoes. After completing the improvised element, pause for about 2 seconds while the music goes on, go one step to the right (instead of the standard two) and then continue as usual.</p> <p>Tutorial: https://youtu.be/X1zN2iNtWSk?si=KtNNutcc9IR5HIZV</p>
Inclusive elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection - dancers stand as tightly to each other as possible, firmly holding each other's hands thus creating a strong connection • Unity - the movements among the dancers need to be unanimous as everyone feels the movements of their right- and left- side partners touching them with shoulders and arms • Energy - the special "hey!" / "hey, ho!" exclamations throughout the dance serve as a way to raise the spirit of the dancers, in addition to the bold "ram hitting" movements and the high position to be held for the head / sight • Respect - the dancers should respect the dance line from the beginning and make sure that they are not standing in front of or behind their right- and left- side partners, and the same line should be respected also during the forward- and backward- movements
Music	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o_bKsW2vGivgYsiTsCZp1uNpz8DBdE89/view
Notes	Karno Kochari can be danced in 2 equal lines facing each other, as if simulating the movements of a ram battle.

Country	Armenia 
Dance name	Tamzara
How to dance	<p>Tamzara is a wedding song-dance found in many Armenian settlements. The word “Tamzara” refers to the name of an Armenian settlement; however, more than 17 variants of this dance have been found.</p> <p>Tamzara used to be a wedding song-dance, where the main role belonged to the head of dance and his assistant, and where the bride had to stand beside the godfather. Nowadays, Tamzara has nearly lost its ceremonial meaning and is performed on almost all community occasions and feasts.</p> <p>The Tamzara is a dance in a distinctive 9/8 rhythm, which was widespread across much of the Armenian Highlands. The music is typically played by a traditional musical instrument called duduk - a woodwind instrument, and dhol - a double-headed drum. The combination of duduk and dhol creates a unique and energetic sound that sets the tone for the dance.</p> <p>Tamzara is one of the most popular Armenian folk dances that is well-preserved among Armenians.</p>
How to dance	<p>Position: start by standing in a circle, hold each others by shoulders and make sure that one person’s left arm always goes over the next person’s right arm. The basic movements include hitting the ground with your foot, and performing springs by bending your knees meanwhile moving your body weight on the bent leg. Please see the video below for further explanation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTQ5BwUnOt0</p> <p>Note that in the video 3 different versions of Tamzara are danced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 00:10 - start with version 1 • 01:12 - switch to version 2 (hand holding changes) • 01:54 - switch to version 3 (continues till the end)
Inclusive elements	<p>Community: Tamzara is danced in one big circle, where every dancer can stand anywhere in the circular dance chain and be included.</p> <p>Equality: In Tamzara, there is no dance leader and there is no requirement to stand according to heights, gender or any other factor, so everyone is really equal in the circle</p> <p>Cheerfulness: Claps in rhythm with the music can be integrated in the dance thus contributing to harmony and inclusion within the circle</p> <p>Ease of movements: Tamzara does not require plastic movements or experience in dancing, it is easy to dance and ensures that everyone can participate and enjoy the experience</p>
Music	<p>Version 1: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cLh76ZfG05SZHdVNNMm1c_u5jDVpYgWI/view</p> <p>Version 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kawP7laHCA</p>




Country	Germany 
Dance name	S´ Mühlrad
Background	<p>S´Mühlrad literally means „the mill wheel“. This is a classical folk dance, which is relatively easy to learn and therefore often taught to children as one of the first dances. The figure dance describes the miller's craft, the individual figures are supposed to represent the process from the grain to the finished milled flour.</p> <p>The special feature of this dance is that it is performed by different local, traditional folk dance clubs, but never identically. Villages that are right next to each other, such as Martinszell and Waltenhofen already have small differences in the way they dance. In the clubs, the dance style is passed on from generation to generation. Thus, over the years, small differences developed, which, however, also make it a bit of an individual dance for the clubs. The same applies to the traditional costumes, which are different in each small village and its association.</p>
How to dance	As the music starts, couples join the circle. The lead dancer signals the start with a stomp. Couples swing partners into the circle, maintaining contact with neighbors. The circle tightens, moving left, then couples walk in place with hands in the "High five" position. The large circle moves left, and male dancers slide to the center while females hold hands, clattering with heel stamps. Females pull males up, and couples separate, forming two gears. The lead dancer initiates a wheeling motion, and the circle continues left. The female dancers reach back, forming an extended circle, then couples break away for two-step turns. In the finale, male dancers turn female dancers out, kneel, rise, and couples go around.
Inclusive elements	<p>Structured Formation: S'Mühlrad often involves a structured circular formation, allowing dancers to feel connected and equal within the dance.</p> <p>Collaborative Movement: S'Mühlrad emphasizes synchronized movements within the circle, fostering a collaborative atmosphere. Participants work together to create the rotating wheel, promoting a sense of togetherness.</p> <p>Celebratory Atmosphere: Often performed in celebratory events and festivals, the S'Mühlrad dance creates an inclusive and festive atmosphere. Participants feel a sense of belonging and shared joy as they contribute to the lively dance.</p>
Music	<p>Can be danced to many marching songs, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zqm2qtLe9ZQ • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHdBAajulEo
Notes	You have to memorize the order of the figures.

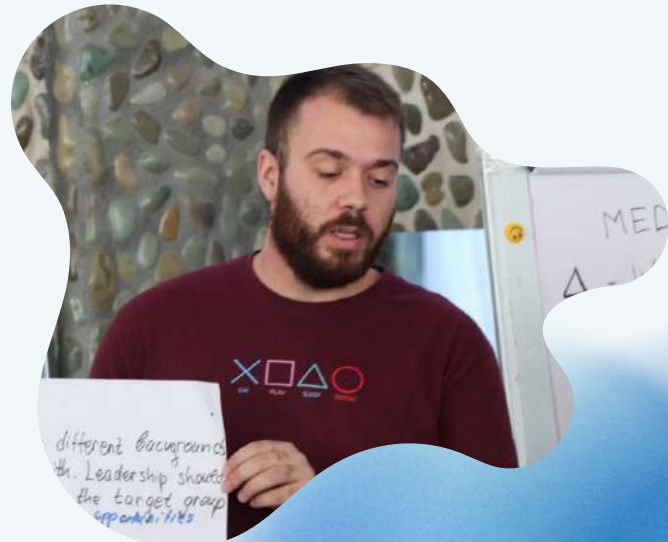


Country	Italy 
Dance name	Tarantella
Background	<p>The Tarantella is one of the most emblematic and recognizable dances of Italy, with roots deeply embedded in the folklore and history of Southern Italy. The name "Tarantella" derives from the city of Taranto in Puglia and is believed to have originated as a cure for the bite of the tarantula, a type of venomous spider. According to popular belief, the victim of the bite had to dance frenetically to sweat out the poison. This practice, known as "tarantism," was considered a form of both physical and psychological therapy.</p> <p>Over time, the Tarantella transformed from a medical ritual into a celebration of life and community. It became a staple in festive occasions, such as weddings, village feasts, and religious celebrations. Each region of Southern Italy developed its own version of the dance, with variations in steps, music, and costume, reflecting Italy's cultural diversity.</p> <p>The Tarantella is characterized by a fast tempo, often in 6/8 time, guiding dancers in quick and lively movements. The dance can be performed by couples or groups and often includes steps that mimic courtship. Beyond being a form of entertainment, the Tarantella plays an important role in preserving cultural traditions and strengthening community bonds. The dance is an expression of joy and unity, often performed during events that bring together families and friends.</p> <p>In the modern era, the Tarantella continues to be a vital part of Italian celebrations, both in Italy and in Italian communities abroad. It is also a subject of study for ethnomusicologists and dancers seeking to preserve and promote folk traditions.</p>
How to dance	<p>Please see the tutorial and videos below for further explanation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-xsosv6uM0 • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CM-B_KL3PFI&t=35s • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7Mt2gLSx_A&t=28s • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KhK9YyLs7E&t=72s
Inclusive elements	<p>Energetic Footwork: Tarantella features lively and rhythmic footwork that is relatively simple, allowing participants of various skill levels to engage in the dance with enthusiasm.</p> <p>Circular Formation: Often performed in a circular formation, Tarantella fosters a sense of community and unity. The circular structure encourages collaboration and inclusion as participants move together.</p> <p>Dynamic Partnering: While traditionally a couple's dance, Tarantella allows for dynamic partnering. Dancers can switch partners or form larger groups, promoting inclusivity and a sense of shared celebration.</p> <p>Expressive Arm Movements: The dance incorporates expressive arm movements and gestures, providing an avenue for individual expression. Participants can infuse their unique style, contributing to the diversity of the dance.</p> <p>Inclusive Celebrations: Tarantella is often performed during celebrations and festivals, creating an inclusive and festive atmosphere, thus providing a shared experience.</p> <p>Community Engagement: The dance is frequently part of community events, encouraging participation from individuals of all ages and backgrounds. This community engagement enhances the sense of inclusivity and belonging.</p>
Music	https://music.apple.com/it/album/tarantella-napoletana/1458221570?i=1458221571
Notes	The musical instruments typically associated with the Tarantella include the tambourine, mandolin, and guitar.




Country	Greece 
Dance name	Sousta
Background	<p>Sousta is a Greek folk dance, performed at weddings as an activity of courtship between husband and wife. It originates from Ancient Greece, and holds prominence in Dodecanese Islands, and broader Aegean region. The performance of the dance reflects various gender roles, inter-played with values of romance and marriage. The Sousta acted as a socialisation process between the youth of a village, evolving into a dance central to these youth as they grew up and formed relationships with others. The Sousta is most commonly performed as a three-step dance, with a 'hopping' motion and crossed-over hands.</p> <p>The Sousta originated from ancient Greece, in the island of Crete. Men working with medicine on Ancient Crete sometimes danced the Sousta to appease the earth goddess Rea. By dancing with large leaps, which was believed to influence growth in nature, the Sousta was seen as a dance for fertility. The Sousta was also seen as a dance of the sea, linked to its origins from the island of Crete.</p> <p>As a couple's dance at weddings before the Independence of Greece in 1947 there are numerous variations of the dance across Greece, most notably throughout the Dodecanese Islands. The Sousta is also connected with war, and holds significance during the inter-war period of 1925–1940, in Rhodes, Greece.</p> <p>The Sousta represents the interplay of gender roles within its performance. To initiate the dance, men would invite women discreetly to protect the female's identity. Any men who did not lead the dance often sung with the women. This is due to the lead dancer's position to control the flow and coordination of the performance and other dancers. Only a male could lead the dance, while performing around the female to ensure her privacy was upheld. This reflected a sense of honour that the male carries through the dance. As a result of the honour the male grants the female, women in the dance reveal a sense of privacy.</p>
How to dance	<p>Please see the tutorial and video below for further explanation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmZ1MwvwpSA</p>
Inclusive elements	<p>Simple Footwork: Sousta often features uncomplicated footwork, making it accessible to dancers of varying skill levels and physical abilities.</p> <p>Circular Formation: The dance typically involves a circular formation, emphasizing unity and collaboration among participants.</p> <p>Community Engagement: Sousta is often performed in community gatherings, providing an inclusive setting where individuals of all ages and backgrounds can participate and connect through dance.</p> <p>Expressive Gestures: The dance incorporates expressive gestures and arm movements, allowing participants to convey emotions and connect with the cultural narrative, regardless of language barriers.</p> <p>Cultural Celebration: Sousta serves as a celebration of Greek culture, inviting individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage in a shared experience and appreciate the rich traditions embedded in the dance.</p>
Music	https://youtu.be/zjAw0G4FDkw?si=eD0lpo3eK1zu42Mq

Country	Greece 
Dance name	Sirtaki
Background	<p>Sirtaki or syrtaki (Greek: συρτάκι) is a dance of Greek origin, choreographed for the 1964 film Zorba the Greek. It is a recent Greek folkdance, and a mixture of "syrtos" and the slow and fast rhythms of the hasapiko dance. The dance and the accompanying music by Mikis Theodorakis are also called Zorba's dance, the Zorba or "the dance of Zorba". The dance has become popular in Greece and one that is identified with the Greeks, becoming an "invented tradition".</p> <p>The name sirtaki comes from the Greek word syrtos – from σύρω (τον χορό), which means "drag (the dance)" or "lead (the dance)" – a common name for a group of traditional Greek dances of so-called "dragging" style, as opposed to pidikhtos (πηδηχτός), a hopping or leaping style. Despite its name, sirtaki incorporates both syrtos (in its slower part) and pidikhtós (in its faster part) elements.</p> <p>The dance was created specifically for the film Zorba the Greek rather than a traditional form of dance. The name sirtaki suggests it was created based on a traditional Cretan dance form "syrtos", a type of dance where the dancers drag their feet instead of hopping, however, the dance incorporates both a slower hasapiko dance style, and a faster hasaposerviko style. The dance is therefore an amalgamation of three different dance styles. It also has some characteristics of the zeybek dance. The choreography of the dance for the film has been attributed to Giorgos Provias.</p>
How to dance	<p>Please see the video below for further explanation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QskFT7AaKH0</p>
Inclusive elements	<p>Gradual Complexity: Sirtaki often starts with simple and repetitive steps, gradually building in complexity. This approach accommodates participants with varying levels of dance experience, making it accessible to a broad audience.</p> <p>Circular Formation: The dance typically involves a circular or line formation, promoting a sense of unity and inclusivity.</p> <p>Adaptable Pacing: Sirtaki allows for adaptable pacing, accommodating dancers of different speeds and comfort levels. This flexibility ensures that everyone can participate at their own pace, contributing to an inclusive dance environment.</p> <p>Encouraging Collaboration: Sirtaki often involves collaborative elements, such as dancers linking arms or shoulders. This physical connection fosters a sense of collaboration and togetherness, reinforcing the inclusive nature of the dance.</p> <p>Inclusive Music Tempo: The dance is set to lively and uplifting music, creating an inclusive atmosphere that encourages participants to embrace the joyous spirit of the dance. The universal appeal of the music transcends cultural boundaries.</p> <p>Community Engagement: Sirtaki is frequently performed in community events, weddings, and celebrations. This communal aspect of the dance encourages diverse groups to come together and share in the joy of the moment.</p>
Music	Sirtaki Zorbas



Country	Bulgaria 
Dance name	Shirto Horo
Background	<p>Shirto is a famous Pirin folk dance that is performed throughout Southwestern Bulgaria. In the Pirin ethnographic region, there are many dances influenced by the Shopski, Thracian and Rhodope ethnographic regions, with even a Greek influence observed. The name of Shirto Horo comes precisely from Greek, in translation - drag, lead. The chorus is performed with one main movement and four additional figures. It is played moderately to the accompaniment of musical instruments typical of the region - zurna and tapan (drum). Other people with foreign influence to the same extent are Sirto(s) and the so-called Greek dance.</p> <p>Pirin dances are rich and varied, being divided into female and male. The women play many times to the accompaniment of a song in moderate rhythm. People run in a circle, semicircle, or line. The grip is most often for hands in bent elbows, and the steps are slow, drawn out and accompanied by many jumps and springs. Their costume is rich in pafti (sg. pafta - belt buckle), pendari (sg. pendar - gold coin) and various ornaments, and the weaving is typical and distinctive. The men's dance is characterized by its slow pace, which gradually speeds up. The movements are with high raised legs, accompanied by light steps, rotations, springs and squats. The costume of the Pirin (Macedonian) ethnographic region is light and tight, which allows the performance of the dance to be solemn and slow, with retention in a certain position for a few seconds. In men, a shoulder grip can be encountered.</p>
How to dance	Please see the tutorial and video below for further explanation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_1s4wdpY3s
Inclusive elements	<p>Holding hands, cheerful music, played in a weddings, dancing in a straight line or a circle, where everyone is free to join, feeling the energy and the moves of the other dancers next to the circle, creating trust among them, the "leader" of the dance is first among equal people, supporting the whole group, creating connection and feeling of unity, transferring the energy of the dance through the whole group, the respect to the other dancers can be seen in the fact that no dancer overtakes the dancer in front of them.</p> <p>Circular Formation: The dance is typically performed in a circular formation, fostering a sense of unity and community. This circular arrangement promotes inclusivity, as participants feel connected to each other and move together as one.</p> <p>Encouragement of All Ages: Shirto Horo is often enjoyed across generations, with participants of all ages joining in the dance. This intergenerational participation enhances the inclusivity of the dance, creating a shared experience for diverse age groups.</p> <p>Cultural Celebration: Shirto Horo is a celebration of Bulgarian culture, and its performance serves as an inclusive platform for individuals to engage with and appreciate the rich cultural heritage embedded in the dance.</p>
Music	https://youtu.be/GBxWf99V6Os?si=LHI3G0l1XGDikdqy
Notes	There are 2 figures in the dance, which are based on the fact that the people living in Pirin mountains had to walk slowly and climb mountains and steep hills in their daily life.

Country	Bulgaria 
Dance name	Gankino Horo
Background	<p>The chorus is played vigorously, energetically and lively. The lead dancer (leader) waves a patterned country cloth in his right hand to enspire the other dancers and create a mood among those present who admire the dance. Very often he bends the whole dance in different directions, which results in beautiful figures. When the steps of the chorus are played to the original rhythm of the chorus tune, they, together with the beautiful gestures and movements of the body, exude a special charm. The characteristic complex tact and rhythm, as well as the figures that are described during the performance, gave reason for the people to call the Gankin people "crooked" people. The choir has a circular form – it is played in a closed or open circle and is also from the Severnyashki (eng. Northern) ethnographic region.</p> <p>The Severnyashki ethnographic region includes Northwestern Bulgaria (Vratsa, Montana, Vidin, Lom), in the north it extends to the Danube river (Svishtov, Ruse, Lovech, Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo), in the east it borders the Dobrudja ethnographic region (Shoumen, Razgrad), and to the south with Stara Planina (Balkan Mountain). The Severnyashki ethnographic region is the second largest and its folklore is greatly influenced by our western neighbor - Serbia, and to the north by Romania.</p> <p>The people and dances here are characterized by breadth, jumpiness and speed, and are accompanied by a specific call. The movements are concentrated in the legs and are springy. It is common to hold hands and shake freely, which gives a lightness and freedom to the performance. All this in the dance of the severnyatsi (eng. northerners) makes its people beautiful, lively and temperamental.</p> <p>Only in this area are wind instruments found at weddings, celebrations and meals.</p>
How to dance	<p>Please see the tutorial and video below for further explanation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRdifDUq2EA</p>
Inclusive elements	<p>Gankino Horo often involves straightforward and repetitive footwork, making it accessible to dancers with varying levels of experience. The simplicity of the steps encourages a wide range of individuals to join in the dance. The “leader” of the dance is first among equal people, supporting the whole group, creating connection and feeling of unity, transferring the energy of the dance through the whole group, the respect to the other dancers can be seen in the fact that no dancer overtakes the dancer in front of them.</p> <p>Inclusive Music Tempo: The dance is set to lively and rhythmic music, creating an inclusive atmosphere that encourages participants to connect with the energetic spirit of the dance. The universal appeal of the music transcends cultural boundaries.</p> <p>Community Engagement: Gankino Horo is frequently part of community events, festivals, and celebrations. The communal aspect of the dance invites diverse groups to come together, fostering a sense of belonging and shared joy.</p>
Music	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUVKo9wkjWw
Notes	The people hold hands up at the height of their shoulders during the dance and they move them gently, but cheerfully up and down and this movement shows the joyful character of the dances in the area.



6. INCLUSIVE ELEMENTS OF DANCES

The chart below was created by the participants of the project.

Each day, when a country presented and taught their dance, the whole group came together to find out the inclusive elements of the dance, which made participants feel included, connected to the community, helped in breaking down barriers and celebrating diversity.

Inclusive elements in traditional dances	Armenian Kochari	Bulgarian Shirto	German S`Mühlrad	Greek Sousta	Italian Tarantella
Connection among community members with synchrony	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Circle which includes everyone and no one is left behind		✓	✓	✓	✓
There are no differences in movements for different genders	✓	✓			✓
The universal language of rhythm makes it accessible to all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, to join	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hand holding by the same principle (e.g. left over the right one) ensures evenness on both sides	✓	✓	✓		
A sense of community is built among the members of the group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The tempo in the dance is speeding up smoothly allowing everyone to catch it	✓			✓	✓
The dance movements require support towards each other	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The dance conveys positive feelings of love and romance				✓	✓

Inclusive elements in traditional dances	Armenian Kochari	Bulgarian Shirto	German s'Mührad	Greek Sousta	Italian Tarantella
Trust built between participants interacting with each other through body language	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A gear (wheel) scheme helps to put parts together and complement each other			✓	✓	
A networking style environment is created, where participants communicate and get to know each other	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Everyone is being on the same level during the dance, not higher or lower	✓	✓		✓	✓
The dance showcases unity in action and purpose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Everyone should follow a straight footline in a dance, which symbolizes and promote equality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The dance contributes to creating a happy and cheerful environment fostering inclusion		✓	✓	✓	
Energy passing through everyone with hand holding, eye contact, smiles and spirit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Everyone is being under spotlight of attention in different parts of the dance				✓	✓
Is being danced during the weddings and community ceremonies		✓	✓	✓	✓
Socializing and forming pairs in closed communities			✓	✓	✓
Dance against the collective enemy, emotion as a unifying element in the dance	✓				✓
Demonstration of respect towards each other in dance movements and positions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

7. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

The participants of the project organized local follow-up events in their communities and taught foreign folk dances to the young people with fewer opportunities, excluded from the society.

German dances in Armenia and Bulgaria



Bulgarian dances in Germany and Armenia



Greek dances in Bulgaria and Germany



7. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Armenian dances in Germany, Bulgaria, Italy and Greece



8. DANCE AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSION: STEP BY STEP

Folk dances can be a powerful tool to promote inclusion and diversity, especially when deliberately incorporated into educational activities.

Here's a step-by-step guide on successfully using folk dances for educational purposes.



1. Select the Appropriate Dances

First, choose dances that are representative of cultures and emphasize diversity. Ensure that the chosen dances are inclusive in allowing participants of different abilities and characteristics to join in.

2. Provide the Context

Share the origin, history and cultural context for each dance and emphasize the significance of inclusivity in traditional practices. Explain the diverse origins of the dances, the associated meanings of movements and how the dance evolved through time and space, showcasing the beauty of cultural variety.

3. Create Inclusive Spaces

Foster an environment where all participants feel welcome and respected, regardless of their background. Encourage open dialogue about the importance of inclusion in the dance and connect it with the broader context.

4. Teaching the dance

Break down the explanation and practice of movements into manageable parts, allowing the participants to understand and perform the movements correctly. Encourage them to help and support each other during the learning process.

5. Promote Collaboration

Arrange collaborative activities that require participants to work together in small groups, reinforcing the idea of diversity within unity.

6. Incorporate Symbolic Inclusive Movements

Highlight the inclusive elements and movements of the dance that specifically represent unity, acceptance, and diversity. Discuss the significance of these movements that bring an inclusive environment to deepen participants' understanding of the topic. For example, in Karno Kochari, we explained that everyone should stand and dance on the same line and follow that during the dance. They always stay equal to the one standing to the right of them. This symbolizes the equity in the society, which we want to reach.

8. DANCE AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSION: STEP BY STEP



7. Reflective Discussions

After the practice sessions, facilitate reflective discussions on how the experience relates to the broader themes of inclusion and diversity. Encourage participants to share insights and personal growth resulting from their engagement in traditional dances.

8. Cultural Showcases

Organize cultural showcases where participants can present the learned dances, along with presenting elements of the culture, such as learning interesting facts about the cultural traditions or tasting traditional food. Invite community members to join and participate, a sense of connection will be fostered beyond the educational setting.

9. Follow-up

After successfully completing the educational activity, you can give young people a task to organize their own actions where they teach the dance to their peers. This will allow the participants to take further responsibility for inclusion and diversity, experiencing it with many other youngsters.

By encouraging inclusion and the appreciation of diversity in traditional dances, you can nurture values such as respect, trust and support among the participants in the community.



9. WRAP-UP: FAREWELL VIDEO

[Click here](#) to watch the sum-up video of our incredible project week of dances and diversity!

