



PROJECT 101055705 — DIALOG CITY

DELIVERABLE 3.10 IMPACT ANALYSIS REPORT

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Introduction

This impact analysis focuses on the short-term outcomes of the DIALOG CITY project, observed up to the completion in October 2025. During this period, the Citizens Archive Platform was prototyped, promoted, and refined as an innovative tool engaging diverse user groups and linking directly with project events. In parallel, a creative Futures Literacy methodology was developed as an artistic approach to foster social change. The project also achieved a European-wide audience reach-out through its four Festivals supported by Artistic Residencies. Finally, the consortium partners strengthened their position in the cultural and creative industries (CCI) by creating new tools, methods, and cross-sectoral collaborations that extend beyond the project's duration.

The DIALOG CITY project

DIALOG CITY was born out of the conviction that an innovative cultural and human-centred approach can directly contribute to social cohesion in times of huge transformation processes. This can only be done by filling the gap between superfast technological development and urgent democratic improvement towards participation.

The project contributed to increased access to and participation in culture by various ways of audience engagement in the development of physical cultural events and digital platforms; this also included decision-making in a practical manner by using digital means for selection processes as well as feedback loops in needs assessment and the evaluation of activities.

Co-creation has been at the core of the DIALOG CITY project idea encompassing a CITIZEN ARCHIVE PLATFORM (CAP) for the cultural heritage sector, innovative design thinking processes on FUTURES LITERACY, DIALOG CITY FESTIVALS and local events and finally ART FOR PUBLIC - artistic urban interventions.

The above outcomes have been implemented by a group of 7 project partners that are based in small and medium-size cities in 5 European countries. The project was initiated and is coordinated by the Stadt- und Stiftsarchiv Aschaffenburg in Germany. The project partners are CulturePolis in Greece, the Stadtmuseum Graz GmbH from Austria, the Fondazione Cirko Vertigo, the Centro Formazione

Professionale Cebane Monregalese and the Consorzio Interaziendale Canavesano per la Formazione Professionale CIAC from Italy, as well as Quatorze from France.

The project lasted 44 months and was co-funded by the Creative Europe program.

The project had three pillars:



ARCHIVING OUR CITY [A CITIZEN ARCHIVE PLATFORM - CAP](#)

The project delivered a web tool named CITIZEN ARCHIVE PLATFORM (CAP) to submit all kinds of data-based objects (born digitals) such as images, video, audios and texts, but also hybrid and digitized analogue objects, which are stored by the responsible museums and archives and then integrated in a professional, but non-profit, compliant archival system; an integrated part of the submission process is the possibility of enriching the submitted data with oral history interviews. The innovative digital toolset is directly related to citizens' participation.

OUR COMMON FUTURE [A FUTURES LITERACY Design Thinking Toolkit](#)

The project created options and possibilities in order to imagine our future society and build capacity to develop solutions and alternatives. FUTURES LITERACY methodology was included by creative means in various artistic, participatory and educational processes. The question on how we want to design our future ways of living together was also related to the New European Bauhaus initiative and contributing to the reimagination process. Following a two-stage training process,

18 workshops were carried out in the 5 partner countries by 28 people (Artists and Facilitators) attracting 239 participants of all ages and backgrounds.

DIALOG CITY EVENTS and ART FOR PUBLIC Digital-analog Festivals and Artistic Interventions

DIALOG CITY Events were organized involving citizens directly into content creation. Four (4) major festivals were organized in Mondovì (IT), Graz (AT), Montpellier (FR) and Aschaffenburg (DE) from 2023 to 2025. While running in physical spaces, digital access was given in different parts of their programs. With this hybrid structure, the impetus of a digital-analogue dialogue on European level was established within the partnership.

Additionally, with a European-wide open call ART FOR PUBLIC, the project established an annual artistic residency competition for every festival. Professional artists were invited to develop ideas for the visualization and promotion of DIALOG CITY - in the participating cities and beyond. Four selected artists in total got the opportunity for a 2-month residency in one of the cities involved and were supported by the local organization - financially and logistically. The resulting art works are available in four single publications for each residency and finally in a combined publication with the overall context of the DIALOG CITY project.

The project events as evaluation points

The DIALOG CITY Events in three consecutive years served as platforms with high public appeal to present the interim results of the other two project pillars to a wider public. They served as milestones to promote, review and evaluate in the short term, the ongoing development of the CITIZEN ARCHIVE PLATFORM and the FUTURES LITERACY methodology and could lead to a larger European network during and after the project's lifetime.

The DIALOG CITY objectives were to:

- Enhance the capacity of the European cultural and creative sector by developing new practices on how to connect digital innovation directly to citizens' participation through a dialogical approach.
- Develop innovative digital access for various audience groups.

- Pioneer models of artistic and creative services for the facilitation of the social and ecological transformation process.
- Organize 'hybrid festivals' and 'future festivals' based on audience participation in both planning and implementation. This way, art and culture can contribute actively to social change.

The Dialog City Project Results

The evaluation of the project has been twofold: impact analysis & summative evaluation. An external service provider undertook the task of Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) for the entire project and organized and implemented the summative evaluation. This evaluation happened at two instances in the life cycle of the project, midterm and final and has taken into consideration the current results.

In addition to this, the lead partner (City of Aschaffenburg) also had a sustainability manager on board which enabled the team to monitor and internalize all results since the very beginning of the project. This impact report is closely linked to the summative evaluation process, and the two reports can be used together as a unique and general evaluation of the project.

Glossary

- **Transportability:** the ability to carry results from one setting to another without losing validity.
- **External validity:** the robustness of findings across different contexts.
- **Mechanism:** the process by which impact is generated.
- **Context variable:** a condition that influences whether mechanisms succeed.
- **Replicable part:** a mechanism that works across contexts.
- **Adaptable periphery:** a mechanism that requires local adjustment.

The data collection process

When the first Hybrid Festival opened in the Italian hill town of Mondovì in July 2023, visitors found themselves stepping into an unusual kind of cultural event. Instead of simply attending concerts or visiting exhibitions, they were invited to take part in a conversation: How can art and culture help us navigate the digital transformation of our cities? How can citizens, decision makers and artists co-create visions of sustainable urban life?



Figure 1, Mondovì Festival, Credits: Cirko Vertigo

This was the start of Dialog City, a European cultural innovation project designed to connect five groups of stakeholders: artists, citizens, decision makers, cultural heritage professionals, and other civic actors. The project's premise was simple yet ambitious: cultural formats — hybrid festivals, Futures Literacy workshops, digital archives — can become prototypes for civic innovation, influencing not just local debates but also offering transferable models for other European cities.

Between 2023 and 2025, four festivals were staged in Mondovì, Graz, Montpellier, and Aschaffenburg. Each festival became both a celebration and a research site. Impact Questionnaires were distributed, gathering 158 responses across the four cities. The questionnaires were anonymous and directed at the adult attendees of the festivals, the artists involved in the production of the festivals and the citizens,

decision makers, cultural heritage professionals and other stakeholders in the city that were attending the parallel events like Futures Literacy, games and the Citizen Archive Platform workshops.

Since the beginning of the project, the project partners decided that there should be some room for the questionnaire adapting to each festival program as

a) the events were happening in parallel with the development of the Citizen Archive Platform and the Futures Literacy training, and

b) each festival had a special focus aligned with the local community needs and aspirations in the different cities.

Base on this approach, CulturePolis created a list of questions ([Annex A](#)) that the partners could pick from containing a list of obligatory questions that all events had to include [generic questions on the role of arts and culture in managing knowledge and transformation (Arts & digital transformation) and questions on general aspects of the project (Green Deal, Gender equality)], and a list of questions that were relevant to the potential different themes of the festivals (questions on the specific Deliverables of the project). If the festival program included one of the activities, the relevant questions were chosen for the impact questionnaire for the event.

The questionnaires were distributed in both online and printed form at two instances: inside the event premises where team members had tablets and/or printed questionnaires; after the workshops to all the participants either in print or digital form. The answers collected in printed form were transferred from the team to digital files. CulturePolis aggregated these data in a single data source for analysis. After each festival, the results were shared with the partners of the project for internal evaluation and improvement of the next activities.

Responses came in Italian, German, French and English. They reflected diverse perspectives, but when placed side by side, a pattern emerged: some effects leading to impacts appeared universal and easily portable, while others were deeply shaped by local contexts.

The results of these four events form the core of this Impact Analysis Report focusing on short-term impact. But rather than presenting them as isolated numbers, this report asks: Which of these results can travel? Which processes can be replicated in other European cities and contexts after the project ends in

December 2025? It is important to mention here that the lessons learned from the Dialog City project are available to feed the reflection for other projects, in a perspective of impact and sustainability, but they are not a one size fits all guide which could be used anywhere by anyone.



Figure 2, Graz Festival, Credits: Maria-Louiza Laopodi, CulturePolis

The Theoretical Background (Transportability Lens)

A methodological departure

Most cultural project reports measure impact in terms of satisfaction, participation numbers, or direct testimonials. While valuable, these metrics do not answer a crucial question: *if we repeat this model elsewhere, will it produce the same kinds of effects?*

This report adopts the Transportability/External Validity lens, a methodological perspective borrowed from causal inference, implementation science, and realist evaluation. The key idea is that effects are should not only be strong where they are first observed, but also transferable to new contexts.

Transportability research (Pearl & Bareinboim, 2014; Glasgow et al., 1999; Proctor et al., 2011) has shown that replication depends on three elements:

1. **Mechanisms** — the forces that generate impact (e.g., artistic facilitation that enables reflection).
2. **Context variables** — the conditions that allow mechanisms to operate (e.g., language accessibility, digital literacy, municipal support).
3. **External validity testing** — the process of checking whether results and effects observed on one site are also present in another.

Why it matters for culture

Cultural innovation projects are particularly vulnerable to the pilot trap: they succeed spectacularly in one city, but when others try to replicate them, the results are disappointing. By applying the transportability lens, Dialog City avoids this trap and makes its processes available to produce the same effects and/or some unexpected ones in a different [city] context. It becomes possible to distinguish core mechanisms that are robust across contexts (for instance, Futures Literacy workshops that proved engaging everywhere) from adaptable peripheries that require careful local tailoring (such as inclusive communication strategies).

Impact Analysis

The context – problem statement

European cities are navigating two profound transitions: the digital transformation of services and infrastructures, and the ecological transition guided by the Green Deal. Yet citizens often experience these transitions as abstract policies, distant from their everyday lives. Dialog City set out to bridge this gap, using art and culture as mediators to bring complex issues into lived, shared spaces.

The challenge was not only to demonstrate that culture can mediate these transitions, but also to measure whether the mediation mechanisms can be transported elsewhere. This is the heart of the project's qualitative evaluation strategy.

Assumptions

At the outset, three assumptions shaped the evaluation:

1. **Some mechanisms are universal.** They will produce similar outcomes in diverse contexts.
2. **Some mechanisms are context sensitive.** They work only when certain local conditions are present.
3. **Some mechanisms are hybrid.** They can be transported, but only with adaptation.

These assumptions guided the interpretation of data from the four festivals.

An overarching question prevailed across all assumptions:

Can artistic practices combined with Futures Literacy methodologies and other digital tools empower citizens and decision makers to affect the digital transformation of their cities?

The target groups

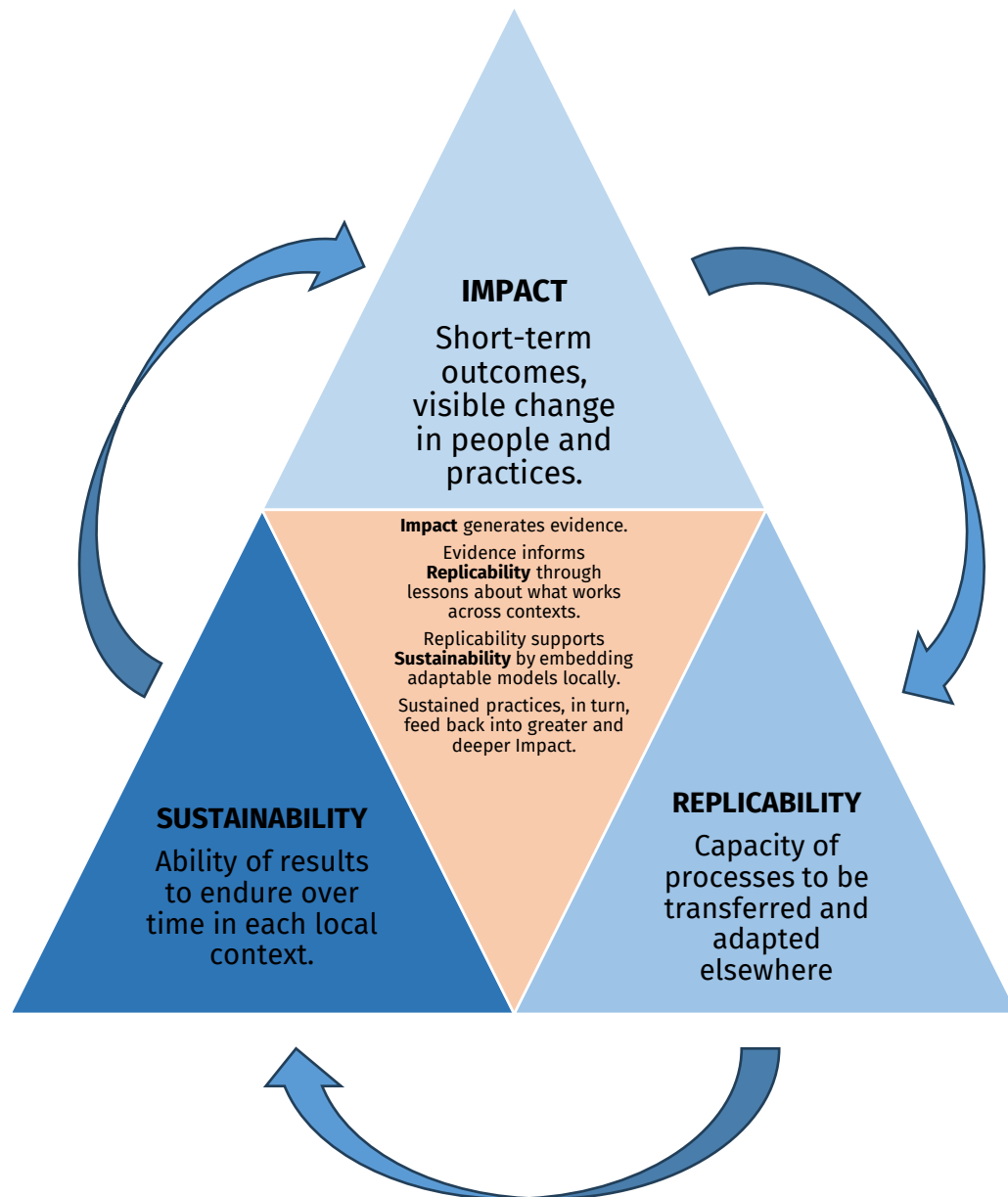
Dialog City engaged five groups of stakeholders:

- **Artists:** not only creators but also facilitators of dialogue.
- **Citizens:** the majority of respondents, representing local publics.
- **Decision makers:** municipal leaders, policymakers, cultural officers.
- **Cultural heritage professionals:** museums, archives, and cultural institutions.
- **Other stakeholders:** NGOs, activists, educators, and community partners.

Each group's perspective is crucial. For example, artists consistently emphasised the need for visibility and continuity of their contributions, while decision makers valued participatory dialogue but flagged the need for clearer institutional anchoring. Citizens, by contrast, engaged most enthusiastically in Futures Literacy exercises, seeing them as opportunities to imagine futures beyond technical policy language.

The Triangular Lens

Impact → Replicability → Sustainability



Visual 1. The Triangular Lens

Mondovì (Italy, 2023)

In Mondovì, the conversation began. Citizens responded with curiosity and enthusiasm, affirming that art could indeed mediate the digital transition. Artists felt energised but requested tools for continuity. Decision makers were present but less numerous; their responses stressed the novelty of being invited into informal dialogue.



Figure 3, Mondovì Festival, Photo credits: Cirko Vertigo

Graz (Austria, 2024)

Graz provided a smaller dataset (12 responses), but it revealed an important context variable: language and scale matter. Citizens appreciated Futures Literacy workshops, but CAP awareness remained nearly absent. Local institutional anchoring was weaker here, showing that without strong local or municipal partners, replication is fragile.



Figure 4, Graz Festival, Credits: Sebastian Rieser

Montpellier (France, 2025)

Montpellier showed high energy, with citizens and cultural heritage professionals particularly engaged. Futures Literacy once again proved universally engaging, demonstrating its transportability. However, gender-inclusive communication scored lower, reflecting specific cultural debates in the French context.



Figure 5, Montpellier Festival, Credits: Maria-Louiza Laopodi, CulturePolis

Aschaffenburg (Germany, 2025)

By the time Dialog City reached Aschaffenburg, the team had refined facilitation techniques. Citizens responded in large numbers (80 questionnaires). Awareness of the Green Deal was moderate but concerns about e-waste and pollution were prominent. CAP use remained limited, underscoring that adoption is not automatic but requires dedicated onboarding.



Figure 6, Aschaffenburg Festival, Credits: Alexander Klotz OrangeProduction.de

Results of the questionnaires

Across the four categories:

- **Category 1 (Arts & digital transformation):** almost universal agreement. A transportable core.
- **Category 2 (Deliverables):** Futures Literacy transportable; CAP adoption context-sensitive; hybrid events require alignment with municipal channels.
- **Category 3 (Green Deal):** awareness varies; concerns show broad thematic overlap but context-specific intensity.
- **Category 4 (Gender equality):** inclusive communication is uneven; adaptation necessary.

The data collected is also shown in the summative evaluation report as part of the Evaluation Matrix with distinct indicators.

Replicable parts

The arts-driven narrative of digital urban transformation and Futures Literacy workshops clearly replicate across cities. They appear robust to changes in language, audience composition and local culture. These mechanisms form the replicable backbone of Dialog City.

Sustainability of the project results

Sustainability is not simply about keeping Dialog City alive within the four pilot cities. It is about whether the project's mechanisms — the Citizen Archive Platform Futures Literacy workshops, and the Festivals — can take root in other European contexts after the formal funding period ends. Through the Final Conference entitled “Where do we go from here?” planned at the end of the project, the partners will deliver a Sustainability report by incorporating the feedback of the different stakeholders of the project and the summative evaluation.

1. Where could Dialog City travel?

The project's transportable cores — the artistic framing of digital transformation and the Futures Literacy workshops — are not tied to local history or geography. They work because they appeal to universal capacities of imagination and dialogue. This means they can be taken up in a wide spectrum of European urban contexts.

However, successful replication depends on the host city's characteristics. Based on the four pilot cases, we can outline the minimum requirements:

- **Medium-sized to large cities** (50,000–500,000 inhabitants) where cultural programming already plays a visible role in civic life. Small towns may lack the infrastructure and diverse audiences to sustain the hybrid festival model, while very large metropolises may risk diluting the intimacy of participation.

- **Active municipal cultural departments** or agencies open to experimentation. The presence of decision makers in Mondovì and Aschaffenburg, even in small numbers, proved crucial in legitimising the format.
- **Existing cultural heritage institutions** (museums, archives, libraries, memory centres) that can anchor the Citizen Archive Platform. In Montpellier, heritage professionals became active allies, showing how institutional partners provide stability and credibility.
- **Civic associations and NGOs** that act as bridges to citizens. Graz revealed the fragility of the model in the absence of strong community intermediaries.
- **Linguistic and digital literacy environments** that permit easy onboarding to the CAP. CAP use was lowest where translation and facilitation were weakest.

In short, Dialog City is most likely to thrive in **European small and medium-size cities**: those with strong cultural infrastructures, visible municipal engagement, and heritage institutions that already mediate between past and future.

2. What kind of base is needed?

To ensure replication, a host city needs a **base of three assets**:

1. **A cultural convenor** — an institution or festival that can host and organise the hybrid festival.
2. **A civic anchor** — a municipal or regional office willing to connect the project to policy and participation structures.
3. **A heritage partner** — a museum, archive or library that can host and moderate the CAP beyond the festival itself.

When these three assets align, the project does not feel like a one-off event but a **living infrastructure** for dialogue.

Conclusion

The Dialog City project demonstrates that culture is more than a backdrop to Europe's digital and ecological transitions; it is an active infrastructure that enables citizens, artists, and decision makers to co-create visions of the future. Over the course of four festivals in Mondovì, Graz, Montpellier, and Aschaffenburg, the project generated a body of evidence that goes beyond anecdote. It shows which mechanisms of impact are robust and replicable across contexts, and which are sensitive to local conditions and therefore require adaptation.

- **Replicable mechanisms** = those rooted in universal human capacities for dialogue and imagination.
- **Context-sensitive mechanisms** = those dependent on institutional frameworks, digital tools, or cultural norms.

Robust and Replicable Mechanisms

(Stable across contexts — high transportability)

These mechanisms have proven effective in all four cities (Mondovì, Graz, Montpellier, Aschaffenburg) despite differences in size, culture, and governance. Their impact is not dependent on local conditions and can therefore be confidently replicated elsewhere.

- a. The artistic mediation of digital transformation
- b. Futures Literacy (FL) workshops
- c. Hybrid festivals as dialogic public spaces

Context-Sensitive Mechanisms (Require Adaptation)

(Variable across contexts — lower transportability unless adjusted)

These mechanisms show potential but depend heavily on local conditions such as institutional support, language, digital literacy, or governance culture.

- a. The Citizen Archive Platform (CAP)

- b. Gender equality and inclusive communication
- c. Green Deal engagement
- d. Municipal and institutional co-ownership

The evaluation through the transportability and external validity lens has made it possible to separate the transportable core from the adaptable periphery. The transportable core is strong: nearly universal agreement that art can drive digital transformation, and repeated success of Futures Literacy workshops as participatory spaces of imagination. These elements can travel with confidence to other European cities.

The adaptable periphery includes the Citizen Archive Platform, gender-inclusive communication, and links to municipal hybrid initiatives. These mechanisms hold promise but require context-specific support: facilitation, institutional anchoring, and careful language adaptation. Sustainability therefore depends not on copying formats wholesale, but on building replication toolkits that specify the local conditions under which success can be expected.

Looking beyond 2025, Dialog City offers Europe a prototype for cultural mediation of transitions. Its lessons are not confined to the four pilot sites. Medium-sized cities with active cultural sectors, committed municipal partners, and heritage institutions ready to experiment are ideal grounds for replication. By logging context variables and sharing adaptation practices, the project can become a multiplying model, supporting a network of cities that use culture as an engine of transformation.

In conclusion, Dialog City's short-term impact shows a clear pathway to long-term sustainability and replicability. If supported and adapted carefully, the project can grow from a pilot into a European methodology: a way of ensuring that culture, in all its forms, continues to provide the imagination, dialogue, and shared memory that Europe needs to navigate its futures.

Annexes

Annex A: List of impact questions

Q1: Which of the following best describes your role today in your city:

1. Citizen
2. Artist
3. Decision maker
4. Other stakeholder in the city
5. Cultural heritage professional

Depending on the answer, we could offer a combination of the following questions:

Q2: Can arts and culture create an impact in the dissemination of knowledge?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure.

Q3: Can arts and culture reinforce the sense of belonging?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure.

Q4: Are training activities able to empower citizens in the digital transformation happening in their lives and cities?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure.

Q5: Which of the following activities can better help people process changes in their lives:

- Seminars & workshops
- Networking
- Technical solutions

Q6: Are EU funded projects useful to help citizens navigate through digital transformation?

- Yes
- No

Q8: Open ended question: What kind of networking activities do citizens need to participate in their city's digital transformation?

Questions on the specific deliverables

Citizen Archive

Q9: Have you heard of the Citizen Archive tool?

- Yes
- No

Q10: If yes, have you used it?

- Yes
- No

Q11: If yes, what is your perception about the tool?

- Positive
- Negative
- Don't know, haven't heard of it.

Q12: If you have used the Citizen Archive tool, how do you consider it to be for people with visual deficiency?

- Accessible
- Relevant
- Efficient
- None of the above
- I don't know / I am not able to say.

Q7: Is a city archive able to process stories to help people understand social and technological changes?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure.

Futures Literacy

Q13: From the following skills, which do you think match better with the term Future Literacy?

- Ambient detection: detect trends and weak signals
- Scenario development
- Feasibility and impact assessment studies
- Strategy formulation
- Shaping a future vision
- Development/configuration of serious games

Q14: For artists trained >> What is your perception about the Future Literacy training methodology?

- Positive
- Medium
- Negative
- Not sure

Q15: Do you feel comfortable with it and/or capacitated thanks to it?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure.

Q16 For citizens trained >> What is your perception about the methodology?

- Positive
- Medium
- Negative
- Not sure.

Q17: Do you feel comfortable with it and/or capacitated thanks to it?

- Yes

- No
- Not sure.

Q18: Open question - Have you heard of any initiative in cities that can help citizens and decision makers work together?

Hybrid Events

Q19: Open question - Do you know of any city in Europe or elsewhere that resembles your city in size, geography or other aspects? (This could be used to give us ideas about the next application and using the DC methodology in other cities)

Questions on general aspects of the project

Q20: What does Sustainability mean for you?

Options to choose from.

Q21: Are you aware of the environmental impact of digital transformation?

Yes/No/Don't know.

Q22: If yes >> Select from a list of impacts like data servers and microchips, overheating by servers, cable production and metal extraction, etc.

Q23: Are you aware of the European Green Deal?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure.

Q24: What does Data Analytics mean for you?

Options to choose from.

Q25: What is gender equality and diversity for you?

Options to choose from.

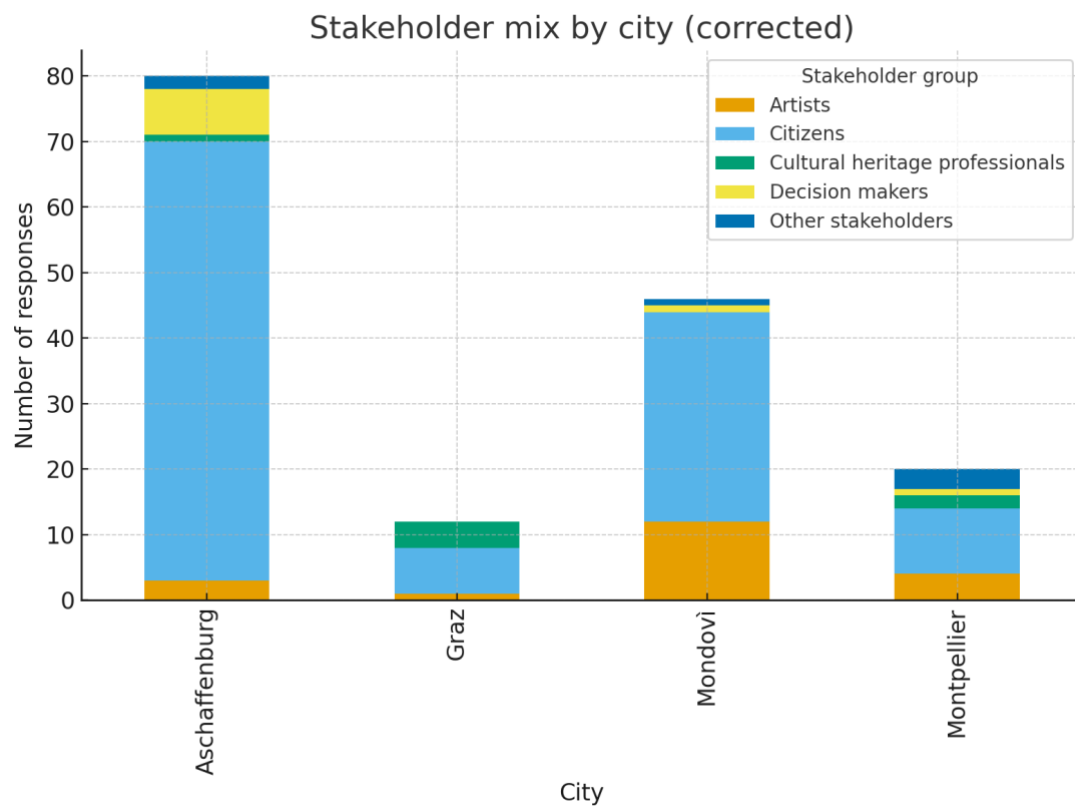
Q26: Did you feel at any point that the Dialog City activities need to better address gender-specific differences and diversity?

- Yes
- No

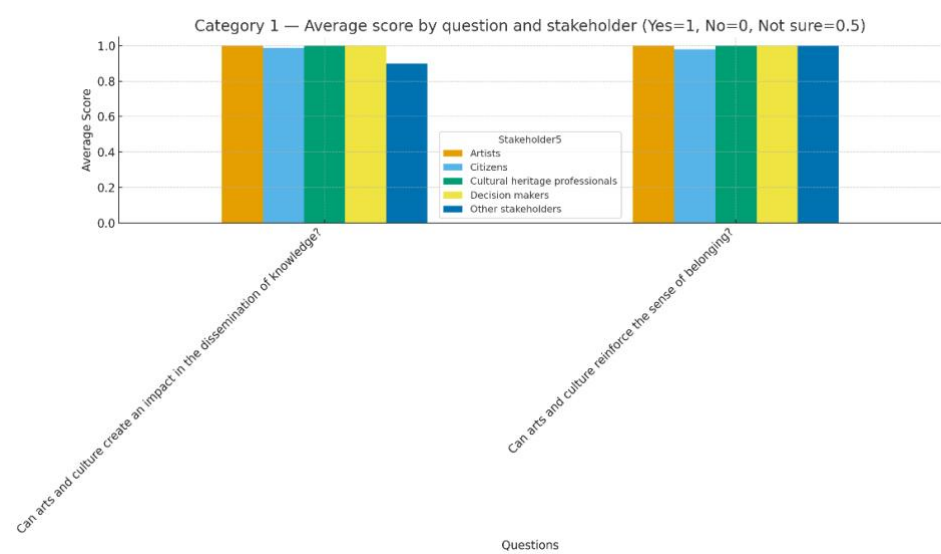
Q27: Was the communication of the Dialog City activities relevant to your gender and role in the community?

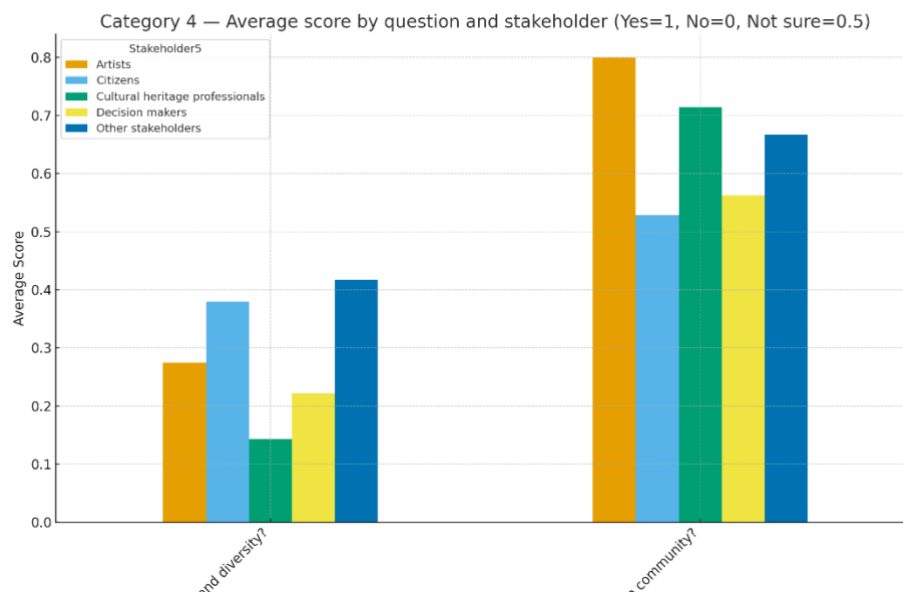
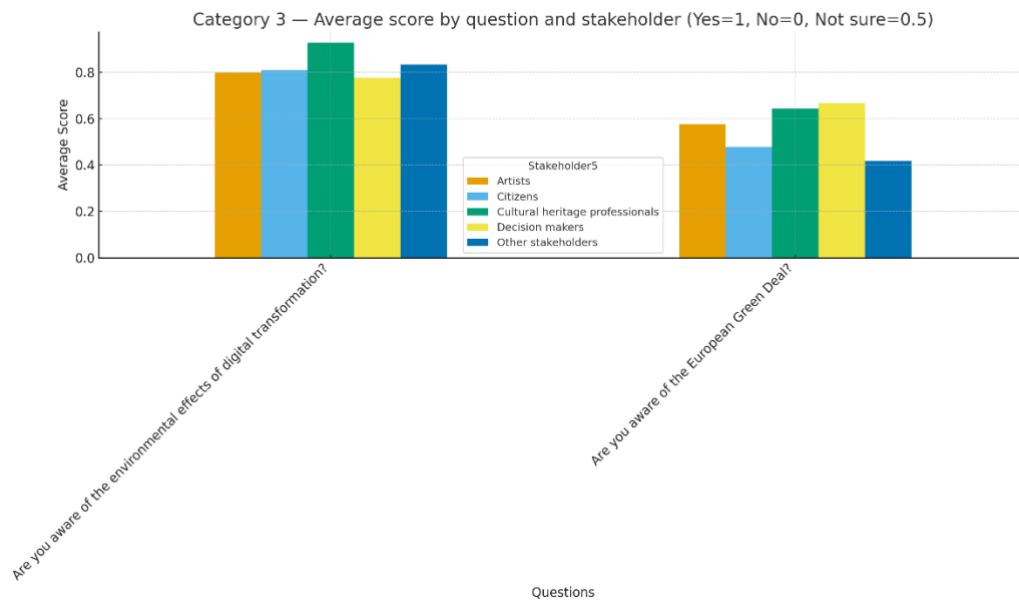
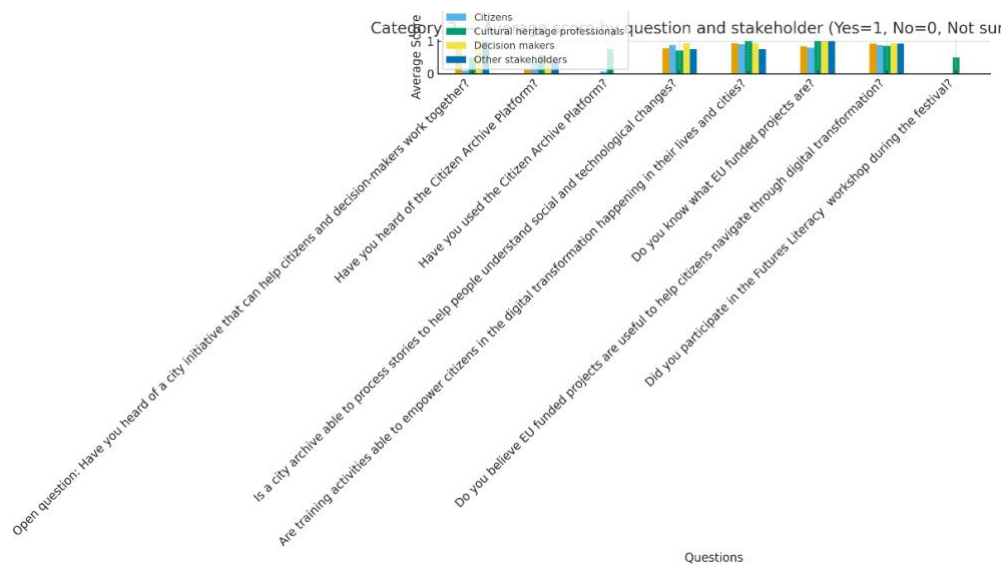
- Yes
- No
- Other - comment

Annex B: Stakeholders mix by city



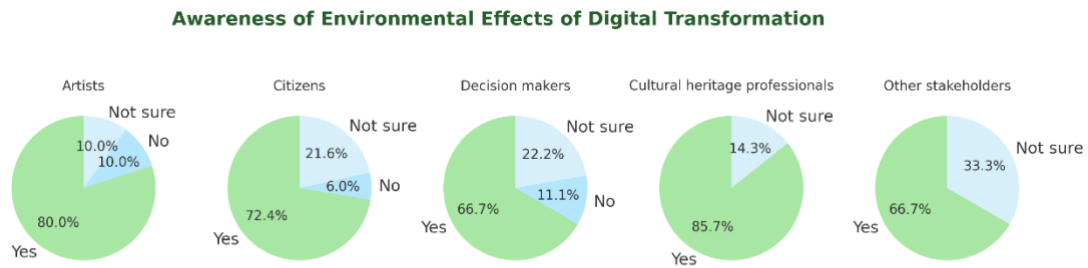
Annex C: Category results with questions included in bar charts and pie charts per stakeholder group.





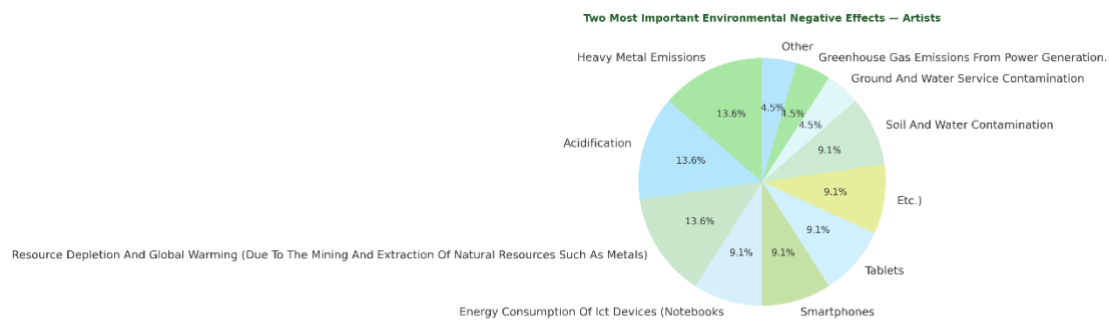
Annex D: Green Deal concerns coded into 3 themes

- Awareness of environmental effects of digital transformation — pie chart by stakeholder.

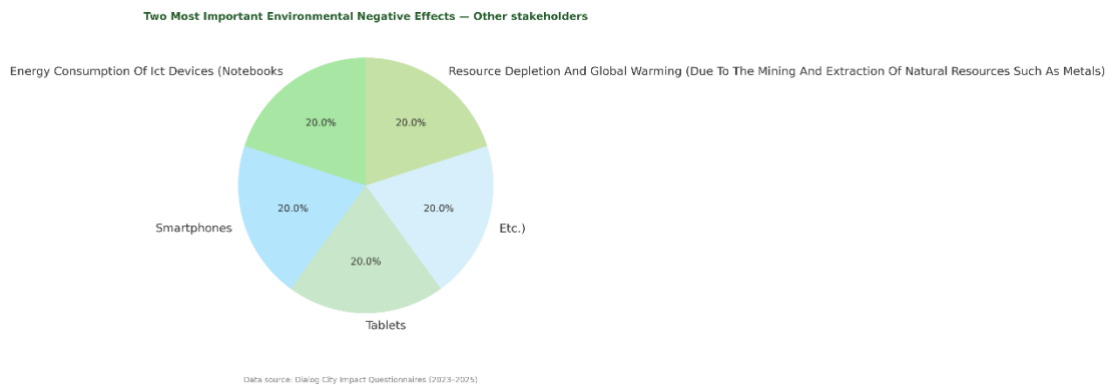
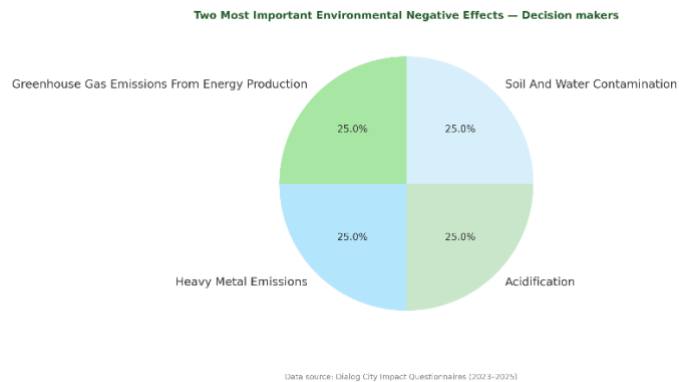
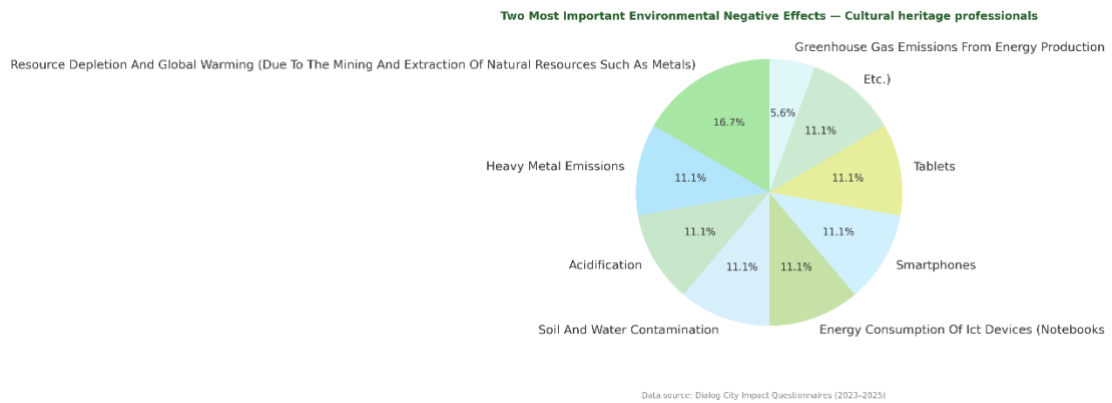
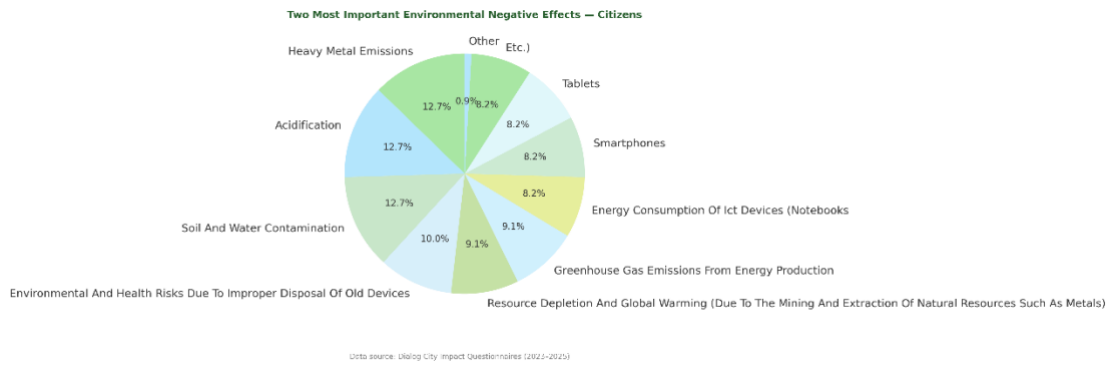


Data source: Dialog City Impact Questionnaires (2023–2025)

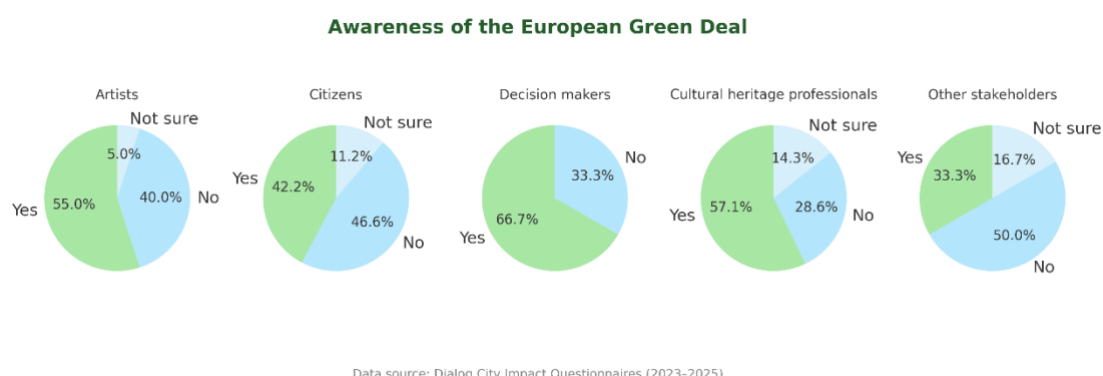
- The most important environmental negative effects.



Data source: Dialog City Impact Questionnaires (2023–2025)



- Awareness of the European Green Deal — pie chart by stakeholder.



Annex E: Context variables checklist for replication (audience demographics, partner type, facilitation intensity)

Data source: DialogCity_Impact_Data_158RESULTS_EN.xlsx

Exclusions: Columns H, S, and X

Grouping variable: Column B → *Festival (City)*

Scored context dimensions:

1. Audience Demographics — Diversity index based on categorical dispersion
 2. Stakeholder Diversity — Variety of stakeholder types per city (Column E)
 3. Facilitation Intensity — Proxy based on number of responses per city
- Output:
- Scored on a normalized 1–5 scale per city
 - Includes a composite average (Context Readiness Score)

Context Variable Checklist

Note: 1–5 scale (higher = stronger replication readiness):

Festival (City)	Audience Demographics	Stakeholder Diversity	Facilitation Intensity	Composite Context Score
Aschaffenburg	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.00
Mondovì	3.3	3.0	3.0	3.10
Montpellier	2.0	5.0	1.5	2.83
Graz	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.00

- **Aschaffenburg** emerges as the **strongest replication context** — diverse audience, balanced stakeholder ecosystem, and high facilitation intensity.
- **Mondovì** shows **moderate readiness**, driven by early diversity in engagement but limited scale.
- **Montpellier** exhibits **good stakeholder diversity** but lower facilitation levels, suggesting potential if supported with training and stronger mediation.
- **Graz** has the **lowest contextual readiness**, reflecting more homogeneous participation and fewer facilitation resources.