

DIVERSITY OF INITIATIVES IN THE PRYKARPATTIA

(REGIONAL RESEARCH REPORT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE
"DIVERSITY AMBASSADORS IN PRYKARPATTIA" PROGRAM)



DIVERSITY AMBASSADORS
IN PRYKARPATTYA

CONTENTS

Context and research goals overview	1
Generalized portrait of local Diversity Ambassadors.....	2
The needs of local initiatives.....	3
Overview of the focus areas of work of the Diversity Ambassadors in Prykarpattia.....	5
Results.....	8
Recommendations - how to support the initiatives which support diversity.....	9
Closing remarks.....	10





Проект фінансується
Європейським Союзом

The mapping has been conducted under the Diversity Ambassadors in Prykarpattia program implemented by the STAN Youth Organization under STAN Diversity Ambassadors 2020: Localization project supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and under The Diversity Ambassadors in Prykarpattia. It's anti-fragile support for vulnerable groups and civil society activists project implemented through a regranting scheme for supporting the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum at the expense of the European Union as part of the civil society support in the region.

Under the regranting scheme the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum supports the projects of its members who promote the achievement of the mission and goals of the Forum. The grants are available to civil organizations from the Eastern Partnership countries and the EU. The key areas of the support are: democracy, human rights, economic integration, environment and energy, contacts between people, social and labour policy.

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Youth organization STAN and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

Context

The mapping has been conducted in 6 communities of the Ivano-Frankivsk region. The influence of the recent local elections is observed in all communities. The processes of decentralization and restructuring of local infrastructure are set in motion, affecting local activists. Against the background of the latest political change, local actors of the civic sector resume their activities after almost a quarantine year. Together with them under our research, we want to find the missing puzzle pieces: to understand the new and unmet needs of vulnerable groups to plan future activities to support diversity in the region.

The research results (mapping) are a set of recommendations for the aid of local initiatives that support diversity in the region. The recommendations are based on the needs of local initiatives and vulnerable groups. The research team has conducted more than 40 in-depth interviews with local change agents in 6 communities in the Ivano-Frankivsk region to make recommendations. Change communities from Verkhovyna united territorial community, Dolyna, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kalush, Kolomyia, and Lysetsk took part in the mapping.

The mapping was not intended to create a complete map of all initiatives in the region. It would be impossible, but in the future, we are planning to continue collecting stories from other initiatives which support diversity in Prykarpattia.

We are sure that it will be useful for a wider community to get acquainted with each unique experience of cooperation and mutual aid.

Communicating with the initiatives under a pilot mapping, we tried to understand the following:

- **Who are the Diversity Ambassadors in Prykarpattia.**
- **What is a portrait of local activists who support the values of human rights and an open world in different spheres and extent?**
- **What challenges do local activists face, and what are their needs?**
- **What effective ways of support will be able to help initiatives in their development?**

This knowledge will help understand which initiatives cooperation can be established with and the way to do it, and how people who want to support change initiatives in the region can act.

We hope that the results of the research will be useful. They will shed light on new important discoveries or strengthen the understanding of some guesswork.

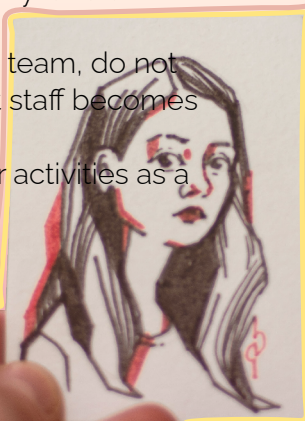


Who are the actors who potentially support diversity?

Who can be the Diversity Ambassador in Prykarpattia? They can be people who are not indifferent to the development of their community. They are interested in other people and open to the new. Their work is relevant because it makes somebody's life better. They have their convictions and can argue them. At the same time, they accept the existence of other opinions. They do not accept any form of violence and discrimination. They are worthy and respect the dignity of every human being. They are ready to respond to injustice and change the world for the better. And they need support.

The Diversity Ambassadors *(a generalized portrait based on the communication with local activists)*

- Have their circle of contacts with other active citizens - have a certain influence (often an unconscious one);
- Have their own experience which encouraged a more active civil position;
- Often have a wide range of public activities without prioritization; rely on their feelings and convictions when choosing goals and methods of action;
- Often earn money conducting other activities and spend part of the earnings on public affairs;
- Have clear convictions and are ready to hear others;
- Vulnerable to shocks such as quarantine / vulnerable to political or administrative changes;
- Appreciate their community and are not going to leave it;
- Engage volunteers to the team, do not have a staffing strategy / lost staff becomes irreplaceable;
- Often do not register their activities as a public association.

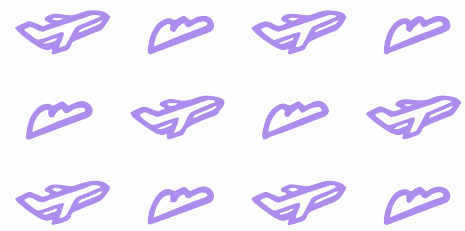


Working circumstances (risks):

- Have no support from local authorities, often avoid contacts due to the risk of politicization of activities;
- Rarely have access to grant support due to a lack of knowledge;
- Sometimes have the support of local patrons - but it is not stable;
- Often come across a lack of understanding from the community about the importance of their work;
- Face condemnation from society if they work with sensitive topics;
- Aim to have their own workspace - it is often without heating rented from strong political initiatives / not protected from invasion;
- Mostly have no integration with the networks of civil society organizations - informationally isolated;
- Often have difficult access to target audiences in particular due to low quality of the Internet;
- Low transport links, especially in small communities what make communication difficult.



Other needs in the activities of local actors who support diversity



At the beginning of the activity:

1. Realization of the first own project. The experience of implementing the first independent project. A significant need is to implement the first independent project. Mentoring is often used to fulfill this need, in particular for youth initiatives. However, there is an additional risk of ignoring the real interests of young people in this case. Mentors can only be guided by their own experience, which is often limited to a narrow topic. In this case, they can impose their own experience as a correct one. Mentoring is the right way of supporting for a short period.

2. Registration and legal regulation of activity. Support for the registration of a public association is essential for new initiatives. Later on, the development of legislation to support volunteering, legal consulting on labor legislation, copyright, and other activity aspects becomes a topical issue.

For existing initiatives:

3. Communication. Local initiatives often have a very narrow and stable target audience. To expand the audience, local diversity actors need to improve communication, for example, by participation in joint events.

4. Strategic planning. Due to a lack of permanent financial support, initiatives often begin on spontaneous activities. Under these conditions, it is challenging to monitor the activity's effectiveness; besides, the risk of loss of meaning and emotional burnout increases.

5. Professional development. For initiative teams to work more effectively, better access to professional development in the required expertise is needed.

6. Access to new knowledge. Informational isolation being specific to many organizations leads to the degradation of activity. One of the possibilities to clear the threshold may be to belong to civil society organizations' professional communities and networks.

7. Evaluation and presentation of work results. Initiatives rarely have enough expertise to evaluate the effectiveness of their activities. More over, they rarely have the opportunity to present the results of their actions.

8. Evaluation of needs of the target audience. The evaluation of the needs of the target audience is not fulfilled, and a lack of awareness of the own audience often bothers the activity of initiatives. Initiatives suffer from a lack of motivation or unwillingness to participate from people they work with because they do not have enough expertise to assess their needs.

9. Access to financial resources. Local initiatives have no access to available opportunities to attract finance. The development of fundraising competence is required.

10. Institutional development. The risk of sole hierarchical management is present. Initiatives often come across the risk of sole management when all activities depend on one person. It makes the organizations fragile. That's why it is crucial to support institutional development for local initiatives.

At the community level:

11. Closer cooperation between different actors, unity for a common goal are required. Collaboration between initiatives in communities is mainly situational (within a project). Initiatives need to have space (not physical) to define a common goal to establish long-term cooperation.

Development of the youth sector or strengthening of freedom of expression in the community can be an example of the goal.

12. Solidarity support. The activity of initiatives depends on the overall well-being of the ecosystem in the community of



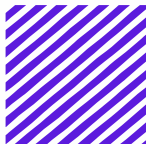
Overview of the focus areas of work of the Diversity Ambassadors in Prykarpattia

Different people, representatives of various spheres of activity, and belonging to different social groups can become Diversity Ambassadors. Within the framework of mapping the initiatives of Prykarpattia, we met:

The youth initiatives

Teenagers, students, and progressive youth in communities often become Diversity Ambassadors. When joining civic organizations, they often bring the ideas of social inclusion and non-discrimination. Although their ideas find no resonance with conservative organizations' actions, they still influence the development of discussion around these topics. It is typical for the youth initiatives i.e., initiatives implemented by young people, to seek support from a circle of the same age friends. If young people have enough courage and find other young changemakers of like minds, they create independent initiatives.

Challenge: when joining existing adult organizations, they do not have enough influence. Initiatives such as Youth Councils are dependent. They have no idea of and do not receive enough information to establish a full-value work. They have no influence when really important decisions are made and do not receive enough information to establish a full-value work. They have no influence when really important decisions are made.



Example of cooperation: Involvement of artists to the media campaign.

A school in cooperation with a public sector launches an educational project in order to create a student company. High school students study and develop their own tourist offer. A local tourist site hosts a unique offer of tours for children on the platform. The school is proud of the innovation and improves some studies. The non-formal educational organization receives a unique expertise for distribution.

The initiatives that work with young people but are not entirely youth organizations, for example, Youth Centers, require educational support. They do not have a basis on which to build a youth environment, so they often reduce their activities to organizing concerts and installing waste bins. Human rights education could be a basis for youth centers, with a further focus on increasing youth participation.

Challenge: achieving contact with the real needs of young people

Women's initiatives

Women's initiatives stand in solidarity with the problems of others. Because of social pressure, they often focus on children or young people. They also make great progress in this area by defending the interests of future generations. They are in dire need of a public understanding of the relevance of gender equality. Suffer from a biased attitude to the role of a woman.



activists. Initiatives need increased solidarity in times of difficulty.

**Example of cooperation:
Involvement of artists to the media
campaign.**

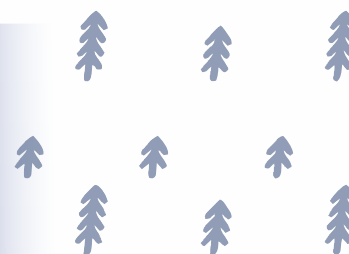
An environmental organization hired a photographer and a writer to develop a media campaign from eco-education. The creative implementation of the ideas attracted more attention from the audience of the local media publication which regularly publishes materials. More new people responded to the problems raised by the eco-initiative.



13. Networking for fresh ideas. Cooperation of initiatives often concerns precisely separate projects or individual contacts, for example, through the membership of one person in several initiatives at the same time. It reduces the opportunity for productive interaction. It is important to expand cooperation between different areas to generate relevant ideas.

14. Cooperation with the authorities. Organizations require establishing sustaining relations with local authorities to respond to current challenges more effectively and be more sustainable in time. Challenges on the way to the establishment of trust-based relations with the authorities are non-transparency, authorities failure, corruption and nepotism, the political involvement of local administration, preference of non-participative management practices.

15. Security of civic initiatives activity. Initiatives, especially the ones that work with vulnerable groups and sensitive topics, require protection.



Challenge: overcoming gender prejudices from society.

Programs for children, art education

Alternative educational programs aspire to be useful and fill the gaps of formal education. They often become an environment of acceptance and allow children to fulfill their needs for self-expression, acceptance and a friendly environment which are ignored by schools. Art education (especially an alternative one) is interested in children's free self-expression. Often such educational programs also initiate inclusion and care for excluded groups of children.

Challenge: schools ignore a long time, art education has been a territory free from politics. For the past few years, political forces have also begun to pay attention to this area. Three centers of extracurricular education in Ivano-Frankivsk initiated by political parties are a mark of it.

Examples of cooperation: Art education overcomes quarantine restrictions

When looking for the ways to pass over the quarantine restrictions, the art school starts a special project together with a local media. Television school for children rapidly gains popularity. The media gets a wide coverage from a new audience of children and parents. The school does not lose opportunities for activity during a quarantine time. The children are interested in unusual activity.

Progressive education and educators

Initiative educators are open to the new and that's why they better accept diversity. Unfortunately, most educational institutions and educators are not governed by human rights values in their activities. That's the reason why educators who are changemakers often get into a hostile environment. They are interested in expanding a range of contacts to meet other people. They need support, including creation of the space advantageous to their development work.

Challenge: overcoming disregard from the society, economic independence.

Independent media

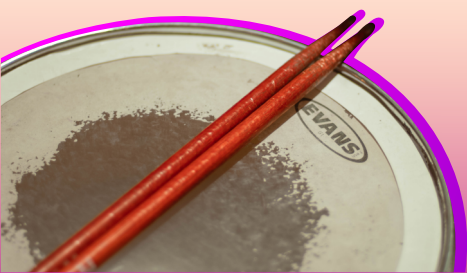
Independent media has more information than any other public initiative and can use knowledge to create a public opinion or increase transparency.

Challenge: a sustainable financial model of independence.

Art

Art initiatives mainly act in a spiritual sphere. Artists do not have access to the required experience to take part in social discourse.

Challenge: a high-quality art education with attention to the social significance of art.



Results

Each community has an experience of unique ideas and initiatives that can be a useful resource for others. Initiatives require an opportunity to share their experience with a wider world. They often have problems concerned with poor coverage of their activities.

Initiatives generally recognize their role not very well. It may be connected with a lack of relations with other initiatives that could help forward a self-reflection process. Initiatives often do not identify their own target audience. Service institutions that hardly have any connection to a wider world often work with vulnerable groups. That's why the problems of vulnerable groups remain unknown and cannot be resolved effectively. They are not introduced in public discourse.

For many change makers social activity is an additional one. Therefore, it may not be officially registered and may have no access to the opportunities open to the public sector. More over civic initiatives often do not realize their role in relations with the authorities. They do not defend their interests or advocate for change, but suffer from the actions of local authorities. It does not concern pro-government initiatives that have full access to the opportunities. But they also do not realize their role as defending the rights of local communities. The activity of initiatives is mostly superficial. The initiatives that know their target audience are much more effective and professional.

There is no initiative in the region which functions as a resource center for the



Culture

The culture is out of real interest in communities because it had to be revised a long time ago. Even mass culture in communities does not deal with the interests of local citizens.

Challenge: actualization of culture.

Example of cooperation: «Marketing supports culture»

Marketing as a socially responsible business of a civic organization consults cultural institutions to improve customer service. Local tourism business gets more guests because of the increased attractiveness of the place and supports the public initiative.



Tourism

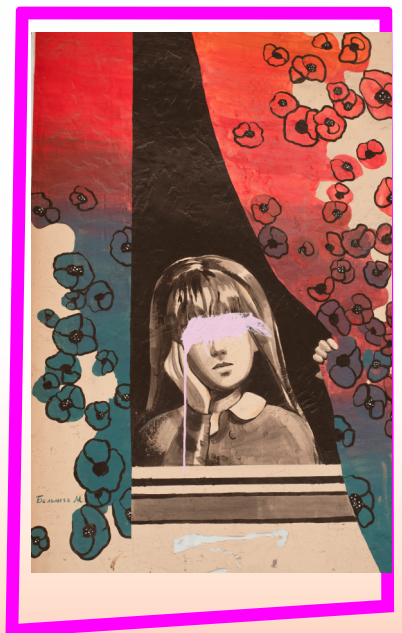
Local tourism development initiatives support local entrepreneurs. Potentially they can become unifying institutions and involve students/educators, etc., to create a mutually intensifying partnership.

Challenge: overcoming the division to "insiders" and "outsiders".

Science

When looking for effective forms of work science, step by step comes to social benefits.

Challenge: remoteness from civic sector, isolation.



МИСТЕЦЬКИЙ ЦЕНТР
концертний зал картинна галерея

What to do in Prykarpattia?

Recommendations for activities based on the needs of vulnerable groups

Needs of vulnerable groups

Vulnerable groups suffer from widespread stereotypes. Women are limited in their choice of a desired field of activity due to common gender stereotypes. Youth initiatives have to struggle to get a serious attitude.

Need: freedom from discrimination.

Vulnerable groups of young people need better access to youth infrastructure. Often the actors of art education or even group activities perform the function of youth work in the communities. They care about the inclusion and needs of the excluded groups. However, they do not have enough access to the education of youth workers.

Needs: access to education.

Public trust in the government is shallow. Representatives of local communities and especially of vulnerable groups do not believe in the possibility of changes. Accordingly, there is an urgent need to increase the level of public confidence in the state institutions.

Need: social protection and enjoyment of the rights, an increase of legal awareness.

A lack of knowledge about the government actions and the principles of decision-making is observed.

Need: access to public information.

Proposed solution

Culture without stereotypes

A cultural sphere dies in communities as it does not correspond to the needs of residents. The cultural sphere should look for relevant topics and involve art to overcome prevailing stereotypes in communities, and this way causes the improvement of the quality of life.

Education for youth workers

The activists interested in youth work use an inherited from the Soviet times' format due to a lack of a better procedural framework. Human rights education, education for the inclusion of society, and youth participation can become such a framework.

Dialogue (a structured dialogue / the youth's dialogue with authorities)

The dialogue should begin with defining positions and interests as they have often been ignored for so long that they already cannot be easily named. The dialogue should also include the preparation of government representatives for the adoption of participatory practices. The third component should be a meeting of the parties to develop a common decision on which implementation is to be checked.

Transparency and awareness

The actions taken to cover public information and ensure free access to information for all population segments are not enough.

Needs of vulnerable groups

Unmet basic needs often become a barrier to full integration into society. The level of financial literacy of the population is low what causes other problems.

It is a frequent occurrence to ignore problems to avoid social ostracism.

As in the case of domestic violence, the custom of hiding a problem in the family circle does not solve the problem that is widely spread in society. Similarly, the issue of mental health is entirely unknown in the community. It is also widely spread in society, like many others.

Need: an acceptance and safe environment.

The need is to be heard. Vulnerable groups have no opportunity to express existing needs. High-quality research in the local communities lacks. There is no influence between real needs and decision-making. Data on monitoring of service institutions working with vulnerable groups are absent. That's why it is impossible to understand whether their activity is really useful.

Strategic planning at the local level is performed without taking into account a wide range of community needs. The actors who protect the interests of the excluded groups are not involved in the strategic planning process.

Need: to be represented in the community development planning.

Vulnerable groups of the population have no access to a comprehensive approach to resolve social issues. For most people, group temporary or one-time support is not enough. Returning to their usual environment, they cannot be fully integrated due to the unreadiness, misunderstanding, or rejection by close people. Veterans, children with disabilities, women who suffered from violence, etc., come across such problems.

Proposed solution

Economic decisions

For example, school social entrepreneurship in education for teenagers, new professions courses for people of all ages, as well as a search for new solutions.

Openness

Society supports tabooing of problematic issues that do not help to solve them. The creation of a safe space for open dialogue remains a "blank spot" in activities of the public sector.

High-quality research and monitoring

(For example, a full-scale participatory community mapping, the youth's needs assessment, etc.)

Strategic planning at all levels taking into account the needs of different groups.

To develop the city's strategy, specialists in this field should be involved. They will launch the full reflection of the population's needs and help to create a realistic plan based on the available potential. Now local strategies are not real or reflect the interests only of a privileged group.

Comprehensive work with families and the environment, individual attention in crisis situations

For example, it can be embodied by the implementation of social order from the community by a social initiative. That will provide the possibility of systematic, not episodic work.

Closing remarks

Interviews with local activists made it clear that many topics need to be researched more in-depth. Further mapping of diversity should focus on looking for the individual initiatives that represent the interests of the excluded groups to develop further ways of building the bridges between them and a wide range of initiatives that can mutually reinforce each other.

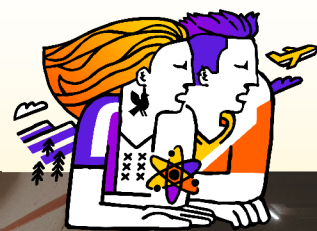
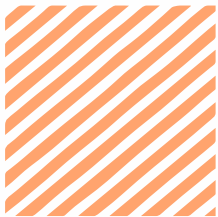
It became clear that work with many vulnerable groups lies outside the sphere known to the majority of respondents. According to them the interests of these vulnerable groups are mainly represented by the following organizations: religious organizations, public utility companies, departments of social service and charity funds. There is a high degree of distrust to the charity funds, although not enough is known about the activities in each of the three cases. Mapping could increase the publicity of these initiatives' activity and probably attract attention to the topics which are tabooed now. It is important to do to stop the ignorance of the excluded people that is observed now.

Participatory research of social inclusion of cities and communities deserves special attention. Physical accessibility is not enough to be fully included in society, although it also lacks. Limiting beliefs disrupt full integration into society. Refusal to hold a dialogue or inability to build it due to transparent or pointless barriers. Economic barriers and obstacles of non-availability of education. Other needs of the people excluded from the community stay unnoticed and how they can be met is a topic for a more in-depth analysis.

One of the most evident social elevators is education which requires a separate research. Contrary to the research group's previous expectations, no student initiatives in the communities can be found. (Except student government in one of the communities). But even in this case, education has not become a catalyst for an active position. Education was mentioned as an acute issue in most interviews. What inconsistencies exist in the formal education system and what the potential it has are the topics for a deeper research.

A mapping together with initiatives could fill the gap between them and their audiences. Development of the participatory culture and advancement of mapping of diversity is also one of the promising areas for further activity.

Within the pilot survey, we realized that there are not many confident Diversity Ambassadors in the region, and there are many reasons we described above for it. However, all activists of the region have a common value, which they protect and care about in their work in the community. This value is in keeping with the value of accepting diversity, it is about freedom.





Response to the methodology and analytical report on mapping:
Yuliya Lyubych

Community research method community mapping was performed by:

Yuliya Lyubych,
Tatiana Grytsenko
Denis Kozlov
Andriy Volyk
Vladyslav Sokha
Ksenia Yanko

Photographer:
Ksenia Yanko

Project coordinator:
Vladyslav Sokha

website: stan.org.ua
facebook: [lgstan](https://www.facebook.com/lgstan)
instagram: [stan.art.group](https://www.instagram.com/stan.art.group)
telegram: [stanartgroup](https://www.telegram.com/stanartgroup)

