
Supporting Ukraine through citizen engagement at Baltic Universities

Baltic universities fostering citizen engagement through social actions for Ukrainian refugees

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Consortium

The consortium governing the project is adequately representing a wide range of expertise, since 5 Higher Education Institutions (Tallinn University, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Kaunas University of Technology, University of Tartu, University of Latvia) join hands with a web education specialist (Web2Learn). This mix of knowledge, skills, experiences and networks guarantees a layered approach towards a diverse range of stakeholders.



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List of Abbreviations

The following table presents the acronyms used in the deliverable in alphabetical order.

Abbreviations	Description
EU	European Union
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HE	Higher Education
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive Summary

This publication addresses a topic of significant social relevance and emergency: Baltic universities' responsiveness to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis by means of citizen engagement. Hence, this collection of university-driven actions serves as a first systematic attempt to map and analyse formal and informal ways through which the higher education (HE) sector fosters citizen engagement in actions for a social purpose.

Some of the points on which this study lays emphasis are:

- Baltic and Ukrainian universities' actions in support of Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs);
- The role of citizens in university-led actions;
- The types of actions that have been carried out and their social value in terms of participation and inclusion.

The study is grounded into two key concepts; namely (a) citizen engagement and (b) grassroots innovation that emphasise the social mission of the HE sector, especially in a crisis situation (i.e. the Russo-Ukrainian war).

In our analysis, we selected 20 indicative actions organised by Baltic and Ukrainian universities. The study outlines the framework and the scope of the conducted research, the methodological process that has been applied and the typological spectrum of actions organised for the benefit of Ukrainian refugees.

In the broader level of university-society policy making, this publication leverages HEIs' social role and contribution in the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis, while paving the way for further collaboration between the HE sector, policy, industry and society in the face of socially disruptive conditions.

“The authors dedicate the present study to all human beings contributing by any means, at any time, individually or collectively, to the unique edifice of human solidarity with Ukraine”.



1. Background

The Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, has resulted in a harsh and ongoing war whose humanitarian consequences are widely felt not only in Ukraine but also in the rest of Europe. Since 2022, the war has created a wave of IDPs and refugees who have sought refuge in the western part of the country and abroad.

In this challenging situation, the Baltic region has been particularly affected by the conflict as thousands of Ukrainian refugees have reached and temporarily settled in all three Baltic states. According to the latest figures provided by UNHCR (February 22, 2023), more than 43000 Ukrainian refugees are living in Estonia under temporary or subsidiary protection, more than 44000 have sought temporary protection in Latvia, while 72000 have found refuge in Lithuania with authorities expecting a wave of 150000 people in 2023.

Faced with an unprecedented influx of Ukrainian refugees, Baltic stakeholders, from civil society to industry and the educational sector have mobilised their forces to provide much needed assistance to refugees. Motivated by the plethora of initiatives that have been realised since February 2022, we look into types of action that emphasise the social dimension of these initiatives, while bringing to the fore the social mission of universities in times of crises.

We are thus particularly interested in exploring actions that leverage forms of citizen engagement with the aim to highlight participatory and open to the public actions, in which academic communities in Baltic countries were actively involved.

The Baltics4UA project

This publication is a result of the EU-funded Baltics4UA project (Supporting Ukraine through citizen engagement at Baltic Universities, <https://baltics4ua.eu/>), whose objective is to tackle the consequences of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis in the Baltics by bringing HEIs to the forefront of action taking for a social purpose. By acknowledging the immense opportunities arising from close collaboration between academia, policy, industry and society, the Baltics4UA project aims to foster the recognition of actions that enable citizen engagement in HE curricula, thus enhancing the valorisation of formal and informal learning practices.

This 2-year project is coordinated by Tallinn University. The consortium is made of five universities (Tallinn University, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Kaunas University of Technology, University of Tartu, University of Latvia) and one business partner (Web2Learn) who specialises in open and social learning.



2. Rationale

In this section, we outline the motivation of the study by explaining the role of HEIs in tackling contemporary crises through citizen engagement (2.1), and by focusing on the HE sector's role in the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis (2.2). Additionally, some definitions on key terms used in the study are also provided (2.3).

2.1. Universities tackling crises through citizen engagement

Historically, societies face social challenges that bring to the fore the need for greater mobilisation of resources. Responding to this need, since their creation, universities are lighthouses of science-driven interventions to mitigate social problems thanks to their capacity of enabling pioneering knowledge and research.

The latest example of universities' effective support to communities faced with an unprecedented challenge is the COVID-19 pandemic. Academic staff and students deployed their forces to provide solutions in this pressing health and social matter (Berditchevskaia & Peach, 2021), also in the form of digitally-enhanced actions (Zourou, 2021). In this context, the Erasmus+ project HEIDI ("Digital action at HEIs as a catalyst for social change in the COVID-19 crisis") is an indicative but suitable example of a project that aimed at enhancing HEIs' ability to contribute, via participatory and digitally-enhanced ways, in the fight against the pandemic¹. The Erasmus+ project results platform² is a gateway to EU-funded projects under the Erasmus+ programme tackling the pandemic crisis in the education and training sector.

2.1.1. European Universities addressing the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis

Since February 2022, universities have initiated a series of actions to facilitate the adaptation and integration of Ukrainian refugees into their hosting communities and the respective national HE sectors. One of the most known actions set up quickly after the war outbreak,

¹ HEIDI project, <https://heidiproject.eu/>

² Erasmus+ project results platform, <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects>

thus demonstrating the power of digital technologies and social responsibility, is the #ScienceForUkraine initiative. In particular, by realising the need to provide up-to-date and accurate information to Ukrainian scholars who found refuge outside the Ukrainian borders, a team of determined scholars spread throughout European HEIs founded the #ScienceForUkraine initiative (Rose et al. 2022).

Through the #ScienceForUkraine online platform³, volunteers from around the globe are called to procure information about research and job opportunities in European HEIs for Ukrainian scholars and students. Thanks to the active engagement of people -more than 130 volunteers actively contributing- #ScienceForUkraine has emerged as one of the most exemplary bottom-up and self-organised initiatives that have been introduced by university staff since the beginning of the war.

Additionally, quick response by European university networks have been showcased through the European University Association (EUA) that has launched a Twitter-based aggregation of support measures by the European HE community for Ukrainian refugees. EUA has developed two Twitter lists; the one concentrating information and supportive statements from February to mid March 2022 (available [here](#)) and the second for April 2022 (available [here](#)).

Likewise, statements of solidarity and support by European university networks are a concrete expression of the European HE sector mobilisation in the face of the Ukrainian war and its consequences. An outstanding example of European HE solidarity with Ukraine is the joint statement issued by 40 European Universities Alliances and the EURECA-PRO alliance in March 2022. The statement paved the way for inclusive and support mechanisms to be developed in European HEIs for the benefit of Ukrainian refugees and academic communities⁴.

2.1.2. Indicative EU-funded projects

Faced with the consequences of the Ukrainian crisis, European universities are developing EU-funded projects to promote upskilling and inclusion of Ukrainians in the European Research Area.

Indicatively, the Erasmus+ project AGILE⁵ (Higher education resilience in refugee crises: forging social inclusion through capacity building, civic engagement and skills recognition,

³ ScienceForUkraine, <https://scienceforukraine.eu/>

⁴ EURECA-PRO. (March , 2022). Joint statement of the 41 Alliances of European Universities on the conflict situation in Ukraine. <https://www.eurecapro.eu/the-41-european-university-alliances-statement-on-the-conflict-situation-in-ukraine/>

⁵ AGILE project, <http://www.agileproject-erasmus.eu/>

2022-2025) aims to increase HE resilience in refugee crises and foster Ukrainian refugees' integration. The project addresses the needs of Ukrainian refugees in EU member-states as well as IDPs in western Ukraine.

Furthermore, one of the most targeted interventions for the benefit of the Ukrainian HE sector and its people is the Multiplication Trainings for Higher Education Administrators in Ukraine (THEA Ukraine X) programme⁶. The programme foresees training HE administrators in Ukraine in internationalisation skills that are deemed indispensable for the sustainability and resilience of the Ukrainian HE sector. It is led by FH Münster University in cooperation with Sumy State University.

Finally, in the field of cultural heritage protection and the role of universities in preserving Ukrainian heritage, the Erasmus+ eCHOIng project (Recovery of cultural heritage through higher education-driven open innovation, 2022-2024) produced an open access online module on "Open innovation in academia-society cooperation: examples of cultural heritage preservation in situations of crisis" (Zourou, Oikonomou, Ziku, Skowron, 2022). The [module](#) presents participatory and innovative practices to cultural heritage preservation that have provided critical support to the Ukrainian cultural heritage sector and its people.

2.2. Gaps in the literature review and the contribution of the present study

The mobilisation of Baltic HEIs to address the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis has been documented piecemeal in news articles, journals or in HEIs' official websites. This study aims to bring together and analyse in a coherent way university-driven actions, thus overcoming the existing lack of:

- systematic insights into Baltic and Ukrainian universities' actions in support of Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons;

The collection of cross-country university actions is a first step to create a pool of examples that need to be classified based on a scientifically-sound methodology (see Methodology section). There is no prior systematic attempt that proceeds in this kind of analysis of actions for Baltic universities. Although several European universities have offered support to Ukrainian refugees, the cross-country and cross-institutional perspective was missing from any mapping and analysis attempt.

⁶ The THEA Ukraine Programme, <https://en.fh-muenster.de/WWWeiterbildungen-int/internationale-weiterbildungen/thea-ukraine-startseite.php>

- valorisation of the role of citizens in university-led actions;

As the crisis makes it urgent for Baltic universities to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees, there is a tendency to neglect two valuable dimensions of university-led actions: the social participation and social innovation dimensions. In this study, we seek to bring forth the citizen's role in institution-led initiatives, thus creating the basis for social innovation to thrive.

- a typology of actions and their social value in terms of participation and inclusion.

This publication provides a typology-based analysis of actions that was missing from the (largely unstructured) literature review. To better understand the range of the actions that have been carried out and their social dynamics, a typology of actions common to all initiatives has been applied, to ease the cross-institutional and cross-country mapping of initiatives (see *Methodology section*).

Finally, it should be noted that universities are not alone in urging (and collaborating with) civil society to tackle societal challenges; in the policy sphere, governments also play a role in activating communities to stand with Ukrainian refugees. Although it will not be the subject of the present study, it is worth exploring, at a later stage, the correspondence between government-initiated and university-driven actions in cooperation with civil society in crisis situations.

2.3. Some definitions

Before delving into the scope and methodology sections, we present indicative definitions of the key terms used throughout the study.

Citizen engagement

We define citizen engagement as the interaction between citizens, scientists and policy makers to address societal issues (European Commission, 2020). The last two decades an increased focus on citizen engagement at EU level is being noticed, as well as the multiplication of efforts to leverage the role of citizen engagement in national as well as European policies (Kotanidis & Del Monte, 2022). Numerous studies have also mapped and outlined the variety of citizen participation forms, such as the OECD report on citizen deliberation (2020)⁷. An additional evidence of the EU's growing attention towards citizen

⁷ OECD (2020), *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/339306da-en>.

participation is the recent establishment of the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy at the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission in 2018⁸.

In the context of the present study, we delve into the type and the level of citizen engagement in actions organised by universities to highlight connections between specific kinds of actions and their impact on citizens' empowerment.

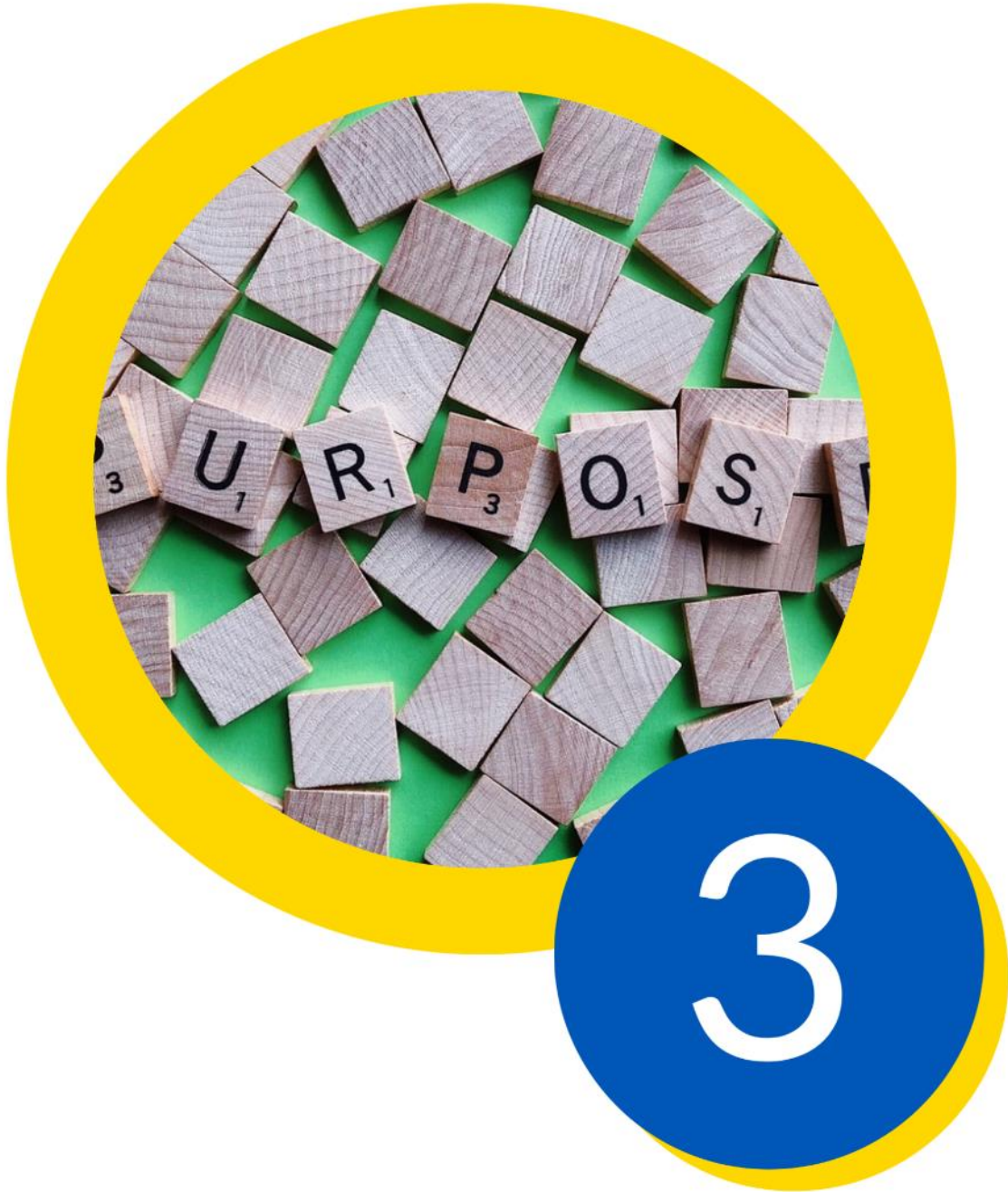
Grassroots innovation

We adopt Bernstein et al. (2021) definition of grassroots innovation as home-grown inventions or novelties created by everyday people and used to address challenges that directly or indirectly influence their lives (p. 7). Grassroots innovation is a key term of the present study as it points to the innovation potential of bottom-up and citizen-led actions.

Social action

Social action is defined as “people coming together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities” (UK Government, 2016). Thus, social action becomes a catalyst to social innovation through which people from different socio-cultural and educational backgrounds engage in knowledge exchange to produce socially beneficial solutions.

⁸ European Commission. (June, 30, 2022). About the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy. https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/participatory-democracy/about_en#:~:text=Help-Competence%20Centre%20on%20Participatory%20and%20Deliberative%20Democracy,policy%20through%20citizen%20engagement%20practices.



3. Scope

The goal of this publication is to offer a mapping and an analysis of selected social actions in which academic communities and citizens in the Baltic countries were engaged in solidarity to Ukrainians fleeing the war.

The scope is twofold. At first, it aims to serve as a cross-country mapping of actions carried out by Baltic and Ukrainian universities to respond to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis. We move beyond a first-level categorisation of actions by integrating the citizen engagement dimension to valorise citizens' role in the selected actions.

Hence, our approach to grassroots innovation and citizen engagement is reflected in the scope of this study, since we aim to identify and analyse actions through the lens of their degree and type of citizen engagement.

In this context, this publication is designed to act as more than a curated collection of actions by Baltic and Ukrainian universities but as a trigger of more participatory and citizens-oriented action taking amid disruptive social conditions (cf. war, conflict) (Rose et al. 2022).



4. Methodology

Overview

This section presents the methodology through which the identification, selection and analysis of actions have been carried out. By developing a conceptual framework, we aimed to establish a solid desk research as well as a subsequent analysis of the results. Hence, we adopted a 3-step methodological process outlined below.

Step 1 | Framing the study: selection criteria and features by action

The aim of Step 1 was to produce a pool of actions undertaken by Baltic and Ukrainian HEIs to engage citizens in forms of social action for Ukrainian refugees. We first produced the **conceptual framework**, which was composed by the key definitions of the study (present hereby), the scope, roles, duration and timeframe of the research. The collection of actions took the form of a desk research that began in February 2023 and was completed by May 2023.

The conceptual framework specified the four selection criteria to consider, namely:

- (1) the involvement of a HEI,
- (2) the location in a Baltic country,
- (3) the benefit for Ukrainian displaced populations, and
- (4) the connection to a type of action from the established typology

Main components of the conceptual framework were the selection criteria and the two applied typologies of a) actions and b) levels of citizen engagement (see section Step 2).

To better frame the study, the 3-step methodological process figures below (Figure 1).

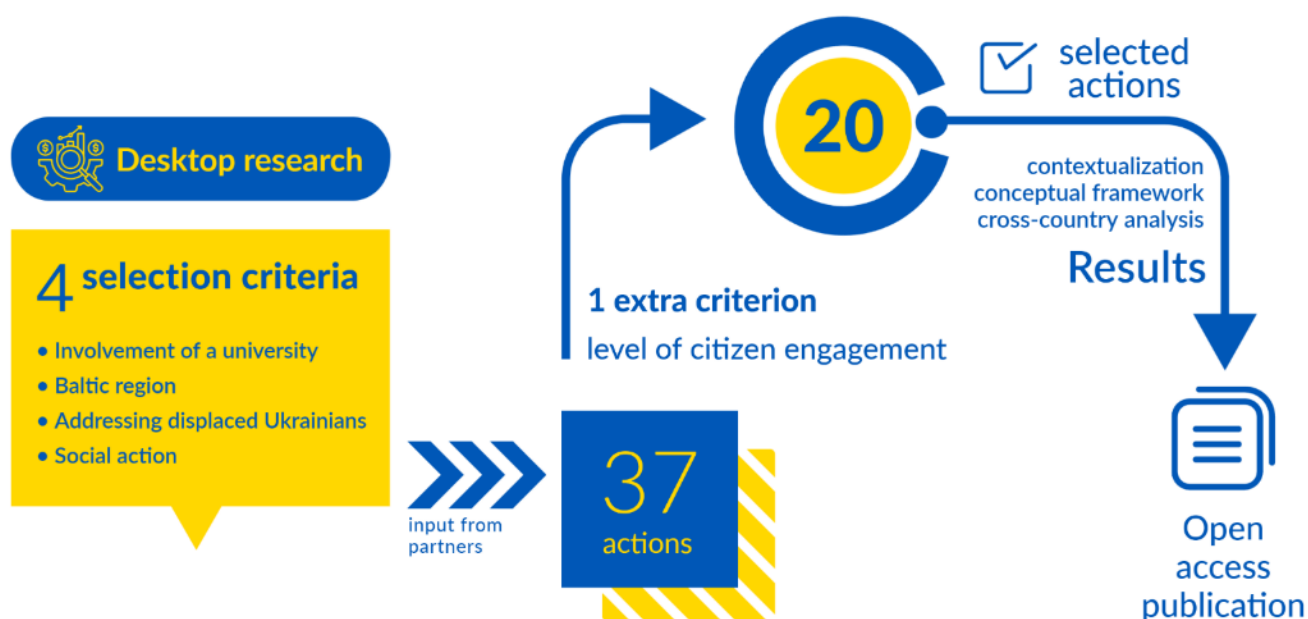


Figure 1 Methodological steps

The desk research

Entries were added in a shared spreadsheet common to the Baltics4UA consortium. The desk research targeted actions carried out by Baltic and Ukrainian universities in their territories since the beginning of the war. Once the collection of actions was completed, the authors screened all entries to validate their relevance.

Focus on the 4 selection criteria of step 1:

1. HEIs' involvement in the action

Partners collected actions that have been organised by universities or academic communities (staff, students, researchers) since February 2022. Hence, the involvement of at least one HEI was a fundamental selection criterion to build the inventory.

2. Geographical distribution

a. Baltic countries

Partners gathered examples of actions undertaken by Baltic universities in the Baltic region and Ukraine, as well as examples of studies that refer to these actions. Each partner

university focused on its national context by providing examples of actions (e.g., TLU and UT provided examples of Estonia-based actions).

b. Ukraine

Partners included actions carried out by Ukrainian universities in Ukrainian territory regarding IDPs.

3. The typology of actions

To be able to compare on the same ground initiatives that have been initiated at different timeframes and by different institutions, we designed a typology of actions against which all HE-led actions were categorised. The typology is the result of two main factors, namely: (1) our willingness to emphasise the citizen participation dimension of actions, and (2) a first categorisation of actions made by Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) for Ukrainian refugees and students⁹. The VMU categorisation served as basis to the typology adopted in this study, containing the 18 items presented below:

1. Citizen Science
2. Hackathon
3. Crowdfunding
4. Crowdsourcing
5. Do-it-yourself
6. Art event (theatrical plays, music concerts, exhibitions etc.)
7. Scholarship
8. Tuition free studies
9. Free accommodation
10. Psychological counselling
11. Podcast
12. Campaign
13. Public lectures
14. Legal counselling
15. Networking event
16. Summer camp
17. Educational equipments
18. Working/Research group

⁹ Vytautas Magnus University. (n.d.). Support to UA. <https://www.vdu.lt/en/support-to-ua/>

To better situate each action in its broader context, common descriptors to each action were provided, allowing us to define each action according to common features. These features were: (a) the status of the action (ongoing or completed); (b) the involvement of a business partner; (c) the leader of the action (HE administration, researchers, students and staff) and (d) the target groups.

With the completion of the desk research (Step 1), Baltics4UA partners had gathered 45 initiatives of Baltic and Ukrainian universities.

Step 2 | Second screening of actions: emphasis on citizen engagement

In step 2, we proceeded to a more refined categorisation, this time considering the level of citizen engagement of the collected actions. Therefore, a second screening of all actions was established, as our intention was to analyse citizen engagement nuances of the selected actions.

Selection criterion in step 2:

1. Level of citizen engagement

Although citizen engagement may be present in social actions, not all actions are characterised by the same level of citizen engagement. From this perspective, we first took into consideration Bonney et al. (2009)'s categorisation of degrees of public participation (cf. contributory, collaborative, co-creative). Nevertheless, we found this typology to be more suitable for citizen science-oriented actions and projects rather than with the types of actions identified by partners in step 1.

Therefore, we adopted the analysis of actions based on the level of citizen engagement as outlined by the World Bank Working Group on Citizen Engagement (2015), as we believe it better fits to the needs of the present study; namely it is more relevant to the types of actions identified and the degree in which we can identify the level of citizen engagement in them. The levels of citizen engagement are four, namely:

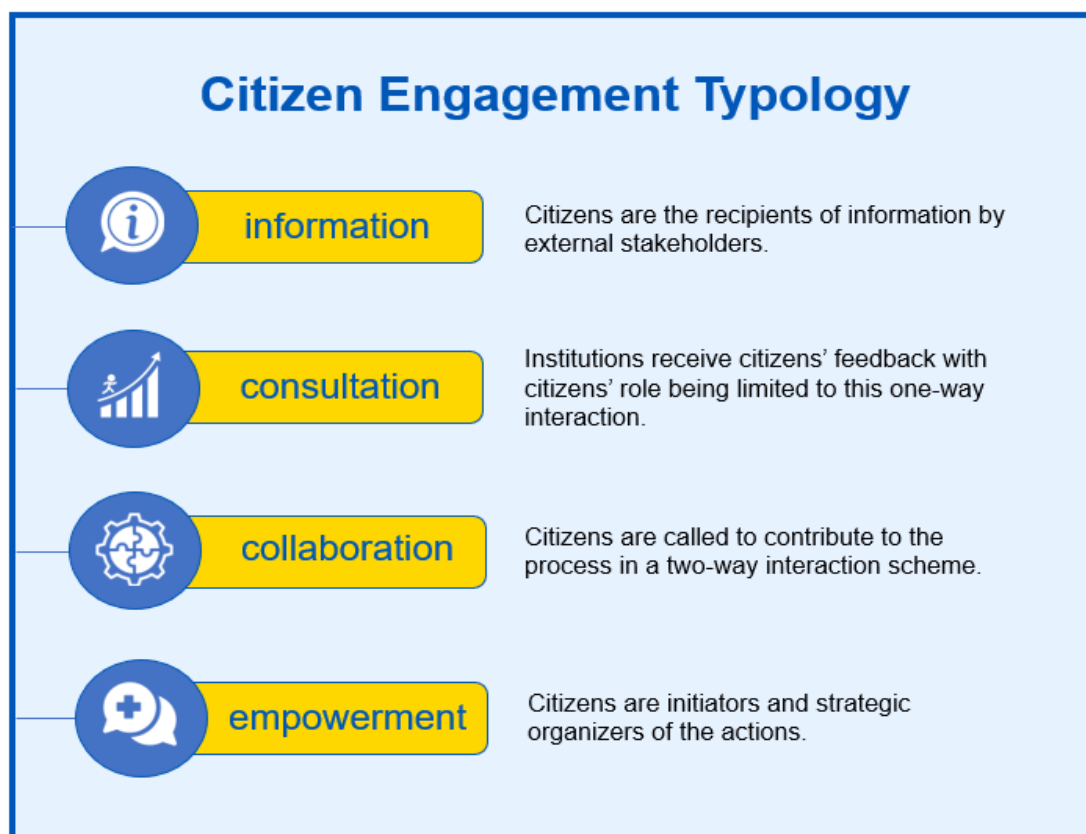


Figure 2 Levels of citizen engagement, Source: World Bank WG on Citizen Engagement (2015)

In the data collection spreadsheet, the column “Levels of citizen engagement” contained a dropdown list with the four items above plus “None” as category item.

Feature in step 2:

2. Grassroots innovation dimension

We were also interested in shedding light on the presence of any grassroots innovation in the selected actions. Therefore, a dedicated column “Grassroots innovation” contained the options “Yes” and “No”.

Once the level of engagement of each action had been identified, as well as the presence of any grassroots innovation dimension in them, we removed actions that didn’t meet the second selection criterion of step 2. Hence, from an initial set of 45 actions, we reached a new set of 27 actions containing indications of citizen engagement.

Step 3 | Identification of the 20 actions

In step 3, we distinguished actions according to the level of citizen engagement, thus eliminating those actions that included a limited level of citizen engagement, namely those belonging to the *Information* level of the typology (cf. step 2). We consider information as a quasi-non-engaging form of mobilising citizens due to the uni-directional way of communication it conveys. This way, we reached the number of 20 actions. The list of the selected actions does not follow an alphabetical or time-based principle -the order in which the actions appear is random.

Limitations

It is worth mentioning some limitations of the research. First, the timeframe of this desk research was rather short as it ran from February to May 2023. In addition, the collection is indicative of the plethora of initiatives organised in the Baltics; despite our efforts to intensively collect as many actions as possible, we cannot claim that the study is exhaustive. Moreover, the analysis of each action is a (subjective) interpretation of the authors based on the data available at desk research level.

5. 20 citizen engagement actions by Baltic universities



The result of our desk research, and the methodology that has been applied to it, were concluded with the identification of 20 university-driven actions based on their level of engaging citizens. Below, we provide an overview of these actions by showcasing their key features as well as citizens' contribution to each one of them.

Selected practices at a glance

- 1 Support the Ukrainian students - become a permanent donor!
- 2 Students with Ukraine
- 3 A Café forum for Ukraine
- 4 A charity book fair for supporting Ukraine
- 5 Temporary protected Ukrainians and other Ukrainians in Estonia
- 6 The Scholarship fund for Ukrainian students
- 7 Help protect- Let's make safety nets together
- 8 Starting with Ukrainian art history
- 9 Social design for Young Ukrainian Refugees
- 10 Rebuilding Ukraine
- 11 WILL: Student Exhibition
- 12 Craft workshop for Ukrainian children
- 13 Crowdfunding for portable charging stations
- 14 Supporting war-affected Ukrainian students
- 15 Navigating Change and Transforming Trauma
- 16 Student Volunteer Headquarters
- 17 Weaving camouflage nets
- 18 A charity volleyball tournament
- 19 A volunteer Teaching Programme
- 20 I donate lunch money to support Ukrainian students at my university

#1 Support the Ukrainian students – become a permanent donor!

A fund for Ukrainian students

<https://www.tlu.ee/en/news/support-ukrainian-students-tlu-become-permanent-donor>

Short Description

This action is carried out by the Student Union of Tallinn University (TLU) and is complementary to other initiatives run by TLU, such as tuition-free studies offered to Ukrainian students. The action consists of a charity fund whose purpose is to collect donations for the TLU's Ukrainian students.

The Student Union of Tallinn University aims to provide support to Ukrainian students to cover their living expenses. Particularly, one of the main motivations that triggered action by the student union was the realisation that the tuition-free studies and accommodation offered by TLU may not be enough for Ukrainian students.

The programme is open to all Ukrainian students enrolled at TLU who can apply for funding. The funds raised will be distributed equally among Ukrainian students. To receive support, students need to submit an application to the Student Union.

Citizens' role and contribution

In this action, university students become a catalytic agent towards supporting their Ukrainian colleagues. By establishing an ad hoc fund for Ukrainian students who have sought refuge in Estonia, TLU students actively engage in organising, communicating and providing much needed support to Ukrainian refugee students. Moreover, through this crowdfunding campaign, all students and the academic community are encouraged to financially contribute to the wellbeing of Ukrainians.



key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Tallinn University



Type of social action
Crowdfunding



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Ukrainian refugee students



Status
Ongoing

#2 Students with Ukraine

A non-governmental organisation founded by students

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/350240783658789>

Short Description

The Student Union of the Tallinn University has set up a non-governmental organisation, called “Students with Ukraine”, to assist the Ukrainian population. In particular, the organisation collects food and other useful materials, such as blankets and clothes that are sent to Ukraine.

Until now, “Students with Ukraine” has managed to collect and ship 47 buses, 7 cars and 1 truck full of stuff, including: 10.000 diapers, 1250 bottles of water and juice, 400 boxes of medicine and hygiene accessories, 100 blankets, 50 outdoor beds, 40 sleeping bags.

Beyond this crowdsourcing-based action, the organisation runs a variety of other activities to encourage the local population to support Ukrainian refugees in Estonia.

Citizens’ role and contribution

“Students with Ukraine” is a volunteer-based organisation founded by students of Tallinn University. It operates on a crowdfunding basis by collecting and providing humanitarian aid by citizens who desire to help the Ukrainian population. Hence, volunteers form the core of this grassroots and collaborative action that fosters citizen engagement for the benefit of displaced Ukrainian and refugees.



key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Tallinn University



Type of social action
Crowdsourcing



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Ukrainian refugee students,
Ukrainian refugees



Status
Ongoing

#3 A Café forum for Ukraine

Meeting with Ukrainian refugees

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/350240783658789>



Short Description

The Student Union of Tallinn University has organised an event titled “Ukrainian Café in 2022”. The aim of the event was for students from the University of Tallinn to meet with Ukrainian students and friends to develop a network of social contacts towards the creation of a community around Ukrainian students.

According to the Student Union, this is a critical step for Ukrainian refugees’ adaption to the new circumstances. Local students, through their discussions with Ukrainian people, had the opportunity to better understand the situation in Ukraine and to consider new ways of assisting the suffering population.

Overall, the event was a major step for both groups towards building mutual trust and understanding.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Tallinn University



Type of social action
Networking event



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education staff,
Ukrainian refugee students



Status
Completed

Citizens’ role and contribution

“Ukrainian Café in 2022” is a unique action that aimed to create a friendly environment for Ukrainian refugee students. Specifically, the role of Estonian students who organised and participated in this event was an open expression of citizen engagement towards an important social issue, that of creating a safe space for solidarity and communication with Ukrainians. TLU students, as active citizens, by showing concrete empathy to those who suffer, set a valuable example for the rest of their academic and national community.

#4 A Charity book fair for supporting Ukraine

A book fair as a crowdfunding event

<https://taltech.ee/sundmused/heategevuslik-raamatulaat-ukraina-toetuseks>



Short Description

This action included the organisation of a charity book fair, run by the university students' union in partnership with the university's central library.

Students, as well as other volunteers, were called to donate one or more books to the library service, which was in charge of this activity, in order to be sold during the charity fair. Prices ranged from 0.5 to 2 euros.

The amount of money that was gathered is used for supporting Ukrainian students studying at Tallinn Technical University.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Tallinn Technical University



Type of social action
Campaign



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education staff,
Ukrainian refugee students



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

In this action, students played a fundamental role in carrying out this collaborative action. In particular, students called on and encouraged the academic staff and students as well as citizens who were not part of the academic community to support Ukrainian refugee students by not only buying a book for a symbolic price but also donating books to set up the book fair; an act of solidarity that necessitates and carries a greater level of action-taking by people involved in it.

#5 Temporary protected Ukrainians and other Ukrainians in Estonia

An investigation on the Ukrainian population hosted in Estonia

<https://skytte.ut.ee/sites/default/files/2022-12/Jauhiainen%20et%20al.%20Temporary%20protected>

Short Description

The University of Turku run a research project titled as “Temporary protected Ukrainians and other Ukrainians in Estonia” to investigate how Ukrainians in Estonia coped under temporary protection and similar legal statuses.

The University of Tartu conducted the survey and data analysis for the report. In particular, the research programme identified a series of actions undertaken in Estonia, including access to accommodation, employment, health (medical) care, education for children, and subsistence.

According to the main research conclusion, as of September 2022, Ukrainians in Estonia had been offered protection from the war regardless of their status. However, not all Ukrainians knew about all services or could access them.

Citizens’ role and contribution

A research programme usually serves scientific questions. In this study, Ukrainian refugees residing in Estonia were consulted for researchers to map their legal status and challenges. Hence, a research programme allows researchers to release an intellectual output that can be useful for policy makers and beneficial for the targeted population. Although the level of citizen engagement in this action remains low (consultation), the focus on Ukrainian refugees who were engaged in the research programme carries a value in terms of social relevance and participation.



key features

**Country**

Finland (Report about Estonia)

**University Involved**

University of Turku & University of Tartu

**Type of social action**

Working/Research group

**Level of citizen engagement**

Consultation

**Target group/s**

Policymakers, local and national governments

**Status**

Completed

#6 The Scholarship fund for Ukrainian students

A scholarship programme for Ukrainian students at the University of Tartu

<https://ut.ee/en/ukraine>



Short Description

The University of Tartu, acknowledging Ukrainian students' need to continue their studies, has established an ad-hoc fund for supporting Ukrainian students to proceed with their studies in the university through a scholarship programme.

The fund is open to donations from companies and individuals, and all undergraduate and graduate students are allowed to apply for funding.

Students can use the scholarship according to their own needs, while the number and size of scholarships depends on the total amount of donations. Applications can be submitted after a public call, announced through the university information channels.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
University of Tartu



Type of social action
Scholarship



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Ukrainian refugee students



Status
Ongoing

Citizens' role and contribution

The scholarship fund for Ukrainian students is a fundraising initiative carried out by the University of Tartu. As in similar actions, citizens and organisations, from individuals to companies, are encouraged to financially support the studies' journey of Ukrainian refugee students in Tartu. Although a scholarship, as an action, is an institutionalised and top-down approach to engagement by universities, the public call for funds and support that takes the form of a crowdfunding campaign, brings a collaborative dimension to this action for both supporters and the beneficiaries.

#7 Help Protect – Let's make safety nets together

Volunteers facilitate defenders of Ukraine

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/279752134314746/>



Short Description

Help Protect is an action carried out by citizens in Estonia. In particular, it is a network of volunteers, the largest in Estonia, taking actions towards helping the defenders of Ukraine.

The main objective of the network is to produce camouflage nets for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The network is open to citizens from all over Estonia and of all ages, willing to contribute to the largest crowd-based initiative. Camouflage nets are produced in every part of the country, while the University of Tartu is contributing to the action by producing nets and helmet covers in two university buildings.

In partnership with NGOs such as the “United Delivery Mission” and the “SAB UA”, the nets are delivered to Ukraine.

Citizens’ role and contribution

“Help Protect” was initially founded by members of the academic community from the University of Tartu, specifically staff of the Faculty of Humanities and Arts. It now consists of a network of citizens, organised in small, local groups that are coming together to create camouflage nets, using old clothes, for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Thus, this action combines a strong collaborative and co-creative dimension as citizens dedicate their time in learning how to sew the nets thanks to a workshop that was organised for the public. Staff and students at the University of Tartu were also encouraged to drop-by to cut strips and make nets.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
University of Tartu



Type of social action
Do-it-yourself



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education staff and students, citizens, refugees



Status
Completed

#8 Starting with Ukrainian art history

A public event for Ukrainian Art and its perspectives after the war

<https://www.artun.ee/kalender/naituse-ajalood-ja-dokumentatsioc-kirjutamisega/>



Short Description

Are there any similarities between the soviet and post-soviet periods with the war and the post-war eras regarding art history in Baltics and Ukraine, respectively? What could be the Ukrainian post-war art and what are its perspectives?

These are some of the major questions with which participants were dealt with throughout a public hybrid event organised by the Estonian Academy of Arts. During the event distinguished Ukrainian art historians, art experts and artists discussed issues related to the status of Ukrainian art by mainly focusing on museums in Ukraine and their operation.

All Ukrainian speakers were invited to participate through a short-term scholarship programme that gave them the opportunity to continue their research and artistic activity in Estonia.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Estonian Academy of Arts



Type of social action
Art event



Level of citizen engagement
Consultation



Target group/s
Art experts, citizens



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

In times of crisis, art becomes a transformative element that helps people to express and share their emotions, experiences and thoughts with each other. In this action, citizen engagement remains in a particularly low level (consultation), as the public was invited to assist or voice their views but not to actively shape the dialogue or be involved in hands-on action-taking for the immediate benefit of Ukrainian refugees in Estonia.

#9 Social Design for Young Ukrainian refugees

Training more resilient citizens

<https://www.artun.ee/kursus-reageerimine-kriisile-sotsiaalne-disain-noortele-ukraina-pogenikele/>



Short Description

The Estonian Academy of Arts in partnership with the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in Budapest and the Hadassah Academic College in Jerusalem organised a course titled “Social Design for Young Ukrainian Refugees”.

The main objective of the course was to explore ways of using the existing social design to assist young Ukrainian refugees to resettle in Estonia and to adapt in the local society.

Thus, the course emphasised on developing tools and applied social research methods towards exploring and addressing the various social challenges on emotional, economic, and political level.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Estonian Academy of Arts



Type of social action
Educational equipment
(training course)



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Ukrainian refugee students



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

Young Ukrainian refugees in Estonia were engaged in a social design course that provided them with knowledge, skills and tools to better understand and handle social challenges. The level of citizen engagement in this action has been identified as “collaborative” since participants were neither the initiators nor co-creators of the course but through their concrete participation, they brought their equal and valuable contribution in a demanding but also creative learning experience that was set up by academic staff and experts.

#10 Rebuilding Ukraine

A Hackathon for rebuilding Ukraine

<https://www.artun.ee/kalender/garage48-future-of-wood-ukraina-taasehitamine/>



Short Description

Rebuilding Ukraine was an action organised by Garage48, the Estonian Academy of Arts, the Estonian Research Council and the Tsender Competence Center.

The action took the form of a hackathon, particularly a makeathon, aiming to result in physical or digital prototypes, based on wood, to develop a coherent framework of rebuilding Ukraine in the post-war era.

Students, working practitioners, experts and enthusiasts were welcomed to contribute to bringing out-of-the-box ideas. The winning teams created a) a modular system made of straw panels that is fully off-grid (team: 1+X), b) a foldable tent that will help Ukrainians with temporary accommodation (team: Safe Space), and c) a mechanical weaving device to speed up the making of camouflage nets (team: KAMOON).

Hence, all ideas and prototypes based their ideas on the following concepts: Modular, Circular and Climate Neutral Design; Circular-Cyclical Technologies, Engineering and Manufacturing.

Citizens' role and contribution

Hackathons are an effective and usually bottom-up way to foster citizen engagement in a social issue that needs creative solutions. This action is also an exemplary model of how university students, companies and citizens' collaborations can generate meaningful solutions in times of crisis, as this makeathon comprised of teams made up of students and citizens who were supported by mentors of the industry sector.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Estonian Academy of Arts



Type of social action
Hackathon



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education students,
citizens



Status
Completed

#11 WILL: Student Exhibition

Art as mechanism of social empathy and solidarity

<https://www.artun.ee/kalender/tahe-voля-eka-ukraina-tudengite-naitus/>



Short Description

This action was an art exhibition hosted at the lobby of the Estonian Academy of Arts. As a result of a course led by Tanja Muravskaja, Ukrainian students of the Academy decided to create an exhibition titled “WILL” to share their impressions of the war in Ukraine.

The main question that was addressed by the exhibition was how were Ukrainian students of arts affected by the war?

Sharing their perspectives was considered as an effective way of sensitising attendees towards enhancing their empathy in support of the Ukrainian people.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Estonian Academy of Arts



Type of social action
Art event



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education students, citizens, Ukrainian refugees



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

What is the role of art and art events during times of crisis? Ukrainian students of the Estonian Academy of Arts tried to convey their messages of solidarity, empathy and awareness to the Estonian public. This action was set up by students who exhibited their own personal experiences, thoughts and feelings, regarding the war in Ukraine and its consequences. Although the level of citizen engagement is predominantly low(consultation) as the wider public was only called to attend the exhibition, the power of art in making people reflect on their role in this challenging social landscape is a strong feature that renders this action worth-placing among others in this collection.

#12 Craft workshops for Ukrainian children

A summer camp for Children

<https://www.artun.ee/disainitudengite-meisterdamise-tootad-ukraina-lastele/>



Short Description

Industrial design students of the Estonian Academy of Arts and the Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School designed a workshop for Ukrainian refugee families of children aged 4-11 y.o.

The event was organised and guided by first-year students. Its main objective was for children to make their own toys or create something to decorate their temporary home.

During the event, children crafted soft animals; a special moment was the use of foam waste from students, thus transforming the event into an artificial snow that gave children great entertainment.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
Estonian Academy of Arts



Type of social action
Summer Camp



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education staff and students, Ukrainian refugees



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

This workshop for Ukrainian refugee children showcases how academia can help nurture creative and collaborative approaches to learning, even amid disruptive social conditions, such as the war experienced by these children and their families. In this action, refugee children could create their own Do-It-Yourself toys and entertaining decorations. Hence, this action was also beneficial in terms of learning and knowledge for students who participated in the workshop and understood how art can be used as an effective way and method of relieving refugees as well as improving the quality of their life in Estonia.

#13 Crowdfunding for portable charging stations

A crowdfunding campaign to address electrical disruptions caused by the war

<https://dovanokukrainai.wixsite.com/stoteles>



Short Description

Students of Vilnius University in cooperation with the One K Support Fund decided to organise a crowdfunding initiative, to contribute to the problem of electrical disruptions in Ukraine.

In particular, the amount of money raised will be used in purchasing portable power stations and batteries.

The action not only aims to keep Ukrainian citizens connected but also to assist hospitals in keeping their operations stable, thus saving people's lives.

key features



Country
Lithuania



University Involved
Vilnius University



Type of social action
Crowdfunding



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education students, citizens



Status
Ongoing

Citizens' role and contribution

In this action, students of Vilnius University set up and engaged in a crowdfunding action to raise funds in order to purchase portable charging stations to be used in conflict zones. Thanks to the open and innovative nature of crowdfunding that uses technology as well as collaboration among users and supporters as its two main features, this action is exemplary for its bottom-up dimension as university students initiated and developed it. Hence, by encouraging and promoting a network of active citizens through crowdfunding, citizens' role and contribution become vital for the achievement of its goals.

#14 Supporting war-affected Ukrainian students

Supporting students through crowdfunding

<https://www.classy.org/give/406780/#!/donation/checkout>



Short Description

The LCC International University has established a special fund that provides housing, living stipends, and/or tuition for up to 220 war-affected students from Ukraine whose lives have been disrupted and homes have been destroyed by the war.

Through crowdfunding, donors can choose a predefined lump-sum or determine the amount of the donation themselves.

According to the university, more than 500,000 euros are needed to host 220 students.

key features



Country
Lithuania



University Involved
LCC International University



Type of social action
Crowdfunding



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Ukrainian refugee students



Status
Ongoing

Citizens' role and contribution

Crowdfunding is a widespread and popular way that achieves a 2-level goal. First, it can provide the resources that are necessary for the institution and its beneficiaries. Second, it is a way of making fundraising more open, digitally-enhanced, and engaging for the public. In this action, crowdfunding stipulates a more collaborative approach to raise the requested sums for the university to host Ukrainian students free of charge. It also connects the need of Ukrainian refugees with the willingness of citizens to contribute to their wellbeing. The power of crowdfunding brings together people from every part of the world that is concerned by the ongoing war and its consequences to the Ukrainian population.

#15 Navigating Change and Transforming Trauma

Healing war traumas through psychological counselling

<https://lcc.lt/ru/news/navigating-change-and-transforming-trauma-a-ukrainian-refugee-workshop>



Short Description

This action entailed a 2-days workshop for Ukrainian refugees titled "Navigating Change and Transforming Trauma" was held at the Vilnius Ukrainian Center.

The workshop aimed to provide a safe space for participants to collectively share and witness the impact of trauma, build resilience, and adjust to their new lives in Lithuania.

Led by co-facilitators from the Center for Dialogue and Conflict Transformation at the LCC International University, the workshop focused on understanding trauma's effects and developing skills for healing and community-building.

The workshop emphasised the healing power of storytelling and the importance of empathy in the recovery process.

key features



Country
Lithuania



University Involved
LCC International University



Type of social action
Psychological counselling



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education staff and students, Ukrainian refugees



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

In this action, members of the academic community in Lithuania provided to Ukrainian refugees much needed psychological counseling through an interactive workshop. Although citizen engagement in this action is not particularly high (level: consultation), as refugees were only called to share their stories and their psychological impact on them, its value for the target group remains important, as people were consulted and were given the opportunity to voice their fears and anxieties in a new socio-cultural environment.

#16 Student Volunteer Headquarters

Volunteers networks equip Ukrainian Armed Forces

<https://lpnu.ua/news/anastasiia-vakarchuk-pro-vnesok-u-peremohu-plany-na-maibutnie-ta-studentskyi-volonterskyi>



Short Description

Student Volunteer Headquarters is a student union in Lviv Polytechnic National University, founded and directed by students, who aim to actively assist Ukrainian Armed Forces.

In particular, the union has developed expertise in making from scratch or repairing camouflage nets and collecting humanitarian aid for the military.

The union welcomes everyone who wishes to contribute, such as citizens of Lviv or even refugees, coming from conflict zones. According to the head of the organisation, Anastasia Vakarchuk, volunteers' commitment to helping the defenders and making their service easier reflects their determination to contribute to the war effort and ensure victory.

Citizens' role and contribution

The power of crowds and volunteer work are particularly manifested in times of crises, where numbers and effective collaboration make the difference. Likewise, this action is a primordial example of how bottom-up and student-led volunteer networks can effectively contribute to the needs of their country's defense. Citizen engagement level here is at its highest rate (empowerment), as students and citizens are empowered by their own means and synergies to create the necessary materials (e.g., humanitarian aid) and equipment (e.g., camouflage nets) for the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

key features



Country
Ukraine



University Involved
Lviv Polytechnic National University



Type of social action
Crowdfunding



Level of citizen engagement
Empowerment



Target group/s
Students



Status
Ongoing

#17 Weaving camouflage nets

Empowerment through academia-society collaboration

<https://lpnu.ua/news/pratsiuvatymemo-tut-do-peremohy-u-4-korpusi-politekhniky-volontery->



Short Description

The academic community of the Lviv Polytechnic National University, during breaks and air alarms (in bomb shelters), prepares camouflage nets.

Besides supporting the Ukrainian Armed Forces, this activity serves as a way of fostering the communication bonds among the community members and as a way of relieving their stress.

In particular, the students union in Lviv has organised about 70 centres of weaving camouflage nets in which students, teachers and employees of the university are involved.

Moreover, the volunteers have already sewn over 100 sleeping bags for the soldiers, prepared first-aid kits and other useful items for the soldiers.

key features



Country
Ukraine



University Involved
Lviv Polytechnic National University



Type of social action
Do-it-yourself



Level of citizen engagement
Empowerment



Target group/s
Higher education students and staff, citizens



Status
Ongoing

Citizens' role and contribution

This action showcases the highest level of engagement requested and provided by its organisers as well as participants who dedicate their time and resources in camouflage nets weaving. Through their participation, people feel a strong sense of belonging and of contributing to a collective effort for the benefit of the country's defense. Moreover, making camouflage nets together is an alternative way of providing a form of psychological support for citizens who feel that they can still rely on their community's mobilisation to change things.

#18 A charity volleyball tournament

Sport to support Ukraine

<https://lpnu.ua/news/v-it-koledzhi-lvivskoi-politekhniky-orhanizuvaty-blahodiinyi-turnir-z->



Short Description

This action was a sport event organised in favour of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. In the gym of the College of Information Technology, a charity volleyball tournament was held with the participation of 15 teams.

Each team represented a region of Ukraine, among which was also Lviv. The tournament was organised by a student of the college and an alumnus.

With the amount of money that was raised (around 22,500 hryvnias), the organisers purchased winter tires for military off-road vehicles.

key features



Country
Ukraine



University Involved
Lviv Polytechnic National university



Type of social action
Campaign



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education students, citizens



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

In this initiative, there are three groups of engaged citizens. The first group is students that organised the tournament. The second group is athletes who answered the call of the students-initiators, while the third group is attendees of the volleyball tournament. Thus, the level of citizen engagement in this action is perceived as "collaborative" since its bottom-up approach (tournament organised by students), and the involvement of citizens in its implementation (teams, fundraising-donations) were instrumental for the achievement of its goal.

#19 A Volunteer Teaching Programme

Enhancing human resources of the Estonian educational system

<https://www.tlu.ee/hti/vabatahtlike-uliopilaste-programm>



Short Description

The University of Tallinn in cooperation with the University of Tartu and with the support of the Estonian Ministry of Education, launched a volunteer teaching assistant programme to alleviate the increased workload on schools and kindergartens due to the high number of incoming pupils from Ukraine.

The programme targets students of pedagogical sciences who do volunteering to schools as teaching assistants.

Overall, the programme has a double orientation. The first is for students to gain teaching experience, while the second is to enhance human resources of the Estonian educational system.

Finally, both universities are providing scholarships to students who participate in the programme.

key features



Country
Estonia



University Involved
University of Tallinn



Type of social action
Educational equipment
(teaching support)



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Higher education staff and
students, Ukrainian refugee
children



Status
Ongoing

Citizens' role and contribution

During the Ukrainian refugee crisis in the Baltics, demands for increased human resources have arisen in the Estonian educational system. The level of engagement in this action is considered collaborative, as university students are actively participating in teaching classes and courses for Ukrainian refugee children, thus transforming a top-down action to a collaborative one that could have not taken place without the engagement of students.

#20 'I donate lunch money to support Ukrainian students at mv university'

Fundraising for Ukrainian students at VMU

<https://hmf.vdu.lt/en/support-actions-for-the-ukrainian-academic-community-at-vmu/>



Short Description

The staff of Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) departments of International Cooperation and the Student Affairs, together with the VMU Student Representative Council, invited the members of the university community to join the support action "I donate lunch money to support Ukrainian students at my university."

The aim of the action was to financially support the students from Ukraine.

Overall, over 3,500 EUR were raised that were allocated to one-time scholarships for 44 VMU students.

key features



Country
Lithuania



University Involved
Vytautas Magnus University



Type of social action
Crowdfunding



Level of citizen engagement
Collaboration



Target group/s
Academic staff, personnel



Status
Completed

Citizens' role and contribution

Citizens' participation in this funding action was instrumental to the achievement of its goal. Although this was an action that targeted a context-specific target group, namely higher education staff at VMU, the level of engagement requested from participants makes it a collaborative effort that was built thanks to the sense of responsibility and awareness of VMU's academic community.



6. Analysis

An analysis of the 20 selected actions is important to gain a better understanding of, and to situate the actions in relation to the methodological approach that has been adopted in this publication. In this context, we carry out a 5-level analysis based on (a) HEIs' involvement in the actions, (b) geographical distribution, (c) types of action, (d) level of citizen engagement, and (e) the grassroots innovation dimension.

A. HEIs' involvement in the actions

The present study refers to a collection of actions set up by Baltic and Ukrainian HEIs. In this framework, we do not perceive universities as structures that operate in an exclusively top-down manner thus being alienated from the social problems faced within and beyond their communities. On the contrary, we consider vital the social mission of universities that is manifested through the active engagement of their academic staff and students in social matters. Thus, behind the term "HEIs" we identify all dynamic processes that make universities open to societal engagement; we distinguish actions organised by university staff and students to bring to the forefront the citizen engagement dimension, especially during challenging times. In this sense, the HE sector is being viewed as a living organism that forms an integral part of society.

The actions showcased in this publication bear witness to the active role that universities ought to take to address emergency situations and social issues that require effective and immediate responses. Through this publication, we aim to raise awareness and foster the implementation of bold and participatory actions by the HE sector in the Baltics; actions that forge resilience to universities and their communities but also bring universities closer to society, policy and industry. In particular, Baltic and Ukrainian HEIs demonstrated a remarkable ability to provide quickly response to the emergency. As manifested in actions [4] [6] and [12], university staff and students immediately set up initiatives to address Ukrainian refugees' needs. The scholarship fund for Ukrainian students established in the first days after the war outbreak by University of Tartu [6], the charity book fair organised by students and librarians in Tallinn Technical University on April 2022 [4] and the craft workshops for Ukrainian refugee children carried out by students of the Estonian Academy of Arts in March 2022 [12] are indicative examples of completed actions that showcase Baltics HEIs' speedy mobilisation in the face of the Ukrainian war.

B. Geographical distribution

The geographical spread of the 20 selected actions shows significant concentration of initiatives by universities in Estonia, since thirteen of the twenty actions were initiated by Estonian HEIs. Four of the actions are organised by Lithuanian universities while three are

carried out by Lviv Polytechnic National University in Ukraine. Thus, we observe the absence of Latvia-based actions in this final collection. Although Baltics4UA partners were encouraged to gather actions organised at national level, the subsequent analysis of resources resulted in the identification and selection of only those actions that meet the selection criteria that have been set.

Additionally, the significant presence of Estonian universities' actions could be attributed to the fact that the Baltics4UA consortium consists of two Estonian partners and only one university partner from each of the rest countries, namely Lithuania, Latvia and Ukraine.

Finally, although a more balanced geographical distribution of the selected actions would have been preferable, geographical considerations were not a criterion for the 20 selected actions. At the desk research stage, partners were advised to look for actions deriving from universities across the Baltics, without considering any limit regarding the number of actions that should be showcased per country.

C. Types of action

Overview

The analysis shows that the 20 selected actions correspond to 12 specific types of action of the overall 18 types identified in the typology. From these 20 actions, 5 form part of the “crowdfunding¹⁰” type, 2 were identified as “art events”, 2 actions referred to as “do-it-yourself¹¹” actions, 2 as “educational equipment” actions and 2 as “campaign”. Furthermore, we identified one action per the following types: a summer camp, a scholarship, a hackathon, a psychological counseling action, a networking event, a research group and a crowdsourcing action. By looking at these 12 types of action, we observe several initiatives aimed at raising funds for Ukrainian students (see crowdfunding actions below), while there are actions which are oriented in co-developing solutions to emergent issues (see hackathon and do-it-yourself actions below). Additionally, we witness a series of actions that employ art as a means of effective social interaction and healing, as well as events that are designed to bring together local university staff and students with Ukrainian refugee students and scholars. In Figure 3, the overall landscape of types of actions present in this study can be visualized.

¹⁰ European Commission (n.d.). Crowdfunding explained. https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/access-finance/guide-crowdfunding/what-crowdfunding/crowdfunding-explained_en

¹¹ Arndt, F., Ng, W., Huang T. (2021). Do-It-Yourself laboratories, communities of practice, and open innovation in a digitalised environment, *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 33:10, 1186-1197, DOI: 10.1080/09537325.2021.1931674

Baltic universities fostering citizen engagement through social actions for Ukrainian refugees

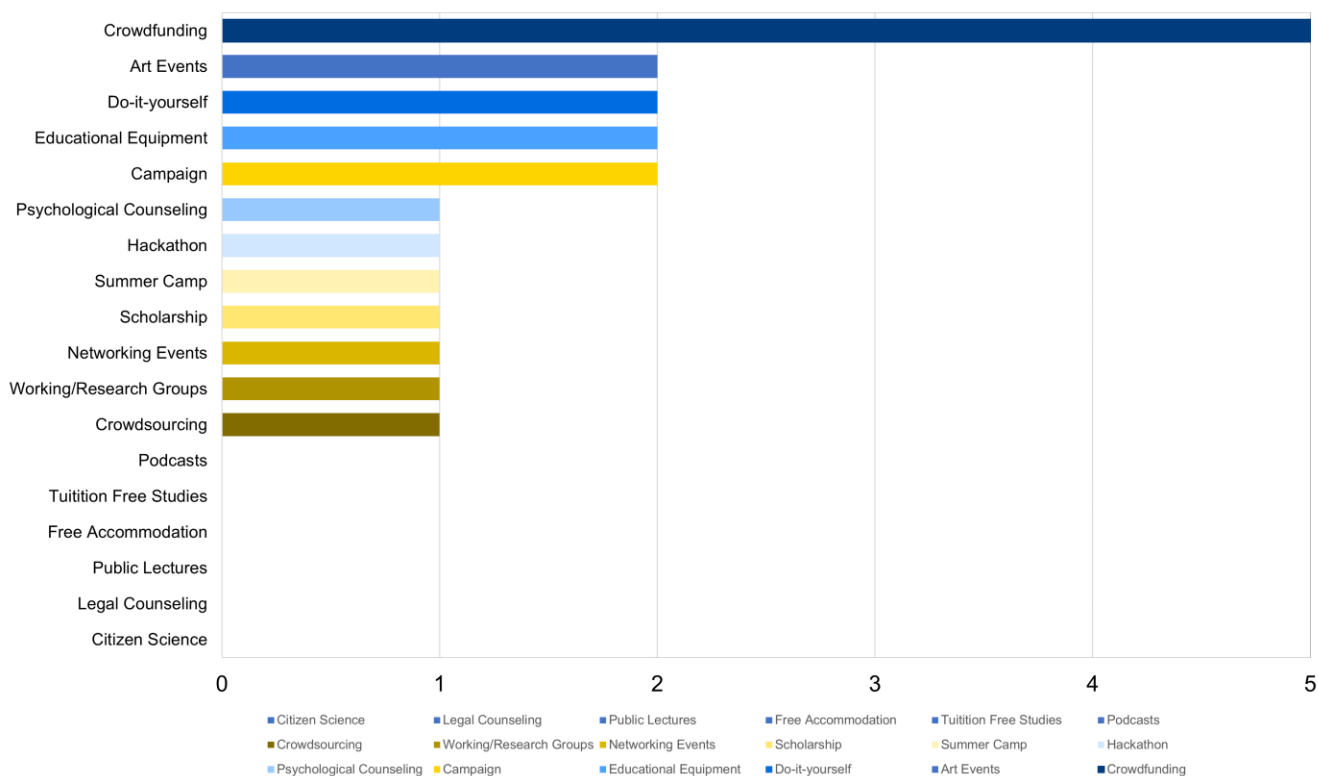


Figure 3 : 12 action types in the sample

Below, we provide an overview of the actions showcased in groups based on their type.

Crowdfunding actions

As the most represented category in the 20 actions, Baltic and Ukrainian universities opt for crowdfunding as an alternative digitally supported way of fundraising to support Ukrainian refugees. Thus, HEIs' willingness to quickly collect funds in the emergency situation meets the need for more networked and participatory approaches to funding; a need that, in this case, corresponds to the potential of crowdfunding.

By delving deeper into the 5 crowdfunding actions ([1] [13] [14] [16] [20]), we observe that action [14] was carried out as a top-down initiative by the administration of the LCC International University which set up a special fund to cover the living and studying expenses of Ukrainian students. The rest of crowdfunding actions were initiated in a more bottom-up fashion, by students and academic staff, such as the "I donate lunch money to support Ukrainian students at my university [20]", or the charity fund that was established by the student association of Tallinn University [1]. All crowdfunding actions are targeting Ukrainian students and aim to cover not only their studies' expenses, but also wider needs related to their subsistence and accommodation. Social networks have been used in all documented crowdfunding campaigns to enhance visibility, outreach and speed of action.

Additionally, action [20] set up by Vytautas Magnus University staff and students distinguishes itself from the rest of crowdfunding actions as it covered expenses of Ukrainian students who were enrolled in the university before the war but were not eligible for state support.

Among the five crowdfunding initiatives, action [14] provides a user-friendly way to donate money online through a dedicated platform that is part of the university's official webpage. The rest of the crowdfunding actions mainly entail traditional ways of encouraging people to donate, precisely through bank services.

Synthesizing the value of the crowdfunding campaigns analyzed in this study, we can claim that what triggered this type of social action is the realisation that without providing holistic support to refugees, it wouldn't be feasible for them to continue their studies' journey since they still have to address basic human needs. We believe that this type of social action successfully served the principles of crowdfunding: rapid response, focused reply to a well identified need, use of social networks and a combination of institutional (HE hierarchy) and community engagement.

Art events

Art and cultural manifestations have been adopted by university staff and students as a direct and indirect way to serve the needs (cf. psychological, social) of Ukrainian refugees. Aiming to bring down communication barriers and heal psychological traumas of Ukrainians fleeing the war, art academies and relevant university faculties organise art-based manifestations and healing workshops where they could meet with Ukrainian refugees, share their experiences and build communities of support and solidarity.

In the present collection, we identified two art-based events, namely actions [8] and [11]. Both actions foresee transmitting the stories and experiences of Ukrainians to the local audiences who assist in the manifestations. On the one hand, action [8] entailed a public discussion and exchange of ideas on the status of contemporary Ukrainian art. In this case, initiative undertaken by the Estonian Academy of Arts gave the opportunity to Ukrainian scholars and experts -as well as local participants- to engage in dialogue and share their viewpoints on the issue.

On the other hand, action [11], the Ukrainian students-led exhibition, was a powerful (for students) way to express their feelings and share their experiences in relation to the war with Estonian citizens. Interestingly, each of these two actions made use of art in different ways, as action [8] placed art as a central topic upon which participants were called to deliberate, whereas action [11] used art as a means to convey students' experiences and messages about the war.

Do-it-yourself actions

The study identifies two do-it-yourself (DIY) actions that include the active involvement of participants in creating, repairing or remodeling. In our two DIY cases, [7] and [17], citizens engaged in weaving camouflage nets for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Action [7] was set up by teaching staff and researchers of the University of Tartu, while action [17] by the academic community and students of Lviv Polytechnic National University.

In both cases, universities open up to the public and encourage community bonding and participation, thus enhancing societal resilience and readiness in response to emergency situations. Actions [7] and [17] are significant examples of the power of self-organisation and collaboration between academia and citizens, with action [7] being a remarkable model of academia-civil society-citizens cooperation during crises.

Open innovation actions

As with crowdfunding and DIY initiatives, we also map the presence of two other types of actions that belong to the open innovation¹² landscape, namely hackathons¹³ and crowdsourcing¹⁴. These digitally-enhanced actions allow the generation of solutions, or the gathering of resources, through the active participation of people who wish to contribute with their ideas, expertise and knowledge to a social purpose.

In particular, action [10] was a hackathon co-hosted by the Estonian Academy of Arts, the Estonian Research Council, TSENTER Competence Centre and one business partner, Garage48; the hackathon was an open invitation to citizens to co-create solutions that will revalue the use of wood which is considered an important material for the rebuilding of Ukraine in the post-conflict period. Citizen engagement becomes particularly manifested in hackathons, as participants, people of several nationalities and educational levels, come together to work on solutions to common and socially relevant issues. Through close collaboration with hackathon organisers but also through actively shaping their own ideas, participants gain in knowledge, skills and active citizenship attitudes.

In a similar fashion, the crowdsourcing action “Students with Ukraine” [2] is a students-led initiative that aims to collect useful things and materials that are then sent to Ukraine, such as food, hygiene accessories, and sleeping bags. This bottom-up action is an expression of the value and importance of grassroots actions that raise awareness and effectively

¹² European Commission. (2016). Open Innovation, Open Science, Open to the World – a vision for Europe. DirectorateGeneral for Research and Innovation. <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-singlemarket/en/news/openinnovation-open-science-open-worldvision-europe>

¹³ Hackathon.com (December 22, 2021). What is A Hackathon? <https://tips.hackathon.com/article/what-is-a-hackathon>

¹⁴ Howe, J. (2006, January 6). The rise of crowdsourcing. Wired magazine, 14(6), 1-4. http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.06/crowds_pr.html

mobilise the academic community and society to act in an immediate and efficient way to an emergency.

Both actions [10] and [2] bring to the fore citizens' proactive role in shaping and implementing solutions that are co-created through close involvement of a variety of social actors. Nevertheless, the crowdsourcing action [2] is closer to the crowdfunding initiatives outlined above since it leverages the power of the crowds to achieve its goal. On the other hand, the hackathon [10] stimulated participants to develop technologically-advanced and original ideas, thus materialising the quest for innovative solutions to the crisis.

Educational equipments and campaigns

In the present study, there are two actions, [9] and [19], that involve the provision of education-related courses and materials for the benefit of Ukrainian youth and children. Specifically, action [9] was a collaborative course on social design that called on Ukrainian young refugees to develop tools to tackle social challenges. On the contrary, action [19] entailed the participation of students of Tallinn University in a teaching programme where they would act as educators of pupils coming from Ukraine. In terms of citizen engagement, action [9] adopts collaboration between facilitators and participants in co-developing the course, while action [19] is considered as a collaborative initiative between the university and its students who accept to serve as kindergarten teachers.

Figure 3 outlines also the presence of two campaign actions, namely [4] and [18]. In the first case, students at Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech) organised a charity book fair to raise funds for fellow Ukrainian students. Even though this action shares similarities with crowdfunding campaigns, it has been identified as a "campaign" type of action since its core goal was to raise awareness within TalTech's academic community on the needs of Ukrainian students in Estonia. Likewise, action [18] was a volleyball tournament carried out in Lviv Polytechnic National University through which a sum was raised to purchase winter tyres for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Hence, both actions acted mainly as campaigns designed to bring together and mobilise members of the academic communities towards action taking.

Other types of actions identified

The collection comprises also of a series of actions that feature one time in Figure 3. Specifically, the provision of psychological counselling workshops is a service offered by universities to traumatised Ukrainian refugees of all ages who are in need of professional psychological support. Indicatively, the 2-days workshop for Ukrainian refugees [15] is a distinct example of how academic staff can leverage their knowledge and expertise to address psychological needs and traumas of Ukrainian refugees.

Additionally, the organisation of a summer camp [12] or a networking event [3] for Ukrainian students are two types of actions that student associations, usually in collaboration with academic staff, undertake for welcoming refugees. Furthermore,

the allocation of scholarships [6] and the promotion of research activities [5] that map the needs of Ukrainian refugees in the Baltics are some of the most HE-oriented types of action that have been identified in this publication.

The mapping of initiatives based on the type of social action served to grasp the range of university actions. This analysis will now be completed by an understanding of levels of engagement, serving to approach citizen engagement holistically.

D. Level of citizen engagement

By acknowledging that the degree of citizens' involvement is not the same in all 20 selected actions, we distinguished actions based on 3 levels of citizen engagement, namely consultation, collaboration and empowerment (see step 2 in Methodology). Accordingly, Figure 4 below shows a rather promising picture.

Specifically, 70% of the actions engaged citizens in some form of collaborative action that entailed citizens' participation that goes beyond being informed or consulted about the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

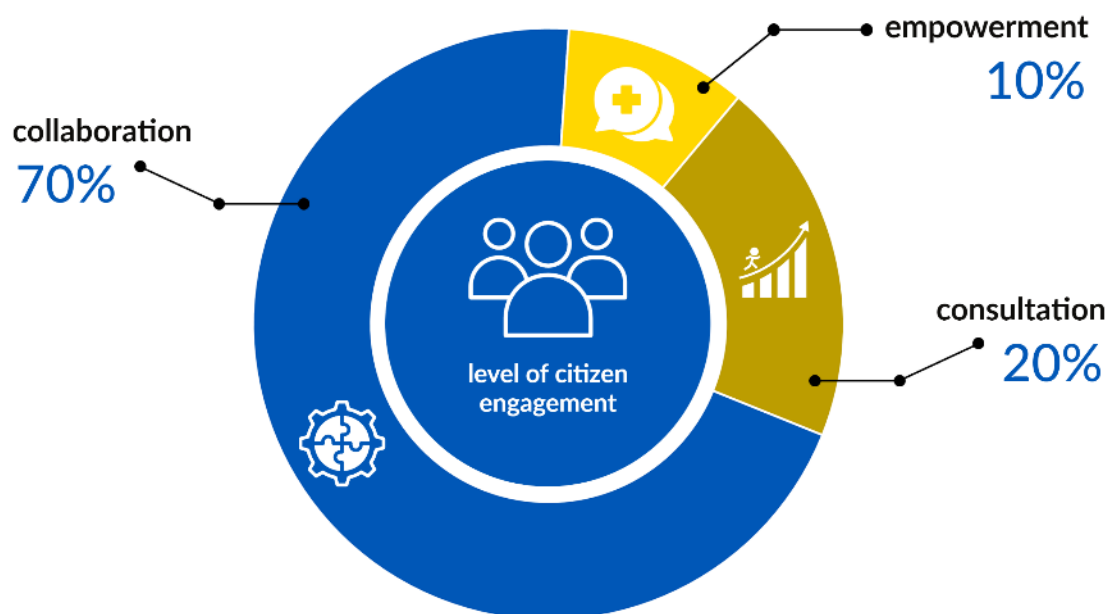


Figure 4: Levels of citizen engagement in the sample

Furthermore, in Figure 4, a small but significant, in terms of social value and participation, percentage of actions (10%) lead to citizens' empowerment. These

actions are mainly run by LPNU student and staff communities and are connected to DIY initiatives, such as weaving camouflage nets for the Ukrainian Armed Forces ([7] [17]). These actions are usually grassroots in nature, self-organised and include an important level of community bonding and collaboration that empowers people to become an active part of change.

Finally, 20% of the selected actions entailed a rather low level of citizen engagement framed as "consultation". In actions [5] and [8], citizens, students and Ukrainian refugees were called to express their views on a particular issue or reflect on their situation while they assisted in an art event. Although we don't expect citizens' role to be fundamental in this level of engagement, we should not underestimate the value of reaching out to wider audiences even to consult with them, since this can be the first step towards more and long-term engagement. Especially seen as a possibility of transitioning from consultation to collaboration and empowerment, there is value in consultation from a dynamic perspective.

E. The grassroots innovation dimension

Although grassroots innovation was not a key selection criterion (see Methodology section) but a feature in the description of actions, we see significant social value in bringing to the fore this dimension as an extension to the level of citizen engagement.

In investigating the selected actions, there is evidence that 4 of the 20 actions, specifically actions [7] [10] [16] and [17], contain a degree of grassroots innovation. In particular, we see true grassroots innovation potential only in those actions where people are creating home-grown inventions to address challenges that directly or indirectly influence their lives. In this context, actions [7] and [17] depict university communities and citizens adopting a bottom-up approach to co-create camouflage nets for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Likewise, the crowdfunding actions by LPNU students in action [16] include a degree of grassroots innovation as they are delivered by Ukrainian students who seek to provide alternative and immediate solutions to mitigate the consequences of the war.

In this framework, action [10], the hackathon, is an outstanding example of grassroots innovation as participants were called to shape and co-create solutions: the hackathon also carried a particularly innovative dimension since digital tools and ideas merged to produce effective response mechanisms to social problems.



7. Conclusions

The present publication should be viewed as a first systematic effort towards the compilation of a collection of citizen engagement actions, carried out by Baltic and Ukrainian universities to tackle the effects of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis. The desk research led to a pool of 45 university-driven actions of which 20 were selected for their emphasis in high levels of citizen engagement.

Our focus on the citizen engagement dimension of the actions led us to showcase actions that include a form of collaboration between the initiators of the actions and citizens. In this sense, we perceive collaboration as citizens' contribution to action taking for the benefit of Ukrainian refugees in a participatory and interactive way.

Overall, from the 20 selected actions, we identified 5 crowdfunding initiatives that aimed to gather funds and resources to cover the needs of Ukrainian refugee students in the Baltics. In this context, we observed that several university-led actions are connected with the provision of financial support and resources to Ukrainian refugee students, their families and IDPs. By implementing actions such as crowdfunding, crowdsourcing and scholarships, Baltic HEIs seek to offer educational as well as social benefits and support to Ukrainian refugees, whether they are members of an academic community or not.

Additionally, the collection also includes 4 open innovation actions, such as hackathon, do-it-yourself and crowdsourcing, thus outlining an uncovered potential for more participatory actions and initiatives that can be beneficial for both Ukrainian refugees as well as Baltic stakeholders. Finally, another important set of actions include art events, such as art exhibitions, that gave Ukrainian students in the Baltics the opportunity to share their stories and emotions with their hosting communities.

Eventually, this collection is not exhaustive regarding the variety and diversity of actions that Baltic and Ukrainian universities carry out to assist refugees and IDPs. Our purpose was to map the current landscape of actions based on a context-specific typology that speaks to the reality of academic settings, as well as to apply a citizen engagement typology that resonates with the nature and content of the actions.

We will keep expanding our understanding and knowledge on citizen engagement in this context by exploring how citizens are contributing to social actions organised by other stakeholder groups, such as companies and the private sector, in the upcoming activities of the Baltics4UA project.

Annex

For the thoroughness of this study, in this section there are included all those actions that didn't meet the selection criteria outlined in the methodology. For each action we pose a short description.

1. Scholarship for Ukrainian students

Website: <https://en.ktu.edu/for-ua-students/#Targeted-scholarship-for-the-studies-of-Ukrainian-citizens>

University involved: Kaunas University of Technology

Outline: This initiative consists of a targeted scholarship for studies for Ukrainian citizens. In particular, it targets refugees from Ukraine having moved to Lithuania. This includes three target subgroups: (a) Ukrainian students; (b) their family members; and (c) stateless persons residing in Ukraine, victims of the Russian invasion in Ukraine. The scholarship regards all levels of studies; namely, undergraduate, graduate and doctoral studies. Its amount is 300 euros per month and it is terminated upon expulsion from the higher education institution, termination or completion of studies, or after taking academic leave.

Status: ongoing

2. Supporting Ukraine: free of charge accommodation to UA students

Website: <https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/ul-support-for-ukraine/>

University involved: University of Latvia

Outline: In order to support refugees from Ukraine, the University of Latvia (UL) offers to Ukrainian students free of charge accommodation. The initiative is part of a larger programme run by the University of Latvia, aiming to support Ukrainian refugees. The action includes students' incorporation into the UL study programmes and for academics the opportunity to continue their research and teaching activities. The accommodation initiative consists of offering Ukrainian students the opportunity to stay in the dormitories in which international students, visiting University of Latvia, are hosted in, without paying fees.

Status: ongoing

3. Supporting Ukraine: Reduction in tuition fees

Website: <https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/ul-support-for-ukraine/>

University involved: University of Latvia

Outline: The University of Latvia, in partnership with the Latvian government, offers to Ukrainian students the opportunity to continue their studies free of charge. The initiative is complementary to other activities run by the university of Latvia towards supporting Ukrainian students and academics.

Status: ongoing

4. Supporting Ukraine: Legal Clinic assistance

Website: <https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/ul-support-for-ukraine/>

University involved: University of Latvia

Outline: The University of Latvia has set up a special service to provide Ukrainian refugees free of charge legal support. The action is provided by the Faculty of Law of the university and its professional staff.

Status: ongoing

5. A free City-Camp for Ukrainian Children

Website: <https://taltech.ee/uudised/tehnikaulikool-kutsub-ukraina-lapsi-tasuta-linnalaagrisse>

University involved: Tallinn Technical University

Outline: This action included the organisation of a 3-day summer-camp for Ukrainian children, from 1 to 7 y.o. In particular, university students participated in a series of joint and playful activities with refugee children, including among others, woodworking, 3D modelling, robotics and animation. Moreover, the camp also comprised free of charge local language lessons and food, both offered to children. Finally, all activities were hands-on and playful, designed to give participants a sense of achievement; a feature that is crucial for children's psychological wellbeing.

Status: completed

6. An event to support Ukraine

Website: <https://taltech.ee/sundmused/sundmus-ukraina-toetuseks-18-martsil-tudengimajas>

University involved: Tallinn Technical University

Outline: This action took the form of an event organised by the Technical University of Tallinn (TalTech). It included a lecture on the ongoing situation in Ukraine as well as the screening of the film “U311 Cherkasy”. The event also hosted a panel of academics, members of the Ukrainian community of the Technical University of Tallinn, that engaged in a dialogue about the war in Ukraine. The discussion centred around issues related to participants’ thoughts on the Russian invasion and future action that could be taken by citizens and the academic community. Finally, all donations made by attendees and participants were given in the support of Ukraine.

Status: completed

7. Science kits donated to Ukrainian refugee children

Website: <https://taltech.ee/uudised/virumaa-kolledz-jagab-sel-korral-teaduslaagri-kaste-ka-ukraina-lastele>

University involved: Tallinn Technical University

Outline: The Virumaa college of the Technical University of Tallinn (TalTech) decided to donate 20 out of 100 science kits to refugee children coming from Ukraine. Those kits included activities such as: building a helicopter, encrypting a letter, building a water station, building a galaxy in a jar or even making “magical” tricks. According to the head of the Virumaa college, Küllike Kullerkupp, the aim of this action was for Ukrainian children to have a creative and joyful experience with science in Estonia.

Status: completed

8. War in Ukraine: lectures and public talks

Website: <https://ut.ee/en/content/university-invites-everyone-webinars-about-ukraine>

University involved: University of Tartu

Outline: The University of Tartu has been organising a series of webinars, including public talks, discussions and round tables, to raise awareness on Ukrainian culture, society and politics in the context of the war. Until now, three online events have been run, namely: (a) “Ukrainian Cities at War: From Conspiracy Theories to New Urban Realities”, which included two talks on Ukrainian geopolitics and their relation with public (conspiracy) narratives; (b) “How are the UK and Estonia supporting Ukraine and dealing with Russia?” which included a round table on Ukrainian language and how Estonians understand and learn Ukrainian through Russian; (c) “Feelings, Actions, and Thoughts in the First Days of Full-Scale War in Ukraine”, which was a discussion seminar on the impact of the Russian invasion on the general public.

Status: ongoing

9. Reforming Ukraine's education system

Website: <https://ut.ee/en/content/european-cooperation-developing-ukraines-education-system-continues-defying-military-action>

University involved: University of Tartu

Outline: This action was carried out by the University of Tartu in partnership with several Ukrainian universities, in the framework of the MultiEd Erasmus+ project whose objective was to update Ukraine's education system. In particular, the project focused on reforming teacher training curricula, diversifying language teaching methods and promoting multilingual education in Ukraine. Participants from Ukraine were informed about and trained on course and material development strategies, the higher education system in Estonia, approaches to multilingualism in education, and e-learning. During the programme, participants were called to design and develop materials and strategies, thus enhancing the educational and training capacity of Ukrainian universities.

Status: completed

10. Ukrainian House (Ukraina Maja)

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/ukrainamaja/>

University involved: University of Tartu

Outline: This action consists of (but is not limited to) staff and students of the University of Tartu, as well as university alumni and other volunteers. One of its main objectives is to support Ukrainian students and staff at the University of Tartu, together with other representatives of the Ukrainian community in Tartu, and to contribute to refugees' integration into Tartu's academic and general community. Hence, Ukrainian House aims to create links and bonds between the Estonian, international, and Ukrainian communities, helps to facilitate communication between both sides, and to coordinate activities geared towards mutual cultural understanding. Ukrainian House has organized or co-organized more than 60 cultural events since 2022, with more than 4,000 participants, involving a team of approximately 50 volunteers (many of whom are current University of Tartu students).

Status: ongoing

11. Podcast series by the Center for Eurasian and Russian Studies

Website: <https://ceurus.ut.ee/new-ceurus-podcast-series-in-russian/>

University involved: University of Tartu

Outline: This action is a podcast series in Russian language produced by the Center for Eurasian and Russian Studies (CEURUS) of the University of Tartu. In this podcast series, distinguished guests are invited to talk about various topics focusing on the relation between the Ukrainian society and the political situation, and their relation with the Russian invasion in Ukraine. The podcast discusses various topical political issues in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia. The aim of this action is to provide expert commentary and analysis of the reasons and the motivations of the Russian invasion, as well as the reactions of the Ukrainian people and politicians. Hence, CEURUS intends to deepen and enhance our understanding of the situation in Ukraine.

Status: ongoing

12. Supporting researchers for Ukraine

Website: <https://www.rsu.lv/en/news/if-you-are-ukraine-rsu-ready-help-academic-staff-and-their-families-ukraine>

University involved: Riga Stradiņš University

Outline: In response to the Russian military aggression in Ukraine, Riga Stradiņš University assisted Ukrainian PhD students and academic staff, as well as their families, by providing them free accommodation and the opportunity to continue their research and teaching activities. The programme welcomed approx. 150 graduate students and academic staff together with their families.

Status: completed

13. Doctors and Researchers from Ukraine and Latvia Share Their Experience at Practical Ophthalmology Conference

Website: <https://www.rsu.lv/en/news/doctors-and-researchers-ukraine-and-latvia-share-their-experience-practical-ophthalmology>

University involved: Riga Stradiņš University

Outline: An Ophthalmology Conference, organised by Professor Pavlo Fedirko, Professor Natalia Vladimirovna Pasechnikova, and Professor Māra Pilmane, was held online between Kyiv and Odessa in Ukraine and Riga in Latvia. It featured sections on ophthalmology-surgery, conservative treatment of ophthalmological diseases, and a master class on various ophthalmology topics. The conference attracted over 5,870 online viewers. Beyond

bringing together specialists in ophthalmology from both countries, the conference also intended to support Ukrainian scientists by giving them the opportunity to share their experiences and disseminate examples of their work, resulting in future collaborations among scientists of both countries.

Status: completed

14. Centre of Ukraine

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/centre-of-ukraine-opened-at-vmu-education-academy/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: The Centre of Ukraine was officially established in Vilnius as result of the cooperation between the Vytautas Magnus University and the Embassy of Ukraine in Lithuania. The main objective of the centre is to bring together the Ukrainian community in Lithuania and to cater to their needs by providing a space for culture, education, and community services. Additionally, the centre aims to enhance Ukrainian community academic activities, and cultural diplomacy between Lithuania and Ukraine, by representing the second. In the long term, the main objective of the centre is to assist Ukraine in becoming an official member of the European Union. VMU provides accommodation, scholarships, organises free Lithuanian language courses, and provides psychological assistance.

Status: ongoing

15. Training academics in providing medical assistance

Website: <https://lsmu.lt/en/ukrainian-university-professors-and-doctors-were-trained-to-provide-assistance-in-extreme-conditions-at-lsmu/>

University involved: Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

Outline: The Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU) organised an initiative to identify medical needs in conflict zones. In particular, twenty Ukrainian lecturers and doctors from various medical universities in Lviv, Odesa, Bukovyna, and Uzhhorod National University underwent training at the LSMU in order to enhance their skills in providing assistance to severely injured patients. Beyond improving professional skills and knowledge, the training also intended to foster stronger connections between Lithuanian and Ukrainian healthcare professionals.

Status: completed

16. Educational Center “Ukraine”

Website: <https://lpnu.ua/vstupnyku/osvitnii-tsentr-ukraina>

University involved: Lviv Polytechnic National University

Outline: The Educational Center “Ukraine”, as part of the “Open Policy” Foundation, aims to facilitate Ukrainian students to access higher education in Ukraine. Specifically, the Center emphasises on those students coming from war zones, territories under threat as well as occupied areas. In particular, in 2020, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Government Contact Center, and the “Open Policy” Foundation signed a Memorandum of Cooperation for the implementation of the project “Accessibility of Education for Students from Non-Government-Controlled Territories”. After the outbreak of the war in 2022, the Center addresses all students affected by the war.

Status: ongoing

17. The Center for Internally Displaced People

Website: <https://lpnu.ua/news/posol-ssha-v-ukraini-vidvidala-tsentrvpo-u-lvivskii-politekhni-ta-pospilkuvalasia-z>

University involved: Lviv Polytechnic National University

Outline: The Lviv Polytechnic National University, to address the need for accommodation of internally displaced people from eastern Ukraine, decided to reuse its student dormitories as a space where they can temporarily reside. In order to serve this objective, the university made the necessary adjustments to the buildings as well as to the equipment. As of December 2022, about 350 people are living in the buildings of the Lviv Polytechnic, out of a total number of 6,500, who have been hosted in the centre.

Status: ongoing

18. Non-contact scanning for magnetic fields

Website: <https://lpnu.ua/en/news/polish-charitable-foundation-postup-and-lviv-polytechnic-automate-demining-ukraine>

University involved: Lviv Polytechnic National University

Outline: The Polish Charitable Foundation “Postup” in cooperation with the Lviv Polytechnic National University are developing special drones for non-contact scanning of the ground. This initiative is based on the need for cleaning the ground that is contaminated by unexploded ordnance and landmines. Provided that one such drone is capable of scanning 10–15 hectares per day, it is estimated that over a period of 5 years, using 200–

300 machines, there will be scanned all potentially contaminated areas, without recruiting 100,000 specially trained individuals that would be otherwise needed.

Status: ongoing

19. Donation campaign

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/vmu-extends-a-helping-hand-to-ukraine-everyone-is-welcome-to-donate/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) has extended its support to refugees by establishing a fund to aid Ukrainian students affected by military operations. The fund is supported by donations from businesses, the public sector, and individuals, while it provides scholarships covering study, accommodation, and settlement expenses at Vytautas Magnus University.

Status: ongoing

20. Free or reduced-fee accommodation to Belarusian and Ukrainian students

Website: <https://apgyvendinimas.vdu.lt/en/regarding-the-accommodation-fee-reduction-for-vmu-students-who-suffered-from-repression-by-the-belarusian-government-and-military-actions-in-ukraine/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: Vytautas Magnus University (VMU), recognizing the challenges Belarusian and Ukrainian students have been faced with, aims to create a supportive environment for their academic journey. In particular, for the academic year 2022-2023, the university is offering free accommodation to Ukrainian students, affected by the consequences of the war, and to Belarusian students, under political oppression or persecution. By offering various forms of support, including a reduced fee for accommodation, VMU aims to mitigate financial burdens and provide a conducive environment for these students to pursue their education and achieve their academic goals.

Status: ongoing

21. Supporting Ukrainian students enrolled in the university before the war

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: Vytautas Magnus University (VMU), committed to supporting Ukrainian students who were enrolled at the university before the start of the war, has implemented various measures to provide assistance and ensure their continued education. In particular, it offers social scholarships, tuition fee discounts, or even exemptions. VMU stands in solidarity with its Ukrainian students, supports their academic journey and provides them with the necessary resources to thrive.

Status: ongoing

22. Grants for full scholarship and free accommodation

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) is offering Ukrainian students the opportunity to continue their education in Lithuania, free of charge and with free accommodation. To ensure that these students can fully concentrate on their academic pursuits, the university has already awarded 156 of them a 100% scholarship, covering the entirety of their tuition fees. For the remaining students, VMU has granted partial exemptions from the tuition fee, alleviating a significant portion of the financial burden they may have faced otherwise.

Status: ongoing

23. Erasmus+ internships for students from Ukraine

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: Recognizing the significance of hands-on vocational experience, Vytautas Magnus University has offered a number of internship positions to students from Ukraine in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. The internships served as a stepping stone for Ukrainian students to gain concrete experience in their respective fields of study. By engaging in real-world projects and working alongside professionals, they had the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge and develop valuable skills that will benefit them in their future careers.

Status: completed

24. Erasmus+ for Ukrainians scholars and Higher Education staff

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: Under the "Erasmus+" programme, Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) has welcomed educators and professionals from Ukraine, thus enhancing its academic community and promoting international cooperation. In particular, five lecturers and fifteen employees were granted funding for teaching and study visits lasting from 7 to 10 days. These opportunities fostered knowledge exchange, intercultural learning, and collaboration between the two countries; Lithuania and Ukraine. The university provided a platform for the lecturers to share their expertise, enriching students' educational experience and promoting a deeper understanding of Ukrainian academia.

Status: completed

25. Training in climbing for students from Ukraine and Belarus

Website: <https://www.vdu.lt/en/>

University involved: Vytautas Magnus University

Outline: The Vytautas Magnus University in partnership with BoulderHouse and Kaunas & Bonobo organised a series of training climbing activities for students coming from Ukraine and Belarus. The aim of this action was to support students' mental and physical wellbeing in times of extreme pressure due to the war in Ukraine and political persecutions in Belarus.

Status: completed

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