



# Methodology for the design, implementation and assessment of citizen engagement as crisis response at Baltic HEIs

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WP2A6 Methodology for the design, implementation and assessment of citizen engagement as crisis response at Baltic HEIs

# Deliverable Factsheet

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## Consortium

The consortium governing the project is adequately representing a wide range of expertise, as 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 toward a diverse range of stakeholders.

	Name	Country
1	Tallinn University	Estonia
2	Lviv Polytechnic National University	Ukraine
3	Web2Learn	Greece
4	Kaunas University of Technology	Lithuania
5	University of Tartu	Estonia
6	University of Latvia	Latvia



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## Revision History

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# 1. Introduction

In times of social disruption and humanitarian crisis, like the one currently being experienced by the Baltic states due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, developing mechanisms that effectively mobilise and engage citizens in a social purpose is a fundamental element of resilience.

This publication aims to provide a methodological framework for the implementation and assessment of the citizen engagement initiatives that will be carried out by Baltics4UA partners. The present methodology is built to provide a common roadmap to consortium partners who will organise the actions. Therefore, to ensure the smooth implementation and evaluation of the 22 actions, Web2Learn has produced this methodology that outlines in a detailed way the tools (e.g. checklist, surveys) to be used and steps to be taken to successfully complete the actions.

The methodology is connected to the common understanding on social action and citizen engagement that is adopted and applied by the Baltics4UA consortium throughout the project's life cycle.

## 2. Why citizen engagement?

As the magnitude and impact of the war in Baltic societies is expected to increase in magnitude and impact as the conflict goes on, the quadruple helix actors (science, policy, industry, society) need to foster collaborations that will enhance the engagement of citizens in supporting Ukrainian refugees who are settled in the Baltics. Thus, in the face of such unprecedented social conditions, collective efforts are to be adopted; efforts and actions that are participatory and designed to expand the potential for social innovation that is hidden within each citizen and community.

In this context, citizen engagement points to the need of raising awareness among citizens about the humanitarian crisis and encouraging them to take active action in a series of activities that are hosted, run or supported by Baltic universities. By leveraging the potential of collective mobilisation for a social purpose, Baltics4UA foresees enhancing university-driven citizen engagement practices and actions that will build stronger and sustainable collaborations between academia-business and society.



## 3. The role of universities in citizen engagement for crisis response

The higher education (HE) sector has a crucial role to play in mitigating the consequences of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis in the Baltics by leveraging its own resources, as well as citizens' potential for innovation and resilience. In the current crisis, Baltic universities have been to the forefront of collective mobilisations for providing assistance and opportunities to Ukrainian refugees who wish to continue their educational journey (Zourou, Oikonomou, Samiotis, 2023).

Moreover, universities have engaged in actions that help Ukrainian refugee communities address their needs, whether they are part of the academic community or not. Hence, the social role and mission of universities is further accentuated during times of crisis in which society needs to make use of all available resources and means to address refugees' inclusion<sup>1</sup>.

Additionally, building a participatory and action-oriented attitude within your communities -instead of succumbing to an exclusively top-down approach to tackle the crisis- will overall strengthen your HEIs' crisis response<sup>2</sup> strategy and social value in the post-crisis era.

## 4. Organising your action

This section introduces you to the 6-step methodology for implementing your citizen engagement actions. The adopted methodology is based on guidelines of events' management in business projects in which the component of citizen engagement has been added. This methodology was chosen among other available ones (cf. design thinking) as it is more relevant to the focus on citizen engagement that the implemented actions adopt; a goal that moves beyond problem-solving and the production of innovative results. What follows is a detailed enumeration and description of the action points you need to adopt to successfully run your WP2A7 activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Abamosa, J.Y. (2021): Social inclusion of refugees into higher education: policies and practices of universities in Norway. *Educational Review*, DOI: 10.1080/00131911.2021.2009443

<sup>2</sup> Benner, M., Grant, J., O' Kane, M. (2022). Crisis response in higher education. How the pandemic challenged university operations and organisation. Springer.  
<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/54440>





## 4.1. Define the target groups and its needs to outline your objectives

The first step to take in organising your actions is to define the target groups. According to the project application, your actions will address the needs of Ukrainian refugees and displaced persons in your country. Locals and members of your academic community will also be encouraged to engage in the actions together with Ukrainian people.

Once this stage is completed (approx. duration: a 1h30 meeting with your team), we recommend you conduct a needs assessment to acquire a better understanding of the needs you aim to address. To apply a participatory and relevant needs analysis, you should involve your target groups in it, namely people who will be called to participate in your actions. A way to do so is by releasing a questionnaire or proceed to short interviews or informal discussions with people who will be engaged in your actions, while a desk research is recommended as a complementary needs mapping activity. It is advisable to dedicate a week to identify needs of your target groups.

Once you have analysed needs of your target group, you need to clearly define the objectives of your actions based on the needs assessment. This way, you will be able to create a relevant (to your context) and appealing action. The identification of your action's objectives can be made in the time span of 2-3 days, depending on the results of your needs assessment and the way you will choose to interpret the collected data.

This is the time to answer the question “What is the specific aim of the action?”. Whether it is to raise funding for Ukrainian students or create an innovative solution that will improve their lives, your objectives should be S.M.A.R.T., namely Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely<sup>3</sup>.

The same steps are to be taken for all your actions (4 actions by HE partner and 2 for W2L). Please document your actions in [this spreadsheet](#). Don't forget to regularly update the table once you have defined or implemented your action.

The Baltics4UA application states that partners should engage **at least 10 participants** in each citizen engagement action of their citizen engagement action.

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<sup>3</sup> Doran, G.T. (1981) There's a SMART Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives. Journal of Management Review, 70, 35-36.  
<https://community.mis.temple.edu/mis0855002fall2015/files/2015/10/S.M.A.R.T-Way-Management-Review.pdf>



## 4.2. Develop an engagement strategy

A subsequent fundamental step to take is to develop an engagement strategy that will focus on both your target audiences, namely the members of your academic community as well as people who will be involved in the actions and don't belong to the academic community. An engagement strategy comprises the necessary measures and points to take into account and implement to enhance active and long-term involvement of your target groups in the action.

With regards to your HEI, it is important to identify the members of your team who will be in charge of and carry out the actions and design an engagement strategy to acquire support from academic staff and students in your university. Besides collaborators, fellow colleagues and students with whom you are in daily contact due to regular teaching and research activities, you should consider engaging a greater number of people working at your institutions for two main reasons.

First, it is advised to include as many academic staff and students as needed to successfully implement your action, as there are multiple roles to fulfill (e.g., team members working on communication and outreach, core team to be engaged in the management and organisation of the action, others to volunteer during the action, etc.). Second, based on the topic and objectives of your action, you may see the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues and students of different departments to increase impact and engagement within your academic community.

Likewise, you need an engagement strategy that will allow you to reach out to your target group/s but also keep their interest and engagement vivid during as well as at the end of your actions. It is recommended you approx. dedicate 3 days to outline and plan your engagement strategy.

## 4.3. Considering the ethical dimension: inclusion and diversity



Organising events for citizens entails the participation of a variety of people, stakeholders and social actors who will be part of your actions. Given the challenging social conditions in which Baltics4UA partners will operate, particularly due to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis, it is crucial to **ensure the application of democratic values, respect for human rights, and the principle of non-discrimination at all stages of action implementation.**

Starting by ensuring equal access and inclusion within the team that will lead the citizen engagement actions, Baltics4UA partners are called to follow the inclusion and diversity strategies of their institutions. Similarly, it is fundamental to design your actions in ways that are accessible to your target audiences by taking into account and addressing all potential barriers to participation (e.g., language, health issues, venue, etc.).

Likewise, ensuring that participants are coming from an as much diversified socio-cultural environment as possible is a significant point to address at the first stage of shaping your action. The post-event survey that you will share with participants will provide the relevant data of how culturally-diversified your action was.

In this context, a useful and insightful document to consult is the [Inclusion and Diversity Strategy](#) in the field of youth by the European Commission (2014).

### 4.3.1. Data collection and data management

Your actions will entail the collection of some types of personal data from participants, such as:

- images;
- video recordings;
- personal data (requested in the attendance lists as well as in the post-event survey);
- data acquired in the needs assessment stage (see section 4.1).

To ensure data collection and data management privacy and protection, it is imperative to abide by the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)<sup>4</sup> and make it clearly stated in your workshop's materials as well as at the beginning of your action, so that participants are fully aware of the data management that defines your action.

With regards to images and video recordings, in the registration form of your action and the attendance list you should integrate the text present in this [Consent form](#) and put the disclaimer.

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<sup>4</sup> The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Legal text: <https://gdpr-info.eu/>



Personal data acquired in the needs assessment stage and the post-event survey will be used at a confidential base and exclusively for the analysis of results of the actions that will be presented in the relevant publication. Images and videos will be shared through the project's and partners' social media networks (dissemination activities) upon consent provided by participants.

It is advisable you engage in a thorough discussion on ethics and data management considerations within your organising team. Approx. 2 days of consultation will be beneficial to outline an ethically-sound action.

## 4.4. Defining the level of citizen engagement

Once you have defined the objectives of your actions, your target audience/s and how to make your activities as inclusive and accessible as possible, you need to identify the degree of engagement of citizens in the actions. An approach to define levels of citizen engagement has been developed by the World Bank Working Group on Citizen Engagement (2015). This approach has been adopted in a result of the Baltics4UA project (Zourou, Oikonomou & Samiotis, 2023). Thus, the levels of citizen engagement are four and presented in Figure 1 below:

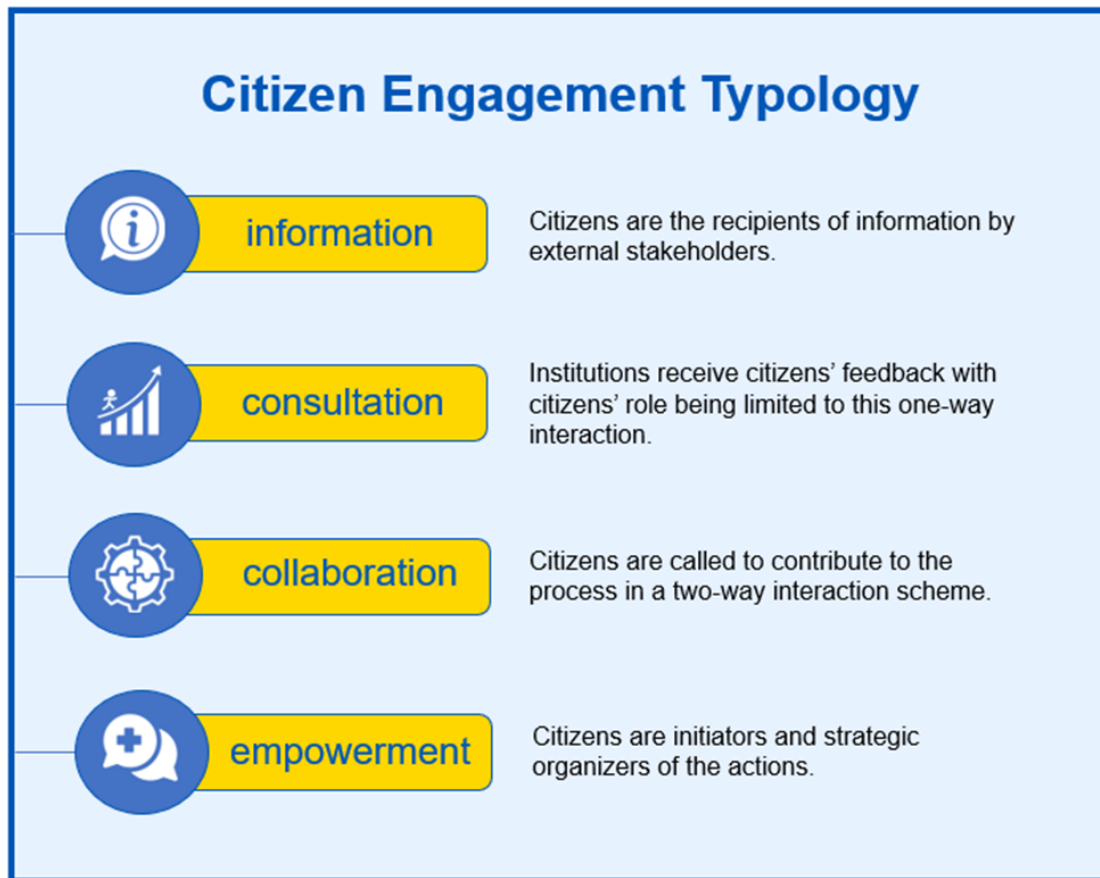


Figure 1. Levels of citizen engagement. Source: World Bank WG on Citizen Engagement (2015, pp 8)

In practical terms, this means that you need to define in which stages of the implementation of the action will participants (see section 4.1 for target audiences) be actively involved, how and in which degree. For example, are you thinking of organising a public lecture in which participants will be called to exchange ideas and shared their stories? Then, in this case, you aim for the “consultation” level of citizen engagement, as people will be called to express their views but not overall shape the way the action unfolds. Likewise, if you plan to organise a co-design session with your target group, then you move towards a collaborative level of engagement as participants will co-develop the format and outcomes of the action.

What you should take into account is that **the level of citizen engagement is directly linked to the type of actions you will design**. Therefore, the upcoming step is to define the type of actions you will deliver.



## 4.5. Identifying the type of social action

Within the project, a specific typology of actions has been identified to guide partners in the implementation of the forthcoming actions. Below, we present a brief presentation of the 18-item typology from which partners will be called to select the most adequate -to their context- actions.

### 1. Citizen Science

Citizen science refers to public participation in scientific research that is manifested through data collection activities.

#### Useful resources:

1. <https://eu-citizen.science/>
2. <https://scistarter.org/>

### 2. Hackathon

A hackathon is a (usually) 2-days event in which people collaborate to produce innovative solutions to (social) problems.

#### Useful resources:

1. <https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/hackathon>
2. <https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/technology/blog/what-is-a-hackathon/>

### 3. Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is an innovative way to raise funds by leveraging the power of technology and the crowd.

#### Useful resources:

1. <https://web.uri.edu/risbdc/old-blog-page/crowdfunding-11-elements-of-a-successful-crowdfunding-campaign/>
2. [https://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/topics/Museum\\_Management/Crowdfunding\\_ReshapingEngagementInCulture.pdf](https://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/topics/Museum_Management/Crowdfunding_ReshapingEngagementInCulture.pdf)

### 4. Crowdsourcing



Crowdsourcing entails the collection of resources (e.g. data, ideas, services, etc.) by widening the pool of people who are facilitated to join the action through a digital means.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://ecas.org/projects/crowdsourcing/>
2. <https://www.braineet.com/blog/crowdsourcing-benefits>

## 5. Do-it-yourself

Do-it-yourself actions imply participants come together to co-create tools, gadgets or things that are of great relevance (e.g., camouflage nets).

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://www.mystonetack.com/en/history-do-it-yourself/>
2. <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/18/arts/18abroad.html>

## 6. Art event (theatrical plays, music concerts, exhibitions etc.)

An art event includes a series of artistic manifestations, such as theatrical plays, music concerts, art exhibitions, etc.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://www.americanscientist.org/article/how-art-can-heal>
2. [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Arts-Engagement-as-Represented-by-Five-Art-Forms\\_fig1\\_255173198#:~:text=once%20per%20quarter.-,....%2C%20visual%20arts%2C%20literature\).](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Arts-Engagement-as-Represented-by-Five-Art-Forms_fig1_255173198#:~:text=once%20per%20quarter.-,....%2C%20visual%20arts%2C%20literature).)

## 7. Scholarship

Scholarships are usually provided by universities and foundations to cover studies or/and subsistence costs of students.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://education.ec.europa.eu/study-in-europe/planning-your-studies/scholarships-and-funding>

## 8. Tuition free studies

Tuition free studies refer to educational and teaching programmes and courses (physical or online) that are offered for free.



**Useful resources:**

1. <https://commonwealthcollege.ca/blog/what-is-tuition-free-education/#:-:text=A%20tuition%2Dfree%20college%20does,tuition%2C%20instruction%20or%20course%20material>

## 9. Free accommodation

Free accommodation refers to the provision of free dormitory services.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://visitukraine.today/blog/556/cambridge-will-provide-ukrainian-students-with-free-housing-and-education>

## 10. Psychological counselling

Psychological counselling entails psychological services and support offered to people in need of such interventions.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://www.vu.lt/en/support-to-ukraine/psychological-support>

## 11. Podcast

A podcast is made of audio files released online in the form of series.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://www.podcastinsights.com/what-is-a-podcast/>
2. <https://influencermarketinghub.com/glossary/podcast/>

## 12. Campaign

A campaign is made of a series of actions to raise awareness about an issue an achieve a goal.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://www.ziflow.com/blog/types-marketing-campaigns>
2. <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-campaign-strategy/>

## 13. Public lectures

Public lectures are usually a series of open to the wider public (beyond academic staff and students) lectures that aim to educate and share knowledge with people on a topic.





#### Useful resources:

1. <https://www.hotcoursesabroad.com/study-abroad-info/once-you-arrive/what-are-the-benefits-of-public-lectures-and-talks/#:~:text=Public%20lectures%20can%20give%20you,Stephen%20Hawking%2C%20and%20Greta%20Thunberg.>
2. <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch-now/why-are-public-lectures-important-professor-martyn-thomas>

#### 14. Legal counselling

Legal counselling refers to the legal services offered to people in need of it.

#### Useful resources:

1. <https://research.thelegaleducationfoundation.org/research-learning/funded-research/access-to-justice-through-university-law-clinics>
2. [http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/knowledge\\_exchange/briefing\\_papers/series5/mckeever-briefing.pdf](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/knowledge_exchange/briefing_papers/series5/mckeever-briefing.pdf)

#### 15. Networking event

A networking event aims to bring together and create bonds between members of diverse communities; to connect them through a shared action or event.

#### Useful resources:

1. <https://www.bizzabo.com/blog/networking-event-examples>
2. <https://teambuilding.com/blog/networking-event-ideas>

#### 16. Summer camp

A summer camp is a programme that is usually part of the academic curriculum. The camp aims to enhance participants' knowledge and skills.

#### Useful resources:

1. [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/20f88051-86f1-4b41-963d-c25828ffb5a4/Guideline\\_How%20to%20Manage%20a%20Successful%20Summer%20School.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/20f88051-86f1-4b41-963d-c25828ffb5a4/Guideline_How%20to%20Manage%20a%20Successful%20Summer%20School.pdf)

#### 17. Educational equipments

Educational equipments refer to educational, learning and training resources that support instruction within universities (e.g., online modules, smart educational gadgets).



**Useful resources:**

1. [https://commission.europa.eu/education/teaching-methods-and-materials/available-educational-materials\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/education/teaching-methods-and-materials/available-educational-materials_en)

**18. Working/Research group**

A working group is a group of experts appointed to investigate and make recommendations on a specific issue.

**Useful resources:**

1. <https://handbook.sourcegraph.com/company-info-and-process/communication/working-group/>
2. <https://larahogan.me/blog/running-working-groups/>

## 4.6. Create an implementation plan

At this stage, start building your plan for the execution of your actions. With all-above parameters identified, you need a careful and step-by-step implementation plan that will include the necessary tasks to be taken to successfully run your actions. Your implementation plan need to outline clear instructions as well as specific responsibilities and tasks by staff member and volunteers (if present).

The implementation plan may also include an alternative (plan b) activity in case you have identified risks that may arise during the action. It is recommended that you dedicate approx. 3 days to outline your implementation plan.

## 4.7. Train and prepare staff

Since the Baltics4UA project targets particular group/s (cf. Ukrainian refugees) in a socially disruptive context, it is advised to prepare your team on what to expect and how to deliver the designed actions. The creation of a short document that will include important things to consider and to be careful of throughout the implementation of the actions would be beneficial as a training material<sup>5</sup> for staff.

**Before moving to the implementation of the action, make sure that all members of your team are aware of their tasks and roles as well as of the way your action will be run.**

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<sup>5</sup> Education without backpacks. (March 29, 2023). Free educational resources for Ukrainian children. <https://obr.education/en/free-educational-resources-for-ukrainian-children/>



## 4.8. Assessing the impact of your action

To evaluate the impact of your actions, a post-event survey has been developed that you will share with participants at the end of each of your actions. The survey will entail a list of questions that aim to depict the knowledge, skills and attitudes forged in participants as a result of their involvement in the action. The findings of your surveys will be analysed by partners and presented in deliverable 5 (D5), an open access publication titled “Academia as catalyst of the quadruple helix implementation for social responsibility in the Baltics”.

You can find the post-event survey in section 7.

## 5. Disseminate and share best practices

Communication and dissemination of your actions and their results is a key task that needs to be fulfilled prior, during, and after the end of your action. Besides regular dissemination of your action through your communication channels, it is advisable to gather and share, through Baltics4UA social media channels, best practices that have been developed as a result of your actions to enhance their impact and reach out to wider stakeholders and audiences.

## 6. Checklist

This checklist offers a step-by-step overview for organising the citizen engagement actions.

### Building blocks

(A. Objectives and target audience, see [section 4.1](#))

- Target group/s:** Define the target group/s of your actions. Distinguish between direct and indirect ones.
- Needs assessment:** Conduct an assessment of needs of your target audience.
- Objective(s):** Define your actions’ objective(s). Ensure they are S.M.A.R.T!



- Number of participants:** Each citizen engagement should involve at least 10 participants.
- Stakeholders mapping:** Create a list of stakeholders you would like to engage in your actions.

(B. *Engagement strategy, see [section 4.2](#)*)

- Engagement strategy:** Action plan

(C. *Ethics, see [section 4.3](#)*)

- Ethical considerations:** outlined and addressed
- Inclusion and diversity in your team:** In your call for people to join the organising team, you have tackled possible barriers to inclusion and diversity (e.g., language, health issues, gender, nationality, social class, etc.)
- Inclusion and diversity:** Ensure inclusion of your action and diversity within your target audience.

(D. *Data management, see [section 4.3.1](#)*)

- Data management:** Define data collection, analysis and management policy

(E. *Citizen engagement, see [section 4.4](#)*)

Depending on the level of citizen engagement you are aiming for.

- Design of the action:** E.g. in a collaborative action, participants should be offered the possibility to equally shape and contribute to the action. In information actions, citizens are only called to assist to the action and become aware of the issue at stake.
- Milestones:** Identify starting and ending points for the engagement, along with key milestones in between (for actions that are delivered in more than just a few hours or one day).
- Safe space:** Ensuring that participants will feel safe to engage in the action. Special measures to avoid threatening situations between Ukrainian refugees, locals and Russian populations (if present).

(F. *Type of action, see [section 4.5](#)*)

- Type of action:** Define your social action.

(G. *Implementation plan, see [section 4.6](#)*)

- Plan:** Set the plan of the action (duration, tools, staff involved, activities)



- Risk assessment:** Define the potential risks and ways to mitigate them.
- Resources:** Ensuring the necessary resources to carry out the action. The creation of an event action budget will be of help.
- Date:** Select the date(s) of your action(s).
- Venue:** Ensuring the accessibility of the location in which the action will take place.
- Registrations:** Decide on online or physical registration of participants.
- Materials:** Prepare educational and training materials (if needed).
- Event suppliers:** Coordinate with event suppliers (catering, equipment, etc) (if needed).
- Communication:** Outline a clear and targeted communication and dissemination strategy that will provide concrete measures to apply before, during and after the action takes place (posters, social media posts, website posts, etc.)
- Attendance lists and Certificates.**

*(H. Train and prepare your team, see [section 4.7](#))*

- Team members:** Academic staff and students are part of the organising team.
- Participation:** You set up meetings of the organising team by ensuring all can equally participate in the discussions.
- Roles and tasks:** Clear tasks and roles are assigned to each team member.
- University support:** Confirm the support of your institution's decision makers.

*(I. Impact and dissemination, see [sections 4.8 & 4.9](#))*

- Share post-event survey with participants.**
- Report:** presentation of evidence from your action
- Dissemination strategy and plan:** before, during and beyond your action.



## 7. Post-event survey

### TITLE OF THE EVENT

The purpose of this questionnaire is to allow us to evaluate the NAME OF THE EVENT you attended (LOCATION) as part of the Baltics4UA project. Your feedback is both important and confidential and will allow the continual improvement of future actions.

*(Demographic and social information)*

1. Professional status (University staff, university students, university librarian, other)
2. Country of origin
3. Are you a Ukrainian refugee or internally displaced person (for the actions implemented by LPNU)?

*(Participants' reflections on the action)*

4. Have you ever participated in a university-led action for a social issue before?
5. Please provide up to 3 expectations/objectives you had prior to attending the action (**for partners: please add here the type of action you organised e.g. hackathon**)
6. Were your expectations met? Please choose the most appropriate, on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 expectations not met/ 2 expectations barely met/ 3 expectations partially met/ 4 expectations fully met)
7. Were you encouraged by the organisers to actively participate in the action? (Yes/No/I'm not sure)
8. Did you feel more socially empowered after attending the action?
9. Will you consider participating in an action organised by a university in the future?

*(Organisation of the event & Logistics)*

10. Do you think the event was inclusive and a safe space for you to interact with other participants?



11. The pace was about right.
12. Information was delivered at the correct level.
13. Speakers were proficient and approachable.
14. There was adequate time for questions from participants during the action.
15. The logistics (information, links, post-event material) were well organised.
16. Further comments or suggestions.

## References

World Bank Working Group on Citizen Engagement (2015). Engaging With Citizens For Improved Development Results, Strategic Framework For Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement In Wbg Operations, Concept Note. Available online <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/266371468124780089/strategic-framework-for-mainstreaming-citizen-engagement-in-world-bank-group-operations-engaging-with-citizens-for-improved-results>

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