



REPORT

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY
RIVNE MUNICIPALITY

"How can we make our community a place where young people want to stay and build their future?"

28 March – 26 April 2026





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From setting up the citizens' assembly to developing recommendations

PREPARATION STAGE

Forming a citizens' assembly that is representative of the Rivne municipality

- Demographic analysis of the community
- Large-scale publicity campaign
- Distribution of 5,000 invitation letters
- Registration of potential participants
- Selection of 45 participants by sortition based on criteria such as: age, gender, area of residence, level of education, IDP status

Stakeholder Forum
15 November 2025

- 42 representatives of the community's youth sector
- What factors influence young people's decisions to stay in or leave the community?
- What key information needs to be provided to participants of the forthcoming Assembly to enable them to produce evidence-based recommendations for the local authorities?

IMPLEMENTATION

28–29 March

Session 1 (two days)

The participants identified the key challenges and explored their underlying causes.

Seven system-wide problems emerged from the deliberative process.

- An introduction to youth policy in the community
- Panel discussion: "Rivne: Stay or Leave?"
- Speed-dialogue sessions with seven subject-area experts

→ Participants identified the key problems and causes of youth outflow

4–5 April

Session 2 (two days)

Practical experience — responding to participants' queries

Each invited practitioner answered a specific question that had arisen following the first weekend.

- 7 case studies from real communities and institutions
- Prioritisation: voting on 30 objectives (using stickers)
- Generating recommendations in small groups
- First round of voting: in favour/neutral/against

→ Participants produced: 27 preliminary recommendations

25–26 April

Session 3 (two days)

Dialogue with the authorities: what's already in the works, what's new, and what's doable

- Speed-dialogue sessions with seven City Council officials
- Participants consolidated related recommendations
- Final vote (ballot paper, 1–5 scoring scale)

→ Participants refined and consolidated: 27 → 20 recommendations, all adopted with support between 63% and 94%

OUTCOMES

20 recommendations are presented to the City Council

All 20 recommendations, which were drawn up and endorsed by the participants are forwarded to Rivne City Council for public consideration and decision-making

- The report is publicly presented and submitted to the Rivne City Council
- The City Council will provide feedback
- An Action Plan will be developed to implement the recommendations, setting out deadlines and assigning responsibilities



1. ABOUT THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

1.1. What is deliberative democracy?

Modern democracies are increasingly faced with challenges that cannot be effectively addressed through the traditional mechanisms of representative democracy alone. The complexity of social issues, the need to balance diverse interests and expectations of citizens, and the necessity to strengthen trust between the authorities and society have all contributed to the development of new approaches to decision-making. One such approach is **deliberative democracy**.

> Deliberative democracy is built on the principle of substantive and reasoned discussion of issues of public importance. Unlike conventional forms of participation, where citizens mainly express support for or opposition to decisions that have already been made, deliberative processes involve jointly examining an issue, considering different points of view, exchanging arguments and seeking solutions that balance the interests of a broad range of people.

The central premise of deliberative processes is the conviction that the quality of decisions improves when citizens are able to access reliable information, ask questions of experts, discuss the issue and form their own position based on evidence and arguments. This approach promotes more informed participation in decision-making processes and leads to decisions that enjoy a higher level of public support.

Over recent decades, deliberative mechanisms have been actively used in many countries around the world and in Europe.

> For Ukraine, deliberative tools are taking on particular significance in the context of decentralisation, community revitalisation and the strengthening of the role of local self-government. They create additional opportunities to involve residents in shaping decisions regarding the development of their communities and help foster a culture of responsible dialogue between the authorities and citizens.

1.2. Citizens' assembly as a platform for dialogue between local government and residents

One of the best-known and most widely used tools of deliberative democracy is the citizens' assembly. This is a structured process for engaging citizens in the consideration of a specific issue of public importance and the development of recommendations for public authorities.

➢ *In various parts of the world, citizens' assemblies and other forms of deliberative democracy have been used to discuss issues such as climate policy, constitutional reforms, urban development, healthcare, education and other areas of public life. Successful international experience shows that involving citizens in meaningful dialogue not only helps to find high-quality solutions but also strengthens trust in democratic institutions.*

What makes citizens' assemblies unique is the principle of random selection of participants. 45–50 people (up to 100 in the case of a national assembly) are selected by sortition, using a specific methodology, from among willing community members (who have signed up to take part); these individuals should represent the main socio-demographic profiles of the population



in terms of gender, age, level of education, area of residence, etc. This approach ensures a diversity of experiences, views and life circumstances among participants, whilst also creating the conditions for the voices of different population groups to be represented.

Assembly typically meets over 2–3 weekends (Saturday and Sunday). First, participants are introduced to the topic and receive all the necessary information from experts and stakeholders. Next, in small groups and with the help of professional facilitators, they analyse the issues, discuss possible solutions and develop their own proposals. **The final stage involves drawing up recommendations, which are supported by a supermajority of the assembly, and delivering them to the authorities for consideration, a public response and action.**

A key benefit of the citizens' assembly is the combination of citizens' experience and expert knowledge. Participants make decisions based not only on their own convictions, but also after considering different viewpoints, facts and expert information. Therefore, the recommendations generated through this process often tend to be practical, balanced and focused on long-term outcomes.

➢ *For local self-government bodies, the citizens' assembly is an effective tool for engaging residents in the policy-making and decision-making processes that influence the community's development. For citizens, it is an opportunity to be directly involved in resolving important local issues, to have their voices heard and to influence the decision-making process.*

In order to strengthen dialogue between local authorities and residents, and to involve citizens in shaping decisions regarding the community's future, a citizens' assembly was held in 2026 in the Rivne City Territorial Community, with comprehensive expert, methodological and financial support from a Council of Europe project, to discuss the following topic: **"How can we make our community a place where young people want to stay and build their future?"**





2. PREPARATION AND PLANNING OF A CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY IN THE RIVNE MUNICIPALITY

2.1. Defining the citizens' assembly's remit and its mandate

Organising the citizens' assembly in the Rivne community proved to be a complex process that took over six months. To design and support all stages — from preparation to sessions delivery — the Council of Europe project engaged international experts from the **Federation for Innovation in Democracy – Europe (FIDE)**, who have extensive experience in organising citizens' assemblies. **Nataliia Malynovska**, PhD in Political Science, national consultant for the Council of Europe project, oversaw the methodological design of the Assembly. She ensured that the methodology of the deliberative process was followed, drew up a detailed agenda for each session and was responsible for designing the training component.

A key stage in the preparation of the citizens' assembly was the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding** between the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Rivne City Council. The MoU formalised the partnership between the parties regarding the planning and conduct of the citizens' assembly based on the principles of transparency and inclusivity. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe committed to providing expert, methodological and financial support to the Rivne City Council in the preparation, organisation and implementation of the citizens' assembly. The Rivne City Council, for its part, undertook to ensure that the citizens' assembly took place and to consider the recommendations put forward, identifying the most appropriate ways of translating them into specific policies.

The document was signed on 28 October 2025 during the 49th session of the Congress by the Secretary of the Rivne City Council, Acting Mayor **Viktor Shakyrzian**, and the Secretary General of the Congress, **Mathieu Mori**.



The remit of the Rivne Community's citizens' assembly was grounded in the community's own priorities rather than chosen at random. In 2024–2025, as part of the development of the **Development Strategy of the Rivne Urban Territorial Community**, and with the support of the Council of Europe project *"Strengthening democratic resilience through civic participation during the war and in the post-war context"*, residents were surveyed to identify the most pressing challenges facing the community and its future development.

Among the priority issues, respondents most frequently cited support for young people, the creation of opportunities for their employment, self-fulfilment and the promotion of entrepreneurial initiatives. They considered the issues of youth employment within the community and facilitating youth entrepreneurship to be the most pressing.

These two areas were proposed by the Rivne City Council for further discussion with national and international experts with a view to determining the remit of the citizens' assembly. Following the consultations, a topic concerning the future of young people in the community was selected. Its relevance extends far beyond the Rivne community, as fostering conditions that encourage young people to stay, live and thrive in their own community is a shared challenge for many communities in Ukraine and other European countries.

Stakeholder Forum

To finalise the remit, clarify its main issues and identify the key questions for the upcoming citizens' assembly, a **Stakeholder Forum** was held on 18 November 2025. The Forum provided an opportunity for stakeholders to review and provide feedback on the proposed remit before its approval, test preliminary hypotheses regarding the factors influencing young people's decisions to stay in the community or leave it, and contribute suggestions for the preparation of informational materials and the Assembly's agenda.

The Forum was attended by **42 representatives** of the Rivne youth community, including members of the Youth Council, student and school councils, youth CSOs, youth workers and representatives of youth-oriented institutions. The session was held as a World Café and moderated by a consultant from the Council of Europe project.

Following the Forum, priority areas for the citizens' assembly's future work were identified. These include making the community more attractive for young people to live and pursue their potential, developing educational and professional opportunities, improving access to information, empowering young people to participate in decision-making, and strengthening communication between young people and local authorities. These areas informed the content of the information kit provided to selected participants, the selection of experts and stakeholders, and the design of the citizens' assembly sessions' agenda.

The Forum was a crucial step in preparing for the citizens' assembly, helping to shape the subsequent discussions and confirm the relevance of the remit.



2.2. Analysis of youth policy and the needs of young people in the Rivne municipality

In preparation for the sessions of the citizens' assembly, **Zakharii Tkachuk**, a Council of Europe project consultant in the policy domain, conducted a comprehensive analysis of the situation of young people in the Rivne community, covering their demographic profile, the extent to which youth policy is being implemented, the existing infrastructure and opportunities for young people to participate in community life. The findings served as the basis for formulating preliminary hypotheses, identifying thematic areas of work and selecting experts.

Meanwhile, systematic gaps in the availability of up-to-date data on young people at the local level were identified while gathering information. This issue was subsequently acknowledged by the Assembly members, who reflected it in their recommendations.

Data collection and challenges

Data from various sources were used to prepare the analysis, including publicly available statistical data at national and local levels, the community's policy and programming documents, reports of the Rivne City Council's departments and responses to official enquiries sent to the relevant departments.

The main sources of information included:

- Responses to enquiries sent to the Department of Education and the Department for Youth and Sport of the Rivne City Council Executive Committee;
- An interview with the Head of the Department for Youth and Sport;
- Presentation materials on the progress of youth policy implementation in the community;
- The Youth Support Programme of the Rivne Urban Territorial Community for 2022–2026;
- Information on the activities of the Youth Council;
- The Development Strategy of the Rivne Urban Territorial Community up to 2027.

The following information on young people in the community was not received or is lacking:

- Number of young people by specific age groups (14–35 years), including those studying at universities and vocational colleges;
- Data on higher education institutions outside the community chosen by high school graduates from Rivne and Kvasyliv;
- Distribution of young people across the community's neighbourhoods;
- Extent to which young people's needs for extracurricular education are met and their coverage by relevant services;
- Number of young people registered as unemployed;
- Number of young people who have received the Personal Business grant through the employment service;
- Number of young people serving in the Armed Forces or holding veteran status;
- A comprehensive map of the community's youth policy stakeholders, including structural units, municipal institutions, consultative and advisory bodies, as well as other institutions;
- Information on the community's youth policy priorities for 2021–2025 and the budget funding allocated to this area;
- Number of youth spaces and public spaces for young people, and the criteria for classifying them as such;
- Findings from a comprehensive study of the needs, expectations and motivations of young people in the community.

Key challenges during the collection and analysis of information

The collected data revealed key systemic hurdles hindering youth policy development in Rivne municipality.



- First, data regarding youth are dispersed across multiple departments and institutions without integration into a centralized system. Consequently, there is no unified hub available to generate a comprehensive demographic and social profile of young people in the municipality.
- Secondly, the municipality lacks a systematic mechanism for monitoring the needs, expectations and attitudes of young people. This limits opportunities for data-driven decision-making and undermines the ability to assess the effectiveness of youth policy measures.
- Thirdly, responsibility for collecting and analysing information is spread across various departments. Each operates within its own remit and collects data only within its own area of activity, which makes it difficult to form a comprehensive picture of the situation of young people in the municipality.
- A particularly challenging issue is the availability of data on young people studying at universities and vocational colleges. The Education Department of the City Council's Executive Committee focuses primarily on pre-school and general secondary education institutions, which fall within its remit. Meanwhile, higher and vocational education institutions, although located within the community, do not fall under the jurisdiction of local authorities. Thus, information on students and the educational journeys of graduates is not systematically collected, despite the fact that the choice of where to study often influences young people's subsequent migration decisions.

The lack of a comprehensive study of young people's needs is not merely an informational or methodological gap. It introduces the risk that individual measures and programmes might not fully meet the actual needs of the target audience. It is worth noting that the members of the citizens' assembly included in their list of final recommendations the provisions to conduct regular research into young people's needs (Recommendation 14) and to establish a Centre for Community Needs Research (Recommendation 19).

The state of youth policy in the Rivne municipality

The analysis revealed a number of key observations, which provided the basis for further deliberations during the citizens' assembly.

Key challenges facing youth policy

Institutional capacity	• The administrative staff is too small to handle the tasks at hand. • There is no analyst or programme manager. • There is no system for monitoring the outcomes of youth policy.
Funding	• A focus on retaining rather than on results. • There are no long-term programmes for the development of youth policy. • CSOs' reliance on grants calls into question the sustainability of their activities.
Infrastructure	• Teenage clubs operate using an outdated model and fail to meet the needs of young people aged 14–35. • There is no fully-fledged youth centre that meets the needs of young people aged 14–25 in terms of both quality and quantity. • There is no network of modern spaces such as co-working spaces, hubs or youth centres.
Youth participation	• The Youth Council has limited influence on actual decision-making. • Young people's interests are represented in a fragmented manner, and there is no unified approach to engaging different groups. • Students at universities and vocational colleges are not sufficiently integrated into community life. • CSOs are not equal partners in shaping youth policy.



The Rivne municipality has a solid foundation for the development of youth policy, supported by a well-developed educational environment, active youth engagement, and existing mechanisms for participation in community life. At the same time, the analysis identified a number of challenges related to institutional capacity, coordination of youth policy, data accessibility, and the development of youth infrastructure.

A key long-term objective is to move beyond individual measures towards a comprehensive, sustainable and data-driven system for supporting and developing young people. Such a system should be based on cross-sectoral cooperation and the active involvement of young people themselves.

The analysis confirmed the relevance of the remit chosen for the citizens' assembly and served as an excellent springboard for its participants. A significant share of the recommendations developed during the assembly are directly aimed at addressing the challenges identified and creating more favourable conditions for young people's lives, development and personal fulfilment within the community.

2.3. Demographic profile of the community and preparation for the lottery

To ensure that the citizens' assembly reflected the diversity of the community, a demographic profile of the Rivne Municipality was developed. Based on this profile, a randomly selected sample was drawn from among registered participants using the ***Panelot*** software. This enabled forming an Assembly composition that best reflected the community's demographic makeup in terms of key socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age, area of residence, level of education and internally displaced person status.

Collecting relevant data for the Rivne community was challenging due to the diversity of sources, the lack of up-to-date information on certain categories and limited access to registers. In wartime, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine has suspended the publication of certain data and does not provide it upon request from local authorities, which required flexible approaches to sample selection.

To estimate the population size and the gender and age breakdown of the Rivne municipality, data from the National Health Service of Ukraine were used, including information on residents who had registered with a general practitioner (GP). The geographical distribution of the population was determined using data from the State Voters' Register of Ukraine, which was updated at the end of December 2025, while acknowledging that these lists may not be entirely up to date.

Due to the significant number of internally displaced persons (over 17,000 registered individuals), two categories were designated for this group: those already integrated into the community and those who are likely to be integrated in the future. Data on IDPs was obtained from the Department of Social and Veterans' Policy of the Rivne City Council, whilst recognising that some individuals might not have been officially registered.

In total, four main data sources were used, each with its own advantages and limitations, which affected the accuracy and completeness of the final representativeness model.



Data sources and their limitations

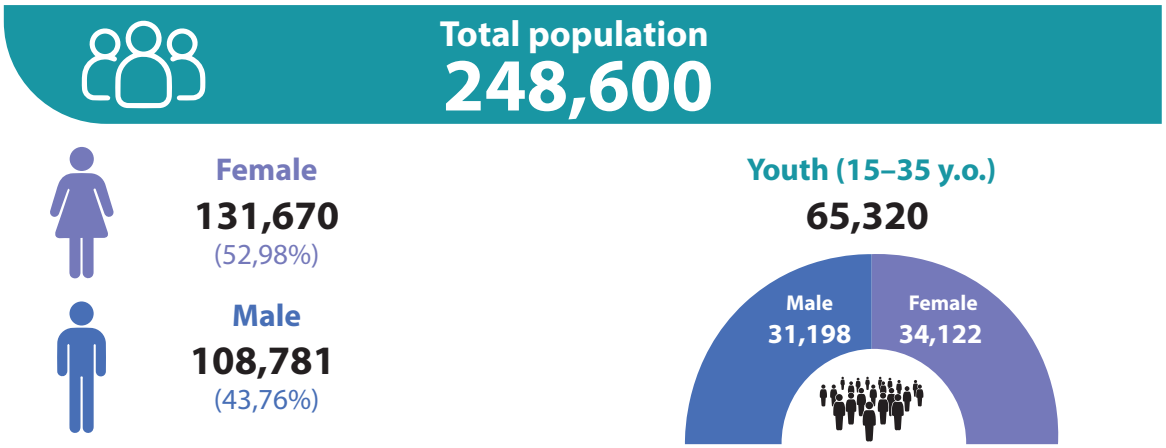
Source	Information Note	Restrictions
State Voter Register[1]	The list of voters by polling station, linked to their addresses, as the primary basis for geographical distribution	This has only been available since January 2026. Prior to this, the team did not have a comprehensive register
The Development Strategy of the Rivne Territorial Community up to 2027[2]	Breakdown of the population by gender and specific age groups	The Strategy's data on education consist solely of a list of educational institutions and the total number of students, without a breakdown of the adult population by level of education
Community Profile. Rivne Urban Territorial Community (2023)[3]	Breakdown of the community's population by age as at 1 January 2022	The data on educational levels used in the Rivne community profile are based on the results of the 2001 All-Ukrainian Population Census and are therefore out of date. Furthermore, they do not reflect the demographic and social changes that have taken place since the start of the full-scale invasion.

Key issue: Up-to-date data on the distribution of the Rivne municipality's population by educational levels are unavailable. The most recent data available come from the 2001 Population Census. Hence, the educational criterion for the sortition was established based on outdated statistics, which limits the accuracy and representativeness of this indicator.

Community population breakdown: outputs

Based on the sources gathered, a demographic profile of the community was drawn up, which then served as the basis for calculating the quotas for the recruitment of members of the citizens' assembly.

Gender breakdown and total population



Source: Community Development Strategy

Source: Community profile, 1 January 2022



[1] State Voter Register: https://www.drv.gov.ua/portal/cm?start

[2] Development Strategy of the Rivne Territorial Community until 2027: http://rivnerada.gov.ua/portal-files/portal/Стратегія_розвитку_Рівненської_територіальної_громади_до_2027_року.pdf

[3] Community Profile. Rivne Territorial Community (2023): https://rvrada.gov.ua/portalfiles/1/216/3438/PH_2023.pdf

Age groups

Age group	Population	Share	A quota for 45 participants
0–15 y.o.	42,151	22.0%	not eligible
16–59 y.o.	149,416	78.0%	35 participants
60 and older	48,884	22.0%	10 participants
20–39 y.o. (adjusted)	71,044	38.1%	17 participants
40–59 y.o. (adjusted)	66,336	35.6%	16 participants

Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution was compiled on the basis of data from the online voter portal, according to polling stations linked to neighbourhoods. As at 31 January 2026, the electoral roll comprised 175,168 persons. The city of Rivne is roughly divided into nine main neighbourhoods and historical districts: **Central District and districts of Pivnichnyi, Yuvileinyi, Lionokombinat, Boiarka, Basiv Kut, Zolotiiv, Tynne and Novyi Dvir**. In order to simplify the calculation of quotas, these were grouped into four notional parts of the city: North, South, West, Centre and East. The ratio between them was based on the actual distribution of residents according to the electoral register. The ratio between Rivne and Kvasyliv was calculated separately, based on data on the population of the city and the settlement.

Part of the community	Neighbourhoods	Voters	Share	Quota for 45
Rivne's North	Lionokombinat, Pivnichnyi	~11,334	6.4%	3
Rivne's South	Basiv Kut, Dvorets	~22,210	12.5%	5
Rivne's West and Centre	Central District, Boiarka, Yuvileinyi, Zolotiiv	~80,900	45.5%	19
Rivne's East	Chaika	~63,400	35.6%	16
Kvasyliv	Kvasyliv (separately)	3,396	1.9%	2 (min)
Total		**175,168**	**100%**	**45**

As part of the community, Kvasyliv required special attention during the planning stage. Despite its small share of the total electorate (1.9%) it was important to ensure that its residents were represented among the participants, so that the Assembly would reflect the entire community rather than just the city of Rivne.



Final criteria and categories for the sortition using the Panelot software

Based on the data collected, relevant demographic categories were identified and used to calculate the quotas.

Criteria	Categories	Quotas (min–max)
Gender × Age	Male 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, 65–74, 75+	0–5 per subcategory
	Female 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, 65–74, 75+	1–5 per subcategory
Geography	North, South, West+Centre, East, Kvasyliv	Acc. to the calculated quotas
Education	Higher education, vocational education, basic secondary education	Based on 2001 data
IDP status	IDP/non-IDP	2 spots reserved for IDPs

Challenges in demographic analysis and how to overcome them

One of the key challenges in compiling the community's demographic profile was the need to combine data from different sources. These data covered different time periods and had been collected using different methodologies. For instance, the gender and age breakdown of the population was based on 2022 figures, the geographical distribution came from the electoral register as of early 2026, and information on educational levels used figures from the 2001 All-Ukrainian Population Census.

However, this is not unique to the preparation of the citizens' assembly. Due to the lack of more up-to-date statistical data, local authorities are also forced to use these same sources when developing strategies and other policy documents for the community.

As preparations for the citizens' assembly did not involve conducting separate demographic studies, officially available sources were used to create the sample. The data were cross-checked, and for each criterion the most up-to-date available source was selected to calculate the proportions for the sortition. Thus, while the recruitment plan for members of the citizens' assembly does not claim to be absolutely accurate, it is as close as possible to the community's current demographic profile, given the limited availability of data.

Challenge	Solution	Outcome/Limitations
The online voter portal only became available in January 2026.	Archive data on polling stations had previously been used; following the opening of access, the relevant database was updated	The geographical distribution was made accurate by using up-to-date data
Up-to-date data on educational attainment are lacking; the available data rely solely on the 2001 Census	Census data were used as a baseline approximation	The education criterion is the least accurate of all (limitations on representation)
Diverse sources with different years and methodologies	For each criterion, the most up-to-date source was identified, whereupon the proportions were recalculated	The process required a significant amount of time for preparation and coordination



Kvasyliv accounts for approximately 1.9% of the eligible voters in the Rivne community (3,396 out of 175,168 residents), which is significantly less than its actual share of the community's population.	A minimum of two seats were reserved for residents of Kvasyliv during the sortition	Representation was ensured but remained limited due to the small voter base

Key takeaways for future citizens' assemblies

The experience of the Rivne municipality has proven that preparations for selecting Assembly members should begin at least 3–4 months before the sortition. Key steps include gaining access to the voter register, collecting data from relevant departments, identifying gaps and finding ways to address them. The lack of up-to-date data on educational levels is a challenge faced not only by the Rivne community; it is, in fact, a systemic problem affecting most Ukrainian communities. The most recent nationwide data on the educational structure of the population are based on the 2001 Census figures.

2.4. Outreach campaign and registration

A communication plan was developed to inform the municipality population about the citizens' assembly. It set out the key messages, communication channels, and schedule for disseminating information materials. The intensive communication campaign ensured that residents in the Rivne municipality were kept updated on the aims, objectives and progress of preparations for the citizens' assembly, as well as on opportunities to get involved.

An important communication channel was the **page dedicated to the citizens' assembly on the official website of the Rivne City Council**, where materials were regularly released describing each stage of the Assembly's preparation and running (see the QR code on page 17).

Oleksii Ohon, a well-known Rivne-based artist and designer, created the logo for the Rivne citizens' assembly. It captures the essence of the citizens' assembly as a process of deliberation and exchange of views aimed at jointly developing ideas and proposals.

РІВНЕ ГРОМАДСЬКА АСАМБЛЕЯ

Volunteers from the Youth Council and education professionals from the municipality were involved in distributing invitation letters on behalf of the City Council Secretary to randomly selected households. This work took place in early February 2026 under difficult weather conditions, with temperatures below –20°C and heavy snowfall.





On 30 January 2026, a **large-scale outreach campaign** was launched to encourage residents to register for the citizens' assembly, covering all the main communication channels.

The Secretary of the City Council and Acting Mayor, **Viktor Shakyrzian**, recorded a video address urging residents to sign up for the citizens' assembly. A promotional video featuring members of the Supervisory Committee was also produced. The Youth Council affiliated with Rivne City Council came up with a separate initiative, producing their own video.

The citizens' assembly page on the City Council website	*Address by the Acting Mayor*	*Promotional video by the Supervisory Committee*	*Promotional video by the Youth Council*

Two local newspapers, **7 Dniv** and **Rivne Vechirnie**, published articles about the citizens' assembly. Over a two-week period, **public service announcements were broadcast on Radio Track**, while videos promoting the Assembly were shown on public transport. In addition, the City Council Secretary participated in several television and radio programmes, while information about registration was actively disseminated through the social media channels of the City Council's executive bodies.

Five billboards were installed in the community, **200 posters** were distributed in social, cultural and healthcare facilities, and **1,000 information leaflets** were handed out. Retail chains and shops responded to the city authorities' call to distribute information leaflets and posters.



A key methodological component in forming the citizens' assembly group is a step-by-step process for randomly selecting members. This approach ensured equal opportunities for all residents of the municipality to be selected for participation. Particular emphasis is placed on engaging people **who would not normally take an active part in decision-making processes**, including through the use of invitation letters.



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Шановний(а) жителю(-ко) Рівненської громади!

Від імені Рівненської міської ради вітаю Вас із тим, що Ви стали одним(ією) із 5 000 жителів і жительок нашої громади, яких запрошено до участі в Громадській Асамблеї.

Ваші думка та голос можуть стати ключовими у вирішенні стратегічно важливого для громади питання!

У березні-квітні 2026 року Рівненська громада за підтримки проєкту Конгресу Ради Європи «Зміцнення багаторівневого врядування та місцевої демократії для підтримки відновлення України» **вперше проведе Громадську Асамблею.**

Громадська Асамблея – це інноваційний інструмент залучення громадян до прийняття рішень, що застосовується у багатьох країнах світу, **а з 2024 року – і в Україні.** Група жителів та жительок громади, які відображають її за основними демографічними показниками (вік, стать, освіта тощо), протягом трьох сесій за допомогою експертів вивчають визначену тему та обговорюють її в групах, після чого **напрацьовують рекомендації для органів влади**. Влада зобов'язується взяти ці рекомендації до уваги.

Тема: «Як зробити нашу громаду місцем, де молодь хоче залишатися та будувати своє майбутнє?»

Дати: 28-29 березня, 11-12 квітня, 25-26 квітня 2026 року (орієнтовно з 10:00 до 17:00).

Це запрошення надіслано 5 000 мешканцям і мешканкам Рівненської громади (міста Рівне та селища Квасилів) **випадковим чином**. Із числа тих, хто зареєструється до участі в Асамблеї, **45 осіб буде відібрано шляхом жеребкування за спеціальною методикою**.

Запрошуємо реєструватися до **25 лютого 2026 року** одним із зручних для Вас способів:
- за допомогою QR-коду
- за адресою: м. Рівне, вул. Соборна, 12а, каб. 109 (понеділок-четвер: 08:00-17:15, п'ятниця: 08:00-16:00, обідня перерва: 13:00-14:00)
- за номером телефону: (0362) 62-32-56 (понеділок-четвер: 08:00-17:15, п'ятниця: 08:00-16:00, обідня перерва: 13:00-14:00).

За участь у Громадській Асамблеї передбачена грошова винагорода у сумі 3000 гривень (за три сесії, по два дні кожна). Експертну, фінансову та організаційну підтримку надає проєкт Конгресу Ради Європи. Під час усіх днів буде забезпечено обіди та кава-перерви. Приміщення для проведення Асамблеї буде доступним для людей, які користуються кріслами колісними, та забезпечене укриттям на випадок повітряної тривоги.

Ваша участь у всіх трьох сесіях є обов'язковою для забезпечення безперервності обговорень і досягнення змістовних результатів. Детальну інформацію щодо програми, місця проведення та інших організаційних питань буде повідомлено додатково всім відібраним шляхом жеребкування учасникам.

**Цей лист є запрошенням стати кандидатом на участь у Громадській Асамблеї для будь-яких двох осіб, які проживають у Вашому домогосподарстві та досягли повноліття (18 років).*

З повагою,
Віктор ШАКИРЗЯН
Секретар міської ради, виконувач обов'язків міського голови м. Рівне

In the Rivne community, which comprises the city of Rivne and the village of Kvasyliv, **5,000 invitation letters were sent out to randomly selected households**, based on a methodology developed in collaboration with international experts from the Federation for Innovation in Democracy – Europe (FIDE). The letters provided information on the topic and format of the citizens' assembly, its dates, and how to register to join. Residents were also informed that the Council of Europe project provides a daily honorarium for the time spent participating in the assembly (in line with European and global practice regarding citizens' assemblies), amounting to UAH 3,000 for participation in three sessions.

Furthermore, all community residents who learned about the citizens' assembly were able to register to participate independently, even if they had not received an invitation letter. **Registration was open for three weeks, from 2 to 25 February 2026**. For convenience, several methods of applying were provided, such as via an online registration form, by telephone or by visiting the city council in person. All adult residents of the community were eligible to register, with the exception of employees of the city council's executive bodies, senior officials of the community, members of the Executive Committee of the Rivne City Council, employees of municipal enterprises, institutions, establishments and organisations founded or co-founded by the Rivne City Council, and members of the Rivne City Council.





Method 1. Invitation letters	Method 2. Open registration
The City Council distributed 5,000 invitation letters to randomly selected households. To do this, the community's area was divided into four sections: north, south, east and west. Within each of these sections, streets and households were selected at random, and invitations were delivered to their letterboxes. This approach ensured that the upcoming citizens' assembly would be geographically representative.	Alongside distributing invitation letters, the city council organised an open registration process, accessible to all interested residents of the community. Several channels were used to communicate this information: • Publishing information about registration on the official website of Rivne City Council. • Placing printed information materials (billboards, posters, leaflets and flyers) in shops, municipal institutions, social and cultural venues, at public transport stops and in other public places. • Sharing information on social media to reach a wider audience.
30 out of 45 participants were selected from among those who registered via invitation letters	**15 out of 45 participants were selected from among those who registered during the open call**

The Council of Europe project's experts put together an **information kit**, which was sent to the selected participants of the citizens' assembly ahead of its first session. The kit provided information on the citizens' assembly as an instrument of deliberative democracy, its advantages and how it differs from other forms of civic participation, as well as background information on the topic under discussion. Although the information kit was designed primarily for Assembly participants, it may also be useful to a wider audience within the community.



2.5. Supervisory Committee: ensuring the transparency and impartiality of the process

As part of the preparatory phase, the Department of Strategic Development and Investments appointed the Supervisory Committee of the citizens' assembly of the Rivne municipality. It included representatives of youth organisations, members of the city council, representatives of executive bodies, the university and civil society organisations. The Supervisory Committee held two meetings. Its members also participated in the Assembly's sessions as observers and contributed to the recording of promotional videos for the registration information campaign.

The Supervisory Committee acted as an independent oversight body. Its members monitored the transparency and proper procedure in preparing and conducting the Assembly. However, the Supervisory Committee did not influence the substance of the deliberations and took no part in developing recommendations.

The Supervisory Committee included:

- **Maryna Pavliuchenko**, Chair of the All-Ukrainian Association of Internally Displaced Persons, a member of the Co-ordinating Council on IDP Issues at the Executive Committee of the Rivne City Council, and a member of the Expert Board at the Representative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights in the Rivne Region;
- **Anna Khlistunova**, Director of the Rivne City Council's Specialised Children's and Youth Sports School of the Olympic Reserve No. 2, Member of the Rivne City Council;
- **Viktor Moshynskyi**, Rector of the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering;
- **Ivanna Odeichuk**, Chair of the Youth Council at Rivne City Council;
- **Kateryna Marchuk**, Director of the Rivnenska Oselia Real Estate Agency, volunteer and member of the Rivne City Council;
- **Olena Petryk**, Director of the Department of Social and Veterans' Policy at Rivne City Council;
- **Andrii Perets**, member of the Kvasyliv Sports Club.

Throughout the entire Assembly process, from the preparatory stage to the conclusion of the sessions, the Supervisory Committee found no issues regarding compliance with procedures or any breaches during the conduct of the Citizens' Assembly.



2.6. Recruitment of the assembly members

Prior to the sortition using **Panelot**, an open-source software designed for the random and representative selection of participants for citizens' assemblies, citizens' juries, and other deliberative processes, the criteria for the community's demographic profile were determined, and quotas were calculated to establish the minimum and maximum number of residents in each subgroup. The quotas were set in proportion to the demographic structure of the Rivne community.

A total of **772 registrations** were received from those wishing to take part in the citizens' assembly of the Rivne municipality, of which **448** were received in response to invitation letters. The response rate to the invitations was **8.96%**, a figure several times higher than the European average, which is usually 2–3%.

Following verification and filtering of the database of registered participants, the number of registrations was reduced to **738**. Specifically, applications from residents of other communities and regions were excluded, as were those from people who work or study in Rivne but do not actually live in the community.

On 9 March 2026, a sortition was held using Panelot, conducted by a Council of Europe project consultant in the presence of project representatives and members of Rivne City Council. The selection criteria were designed to ensure that the composition of the Assembly reflected the community's demographic profile in terms of gender, age, area of residence (neighbourhoods of Rivne and Kvasyliv), level of education and IDP status.

Before the sortition process began, all personal data was anonymised. The software generated 862 possible compositions of the Assembly that met the established criteria for representativeness. One of these, comprising 45 participants, was randomly selected using the *random.org* service. The selected individuals were then invited to take part in the Assembly.

Ultimate outcome

Overall, it was possible to ensure compliance with most of the defined criteria: proportions were maintained in terms of gender, registration channels, IDP status and three out of four geographical areas of the city of Rivne. However, this experience has shown that future citizens' assemblies would benefit from compiling a larger reserve list, particularly for categories where lower levels of interest in participation are anticipated.

The tables below show the planned quotas (minimum and maximum) and the actual composition of the 45 selected participants. Some deviations are due to a number of selected residents declining to participate and being replaced by candidates from the reserve list.

✓ Within the quota	↑ Above the maximum	↓ Below the minimum

1. Gender and age

Category	Min	Max	Selected	Status
Men				
Male, 18 to 24 y.o.	4	4	4	✓
Male, 25 to 34 y.o.	4	4	3	↓
Male, 35 to 44 y.o.	4	5	4	✓
Male, 45 to 54 y.o.	4	4	5	↑
Male, 55 to 64 y.o.	4	4	4	✓



Male, 65 to 74 y.o.	2	4	2	✓
Male, 75+ y.o.	0	0	0	✓
Women				
Female, 18 to 24 y.o.	4	4	5	↑
Female, 25 to 34 y.o.	3	4	7	↑
Female, 35 to 44 y.o.	4	5	5	✓
Female, 45 to 54 y.o.	3	3	0	↓
Female, 55 to 64 y.o.	3	3	3	✓
Female, 65 to 74 y.o.	2	3	2	✓
Female, 75+ y.o.	1	2	1	✓

2. Education

Level of education	Min	Max	Selected	Status
Secondary	12	15	9	↓
Higher (Bachelor's degree/Vocational qualification)	20	20	22	↑
Advanced (Master's degree)	10	13	14	↑

3. Geography (parts of the city)

District	Min	Max	Selected	Status
North	6	7	6	✓
South	7	8	8	✓
East	12	14	9	↓
West	12	16	16	✓
Postcode 33000*	0	5	6	↑

** Participants with the postcode 33000, which is not linked to a specific neighbourhood. This is likely either the general postcode for the city centre, or people provided an incomplete postcode when registering. Panelot has placed them in a separate category to allow for flexibility in the sortition.*

4. City/town

Residence address	Min	Max	Selected	Status
Rivne	42	42	44	↑
Kvasyliv	3	3	1	↓

5. IDP

IDP status	Min	Max	Selected	Status
Not an IDP	43	43	43	✓
IDP	2	2	2	✓



6. Registration channel

Channel	Min	Max	Selected	Status
Letters	30	30	30	✓
Online advertising	15	15	15	✓

Summary

Quotas fulfilled	Deviations from quotas
✓ Gender breakdown: 23 women / 22 men	↓ Female, 25 to 34 y.o. 7 (no more than 4)
✓ North, South, West	↓ Female, 45 to 54 y.o. 0 (at least 3)
✓ IDPs: 2 of 2	↓ East: 9 (at least 12)
✓ Registration channels: 30 / 15	↓ Kvasyliv: 1 (at least 3)
	↓ Secondary: 9 (at least 12)



3. HOLDING THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY IN THE RIVNE MUNICIPALITY

3.1. Methodology and reasoning behind the setting of day-by-day agenda

The agenda for the citizens' assembly was informed by the understanding that youth policy is intersectional and cannot be considered in isolation from issues relating to the economy, education, culture, security and urban development. It was underpinned by pre-formulated hypotheses regarding the factors influencing young people's decisions to remain in their communities, notably the availability of employment and housing, a sense of security, and the transparency of local self-government.

These hypotheses guided the selection of experts and topics for discussion, without offering participants ready-made answers. Whether participants would view youth policy as a distinct area or as an issue permeating various spheres of community life was not predetermined. Each session broadened participants' perspectives by drawing on the experiences of stakeholders from different sectors and experts in the policy area, while also addressing questions that arose throughout the process.

From the organisers' hypotheses to the members' conclusions

The organisers began the first session by proposing seven thematic areas as working hypotheses regarding the factors that might influence young people's decisions to remain in the community:

- economy;
- education;
- socio-political environment and civic engagement;
- youth policy;
- security and the impact of the war;
- generational trends;
- local budget-funded targeted programmes.

Nevertheless, the participants did not limit themselves to discussing the proposed topics, but instead articulated key issues within each area independent of the organisers. These issues proved to be more specific and focused. Consequently, rather than having seven broad thematic units, seven systemic issues were identified, which provided the basis for the Assembly's subsequent deliberations. This is a key feature of the citizens' assembly methodology: the organisers set the framework for discussion, but the content and priorities are shaped by the assembly members themselves.

3.2. The roles of experts, facilitators and stakeholders

The Council of Europe project engaged facilitators to support the Assembly's work, all of whom had previously been trained by international experts from FIDE. The training covered



moderation and dialogue techniques and methods of organising group work, including those reflecting the specific nature of a tool such as the citizens' assembly. The lead facilitator of the citizens' assembly, **Oleksandr Solontai**, coordinated the efforts of seven independent facilitators, who worked at separate working groups comprising 6–8 assembly members. The facilitators —**Tetiana Semiletko, Olha Hvozdik, Bohdana Beschastna, Viktoriia Kostiuk, Svitlana Tarasova, Iryna Shelep and Mariana Kuzemska-Danyliuk** — ensured the smooth running of the group work throughout the six days of the assembly. They aided participants in structuring the deliberations, created the conditions for equal participation, facilitated the identification of common ground, and supported the groups in drafting recommendations and preparing them for the final vote. In doing so, the facilitators adhered to the principle of neutrality: they did not express their own opinions on the content of the discussions or influence the decisions of the participants.

Visual facilitation techniques were also used during the citizens' assembly in Rivne. On the first day of the second session, **students from the Martynenko Children's Art School in Rivne** joined the process, creating a series of sketches that creatively captured the atmosphere of the assembly, the course of the deliberations, and interactions among its members.



3.3. From introduction to the topic to developing solutions: the three sessions of the assembly

The citizens' assembly was structured around a gradual transition from exploring the topic to jointly developing recommendations. Over the course of three two-day sessions, 29 speakers contributed to the assembly's deliberations, sharing their knowledge, experience and practical insights through expert presentations, "speed dialogues" and a panel discussion. The members of the citizens' assembly progressed through all stages of the deliberative process: Introduction to deliberation and joint development of principles for discussion; Exploration of the topic and its key issues; Analysis of the causes of existing challenges; Identification of priority ideas; Development and discussion of recommendations; Refinement of recommendations based on discussion and feedback; Final voting on the recommendations. This approach enabled members to move from individual perspectives to jointly formulated, balanced and well-founded recommendations.

Session	Agenda and invited participants	Outcome of the session
Session 1 28–29 March	**Expert speakers:** • **Demian Petryk**, Youth Platform NGO, presented demographic trends in Ukraine and an analysis of youth policy in the Rivne community; • **Oleksandr Hrebeniuk**, Head of the Department for Youth and Sport, delivered an overview of youth policy in the Rivne community. **Panel discussion: "Rivne: Stay or Leave?" Features:** • **Nataliia Chyhyr**, Deputy Head of the Department for Youth and Sport at the Rivne Regional State Administration • **Olha Kret**, PhD in Poli-Sci, researcher, youth worker, Rivne State University • **Anastasiia Babenko**, former director of the NOTA Youth Centre, youth worker • **Ivanna Odeichuk**, Chair of the Youth Council at Rivne City Council **Speed-dialogue sessions with seven sectoral experts, who shared insights and perspectives on various areas of youth work:** • **Nataliia Hlazkova**, Director of the Department of Economic Development at Rivne City Council (topic: Economy) • **Myroslava Zhovtan**, Director of the Centre for Professional Development of Teaching Staff (topic: Education) • **Mykhailo Shelep**, political scientist and consultant on local democracy (topic: Socio-Political Environment and Engagement) • **Lesia Holoiad**, youth policy expert, member of the National Council on Youth Affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (topic: Youth Policy) • **Iryna Mataieva**, Director of the Municipal Guard Department of the Rivne City Council (topic: Security and the Impact of the War) • **Olha Chepel**, youth worker, facilitator, coach, mentor (topic: Generational Features) • **Bohdan Koliada**, Secretary of the Berdychiv City Council (topic: Local Budget-Funded Targeted Programmes)	**Joint map of issues and challenges** Participants identified the community's key issues and analysed the factors contributing to the outflow of young people. A list of information requests was also drawn up, laying the groundwork for the preparation of the agenda for the next session.
Session 2 4–5 April	**Expert speaker:** • **Zakharii Tkachuk**, Executive Director of Youth Platform: answers to participants' questions following Session 1 **Speed-dialogue sessions with seven experts on the experiences of other communities and organisations:** • **Nadiia Kovalchuk**, First Deputy Rector of the Lutsk National Technical University (topic: University as a Hub for Community Engagement of Young People) • **Oksana Kyrychuk**, Regional Coordinator of the EGAP Programme in the Volyn Oblast (topic: Digitalisation of the City and User-Friendly Interfaces for Modern Youth Life) • **Ivanna Antoniuk**, Operations Manager of the Algorithm of Action platform (topic: Modern Hubs: Spaces That Attract Young People)	**Prioritisation of 30 objectives (voting with stickers). Development of preliminary recommendations in seven working groups.** This enabled participants to gauge each other's views and continue working on the recommendations, moving from objectives to the drafting of recommendations. A request from participants for a dialogue with representatives of the city council was recorded.



	• **Solomiia Buteiko**, Chair of the Harmyder Creative Association (topic: How Cultural Actors Build an Attractive Environment for Young People) • **Anna Chuba**, social entrepreneurship expert (Impact Business Hub) (topic: Entrepreneurship Programmes and Business Incubators for Young People) • **Yevheniia Honcharova**, SpivDiia Career Programme Manager (topic: Career Guidance as a Means of Building Sustainable Employment for Young People) • **Veronika Mishchuk**, Director of the Volyn Youth Centre (topic: The Role of Youth Spaces in Supporting Young People in the Community)	
Session 3 25–26 April	**Speed-dialogue sessions with seven local self-government officials and sectoral experts to assess the feasibility of the recommendations and jointly refine them for policymaking and implementation across different sectors.** • **Lidiia Voitiuk**, Chief Specialist at the Culture and Tourism Office • **Oksana Popadynets**, Head of the Business Development Office at the Department of Economic Development • **Yevheniia Kursyk**, Director of the Department of Digital Transformation and Administrative Services • **Andrii Shevchuk**, Head of the Master Plan and Urban Development Division at the Office of Urban Planning and Architecture • **Olena Petryk**, Director of the Department of Social and Veterans' Policy at Rivne City Council • **Pavlo Shevchuk**, Director of the Partnership Development Centre at the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering • **Svitlana Yatsiuk**, Head of the Recruitment Department at the Rivne branch of the Regional Employment Centre	**27 recommendations** were drawn up by 7 working groups. **The participants consolidated related recommendations themselves: 27 → 20.** A final vote was held using a single ballot paper (on a scale of 1–5, where 5 represents the highest level of support). All 20 recommendations were adopted with support ranging from 63% to 94%.

Over the course of the three weekends, members of the Assembly rotated between working groups approximately eight times. This was a deliberate methodological choice aimed at encouraging participants to get to know one another, exchange diverse perspectives, and contribute collectively to the development of recommendations.

3.4. Member feedback and adjustments to the session agenda

After each weekend, members of the assembly provided feedback using the Stop/Continue/Start format. This tool was used both to evaluate the process and to adapt the agenda for subsequent sessions in line with the members' needs.

After the first weekend, the most common request was for greater specificity: fewer general discussions and a stronger focus on practical outcomes. Participants suggested involving targeted experts, defining the next steps more clearly, and moving from discussing problems to formulating solutions. In response, the agenda for the second session focused on practical case studies implemented in other communities.

Following the second weekend, members gave a positive assessment of the productivity and spirit of cooperation, whilst also requesting a more stable format: fewer rotations between working groups, more time to work in fixed groups, the consolidation of related ideas, and a focus on developing concrete solutions. This feedback informed the third session, which featured



more stable group compositions, a structured dialogue with local government officials, and the finalisation of the recommendations.



3.5. The assembly's findings: problems, causes and a vision for change

The first session involved participants reaching a shared understanding of the situation by identifying systemic problems and their root causes. At the start of the session, they were presented with seven thematic areas for discussion as a starting point for their deliberations. However, during the deliberations, the participants independently narrowed down, reformulated or re-examined these areas, transforming them into more specific systemic challenges. In a number of cases, they moved away from the proposed topics and identified their own issues, which they considered important.

This was one of the key outcomes of the first session, which demonstrated how participants perceive the main challenges relating to young people's lives in the community.

Issues identified by participants

#	Issues
1	Insufficient economic activity among young people in the Rivne community
2	Lack of a support system for young people in the business sector
3	Information gap in access to opportunities in the context of digitalisation
4	An information vacuum in youth policy and unequal opportunities for self-fulfilment
5	Young people do not perceive Rivne as a city offering great opportunities and a comfortable life
6	Youth education: insurmountable challenges
7	The need for retraining and raising awareness among youth workers

The seven issues identified by the participants cover a range of areas, from the economy to the urban environment. To facilitate analysis and further work on the recommendations, the organisers have grouped them according to their subject matter. That said, the issue of public outreach was raised as a challenge at every table, regardless of the main topic of discussion, which confirms its cross-cutting nature.

Issues grouped by theme

Thematic unit	Key manifestations
Public outreach and access to opportunities *Young people lack access to up-to-date information about opportunities in the community — regardless of the topic under discussion, this issue was raised at every table*	• Lack of a centralised source of information on opportunities, events and programmes • Low awareness among young people of grants, support programmes and resources • Poor communication between the city, young people and civil society organisations • Lack of user-friendly digital tools (a single platform, interactive map, app) • Unequal access to information for different groups of young people and residents of Kvasyliv
Entrepreneurship and economic activity *Young people have limited opportunities for business activities and gaining their first work experience*	• A lack of knowledge about entrepreneurship and financial literacy • A lack of a support system for youth-led businesses: co-working spaces, mentoring, programmes • Few jobs offering a decent wage and opportunities for growth • A heavy tax burden and a lack of affordable commercial premises • A lack of guidance for first-time job seekers and support for veterans looking to set up their own businesses
Education and self-fulfilment *The education system does not prepare young people for the real job market, and opportunities for development outside educational institutions are limited*	• Outdated teaching methods; a disconnect between education and the real needs of the job market • A lack of accessible non-formal education and modern hubs for development • A lack of mentoring and mechanisms to expose young people to best practices • Youth initiatives remain local and do not extend to the city-wide level • Lack of a support system for youth self-governance and scaling up initiatives
Urban environment and identity *Rivne is not perceived by young people as a city of opportunities; there is a lack of spaces, cultural events and a sense of belonging*	• Underdeveloped urban infrastructure and neglected recreational areas • A lack of modern public spaces for leisure and socialising • A lack of international-level cultural events and "magnets" for young people • The stereotype that "Rivne is a big village", and the lack of a city brand aimed at young people • Limited youth participation in decision-making processes and an insufficient sense of support from the authorities

The reasons listed below are a summary by the report's authors based on the participants' discussions. While not an exhaustive list, they reflect the most frequently recurring themes that emerged across all seven round-table discussions.



Reasons for the youth outflow



Prioritising objectives and the public outreach paradox

During the second session, participants voted on **30 objectives that had been put forward**. Each participant had **5 votes (stickers)**.

The goals that received the most support:

- Hosting events that bring together the city, business and young people;
- Creating a network of youth spaces focused on technology, defence and creativity in schools, universities and informal education centres;
- Promoting the Rivne community through culture and sports.

A curious contradiction was observed here, one which the participants themselves noticed: regardless of the topic, the idea that there was a lack of communication on the part of the authorities persisted in the discussions at every table. Yet when it came to voting, all items relating to public outreach and digitalisation received the fewest votes. The participants intuitively sensed that outreach is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Voting for "better communication" would have meant voting for a means, rather than an outcome. This may suggest that at this stage, digitalisation gained the standing of a cross-cutting priority rather than a separate one; this was later confirmed by the highest rating in the final vote for the recommendation concerning the creation of a single web resource with a mobile app (94.4%).

Participants had varying levels of awareness regarding a significant proportion of the initiatives already in place within the community. Some of the recommendations, which were perceived as "new ideas" are in fact already being implemented in one form or another. This does not diminish their value, but rather confirms the relevance of the issues raised. **At the same time, this has once again highlighted that the problem of the information vacuum is systemic in nature and cannot be reduced to a single technical solution.**




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4. OUTCOMES OF THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY IN THE RIVNE MUNICIPALITY

4.1. From 27 to 20 recommendations: how participants drew up the final list

At the second session, each of the seven working groups drew up its own recommendations, 27 in total. Each of them was developed according to a single framework, which involved defining the title, the necessary measures, the responsible parties, the target audience, the implementation mechanism and the expected outcomes of implementation.

This was followed by an initial (preliminary) vote using stickers: each participant could support ("🟢"), remain neutral ("🟡") or oppose ("🔴") each recommendation.

At the third session, following a dialogue with representatives of the city council, the participants independently reviewed the entire list and decided to consolidate related recommendations. As a result, the 27 items were reduced to 20. This list was then put to a final vote.

First round of votes (27 recommendations)

The first round of voting revealed several important patterns. The level of support for individual recommendations during the first (indicative) round of voting varied. Some recommendations received the support of the majority of members, whilst others received significantly fewer votes. This in itself was an important signal: recommendations with lower levels of support were either not clear enough, or were perceived as too narrow in scope or less relevant to the wider community.

How to read the table

All percentages are calculated based on the total number of participants (= 100%).

"Participation" refers to the share of participants who placed at least one sticker next to a recommendation.

"In Favour"/"Neutral"/"Against" refers to the share of participants who placed the corresponding sticker.

Voting format

Each participant had 10 stickers of each colour: green (in favour), yellow (neutral), red (against).

Participants could vote on any number of recommendations and were under no obligation to rate them all.

#	Recommendation	Participation, % of the total number of Assembly members	In Favour	Neutral	Against
1	To introduce the My Start-up school entrepreneurship course	69%	66%	3%	0%
2	To set up a business incubator for budding entrepreneurs	39%	27%	9%	3%
3	To establish the TechnoRivne Centre for Defence and Civilian Technology	**12%**	9%	3%	0%
4	To set up a community café at the Youth Centre	39%	36%	3%	0%



#	Recommendation	Participation, % of the total number of Assembly members	In Favour	Neutral	Against
5	To set up advice desks run by the Department of Economics at the Centre for Administrative Services (to provide advice and support for youth-led businesses)	42%	27%	6%	9%
6	To supplement the existing youth policy programme with existing measures to provide financial support for start-ups	**12%**	6%	3%	3%
7	To create a city-wide platform listing municipal premises available for youth-run businesses	27%	24%	3%	0%
8	To create a single, functional app called Rivne In Your Smartphone with a chatbot on social media for young people	76%	73%	3%	0%
9	To design an interactive map of the community	42%	12%	30%	0%
10	To host interactive street festivals: The City at Your Fingertips	18%	6%	12%	0%
11	Rivne Promotion through Emotion: to set up urban spaces for outdoor activities	21%	15%	3%	3%
12	To develop an application, Culture and Sport in Rivne on Your Smartphone	33%	6%	27%	0%
13	To create multi-purpose open-air sports facilities	64%	55%	9%	0%
14	To establish multifunctional arts venues	67%	58%	9%	0%
15	Creative Youth Cultural and Sports Fair	**12%**	3%	9%	0%
16	Sports weekends for the entire family	27%	12%	15%	0%
17	To revive the Drevlianski Dzherela Folk Festival	33%	24%	0%	9%
18	To undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of young people in the Rivne community	52%	33%	18%	0%
19	To establish a multifunctional youth centre offering services covering career guidance, career counselling, mentoring and internships	58%	52%	3%	3%
20	To establish an expert board on the implementation of the recommendations of the citizens' assembly	27%	18%	3%	6%
21	Child- and youth-friendly universities	**12%**	0%	0%	12%
22	Mentoring School for students of higher education institutions in Rivne	30%	21%	6%	3%
23	To launch the Start-up Space	30%	6%	21%	3%
24	To upgrade the cultural environment for young people (beautification of the Shevchenko Park)	52%	48%	3%	0%



#	Recommendation	Participation, % of the total number of Assembly members	In Favour	Neutral	Against
25	To establish a youth centre as a municipal institution of the Rivne community	45%	36%	6%	3%
26	To establish a centre for researching the needs of the Rivne community	52%	39%	12%	0%
27	To build a network of youth hubs	48%	33%	12%	3%

Note: *Recommendations 3, 6, 15 and 21 received feedback from 12% of participants or fewer (highlighted in orange in the Participation column). Recommendation 21 (Youth-friendly universities) is the only one where everyone who voted was against it. Rather than signalling a rejection of the idea, this prompted its reworking.*

Takeaways of the first vote

The recommendations relating to physical spaces and digital tools received the highest level of support: the Rivne in Your Smartphone app (73% 'in favour'), the My Start-up school course (67%), the beautification of the Shevchenko Park (48%), arts spaces (58%) and open-air sports grounds (55%). These recommendations also attracted the largest number of voters, indicating widespread public interest in them.

The recommendations with the lowest support were those with low voter turnout: Recommendation 21, Youth-friendly universities, received 100% of votes against amongst those who voted, signalling that it needed to be revised. Recommendations 6, 9, 10, 12 and 23 received predominantly neutral ratings, with participants neither rejecting the ideas nor actively supporting them, indicating a need for further refinement.

Overall, the first vote provided a clear understanding of which recommendations enjoyed broad support and could be implemented as they stood, and which required consolidation, reworking or more detailed consideration — as indeed they underwent during the third session.



Final vote

Following the first preliminary vote, the participants analysed the results, discussed the recommendations across the working groups and consolidated overlapping or complementary proposals. As a result, the 27 initial recommendations were narrowed down to 20 agreed recommendations, which were put to a final vote.

The final vote involved participants filling in individual ballot papers, on which they rated each recommendation separately on a five-point scale (from 1 to 5). For a recommendation to be considered approved by the citizens' assembly, it had to receive at least **60% support** (equivalent to an average score of 3.0 or higher). All 20 recommendations met the set threshold and were included in the final set of recommendations.

#	Recommendation	Average Score	Support rate
1	To introduce the My Start-up school entrepreneurship course	4.41	88.13%
2	To set up a business incubator for budding entrepreneurs	3.88	77.50%
3	To establish the TechnoRivne Centre for Defence and Civilian Technology	3.66	73.13%
4	To develop a dedicated multi-level awareness campaign, City for Young People, on youth support programmes	3.47	69.38%
5	A city-wide digital platform listing affordable premises for young people to set up a business and put their ideas into practice	3.50	70.00%
6	To establish a youth entrepreneurship support advice desk at the Administrative Services Centre	3.66	73.13%
7	To set up a community café at the Youth Centre	4.16	83.13%
8	To create a single online resource featuring the Rivne in Your Smartphone mobile application, with a chatbot on social media and an interactive map integrated into the resource	4.72	94.38%
9	Rivne Promotion through Emotion: to create open spaces for young people to enjoy outdoor activities	3.91	78.13%
10	To create multi-purpose open-air sports facilities	4.25	85.00%
11	Creating spaces for young artists	3.72	74.38%
12	Creative Youth Cultural and Sports Fair	3.53	70.63%
13	To revive the international Drevlianski Dzherela Folk Festival	3.75	75.00%
14	To undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of young people in the Rivne community	3.53	70.63%
15	To establish an expert board to support the implementation of youth policy	3.19	63.75%
16	A mentoring scheme to support students' integration into community life in Rivne	3.47	69.38%
17	To upgrade the cultural environment for young people (beautification of the Shevchenko Park)	4.16	83.13%
18	To establish a youth centre as a municipal institution of the Rivne community	3.84	76.88%
19	To establish a centre for researching the needs of the Rivne community	3.31	66.25%
20	To build a network of youth hubs where young people can discover themselves and gain practical skills by addressing the real needs of the community	3.78	75.63%



85% and above: highest level of support | **75–84%:** high level of support | **60–74%:** sufficient support (above the threshold)

Unlike the first, preliminary vote, which was used to refine the recommendations, the results of the final vote determined the citizens' assembly's final set of recommendations.



About the process

Firstly, members of the assembly identified overlaps between the tables: different people, working on different issues, reached the very same conclusions. This reinforces the relevance of these recommendations, regardless of the specific issue for which they were formulated.

Secondly, the consolidation was not done mechanically, but was driven by substantive considerations. During the final refinement stage, participants communicated independently across the working groups and agreed to consolidate similar recommendations. They distinguished between tools (such as apps or platforms) and the substance of the solutions (a youth centre, business support). For example, three separate digital recommendations were merged into a single comprehensive one, as participants concluded that the community needed a unified ecosystem rather than several parallel solutions.

This also affirmed the importance of collaborative work on the content, rather than the promotion or "appropriation" of individual ideas. Furthermore, participants who initially had differing views on the issues facing young people were able to develop coordinated joint recommendations.

Thirdly, the results of the first vote served as a tool for refining the recommendations, rather than for their automatic selection or rejection. Having assessed the level of support for each proposal, the participants returned to their group work, reviewed their recommendations, refined their content and combined similar ideas. As a result, the 27 initial recommendations were consolidated into 20 more comprehensive and coherent recommendations.

These 20 recommendations were put to the final vote. Participants rated each recommendation individually on a scale of 1 to 5. To be included in the final set of recommendations, a recommendation had to receive the support of at least 60% of the participants. All 20 recommendations successfully met this threshold.

Thus, the reduction from 27 to 20 recommendations was achieved through substantive refinement and the consolidation of similar proposals following the first indicative vote. Following this, all 20 recommendations were put to a final vote, and each received the support



of over 60 per cent of the Assembly's participants. This evidenced that the final package of recommendations reflected the participants' joint position, formed as a result of discussions, consensus-building and collective decision-making.



4.2. Recommendations of the citizens' assembly

Over the course of three sessions, participants drafted, refined and voted on 20 recommendations for the Rivne City Council. The final vote was conducted using a single ballot paper, whereby each participant rated each recommendation on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest level of support). This approach allowed for an independent assessment of each recommendation and determined the actual level of support for each initiative. All 20 recommendations received over 63% support, with the majority receiving over 70%.

In the list below, the recommendations are organised into four thematic sections. The area of digitalisation and public outreach stands out as a distinct focus; it is presented not as a separate section but as a cross-cutting tool that reinforces each of the four main areas.

Entrepreneurship and economy Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 6	• **Rec. 1.** To introduce the My Start-up school entrepreneurship course: 88.1% • **Rec. 2.** To set up a business incubator for budding entrepreneurs: 77.5% • **Rec. 3.** To establish the TechnoRivne Centre for Defence and Civilian Technology: 73.1% • **Rec. 6.** To establish a youth entrepreneurship support advice desk at the Administrative Services Centre: 73.1%
Spaces and environment Recommendations 7, 9, 10, 11, 17	• **Rec. 7.** To create a social café at the Youth Centre: 83.1% • **Rec. 9.** Rivne Promotion through Emotion: to create open spaces for young people to enjoy outdoor activities: 78.1% • **Rec. 10.** To create multi-purpose open-air sports facilities: 85.0% • **Rec. 11.** To create spaces for young artists: 74.4% • **Rec. 17.** To upgrade the cultural environment for young people (beautification of the Shevchenko Park): 83.1%



Cultural events and identity Recommendations 12, 13	• **Rec. 12.** Creative Youth Cultural and Sports Fair: 70.6% • **Rec. 13.** To revive the international Drevlianski Dzherela Folk Festival: 75.0%
Youth institutional infrastructure Recommendations 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20	• **Rec. 14.** To undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of young people in the Rivne community: 70.6% • **Rec. 15.** To establish an expert board to support the implementation of youth policy: 63.8% • **Rec. 16.** A mentoring scheme to support students' integration into community life in Rivne: 69.4% • **Rec. 18.** To establish a youth centre as a municipal institution of the Rivne community: 76.9% • **Rec. 19.** To establish a centre for researching the needs of the Rivne community: 66.3% • **Rec. 20.** To build a network of youth hubs where young people can discover themselves and gain practical skills by addressing the real needs of the community: 75.6%
Digitalisation and public outreach (cross-cutting) Recommendations 4, 5, 8	• **Rec. 4.** To develop a dedicated multi-level awareness campaign, City for Young People, on youth support programmes: 69.4% • **Rec. 5.** A city-wide digital platform listing affordable premises for young people to set up a business and put their ideas into practice: 70.0% • **Rec. 8.** To create a single online resource featuring the Rivne in Your Smartphone mobile application, with a chatbot on social media and an interactive map integrated into the resource: 94.4%

** Digitalisation and public outreach are cross-cutting instrumental priorities that reinforce all four areas. For further details, see Section 4.4.*



Results of the final vote

#	Recommendation	Score	Support	Section
8	To create a single online resource featuring the Rivne in Your Smartphone mobile application, with a chatbot on social media and an interactive map	4.72	94.4%	Digitalisation (cross-cutting)
1	To introduce the My Start-up school entrepreneurship course	4.41	88.1%	Entrepreneurship and economy
10	To create multi-purpose open-air sports facilities	4.25	85.0%	Spaces and Environment
7	To set up a community café at the Youth Centre	4.16	83.1%	Spaces and Environment
17	To upgrade the cultural environment for young people (beautification of the Shevchenko Park)	4.16	83.1%	Spaces and Environment
9	Rivne Promotion through Emotion: to create open spaces for young people to enjoy outdoor activities	3.91	78.1%	Spaces and Environment
2	To set up a business incubator for budding entrepreneurs	3.88	77.5%	Entrepreneurship and economy
18	To establish a youth centre as a municipal institution of the Rivne community	3.84	76.9%	Youth institutional infrastructure
20	To build a network of youth hubs where young people can discover themselves and gain practical skills by addressing the real needs of the community	3.78	75.6%	Youth institutional infrastructure
13	To revive the international Drevlianski Dzherela Folk Festival	3.75	75.0%	Cultural events and identity
11	Creating spaces for young artists	3.72	74.4%	Spaces and Environment
3	To establish the TechnoRivne Centre for Defence and Civilian Technology	3.66	73.1%	Entrepreneurship and economy
6	To establish a youth entrepreneurship support advice desk at the Administrative Services Centre	3.66	73.1%	Entrepreneurship and economy
12	Creative Youth Cultural and Sports Fair	3.53	70.6%	Cultural events and identity
14	To undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of young people in the Rivne community	3.53	70.6%	Youth institutional infrastructure
5	A city-wide digital platform listing affordable premises for young people to set up a business and put their ideas into practice	3.50	70.0%	Digitalisation (cross-cutting)
4	To develop a dedicated multi-level awareness campaign, City for Young People, on youth support programmes	3.47	69.4%	Digitalisation (cross-cutting)
16	A mentoring scheme to support students' integration into community life in Rivne	3.47	69.4%	Youth institutional infrastructure
19	To establish a centre for researching the needs of the Rivne community	3.31	66.3%	Youth institutional infrastructure
15	To establish an expert board to support the implementation of youth policy	3.19	63.8%	Youth institutional infrastructure



4.3. Review of the recommendations: key areas and anticipated impact

Each of the twenty recommendations from the citizens' assembly follows a clear line of reasoning: what exactly needs to be done, who is responsible, who the target audience is, and how it will work. Each recommendation is also accompanied by a description of the expected outcome, put together by the Assembly participants themselves, as they are the ones whose vision best captures its content and purpose.

The recommendations are grouped into four thematic sections. Each covers a separate area of change, whilst all sections are interlinked: changes in one area pave the way for positive changes in others and reinforce their impact.

SECTION	**Entrepreneurship and economy** From fostering an entrepreneurial mindset at school to establishing an effective business support system and accessible pathways into entrepreneurship through advisory support.

The four recommendations in this section form a coherent ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship — from school education (Rec. 1) to practical business support (Rec. 2 and Rec. 3) and a smooth entry point via a system of advisory services (Rec. 6). Participants emphasised that what is lacking is not only funding, but also a culture of entrepreneurship, visible infrastructure and clear first steps.

1. To introduce the My Start-up school entrepreneurship course: 4.41/5 (88.1%)

Action plan	• To include financial and environmental literacy, leadership and the basics of entrepreneurship in the syllabus. • To consult with colleagues from Lviv regarding the content and implementation. • To develop a draft course and present it at a City Council meeting. • To test the course in one pilot specialised (business) secondary school. • To gather feedback from students and supervisors to improve the course.
Responsible parties	• Education Department. • Department for Youth and Sport. • Department of Economic Development. • Department of Social and Veterans' Policy of Rivne City Council. • Department of Digital Transformation and Administrative Services of the Rivne City Council.
Target audience	Schoolchildren starting from Year 5.
How it will work	Schoolchildren will attend regular optional entrepreneurship classes at the pilot school in collaboration with local universities (e.g. the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering). Once the course has been refined, it will be rolled out to other educational institutions in the community.
Expected outcome	Improving schoolchildren's financial literacy, producing graduates with practical entrepreneurial skills, and increasing the number of young entrepreneurs and fresh creative ideas.



2. To set up a business incubator for budding entrepreneurs: 3.88/5 (77.5%)

Action plan	• To lease premises for a period of three years at a symbolic cost (subject to a competitive selection process). • To provide the necessary facilities and equipment: computers, free internet access, etc. • To organise systematic support for entrepreneurs, including regular training sessions, one-on-one support, legal and tax advice, grant funding on a competitive basis, and meetings with investors. • To publicise information about the business incubator, including via the Rivne in Your Smartphone app.
Responsible parties	• Rivne City Employment Centre (Recruitment Department). • Department of Economic Development. • Partnership Development Centre at the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering. • Department of Digital Transformation and Administrative Services of the Rivne City Council.
Target audience	First-time entrepreneurs aged 35 and under, including veterans.
How it will work	Young people starting a business will receive comprehensive support: one-on-one consultations, guidance and mentoring from experienced entrepreneurs; access to a fully equipped workspace for three years; and assistance in preparing to attract investment and establishing contacts with potential investors for pitch sessions.
Expected outcome	Economic activity among young people will increase, as will the number of start-ups — including innovative ones — and businesses from Rivne that will become well-known throughout Ukraine.

3. To establish the TechnoRivne Centre for Defence and Civilian Technology: 3.66/5 (73.1%)

Action plan	• Concept for a research and engineering hub. • To allocate premises for the centre (convert a youth club, a university facility or an existing rehabilitation centre). • To recruit staff (teachers, craftspeople). • To establish the necessary infrastructure. • To organise certified training, research, development and testing of prototypes. • To include promotion of the space in the technical specifications for the Rivne in Your Smartphone app, and promote it in schools.
Responsible parties	• Education Department. • Department for Youth and Sport. • Department of Social and Veterans' Policy of Rivne City Council. • Department of Digital Transformation and Administrative Services of the Rivne City Council.
Target audience	Young people aged 12 to 25 (including veterans).
How it will work	Students will study modern technological solutions, the fundamentals of engineering and design, and specialised software, particularly for the defence industry. They will refine existing civilian solutions (in areas such as healthcare and agriculture) and develop new technological products. Developments will be tailored to the needs of the community and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. IT specialists, military personnel and veterans will be engaged



	as mentors and supervisors. Upon successful completion of the courses, students will be awarded a certificate.
Expected outcome	Development of technological skills among young people (aged 12 to 25) by involving them in community-oriented activities and work on real-world projects, where participants will be able to test their developments. Professional reintegration of veterans. A catalyst for cost-effective, innovative solutions to meet the community's needs in areas such as the environment, defence and agricultural production.

6. To establish a youth entrepreneurship support advice desk at the Administrative Services Centre: 3.66/5 (73.1%)

Action plan	To set up an advisory desk at the Administrative Services Centre, in collaboration with the Department of Economy, to provide young people with information and support on starting their own business, participating in municipal support programmes, grant opportunities, access to municipal premises, writing applications and developing their own ventures.
Responsible parties	• Department of Economic Development. • The Administrative Services Centre in Rivne.
Target audience	Young people who are planning to start their own business, develop a business idea or want to find out about support available from the city.
How it will work	The Administrative Service Centre designates a dedicated workstation or a designated adviser to deliver initial consultations, provide information on available opportunities, help young people navigate support programmes, and refer them to the relevant services or partners. (This is not currently in place and differs from the services provided by the Employment Centre; it focuses on municipal programmes and the support they offer.)
Expected outcome	Young people are provided with a clear and accessible framework for starting their own businesses; the use of municipal support programmes is increasing; and there is a rise in the number of youth business initiatives and in the economic activity of young people within the community.

Changes in the community

- The number of young entrepreneurs and start-ups will grow.
- Young people will know where and how to start their own business, with a clear path from idea to implementation.
- Veterans will have specific tools to help them adapt in their new careers and enter the business world.
- The Rivne community will become a prominent player on Ukraine's entrepreneurial map

SECTION Spaces and Environment

The Rivne community will become a place where young people want to spend their time, with vibrant public spaces designated for sport, leisure, creativity and networking.



The five recommendations in this section are underpinned by a shared vision: Rivne should become a city where young people choose to spend their time. This means vibrant public spaces

for sport (Rec. 10), leisure (Rec. 9) and creativity (Rec. 11), a high-quality cultural environment in the central park (Rec. 17) and a social space for meetups and networking (Rec. 7).

7. To set up a community café at the Youth Centre: 4.16/5 (83.1%)

Action plan	To provide a separate space within the Youth Centre for a social café to operate as an open venue for meetings, socialising, learning and supporting youth initiatives. To introduce a model whereby a portion of the café's revenue is channelled towards the development of the Youth Centre, events, educational activities and support for youth projects.
Responsible parties	• Department for Youth and Sport. • The Youth Centre's management. • The Youth Council. • Partners representing civil society or social enterprises.
Target audience	For young people, local residents, community-based projects, young entrepreneurs, teams and organisations in need of an open space for collaboration and development.
How it will work	A café space will be set up at the Youth Centre to serve as a place for leisure, networking and hosting events. It may be managed through a partnership model with a social enterprise or organisation. A portion of the profits will be channelled towards supporting the Centre's activities and youth initiatives.
Expected outcome	Creating a vibrant and engaging space for young people, building their entrepreneurial capacities, providing new opportunities for socialising and sharing experiences, and offering an additional resource to support youth projects and activities.

9. Rivne Promotion through Emotion: to create open spaces for young people to enjoy outdoor activities: 3.91/5 (78.1%)

Action plan	To create an emotionally engaging, modern and dynamic environment in Rivne (public spaces such as: parks, squares and pocket parks), which encourages physical activity and social interaction amongst young people, fosters a sense of belonging to the city and encourages them to spend time there. Transforming public spaces to include areas for outdoor activities for young people.
Responsible parties	• Department of Culture and Tourism. • Department of Youth and Sport, in collaboration with other departments. • Implementation: departments of local self-government bodies, youth/civil society organisations, businesses and athletes. • To be implemented using budgetary funds, international technical assistance and other grant programmes.
Target audience	For young people of all ages, tourists/visitors to the city and other residents.
How it will work	This should be a network of activity spaces in parks, public gardens and similar venues, offering various types of activities, such as a skate park in one place, a climbing wall in another (Shevchenko Park), a dry fountain, etc. Regular visits to these spaces will encourage young people to socialise, interact and get to know one another. The project should be developed with the involvement of young people, youth opinion leaders and experts, so that these spaces are not only "static" but also "dynamic", with various competitions, dance battles and meetings with opinion leaders taking place.



Expected outcome	- Vibrant and lively public spaces; - Improving young people's fitness; - Strengthening social cohesion; - Fostering an emotional connection with the city; - Greater involvement in community life; - Better public spaces.

10. To create multi-purpose open-air sports facilities: 4.25/5 (85.0%)

Action plan	• To determine the location of sports facilities within the community and agree these with the local authorities. • To bring existing sports facilities up to standard. • To develop new, modern sports facilities. • To attract sponsors, including: grants, businesses, etc. • To launch a public outreach campaign.
Responsible parties	• Department for Youth and Sport. • Department of Culture and Tourism. • Department of Urban Planning and Architecture. • Task force.
Target audience	Residents of the community in Rivne and Kvasyliv. Young people, children, parents, veterans and people with disabilities.
How it will work	• Three outdoor 5-in-1 sports areas will be created. • One option includes basketball, five-a-side football, volleyball, tennis and badminton. Markings in different colours on the playing surface, with the courts designed to be barrier-free. • Free access to practices. • The capacity to host various competitions across different sports.
Expected outcome	Keeping young people engaged. Organising regular competitions in various sports. Promoting the health of young people. Free access to practices.

11. To create spaces for young artists 3.72/5 (74.4%)

Action plan	• To decide on a venue and obtain approval from the authorities. • To bring the venue up to standard. • To secure funding through grants, the business sector, etc. • To launch a public outreach campaign.
Responsible parties	• Department of Culture and Tourism. • Task force.
Target audience	Residents of the community in Rivne and Kvasyliv. Young people, children, parents, veterans and creatives.
How it will work	The first step is creating a space for young creatives: photographers, writers and artists. Activities will include exhibitions, lectures, practical sessions, knowledge-sharing sessions and workshops. Going forward, spaces will be set up to involve creatives from other fields, such as pottery, handmade crafts, etc.
Expected outcome	Children and young people will have free access to the spaces. They will be able to express their creative ideas and talents. Experiences will be shared. Exhibitions and workshops will be held. This will promote the self-fulfilment and creative development of young people.



17. To upgrade the cultural environment for young people (beautification of the Shevchenko Park): 4.16/5 (83.1%)

Action plan	• To engage with local residents on how this should be done (e.g. through public consultations) in order to gauge their views and preferences. • To draw up project design and cost estimate documentation. • To raise funds and seek investment (local investment, grant funding). • To encourage local investors (by promoting information about them; specifying that the project was carried out with the support of specific entrepreneurs). • To select contractors (including by involving local utility companies to collaborate on specific areas and individual zones).
Responsible parties	• Rivne City Council. • Executive Committee. • Department of Culture and Tourism. • Department of Urban Planning and Architecture. • Department for Youth and Sport. • Education Department. • Department of Infrastructure and Urban Improvement.
Target audience	Young people, tourists, families and children.
How it will work	Young people in the community will be able to spend their downtime in spaces designed for this purpose: - zoned areas (lawns, dog-walking areas, barbecue areas), - leisure activities for young people in various fields (singing, art exhibitions, debates, guitar playing), - replacement of amusement rides, children's playgrounds and sports facilities, - upgrading of lighting, - installation of CCTV cameras to ensure safety, - open-air cinema screenings, - group viewings of football matches and sporting events, - discos for people aged 30 and over.
Expected outcome	A comfortable environment will be created for recreation and enjoying leisure, and young people will have spaces where they can relax and unwind.

Changes in the community

- The Rivne community will become a place where young people choose to live, a place where they can spend time, socialise and achieve their potential.
- An emotional bond will be forged between young people and the city through shared spaces and events.
- Young people's participation in physical activities and community life will increase.
- The community will become more attractive to tourists and new residents

SECTION

Cultural events and identity

Forging an emotional bond between young people and the community through shared events and the region's cultural heritage.



The two recommendations in this Section aim to forge an emotional bond between young people and the city through shared events. The Interests Fair (Rec. 12) helps young people find a hobby or sporting activity, whilst the revival of the Drevlianski Dzherela Fest (Rec. 13) serves to strengthen both the region's cultural identity and its tourism potential.

12. Creative Youth Cultural and Sports Fair: 3.53/5 (70.6%)

Action plan	• To conduct an audit of the facilities. • To invite and engage participants. • To launch a public outreach campaign. • To agree on the venues.
Responsible parties	• Department for Youth and Sport. • Department of Culture and Tourism. • Department of Social and Veterans' Policy of Rivne City Council.
Target audience	Residents of the community in Rivne and Kvasyliv. Young people, children, parents.
How it will work	In the summer, various sports, music, singing and other clubs and groups will showcase their activities. At different times of the year, depending on the theme, these open-air fairs will be held at various venues. Participants will be able to find out about any activity, give it a go and choose a hobby or sport for themselves.
Expected outcome	Getting young people involved in the community's cultural life. Self-employment and creative self-fulfilment. Promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. Creative growth.

13. To revive the international Drevlianski Dzherela Folk Festival: 3.75/5 (75.0%)

Action plan	• To invite patrons. • To end the war. • To invite folk ensembles from Ukraine and other countries. • To conduct a publicity campaign. • To draw up a schedule, including dates, venue, resources and budget.
Responsible parties	• Department of Culture and Tourism • Mr V. P. Kovalchuk, Founder and Organiser of the Ethnocultural Centre at the Rivne City Children and Youth Centre
Target audience	Residents of the community in Rivne and Kvasyliv. Young people, children, parents and foreign delegates.
How it will work	Once a year, in the summer, a festival and competition will be held featuring folk groups from around the world. The festival will serve as a platform for promoting Slavic culture. Various competitions, workshops, historical exhibitions and so on.
Expected outcome	Young people will be involved in studying, preserving and promoting authentic folk culture, folklore and customs. The number of visitors to the region will increase. Promotion of the Rivne Polissia region. Attracting large numbers of young people from abroad. Revitalisation of the region's ethnocultural heritage. Engaging young people in community life.



Changes in the community

- Young people will know about and take pride in the cultural heritage of the Rivne Polissia region.
- The region will become known beyond Ukraine's borders through international cultural events.
- Young people will discover their hobbies and find a sense of community through a fair showcasing their interests.
- The city will forge its own cultural identity that attracts rather than repels.

SECTION	Youth institutional infrastructure Structural institutions that provide ongoing support for young people, including a youth centre, hubs, mentoring, research and coordination.

Although the six recommendations in this Section are the most challenging to implement, they are fundamental. The youth centre (Rec. 18) and the network of hubs (Rec. 20) will form a permanent support ecosystem. Research initiatives (Rec. 14, Rec. 19) provide an evidence base for decision-making. The mentoring system (Rec. 16) supports students, whilst the Expert Council (Rec. 15) acts as a mechanism for systemic coordination and accountability.

14. To undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of young people in the Rivne community: 3.53/5 (70.6%)

Action plan	To design and carry out research (surveys, focus groups, interviews) amongst various groups of young people (school and university students, employed young people) regarding their needs, motivations, plans and challenges.
Responsible parties	Local authorities (Department for Youth and Sport), youth centres, CSOs, research teams.
Target audience	Young people aged 14 to 35 in the Rivne community, stakeholders (local authorities, educational institutions, CSOs).
How it will work	This is the first step towards establishing a youth centre, with a view to developing the services that young people in the Rivne community actually need. Data collection via online surveys, face-to-face meetings and in-depth interviews, followed by analysis of the results and a public presentation. Using the findings to inform the planning of policies and programmes for young people.
Expected outcome	The community will have a youth centre that meets the real and current needs of young people. Decisions affecting young people will be informed by real data rather than assumptions. The effectiveness of youth policies and programmes will improve, as will the understanding of the needs of different groups of young people.

15. To establish an expert board to support the implementation of youth policy: 3.19/5 (63.8%)



Action plan	To establish an Expert Board for the implementation of youth policy and the adoption of the recommendations developed, reporting to the Mayor, with the involvement of government officials, participants in the citizens' assembly, young people, educators, the business community and civil society

Responsible parties	• Rivne City Council, Department for Youth and Sport. • Line departments in partnership with civil society organisations, the business sector and the Youth Council.
Target audience	Stakeholders in the process (the authorities, educational institutions, civil society organisations, the business sector), and young people in the community as the ultimate target audience.
How it will work	In accordance with the Regulations on the Expert Council, a pool of experts, motivated young people, businesses, civil society organisations and members of the citizens' assembly (on a voluntary basis) will be selected through a competitive process. The Council will function as an advisory body on a voluntary basis to analyse initiatives, provide expert recommendations and help to attract partners and resources; it will include young people, experts and practitioners; and it will meet regularly without duplicating the functions of the department.
Expected outcome	The quality of youth policy implementation will improve. Decisions will become more informed and inclusive. Cooperation between the authorities, young people and partners will be strengthened. Trust between the authorities and the community will grow. Recommendations will move beyond mere declarations.

16. A mentoring scheme to support students' integration into community life in Rivne: 3.47/5 (69.4%)

Action plan	To introduce a system of student mentoring in higher education institutions as part of the "child- and youth-friendly university" model, which combines open infrastructure, involvement in community life, and support for personal development, job-seeking and finding a place within the community.
Responsible parties	Higher education institutions, the Rivne City Council, the Youth Centre, the Youth Council, and CSOs in partnership with the business sector.
Target audience	University students (notably first-year students), schoolchildren as prospective future students, and young people in the community.
How it will work	Universities will open their premises to young people (to enable them to take part in events and workshops and use co-working spaces) and introduce a mentoring scheme: students will be assigned a mentor and given access to opportunities within the community; they will try their hand at projects, internships and initiatives, gain experience and gradually find their place in the community.
Expected outcome	Students will feel part of the university and the community. Their engagement and activity will increase. The attractiveness of local higher education institutions will rise. An environment will be created that supports personal development, and the outflow of young people will decrease. Young people will find their footing in their chosen profession, build a career or start their own business in Rivne, feel a connection to the city and identify themselves as part of the community.

18. To establish a youth centre as a municipal institution of the Rivne community: 3.84/5 (76.9%)

Action plan	• To adopt a resolution of the Local Council on the establishment of a Youth Centre (the annexes thereto will specify the Centre's permanent staff and its location) and to approve the Articles of Association. • To register a legal entity. • To draw up project design and cost estimate documentation. • To recruit staff and engage volunteers. • To allocate premises. • To undertake renovations. • To secure funding from the local budget and grants.



Responsible parties	• Rivne City Council. • Executive Committee. • Department for Youth and Sport. • Department of Municipal Property Management.
Target audience	Young people, university students and young entrepreneurs.
How it will work	Young people will be aware that there is a single body responsible for youth policy and youth work, which secures grants and highlights opportunities for young people to develop in various fields through: - providing information to young people to encourage their further involvement in community youth initiatives; - engaging school and university students; - involving young people in all community processes; - one-on-one counselling, group courses, meetings with mentors, access to work placements and opportunities, and collaboration with colleges, universities and employers. In a single place, young people will be able to learn about: - courses on career development and job seeking, - starting a business, - career guidance for teenagers (actively involving schoolchildren), - introducing young people to entrepreneurs and businesses, - legal support and advice, - the needs and opportunities of the community's business environment.
Expected outcome	A single, multifunctional centre will be established to implement youth policy within the community, with separate branches based on existing youth clubs (offering various youth policy services), including a dedicated branch focused on providing accessible services tailored to young people's needs: vocational guidance, career counselling, mentoring and internships. Young people will have access to systematic support for their development; levels of employment and self-fulfilment will rise; and the outflow of young people from the community will decrease. Young people will know where to find information about career opportunities, how to write a CV correctly, and how to communicate effectively with employers; this space will be a trusted environment, with entrepreneurs and local businesses engaging with educational institutions and able to recruit the staff they need.

19. To establish a centre for researching the needs of the Rivne community: 3.31/5 (66.3%)

Action plan	To set up a research centre (surveys, focus groups)
Responsible parties	• Department of Economic Development: establishing the Centre; • Higher education institutions (notably sociology programmes): conducting research; • Civil society: helping to secure funding for research; • Businesses: commissioning research to meet their own needs.
Target audience	Departments of the Rivne City Council, youth hubs and businesses.
How it will work	The Centre will regularly monitor developments and receive research requests from youth hubs: - Research will be carried out on a regular and recurring basis; - Research will be commissioned by various departments of the Rivne City Council (education, culture, environment, etc.); - Research may be commissioned by businesses (on a paid basis); - Findings will be factored into various community policies;



	- Research will not be influenced by the political climate; - The Centre has the potential to be self-sustaining; - The Centre will involve young people in internships to help conduct surveys.
Expected outcome	Understanding the needs of community residents and the trajectory of development for the Rivne community

20. To build a network of youth hubs where young people can gain practical skills: 3.78/5 (75.6%)

Action plan	To create spaces for young people's communities where they can redirect their lives by working together to develop a wide range of projects for the city (sporting, rehabilitation, cultural, environmental, technology, etc.)
Responsible parties	The Department for Youth and Sport (coordinator), other departments of the city council (strategic development, education, culture, environment, economy), as well as the Employment Centre, educational institutions, civil society organisations and the business sector.
Target audience	Young people: - high school students; - university students; - university graduates; - young veterans; - parents on parental leave; - young professionals looking to change careers.
How it will work	By integrating young people into the professional environment, they can adapt to the circumstances, retrain, tackle real community issues and receive mentoring support from the community: - A network of hubs will be established; - Hubs will operate in different areas of the community; - Hubs will have different sector-specific focuses (business, environment, culture, etc.); - Young people at the hubs can try their hand at various professions; - Hubs will host events such as careers fairs, workshops, hackathons, etc.; - Within the hubs, teams of young people will work on addressing issues identified by the Centre for Strategic Studies; - The network of hubs will hold an annual festival showcasing its achievements; - Hubs may be established on the basis of existing municipal institutions; - The network may bring together the interests of business, education and career guidance centres.
Expected outcome	Young people will acquire qualifications, find a sense of purpose within the community, gain the support of those around them, and discover a meaning to their lives within the community.

Changes in the community

- Young people will have systematic institutional support: a permanent ecosystem, rather than one-off projects.
- Decisions on youth policy will be informed by evidence and actual needs.
- University students will remain in the community because they feel they belong there.
- The authorities and the community will have a shared mechanism for coordination and accountability.





20 recommendations: the bigger picture

If we consider all four sections as a single whole, we can see a systematic logic that the members developed themselves — without prompting, but through three weekends of collaborative work.

► Spaces over programmes

The recommendations with the highest level of support refer to the physical environment: sports grounds, a park, open spaces, a community café. Participants want more places that will serve as spaces where young people can meet, enjoy their time and feel that the city is there for them, rather than simply around them. The very fact that these recommendations received the most votes speaks to a real need: young people need their own space within the community.

► Entrepreneurship needs a roadmap

Among the recommendations is a clear pathway for young entrepreneurs, from a secondary school curriculum where students can learn about entrepreneurship, to an incubator, a tech hub and advice at the Administrative Services Centre. These recommendations should be viewed not merely as individual proposals, but as an opportunity to build a comprehensive pathway that will help young people understand where to go, who to turn to and who can help them.

► Isolated changes will not address the need for an institutional approach and a systematic framework

Some of the recommendations relate to institutions — youth centres and hubs — and there is also a call for needs assessments and data collection. Rather than viewing this group as separate entities, it is important to see them as the foundation for a systematic approach to (re) launching youth policy within the community. Otherwise, the other recommendations risk being merely piecemeal changes and failing to bring about structural change within the community. Recognising this, the participants included these recommendations in the final list.

► Identity is part of the infrastructure

Some of the recommendations relate to culture and community events. A sense of belonging to the city and the city's positioning through culture are aspects that are also part of life and can be just as important as jobs or housing.



Together, these recommendations describe the Rivne municipality as it could be, a community with an entrepreneurial culture, vibrant spaces, a strong cultural identity and a support system for young people. This vision was developed by the participants of the citizens' assembly to make the community a place where young people want to stay and build their future

4.4. Digitalisation and public outreach as a cross-cutting issue in the recommendations

Three of the 20 recommendations relate to digitalisation and public outreach (R4, R5 and R8). They hold a prominent place among the Assembly's outcomes and deserve special mention.

Why this is a tool rather than a goal in itself

When prioritising goals for the first time, the participants did not identify "public outreach" or "digitalisation" as a separate priority, although these topics regularly came up in the small-group discussions. The participants themselves also pointed this out whilst analysing the results.

There is important reasoning behind this: the community needs not only a digital application or platform, but also high-quality content and the promotion of these tools amongst residents. The problem lies not so much in the absence of a platform as in the lack of opportunities, services and information that should be featured there, as well as in the need to make it truly accessible and user-friendly for different demographic groups.

In fact, this recommendation does not apply solely to young people. It reflects the broader experience of the Assembly's participants in searching for information about community life, using municipal services and obtaining answers to their enquiries.

Recommendation 8 (Rivne in Your Smartphone) received the highest rating of all 20 recommendations, 94.4%. Rather than a contradiction, this is a clarification: participants support digitalisation as a tool that makes all other changes visible and accessible. An app is useful when there is something to show: a business incubator, hubs, a refurbished park, a consultation desk at the Administrative Services Centre (based on other recommendations). Another important point is that it can become a hub where different aspects of city life come together in one place, such as education, culture, entrepreneurship and services. A tool that makes cross-sectoral cooperation visible to every resident.



Cross-cutting recommendations

4. To develop a dedicated multi-level awareness campaign, City for Young People: 3.47/5 (69.4%)

Action plan	To draft a programme of activities that will set out the core objectives of the awareness campaign: who to inform, how to inform them, and through which channels. To provide information on the municipal and national opportunities available to the Rivne community for setting up and supporting businesses.
Responsible parties	• Department for Youth and Sport. • Department of Economic Development. • Rivne City Employment Centre. • Youth Council at the Rivne City Council.
Target audience	Young people who want to start their own business and need support; young people who are considering this but don't know how the city and the state can help.
How it will work	A list of activities will be compiled, including information events; promotion on social media (which young people frequently use); publicity, including outdoor advertising; printed leaflets. The aim of this campaign is to raise awareness of the opportunities available in the city (e.g. start-up grants; grants for generators, etc.; how to apply for them; who is responsible for what; relevant procedures).
Expected outcome	A greater number of young people will be aware of municipal support schemes and government programmes. The number of applications for the start-up grant scheme will increase; the quality of the grant applications submitted will improve.

5. A city-wide digital platform listing affordable premises for young people to set up a business and put their ideas into practice: 3.50/5 (70.0%)

Action plan	To create a modern online resource listing available municipal premises in a user-friendly digital format, rather than PDF lists. The resource should include a directory of premises featuring photographs, geolocation, key details (floor area, condition, intended use, accessibility), current status and clear, step-by-step instructions on how to select a premises and submit an application online. To provide, as a separate measure, a transparent support mechanism for young people wishing to start their own business or launch an initiative in this type of premises through preferential rental terms, "rent for 1 hryvnia", a competitive selection process, starting rates, temporary concessions or special terms for youth-led businesses and social initiatives.
Responsible parties	• Department of Municipal Property Management. • Department for Youth and Sport. • Youth Council at the Rivne City Council.
Target audience	Young people who wish to set up their own business, launch a start-up or implement a social or creative initiative, yet lack accessible premises or sufficient start-up resources. It is also aimed at youth NGOs, initiative groups, self-employed young people, budding entrepreneurs and local teams looking for a space to work, develop services or carry out activities.



How it will work	The city will create an online platform featuring an up-to-date list of available municipal premises. Users can browse the options, learn about the terms and conditions, select a space and submit an application online. Special preferential or competitive terms of access to premises will be provided for young people wishing to start a business or implement initiatives.
Expected outcome	Transparent and convenient access for young people to municipal premises to start their own businesses and implement initiatives; more efficient use of municipal property; development of youth entrepreneurship, new services and community engagement.

8. To create a single online resource featuring the Rivne in Your Smartphone mobile application with an interactive map: 4.72/5 (94.4%)

Action plan	To create a single web resource (portal) featuring an information platform and a mobile app with an integrated map, which brings together various services for young people, including education, culture, sport, employment, leisure, etc.
Responsible parties	• Department of Digital Transformation and Administrative Services of the Rivne City Council. • Implementation: local self-government offices and departments, youth and civil society organisations, and the business sector, working together (the City Council's Economic Department, local IT practitioners, including those among the Assembly's participants). • To be implemented using budgetary funds, international technical assistance and other grant programmes.
Target audience	All residents and visitors to the community, with a focus on young people of all ages.
How it will work	The web resource, complete with a mobile app, will combine the functions of a social media platform, a service and information portal, along with gamification features. It is to be integrated with municipal services, data and departments, and will involve businesses, entrepreneurs, universities, etc. Key functionality: a personal dashboard for young people; an interactive map of opportunities; transport and mobility (online navigation); leisure and culture; activity and participation/volunteering; education and development; a chatbot on social media (quick access); an information centre; sport and employment; feedback. A gamification feature should be included.
Expected outcome	A unified digital ecosystem resource (web platform + mobile app + FIQ, with a chatbot to be added later) will be created, bringing together all opportunities for young people in the community and providing quick and convenient access to them. Young people will be informed about available opportunities (education, work, leisure, participation). Young people's engagement with community life will be increased through various competitions and similar initiatives. Communication between young people and local authorities will be improved through integrated feedback tools.

4.5. From recommendations to implementation: the role of local authorities

All the recommendations developed are submitted to Rivne City Council as contained in this Report. The local authority undertakes to consider the recommendations and provide a public



response regarding their implementation or the justified reasons for not implementing them.

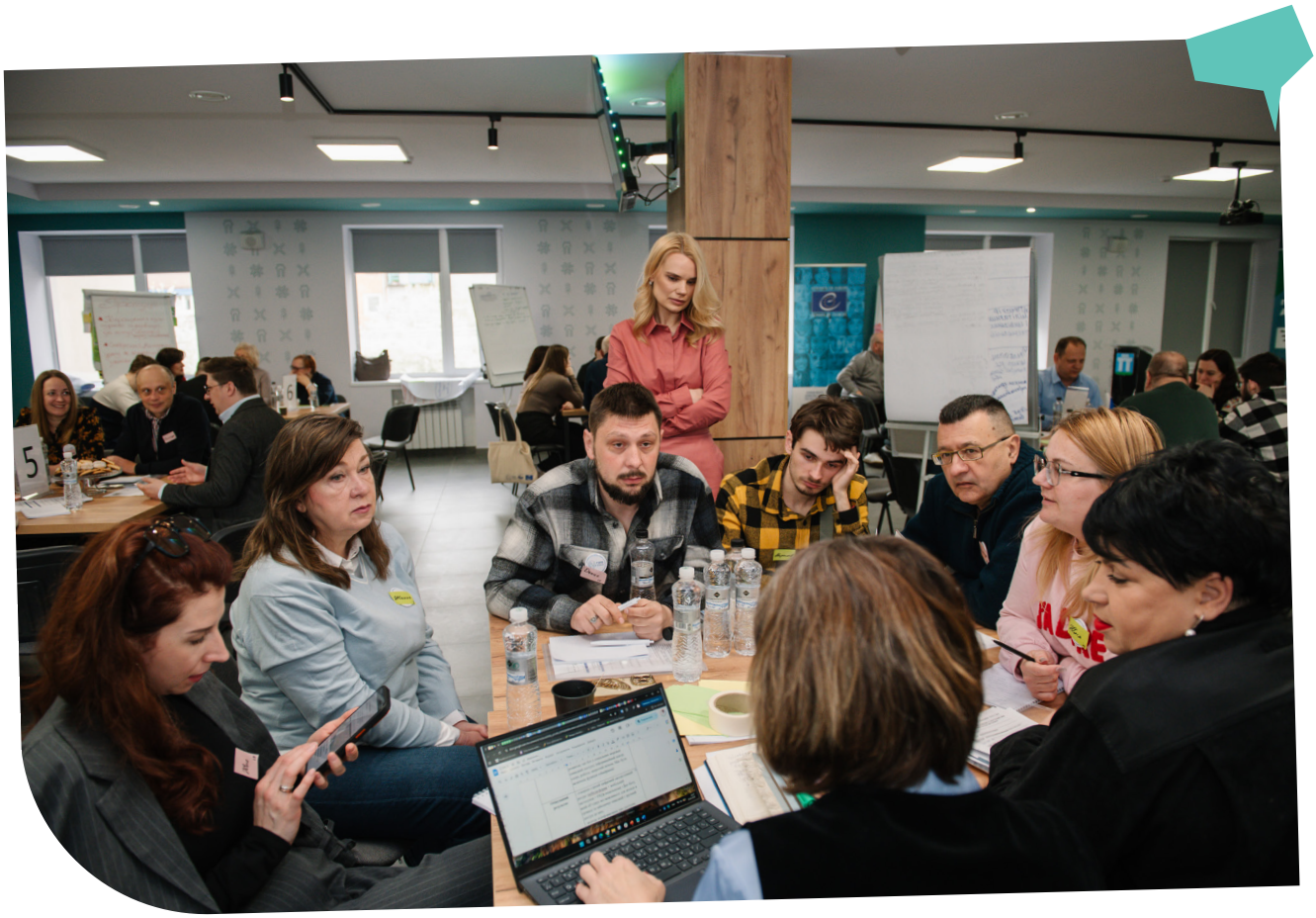
Going forward, the local authority is recommended to draw up an action plan with clear deadlines for implementing the recommendations and designated responsible departments, as well as to report regularly and publicly to the community on the progress of their implementation.

International best practice suggests at least two stages of follow-up feedback from the authorities following the conclusion of the citizens' assembly:

- **The first stage should ideally take place approximately 3–4 months following the presentation of the recommendations.** At this stage, the local authority should indicate which recommendations can be implemented, which require further consideration, and which are currently difficult to implement, providing transparent and reasoned explanations.
- **The next stage should take place in 6–10 months' time to publicly present progress in implementing the recommendations**, share the results achieved and outline further steps.

This approach not only helps to maintain trust in the process but also transforms the Assembly's recommendations into a long-term mechanism for cooperation between the community and the local authorities.

In addition, it would be advisable to create a public tool for monitoring progress — e.g. on the community's website — where residents can track the status of the implementation of the recommendations over time. This kind of tool enhances the accountability of public authorities and showcases that public participation leads to tangible results.



5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Citizens' assembly in the Rivne municipality in figures

The thoughts and impressions of participants are one of the most important indicators of the quality and effectiveness of the citizens' assembly. To evaluate the process, the Council of Europe project conducted a survey amongst members in the citizens' assembly in the Rivne municipality. The survey was conducted anonymously before the assembly began and after all its sessions had concluded.

The findings showed that, for most members, the citizens' assembly provided their first-hand experience with deliberative democracy. Before the process began, **only 16% of respondents had previously heard of citizens' assemblies**. In contrast, by the end of the process, **91% of respondents stated that they fully or largely understood how this format works and why it is needed**. This indicates that participation in the Assembly enabled the majority of participants to understand the principles behind this tool and its role in decision-making at the local level.

Perhaps one of the most telling findings was that **all participants without exception (100%)** who responded to the final survey **considered their decision to join the citizens' assembly to have been the right one:**

- **100% of respondents stated** that they would take part in a similar process again if the opportunity arose in the future,
- **97% would recommend** taking part in the citizens' assembly to their friends or acquaintances.

At the start of the process, participation was driven primarily by:

- **Desire to contribute to the community's development (59%),**
- **Interest in a new format of public participation (54%),**
- **Desire to influence decisions taken within the community (51%).**

Only **5% of respondents** cited daily honorarium as a motivation for participating. This confirms that participation in the citizens' assembly was, first and foremost, an expression of civic engagement and an interest in the community's development.



An important component of the citizens' assembly's work was familiarising participants with various aspects of youth policy and the needs of young people in the Rivne municipality. Upon completion of the process, **97% of respondents reported that their knowledge of the challenges, opportunities and needs of young people had increased; of these, 74% noted that it had increased significantly.**

Among the most valuable features of the citizens' assembly, participants most frequently cited:

- **Representative composition of the assembly (68%),**
- **Involvement of ordinary community residents in decision-making (65%),**
- **and the commitment by local authorities to consider the recommendations developed (62%).**

More than half of those surveyed also highly valued the opportunity to receive balanced information from independent experts. Particularly telling are the results of the assessment of the quality of the process itself:

- participants rated the organisation of the citizens' assembly at an average of **4.79 out of 5,**
- communication between organisers and participants at **4.82,**
- the work of the lead facilitator at **4.85,**
- the work of the table facilitators at **4.76,**
- the work of the lead expert at 4.76 as **well.**

At the same time, the survey revealed that, for participants, the key criterion for the success of the citizens' assembly **remains the extent to which its recommendations are followed up and implemented**. Before the assembly commenced its work, a third of respondents expressed concern about the recommendations potentially not being implemented; after the process had concluded, almost half of those surveyed said they were worried about whether the recommendations would be translated into concrete decisions and actions. This indicates a high level of responsibility among participants for the outcomes of their work and their interest in the assembly's practical impact on community development.

Overall, the survey results reveal a high level of satisfaction among participants with the process, a significant expansion of their knowledge on the topic of youth policy, and a positive perception of the citizens' assembly as a tool for citizen participation in decision-making. They also emphasise the importance of further consideration and implementation of the recommendations developed as a key factor in building trust in this instrument in the future.



5.2. Feedback from members

An assessment of the process would be incomplete without the views of the members themselves. The quotes below reflect their personal experiences of taking part in the assembly and indicate how they rate its organisation, working format and the experience gained.

> "I am delighted that citizens of all ages, professions, educational backgrounds and social statuses can come together around an idea that is relevant to the community to develop practical recommendations for the authorities. And we believe these will be implemented."

> "I'm pleasantly surprised by this format. Participating is both enjoyable and stimulating."

> "I'm thrilled to have taken part in the citizens' assembly in the Rivne municipality. I enjoyed the way it was run; it was fun, there was no time to get bored, plenty of coffee, delicious food, fruitful discussions, interesting information and expert guests. Time flew by. I gained a lot of new experiences."

> "My experience was a positive one. The organisers did a brilliant job. I'd recommend holding more events like this in the future to tackle other issues."

> "Overall, I liked the idea of the citizens' assembly and I believe that events like this should take place more often in our communities. The organisation was top-notch. Of course, there were some difficulties as well, such as when some people tried to dominate the discussion and draw more attention to themselves, which affected my work and that of the group."

> "I came away from the assembly with nothing but positive impressions. It's a kind of exchange of experiences and ideas. I feel that many people have gained greater confidence in themselves, their knowledge and their potential. The organisation was top-notch. Thank you!"

> "From the very first day of the citizens' assembly, I was impressed by our young people. Even though our country is at war and many are simply trying to survive, young people have learnt to live mindfully: they are very creative and idealistic; I'm thrilled for them because they are our future."

> "I really enjoyed the assembly's format. Another important factor was the involvement of experts from various fields, particularly local ones. It was great to learn about the experiences of other communities. I'd like to implement their experiences in our community. In my view, the assembly's topic is a complex one, as we are living through the full-scale invasion, and a large number of young people are leaving due to the security situation. However, all the recommendations adopted at the assembly must be gradually implemented and put into practice, which will significantly improve the city and make it attractive to young people."

> "An intriguing format. I was pleased to see the desire for positive change in the community, the participants' enthusiasm, the interesting ideas, and the competent organisers and guest experts. I've learnt more about the opportunities available to local residents."





5.3. Conclusions and lessons learnt from the citizens' assembly

The 20 recommendations developed by the assembly's participants are the result of three weekends of collaborative work by people with diverse experiences, ages and perspectives. Through deliberation, they sought to answer a single question: What needs to change for the Rivne municipality to become a place where young people want to stay, develop and build their future?

Key observations

➢ **The recommendations cover multiple areas.**

They touch on entrepreneurship, culture, digital tools, institutional capacity and urban development. Instead of limiting themselves to a single area, the participants recognised an important principle: the conditions for young people are shaped not by a single policy, but at the intersection of various sectors. For the City Council, this means that the impact of implementing the recommendations will be significantly greater if they are viewed as part of an overarching framework rather than as isolated initiatives.

➢ **Public outreach is not a standalone policy; it is a systemic "glue" that binds urban programmes together.**

Throughout the assembly, participants repeatedly remarked that they were unaware of opportunities already available within the community. Rather than indicating a lack of programmes, this points to the insufficient effectiveness of communication channels. Therefore, recommendations on digitalisation and public outreach should not be considered in isolation, but in conjunction with substantive changes in other areas.

➢ **The top shared priority is creating spaces for young people.**

Recommendations relating to the physical environment — sports grounds, parks, open public spaces and social spaces for gatherings — received the highest level of support. This clearly highlights the lack of places where young people can interact, spend time and feel part of the urban environment.



➢ **Veterans are part of the youth community and its development opportunities.**

In several recommendations, they are explicitly identified as a target group alongside young

people. At the same time, the set of recommendations lacks proposals relating exclusively to veterans as a separate category. Instead, participants considered them within the broader context of self-fulfilment, employment and inclusion in community life — that is, within the scope of a theme that generally encompasses youth policy.

➢ **The citizens' assembly is also an investment in a culture of civic participation.**

The process proved that residents are willing to get involved in decision-making, provided the format is clear and the outcomes are tangibly meaningful. The recommendations regarding research into young people's needs, the establishment of an expert board and the creation of a youth centre are aimed at ensuring that participation does not remain a one-off event, but becomes an ongoing practice of co-creating policies within the community.



5.4. Next steps and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations

Following the conclusion of the citizens' assembly, a final package of 20 recommendations was submitted to the Rivne City Council. The recommendations reflect the outcomes of the deliberative process, which involved members jointly analysing problems, discussing possible solutions and reaching a consensus on proposals aimed at improving conditions for young people in the municipality.

Timeframes for implementing the recommendations

Timeline	Recommendations	Implementation details
Short term up to 6 months	Rec. 4, Rec. 6, Rec. 12, Rec. 14	Primarily organisational decisions that can be implemented within existing powers and resources.
Medium term 6–18 months	Rec. 1, Rec. 2, Rec. 5, Rec. 8, Rec. 10, Rec. 11, Rec. 15, Rec. 16, Rec. 18	These require additional planning, budgetary decisions or organisational changes
Long term 18+ months	Rec. 3, Rec. 7, Rec. 9, Rec. 13, Rec. 17, Rec. 19, Rec. 20	These require strategic decisions, inter-departmental cooperation, grant funding and/or international funding



Next steps recommended for the local authority

- The City Council should provide a public response to each recommendation, specifying which ones can be implemented, which require further consideration, and which cannot currently be implemented, with appropriate justification.
- The City Council should then draw up and approve, at a council meeting, an action plan for implementing the recommendations, which should include specific deadlines and designated responsible parties. It is also recommended that assembly members be involved in further dialogue and, where possible, in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations.
- The results of the review of the recommendations should be publicly presented approx. **3–4 months** after the submission of this report, and an update on the progress of the recommendations' implementation should be provided approx. **6–10 months** later.
- Ensuring open and systematic communication with the community regarding the status of the recommendations' implementation, including through the local authority's official information channels, such as a dedicated citizens' assembly page on the Rivne City Council's official website.

Although the citizens' assembly sessions have concluded, the process it initiated continues. A significant portion of the members expressed their willingness to continue contributing to the development of the community's youth policy, including through participation in an initiative group and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations developed. This suggests that the citizens' assembly has served not only as a framework for formulating recommendations but also as a platform for long-term civic engagement. As such, the assembly has laid the groundwork for a more open, accountable and collaborative form of governance, in which residents' participation is not a one-off event but an ongoing practice of engaging with the authorities and co-creating local policies.







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