

**“Study on results and impact of implementation of Local Economic Development Plans in Ukraine in 2019-2020”**

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# **Introduction**

The Phase 1 of the EU "Mayors for Economic Growth" Initiative (January 1, 2017-December 31, 2020) resulted in 190 signatories from Ukraine[[1]](#footnote-1), which to various degrees benefited from the provided assistance. In order to conduct an in-depth analysis of the main results and impact of implementing local economic development plans *(hereinafter referred to as the LED Plan or LEDP)* in the first phase of the Initiative, in addition to the feedback from the regular interim monitoring activities, it was decided to conduct a Follow-up Study, which targeted the acting Ukrainian M4EG signatories of the 1st and 2nd waves.

The overall objective of the study was to capture the main results and the impact of the LEDPs, which were designed and implemented in Phase 1 and based on it, formulate the conclusions and recommendations for the future LED actions of the local governments.

The Secretariat of the M4EG Initiative developed the corresponding concept and methodology of the study, which were discussed and fine-tuned with the national teams and experts mobilized for the survey. The list of guiding questions has been developed as part of the methodology, and the answers to these questions helped to get some structured feedback from the interviews with the respondents, in particular to:

* Find out the key achievements of the community based on the results of implementing the LED plan;
* Explore the benefits from drafting a LED plan and implementing it;
* Identify key challenges, barriers, and problems in implementing LED plans;
* Summarize the lessons learned and the experience gained during drafting and implementation of LEDPs;

The respondents in Ukraine were predominantly officials, responsible for local economic development issues (mayors, their deputies, heads of economic development departments, LEDOs[[2]](#footnote-2)), representing 80 signatories of the first (64) and the second (16) waves *(pls. see Annex 1 - The list of cities-signatories of the first and the second wave of the Initiative and names of respondents).*

The interviews were thematically divided into 2 blocks of 5 questions each, which served as guidelines during the conversation between the expert and respondents *(pls. see Annex 2 - The list of Interview Questions).* As supportive documents of the interviews served the respective communities’ LED plans, in particular the tables with the plans of activities and monitoring the results, as well as the monitoring reports on the implementation of LED plans prepared by the signatories in July 2020.

All 80 interviews were conducted in line with the agreed schedule in the period from August 1 to September 4, 2020. The respondents included employees of local self-government bodies, ranging from mayors to specialists responsible for economic development, namely 23 senior officials (mayors and their deputies) and 57 local economic development officers. The average duration of one interview was 1.4 hours. The interviews were conducted in the Ukrainian language.

The summer holiday period and, to some extent, quarantine restrictions made the process of organizing interviews to some extend more complicated. In general, the majority of respondents were committed to answer questions and provided comprehensive and relevant information.

Based on the results of each interview, interview minutes (1,5 page in average) were prepared by the expert to outline the key information and conclusions of each interview. The minutes were drafted and sent to respondents by e-mail for review and possible clarifications on the day of the interview. A total of 11 clarifications have been received by the expert, which in most cases concerned minor improvements of the names of projects/actions implemented by the communities within the framework of LED plans, meaning in general hat the interview minutes were approved without comments.

The minutes of the interviews were treated by the respective self-government bodies as official documents, which briefly summarize the communicated achievements and results from implementing LEDPs as well as the new knowledge, skills and experience acquired by local authorities in the course drafting and implementing the LEDPs.

This Study’s purpose was not related to the evaluation of the quantitate results of local self-government bodies' activities and/or assessment of the efficiency of the M4EG project actions. The summarized feedback from the interviews contributing to the Study’s overall objective outlines the practical experience and the lessons learnt during the drafting and implementation of LEDPs. The survey aims at understanding, which approaches/measures/actions were realistic and efficient and which were less successful or impossible to implement. The interviews were helpful to identify some typical problems and challenges, which appeared during the implementation of LED plans, and in some cases, the interviews provide practical solutions to these problems/challenges based on the experience of the interviewed signatories.

By the time this survey was conducted, not one of the interviewed community in Ukraine had fully implemented all the activities of the LED plans, since the plans of the signatories of the first wave will be completed only at the end of 2020. In this regard, the majority of the respondents were not in position to confirm the impact with qualitative indicators, using instead the numbers from the LEDPs’ progress monitoring sections.

This report on the conducted Follow-Up Study concludes with some recommendations/conclusions for customizing some of the future approaches and activities within the framework of LED in the country.

The report from Ukraine will be available in free access at the EU M4EG Initiative webpage (www.m4eg.eu), together with similar Follow-up study reports from the five other Eastern Partnership countries.

# **General outcomes and results of participation in the "Mayors for Economic Growth” Initiative**

This section summarizes the respondents’ feedback to the five questions of the interview, outlining the improvements in the vision/attitude/approaches of local authorities to the structured support to local economic development, dialogue and partnerships with business representatives, civil society organisations and community members at large. The section also describes the experience of the respondents in networking with other communities in Ukraine and abroad regarding learning and applying the best national and European experience and practices in LED as well as their opinion on the communication/collaboration with trainers/experts of the M4EG Initiative.

*Question: Has your membership in the "Mayors for Economic Growth" Initiative changed your understanding of what local authorities should do to stimulate economic development?*

One of the important tasks of the Initiative was to promote understanding of the importance of creating an appropriate environment for accelerating economic development of the community. In this regard, the LED plans of the majority of respondents included measures to establish a dialogue with business, civil society organizations and active residents. The representatives of the main stakeholder groups of the communities actively participated in the LED planning and its implementation processes. The majority of the respondents confirmed that the improved understanding of local authorities’ LED actions resulted in the first turn in an improved dialogue and cooperation, which helped in taking into account the needs of local entrepreneurs and in jointly elaborating the appropriate LEDP actions aiming at creation of a more enabling environment for business development in the community.

Of the 80 respondents, 65 (81%) said that participation in the Initiative has changed the approach of local authorities to stimulating economic development, while 11 (14%) of them answered “partially” and 4 (5%) of them could not confirm the changes.

The key changes, which resulted from the improved understanding of the local authorities’ place and role in the LED process, and which are highlighted by the respondents are: More appropriate and realistic assessment of the community’s strengths/weaknesses/opportunities, improved dialogue and partnerships with local businesses, changes in LED planning approaches, which are now based on analyses, transparency, broad consultation process and a bottom-to-top approach. The LED planning process became more relevant and efficient as it includes the needs and concerns of major community stakeholders, and it has become pragmatic and demand based and realistic in terms of available community resources and opportunities.

Besides understanding of the importance of involving all parties of the community in the processes of Local Economic Development planning and its implementation, all respondents confirmed the changes in the overall understanding of the role of local self-government bodies in stimulating the development of local businesses and implementation local economic programmes.

The interviewed representatives of the local self-government bodies have also realized the importance to objectively analyze the baseline situation, current problems, trends and jointly determine LED priorities and actions. The signatories also mentioned that the joint assessment of the communities’ strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths was helpful in elaborating the most efficient LEDPs’ actions/measures, including those for the support of small and medium-sized businesses.

*“During the LEDP drafting process, we clearly realized that we need to proceed with planning the LED support measures not only from the considerations (vision) of the authorities, but from the needs of businesses, because they form the real economy of the city and region,”* Slavutych

The majority of respondents (65%) confirmed a clear awareness that creating a favorable business environment is the major responsibility of local authorities.

Almost all respondents reported that the collegiality in the LEDPs drafting, achieved through the creation of work groups and consultations with businesses proved feasibility and efficiency of this approach.

Almost 35% of the respondents noted the importance of the Initiative's methodological recommendations, thanks to which communities were able to develop a logically structured document for the operational community LED planning - a LEDP which contains the selection of the most needed actions, efficiently contributing to job creation and assuring stable income generation for the residents of the community.

It was also confirmed, that the methodology suggested by the Initiative helped to realistically assess the available resources of the community and its potential, which helped to identify possible actions of the LED plan in accordance with the existing opportunities in the community at the time of development of the plan.

*“It is a very good recommendation from the Initiative to start planning the local economic development hearing the voices “from the bottom”: first teach people to hear each other, find the compromise for proper solution in line with the available resources,”* Fursy community.

Respondents who believe that participation in the Initiative has changed the approach of the local authorities to stimulating economic development only partially (14%), explained that, they were familiar and have applied similar approaches, while the methodology suggested by M4EG and the provided support helped to modify the already applied approaches, expanded and deepened already available skills and capacities. That means that such communities have already had some knowledge and experience of modern strategic and operational planning through participation in other technical assistance projects, as well as thanks to relevant educational background of designated staff members and further professional development.

*“Prior to joining the Initiative, the personnel of the local authorities had certain skills in planning the activities stimulating local economic development. However, preparing the LED plan helped us to deeper understand exactly what approaches and tools are needed for this purpose”,* Lviv.

The respondents who reported to have no changes (5%) explained they had a very clear understanding of the local governments’ leading role in the economic development prior to joining the M4EG Initiative. Nevertheless, despite high qualifications and modern knowledge of the employees of local self-government bodies of such communities, the participation in the Initiative was value adding for them in a number of other aspects, especially in broadening the networks and learning the most recent LED best practices.

*Question: Has participation in the "Mayors for Economic Growth" Initiative changed the state of public-private dialogue and interaction between civil society and your municipality? How? Have you managed to build a new partnership at the local level?*

All respondents confirmed that establishing public-private dialogue and interaction is one of the key factors for local economic growth of communities. That is why the majority of the respondents (94%) included related activities into the LED plans.

64 interviewed signatories (80%) managed to establish or considerably improve dialogue and created partnerships with local business community as a result of the implementation of the activities of the LED plans, while 14% (11 signatories) are still in the process. The remaining 5 communities (6%) have not planned activities in this area, as they consider the level of dialogue and cooperation with the local businesses in their communities was and still is sufficient.

The majority of the respondents mentioned that the M4EG LEDP drafting methodology and the related capacity building events were encouraging for them in establishing dialogue with business representatives, which was initially achieved through the creation of working groups, consultations with various stakeholder groups during the LEDPs drafting process. Not only businesses, but also civil society and professional organizations, including women and youth NGOs, local/regional development agencies, etc. were invited and participate in the dialogue. Some local self-government bodies, in the course of drafting the LEDPs conducted surveys among community residents with the purpose of getting a broader knowledge on citizens’ visions, and how they look upon major problems, on development priorities and related activities.

A significant part of respondents (80%) noted that the joint drafting of LED plans and collaboration during the implementation helped to activate local businesses, which, in some cases for the first time, felt ownership to improvements and being part of changing the community for the better.

At the same time, 64 communities have admitted that the establishment of the dialogue and partnerships was sometimes not easy at the beginning of the LEDPs drafting process, since the entrepreneurs in most of cases were rather skeptical about intentions, abilities and capacities of the local authorities to lead the LED process.

*"The dialogue was not easy for us, especially with small businesses and some residents of the community, because the community members, like actually majority of Ukrainians are so much fed up with constant electoral promises that they treat any dialogue with the authorities negatively”* Berezdiv

The major challenge for many respondents was to transform the image of the local authorities from being an opponent to the initiatives of businesses and a useless body into a reliable, transparent and competent partner able to efficiently manage and coordinate the joint implementation of the LED plan, developed in the format of an open and transparent dialogue. This transformation was initially achieved by increased communication activities, panels for dialogue, public hearings, round table events, and some other activities which led to increased interaction and in some cases in public private partnership initiatives, the majority of which have been successfully accomplished.

The most typical examples of successful partnership between local governments and businesses within signatories interviewed, is the creation of clusters, like e.g. “Salt Road” Tourism Cluster (Askania Nova), cluster in publishing and printing, cluster in education and creativity, cluster in fashion (apparel industry) and IT cluster (Lviv), cluster of local producers and active citizens (Krasnokutsk), the woodworking cluster and the furniture manufacturing cluster (Korosten), etc. A large number of communities reported a positive impact from LEDPs’ measures aimed at supporting the agriclusters and agriculture service cooperatives (ASCs), like e.g. the cooperative "Golden gifts of the Carpathian - beekeeping, "Obolonia", berries growing (Dolyna); "Fruit eco op" (Nedoboivtsi), the cooperative for the production of clean energy "Sunny city" (Slavutych); the mini-cooperative for growing seedlings of trees and plants (Fursy).

As public-private partnership examples the respondents also mentioned: "Pocket town" Municipal Market in Chortkiv, "Slavutych-Chornobyl-Chernihiv region" Tourist Information Center, "Mykolaiv RIVER FEST" annual water festival, "Open city" information web resource in Kaniv, Youth co-working space in Baranivka; "Dolyna-invest" municipal enterprise in Dolyna, "I-Smart" municipal co-working for entrepreneurs in Irpin, "Barracks of the old fortress" Ukrainian National Tourist Park in Kamianets-Podilsky, "Business Studio" in Sambir Technical School of economics and Informatics, etc.

According to the respondents, the created entrepreneurship centers, economic schools and business support centers, in addition to their main function in capacity building and advisory services became efficient communication platforms between businesses and local governments.

*“Through the Centers, we managed to establish and maintain a dialogue with small and medium-sized businesses, moved forward in search for investors, assisted start-ups and running businesses in job creation, which led to a number of new public-private partnership initiatives,”* Hlyboka

Some of the interviewed local self-government bodies put a special focus on increasing the dialogue and partnerships with youth. In particular, some have supported the establishment of youth councils, whose representatives participate in the preparation/consultation of LEDPs and in the monitoring process. Students from local educational institutions have helped in conduction of opinion surveys among citizens, and in some trainings. Self-government bodies of some communities have invited students for internship.

All above-mentioned examples arise from the LEDPs activities, and are, in the opinion of the respondents, successful results of the established open dialogue and the created mutually beneficial partnerships between local authorities and businesses, which were important parts of the implementation of LEDP activities.

According to the respondents, thanks to the successfully implemented LEDPs activities, the mutual trust in communities has basically been revitalized, and a commitment among the most active businesses to consider further private public partnership projects has evolved.

It is encouraging that the majority of the respondents confirm that all important decisions in the community are now being made with the mandatory involvement of entrepreneurs and other related stakeholders, which is achieved through consultations, public hearings, working groups.

In addition, a significant part of respondents reported that the Initiative contributed to establishment of dialogue in other than LED areas of community life, for example, culture, social projects, education, etc.

Respondents who considered that dialogue and partnership have changed only partially (14%) admitted the existence of a certain dialogue and interaction between local authorities and businesses before joining the Initiative. The membership in the M4EG helped the self-government bodies to further strengthen the communication and interaction and added new ideas on partnership areas, which were incorporated in the LEDPs. For example, thanks to the LED plan, the Malovyskivska amalgamated territorial community (ATC) has established partnership with the local beekeepers and helps them in branding their products and financially supports producers’ participation in specialized exhibitions.

*"A particular dialogue and interaction with entrepreneurs was always kept in the community, but it has been further strengthened and broadened in the process of LEDP preparation and its implementation,”* Nova Kakhovka.

6% of the respondents have not planned any related activities as they considered the level of private public dialogue and partnership to be already sufficient therefore there was no need to improve it.

The majority of respondents confirmed the efficiency of the LEDPs’ measures aimed at establishment/improvement of dialogue and interaction between the local governments and businesses. The interviewed representatives of the local self-governments also stated that the LEDP activities, which were planned and implemented with the involvement of businesses, were really demand-based and successful.

## *Question: Has participation in the project affected the ability of local authorities to analyze the state of local economic development and plan its further development with the participation of the authorities?*

72 out of 80 interviewed signatories (90%) confirmed that the new knowledge and skills in analyzing the state of local economic development, gained through M4EG capacity building and advisory services, improved their ability in applying them for planning the LED strategic priorities and actions, while 6% (5 communities) have not noticed any affect. The three remaining respondents (4%) could not make any statement in this regard.

Among positive responses, the most frequently mentioned improvement was the ability to apply the statistics received from the basic analyses for the follow up SWOT analysis, which was extremely useful for accurate determining the priority areas for economic development of the communities.

The new ability was also helpful in application of the project-based approach in planning the LEDP activities to each of the defined priorities.

Some of the respondents mentioned that prior to their participation in the Initiative, they did not have sufficient knowledge and experience in modern operational planning and its basic components. Planning was previously mostly intuitive, often not based on a preliminary and objective analysis of the current economic situation, existing problems, weaknesses/strengths, opportunities, and threats. The activities were not always aligned to the strategic goals, while the latter were, in some cases, not defined properly. Some activities of the previous *(pre-M4EG)* development plans resembled a wish list or mere political declarations, without taking into account the available human capacities and financial resources. In most cases, the operational planning aimed exclusively at the economic development of the community *(and not in combination with the socio-cultural block as it was practiced earlier)* was applied for the first time thanks to the participation in the Initiative.

*“Previously, we saw the needs and opportunities of the community only superficially, the activities were sometimes designed based on the experience of other communities, and sometimes even on a subjective intuition,"* Berezdiv

The respondents confirmed that the advantages in applying the suggested LED analyses and methodology were especially obvious, while comparing this new modern approach with the previously applied approaches.

The suggested LED analyses and methodology were useful for planning the LEDP activities in line with realities of the local budgets and of other sources of financing. Collegiality and consultations with the main stakeholders were additionally helpful for the local economic analyses: local businesses provided a lot of feedback, which was useful for the analyses and helped the local authorities to take into account the concerns and current problems of businesses community.

*"The conducted analyses for drafting the LED plan helped us to clearly define the directions of economic development of the community, agree upon the most efficient priority measures and activities, accurately define the required resources and access own and external funding opportunities,”* Nemishaieve.

Respondents noted that the particular elements of the acquired knowledge and skills of LED analyses are being applied also for monitoring of LEDP implementation and for informing deputies and community members about the progress and impact from the implementation of the LEDPs activities, evaluating the interim results, identifying problematic issues and, making some adjustment of the LEDP activities, whenever required.

According to numerous respondents, the acquired knowledge and skills of LED analyses were and will be useful for employees of local authorities in the process of new LED planning, especially for the recently created (amalgamated) communities in frames of the national decentralization reforms.

Three respondents (4%) could not clearly confirm the impact on the ability to apply the LED analyses methodology mainly because of loss of knowledge and skills already acquired by the local self- government bodies, which happens as a result of rather frequent rotation of the personnel.

Five representatives of the local self-government bodies (6% of all respondents) stated that prior to joining the Initiative, they used to apply similar methodology for local economic analysis in the process of operational planning thus no additional impact could be reported.

*Question: Has the Initiative helped you learn from other communities/countries successful tools and approaches to stimulating local economic development?*

The majority of the respondents, namely 69 communities or 86%, replied positively to this question, mentioning that the capacity building and other events organized by the M4EG Initiative as well as the ongoing experience exchange and communication through FB (Facebook) and thematic networking groups were useful in establishing the networks and channels for learning the best practices of the local governments in Ukraine and abroad in order to enhance the LED within communities in Ukraine.

The respondents in particular mentioned the following activities as contributing to dissemination/learning LED experience: the LEDP drafting and other thematic trainings, seminars, conferences, staff exchange programme, thematic working groups as well as individual consultations provided by the national M4EG team. In addition, the 1-2 days study visits programmes in early 2020 to six M4EG demonstration projects were mentioned among efficient experience sharing activities.[[3]](#footnote-3)

In more details the respondents mentioned the study visits to the Netherlands, Latvia as well as to Hlyboka, Chernivetska oblast grant project “Different Communities-Joint Solutions for LED”.

The respondents who participated in the study visit to the Netherlands and Latvia noted the high importance of the acquired knowledge and ideas related to local economic development tools for the Ukrainian communities. The interviewed admitted that the most important outcome from the study tours was a clear understanding of the role of local governments in the economic development of the visited communities in the Netherlands/Lavia. From the practical examples the participants could witness the importance of the open dialogue and cooperation between local governments and businesses. Some specific/thematic experience learnt during the study visits was e.g. in the field of tourism development and communal asset management, which several respondents mentioned as a possibility to replication in Ukraine.

*"Considerable experience in the development of the tourism sector was gained during a visit to the cities of Domburg and Veere. In particular, we were very impressed by the presentation of the mayor of Veere about significant experience of this municipality in the development of ecological and recreational tourism,”* Ivano-Frankivsk.

*"Thanks to this study tour, we are aware that the local authorities actually should manage not only the available communal assets, but also invest into creation of new communal facilities to improve the business support infrastructure in the city attracting funds from local budget, private businesses, grants, whatever,”* Slavutych.

*“The experience learnt during the study visit to Latvia was crucially important for our decision to initiate the creation of the Tourists’ Information Centre in the city together with a modern web resource for tourists,”* Kaniv

*“The study tour gave us additional ideas and know-how for reforming of the municipal car parking system,”* Chortkiv

The respondents, who participated in the study visit to Hlyboka, Ukraine *(M4EG grant project)* confirmed that the experience of the local government in supporting the creation of agriculture service cooperatives was useful, especially for the predominantly urban communities which are in the process of amalgamation with more agriculture based communities and which are in need of filling in the gap with missing experience in supporting agriculture sector in general and small scale agriculture producers in particular.

Some of the respondents could learn about the LED support experience of others from the publications/posts about the experience learnt, which were made by the participants of the study visits.

The important role of non-governmental organizations, which are collaborating with the M4EG Initiative in Ukraine, in particular the Bukovyna Development Agency, Vinnytsia Regional Development Agency, West Ukrainian Resource Centre, Podilsk Regional Development Agency, Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities, in disseminating LED best practices and experience was also noted by several respondents, for example:

*"The Bukovyna Development Agency has successfully implemented the M4EG grant project which serves as a good example of inter-municipal cooperation, confirming that the communities with various entrepreneurship activities may have joint development goals which could be achieved more efficiently through joining forces and resources,"* Berezdiv***.***

According to respondents, the "staff exchange" programme, which was designed and supported by the Initiative, was also rather efficient and useful for learning the experience from the self-government bodies of the EU countries. The respondent from Korosten noted the benefits of the visit of representatives from Bornholm (Denmark), who shared their experience in supporting the local entrepreneurs and helped the team of the local self-government body to fine tune the LED priorities and adjust some of the LEDPs activities and measures. The respondents from Lviv and Pniv have confirmed the value adding inputs of staff exchange programme for learning the practical experience in enhancing LED from the colleagues from the EU countries.

Several respondents (Dubno, Krasnokutsk, Kremenchuk, Kreminna, Mala Vyska, Pervomaiskyi, Tinky) noted as useful the experience exchange on how local authorities support the tourism development with the communities from some other Eastern Partnership countries (Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, Armenia) in frames of Tourism Networking Group

*"The approaches to the local tourism development from Georgia and Belarus were valuable for us. In Ukraine, an example of tourism development for us is the city of Lviv, which is open in sharing info and providing advice and guidance for us. With our colleagues from Slavutych we have a permanent exchange and mutual consultation regarding support to the community based tourism development,"* – Dubno

Respondents admitted that participation in the Initiative contributed a lot to the launch of the informal dialogue between the signatories, which in many cases is still maintained though phone calls, social networks, working visits to each other in order to exchange experience.

Five respondents (6%), admitting the participation in the initiative was useful in learning new experience, have noted that they have managed to only partially apply it in their communities mainly due to the lack of funds and/or human resources.

The remaining six respondents (8%) confirmed to have received access to the information about LED experience of other communities, but could not apply it as it was not relevant to the communities’ needs and priorities.

*"We could learn about the LED supporting models, but were not able to select any matching"*, – Svatove.

Summarizing the respondents' answers to this question, it could be concluded that all the respondents confirmed that the participation in the Initiative was useful for learning new models, approaches, and practices of other local governments supporting the LEDPs and the majority of the respondents (91%) could fully or partially apply the received information for improving its activities in supporting the LED in their communities.

*Question: Have you managed to build friendships or partnerships with other participants in the Initiative (experts, trainers, etc.) that you used in your future work?*

In most cases, membership in the EU M4EG Initiative, participation in its various activities, as well as communication during consultations and trainings contributed to the establishing of effective working relationships, i.e. “friendships and partnerships”, which was confirmed by 72 respondents (or by 90% of the total number of respondents). Only two communities noted to have managed building friendships and/or partnerships only "partially", while six respondents have not planned establishing new partnerships.

*"The community is satisfied with communication with the national team of M4EG experts during the advisory support, trainings and other activities. Always in friendly and professional manner,"* Baranivka

*"During the implementation of LEDPs activities, we were seeking for advice and guidance from the M4EG experts, and we have always received professional and valuable support,”* Kremenchuk

The respondents noted that professional and clear presentation of the material during trainings and expert consultations were focused on practical solutions to current problems of the signatories. It has contributed to establishing of a trustful relationship with project experts, which are maintained as the experts’ team provide immediate response to the requests of signatories any time whenever requested. According to respondents, it was always possible to get advice from experts and trainers on majority of issues: drafting and implementing the LED plan, organizational issues, drafting semi-annual monitoring reports, etc.

*"Membership in the Initiative has become a factor that keeps M4EG signatories united by our common goal to develop our communities,”* Nova Kakhovka

A significant number of communities emphasized the benefits of the M4EG Facebook groups administered by a national team of experts serving as a tool for maintaining friendly relations even during the COVID 19 lockdown.

The respondents noted that thanks to the established communication and friendly working relations the communities were able to establish partnerships, which in some cases turned into specific successful projects.

*“For the development of local tourism, we have signed a memorandum on partnership with two neighboring communities to expand the geography of tourism destinations around Chornobyl and the entire region. Now we have friendly relations and active exchange of experience in creating infrastructure for business development with signatories from Moldova and Armenia,"* Slavutych

*“We have established a partnership network with numerous Ukrainian communities to exchange LED experience and best practices, in particular with Baranivska, Balta who made several study visits to our community recently. There is also on-going exchange of experience with Slavutych,”* Hlyboka

7% of the respondents have the intentions to establish partnerships and have defined the potential partners, but have not transferred the intentions into concrete partnerships yet due to lack of time, replacement of the LED responsible employees, or because of other priorities in their agendas.

Only a few respondents (3%) noted they have not managed to establish friendly relations and partnerships as in some cases explaining this by the dismissal of the previous LEDO and the lack of time for the newly appointed employee to establish contacts with the M4EG team, as for example, in Ivano-Frankivsk, Severodonetsk, and Volodymyrets. Some of the respondents from this category noted that they have not planned creating partnerships with other communities since they already had such relations.

All respondents, without exception, confirmed that consultations were always provided on time and were useful.

# **Specific outcomes of the Local Economic Development implementation process**

This section of the report consolidates the specific results of participation of the Ukrainian communities in the EU “Mayors for Economic Growth” Initiative based on the feedback from the respondents on the most important achievements of communities in the implementation of the LED plans, challenges in its implementation, as well as the probability of implementation of the LEDPs activities within the related LEDPs’ lifetime. The section also describes the experience and skills gained by the respondents during the implementation period of LED plans, as well as information about what individual communities would do differently when developing and implementing plans next time.

*Question: What are your biggest achievements in implementing the Local Economic Development Plan (What are your activities and goals)?*

All the surveyed communities have confirmed positive results from the implementation of the LEDP actions. Some of the respondents were not in a position to confirm the achievements with “numbers” considering it to be quite difficult and unlikely to measure the impact of the activities in quantitative indicators for the actions which are still under implementation or have been finished only recently. The “numbers” communicated by the respondents mainly refer to the quantitate indicators outlined in the LEDPs’ monitoring sections.

*“Kramatorsk local economic development plan is not aimed at measuring the impact from each particular activity. The entire system of LEDPs measures "works" as a complex of activities to create an environment favorable for businesses and investors. The results could not be measured immediately through the comprehensive complex of indicators,”* Kramatorsk

Whereas possible, the respondents provided quantitative indicators to confirm their achievements related to the implementation of LED plans. The achievements are indicatively structured thematically as outlined below:

**Increased support to entrepreneurship development** (creation of business associations, economic development schools, business centers, industrial parks, measures to encourage entrepreneurship development (including among women and youth), improvement/modernization of infrastructure (access roads, fiber-optic internet) – 69 reported achievements:

* Berezdiv*: "The number of the newly registered entrepreneurs has increased from 60 to 124. More than 10 new business sectors have been opened in 6 months of this year."*
* Fursy: *"The number of registered entrepreneurs has increased 2-fold and totaled 426 since the beginning of the implementation of the LED plan (in 18 months)."*
* Nemishaievo: *"One of the results of our work is that 2 youth startups from our community selected for the all-Ukrainian competition, one of them became a finalist of the all Ukrainian competition of the young start-ups”*
* Chuhuiv: *"The conducted trainings “On basics of business” contributed to the growth of women's entrepreneurship in the community. Five out of 10 training participants opened their businesses within 6 months after the training course completion”*
* Mykolaiv: *"Thanks to the Entrepreneurship Support Project "School of guides", 20 women were trained as city guides. Seven of them have started their own business."*
* Lviv: *"In 2019, the number of registered business entities increased by 2,782.”*
* Balta: *"For the efficient communication with 28 communities that became part of our community in the process of amalgamation, the fiber-optic high-speed internet have been installed, which also contributed to the improvement of business operations in the community”*
* Dubno: *"The opening of the Centre for promoting entrepreneurship development in partnership with the NGO "Entrepreneurship perspective" is among the most recent achievements of the community. The centre has become a popular platform for communication and exchange of experience among representatives of the local business community"*
* Lviv: *"The Entrepreneurship Support Centre opened in frames of LEDP’s implementation is a dynamic communal organization that offers the Lviv residents free comprehensive support in starting and developing their businesses. In 2019 the Centre held 174 events, which were attended by 1,775 people. The Centre is the basis for successful implementation of other actions included in the LED plan. In six months of 2020, more than 1,000 people benefited from the individual business consultations provided by the centre".*

**Improved territorial marketing, community promotion and investment climate** – 39 achievements:

* Kaniv: *"In 2019, Kaniv moved from 46th place to 8th in the RCERBS Fund rating for institutional capacity and sustainable development of small and medium-sized cities with population up to 100 thousand people. That year the city council managed to attract 1.4 million euro of investments"*
* *Khmelnytskyi: "Buy Khmelnytskyi made outputs!" is our project which contributes to the promotion of local producers in and outside the community. It helps to find new markets, and increase the export volumes."*
* Slavutych: *"The city is among top 5 investment-attractive communities in Ukraine in 2020 (Slavutych took 4th place in the national investments attractiveness index) ".*

**Increased support to the local tourism** – 25 achievements:

* Kaniv: *"As a result of the implemented LEDP activities the number of tourists has increased by 10 thousand a year.”*
* Trostianets: *"The main result is a huge increase in tourism. The implementation of activity 1.2. "Kayak rental" resulted in the increase in tourists and generation of the additional funds to develop this activity further"*
* Truskavets: *"We have designed and launched the city tourist portal, which is recognized as one of the best in Ukraine. We consider it as the greatest achievement resulting from our LEDP implementation"*

**Strengthened public-private dialogue and increased partnerships** – 24 achievements:

* Dolyna: *"Thanks to the M4EG project, we managed to establish a strong partnership with the Continental Farmers Group (CFG). Thanks to this cooperation we plan to bring our honey producers to the markets of the Middle East."*
* Melitopol: *"We have created a powerful agro-industrial cluster between the Melitopol City Council, the Melitopol District State Administration, communities of surrounding villages and local agricultural producers, also attracting educational and scientific institutions."*

**Improved quality and quantity of Administrative Services** – 19 achievements:

* Biloziria: *"Over the past six months, at least 40 entrepreneurs were registered in the community, thanks to the launch and implementation of the "business from scratch" on line-service as one of the activities from our LEDP.”*
* Bucha: *"Thanks to the implementation of the activity "Creating remote jobs of the Centre of Administrative services provision", the service has become available to more than 10 thousand community members”*

**Increased support cooperatives, clusters and small holder agricultural producers** – 16 achievements:

* V. Kochuriv: *"Thanks to the creation of the cooperative, the biggest environmental problem of the community was solved* – *the residues from the wood processing are no longer burned, but are further processed into wood pellets."*
* Melitopol: *"Thanks to the created agrocluster, the share of exported outputs increased by 7%, the quality of products has improved. We learnt the modern marketing and sales technics of fruit and vegetables which led to the increase of the small- mid scale producers who have considerable improved income."*
* Nove misto: *"The created in frames of LEDP implementation service cooperative increased sales of the agricultural outputs grown by the community households"*

**Increased revenues to the community budgets** – 3 achievements:

* Berezdiv: *"Budget revenues from local entrepreneurs’ taxes doubled last year."*
* Kaniv: *"Tourist tax for the 2020 season increased 3 times."*
* Volodymyrets*: "Due to the attracted new investor for amber extraction, the community’s budget will be increased by 125 thousand euro per year.”*

The application of the bottom up approach to the operational planning of LED activities, which was recommended by the M4EG methodology and communicated during the respective capacity building activities, is by several respondents considered as an important achievement. The dialogue with community representatives in the framework of the working groups on LEDP drafting and in some cases additional broad consultation processes, made it possible to get the opinion of businesses and take it into account while planning the LEDP activities.

*“The results of consultation procesess with the community members thanks to the conducted surveys were very useful for us in general, and in particular, they gave an impetus to changing the territorial marketing concept and approaches to promoting the city,”* Truskavets

In some cases, the received knowledge and skills and ability to apply them were depicted as the achievements. For example, the head of the Pniv community, Andrii Hunda, attributes his election victory to the knowledge and new experience gained as part of the Initiative.

*“Thanks to my participation in the LED project I received the latest knowledge and some practical skills in how the local governments can support economic development in their communities. The knowledge was used for my community development programme, which helped me be elected as the mayor,”* Andrii Hunda, Mayor of Pniv

The majority of respondents noted that the success of implementing measures to stimulate local economic development largely depends on the political and economic situation in the community, the region and in the country as a whole, but it is important to have the desire, knowledge and resources at the local government level, and participation in the EU M4EG Initiative was encouraging and supportive in these regards to the communities concerned.

*Question: What were the biggest challenges/setbacks you faced when implementing the plan (other than problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic)? Try to identify the reasons why some things failed/didn't work.*

During the interviews, most of the respondents could not but mention among the biggest challenges the COVID-19 pandemic, since the most urgent needs of the local health care entities had to be covered by local budgets, because the necessary funds were not provided from the upper level budgets, which led to the revision of the local budgets and postponing the implementation of some activities.

To some extend the acceleration of the process of community amalgamation was mentioned as challenging to the implementation of some LEDPs activities. The Decentralization Reform in Ukraine being currently in its final stage is applying the forced amalgamation of the communities’, which results also in reallocation of budget expenditures due to some changes of priorities, naturally affecting the accents of strategic and operational community development planning.

The feedback from the 80 respondents on the biggest problems and challenges in the implementation of LED plans could be split into the following categories:

**Lack of funds** (failed to attract additional funding, find an investor) – **25 respondents**

* Velykyi Kochuriv: *"We had to unexpectedly reallocate all the resources of the local budget to solve the issues that actually have to be funded through the state budget"*
* Chuhuiv: *“The main reason for non-fulfillment of the LED plan remains the lack of own funds”*
* Fastiv: *"The unstable funding from upper level budgets and the lack of investors constitute significant barriers.”*

**Low qualification of local self-government personnel– 17 respondents**

* Fursy: *"The lack of qualified personnel has become a serious challenge for us, because by creating ATC, we automatically moved to another level of professional communication (regional administration, Ministries).”*

**Non-transparency of public institutions** (including SRDF[[4]](#footnote-4)), **bureaucracy and instability in the country, regulatory gaps** – 15 respondents

* Tokmak: *"The country is always in the process of elections. Governments and ministries are changing”*
* Fursy: *"A significant challenge in the implementation of some measures from the LEDP is absence of the understanding from the regional authorities, which is worsened by the frequent changes of the decision makers. Four regional governors have been replaced in Kyivska Oblast in a year".*

**Absence of consensus between executive authorities and local councils, “political games”,** – 11 respondents

* Svitlovodsk: *"Some of the measures were not implemented in time for objective and subjective reasons, in particular due to the tough confrontation between the mayor and the majority of deputies of the city council."*
* Slavutych: *"The deputies sometimes approve the decisions in contradiction tot the current legislation"*
* Ukrainka: *"The political strife in the city resulted in the replacement of the leadership in the community, which in its turn led to changes in the municipal staff, including those responsible for economic development. This affected the process of the LEDP implementation".*

**Low commitment of businesses and community members’ mistrust to the authorities** – 15 respondents

* Merefa: *"The barrier was a certain distrust and unwillingness of businesses to join the implementation of projects and initiatives of the LED plan”*
* Slavutych: *"The city authorities did not immediately manage to actively involve business in the processes. This became possible only during the second year of LED plan implementation mainly thanks to the improved dialogue" .*

**Change of communities’ economic structure and reallocation of budget funds as a result of the Decentralization Reform** – 7 respondents

* Ivano-Frankivsk: *"As a result of amalgamation, our community integrated 19 other territorial units. Some of them are merely rural with dominating agriculture sector. Thus we have to reconsider the development priorities and reallocate the funds accordingly which may have impact on implementation of some of the LEDP activities"*
* Fursy: *"The challenge in implementing the LED plan was administrative and territorial reform and preparation for the local elections in 2020. As a result of the forced amalgamation, the economic disparities within newly created territorial units increased which led to the reallocation of the local funds”*

**Non provision of promised co-financing/external funding** – 5 respondents.

**Time required for implementation of some activities was not properly calculated -**2 respondents.

11 respondents reported to have no challenges or problems in the implementation of the LED plan.

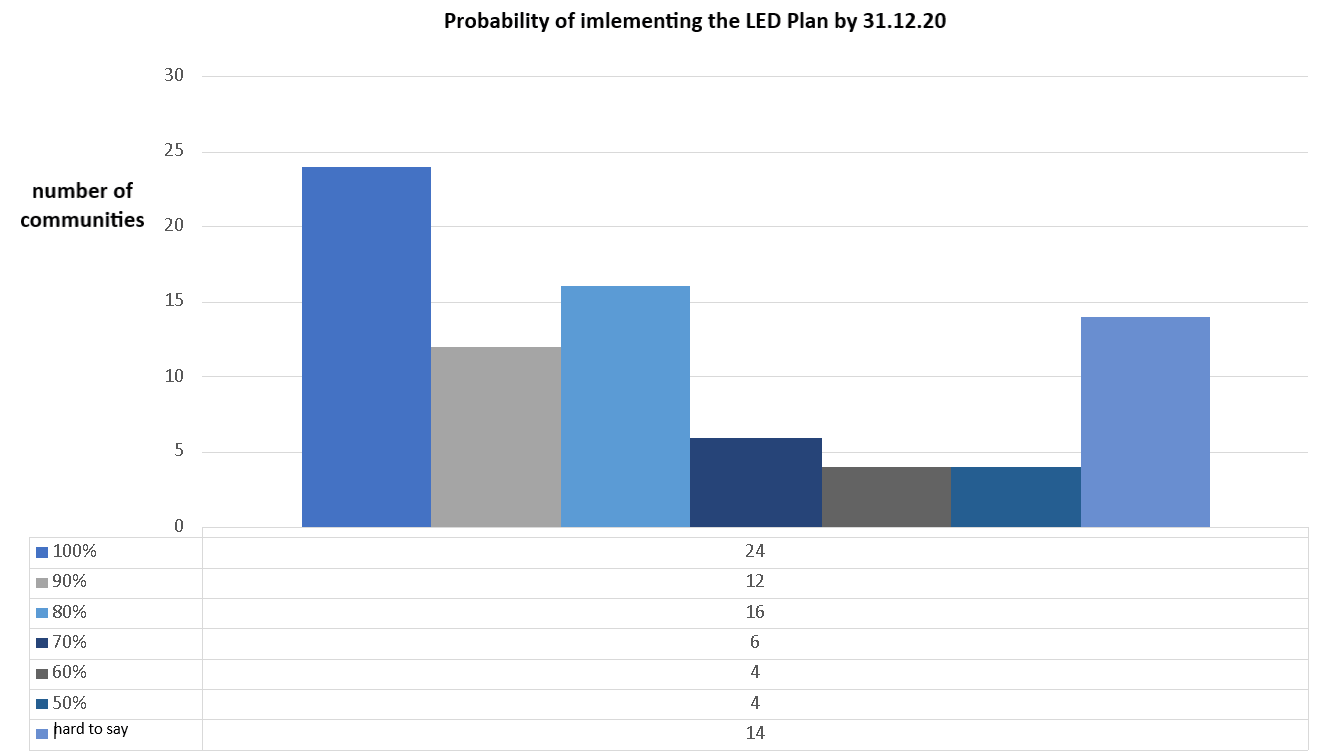
*Question: What is the probability that you will achieve your main goals under the Plan during the period allocated for implementing the plans?*

Given the uncertain situation in the country related to the local elections in October 2020 and, most importantly, the pandemic, the respondents assessed this probability rather cautiously and gave more restrained forecasts regarding the implementation of activities within the time limits set by the LED plan, which for majority of the surveyed communities ends on 31.12.2020.

Baranivka: *“Our biggest risks, which may affect the successful implementation of the plan, are closely related to local elections and the COVID-19 quarantine restrictions"*

Bilgorod-Dnistrovskyi: *"We planned to implement the plan by 100%, but given the current situation in the country and the uncertainty associated with the pandemic, the implementation of the plan is realistic by 80 %"*

Despite the above mentioned risk factors, 65% of the respondents, namely 52, are confident that at least 80% of the plans’ activities would be completed by the end of the implementation period.



Respondents of this group assured that even if the activities are not implemented within deadlines, they will be accomplished in any case, albeit late.

Lviv: *"As of 30.06.2020, the community has fulfilled 87% of all LEDP’s activities. The delays were caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a significant shortfall in funds from the city budget and the postponement of a number of measures included in the LED plan"*

Mala Vyska: *"We clearly could accomplish all activities in time, if not for COVID-19. Under these circumstances we would realistically accomplish 70-80% of them in time,”*

Korop: *"With a high probability, we will complete 70% of the activities within the specified time frame. And with a six-month delay, we think we will accomplish 100% of them"*

Dubno: *"During March-June 2020, the funds planned for the implementation of some measures were primarily used to combat the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, so with a delay of 1 year, we would fulfill all measures by 100%"*

Fourteen respondents gave a confident reply that from 50% to 79% of the planned activities will be accomplished in time.

Another fourteen respondents were not able to assess the probability of the LED plan activities implementation in time or make any clear outlook, which is explained mainly by the status of this group respondents, as they did not have sufficient authority to make forecasts of this scale, even in a semi-formal format. Some of these respondents only recently became advisers on local economic development.

A positive concluding statement based on the feedback to this question is that the majority of the communities, despite the existing problems and challenges, have confirmed their commitment to the achievements of the LED objectives, which is confirmed by the fairly successful process in implementing the LED plans.

*Question: What are the most positive things you have learned in planning and implementing measures to stimulate local economic development?*

According to the majority of respondents, cooperation with the Initiative contributed to building the capacities of the employees of local self-government bodies through learning the new important experience in the sphere of local economic development, in particular in modern approaches to the LED planning, local economic analyses, progress monitoring, establishing dialogue, networking, building partnership, in understanding the place and role of the local authorities in creating an enabling environment for LED, on-going learning and sharing new experience, etc.

55% of the respondents mentioned the ability to establish a dialogue and work in partnership as the major important thing learnt, which includes the understanding of the top down approach for planning LED activities, which assures that the opinion and vision of development priorities and actions of major stakeholders groups of the community, is heard and considered.

41 interviewed communities mentioned several significant positive gains for their municipalities, received in the process of drafting and implementation of the LED plans. The distribution of respondents' answers by topic of experience gained is as follows:

**Ability to establish effective communication with partners, teamwork skills, activation of the public, building a constructive dialogue with business community** – 44 respondents:

Fursy: *"We have learned how to cooperate with small and medium-sized businesses: first find a "common language", then increase the trust to the authorities and become partners in the implementation of ideas and projects to improve the economic situation in the community. We have learned how to jointly defend the interests of the community and negotiate with investors"*

Berezdiv: "*We have learned how to create a dialogue with businesses and community members at large"*

Velykyi Kochuriv: *"We have gained experience in teamwork of employees of local self-government bodies, deputies and businesses"*

Vynogradiv: *"We have learned to listen to and hear businesses"*

Khmelnytskyi: *"We consider the experience of building communications between all stakeholders in order to stimulate economic development as the most useful"*

**Ability to analyze economic situation, set up priorities, design activities, monitor implementation** – 28 respondents:

Chuhuiv: *"The analysis and data collection carried out during the preparation of the plan is a valuable new experience, which we have not widely applied earlier. Now we collect more data prior to taking the decisions which are important for the community."*

Balta: *"The most positive skill that we have learned is the ability to analyze, namely, to conduct a systematic analysis of the economic development of the city."*

**Ability to plan the economic development of the community in line with modern practices** – 17 respondents:

Berezdiv: *"We have learned the modern LED planning methodology, which we will continue to use now, after the current LED plan is over”*

Lviv: *"The city interprets the learnt LED support methodology as a tool that allows you to efficiently plan, implement and control the process of achieving the set goals."*

**Experience in creating partnerships with businesses and CSOs**– 12 respondents:

Trostianets: *"Thanks to the M4EG project, the community’ s trust to the authorities and confidence that jointly implemented projects are basically more successful. Businesses became more socially responsible and helped the authorities to implement some of the activities and overcome the consequences of the pandemic."*

Vynogradiv: *"The experience in building the partnerships with business and civil society during the implementation of the LED plan showed good results. We are confident we will continue moving forward together in the future, also after the implementation of the plan is completed"*

Kaniv: *"Among major lessons that the community has learned is the importance of involving businesses in the processes of planning and implementing LED activities. It leads to significantly greater results."*

Nemishaeve: *"We practiced a partnership with businesses for the first time. Thanks to the experience gained, we have learned to perceive business not only as “budget fillers”, but also as reliable partners"*

Biloziria: *" The main thing we learned is* *creating the partnerships. By implementing the Plan, we have created 4 partnerships and all turned out to be successful”*

Melitopol: *"The most important thing that the community has learned is the ability to establish and maintain dialogue and build partnerships”*

**Understanding the importance of networking for sharing experience** – 10 respondents:

Bucha: *"We have learnt the experience of the Khmelnitskyi, Zhytomyr, and Mykolaiv city councils which was applied for creation of the "Bucha Regional Development Agency"* – a *municipal institution for attracting investment and developing the local economy"*

Slavutych: *"The created networks were useful for sharing the experience in developing business support infrastructure with M4EG signatories from Moldova and Armenia."*

Volodymyr-Volynskyi: *"Thanks to participation in the M4EG Initiative we expanded our networks for exchange of LED experience".*

**Improved transparency of local authorities and better communication** (including coordination between units and departments of local self-government bodies)– 8 respondents:

Chortkiv: *"Thanks to the implementation of a LEDP, representatives of local authorities have learned to better communicate with each other, coordinate the activities and maintain a constructive dialogue with businesses and civil society organisations. These skills proved to be useful when 4 villages were amalgamated with our city in the process of decentralization.*

Volodymyrets and Berezan could not name any positive thing they learnt since both respondents from these communities have replaced the previous LEDOs only recently and were not familiar with the details related to the M4EG Initiative by the time the survey was conducted.

*Question: What would you do differently next time? Try to formulate summarized conclusions of your experience?*

Almost all respondents reported that in the course of drafting and implementation of the LEDPs the respective communities have learned number of lessons, and got the experience sufficient for making conclusions and building up vision for changes/improvements in the future.

43 communities (54%) of respondents noted that in the future, it will be necessary to significantly adjust the goals and activities of the new plans, since the basic parameters of the current state of development have changed during the process of communities’ amalgamation, taking into consideration the new structure of the economic activities and possible disparities in economic development.

Vynogradiv: *"One of the new community that joined our ATC is a city, with dominating urban types of business activities while our current plan is designed for creating the enabling environment for agriculture producers and for rural development"*

Chortkiv: *"Next time our community should pay attention to the solutions for rural areas, like, support to the creation of clusters and cooperatives, small farmers support, etc. because 4 villages have joined our city."*

Truskavets: *"As of today, we should diversify the next LEDP priorities and activities so they are no longer aimed at support to the tourism sector only. Five new communities have been integrated to Truskavets so we will discuss, consider and design the most appropriate support activities".*

29% of the signatories reported that some of the actions of their plans were too ambitious in terms of capabilities and resources of the community, so in the future these aspects will be considered more attentively the future.

11 respondents confirmed the suggested LED planning methodology to be logical and practical thus it will remain actual and will be applied at least for the next planning period.

The respondents' answers to this question were summarized as follows:

* To achieve the set goals, 23 respondents would more attentively align the planned activities with available resources;
* Adjust priorities and activities considering the changed structures of the amalgamated communities – 21 respondents;
* Would conduct more in depth local economic analyses prior to planning the next LEDP activities– 20 respondents;
* Would learn in more detail the experience of other communities (best practices) for the next planning - 11 respondents;
* Would rely exclusively on their own resources (no uncertain external funding) while planning the next LED support activities – 5 respondents;
* Increase the responsibility of the responsible employees for non-performance – 4 respondents;
* Assign external and experienced specialists for the analysis of the economic situation – 2 respondents;

One respondent stated that the time has not yet come to draw such conclusions *“there are still six months before the implementation of the LED plan is completed”.*

In addition, the respondents expressed their wishes and recommendations for possible improvements (new emphasis) in the future activities of the Initiative, in particular to increase the number of grant competitions, three of them mentioned to have grants with smaller budgets, but more often and embracing more communities”. The communities also noted that it would be useful to have more trainings, study trips, staff exchange and other experience sharing events.

# **Overall Conclusions**

The majority of the respondents have confirmed that the goal of the EU "Mayors for Economic Growth" Initiative to additionally convey to the communities the importance of creating a favorable environment for local economic growth and job creation has been achieved.

In course of development and implementation of the LED plans the signatories have been adequately supported by the M4EG Secretariat and Secretariat in terms of building their capacities and providing necessary guidance and advise. Thanks to the support form EU M4EG Initiative the majority of the interviewed communities managed to establish a dialogue and interaction with businesses, civil society and active residents, create partnerships, learnt how to conduct and apply the conclusions of economic analyses, monitor LEDPs’ implementation, as well as strengthened several other LED related skills, capacities, and abilities.

**The key results/achievements and impact from the LEDPs under implementation** based on respondents' feedback could be summarized as follows:

* Increased support to the entrepreneurship development (creation of business associations, economic development schools, business centers, industrial parks, measures to encourage entrepreneurship development, improvement/modernization of infrastructure– 69 respondents;
* Improved territorial marketing, community promotion and investment climate – 39 respondents;
* Increased support to the local tourism – 25 respondents;
* Strengthened public-private dialogue and increased number of partnerships – 24 respondents;
* Improved quality and quantity of Administrative Services – 19 respondents;
* Increased support to cooperatives, clusters and small holder agricultural producers – 16 respondents;
* Increased revenues to the community budgets – 3 respondents.

**Following skills and capacities of the local self-government bodies have been reported as improved and strengthened:**

* to establish and maintain open dialogue with business community and civil society– 44 respondents;
* to analyze the economic situation, set up priorities, design activities, monitor implementation – 28 respondents;
* to plan the economic development of the community in line with modern practices – 17 respondents;
* to understand the importance of networking for sharing experience – 10 respondents:
* to improve the transparency of local authorities – 8 respondents.

The foremost important achievement communicated by the majority of the respondents was the increased understanding of the leading role of the local governments in assuring the enabling environment for economic development and stable income generation of community members.

**In the course of design and implementation of the next coming LED plans the communities are recommended to** conduct more in depth economic analyses, set up demand-based priorities which are aligned to the available budgets and human resources, invest more into building capacities of the LED responsible staff members, outsource the specific technical expertise, introduce the knowledge and skills management system to prevent losing previous experience and knowledge as a result of the rotation of personnel.

**Recommendations for the EU M4EG Initiative’s next phase communicated by some respondents** were mainly about changing the approach to the grant components in favour of increased number of calls and grants with smaller budgets, increase of experts’ field missions to the communities to provide more on-site advice and guidance to the LEDOs and working groups, increase number of experience sharing events and learn successful models of support for economic development by local authorities.

This survey was conducted during the final stage of amalgamation of territorial communities, as a concluding phase of Decentralization Reform in Ukraine aiming to finalize the amalgamation on the day of the nationwide local elections scheduled for October 2020. The election to certain extend will change the leadership of communities and the “majorities” of local councils, although the main working level of specialists of local self-government bodies-signatories of the Initiative is expected to remain and, according to the majority of respondents, will continue to apply the experience, knowledge and skills gained in favor of the economic development of communities.

*ANNEXES:*

# **Annex 1. List of the interviewed signatories of the first and second wave**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Signatory** | **Respondent** | **Position** |
| 1 | Askania Nova | Andrii Shcherbina | Deputy Mayor |
| 2 | Balta | Eduard Rabinovych | Deputy Mayor |
| 3 | Baranivka | Olena Demianiuk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 4 | Berdiansk | Iryna Komarova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 5 | Berezan | Katerina Yakhno | Manager |
| 6 | Berezdiv | Maksym Tkachuk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 7 | Bilgorod-Dnistrovskyi | Olga Polinger | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 8 | Biloziria | Iryna Sinelnyk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 9 | Bucha | Olena Gorb | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 10 | Velykyi Kuchuriv | Mariia Tsukan | Secretary of the village council |
| 11 | Vynohradiv | Nataliia Makarchuk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 12 | Voznesensk | Nina Kutsovska | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 13 | Volodymyr-Volynskyi | Oksana Subytska | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 14 | Volodymyrets | Liudmyla Zatirka | Secretary of the village council |
| 15 | Gyboka | Grygorii Vanzuriak | Mayor |
| 16 | Gorishni Plavni | Olga Ovchynnykova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 17 | Dolyna | Oleksandr Kizyma | Director of "Dolyna-invest” municipal enterprise, member of the LEDP working group |
| 18 | Dubno | Myroslava Piddubnyk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 19 | Energodar | Iryna Kontsur | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 20 | Zhabotyn | Taras Pluzhnyk | Mayor |
| 21 | Zavodske | Zhanna Gabruska | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 22 | Zolotonosha | Viktoria Ostroglazova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 23 | Ivano-Frankivsk | Nadia Kromkach | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 24 | Irpin | Oksana Nechytailo | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 25 | Kamianets-Podilskyi | Maia Gurska | Director of Economics Department |
| 26 | Kaniv | Olena Zhornova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 27 | Korop | Andrii Belan | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 28 | Korosten | Hanna Babska | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 29 | Kramatorsk | Yaroslava Rubailo | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 30 | Krasnokutsk | Anastasia Babenko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 31 | Kremenchuk | Pavlo Bedratskyi | Deputy Mayor |
| 32 | Kreminna | Natalia Makogon | Deputy Mayor |
| 33 | Lubny | Viktoria Haleta | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 34 | Lviv | Oleg Leskiv | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 35 | Mala Vyska | Halyna Fedorenko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 36 | Mala Pereshchepyna | Nataliia Dvirnyk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 37 | Mamalyha | Olena Duminika | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 38 | Medvedivka | Olena Lehoniak | Deputy Mayor |
| 39 | Melitopol | Serhii Pryima | Deputy Mayor |
| 40 | Merefa | Kateryna Kobets | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 41 | Mykolaiv | Tetiana Shulichenko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 42 | Nedoboivtsi | Natalia Myronets | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 43 | Nemishaeve | Oksana Karpovets-Lysenko | Deputy Mayor |
| 44 | Nizhyn | Tetiana Pletniova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 45 | Nova Kakhovka | Viacheslav Kosteniuk | Director of the Development Agency, member of the LEDP working group |
| 46 | Nove Misto | Iryna Blida | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 47 | Novomyrgorod | Valentyna Mizu | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 48 | Obukhiv | Alina Kondratiuk | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 49 | Oleksandriia | Stanislav Kuznietsov | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 50 | Okhtyrka | Alla Yarmak | Deputy Mayor |
| 51 | Pervomaiskyi | Anton Oriekhov | Deputy Mayor |
| 52 | Pyriatyn | Iryna Soldatova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 53 | Pniv | Andrii Hunda | Mayor |
| 54 | Pokrov | Anna Tkachenko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 55 | Popilnia | Olena Nikolaieva | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 56 | Pryluky | Olena Kanavets | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 57 | Pryshyb | Valentyna Horodianko | Mayor |
| 58 | Rukshyn | Inna Honduriaga | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 59 | Sambir | Oksana Fur | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 60 | Svatove | Liudmyla Zhadanova | Deputy Mayor |
| 61 | Svitlovodsk | Oleksandr Voznyi | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 62 | Severynivka | Vladyslav Pidhaiets | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 63 | Severodonetsk | Natalia Petrivna | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 64 | Slavuta | Lilia Maksymova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 65 | Slavutych | Larysa Nikitenko | Director of the Development Agency, member of the LEDP working group |
| 66 | Sokyriany | Nataliia Perepelytsia | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 67 | Ternivka | Lilia Kryzhanovska | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 68 | Tetiiv | Vitalii Karpovych | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 69 | Tinky | Viktoria Fedorova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 70 | Tokmak | Nataliia Kryvoruchko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 71 | Trostianets | Dmytro Tsybulko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 72 | Truskavets | Natalia Skybak | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 73 | Tulchyn | Nataliia Hnatenko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 74 | Uzhgorod | Sehii Shcherbanych | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 75 | Ukrainka | Inna Shevel | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 76 | Fastiv | Nataliia Forsenko | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 77 | Fursy | Mykola Fursenko | Mayor |
| 78 | Khmelnytskyi | Oksana Novodon | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 79 | Chortkiv | Svitlana Chernysh | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |
| 80 | Chuhuiv | Tetiana Krasylnikova | Adviser to the Mayor on LED |

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# **Annex 2. Interview Questionnaire**

*Part I. General outcomes and results of participation in the M4EG Initiative*

1. Has being an M4EG member changed your perception of what and how local authorities can do in order to stimulate local economic growth? Explain your answer.
2. Has the participation in the M4EG Initiative influenced the state of the public-private dialogue and interaction with civil society in your municipality? How? Have you built any new local partnerships? Provide examples.
3. Has the participation in the M4EG Initiative influenced the capacity of the municipal staff to analyze local economic development issues and plan respective interventions? How? Provide examples.
4. Has being an M4EG member helped you learn about successful tools and approaches of stimulating LED in other municipalities of your country, or in other countries? Provide examples.
5. Have you built any friendships or partnerships with other M4EG members (experts, trainers, etc.), which you have used in your work afterwards? Give examples.

*Part II. Specific results and outcomes of the LEDP implementation process.*

1. Name your biggest achievements so far in implementing your LEDP (name activities or objectives). Support this claim with measurable numbers. Explain why they are important for your municipality.
2. What were the biggest challenges/failures in implementing your LEDP (apart from the delays and disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic)? Try to identify reasons why things didn’t work.
3. What is the probability of achieving the major objectives of your LEDP within the remaining implementation period of your LEDPs?
4. What are the main positive things you have learnt while planning and implementing measures for stimulating local economic growth?
5. What would you have done differently next time? Try to formulate lessons learnt from this experience.

*Author - Nataliia Unuchko*

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1. *As on 01.10.2020* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *LEDOs- local economic development officers* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *COVID -19 lockdown prevented broad application of the study visits. Since March 2020 the grantees are disseminainge the experience mainly applying online formats* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. State Regional Development Fund [↑](#footnote-ref-4)