The Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative

Children at the heart of the community,
The Child and Youth Friendly Municipality (CYFM) Initiative is a UNICEF initiative that is intended to support local authorities to enable children and youth to exercise their rights.

The Initiative has been implemented worldwide since 1996 and covers more than 3,000 municipalities in 38 countries on 5 continents.

In Ukraine, implementation of the Initiative began in 2018. More than 170 municipalities have expressed interest in joining the Initiative, but only some of them have been selected to participate. As of the end of July 2020, 35 cities and municipalities (23 of which already have intermediate candidate status) with more than 9 million residents are participating in the Initiative.
Objectives of the CYFM Initiative

• To bring together local governments, civil society and businesses to promote the well-being of all children and youth.

• To create favourable conditions for the development and self-realization of every child and young person.

• To assist the municipalities to attract investments by positioning them as child and youth friendly.

• To change the municipalities’ priorities in making all decisions: by joining the CYFM Initiative, local authorities recognize that the well-being of children and youth, and respect for their interests, are the key goals of their activities.

What should a child and youth friendly municipality be like?

This is a municipality that works systematically to become a place in which young people and children:

• are safe and protected from exploitation, violence and humiliation;
• have a good start in life to grow up healthy and realize themselves;
• have access to quality social, health and educational services;
• express their opinions and participate in making decisions that affect them;
• participate in the family, cultural and social life of the city/municipality;
• live in an environmentally friendly, inclusive and safe setting;
• have spaces for communication, development, play and rest;
• have equal opportunities.
Implementation of the Initiative in Ukraine
35 municipalities are taking part in the CYFM Initiative (out of more than 170 municipalities that have applied)
**CYFM Initiative activity areas**

Depending on the needs of children and youth locally, the municipality chooses priority areas of activity. However, any municipality can focus on working in all activity areas of the CYFM Initiative.

**Why is the CYFM Initiative necessary for municipalities?**

The **municipality** receives strong public and investment support, which fosters the development of local democracy and reaching consensus at the local level. In addition, the municipality joins a large network of global mutual assistance, which includes municipalities from other countries.

**NGOs**, engaged in ensuring the upholding of the rights of children and young people in the municipality have more opportunities for constructive cooperation with local authorities.

**Residents** receive a safe and comfortable municipality to live in.

**Local businesses**, by investing in the social well-being and upholding of the rights of children and youth, help to stabilize the local situation, promote the predictability of local development and governance and achieve recognition in the municipality.

- The right to health care, education and social protection
- The right to be heard
- The right to recognition, respect and fair treatment
- The right to security
- The right to childhood
Assistance of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF is committed to supporting Ukrainian municipalities that have expressed a strong intention to join the Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative in the following fields:

- Assessment of the situation of children and youth rights in accordance with the areas defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Expert consultations on drawing up an Action Plan and a budget for its implementation.
- Promoting cooperation with municipalities of other countries participating in the Initiative.
- Support in the design of mechanisms for the effective involvement of children and youth in the development of local municipalities.
- Fundraising.

How to join and receive the status of a friendly municipality?

1. Adopt a decision to join the Initiative and sign the relevant Memorandum with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).
2. Analyse the situation of children and youth rights in the municipality.
3. Choose at least 3 of the 5 activity areas of the Initiative, in which the municipality will work.
4. Draw up an Action Plan and a budget for its implementation in the coming years.
5. Receive the logo of the candidate for the Initiative, which can be used both in internal communication and for communication with municipalities of other countries, partners and the business community.
6. Implement the Action Plan within 2-3 years.
7. Receive an independent evaluation of the outcomes.
8. Obtain a status of a Child and Youth Friendly Municipality.
The municipalities that were the first to join the Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative in 2018 have already shown the first outcomes of implementation of Action Plans to improve the lives of children and youth.

### Social services

- **223** events conducted to popularize foster care
- **432** events held on positive parenting
- **144** campaigns to inform vulnerable families about social services and benefits
- **47** orphans received housing

### Leisure and environment

- **7** recreation areas created
- **3** green zones created
- **271** rubbish bins installed
- **131** sports grounds renovated or created

- **8 out of 10** children live in walking distance of green recreation areas
- **8 out of 10** children are satisfied with the leisure facilities in their communities
Accessibility

Up to 60% of educational institutions equipped for children with disabilities

17 inclusive resource centres created

4 inclusive playgrounds opened

65 nursing rooms opened

Child rights to speak up

Child and Youth City Councils act in 9 communities

6 Youth Forums took place

3 Youth Centres established

20 youth initiatives received financing from local budgets

Safety

8 out of 10 children believe their path to school is safe

9 out of 10 children believe their communities are safe

1576 security cameras set up in communities

Healthcare

200 awareness campaigns about immunization and prevention of communicable diseases

47 child- and youth-friendly health care premises opened
25 Ukrainian cities delegated power to children for one day

25 Ukrainian cities and municipalities were led by children for one day to draw attention to the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Representatives of local authorities – mayors, heads of amalgamated territorial communities (ATCs) and heads of departments – let children take their positions for one day and listened to their advice on key decisions in cities and municipalities.

These events in Ukraine were part of the special events to mark World Children’s Day, which this year coincides with the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – a human rights treaty ratified by most countries in the world.

Shortly before, the Verkhovna Rada joined UNICEF’s global activities. For the first time in the modern history of Ukraine, the work of the Parliament was opened by children together with the Speaker. 315 MPs voted to include children’s speeches in the Rules of Procedure of the Verkhovna Rada.

Ukrainian cities joined the Global Summit of Child Friendly Cities

Organized by UNICEF with the support of the city of Cologne, the first-ever Summit of Child Friendly Cities brought together more than 550 participants – mayors, local leaders, technical experts, children and youth from more than 60 countries – to discuss innovative approaches to the exercise of children’s rights and their empowerment at the local level.

At the Cologne Summit, Ukraine was represented by administrations and youth from Lviv, Novoukrainka and Bilozirka.

During the Summit, more than 100 mayors from 40 countries signed a Declaration intended to accelerate progress in improving the lives, opportunities and well-being of children in cities around the world. The Declaration implies a commitment by mayors to demonstrate specific measurable outcomes; involvement of children in city development; and elimination of discrimination against children and youth in local policies.
UNICEF’s online course trained 43 youth participation specialists

43 participants successfully completed a series of webinars of the training course “How to ensure the active participation of children and youth in municipalities”. The online course was launched in January 2020 to train young leaders and their municipalities in practical tools for collaboration and ways to involve children and youth in decision-making in municipalities.

More than 2,000 people viewed the webinars, and almost 400 applicants from 30 participating municipalities registered for the training. According to the final testing results, 43 participants were selected by the jury for the next stage of training – implementation of their own projects.
Lviv

The Lviv Children’s Advisory Council initiated a project to combat bullying in schools entitled ‘Bullying STOPS Here’. In order to draw attention to the problem, students make short thematic videos and present them in different schools. The city also participates, with experts from the Office of Children’s Services, the Personnel Management Department of the Lviv City Council or the Main Territorial Department of Justice in the Lviv Oblast joining every presentation and deliver lectures and trainings. The project has already covered 50 per cent of all schools in the city. Launched as a student initiative, the project is being implemented solely on a volunteer basis and does not require additional funding.

In Lviv, child care rooms were opened at 65 public facilities. Separate parking spaces for parents with children are being designated at car parks near hospitals, schools and other public facilities.
Nova Borova

In 2018, the Novoborivska ATC conducted a survey among local residents with disabilities about the problems they, in particular children, face in their daily lives. Physical development and social adaptation were the universally recognized priorities. In response, the local authorities supported the establishment of the first inclusive site at the inclusive resource centres that was already operating in the municipality. As a result, 64 children with disabilities have had opportunities to play sports and relax safely, as well as to socialize with other children in the municipality.

Novoukrainka

While on maternity leave, women risk taking passive roles in the lives of their municipalities and lose their professional skills. The majority of 427 respondents interviewed in the Novoukrainka ATC agreed with this. Thus, the local authorities, with the support of donor programs in Ukraine, in November 2018, established a public centre for them called ‘MAM-Centre – a Space for Mobile Active Mums’. The Centre has three priority activity areas: adult education, increasing social activity and competitiveness of women in the labour market, and supporting them in the implementation of their initiatives. Seven experts work in the Centre on a voluntary basis.
Vinnytsia

In 2019, Vinnytsia won the international Child Friendly Cities Inspire Awards among the most child friendly cities in the world. A project to finance student initiatives brought victory to the Ukrainian city. In total, UAH 1 million was allocated from the city budget to 11 school projects. Through this participation budget, new creative spaces were arranged for students in student lounges, libraries unused utility rooms. In addition, recreation areas were established, the Assembly Hall and sports locker room were re-equipped, emergency medical assistance courses were provided, mental maps on the basics of rhetoric were created, and an anti-bullying project was implemented.

In 2020, Vinnytsia City Council doubled the funding of school projects: students submitted their projects for a total of UAH 2 million, and 8 winning projects were selected.

Kamianets-Podilsky

One of the important activity areas of the CYFM Initiative is the development of leadership skills. For municipalities, this presents an opportunity to train future managers. In order to raise a new generation of leaders, an internship was organized for young people at the Kamianets-Podilsky City Council Faculty of Municipal Administration. Sixty-five young people expressed their willingness to familiarize themselves with the work of local government, to learn how to prepare the applications and implement youth projects, to acquire leadership skills and to make new friends. 35 young people received certificates of successful internship.
Uman

Youth volunteering is actively developing in Uman. In particular, the city has a unique free online platform, League of Volunteers. With the help of this portal, children and young people are taking part in city improvement activities, social and cultural projects.

In 2020, the Coworking Centre Sofa Hub was opened in Uman. There is an events hall, rooms-transformers, coworking and recreation areas. The Hub will host training events, workshops, master classes and many other events. The space brings together the progressive, talented and those willing to develop. The 200-square-meter Centre is free to use and open to everyone.

Volodymyr-Volynskyi

Volodymyr-Volynskyi has twice hosted a Business Initiative among Youth competition, which promotes youth entrepreneurship and delivers training in the basics of doing business. To participate in the project, young people submitted their own business ideas. The proposers of the most promising ideas were selected for the next stage – training, during which the entrepreneurship theory and practice experts taught the participants to develop business plans and implement them. As a result, the young people presented their own business plans, and the winners were the EcoUA project for the production and sale of eco-pens, HOLIDAY STUDIO - a photo studio and event planning agency, and Eco-Dishes - a project for the production of disposable cornstarch tableware.

Odesa

A survey revealed an urgent need for social protection of children with disabilities in Odesa. In response to this need, an outpatient department for early rehabilitation and medical support of children with disabilities and vulnerable children under the age of 7 was opened in the city. Now, 200 children can receive rehabilitation services simultaneously.
Every third Ternopil resident is a young person. Participation in the Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative gives impetus to the development of youth policy in our city. For us, the Initiative is the response of local authorities to the requests of young people.

Yaroslav Zhdanovych, aged 23, Ternopil

It is important for our municipality to participate in the Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative, because adolescents and young people can see and even suggest solutions to problems that adults do not notice. For young people it is a chance to realize themselves and show their abilities. I am pleased that our city is modern and friendly to us. I urge everyone: do not hope that someone will make your land better. The change is in your hands!

Yaroslav Utenko, aged 17, Druzhkivka

Youth energy - for the benefit of the city! That is why our city was chosen as the winner of global Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative.

Andriy Makarov, aged 24, Kremenchuk
Vinnytsia is a city you want to stay in! This is the main goal of the coming decade for our municipality. Participation in the UNICEF Child and Youth Friendly Municipality Initiative encourages children, youth, authorities, NGOs, businesses to focus on creating an environment that enables every child and young person to feel like a full member of the municipality in which they want to live, study, work.

**Volodymyr Dodon, aged 17, Vinnytsia**

Three years ago, it was important for us to find a tool that would help create more comfortable and attractive living conditions, establish dialogue between the authorities and young people, and involve young people in the making of important decisions. We are in favour of cool projects not being lost in the flow of information, but being implemented for the benefit of city residents, so we were among the first to join the UNICEF Initiative after its launch in Ukraine. The results of our cooperation can be seen by everyone: the creation of a recreation area for children and youth, the opening of a preschool education facility, a significant improvement in accessibility for people with disabilities and other persons with reduced mobility in the city and beyond. Implementing projects under the Initiative is the best investment, because the future of children depends on us, and ours depends on them.

**Natalia Yaroshuk, aged 29, Volodymyr-Volynskyi**

Such projects enable children and young people from all over the world to communicate and share experiences at the international level.

**Tymofiy Bilokoz, aged 17, Novoukrainska ATC**
I would very much like all people to follow the traffic safety rules so that there are no road accidents ever. If I were mayor, I would give a reward to everyone who follows these rules. And I would give some money to low-income families so they could spend it on children's entertainment.

Sviatoslav, aged 9, Poltava

We know that trees clean the air, and there are not enough of them in our city, because we have a lot of factories that are not clean, a lot of cars and exhaust fumes. That's why we need a lot of reserves and parks. We also need a lot of ramps. And they should not be steep, as in our underpasses, so that mums with pushchairs or people in wheelchairs can ride up or down.

Taras, aged 8, Zaporizhzhia

I would consign heavy schoolbags to the past; the times of scoliosis would be gone forever. Because we need to keep up with the times and we would get e-books. Also, it is necessary to hide rubbish cans under the ground and teach the city's residents to sort waste. Old houses need to be given new life; beautiful murals need to be painted on them. City residents should use bicycle lanes and everyone should become fond of eco-friendly transport - I will build bicycle lanes everywhere and install bicycle parking racks where necessary.

Oleksandr, aged 11, Chernivtsi
My friends and I have nowhere to go for a walk. We can only play football at the stadium, but I don’t like football. We saw a playground in Odesa where skaters, rollerbladers and cyclists rode. It would be great to have the same for us in our district.

Rodion, aged 12, Dnipro

The whole city should be colourful. The playground should be colourful. And the slides should be soft at the bottom to make the playground safer.

Yaroslava, aged 7, Khotyn

To prevent traffic jams, another route is needed, above the cars. And replace petrol cars with electric ones. Then global warming will stop.

Rostyslav, aged 6, Kyiv

I would build a factory to make flying cars! Yes, an air car factory. And it would need to have a school where children will be taught to drive them. They are not difficult to drive, and children learn quickly!

Dariy, aged 6, Kyiv

I would build a Play Centre for children, so that children do not play on the road, but at the Centre, and so that they do not get into trouble.

Arina, aged 5, Kostiantynivka
For more detailed information and if you wish to join the Initiative, please contact us at:

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