

CONFERENCE REPORT:
GAME OF CITIES:
CULTURE, PARTICIPATION, DEMOCRACY



Urb Cultural Planning project is funded by the Interreg Baltic Sea Region (BSR) programme.

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We would like to thank all the presenters for contributing to this report by sharing presentations content. All the photos included in this document are shared by the conference speakers.



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Conference Report:

Game of Cities: Culture, Participation, Democracy

Conference took place via ZOOM.us platform on 19-21 November 2020 as a part of UrbCulturalPlanning within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region program.

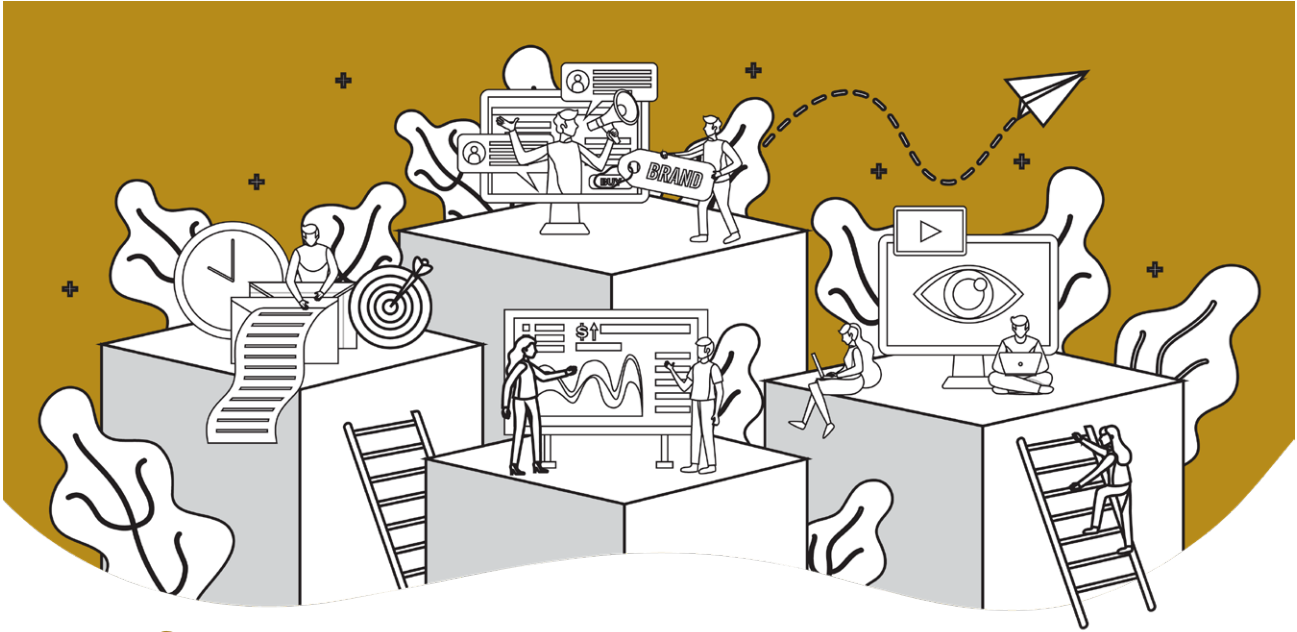
1. Introduction

The second conference of UrbCulturalPlanning INTERREG Baltic Sea Region project took place online from Gdansk, Poland from 19 – 21 NOVEMBER 2020 and was hosted by the Pomorskie Voivodeship/Regional Authority in Poland. The conference gathered urbanists, city planners, artists, researchers, and academics, as well as students, community organizers, politicians and activists who were willing to explore culture perspectives in urban strategies and practice. Main question we were trying to find an answer for, was:

‘How can we use cultural approaches to make our cities and neighbourhoods better places to live?’

The conference consisted of keynotes, panel discussions, and workshops, the aim of this three-day event was to experience, sense, and feel how urban transformation can be triggered by participation through a cultural planning approach.

‘Game of Cities: Culture, Participation, Democracy is a metaphor regarding who “owns” communities and “plays” cities. The conference addresses how municipalities can empower citizen driven community development. In this “game” we use the cultural planning approach to address different social challenges.’



2. Conference recap

2.1. Opening session

a/ theme

The conference was opened by Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship Mieczysław Struk. Main message was delivered by Anna Gołędzinowska, Chairwomen of the Sustainable Development Committee at the Gdańsk City Council. General Introduction was conducted by Krystyna Wróblewska, Head of Baltic Sea Bureau, Pomorskie Region.

b/ schedule

13.30-14.00 Introduction

Intro to Cultural Planning: Līva Kreislere (LV), architect and cultural planner

Comments: **Lia Ghilardi**, Cultural Planner

Moderator: **Mārtiņš Enģelis** (UrbCulturalPlanning)

2.2. Conference blocks

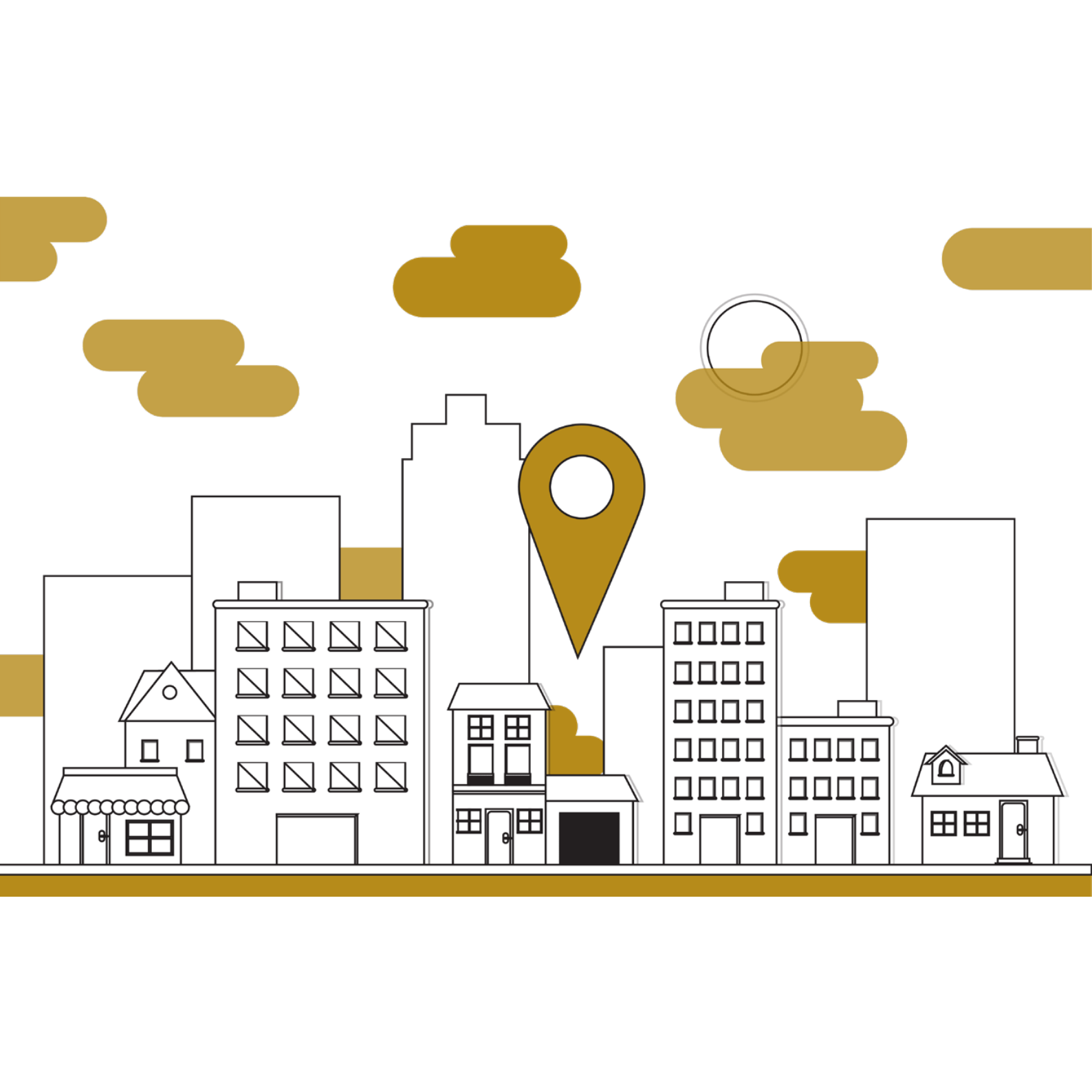
Conference was divided into 4 main blocks. Each of them was connected with cultural planning but had a specific focus:

- **The First block had a focus on CITIES and CITIZENSHIP, namely on models to reinterpret new challenges and possibilities of participatory decision making, participatory budgeting, participatory visioning. It explored how political systems adapt and react to those changes.**
- **Second one was aiming to discuss BUILDING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS, engaging, identifying them as a force in the city building and on empowering communities and the locals. This block puts emphasis on how we can change the places while putting inhabitants and unique features of the space in the centre.**
- **In the third Block, the MODELS of DIRECT participation in and with ARTS AND CULTURE incl. arts/ gaming in cities and including activism / activism, youth and alternative strategies from civil society were described. The main question of this block was: how cultural practice is changing and how the arts can stimulate direct engagement.**
- **Block 4 focused on PROCESSES of engagement and direct participation through GAMIFICATION. This block's main theme was to illustrate how urban gamification and elements of playfulness within urban environment can offer strategic cultural interventions in city planning. We've sought the answer to the question of how can we use games, gamification and forms of directed play to engage citizens and key communities in urban planning?**

2.3. Participants

The Conference Game of Cities: Culture, Participation, Democracy was attended by 255 attendees from all three sectors: public, private and civic. Participates from the Pomorskie region, other parts of Poland, as well as from abroad: Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Russia, representing:

- International organizations such as UN Habitat or Union of Baltic Cities, which are Associate Organization of UrbCulturalPlanning project and important actors supporting implementation of inclusive, participatory planning policies
- Large number of Baltic Sea Region cities and municipalities, both those which are partners of UrbCulturalPlanning project (Riga, Gdansk, Kiel, Pori, Vilnius, Visiginas, Kaliningrad and Guldborgsund Municipality), as well as other such as Gdynia, Warsaw, Helsinki etc.
- Supra-local level government such as Marshal's Office of Pomorskie Voivodeship (departments of culture, promotion, international cooperation), Pomeranian Regional Planning Office Academy: among others Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, University Of Helsinki, Gdańsk University of Technology, University of Gdańsk, University of Skövde, Academy of Fine Arts (Gdansk), University of Wroclaw, Tampere University
- Numerous institutions and associations:
 - o cultural institutions e.g Institute of City Culture, Globe Art Point;
 - o institution involved in promotion of participation and democracy e.g. Stefan Batory Foundation;
 - o associations working directly on promotion of cultural planning approach: Föreningen för Cultural Planning (Sweden)
 - o institutions connected with gamification in urban space such as Trust in Play;
 - o NGO, artists, curators and residents interested in participatory approach to shaping public space through the culture.



2.4. Block 1: CITIES AND CITIZENSHIP

Thursday, 19 November (14:30 -18:00 CET) How do inclusive models for participation offer novel ways to engage citizens in their communities?

a/ theme

The aim of block 1 was to present models allowing to reinterpret new challenges and the possibilities of participatory decision making, participatory budgeting and participatory visioning. During this session the answer to the question of finding inclusive models of participation offering novel ways to engage citizens in their communities was sought.

The first breakout session focused on the planning and cultural aspect of sustainable inclusive development. This session consisted of contextualization of cultural planning as a transversal and cross-sector approach, which uses culture to drive social innovation, and which belong to different planning remits (economic, environmental, social, cultural etc.). Inviting the Chairs of two, the most relevant from the point of view of Cultural Planning, Commissions of the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC): Cultural Cities and Planning Cities allowed us to foster dialogue between planning and cultural perspective. UBC can become a platform for the BSR Cultural Planning Hubs of Excellence to spread uptake of method by other BSR cities, which are not directly involved into UrbCulturalPlanning project, and to qualify use of Cultural Planning, via cities, promoting Urban Toolkit and Policy Road Maps.

In this part, also other UBC members involved directly in UrbCulturalPlanning project (Riga city, Gdansk city, Kiel city and Guldborgsund Municipality), as well as other cities/partners of UrbCultural Planning project (Vilnius, Visiginas, Kaliningrad) were asked to join the discussion. During the second breakout session we focused on the creation of place specific participation models on example of two Baltic Cities: the City of Helsinki and the City of Gdańsk. Both of those municipalities, already for some years, have implemented different models of participation.

This session was concluded with recommendations of how to change governance culture and which steps to take in order to successfully implement appropriate participation model. In the third breakout session participatory budgeting and its different models were discussed. It was enriched with the discussion on the condition which needs to be fulfilled so as this direct participation tool can be effective. The takeaways of this block were practical findings, presented by representatives of cities of Gdańsk, Helsinki, Gdynia, Pori and Warsaw), which can be useful for designing and implementing cultural planning policies in the BSR Cities.

b/ schedule**14.30-15.40 Plenary session and Q&A: Cities and Citizenship**

Keynote 1 : **Christelle Lahoud** (LB), UN Habitat

Keynote 2 : **Marcin Gerwin** (PL), activist and specialist in deliberative democracy

Moderator: **Trevor Davies** (DK), UrbCulturalPlanning, Københavns Internationale Teater

15.40-16.00 Highlights from breakout sessions

16.00-16.30 *Coffee Break*

16.30-17.30 Breakout sessions

Breakout (1) **Is active citizenship prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive development? A Baltic City Perspective**

Moderator: Dorota Kamrowska – Załuska (PL), Gdansk University of Technology

Breakout (2) **How do you create a participation model for your context and your city?**

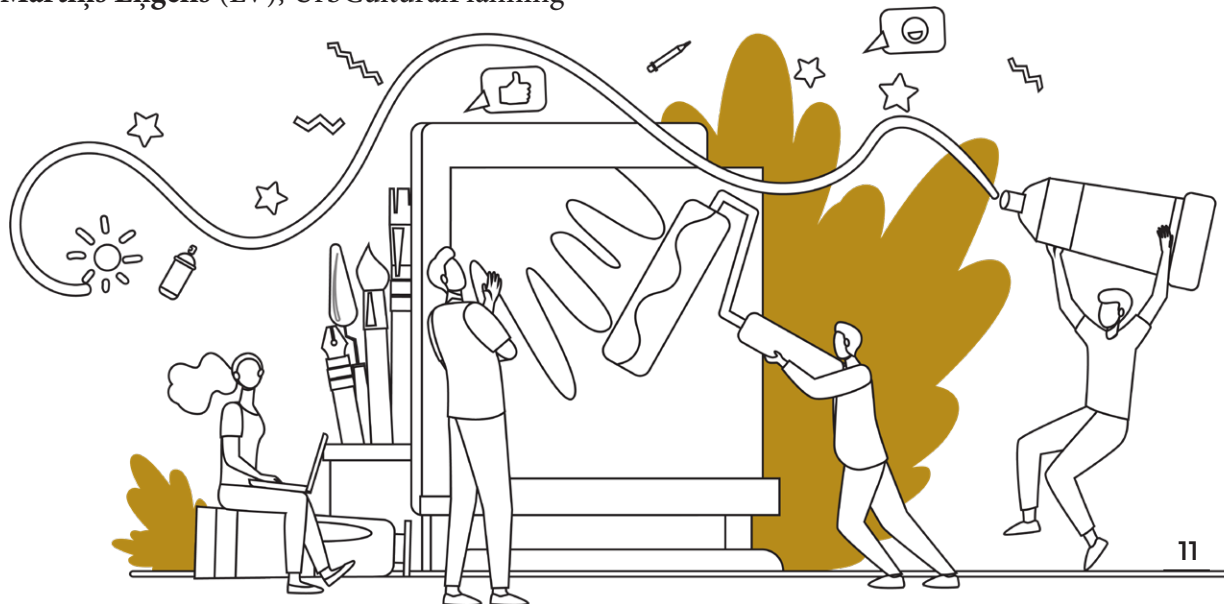
Moderator: **Kati Fager** (FI), UrbCulturalPlanning, City of Pori

Breakout (3) **What can we learn from different models of participatory budgeting?**

Moderator: **Jonas Büchel** (DE/LV), Co-Founder at Urban Institute, Riga

17:00 – 17:30 Plenary round-up with break out leaders

Moderator: **Mārtiņš Engēlis** (LV), UrbCulturalPlanning



c/ speakers & presentations

Christelle Lahoud (LB) UN Habitat: *How do inclusive models for participation offer novel ways to engage citizens in their communities?*

Marcin Gerwin (PL) author and activist, co-founder of “Sopot Development Initiative”, author of “Food and Democracy”: *Towards deliberative democracy*

Paulina Szewczyk (PL) UBC Planning Cities Commission: *Is active citizenship prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive development? – planning perspective*

Rūta Stepanoviatė (LT) UBC Cultural Cities Commission: *Is active citizenship prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive development? – cultural perspective*

Johanna Seppälä (FI), City of Helsinki, Head of the Unit, *Participation and Information: People make the City Democracy and participation in the city of Helsinki*

Magdalena Skiba (PL), Cityhall of Gdansk: *Gdańsk fostering active and responsible communities*

Małgorzata Madej (PL), University of Wrocław: *What can we learn from different models of participatory budgeting?*

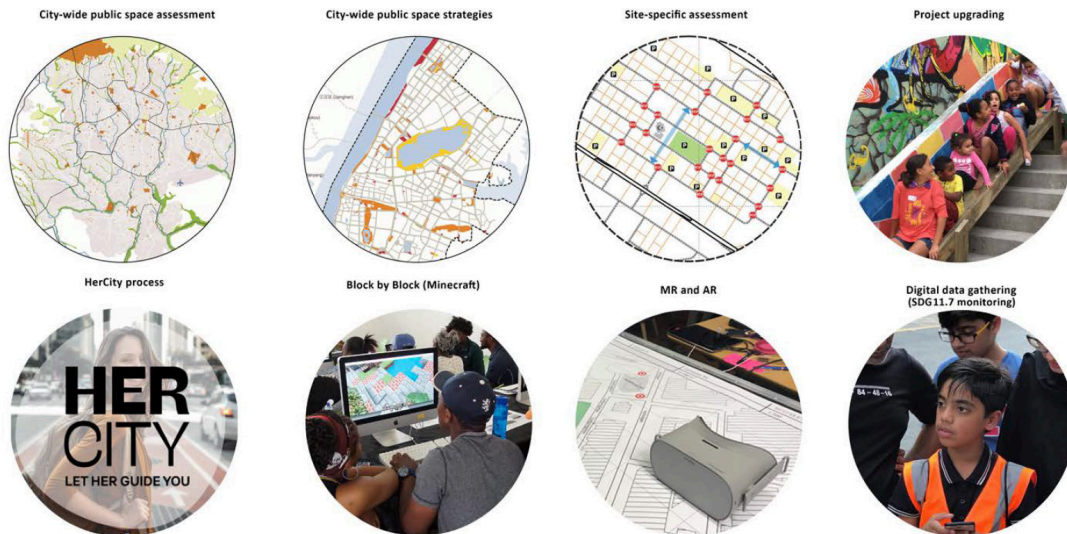
Ewa Stokłuska (PL), City of Gdynia and City of Warsaw: *What can we learn from different models of participatory budgeting?*



d/ key takeaways

During this session the importance of Urban Agenda, which should serve as a framework for participatory transformation of urban space, was pointed out. At the same time, in recent years the process of participation is digitalized and a large number of tools supporting this processes all over the World are being introduced, such as: digital stakeholder mapping, digital measuring app, digital site survey, digital interview, digital exploratory works, digital focus groups discussion and, last but not least, digital quality scoring.

Engagement tools



Simultaneously, an engagement of the communities need to be a continuous process which allows to assess the quality of public space for the life cycle of the project. It is also vital to include vulnerable groups of citizens to ensure inclusiveness of the projects.

Targeted groups



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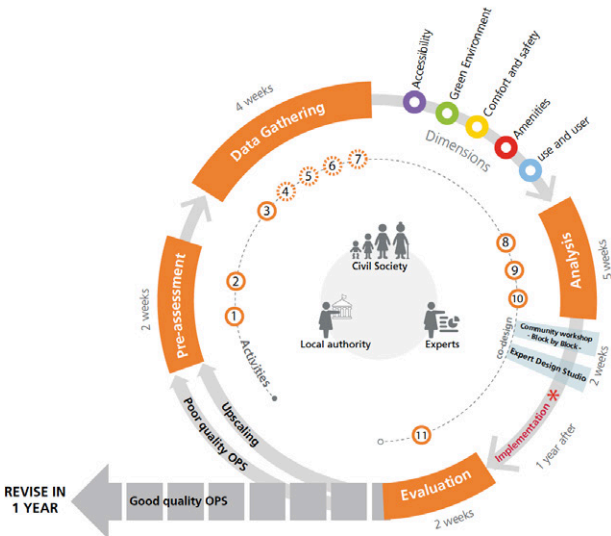
Public space is still underestimated asset of the city while benefits of it are numerous and diverse:

One of the most important tools of direct democracy is a citizen assembly, which allows for independent decision-making and collection of diverse perspectives. This process will work if all stakeholders are invited on equal grounds, conditions for deliberation are favourable and, the most importantly, the common good is at the heart of this process. This tool can be effective if the process is well-designed, common trust is built, best possible experts on the topic are invited and there is a willingness to implement the recommendations.

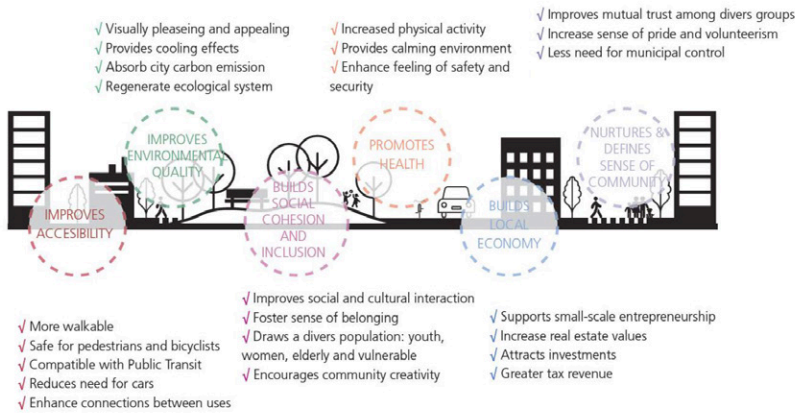
Union of Baltic Cities is an organization which is actively supporting planning and cultural experts working in Baltic Cities. It can play a vital role

Continuous process

Continuous process to engage communities and **assess the quality of public spaces throughout the lifecycle of the project**



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in introducing and strengthening cultural planning approach as Commissions of Planning City and Culture City are directly involved in the projects which follow the same principles. During our session it was stressed that the dialogue between planning and cultural perspective if those complement each other can support urban change. The Planning City Commission of UBC is doing hands-on work around the Baltic Sea, which allows planners and cities' representatives to learn from each other. This participative approach is present in all four layers of community work, they do: social cohesion, inclusion of cultural perspective in planning projects, presence of culture in public space, utilization of planning as a platform and format for cultural activities.

In this context we identified unique features of cultural planning, which make urban projects effective: collaborative approach, inclusiveness, affordability, focus on small and medium-sized cities and reliance on the unique feature of territories. This can be illustrated by important quote of American urban activist - Jane Jacobs:

„Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Important uptake from this session was identification of the main aspects of governance culture change which were needed to implement participatory approach in Gdańsk: presence of Mayor's vision – „Gdańsk as a community”, establishing the Gdańsk Club – think tank for social change and innovation, support of a new profile of civil servants – administration closer to citizens, city as a broker. The need of a cross-sectoral, integrated approach, both within city administration and outside as well as the

importance of the quality relations based on: trust, respect, honesty, openness, partnership and inclusiveness was also stressed. Further the most important principles of the participation processes for the City of Helsinki were identified:

Principles of participation



**Utilising know-how
and expertise of
individuals and
communities**



**Enabling
self-motivated
civic activity**



**Creating equal
opportunities for
participation**

Helsinki

Followed by introduction of games as a tool of involvement which make complex notions such as participation easy to understand, allow to create a sense of solving problems together, helps citizens to co-create city development ideas through gamified approach, makes participatory budgeting more approachable and understandable for citizens and, finally, enables a more democratic citizen involvement.

The third breakout session focused on the role of participatory budgeting as a force of change. Though, in many countries, participatory budgeting is still underestimated, in Poland, it starts to be a mainstream participatory mechanism on a mass scale. It is relatively simple, comparable and ensures visible results. Although the participation is embedded in law, unprecedented public scrutiny can also be observed in this process. One can even risk the statement that implementation of participatory budgeting has caused an involuntary revolution in public administration. For local administration, it means

the need to change an approach to citizens - not only their ideas and expectations, but also the value of their engagement. It is also a „reality check” on procedures, the role of public officials, flexibility of public administration as well as the lesson of the use of crowdsourcing. It is also, at the same time, a risk and an opportunity for changing the image of the city and its administration in the eyes of residents. For local residents participatory budgeting is a tangible possibility of impact as it is allowing for community mobilization and closer contact with public officials – including some unexpected positive experiences. Simultaneously certain disappointment with bureaucracy, accompanying this process, can be observed.



2.5. Block 2: BUILDING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

Friday 20 November (9.30-13.00 CET)

a/ theme

The presentations delivered within Block 2 were reflecting on engaging, identifying cultural planning as a force in urban capacity building and empowering communities. The open discussion was looking for an answer to a leading question: how can we change places through 'the local' as the focus? The aim was to define main factors enabling the implementation of cultural planning while engaging residents. Urban civic activism was one of the main focuses of the session. The speakers discussed the case studies and tools which can empower citizens and engage localities into the urban regeneration process.

The first group of delivered presentations introduced cases where the undertaken actions made the communities more active. The second group on the other hand was trying to link cultural planning-based initiatives with other urban challenges. Even though the theme was focused on revitalizing community perspective through art and culture, the speakers tackled the issue of reenabling neighborhoods within economic and social challenges. One of the topics brought to the discussion showed the need of creating sustainable frameworks which can become part of cultural planning policy. The most interesting part of this block was the discussion on crucial actors of the placemaking process and the role they play in shaping active neighborhoods. The focus was to define what local leaders, governments can do to establish a ground for bottom-up initiatives and what conditions in terms of legal base, planning documents and strategies are necessary to shape active neighborhoods. Additionally, during the sessions the matter of tools and possible ways of organizing the participatory process has been brought to the discussion. It pointed on important conditions of participatory approach and placemaking initiatives empowered by cultural activities which are crucial for the revitalization process to succeed.

The block has been planning practice oriented to introduce good practices at different levels including: municipal level – with the question how to shape strategic documents to help placemaking interventions and to strengthen the process of integrating societies, leadership – how to empower them, how to organize networking process, what tool they need to engage local communities, society – what are the needs allowing to enhance the bottom-up initiatives and what factors are crucial for the community to be actively involved in the placemaking initiatives and decision making processes.

b/ schedule**9.30-10.30 Plenary session and Q&A: Building Communities and Neighbourhoods**

Keynote: **Lia Ghilardi** (IT/UK), Leader in the field of Cultural Planning

10.30-11.00 Plenary with presenters from all breakout sessions

Moderator: **Aleksandra Szymanska** (PL), Institute of City Culture

11.00-11.30 Coffee Break

11.30-12.30 Breakout sessions

Breakout (1) **How can we revitalise the community perspective through arts and culture?**

Moderator: **Lea Lukemeier** (DE)

Breakout (2) **How to create sustainable frameworks in local authorities for cultural planning? & How to reenoble neighbourhoods within economic and social challenges in the Baltic Sea Region?**

Moderator: **Janis Usca** (LV), City of Riga

Breakout (3) **How to enable implementation of Cultural Planning? - CP policy roadmap workshop**

Moderator: **Magdalena Zakrzewska-Duda** (PL), Baltic Sea Cultural Centre, Gdansk

Breakout (4) **How can urban civic activism empower citizens?**

Moderator: **Jekaterina Lavrinec** (LT), Vilnius Tech, Creative Industries

12.30-13.00 Plenary round-up with breakout leaders

Moderator: **Mārtiņš Enģelis** (LV), UrbCulturalPlanning



c/ speakers & presentations

Lia Ghilardi (IT/UK) Leader in the field of Cultural Planning: *Go With The Flow - Local Cultural DNA Mapping. A Tactic For Co-Creating Sustainable Cities*

Aleksandra Szymańska (PL) Institute of City Culture: *How we can revitalize / Community perspective?*

Magdalena Rembeza (PL) Gdańsk University of Technology: *Urban revitalisation through art*

Mathias Holmberg (SE) Föreningen för Cultural Planning: *Culture as value. Cultural perspective. Ways of living*

Jaana Simula (FI) Globe Art Point:

Jekaterina Lavrinec (LT) Vilnius Gediminas Technical University:

Pasi Mäenpää (FI) University Of Helsinki: *Urban civic activism: the emerging fourth sector*

Dorota Kamrowska-Załużska, Hanna Obracht-Prondzyńska (PL) Gdańsk University of Technology, **Krzysztof Stachura** (PL) University of Gdańsk: *How to enable implementation of Cultural Planning? CP policy roadmap workshop*





d/ key takeaways

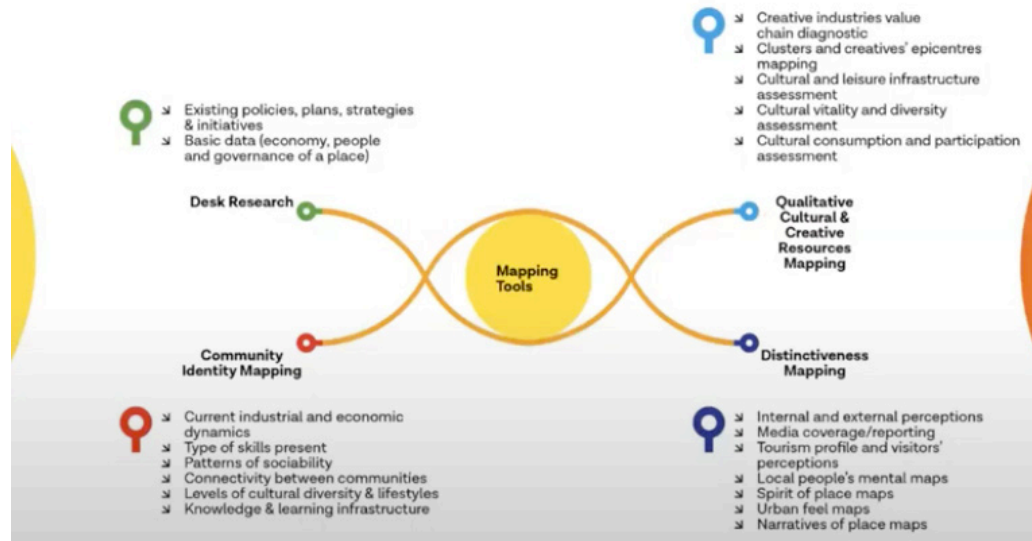
During the sessions several aspects of practical nature aiming to define how to empower urban civic activism has been discussed. The key conclusions from this block can be defined within groups as follows:

Recognizing social needs

To make a place successful we need to recognize social needs carefully. Well knowledge of resources available for the civic activists and evaluation of individual interests is crucial for the urban transformation process. The process however should lead to co-creation based on emergent, self-organized, proactive and constructive co-action, typically outside of form NGOs cooperation. To start we should focus on the citizens' needs, expectations, skills, abilities and aspirations. To do so it is recommended to start from primarily DIY-action instead of orienting towards decision making systems or political engagement. Surely participatory public art can empower individuals and bring effects on a wider scale. We should involve a wide audience and different actors. Reaching all the groups is essential. Advancements in digital technology linked to alienation is one of the biggest challenges for future actions.

Place based actions with culture as a catalyst

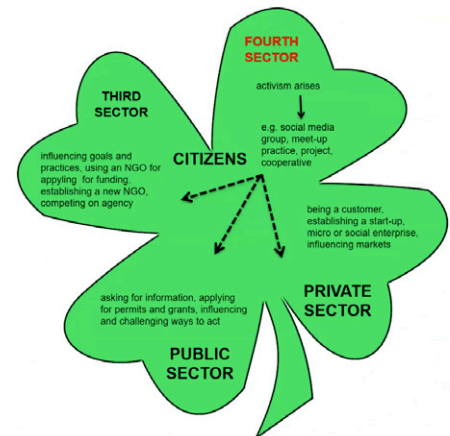
To be successful the context is crucial. Art can be considered as a tool which changes the role of society from passive to active. In the Polish context art became the main actor of a change in the urban



regeneration process. Revitalization through art and culture can surely empower public participation. However, art can be a successful tool and catalyst, only when it is focused on the process not only on objects, and when being planned with and for a public in the shared spaces of a shared city. Place making initiatives should be based on deep understanding of the local, cultural, social and economic resources. Well knowledge of urban and cultural DNA can make a change. However this means that the city requires a more holistic approach, therefore the city should be considered as a cultural ecosystem and undertaken actions call for a people centered approach. The key are cultural institutions, and practitioners to which a new role should be assigned. In public spaces they should act as mediators, intermediaries, advocates of tolerance. At the same time, we need today more devolution of powers down to cities and localities.

Planning for empowering bottom-up approach

To shape urban inclusiveness and active societies we need to adopt systematic thinking to urban development. In the process governments should act as enablers of city development. The success needs not only bottom up initiatives but also city actions in the matter of supportive solutions becoming enablers of the process. This includes providing amenities such as, e.g. tenants and





Narracje #11 SIEDLCE



Aleksandra



PARTICIPATORY PROJECTS
OPEN CALL FOR BOTTOM-
UP PROJECTS /
OPEN CCI

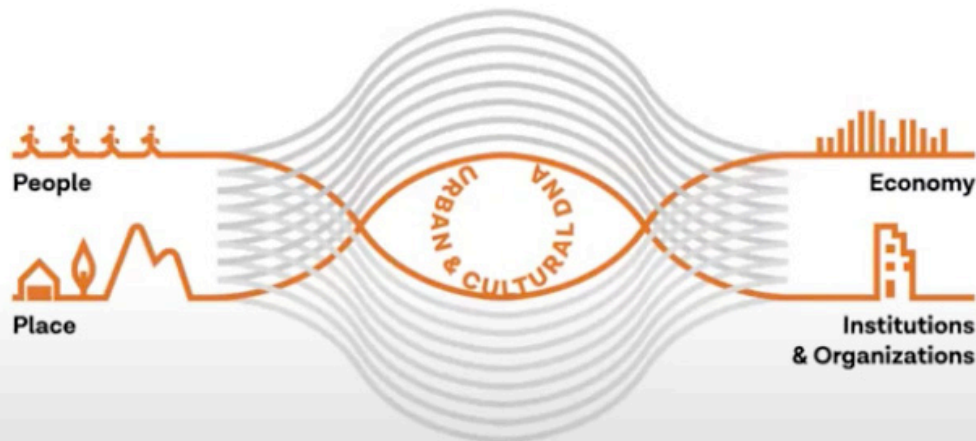











preferential conditions. To make the place successful it should consist of creative sectors, mixed services and concentration of different businesses. The local economy can drive urban change. This, however, requires strategies with a strong vision touching most difficult problems and mindfulness in relation to the local communities. The process of shaping strategic approach needs tactic actions of co-creating from within redefining city vision. This requires good knowledge of local challenges, what can be done on the bases of e.g. place and community mapping. At the end the strategic approach should introduce models based on narrow notions of profit at the expense of long-term visions for resilient communities. Strategies should be considered as iterative processes with transversal task or implementation groups assigned.

Factors required for urban change

We should understand cities as systems of relations, each with their own unique texture of interconnected social, cultural, spatial and economic dynamics. It requires acting in a more holistic way and involving current challenges, e.g. climate changes, ecological disasters, dispersal of populations, shrinking cities, populism. Such challenges should be tackled when planning for active communities. It is time for cities to become more regenerative of resources and communities. Communities should be involved in the process of reaching the neighborhood potential/resilience of the local economy. The current urban revitalization processes should be enriched with such elements. However, it is also important that in general it is too early to say we have been successful as we are yet not able to measure the long-term impact of creative placemaking initiatives.

THE CITY IS A COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM OF RELATIONS



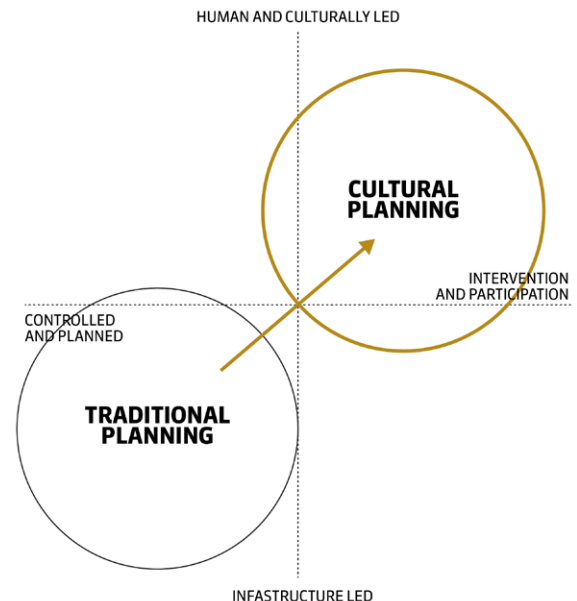
	Networking		The Faculty Fade-away
	Course Structure		The Long Haul
	Co-Design Process		Pair readings and skill building
	Reflection time		One-Room Schoolhouse
	Project Management Tools		

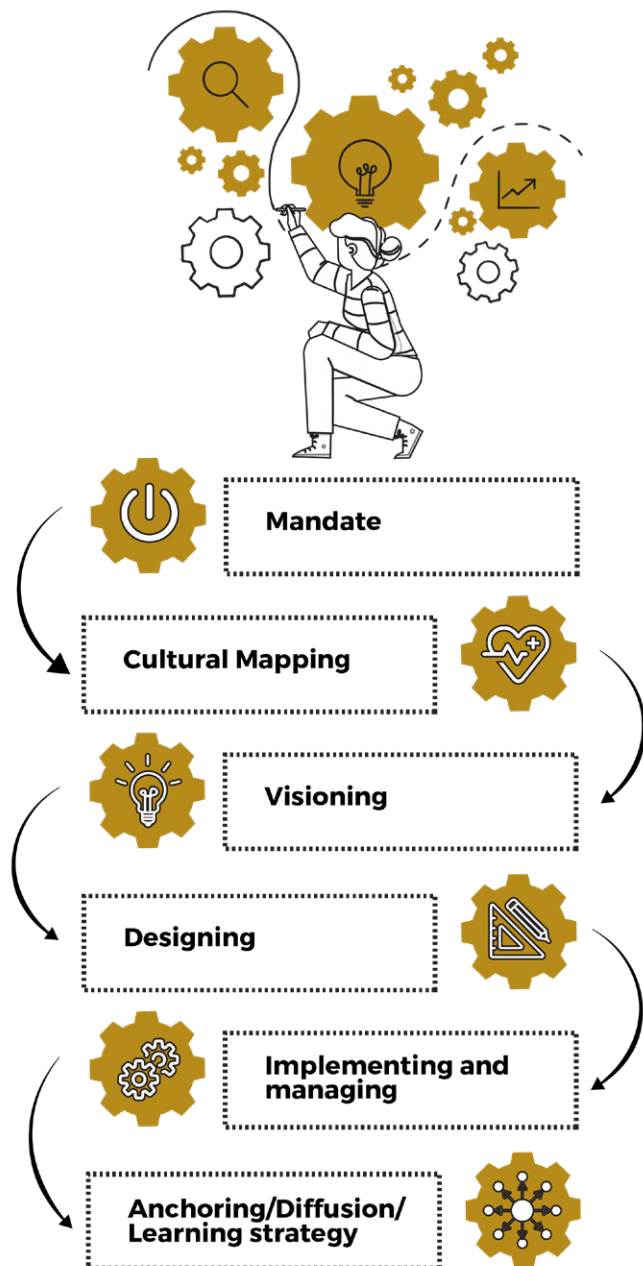
Integrating and co-creating

Majority of the discussion has been focused on participatory practices. What was pointed out is that we should act for accessibility, openness and diversity of urban culture and establish a base for activity, competences and cooperation of groups and individuals. The cities need today a people-driven bottom-up urbanism which takes place in urban space or is related to cities and urban life. Our actions should be based on networking in social media and internet solutions however we should also provide a space to meet. When everyone knows each other it gives a feeling of being united, therefore each neighborhood needs a space where societies can be themselves. The locals need a space dedicated to them else it is challenging to plan for active urbanism.

Cultural planning – a step toward better places

The discussion included also a presentation of cultural planning policy roadmap as a tool for politicians (councilors and committees responsible for planning, social welfare, culture etc.), officials in municipalities / cities, regional and national levels, planning practitioners (architects / planners / designer agencies who take part in this process), cultural institutions, artists, activists and other stakeholders engaged in urban development. The cultural planning



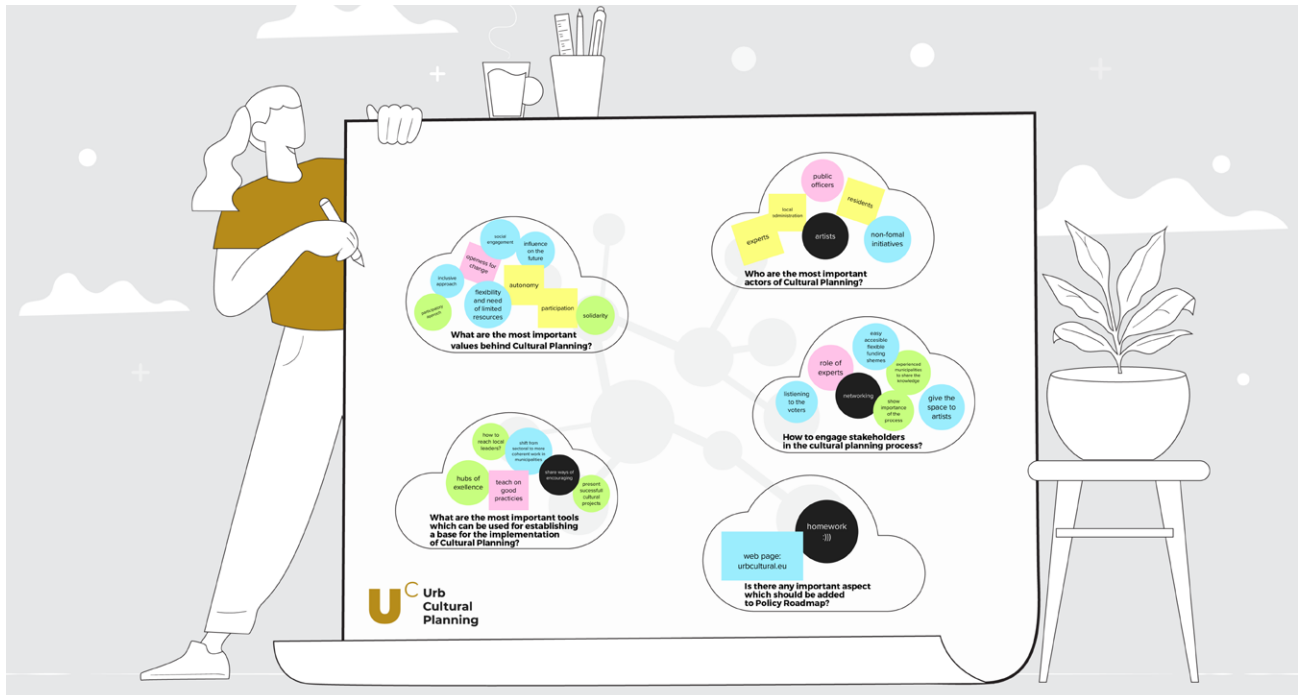


approach offers alternatives to the mainstream public authority approach to urban planning, which is often led by infrastructural, investment, top-down and long-term planning and is primarily concerned with a spatial approach. Cultural planning is based on openness, responsiveness and resilience. It is a broad approach to culture-lead integrated planning, as it enriches traditional planning methods and, in consequence, makes the urban planning process easier, more efficient and more engaging. The use of cultural tools provides a possibility to establish strong partnerships and to empower bottom-up initiatives shifting urban change. It results in an engaged community whose members feel good and are eager to shape their neighborhoods in order to create inclusive public spaces. The discussion brought the following questions: What are the most important values behind cultural planning? Who are the most important actors of cultural planning? How to engage stakeholders in the cultural planning process? What are the most important tools which can be used for establishing a base for the implementation of cultural planning?

The urb cultural planning policy roadmap can be found here:



<https://bit.ly/3uq7PSe>



2.5. Block 3: DIRECT PARTICIPATION THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE

Friday 20 November (14.00-17.30 CET)

a/ theme

The block 3 brought presentations focused on good practices answering the given question: how should cultural practices and the arts transform and stimulate direct engagement within cities and neighborhoods? The discussion aimed to define how to engage societies in the place making process, and how foster inclusion through arts. The question which has arisen during the sessions seek for and answer how public art can contribute to shaping shared public life and how it can become part of urban regeneration process. Several cases which have been tested in Baltic Sea neighborhoods (from Poland, Latvia, Sweden and Denmark) were discussed as good practices to be used as a part of successful cultural planning process implementation.

The session gathered speakers and debaters from different fields including: academia, cultural institutions, art curators, NGOs, activists, operators of financial programs supporting cultural activities, architects and urban planners. It allowed different perspectives to urban transformations engaging societies by cultural initiatives. The scale of presented interventions included actions undertaken within small communities and bigger neighborhoods, from small towns to metropolis.

The presented projects aimed to engage societies while using different tools depending on who was taking a leading role in the project. During the sessions we could listen to cases focused on small interventions, public contemporary art actions, cultural events, urban planning procedures, public participation in the designing process. Such variety allowed us to open an interactive and engaging discussion. It was enriched with presentation of financial schemes, sources and possibilities allowing for a successful implementation of planned interventions. The speakers gave a short and future perspective of presented cases presenting an overview of how the initiatives have started and what goals have been or are going to be achieved. Additionally, some recommendations of the practical nature have been formulated and the difficulties found in the process have been discussed. The key takeaways from the discussion are a set of interesting conclusions and findings to be applicable while planning urban & cultural interventions or shaping urban processes.



b/ schedule

14.00-14.50 Plenary session and Q&A: Models of Direct Participation through arts and culture

Keynote: **Rebecca Rouse** (SE/US), University of Skövde

15.00-15.30 Plenary with presenters from all breakout sessions

Moderator: **Andrea Cederqvist**

15.30-16.00 Coffee Break

16.00-17.00 Breakout sessions

Breakout (1) Do it yourself democracy - Urbanism and Social Change

Moderator: **Harri Sippola** (FI)

Breakout (2) How to work with placemaking and engaging citizens?

Moderator: **Jonas Büchel** (DE/LV)

Breakout (3) How to foster social inclusion through arts?

Presentation and workshop

Moderator: **Olaf Gerlach-Hansen**

Breakout (4) How to ensure that public art contributes to shared public life?

Moderator: **Anna Fedas** (PL), Stefan Batory Foundation

12.30-13.00 Plenary round-up with breakout leaders

Moderator: **Mārtiņš Enģelis**

c/ speakers & presentations

Līva Kreislere (LV) Architect/urbanist: *Do it yourself democracy, Riga model*

Katarzyna Iwińska (PL) Fundacja na Rzecz Wspólnot Lokalnych Na Miejsu, Placemaking Europe (project coordinator): *Placemaking = engaging citizens*

Niels Righoldt (DK) Danish Centre for Arts & Interculture: *Social inclusion through the arts. A way of thinking*

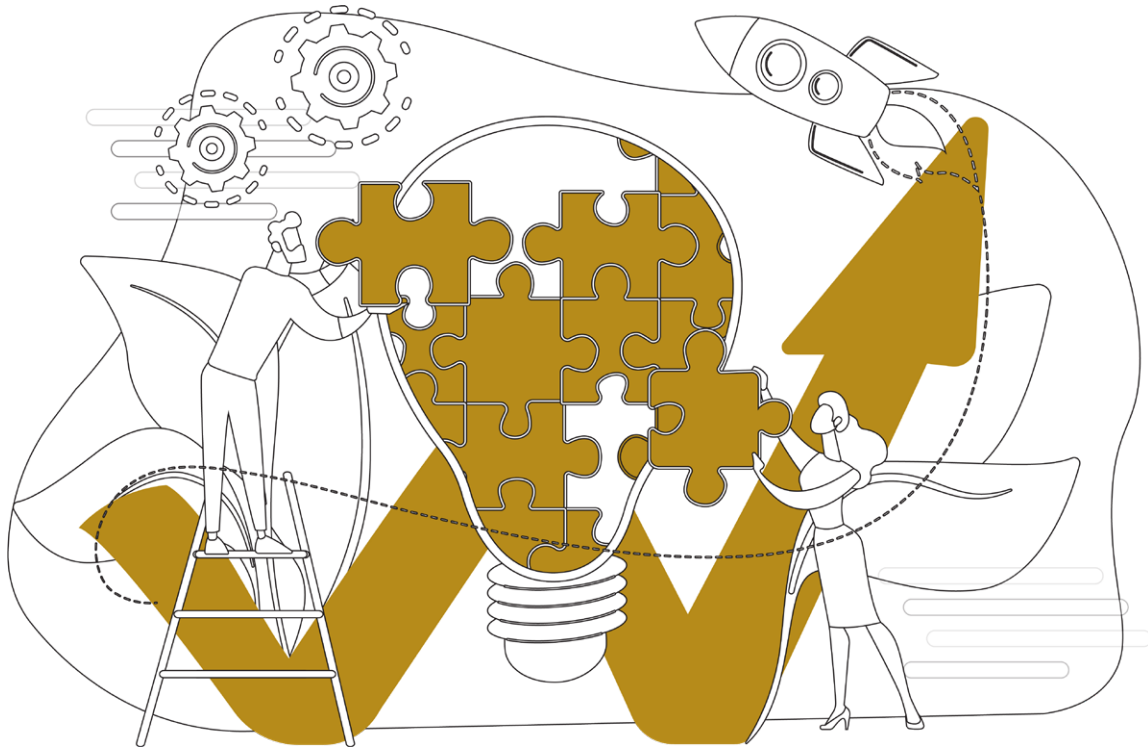
Aleksandra Grzonkowska (PL) Chmura Visual Culture Foundation: *How to ensure that public art contributes to shared public life? How art can democratise place/space/the urban?*

Trevor Davies (DK) Københavns Internationale Teater: *From rights to the city to playing with the city or doing democracy*

Joanna Zawieja (SE) Cc Henrik Orrje, leader, Public Art Agency (curator): *Contemporary art and public spaces: Statents Konstrad*

Anna Fedas (PL) Stefan Batory Foundation: *Active Citizens Fund - National in Poland*

Monika Arczyńska (PL) A2P2 architecture&planning: *Warsaw Neighbourhoods. The Culture of Collaboration*

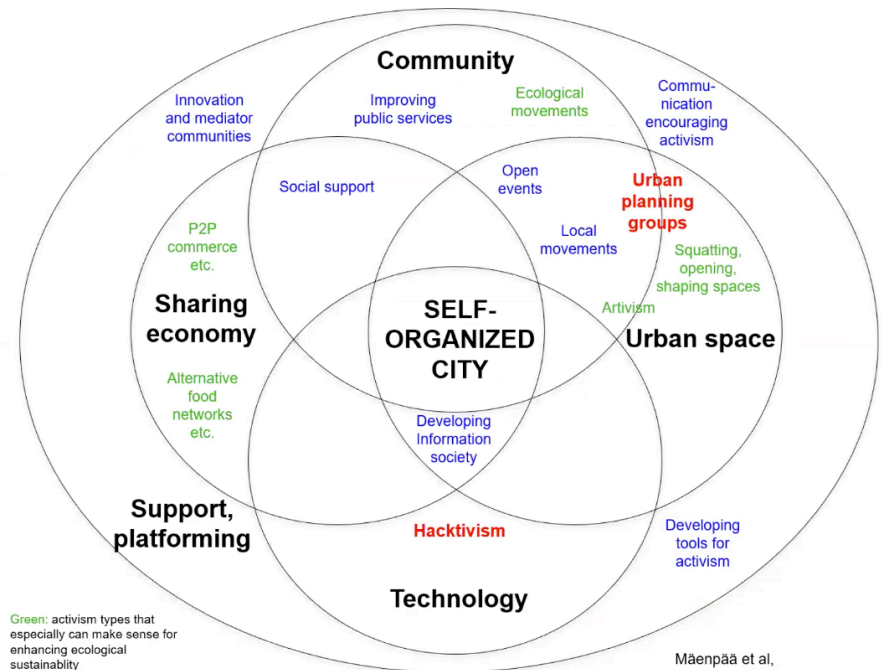


d/ key takeaways

New but old needs of urban space

Even though we seek for new tools allowing urban re-invention and creating spaces engaging societies, the old postulates are still valid today. As Jane Jacobs said: Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody (Jane Jacobs, *The death and life of Great American Cities*, 1961). We need spaces which are designed for its residents, are walkable, encouraging and allowing to shape equity. The conference discussion was strongly focused on how we can shape inclusiveness of public spaces which should become places of local social activity allowing for community integration and stimulating the process of bottom-up initiatives engaging residents in the decision making process. Art and culture are recognized by speakers as factors bringing attention and encouraging urban civic activism. Majority of the discussion focused on how we can benefit from cultural activities to ensure urban transformation. The speakers pointed to the need for placemaking initiatives which should result from cultural activities playing the role of urban catalyst.

However, this can be only successful if we establish a common solution (such as legal framework, profits, open calls) at the municipality level empowering local leaders and activists to become actively involved in the process of urban change. Placemaking however should be considered as an initial point for urban shift as at the end the cities need a coherent approach to urban revitalization shaping social engagement ensuring long term impact. To do so the placemaking initiatives should be used as an opportunity for a well recognition of local needs. The places still need to provide personalization and tangibility. To be successful it

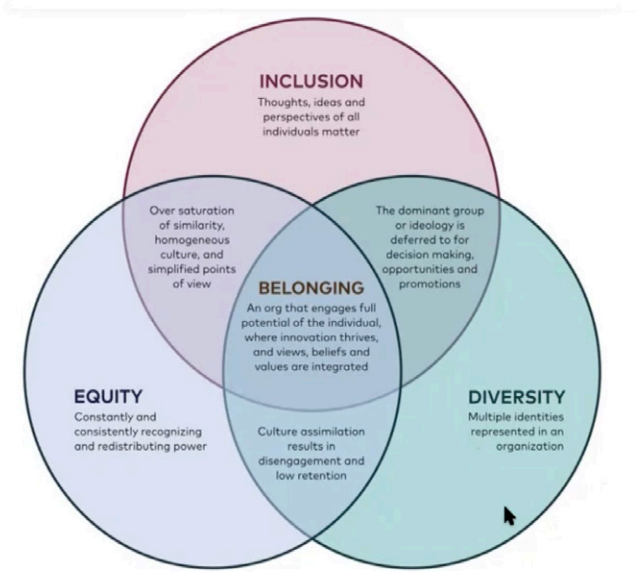


should be open for everyone however it should also provide zoning between private and public in order to shape commitment and responsibility.

Tools enhancing social engagement

As culture and art are recognized as catalysts for placemaking initiatives, the vital role in the urban transformation process is assigned to cultural institutions. The format of them should be well planned and it should not be narrowed to one group only. What the cities need today is the cultural institutions being active in urban space to become catalysts of the transformation which can be successful only if we define the way to shape social engagement. This on the other hand can happen only when we find a way to develop cultural institutions which are interesting and relevant for all the citizens. While planning activities the question which should appear is how the society can benefit from different institutions and how those activities can help not only temporarily keep the residents active in the process of urban revitalization.

To make sure that the placemaking initiatives will bring long-term results we should provide diverse solutions spread in a long time period. The key to success is to seek the new. The locality is crucial in the process as well as a good recognition of social needs. While planning any urban intervention we should consider targeting. The challenge which reminds is how to inspire new target groups. The possibility of bringing attention depends on the creativity of those who shape the process. Direct participation as well as local collaborators are essential in achieving long term results. What should be remembered is the need to support networks of cultural activities. Exchange of good practices and tested solutions make local activists more creative and allow them to keep them engaged. However, both at the local and exchange level the process of building relations takes time, what should be provided.

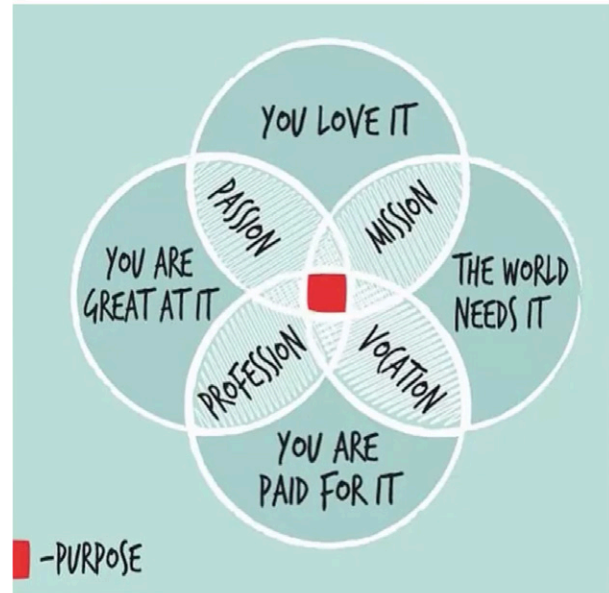


As the placemaking actions are crucial and interventions such as e.g. mobile workshops are surely key to success, we should not forget about thinking of more permanent urban solutions. We can approach it by developing and anchoring long term activities in neighborhoods. Additionally, they should not be oriented on selected places only. The city works as one organism only when we keep all neighborhoods actively involved.

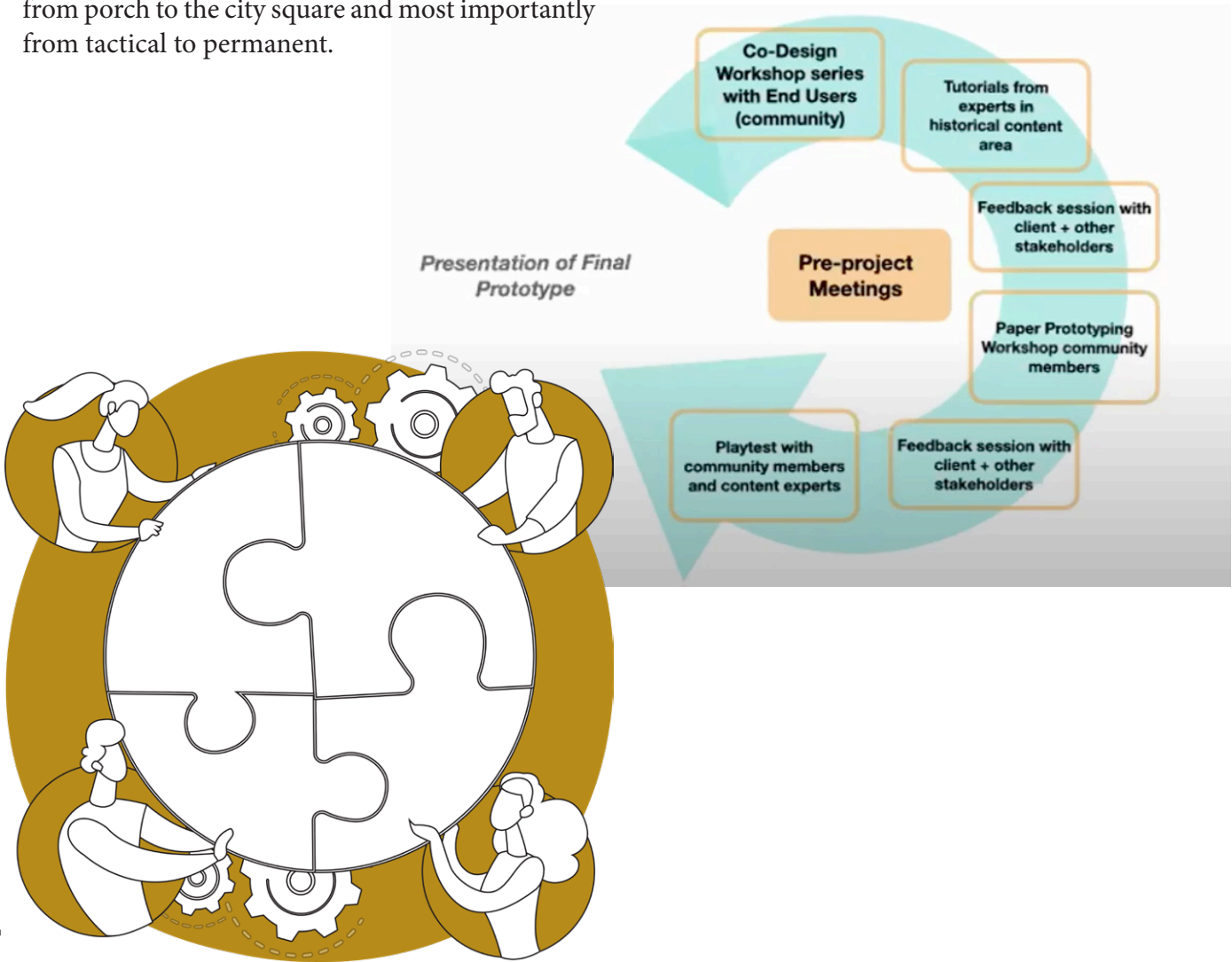
Cultural ambassadors can help to shape the social engagement. However, it is also important to provide simplified procedures for cultural exchange. One of the solutions mentioned is deep democracy as an innovative method for inclusive decision-making with room for all perspectives and the resolution of contradictions, tensions, and conflicts. It creates space for emotions, experiences and events from the past. Defining the platform within which urban dwellers feel comfortable and are encouraged to act is essential. Therefore, when planning urban change, we should open the discussion based on solutions where we work with models presenting initial concepts to establish a base for a discussion. It can help people to understand and allow them to express their needs even when we face difficulties in formulating them. We can also think of mixing solutions, e.g. exploring the design space games, game technologies and mixed reality with cultural heritage.

Steps to urban change

With small steps we can make a change. Local actors should start from thinking of small actions and the ways of bringing attention to new audiences by creative activities. They should ensure stakeholders are open for new expressions. The experience leads the leaders to become co-creators together



with local communities. When they are ready, we should be able to introduce a co-design approach and give a base for co-creating. To achieve such a result education focused on informal and non-formal skills should precede the process. Starting from placemaking focused on engaging citizens is essential for urban change. It will allow us to shift from space to place, from small scale to big scale, from porch to the city square and most importantly from tactical to permanent.



2.6. Block 4: DIRECT PARTICIPATION THROUGH GAMIFICATION

Saturday, 21 November (09:30 – 13:45 CET) How can we use games, gamification and forms of directed play to engage citizens and key communities in urban planning?

a/ theme

The aim of this block was to illustrate how urban gamification and elements of playfulness within urban environment can offer strategic cultural interventions in city planning. The answer to the question of how games, gamification and forms of directed play can be used to engage citizens and key communities in urban planning was sought. The speakers discussed on what condition gamification can become a tool of urban change through the culture and even more importantly: how to engage local communities especially young citizens in this process. We were seeking the answer to the question if Minecraft can be an effective tool of urban transformation. During this session we could listen to what are the advantages of such an approach but also what difficulties need to be overcome for it to succeed.

This session consisted of a keynote presentation which was an excellent start for the discussion of the role of urban gamification. It, not only, gave a theoretical framework but also showed the examples of how urban space can become a 'playing ground' for urban processes. This presentation also focused on the ludification of the culture which in result makes gamification more prestigious.

In the next part of the sessions two round tables connected with the possibility of engagement of young citizens through Minecraft and the models of work with local community partners in arts and gaming projects took place. During the first roundtable partners of UrbCulturalPlanning INTERREG project from Gdansk Baltic Sea Cultural Centre and from Riga presented the gaming demonstrator projects which are currently taking place in terms of UrbCulturalPlanning. The key takeaway from the discussion is an identification of the tools at the micro and project level, as well as methods and processes of engaging different groups, including children. Both roundtables were concluded with recommendations which can support use of gamification in implementing urban change through the culture.

b/ schedule

9.30-10.20 Plenary session and Q&A: Direct participation through gamification

Keynote: **Mattia Thibault** (IT/FI) Tampere University, Expert in Urban Gamification

Moderators: **Lissa Holloway – Attaway** (SE), UrbCulturalPlanning, **Björn Berg Marklund** (SE) UrbCulturalPlanning

10.20-10.40 Plenary with invited external guests

10.40-11.00 Coffee Break

11.00-12.00 Roundtable Discussion: Play and place making with cultural gaming and Minecraft for young citizen engagement

Moderator: **Björn Berg Marklund** (SE), UrbCulturalPlanning

12:00-13:00 Roundtable Discussion: How do we work with community partners in arts/ gaming projects focused on local culture(s)

Moderator: **Lissa Holloway – Attaway** (US/SE), UrbCulturalPlanning



c/ speakers & presentations

Mattia Thibault (IT/FI) Tampere University,
Expert in Urban Gamification: *Ludification of
culture and urban gamification*

Plenary discussion with invited external guests:

Rebecca Rouse (US/SE) University of Skövde,
Maria Saridaki (GR) Trust in Play, **Magdalena
Zakrzewska-Duda** (PL) Baltic Sea Cultural Centre,
Gdańsk

Moderators: **Lissa Holloway – Attaway** (SE),
UrbCulturalPlanning, **Björn Berg Marklund** (SE)
UrbCulturalPlanning

Roundtable Discussion: Play and place making
with cultural gaming and Minecraft for young
citizen engagement

Experts: representatives from UCP Minecraft
Group: **Anna Neugebauer**(DE), **Karolina Cisło**
and **Magdalena Zakrzewska-Duda** (PL) and
Latvian UCP Partners

Respondent: **Christelle Lahoud** (LE), UN Habitat,
Block by Block

Moderator: **Björn Berg Marklund** (SE)

Roundtable Discussion: How do we work with
community partners in arts/ gaming Projects
focused on local culture(s)

Experts: **Maria Saridaki** (GR) Trust in Play **Diana
Gerlach** (DK) Guldborgsund Municipality

Respondent: **Rebecca Rouse** (US/SE) University
of Skövde

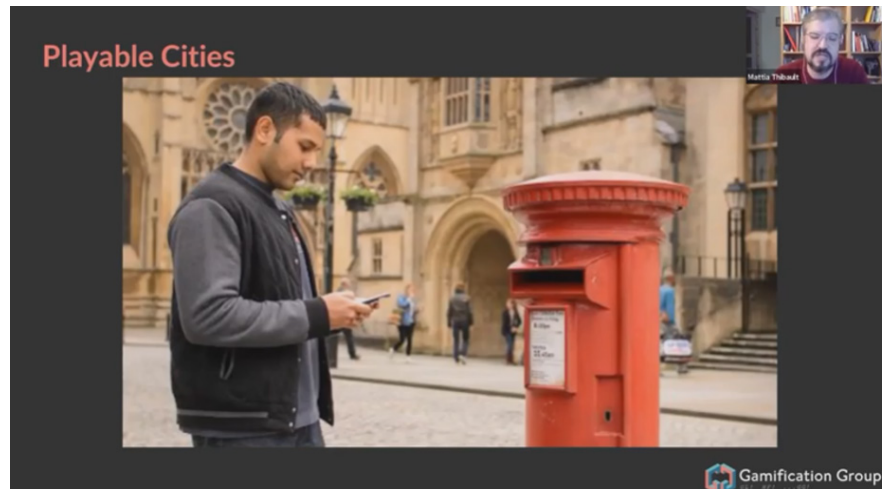
Moderator: **Lissa Holloway – Attaway** (US/
SE) UrbCulturalPlanning



d/ key takeaways

Ludification of culture is a paradigm changer, while at the same time it leads to the increase of the prestige of games and play. This new centrality enhances the play's cultural impact on many non-traditionally ludic contexts such as political activism (eg flash mobs, playful form of expressions) or even fashion (eg by imitating early video games). It allows to construct models to the prototypes activities, so as games become not only a descriptive model of the world but also allows us to understand new phenomena in the public realm. With help of gamification we can use elements of games and game design strategies to create better activities and applications for urban change. As such games can be treated as prescriptive models but in order to do so they have to be understood in the context of cultural change.

Gamification is an attempt to design or afford a playful experience in non-game contexts and is often used in education, healthcare, exercise or marketing. Public space of the city is already non-game context so each playful activity in the public space of the city is already a form of urban gamification. At the same time, public space is modified by this process (e.g.: Fun Theory – piano staircase, or Playable Cities – Hallo lamppost projects).



Other important tools of interventions in urban space are: do it yourself (DIY) urbanism (e.g. parklets), flashmobs, parkour, pride parades, which can also be seen as a gamification in the public realm.



Urban gamification can take different forms, it can be spontaneous or design, bottom-up or top-down, individual or collective, digital or analog, but no matter which shape it takes it always changes the everyday meaning of urban space.

Another important issue is the role of urban gamification in the era of pandemics when many urban borders were reinforced. At the same time borders are ideal play spaces as they are creative space of innovation (Lotman, 1990). Examples can be balconies and windows which in this time can act as an urban stage. Moreover, playfulness can help the mental health of citizens during the pandemic and community play can be translated into urban resilience toward those events.

It is important to think about inclusiveness, openness of such activities and to do so they should be created in a participatory, democratic process. It also shows that urban gamification is more powerful and engaging if it is a bottom-up action.

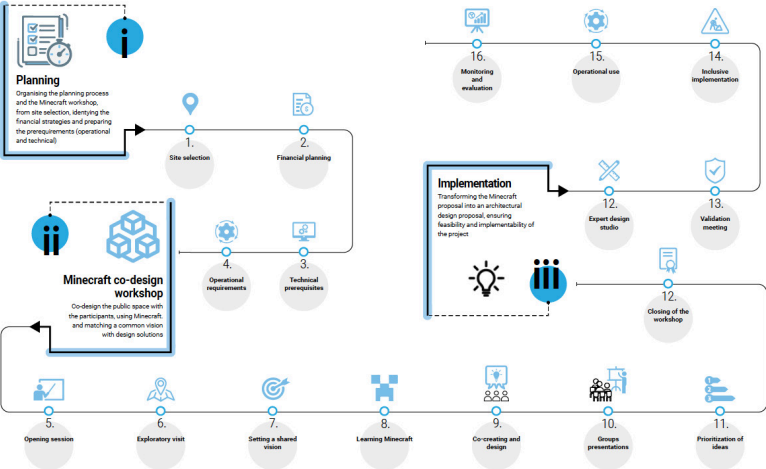
Co-design was present in the Game of Gdansk gaming demonstrator project in Old Suburb where participants were working in their neighborhood, in the area where they live and play on daily bases. In the process they were asked not only to play the game but also to use it in a creative way, and to be developers of their own environment. It was a great tool to engage young citizens. Please find below the link to the presentation of Karolina Cisło and Magdalena Zakrzewska-Duda with extensive information about this interesting project.



<https://bit.ly/3wwCMG5>

It is vital that one should not forget about the utilitarian perspective of gamification. In order to do so we need to measure its effectiveness and its impact. Probably the most comprehensive methodology of using Minecraft in urban gamification is Block by Block project, which starts from planning, through implementation up to evaluation phase. It is one of the most interesting tools to support a participatory urban design process. The most important phases of this instrument, are as follow:

BLOCK BY BLOCK METHODOLOGY



2.7. Virtual walks

As the conference was virtual participants were deprived of the possibility of sensing DNA of the Pomorskie region, but this barrier was partly overcome thanks to the City Culture Institute that prepared two films describing two Gdansk districts which are the place of UrbCulturalPlanning project demonstrators. City Culture Institute has been developing local projects using the method of cultural planning there since 2019. Urban and emotional mapping in the Stare Przedmieście (Old Suburb) which allow to identify local resources, opportunities and barriers that impact the districts development showed that one of the most frequently mentioned problems of the district is its isolation from the neighbouring areas. For people who live and work in the Old Suburb, this isolation creates a sense of loneliness and oblivion, despite the proximity to the heart of the city. Two Gdańsk artists – Katarzyna Pastuszek and Natalia Chylińska – were asked to symbolically connect the heart of the Old Suburb and its significant and valuable places with the surroundings. This symbolic action aims at highlighting and challenging the physical and mental barriers that hinder free movement and communication between neighbouring districts.



<https://bit.ly/3dzdK0w>

The second film was also prepared as part of a local demonstrator project of UrbCulturalPlanning project in Nowy Port. It showed the district of Nowy Port with the eyes of its young population. Youths answered the question why is this district important for them, where do they meet, what places they treat as their own. They also defined what is needed in the district and what, in their opinion, should be changed. One of respondents mentioned that:

‘The fact that everybody knows each other gives the amazing feeling of being united’.

We believe that this is a strength which can be a base for revitalization of Nowy Port:



<https://bit.ly/3uyyXi9>

2.8. Conference summary

The discussion which took place during the conference sessions has shown the need of a new approach strengthening participatory processes in our towns, cities and municipalities. Culture and cultural activities bring a new perspective to the role of stakeholders in urban transformation and revitalization processes. New culture-based tools appear as a chance for empowering bottom-up initiatives as well as they can be considered as a supportive solution for decision makers. Urban dynamics call for engaged and strong communities. This can be done when we approach the urban challenges by enhancing undertaken actions with tools tested in different places in the Baltic Sea Region. All the presentations delivered during the conference has proven that together with citizens we can shape better cities with more liveable and walkable public spaces created and taken care by empowered communities. The neighborhood scale appeared as a crucial one. Culture can play a vital role in the planning process. Culture based solutions, initiatives, actions can be a base for shaping urban planning proceses, policies and strategies. It is time for a new opening within which cultural planning drives urban change and help to create better places and stimulate activities. When well organized, enriched with tools and embedded in local strategies, it can lead to active neighborhoods, districts and cities.



