



placemaking
europe

CITIES IN PLACEMAKING

A city-to-city learning programme
with and for European cities

Report #4

HOW TO WORK ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

November 27-29, 2023 - Wroclaw, PL

HOST CITY:



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We would like to express our gratitude for the warm welcome (even in the chilly temperatures;) we received from the entire Wrocław team! We want to commend their outstanding efforts in organising the event, providing logistical support and openly sharing their challenges and case studies with the whole group. Their remarkable contributions made our collaboration and the workshop a great experience. Thank you very much!

EDITORS OF THE BROCHURE:

Marta Popiolek, Afke Breukel, Lisette van Rhijn, Ramon Marrades
Photos by Maria Blau
Design by Diego March Avila

OUR ORGANISING PARTNERS:



How to work across departments

- Foreword4**
 - Who we are: Placemaking Europe..... 4
 - What is Placemaking?..... 4
 - Organising partners..... 5
- Cities in Placemaking programme 6**
 - The learning sequence 6
 - The participating cities 8
- Recap of the previous milestones 10**
 - Milestone 1: Essentials of placemaking.....10
 - Milestone 2: Placemaking challenges 12
 - Milestone 3: Organisational bottlenecks14
- Milestone 4: How to work across departments 16**
 - Day 1 - Monday, Nov 27.....18
 - Day 2 - Tuesday, Nov 28 34
 - Day3 - Wednesday, Nov 29.....50
- Next step: Milestone 5 - From short-term to long-term..... 58**

Foreword



Who we are: Placemaking Europe

[Placemaking Europe](#) is a non-profit foundation. We develop and share knowledge; contribute to designing and testing tools; create the ground to exchanging ideas; and actively advocate for better public space policies.

We are a European network of front-runners, who together accelerate placemaking as a way to create healthy, inclusive, and beloved communities. To make the spaces we live into places we love. Create a thriving, equitable, and sustainable world by joining values, passion, and action around our public spaces.

DIRECTORS OF PLACEMAKING EUROPE

- Lisette van Rhijn, Co-director a.i.
lisette.vanrhijn@stipo.nl
- Ramon Marrades, Co-director
ramon.marrades@placemaking-europe.eu
- Charlot Schans, Co-director
charlot.schans@placemaking-europe.eu

What is Placemaking?

[Placemaking](#) is a place-led approach for creating healthy, inclusive, and lovable communities. This hands-on approach inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community, and facilitates creative patterns of use with particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Placemaking pays close attention to the myriad ways in which the physical, social, ecological, cultural, and even spiritual qualities of a place are intimately intertwined (PPS). Placemaking combines top-down



planning with bottom-up initiatives and people's empowerment into a democratic and inclusive 'middle-up-down' approach that brings municipalities outside their offices to meet and engage with residents in person.

ORGANISING PARTNERS

[Placemaking Europe](#), [Creative Bureaucracy Festival](#), [International Society for Urban Health](#), [Intercultural Cities Programme by Council of Europe](#).

Cities in Placemaking programme

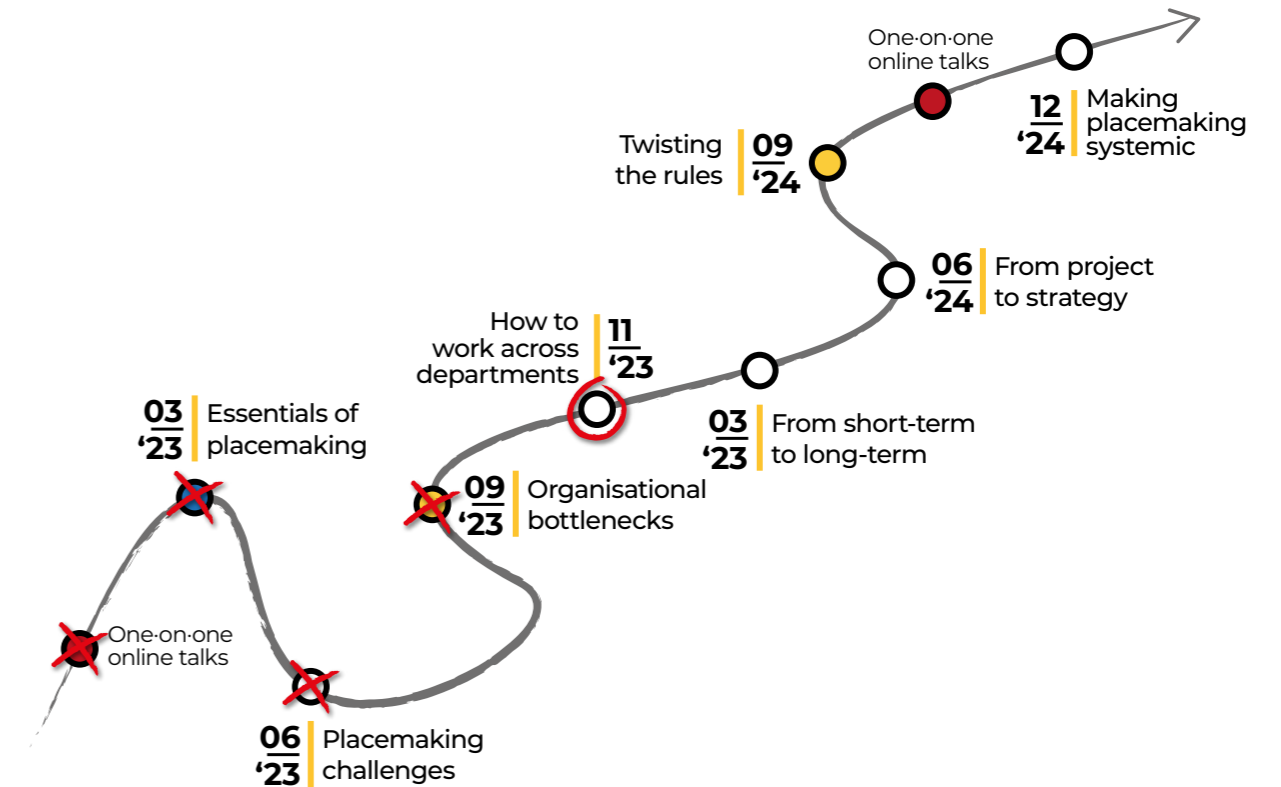
The Cities in Placemaking programme aims to build awareness and practical knowledge within municipalities of placemaking in a way that allows it to foster long-term change. **It is a continuous learning programme designed for municipal public administrations**, during which we set new standards for elevating communities through better public space. Through the programme, we aim to create a next generation of placemaking experts in governance. The programme aims to create a roadmap to a more holistic and sustainable approach to urban development that harnesses placemaking as a city-wide strategy. Participants develop the necessary skills and knowledge to drive systemic change and unleash the full potential of placemaking for the long term improvement of their cities.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES ARE:

1. To work, share and learn together with the placemakers from each of the participating municipalities
2. To break down silos and advocate for placemaking at the municipality level
3. To develop a roadmap for placemaking for systemic change

The learning sequence

The programme consists of 8 workshop-based, capacity-building sessions held in a combination of in-person and remote formats, led by Placemaking Europe and the knowledge partners: Creative Bureaucracy Festival, International Society for Urban Health and Intercultural Cities programme by Council of Europe).



The learning sequence of the programme Cities in Placemaking

The learning sequence is designed to progressively build towards achieving the ultimate objective of the programme which is creating a roadmap for systemic placemaking implementation:

1. Essentials of placemaking - March 2023
2. Placemaking challenges - June 2023
3. Organisational bottlenecks - September 2023
4. How to work across departments - November 2023
5. From short-term to long-term - March 2024
6. From project to strategy - June 2024
7. Twisting rules - September 2024
8. Making placemaking systemic - December 2024

The participating cities are:

1. **Bergen**, Norway
2. **Bradford**, England
3. **Budapest**, Hungary
4. **Cork**, Ireland
5. **Helsingborg**, Sweden
6. **Helsinki**, Finland
7. **Reggio Emilia**, Italy
8. **Rotterdam**, The Netherlands
9. **The Hague**, The Netherlands
10. **Trenčín**, Slovakia
11. **Vila Nova de Famalicão**, Portugal
12. **Vinnytsia**, Ukraine
13. **Wroclaw**, Poland



Recap of the previous milestones

Milestone 1: Essentials of placemaking

MARCH 2023, AMSTERDAM

- In March we met in Amsterdam for a first session of the Cities in Placemaking programme where we discussed the essentials of placemaking, which set a baseline for the programme and shared understanding of what makes a great place, and how we create better cities together with the communities through placemaking.
- Through the contributions of participants and the presentations of the flagship projects, we identified a set of common challenges across the participating cities working with placemaking, ranging from how to make public spaces more inclusive or safe, to how placemaking can help communities to cope with big-scale challenges, such as climate transition.





Milestone 2: Placemaking challenges

JUNE 2023, BERGEN

On June 26 - 28, the participants of the programme met in Bergen, Norway for the second step of the programme. The aim of that milestone was to understand and dive deeper into the challenges that cities face and could be addressed by placemaking on three scales of challenges: macro-challenges, place-based challenges and organisational challenges.

- A. **Macro-challenges** are related to the nature and dynamics of cities, such as social inequality, lack of community cohesion, unsustainable development patterns, and a decline in public spaces.
- B. **Place-based challenges** are related to a more local level and they include underutilised spaces, deteriorating infrastructure, limited access to services, and a lack of identity. These issues take form in the public space and within and across communities.
- C. **Organisational challenges** are related to bureaucratic processes, organisational arrangements, limited resources, resistance to change, and coordination among stakeholders.

One of the outcomes of the Organisational Challenges workshop, which formed the basis for the forthcoming workshops, was the identification of five main clusters of organisational bottlenecks faced by the participating cities:

- funding
- organisational difficulties
- sharing the value of placemaking projects
- engaging people
- measuring the impact of placemaking projects.



Milestone 3: Organisational bottlenecks

SEPTEMBER 2023, STRASBOURG

On September 26, the participants of the programme met in Strasbourg, France, for the third step of the programme. The aim of this Milestone was to identify the main organisational hurdles of city governments in placemaking processes, and explore potential solutions to enhance their effectiveness. The participants used the Embedding Placemaking game to assess where they are on a scale of 1 to 10 on the journey towards making the concept of placemaking an integral part of any urban development project. This exercise was not about comparing ourselves with others or with other cities, but rather an exploration of the current state in order to understand the implications of it. Through group work, we also identified factors that help cities move forward, as well as those that hinder the process of embedding placemaking in the city structures.



Between the cities we realised these overlaps:

- The fact that placemaking is not strictly defined and categorised can be both an advantage and a disadvantage for the organisational structure. On one hand, it can be a bridge for conversations across different sectors and issues; on the other hand, it can feel like it is nobody's responsibility, leading to a lack of ownership. The definition or title is not the key to agreement - it is more important to work on the basis of shared goals and ambitions.
- Before the project starts, we should bring people together and outline the common ambition that will set the rules for the project. This will ensure that there is a sense of shared drive for the project and its purpose. And this is the role of the project owner - not the project manager. If placemaking values are embedded in the project outcomes set at the outset, then they need to be embedded in the project regardless of who is managing it at the end.
- The network and connections both inside and outside the institutions are a key element of transformation - hearing many voices, having the strategic links that 'always help' within the organisation, and finding these local heroes who are always present on the ground, are all crucial in enabling the placemaking culture to penetrate the local environment.
- Open doors to those who want to contribute, create opportunities and leave room for mistakes - the more opportunities for placemaking to emerge and be tested, the more likely it is to inspire others, to be scaled up and to become embedded in everyday practice.

Milestone 4: How to work across departments

The aim of the meeting was to understand the organisational structure in which we are embedded, to define the skills, competencies and mindsets that enable us to work more effectively across departments, and to explore strategies for effective collaboration and coordination of efforts across different departments and stakeholders within city councils and beyond.

The objectives for this workshop were:

- to discuss the challenges that arise from working across departments and stakeholders in placemaking processes;
- to examine successful examples of interdepartmental and interagency cooperation in placemaking;
- to synthesise best practices for effective cross-departmental collaboration in the context of placemaking initiatives.



This workshop was structured around three main steps.

1. First, we discussed the organisational cultures in which we are embedded and analysed the systemic, organisational and individual drivers that can facilitate transformative change.
2. In the second part, each city carried out an analysis of its organisational structure and connections in placemaking projects in order to identify the existing partners that they encounter in the design, implementation and management phases of placemaking projects. During this step, participants were also asked to define the challenges and limitations of the linkages, as well as the characteristics that enhance and improve collaboration.
3. In the final part of the workshop, we returned to the Placemaking Embeddedness Scale to understand what factors or actions can enable us to move up the scale within our organisation and make placemaking more systemic, and what policy-oriented solutions can support this transition.

Day 1 - Monday, Nov 27



Session 1: Opening session - introduction to contents and programme

The first day started off with a welcome from the deputy mayor from Wrocław - Jakub Mazur. He stated how working together with other cities is very helpful, learning from each other's success stories but also mistakes. Wrocław has been working on transforming several neighbourhoods over the last years. With valuing these high quality places and building communities around it, the city is changing. And by breaking down the now existing silos they strive to become even better in integrating placemaking in a systematic way. Inviting people into spaces that used to have bad associations, is something that the city of Wrocław has been working on for quite some time. And by doing this creating successful places in return. And with great results! Such as the community centre: CAL Prądyńskiego as a perfect example.

Next up the director of Placemaking Europe, Ramon Marrades, gave a recap of the last milestone and introduced the two guest speakers: Oriol Estela Barnet and Irene Navarro working on the Barcelona Metropolitan Strategic Plan, as well as Tim Jones - an award winning cultural strategist, broker and mentor.

Session 2: What does it take to work in a placemaking way?

With the first session we wanted to reflect on how the culture we are embedded in influences the way we work, communicate and create opportunities. We started by exploring our current state and defining why the 'old, good ways' are no longer applicable if we want to work in a more flexible and co-creative way. We wanted to define what 'placemaking' thinking would look like if we were to apply it not only to what we do through our work, but first and foremost to see how we work.





Hans Karssenbergh - founder, partner, public developer at STIPO and Board Member at Placemaking Europe led this session and shared the findings on how to work in a placemaking way:

1. A SMALL STORY OF PLACEMAKING FAILURE

- based on the story of the community gardens in Kolenkit, Amsterdam, where the community proposed to expand the project originally designed by the city, and to become involved and take ownership on a much larger scale than originally initiated. The municipality was unable to respond to this request - the bureaucratic procedures took months, the community was disappointed and the energy dissipated.

Lesson: When you reach out to the community, be prepared to follow up and respond quickly. And sometimes it may mean breaking the rules a bit - shortening the time it takes to get approval or “asking for forgiveness, not for permission”. But the key is to tap into the energy in the communities and be able to say yes very quickly.

2. IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS, WHAT IS OUR COMPASS?

What we see in urban development is that cities definitely evolve and change their character and quality over time. But if you look more closely, each structure has a different cycle - the elements that evolve in a shorter time scheme are: functions of the buildings, users, design styles, but what remains over time is the urban grid and the public spaces dictated by the urban structures.

Lesson: Our focus should be on long-term quality values. Public spaces are one of the most long-lasting elements of urban life - so we need to recognise that they have a very significant long-term impact. Once we create them, they will be there for decades, but if they are developed with the right purposes in mind, they can also add long-term quality to the area. Think long term and act short term.

3. INTEGRAL WORKING

We need to recognise that in today's complex urban environments, every decision has a multi-faceted impact and should be made across departments. If we look at the example of health and urban development - we see that the people making the decisions that affect our health don't come from the health department - very often they come from the built environment departments as the physical realm affects the health of people.

Lesson: We should recognise the multiple impacts of our decisions and work collaboratively towards common goals. And to ensure that goals are based on real needs and respond to current challenges, we need to tap into the wisdom of local communities and shape goals based on collective knowledge and efforts.



4 .CHANGING CONTEXT - FROM COMPLICATED TO COMPLEX

We have to accept that nowadays whatever we create, it is based on already spatially-developed environments and interpersonal and interdepartmental relationships. Because of this, the linear planning scheme is no longer applicable. We operate in a world full of stakeholders with different plans and visions.

Lesson: We need to accept the complexity of our current environment and what we are dealing with: interconnected complex transitions with many stakeholders, explosion of networks and stakeholders, interdisciplinary work as a “must have”, new mix of development and management, more vocal citizens and co-inventors, and global networks with local impact. However, we should move away from thinking of this as a complicated issue to realising that we are part of this complex system.

- Think of relational responses rather than following mechanical ways of doing things.
- Don't steer on assumptions, but steer with those who are present and involved.
- (Cuckoo clock) participation is not enough to build trust. It is important to build proper relationships based on transparency and integrity within the complex field of stakeholders.
- Move away from basing actions on 'predictable' outcomes, to embracing uncertainty and learning to adapt.
- Don't always follow rational analysis, but rather your intuition and feeling.

5. BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WAY WE WORK?

What we can certainly agree on is that to change the world, we must first change the environment in which we work. And that touches on values, approaches, structures, networks, skills and tools, and much more. And the placemaking concept can come here in its new layer - let's see what the "placemaking working culture" is and what happens when applied:

Lesson:

- **Embrace the process without assumptions about the outcome** - we tend to be risk averse and fear situations of uncertainty. But that is the beauty of the process - allow yourself not to act as an expert who has all the solutions. The solutions will come over time based on the voices in the process. And the feedback will change the dynamics of the process - and we need to embrace that.
- **Placemaking is about timing** - sometimes there are no initiatives in the neighbourhood and you just have to wait. But when there is an initiative, you need to be able to respond immediately. Answers have to come quickly - and saying 'no' is also an answer.
- **Not participation but co-creation**: develop an active knowledge of the main social needs in the city's neighbourhoods, organise a rapid response time before mobilising initiatives, be able to mobilise large networks, always act situationally - each initiative is unique and you should recognise this: co-invest without taking over and build real partnerships: start with small investments that can be combined with larger ones.

- **Each resident and each group is very different** and has a different way of thinking - you have to be able to accommodate that. And to learn how to accommodate that, being outside and working on the ground is absolutely key. All the things we would know if we spent about 40% of our working time outside...
- **Look for innovators and early adopters** - in every community and group you will find innovators, early adopters and then the 'majority' and the laggards. Look for the first two so that they can act and convince the others with their results. Otherwise, the laggards will take over. (reference: [The Innovation Distribution Curve, Business Illustrator](#))
- **New skills**: craftsmanship and social passion, external orientation and networking, creativity and innovation, entrepreneurship and strategic capacity

A SMALL STORY WHERE THIS ALL COMES TOGETHER: PIAZZA APERTE PROGRAMME, MILAN, ITALY

Find out more about this case in this article:
[Milan before and after: Citywide placemaking](#)



Session 3: Competencies, skills and mindsets - who are the innovators in organisation

The first workshop of this milestone focused on what competencies, skills, mindsets or backgrounds a person should have in order to work successfully across departments and contribute to creating an inspiring and effective working environment. Working in mixed groups, we aimed to identify the critical success factors for cross-departmental working and to discuss the types of characters we need to bring about this change. We looked into:

SKILLS

A specific ability or expertise that is acquired or developed through training, practice, and experience. Skills are practical and can be applied in various contexts to perform specific tasks or achieve particular outcomes

COMPETENCIES

Refers to the combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviours that individuals possess and demonstrate in order to perform effectively in a specific context, role, or field

MINDSETS

Refers to a person's underlying beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about themselves and the world around them. It encompasses the mental framework through which individuals perceive, interpret, and respond to situations. Mindsets influence how people approach challenges, handle success and failure, and generally navigate their lives

BACKGROUNDS

Refers to various aspects of that person's personal history, experiences, and circumstances. It encompasses the sum of one's life experiences, including: cultural, educational, professional, family, social and personal backgrounds

Aspects such as skills or competencies can be acquired through experience, training and practice, but interestingly the most frequently mentioned group was mindset - an aspect that is largely dependent on us and which we can largely adapt internally without any particular set of external conditions. What was also often mentioned as part of the 'other characteristics' were the formal constraints related to the working environment, as well as having appropriate mandates and clear frameworks within which to work. This shows the importance of the internal organisational change that is urgently needed to work more effectively and with better results, and for that we need systemic change.

This exercise resulted in a list of aspects that we can aim for - for the team, but also personally - in order to work in a placemaking way:

SKILLS

- Project management skills and ability to set realistic targets
- Communication skills and ability to share knowledge and information
- Moderation and facilitation skills - both for communities and for the team itself
- Negotiation skills and ability to be diplomatic in a discussion
- Storytelling skills
- Ability to take notes and summarise results
- People skills - knowing how to deal with different personalities and how to apply the language and communication techniques
- Ability to listen and ask the right questions
- Ability to create a comfortable environment for conversation - being the person others want to talk to
- Networking skills and the ability to make connections and see wider benefits
- Ability to sense positive energy and build on its potential
- Ability to learn from mistakes and accept the failure
- Ability to identify opportunities of external funding

COMPETENCIES

- Understanding the process and embedding decisions, being able to time things properly and act strategically
- Being inclusive and open-minded to people, topics and projects, being able to identify and understand the needs of stakeholders
- Knowledge of the organisation, its structures and processes, as well as understanding the goals and processes of other departments, being able to speak the same language, identify synergies and share success with others
- A flair for identifying early innovators
- Ability to give productive feedback and to find oneself in the most appropriate position (e.g. the enabler/leader role)
- Ability to be a team player and understand how actions affect those around us, ability to self-control
- Openness to multi-tasking and interdisciplinary work
- Self-confidence and decision-making skills, as well as the confidence to be vulnerable and to admit lack of expertise in all matters (and sometimes to even ask stupid questions)

MINDSETS

- Approaching the process with a learning attitude and empathy for those we work with - both internally and externally.
- Being positively realistic and both visionary and practical
- Believing in success, in the goals (both personal and those of the project) and persevering in working on the basis of the core values
- Believing in change and its positive impact, keeping motivation high and drawing it from personal cores, being truthful and patient
- Being resilient and persistent, seeing mistakes as opportunities and knowing when to give up.
- Being open-minded and curious, approaching the process without assumptions or agendas, but with enthusiasm and optimism, willing to move out of the comfort zone
- Openness to learn and communicate and to put oneself in other people's shoes
- Eagerness to find a shared perspective, but also willingness to give others ownership of part of the process, an inclusive attitude, and flexibility and openness to change, recognising that we need people with different competencies
- Applying the culture of collaboration and willingness to work with others

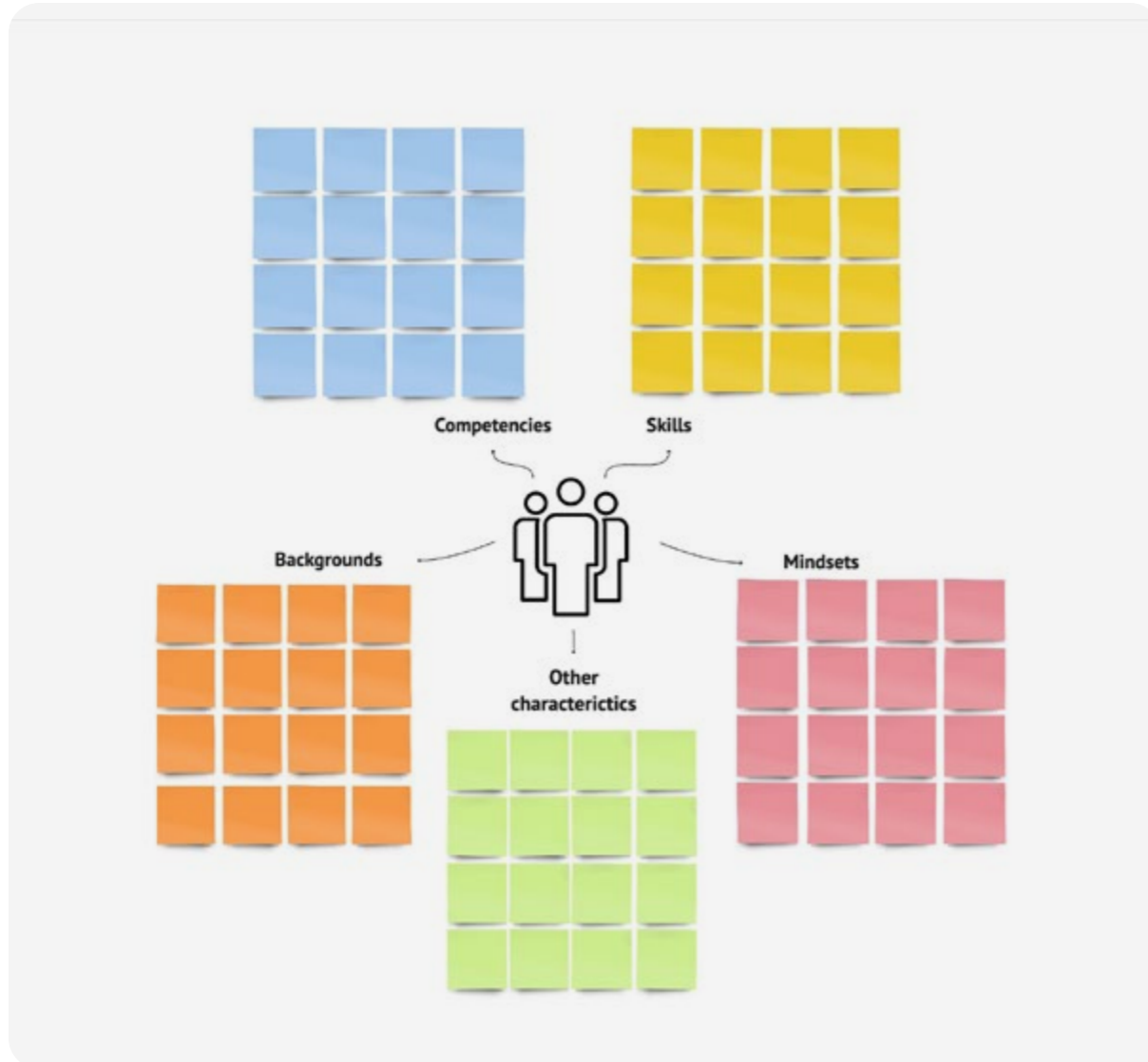
- Respecting the contributions of others and being willing to share successes and failures.
- Accepting that conflict is part of the process and approaching it with a solution-oriented approach

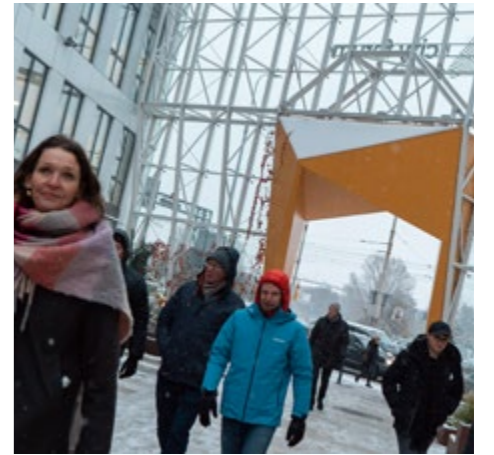
BACKGROUNDS

- Team with diverse backgrounds in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and views and opinions)
- Experience of working with different types of stakeholders (private, public, third sector)
- Experience of working on projects with different funding sources
- Experience of working in different teams
- Diversity of expertise in the team, not a group of specialists, but a group of people who want to learn about different issues and bring different objectives to their work, having diverse and complementary roles
- Experience of having failed before

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

- Having the mandate, capacity, space and resources to work towards the jointly agreed goals, and the legal framework to adapt to the flexible process.
- Understanding the reasons behind the policies
- Working part of the time outside, on the ground, approaching the process from different angles
- Being authentic, transparent and attentive, being a trusted partner in the process, approaching the process with kindness and understanding
- Be energetic and creative as well as diligent and structured, having clarity of tasks
- Celebrating success along the way, sharing small wins





Day 2 - Tuesday, Nov 28



Session 4: Relational workshopping: exploring cross-departmental collaboration

The second day started with another workshop. This time we all gathered in the CAL Prądzińskiego community centre. The focus of the workshop was to map how interdepartmental and external cooperation is already implemented in each municipality, based on a placemaking project from the city. It also took into account which links were positive and which were not. By working in city groups, we also aimed to identify the factors that influence the quality and effectiveness of these collaborations..

Bergen

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Communication and information in the early stages of the project
- Shared spreadsheets and management tools
- Regular workshop meetings and high level of involvement in decision making, feeling of ownership of the project
- Improving relationships by ensuring that interests are aligned - this is a sensitive issue and needs to be handled with appropriate attention and approach

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Lack of open discussions to address the challenges that arise
- Lack of ownership of the project, too little involvement in strategic decisions
- Lack of co-creation methodology
- Lack of trust
- High expectations of outcome but no co-creation approach
- Only being the receiver of information and reluctant to provide input - resulting in not feeling powerful and connected to the project (vicious circle)
- Informality of connections sometimes making them difficult to navigate

Bradford

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Being able to identify a good 'selling point' for the project and being successful in attracting attention
- Different processes and timeframes for social engagement - flexibility for those to be adapted and the ability to adjust the dynamics of it (and keep the good pace)
- Adopting the right scale of expected outcomes and having a strong leadership group pushing in the right direction
- Adopting communication measures (internal and external) at an early stage of the project and keeping all stakeholders informed about the project
- Working with institutions at European level - providing advice, learning and some funding to add value

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- A project being a political debate, becoming very risky because of competing political views and the project becomes a sensitive issue
- Pressure from regional authorities to stick to timetables and budgets and not allowing for flexible adaptation of measures along the process
- Different levels of willingness to adopt new measures - sometimes the visions may be the same but the willingness to adopt them may be different and this needs attention and an appropriate approach

Budapest

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Finding channels for fast and effective communication between different departments
- Recognising the contribution of different stakeholders and sharing new ideas across departments
- Ongoing communication, especially with those stakeholders who may have concerns and uncertainties about the project, and are directly affected by it

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Obtaining approvals from traffic and safety departments - procedures not aligned between departments
- Lack of consistency in communication and response times
- Risk-averse attitudes, seeing change as scary
- Difficulties in communicating with residents - they feel left out as the initiative comes from the council - lack of trust

Cork

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- An external motivator and source of inspiration and energy to go back to the local projects and engage the others, with a strong drive.
- Buy-in between different departments - acceptance and willingness to actively support and participate in the project together
- A shared approach to learning as we go - acceptance of the organic level of the project
- Recommendations for the project as a result of internal consultations - agreement on the shared vision at the early stages of the project
- Finding links with wider projects and building on these synergies

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- History of relationships, approaching some of the stakeholders that cause difficulties due to a common history and previous interactions that were not successful, lack of trust in these exchanges, need to understand that we don't start from "0".
- Sometimes the "champions" of the project (stakeholder leaders) can be overbearing and counterproductive to the project.
- Lack of confidence when doing things for the first time - new ways of doing things come with nervousness
- Eagerness to extend the community engagement approach, but difficulties in finding the right outreach activities

Helsingborg

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Having many people across departments with the same goals and energy to apply the same vision
- Passionate representatives of different stakeholders - harnessing the energy and creativity of these individuals
- Finding allies at regional and national level who can help leverage the importance of the project

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Not having the same goals and drive for the project being very limiting to successful collaboration, having a passive attitude
- Some departments do not see the potential of the public realm and are therefore unwilling to work together, using the excuse of lack of budget.
- The plans and procedures are not synchronised across departments

Helsinki

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Good communication between different project partners, with a shared vision
- Accepting a degree of flexibility and a shared acceptance of an approach to learning what works best along the way, rather than creating set solutions from the outset.
- Not having a strictly defined timetable and not being under time pressure - this allows for a softer approach to the project.

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Sources of funding not 100% identified, therefore lack of confidence in how the project should develop
- Difficult planning and building regulations, which are very restrictive for a project that is to take place at the intersection of many existing elements.
- Conflicting visions between different partners
- Communication between a large group and making sure that everyone is equally up to date is a challenge.

Rotterdam

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Support from City Hall and the ability to contact them quickly and get a response
- Involvement of local stakeholders - businesses and citizens, Involving residents in the early stages helped to define the desired outcomes and shape the project
- A team working on the ground (intermediary between the municipality and the stakeholders) as an information and communication team - good tool for constant communication, maintaining day-to-day relations.

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Stubborn attitudes - a lot of time lost due to the need to obtain approvals, safety procedures that do not allow for less conventional measures and applications.
- Concerns from other departments due to lack of full understanding of the project

Trenčín

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Reflecting on the positives and small wins - not taking them for granted, but celebrating with the team and project partners
- Ensuring that the city council, external cultural organisations and other partners have the same goals, leading to smooth collaboration

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Interpersonal skills and ability to work as a team, changing attitudes of the partners
- The political aspect of the project, the power of the city council, which is demonstrated by the arbitrary decisions made when it comes to budgeting, questioning the importance of the project.
- Communication and management of all partners - time and effort consuming

Vinnitsia

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Support from external experts and international links - positively received by local partners
- Active citizens and strong social engagement - advocating the importance of the project
- Positive feedback about the project from an independent journalist, which helped to demonstrate the importance of the project

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Lobbying within the Municipality - conflicts of interest and often going behind each other's backs
- Tackling issues that are culturally controversial and sensitive

Wroclaw

STRENGTHS OF THE CONNECTIONS, POSITIVE FACTORS

- Identifying the partners who have good relations with the other stakeholders (e.g. the community) and using their connections and channels for communication - building on existing positive links.
- Building the collaborations based on the identified common goal
- Trust between different partners - building on previous collaborations and learning from the past, identifying allies for such projects
- Good internal channels for knowledge transfer

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONNECTIONS, CHALLENGES

- Some partners focusing only on their small part of the project and a vision for that particular issue/sphere - difficulty in seeing the bigger picture and finding common goals; short-term orientation
- Risk aversion and fear of change - also from local communities
- Lack of holistic vision within the Municipality
- Community involvement too late in the process, resulting in a lack of ownership of the project
- Financial constraints

GENERAL REFLECTIONS - HOW TO ENHANCE THE STRENGTHS AND IMPROVE THE WEAKNESSES:

- Sharing reflections with your colleagues and collaborators is not the same as active participation and co-creation. To be able to take this next step and improve the quality of our internal work and conversation, we must think of appropriate communication tools and devote our time and efforts to ensure this.
- A shared vision for the partnership is a key element for fruitful collaboration and the earlier in the process this shared vision is created, the better. Waiting too long to create a shared vision has serious consequences for any project.
- We need to understand that we're not starting from scratch - we're working in areas that have been affected by previous interactions, and we need to take into account that both internal communications and external actions such as public participation from the past may continue to influence the current state of affairs. Even if we were not involved in the previous actions, it is important to acknowledge the previous dynamics and conflicts between stakeholders. Even build in time for mourning or restoration.

- It takes a lot of time and effort to maintain communication, transfer knowledge and make sure that every project partner is on the same page. That's a big part of the communication process. Make sure you allow for suitable time & resources for this.
- We have to recognise that many circumstances lead to different timeframes and dynamics of processes and procedures between different stakeholders. The lack of response or appropriate action is not always due to bad will or resistance to change - individuals can be constrained by external factors and this should be addressed early in the process so that it doesn't come as a surprise during the project. It's a conversation, not an approach with a shopping list of requirements.



Session 5: Cultural placemaking collaborations

By Tim Jones

Tim Jones of TJ Culture took us into the world of creative placemaking. He has been working in the City of London for several years, using culture as a tool to create a more open and engaging public space, and he presented some of his findings. Tim shared that working around the theme of culture inspires working out of silos and in some ways means connecting across sectors to deliver successful, inclusive and thriving places, as this theme:

- is seen and understood by many as energising and interesting;
- cuts across different sectors as everyone has a connection to it;
- can be a means of engaging diverse and often 'hard to reach' communities;
- can turbo-charge outputs as the input/output ratio can be impressive;
- contributes to place meaning, narrative and brand.

It is therefore clearly a useful tool to be applied in the 'Placemaking Thinking' scheme and drive change. Some of the key lessons from the presentation were as follows:

USE THE RESOURCES YOU HAVE, PLAN REALISTICALLY AND GROW YOUR PLAN STEP BY STEP

When planning a process, think of it as cooking from your fridge rather than from a cookbook - you will not be able to collect all the new resources and elements right away, but there is sure to be something you can conjure up from existing resources. The main principles for such an approach are:

Resource:
[Effectuation: The Entrepreneurial Method](#) by Saras D. Sarasvathy

1. Bird in Hand: start with what you have and who you know and use existing means rather than discover new approaches.
2. Affordable Loss: decide and invest what you can afford to lose. Don't target a return first and hope for profitability and growth.
3. Lemonade: leverage challenges and surprises into opportunities rather than working around, overcoming or ignoring them.
4. Patchwork Quilt: build a network of self selected stakeholders. Get commitments and devise strategic partnerships.
5. Pilot in the Plane: focus on what you yourself can control.

Resource: [Cultural Planning Framework](#)

USE CULTURE AS A TOOL TO ADDRESS MULTIPLE NEEDS

Culture is the glue that gives meaning to places, making them successful, engaging and attractive, but also for planning. Using the Cultural Planning Framework (CPF) toolkit can be a useful inspiration to start the conversation in the right direction. The CPF toolkit contains tools that can support everyone in different ways to contribute to more culture in cities. For example: help in creating a working business model and visualising impact measures, various brainstorming tools and ways to map culture in an area. The CPF toolkit invites you to think in 7 steps:

1. Cultural ecosystem mapping: what already exists and where is it?
2. Focal areas: where should cultural planning activity be focused?
3. Formula recommendations: how to control development and provide culture?
4. Cultural plans review: how does the system currently work?
5. Impact assessment: how can we define and measure success?
6. Case studies: what are the different forms of cultural planning deliverables?
7. Business case: how does culture encourage businesses to come and stay in the place?

CULTURE IS AN EASY WAY TO CONNECT WITH OTHER PEOPLE

Go to the right parties! By going to the right parties, you'll be able to make connections with people you might not have realised were crucial to your project. When it comes to culture, it can permeate many different aspects and fields, so you never know who will be your ally and who can help you move projects forward. So don't miss out on making those connections and use culture as a bridge to different conversations.

For inspiration, a recommended resource: *Leading Change* by John P. Kotter



Open session: Places of common - spatial, social and strategic components of places to empower local communities at different urban scales

During this open session we focused on identifying the spatial, social and strategic components of successful places and exploring participatory models that invite us all to take active part of the transformation. We heard from representatives of the Placemaking Europe and Cities in Placemaking programme, as well as local speakers - city officials and local organisations who have worked on implementing neighbourhood and city scale projects aimed at socio-economic improvement.



THE SECRETS OF GREAT PLACES

Hans Karssenbergh - Founder and partner at STIPO

Placemaking is an iterative process and could be about many kinds of projects with the aim to create great places. Some of the key-lessons for designing great places are: 1) Consider the Maslow's pyramid (not only basic needs but also psychological and self-fulfilment needs) but add the spatial aspect to it: space is on the bottom, place at the top. 2) Great public spaces need to be informal, innovative, incomplete, at a small scale and interactive. 3) Everything we see at an eye-level is important to be considered. 4) Façades and ground floors are crucial for activating public spaces. 5) First, think about life, then space, then buildings.

Hans also presented the case study of ZOHO (Rotterdam) where gradually, by improving the wayfinding, opening up the facade of the building, connecting with the local leaders, using the lighter, quicker, cheaper approach, creating an lively hybrid zone and activating the adjacent public spaces by creating a pocket park, the abandoned area transformed into a lively and vibrant neighbourhood. The lessons from this transformation are:

- Values of great public places are: economic capital but also green capital, physical, social and cultural capital - it much beyond just the business case
- In the placemaking life cycle we have to remember of all phases: placemaking activation (with public authorities and local communities), place-led development (involving investors and developers) and place management (involving designers and planners) - and different phases may need different ways of collaboration and organisation
- Placemaking as a mindset - "Placemaking" is everybody's job - not just the activists' or the developers' or authorities'!

EMPOWERING LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN HELSINGBORG: HOW WE ENGAGE OTHERS TO TAKE A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR CITY

Moa Sundberg - Urban Design Strategist, City of Helsingborg

Moa shared her experience of working with local communities through two case studies: Queen's Hill - a renovated part of the neighbourhood where the focus of the transformation was on safe growth through measures such as: education, crime prevention through local environmental design and placemaking; and Söderscen - where a (previously) unsafe and unwelcoming part of the city was transformed through active programming with small community grants and the creation of a platform to connect with residents. The key lessons from years of placemaking work in Helsingborg are

- People don't just show up - think about what you would do if you got the invitation or saw the poster. Would you go? Find the right time and really think about how you communicate it - is it inviting enough? If you don't get the response you want, change the question or the target group. It is not just about reluctance, you have to make an effort to make people feel invited.
- People will come with their other agendas - they will talk about what's bothering them, and they often need to get that off their chest before they can move on to other questions. Be prepared to give them the opportunity to do this, but when you get to the main part of the meeting, be sure to focus solely on how we can change this place together. This requires facilitation and capacity - be prepared for this.



On the left, Moa Sundberg.
On the right, Cezary Stańczyk.

TRIANGULAR SQUARE - PLACEMAKING IN PRZEDMIEŚCIE OŁAWSKIE

Cezary Stańczyk - Liderzy z Przedmieścia

The first placemaking case study presented from Wrocław was the Triangular Square - a unique place on the city map in a diverse neighbourhood full of contrasts, with a rich history and architectural gems, but also very dense tenement housing with very little green space or recreational facilities. The Triangular Square - as the heart of this area - offers a unique opportunity for a placemaking project to transform it into an even more attractive and sustainable space, especially as it is already full of community initiatives, with residents actively involved in various events and initiatives, demonstrating a strong sense of community. The Triangular Square is a perfect example of the impact that a community-led and actively curated space can have on its surroundings, but also of the need for constant engagement and non-stop effort to keep the energy going. The square also has great potential to meet sustainability goals if it is transformed into a green oasis, following placemaking principles to create an inclusive, environmentally friendly hub. By involving residents in decision-making, encouraging volunteering, celebrating local identity, supporting community events and fostering a sense of belonging, the square can truly become a thriving example of how placemaking can bring communities together.

CREATING AND TESTING A PLACE IN THE FORMER MARKET AT SKOCZYLASA STREET (LEŚNICA)

Małgorzata Golak - Director of Economic Development Office

The second case study from Wrocław concerned the former market square in Skoczylasa Street, which had deteriorated and lost its quality due to changing customer behaviour, lack of investment and an ageing population of merchants. In 2018, the market operator tried to save the market by proposing a reconstruction project, but unfortunately the project didn't continue due to the lack of financial participation of the merchants. Later, on the initiative of the Municipality, public consultations and mediations with the merchants were held, which resulted in the decision to maintain the

square for the needs of the residents and to modernise the square, including the modernisation of the adjacent infrastructure. The current aim is to create a multi-functional zone (multi-zone) that will meet the needs of the residents, but as the reconstruction would be very costly due to the very low quality of the existing infrastructure, the aim now is to find innovative, low-budget forms of activating the square. Initial ideas for the square's new role include: a community garden, small leisure and sports facilities, shopping and catering facilities. A larger and more active community is beginning to gather around the case, which has great potential to make the square a central point for testing placemaking solutions and new community-oriented programming that could help transform the neighbourhood into one where the needs of the community are at the heart of change.

Małgorzata Golak



Day 3 - Wednesday, Nov 29



Session 6: Breaking down the silos

By Oriol Estela Barnet and Irene Navarro

The Metropolitan Strategic Plan of Barcelona (MSPB) is a NGO who focuses on the whole metropolitan area of Barcelona, the first to ever exist. The metropolitan scale is forgotten a lot within city development, but it is a very important scale to keep in mind, some problems are across multiple municipalities, and can only be worked on across this scale. The way they work is heavily aligned with placemaking thinking:

- Levelling knowledge
- Aligning priorities
- Identifying trade-offs
- Defining time frames
- Working inside-out / outside-in

The MSPB focus on five principles:

1. The metropolitan area of Barcelona: around 150 municipalities and five million people
2. Reducing inequalities: including climate change)
3. Quintuple helix: government, private, academia, citizens and media - working together
4. Proactivity: not only a plan, but a call to action
5. Collaborative and inclusive work: never do anything alone

They worked in four phases:

1. Sensorization: going to lots of events and meetings in the area. And really actively listening to what is happening in the region. (3 years)
2. Identifying the challenges, with their team and a commission of schools, organisations, experts: result: 67 challenges identified. (1 year)
3. Open discussion: thematic meetings were held and an online participation programme was set up. (1 year)
4. Missions: detailed, prioritised and selected strategic objectives through 24 workshops. (1 year)

This process made a complicated challenge into a complex one. Of course, there were still struggles along the way, such as working with online participation, which also meant fighting the digital divide, mapping a lot of stakeholders and aiming for a bottom-up governance approach. The MSPB also took advantage of existing events and went to the right parties! Barcelona was sustainable food capital of the world in 2021 and is part of the 100 Climate Neutral European cities of the year. And they have taken advantage of these events and motion already happening in the area. As this was the perfect opportunity to spread their message and receive input.



They have worked holistically across departments in around 150 municipalities. How?

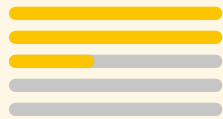
- **Don't think in silos:** instead of thinking in terms of issues, talk about residents' points of view. Define the challenges and goals in a multi-faceted and overarching way, so that cooperation between different departments is naturally strengthened and reinforced.
- **Focus on the issues, not the areas:** Ask stakeholders what they are worried about, rather than asking what area they work in. Don't think in terms of closed issues, which lead to categorisation without a deeper attempt to understand and connect related factors.
- **Use automapping:** Let stakeholders map themselves. Let them tell you what they need and what ideas they have. They may point you to other relevant stakeholders, which will help you build a holistic network. But when building the network, remember to define not only the 'way in' but also the 'way out'.

Session 7: Key takeaways and next steps

For the very last session of the workshop, we revisited the Placemaking Embeddedness Scale (introduced in the previous milestone) and re-evaluated some of the indications that touch on placemaking thinking: levelling knowledge, aligning priorities, identifying trade-offs, defining timeframes, and working inside-out and outside-in. We looked at a number of aspects to analyse specific contexts of interdepartmental work and to identify the factors that help and those that hinder the process. The participants rated each of the presented statements on a scale from 1 to 5 - 1 meaning "totally disagree" and 5 standing for "absolutely agree."



2,4



The essential knowledge to achieve our main goals is shared across the organisation.

AVERAGE SCORE: 2,4

In relation to the first aspect - *The essential knowledge to achieve our main goals is shared across the organisation* - it was noted that in some of the Municipalities, which are very large organisations, the platforms and tools for sharing knowledge do not work effectively enough and the size of the organisation can be a significant barrier to the process and cause information to be siloed. The majority of voices agreed that connections between departments are most likely to be made when connections between individuals are made - knowledge transfer is not yet secured through strategically embedded policies, but rather through individual connections. We should therefore learn from this approach how to get the other individuals on board, and work to ensure that knowledge transfer is embedded in our everyday actions and happens more systematically. The advice to start this journey is to work first with those who want to collaborate and then to convince others by showing the benefits of such an approach.

3,8



Our (department) priorities are aligned to the overall goals of the municipality.

AVERAGE SCORE: 3,8

The assessment of the second aspect showed that most of these 'placemaking' departments are making sure that their goals are aligned with the overall goals, and in a way are trying to extend the commonly agreed goals with the placemaking way of thinking. But what can be confusing in this process is that very often, although the goals are aligned and the policies seem clear, they are not implemented or followed in the same way, causing friction between departments

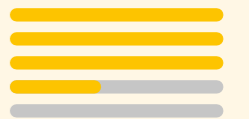
and hindering the process. It is often a challenge to ensure that there is a common understanding that not only are our (departmental) objectives aligned with the main objectives, but that this means that we are actually working towards the same goal and can work together effectively on that basis. Sometimes it feels like we don't see each other enough in that way - as partners with the same vision and priorities. So there is sometimes a lack of understanding of what the goals actually indicate and that there is potential to build on them.

We have the resources and tools to work inside-out and outside-in.

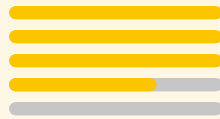
AVERAGE SCORE: 3,4

The higher individual scores in this aspect were found in the participating cities, which not only have the resources and tools, but also have a clear mandate to work with them. The mandate is very often accompanied by a budget, as this means that these particular objectives have been recognised as significant, which helps to scale up actions. This shows how important it is to support the tools for everyday action with strategic guidance and planning. What can also help to move the process forward in this case is to adopt the community of practice approach - we need to recognise (and convince others) that the resources and tools are there to help us to be as effective as possible in our work - not just to get the approvals, signatures and then lay them down unused. What was identified as something that can hinder the process is the inability or unwillingness to learn from each other - the resources and tools will be most effective if they are shared and contribute to the work of many. The tools and resources, like the information, should never be kept in silos.

3,4



3,6



Our short term actions contribute to the long term goals of the city

AVERAGE SCORE: 3,6

In relation to the last statement, there was a lot of mention of the fact that it varies a lot between departments and that it is difficult to rate for the whole organisation. For the most part, the individual scores for each department were higher than those for the organisation as a whole, as well as for cross-departmental projects, which shows that there is definitely a lot of room for improvement. What was noted as something that can help to take this forward is to make sure that short-term actions are evaluated regularly and that they and their impact are questioned in relation to long-term goals. Making our daily practice visible (e.g. in the form of an annual report) can help to reflect on whether today's decisions are having the impact we want and whether the actions we are taking are as effective as they could be.

To summarise this session, we have highlighted that we need to use an iterative process to manage the transition we are trying to make. We need to be prepared to respond quickly, to open the doors when others come along and to see the mistakes as opportunities. It is much more about the soft skills than the hard skills, and we want to apply that to project management. The working culture we want is very much about being open - minded and that applies to all: the organisation, the department, but also to ourselves.

This exercise also led the participating cities to re-evaluate the placemaking embeddedness scores they had previously established - in some cases increasing the scores and in others decreasing them. The main reasons for changing the scores were:

In the case of those who increased their score:

- Seeing the improvement in the level of interest across departments as a result of bringing in new ideas and inspiration, and also participating in the international exchanges that highlight and provide evidence of the importance of placemaking.
- Recognising that we are often already working towards the same goals and objectives across departments, and even if it doesn't always show at first glance, we actually have the same intentions and this should be recognised and celebrated.
- Implement new policies and tools - e.g. by adopting new documents or guidelines that already enforce placemaking thinking - not in the old-school policy style, but more as guidelines or checklists of things to consider when running a project.

In the case of those downgrading their score:

- Difficulties with being the 'early adopters' and not yet getting recognition for actions, which can be discouraging in the moments; not seeing as much action from others.
- Placemaking actions are being adopted in a very fragmented way, without a clear vision or shared understanding of their potential when applied more holistically and systematically, and are still seen as a tool rather than a way of doing.
- Still looking for a common language to break down the barrier and connect across departments, convincing others of what they may not consider to be in their field is a very big challenge.

Next step: Milestone 5 - From short-term to long-term

CORK, MARCH 11-13, 2024



On 11-13 March (Monday-Wednesday), we will meet again for the next milestone on From short-term to long-term.

The aim of the next meeting will be to discuss the implications of moving from short-term placemaking interventions to a more strategic, long-term and comprehensive approach. We will look at the differences between short-term and long-term placemaking approaches and the key elements of a comprehensive, systemic placemaking strategy. We will also work to develop a basic framework for moving from short-term to long-term placemaking initiatives.



See you at the next Cities in Placemaking meeting in Cork.



Ramon Marrades

Co-director of Placemaking Europe

ramon.marrades@placemaking-europe.eu

Marta Popiolek

Partnerships and Network Lead

marta.popiolek@placemaking-europe.eu

placemaking



europe