



Fig. 1 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants in Umeå/ picture credit: Linda Blåfors

RESULTS OF SEEDBED INTERVENTIONS IN SIX CULTIVATING CITIES

Terms

The following abbreviations have been used in this report for specific terms:

Cultivating Cities	The GoGreenRoutes project refers to the six core European city partners as 'Cultivating Cities.' Staff from each of these six municipalities receive funding to participate in GoGreenRoutes. In this document, we use the term Cultivating City and city partner interchangeably to refer to the individual or team leading each municipality's engagement in the project.
Seedbed interventions	Desk research shows that the term seedbed intervention is not yet defined. WP3 partners agree that seedbed interventions could and should significantly influence the NBS interventions and foster connections between different user groups. They are temporary and should raise awareness on issues related to urban health and well-being.
NBS and NBS interventions	The European Commission defines NBS as "solutions that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience. Such solutions bring more diverse nature, natural features and processes into cities, landscapes and seascapes, through locally adapted, resource-efficient and systemic interventions. Nature-based solutions must therefore benefit biodiversity and support the delivery of a range of ecosystem services." (European Commission, 2021). In GoGreenRoutes 6 NBS interventions will be implemented. They are not temporary and the concept for them is based on the results of the seedbed interventions.
UMA	Urban Morphology Analysis: "Urban morphology is the science that studies the physical form of cities, as well as the main agents and processes shaping it over time." (Oliveira, 2018, p. 1)
SWOT	Strengths- Weaknesses- Opportunities- Threats: Based on the results of the UMA, the Cultivating City partners carried out an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) for the selected UWL sites for the seedbed and NBS interventions. The aim of the SWOT analysis was to reflect the results of the UMA and to assess "internal factors" (strengths and weaknesses) and "external factors". (GoGreenRoutes, 2022, Report 3.3, p. 13, opportunities and threats)
UWL and LTF	Each cultivating city formed a local taskforce (LTF) responsible for steering an 'Urban Well-being Lab' (UWL). Once the taskforces were in place, each city developed its own terms of collaboration, subject to certain minimum requirements to be defined. As a minimum, the taskforces will contribute to the design of seedbed interventions in each city as mechanisms for fostering wider stakeholder engagement, as well as the broader design and implementation of NBS interventions and Urban Well-being Plans.

Deliverable 3.5 Work Package 3



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Executive summary

This report shows the processes and results of six seedbed interventions in the project in the six Cultivating Cities. These interventions were developed in close cooperation between city partners and partners from WP3. Already in 2021, the city partners held online and/or face-to-face workshops (Challenge Workshops) in their cities to understand the challenges, inform stakeholders about the project and the interventions and in particular to recruit some of them as a local taskforce for more intensive engagement. Following this, additional workshops were organized by city partners until early 2022 (the Planning Intervention Workshops) to co-creatively develop the seedbed interventions. The city staff together with project partners from WP3 then implemented the seedbed interventions in their cities between July 2022 and September 2022. During the interventions, information and knowledge about future developments in the cities was transferred to participants, as well as active participation formats were used to gather public opinion about the upcoming NBS interventions in the cities in 2023. Through interviews, discussion formats and experimental formats such as the Photovoice method, participants took part in a variety of activities (see chapter 3).

The results of these different activities are summarized and presented in this report. The NBS interventions which will be implemented in the cities in 2023 will be further developed based on these results.

Ideally this report helps the cities to communicate the concept and ideas behind the project. The report was deliberately optimized graphically to make it easier to read, in order to reach a broader audience. We hope that by elaborating the processes and outcomes of the seedbed interventions, the report can serve as inspiration for other cities wanting to undertake similar projects.

In the first chapter, we highlight the people involved in making the seedbed intervention happen. Furthermore, the project objectives and the target audience for this report are explained in more detail. The second chapter describes the specificities of the areas in each city considered for NBS implementation and details the WP3 preparation process for a NBS intervention. Furthermore, the role of the gender, inclusion and diversity aspect within the project is explained. The third chapter serves as the core of the report, where the concepts of seedbed and NBS interventions are explained in detail and subsequently all results of the six cities are summarized. In the fourth chapter, a short reflection of the results is given by partners from WP3 who were on site at the interventions. Finally, in the fifth chapter an outlook on further tasks and actions is provided.

This report was developed as part of task 3.4: "Prepare, Design and Implement a 'seedbed' intervention in each of the Cultivating Cities" in the research project "GO GREEN: Resilient Optimal Urban natural, Technological and Environmental Solutions (GoGreenRoutes)", funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme. It includes diverse actions to use the concept of Nature-based Solutions (NBS) to develop and apply new approaches in designing modern cities that actively promote the health and well-being of urban residents with nature-connectedness as the underlying principle. As part of GoGreenRoutes' work package 3 (WP3), "Cultivating: Re-/ Co-Design, Co-Creation, and Co-Ownership," six seedbed interventions were undertaken in six participating Cultivating Cities. More information about the project can be found on the website <https://gogreenroutes.eu> and more information about previous work that formed the basis for seedbed interventions can be found in report 3.4: "Co-Creation in the making: Introducing and Co-Planning seedbed interventions" (available soon on <https://gogreenroutes.eu/publications>).

INTRODUCING

CHAPTER 1

People behind the Interventions

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Project background

GoGreenRoutes, with its large transdisciplinary consortium, is an innovation action expanding the concept of NBS to include important social parameters for health and wellbeing. The focus of the project lies in improving the relationship between people and their urban environment by enhancing the awareness and understanding of the benefits of urban green space, such as the possibility for healthier and more engaged communities (Noppenbauer et al., 2021, p.8-9; Bah et al., 2021, p.8-9).

GoGreenRoutes also seeks to broaden the understanding, perception and experience of urban green space locally through different actions, like temporary urban interventions, in this context referred to as seedbed interventions. This way, the added value of well-designed and accessible urban green space can be better understood and made explicit to its citizens.

In the context of GoGreenRoutes this report aims to show the main results from the implementation of the seedbed interventions in all 6 cultivating cities.

To this end, the report is divided into 5 main sections and corresponding chapters:

- Chapter 1 introduces the main topic of this report, the seedbed interventions and describes the approach to the subject in the context of the overall project.
- Chapter 2 presents a more detailed overview of the work carried out in the 6 Cultivating Cities within WP3, focusing on the co-creation process and how it untangled across the various activities. Also it provides background on the relevance - within the policy frameworks at international and European level - to carry out such interventions, especially in relation to the essential role NBS can play in providing health and well-being benefits, as well as social cohesion.
- Chapter 3 illustrates the methodology used to develop the interventions, describing step by step the preparatory work carried out in collaboration with the cities, until the actual implementation of the intervention on each site.
- Chapter 4 reflects on the main results and learnings from this process, as well on the information and input collected as public opinion during the interventions.
- Chapter 5 details how the outcomes of this activity will inform and support the way forward in the project.

Where this report comes in

As illustrated before, WP3 is meant to cultivate a large part of the project through Re-/Co-Design, Co-Creation and Co-Ownership.

The seedbed interventions represent a big milestone in the journey of developing the NBS interventions. They are the culmination of an intensive co-creative visioning and engagement process on the local level in each cultivating city.

Each stage of the process has been documented and can be accessed on the project website ([see Report 3.1-3.4](#)).

Consequently, this report will focus on the implementation of the seedbed interventions, documenting and reflecting on their outcome. We believe the seedbed interventions can serve as inspiration for other cities or initiatives wanting to try out similar activities. Therefore, this report was created for a broader audience, enhancing graphic presentation and reducing the need for scientific understanding.

Objectives and target audiences

The objectives of this report are to:

- Describe the context and processes of implementing the seedbed interventions
- Present the outcomes of the seedbed interventions, also including the public opinion collected
- Outline planned next steps, following the conclusion of the seedbed interventions
- Highlight the learnings from the research and implementation

The target audience is:

- The Cultivating Cities partners. The cities are co-authors of this report and each of them will read the others' reflections, to better understand the plans and emerging work in each city, as part of their ongoing peer-to-peer exchange.
- Local stakeholders in the Cultivating Cities (especially the local taskforces) that the city partners will engage in the project.
- Scientific partners in the GoGreenRoutes consortium. The report on the seedbed interventions will be of great importance for all partners, as it will offer key insights from the public opinion to significantly influence the character of the larger NBS interventions, which will induce a permanent change of the chosen target areas in each city.
- Local communities who provided important information on the awareness of the selected target areas influenced by the interventions.

EXPLAINING

CHAPTER 2

Uniqueness and commonalities

Mike Bloomberg, the former mayor of New York City is known for his quote “No two cities are the same but many share similar challenges,” which emphasizes the commonalities and uniqueness of each city and the importance of tailoring solutions to their specific needs and challenges. This quote highlights the idea that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to city governance and that each city must be approached and dealt with in its own way. However, it is not only through Bloomberg we understand this, since a lot depends on the local contexts in almost every field of research and development and sustainable urban development is no different. The WP3 team have tried to understand the similar but also unique challenges earlier on in the project using workshops with city staff, but also through UMA and SWOT Analysis. The WP3 team identified the potentially appropriate roadmaps for the cities (based on the grant agreement tasks), with some processes towards proposing NBS as the solution that could be replicated in most, if not every city.

Here, in this chapter, we go into the details of the various cities’ areas under consideration for NBS implementation. Despite the varied local contexts, needs and interests, it is clear how each of the cities wishes to tackle the same issue with supporting its people’s health and well-being by improving nature in the urban fabric.

Burgas, Bulgaria – Local target Area: Gurko street and Oborishte

A retreat from city life in a green urban oasis

The area is imagined to be a green meeting space, referred to as “Park Island”, providing an oasis for recreation, sound therapy and connection to nature. The park is intended for all residents but providing ideal conditions for patients of nearby health facilities. Ideas are in place for seven units in the park including: meeting spaces, interactive music installations, a multi-purpose stage for yoga and tai chi or theatre, a physiotherapy corner, water sculptures, wooden play area with built elements for children to climb and explore, and accessibility through pathways, bike racks and joint parking spaces.

Access to greenspace will be re-established through the construction of walkways and greenery, providing recreational spaces for people to explore the city in a sustainable, healthier way. Residents will have the possibility to retreat from city life, observe nature and watch local wildlife without leaving Burgas. Both locations will benefit greatly from the interventions.



Fig. 2 Collage of the day in Burgas/
photo credit: Ivaylo Trendaflov

Uniqueness and commonalities

Lahti, Finland – Local target area: Kintterö health forest

Making nature accessible to all

Lahti's residents count on extensive natural resources to support well-being and recovery. Urban green areas consist mostly of forests with extensive path networks and other recreational structures such as huts and bonfire sites.

To take full advantage of its green surroundings, the city developed the concept of a "health forest", next to the healthcare centre in the Kintterö nature conservation area. The health forest will support the well-being and recovery of the healthcare centre staff, patients and visitors, and will be open to all Lahti citizens seeking to bring nature closer to their everyday lives.

Versailles, France – Local target Area: Square Blaise Pascal

The "City of Nature" becomes even greener

The Urban Well-being lab (UWL) in Versailles will respond to a number of environmental and social challenges such as social isolation, sedentary lifestyles, as well as air and noise pollution, highlighting the co-benefits of nature-based solutions for human health, air quality, thermal comfort and to protect biodiversity. Such places will encourage meetings and exchanges between generations, host social activities, and enable more active lifestyles.

Versailles will revitalize the neighbourhood life by fostering a new range of outdoor activities, promoting sustainable modes of transport, and democratising the use of sport facilities by giving them new uses and renewed support.

GoGreenRoutes will also contribute to breaking open silos in public administration by bringing together at least six administrative departments in Versailles: Sports, Green Spaces, Urban Planning and Transport, Neighbourhood Life, Leisure and Youth, and the Communal Centre for Social Actions, along with administrative support services and local partners.



Fig. 3 Collage of the day in Lahti/
photo credit: Juha Tanhua



Fig. 4 Collage of the day in Versailles/
photo credit: Pierrick Daul/ Julia Gäckle

Uniqueness and commonalities

Tallinn, Estonia – Local target area: Vormsi Park

Outdoor recreational fields and a new urban rain garden for happier, more sociable residents

Vormsi Park, situated in the eastern part of Lasnamäe, is within walking distance from the homes of thousands of locals, between Estonia and Russian speaking groups. It represents the perfect area to bring community members together, and the ideal public space for co-designing a new urban garden with local citizens that will result in increased social interactions and reduced stress levels. Outdoor recreational fields will help addressing mental and behavioural disorders across several age groups. Tallinn's residents have decided jointly to focus on management of local trees and the creation of a rain garden, which will give additional opportunities for leisure.



Fig. 5 Collage of the day in Tallinn / photo credit: Anton Semenyura

Limerick, Ireland – Local target Area: Castletroy Greenway

Green, accessible, multi-functional travel routes to link up natural habitats

As a part of revitalising the Castletroy Greenway - a popular cycling path in the city - residents are interested in growing native species along the path as a way to both promote ecological biodiversity as well as to provide a more accessible area of rest for citizens and a place for children to engage in natural play.

Such linkages, if properly planned and implemented, can provide a range of ecosystem services including: creating ecological corridors for wildlife movement; providing active travel routes and encouraging healthier lifestyles; improving wellbeing through contact with nature; improving air quality and even reducing flood risk where Sustainable Urban Drainage features are included.



Fig. 6 Collage of the day in Limerick / photo credit: City of Limerick / Julia Gacke

Uniqueness and commonalities

Umeå, Sweden – Local target area: Bölevägen route

'Green lungs' to tackle air pollution and encourage active travel through gender-sensitive planning

Part of the challenge in making Bölevägen route more attractive derives from the combination of traffic-related pollution and Umeå's cold climate, which keeps emissions from motor vehicles at the street level, leading to poor air quality and adverse health effects.

Umeå is looking into how to turn Bölevägen into a public space that encourages active travel, where residents feel safe at all times, prioritising walking and biking as transport modes. The city is seeking visual and functional integration of green spaces to support the improvement of air quality. Umeå will leverage its long experience in gender-sensitive urban planning to investigate how men, women and other social and cultural groups are using and benefiting from ecosystem services provided by the area.



Working process in WP3

WP3 “Cultivating: Re-/Co-Design, Co-Creation, and Co-Ownership”, starting from the first task “Establish and Maintain the Framework for Collaboration”, set the basis for the overall co-creation approach and main principles. These key guidelines served as the groundwork to guide task 3.2 “Establish and maintain Local Taskforces”, which involved stakeholder mapping and was followed by the task 3.3 “Spatial definition and analysis of Urban Well-Being Lab areas”. The process each city partner has been through of conducting their analysis and mapping the diverse group of potential stakeholders to connect with ([See D.3.2 “Stakeholder mapping report”](#)) was an important step towards mobilising their local taskforce and understanding their individual local target areas.



Fig. 3 Collaboration on an apple juice workshop in Versailles/
photo credit: City of Versailles

By leveraging on this established network of key actors, and their expertise as well as needs identified, Task 3.4 has been guided by the principles for collaboration, supporting the planning of the seedbed interventions, the outcomes of which are being described in this report D3.5 “Results of Seedbed Interventions in six Cultivating Cities”. The main results will be key in informing the following process within the project of co-creating and co-implementing the local NBS interventions in all six cities.

Context is key

Operating within the international policy landscape

The project is working towards having positive impacts and advancements in human well-being and health, equity, diversity and better quality of life inspired by nature. In many international and European level policy instruments, a clear focus has emerged in using NBS to provide solutions to multiple challenges.

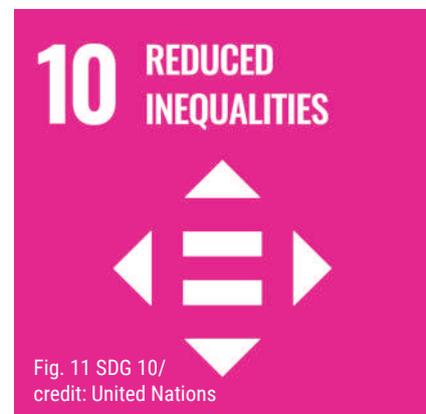
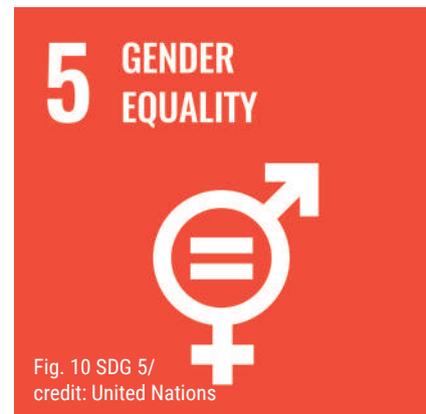
To be able to deliver on the international, regional, national and local ambitions towards sustainable urban development, one should consider the existing and upcoming policy instruments. The following sections explain the existing international and European policy landscape. We intentionally omit the national and local levels for the sake of providing a high-level overview which could be helpful for other European cities as well.

Apart from the policy context, we also provide a brief overview on the social context to help understand how inclusion is sought for within the project. This chapter also includes the aspect of gender, inclusion and diversity (GID). GID is a transversal theme in the project and touches all work packages. This panel guides the cities and project partners to keep in mind the essential elements for social inclusion and support the voices of diverse target groups for the NBS.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The work within GoGreenRoutes and specifically with the seedbed intervention directly or indirectly relates to the Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5, 10, 11 and 15 (see fig. 9-13).

In terms of health and well-being (SDG3), the project focuses on health impact assessments to understand the effects of NBS on people in cities. As for gender equality and reduced inequality (SDG 5 and 10), the Gender, Inclusion and Diversity panel will lay out some fundamental outline of ensuring all voices are heard to 'leave no one behind' and in fact marginalised groups are encouraged to participate in the process of NBS designing, planning and implementation. It is evident that the co-creation and inclusion aspect plays a vital role in successfully integrating NBS in urban fabric, both spatially but also politically with a strong narrative on gender, inclusion, and diversity. Lastly, since the activities are spatial in scope keeping in mind infrastructural changes and NBS implementation and targets the urban community in cities, the SDG 11 and SDG15 are at the core of the work undertaken in WP3 in GoGreenRoutes.



Context is key

Operating within the international policy landscape

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) - the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Global Biodiversity Framework

The Convention on Biological Diversity (Convention on Biological Diversity, URL) promotes nature and well-being, making an urgent call for action in Member States. Because the original Biodiversity targets were not met a new Global Biodiversity Framework (referred to as Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework) was called for and adopted in the CBD COP15. Within the framework, in Target 8 and Target 11 there is mention of nature based solutions as following:

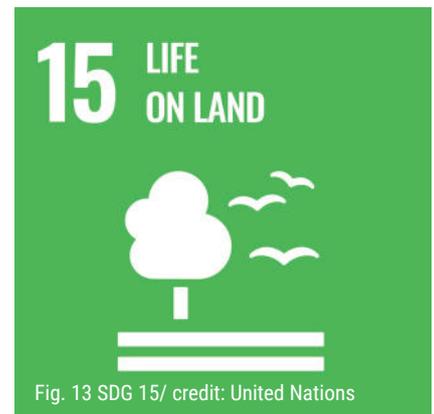
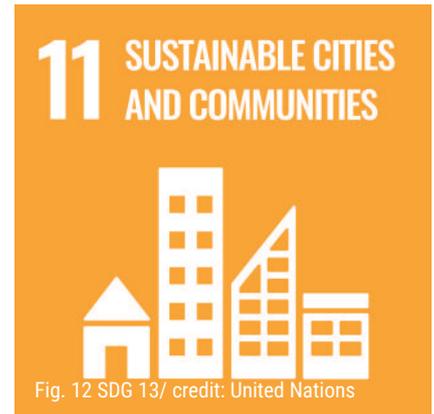
TARGET 8

Minimize the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solution and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimizing negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity.

TARGET 11

Restore, maintain and enhance nature’s contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as regulation of air, water, and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.

Thus, there is an immense role that the cities within GoGreenRoutes can play, specifically by adopting biodiverse Nature based solutions for improving the health and well-being of the people. With the specific action of Seedbed interventions, followed by NBS implementation and also by checking potentials of replicating the solutions, the cities are leading by example within the European context.



Context is key

Operating within the international policy landscape

UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (United Nations, 2022)

The United Nation has declared the decade of 2021-2030 as one for ecosystem restoration. Urban areas account for less than 1 percent of the Earth's land surface. Nevertheless, 70 percent of the population is concentrated in urban areas. Consequently, how we manage and plan urban areas will be key for the health of ecosystems. Therefore, cities are an important player for actions towards ecosystem restoration and are encouraged by the UN to be proactive and support the Decades mission.

Therefore within GoGreenRoutes, and specifically with actions for NBS implementation, the cities together with the project partners strive to provide better health and well-being by adopting more nature-connectedness. The aim of actions such as seedbed interventions, has also been to raise awareness of the importance of the restoration of natural elements within the urban areas. The city officials have shown great interest and commitment in making green spaces available, accessible and attractive.

European context of nature-based solutions (NBS)

The European Commission acknowledged the latest definition of NBS adopted in March 2022 by the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNECE-5) defined nature-based solutions as: 'Actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits.'

Therefore the EU recognizes the same potential to increase well-being by implementing NBS, which is the stated goal of GoGreenRoutes. Very often, in the urban context, it is the 'modified' ecosystem that is being considered and thus with local target areas such as city forests, green corridors, urban parks and such, the GoGreenRoutes cities meet the criteria well. In the case of seedbed interventions, with effective communication and co-creation activities with the locals, a common vision has been developed in each city for the NBS implementation.



Fig. 14 Logo United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration/ credit: United Nations

Context is key

Operating within the international policy landscape

The European Green Deal (European Commission, 2021)

The European Green Deal has an ambitious goal to make EU the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.

Overall, to achieve the ambitious commitments proposed in the EU Green Deal, collective action is needed. The nature restoration law is still undergoing amendments, however the targets for the urban ecosystems might potentially stay the same. The Network Nature project has developed a policy brief which zooms in on the role of cities and regions in delivering towards the law and can be found [here](#). (Network Nature, 2022)

The paragraph below illustrates the immediate connection to seedbed and NBS interventions:

“They (cities and regions) can foster the design and management of urban spaces in a way that protects, connects and restores urban ecosystems and habitats. For instance, by improving the quality of urban green spaces for resilience, biodiversity and climate mitigation. And because they are closest to local communities, they can raise awareness and rally for multi-stakeholder support that will be needed for joint, co-ordinated and systemic action.”

Thus, it is clear that there are several existing policies, both on international and regional level, which are guiding the work of WP3 partners in supporting cities to meet the ambitious targets and ever growing need for living in harmony with nature.

GID (Gender, Inclusion and Diversity)

The concept of social inclusion and environmental justice is embedded in the core of GoGreenRoutes. The Gender, Inclusion and Diversity within the project is supported by a group of volunteering project partners which meet bi-weekly or monthly as a GID Panel and discuss several essential aspects to consider when approaching NBS planning and implementation on the ground. Over time, the GID Panel has combined the work of citizen voice monitor with the actual implementation of important workshops which indicate a milestone in cities, such as the seedbed interventions being discussed here as well as the forthcoming NBS interventions. The aim of the GID panel is to ensure approaching the inhabitants for public opinions in terms of societal and health benefits from nature connectedness, in an inclusive manner.

Apart from project internal GID activities, the GID panel also engages with the sister cluster projects (INHABIT, EUPolis and VARCITIES) to support the development of the justice dimension in NBS projects, in line with the EU Green Deal (described earlier), for instance.

SHOWING

CHAPTER 3

What did we do?

What are seedbed interventions? What are NBS interventions? What are Urban Well-Being Labs?

What distinguishes GoGreenRoutes from other projects is its commitment to co-creation at every stage. GoGreenRoutes believes that NBS can be enriched by co-planning, co-design, and co-implementation, as it may result in a more inclusive and effective process, as local knowledge is involved throughout the whole project. As part of this collaboration framework, and as groundwork for selecting and implementing the locally-appropriate seedbed and NBS interventions, Cultivating City partners defined the locations of Urban Well-being Labs (UWL), they also considered existing challenges and potential for improvement by complementing the Urban Morphology (UMA) and SWOT. An UWL is based on the concept of a living lab. It is governed jointly by a local taskforce and the city partners, although many city partners have since taken a leading role, as some taskforces are more active than others. The UWL is both a physical, geographically bounded, location and a framework for engagement and with local stakeholders (see also report 3.3, available soon on <https://gogreenroutes.eu/publications>).

In GoGreenRoutes, unlike some H2020 projects such as CLEVER Cities and Connecting Nature, the NBS interventions are not defined and set from the start in the participating cities. Instead, with the help of co-creation methods and processes, the cities gradually come to a specific plan or even set of plans for implementation of the NBS interventions in the area identified.

While working with the cities on their plans for the seedbed interventions, these additional parameters were added:

1. Interventions include an on-site event (or online due to the Covid-19 restrictions)
2. The interventions foster connections between different user groups
3. The interventions are temporary

What did we do?

What are seedbed interventions? What are NBS interventions? What are Urban Well-Being Labs?

Fostering connection between different user groups as well as city officials and researchers was especially important. Leading up to the seedbed intervention all cultivating city partners conducted stakeholder mapping and subsequent outreach, to make sure that anyone interested or affected felt included.

The parameters were meant to provide some direction as to what the seedbed intervention could look like, but they left a lot of flexibility for the cities to create an event that best served them. To provide further guidance, WP3 provided an input from several consortium members about possible methods and tools that could be used by the city partners during the seedbed intervention. For example, walking interviews technique, empowering participants with photovoice, or surveys as an evaluation tool. The wide array, reflects the multiple purposes the seedbed intervention should have, as an event to connect and interact with citizens but also as a moment to collect information for future NBS interventions.

In the end no seedbed intervention was the same, varying from the opening of a natural playground proto type, to a guided forest walks, as each city developed a plan that best suited them. We are happy to say each was well attended and delivered important clues for the development of the NBS intervention.

The NBS intervention represents the next stage of the project and was described as follows in the grant agreement:

“... an agreed NBS framework will be applied, including green infrastructure, additional street trees, provision of quality green space for recreation and psychological recovery”

(Grant Agreement number: 869764 - GOGREENROUTES - H2020-SC5-2018-2019-2020 / H2020-SC5-2019-2, page 110).

In contrast to the seedbed intervention, the NBS intervention will be a permanent green installation. It will be based on the experiences derived from the seedbed intervention and the preceding visioning work done in both the Challenge workshops and Planning Intervention workshops. While the final report on the seedbed intervention will not be published until 2023, city partners will receive early excerpts, pertaining to their results in December. This way they can proactively reflect and revise all their plans for the NBS intervention, before coming up with a final idea, that will be implemented in 2023.

Citizen engagement

The way from seedbed interventions to NBS interventions

Now that we have completed the seedbed interventions, we turn our attention towards the permanent NBS interventions. As a reminder NBS can broadly be defined as:

“actions inspired by, supported by or copied from nature and which aim to help societies address a variety of environmental, social and economic challenges in sustainable ways”.

(Ferreira et al., 2020)

As you can see, the umbrella term supports various solutions and activities and is promoted most prominently by the EU in their line of H2020 projects, of which GoGreenRoutes is one.

So far most emerging research has been focused on the environmental impact of NBS, while less is known about their benefits to the economy or quality of life (Ferreira et al., 2020).

This is where GoGreenRoutes comes in, the project aims to explore ways in which NBS can improve health and well-being in urban environments.

There are two principles underpinning the project. The importance of nature connectedness and the belief citizen engagement will lead to better results within the project.

Following the scientific understanding that nature connectedness plays a fundamental role in physical and mental wellbeing (Morris, 2003; Xue et al., 2019) explains the urgent demand for NBS in cities. Already more than half of the global population lives in urban areas and the UN projects it will be 68% by 2050 (UN, 2018), meanwhile mental health decreased under Covid 19, some disorders like anxiety and depression increased by 25% in the first year of the pandemic (World Health Organization, 2022).

What has citizen engagement to do with all this?

While the benefits of citizen engagement are manifold, within GGR, they can broadly be sorted in two categories:

- Benefits directly impacting mental health, e.g., by improving social cohesion, and values such as fairness, acceptance, or trust in institutions.
- Benefits impacting the NBS interventions effectiveness, e.g., better decision making, social learning, co-creation and incorporation of local knowledge.

Some researchers believe that the co-creation of NBS may even lead to a “paradigm shift in society’s relationship with nature, in line with the promotion of multisectoral and multidimensional approaches towards healthier cities” (Nunes et al., 2021).

Citizen engagement

The way from seedbed interventions to NBS interventions

If we take these guiding principles and reflect on how they are being addressed so far, we get an actionable roadmap towards the NBS interventions. We may ask ourselves some of the following questions:

Nature Connectedness:

- Beyond mere greenwashing, how are we ensuring citizens feel a greater sense of connection with nature in our NBS interventions?
- What impact did Covid 19, and the resulting shift towards the digital sphere, have on nature connectedness? Besides the challenges this brought, where there benefits that can be used in future projects?

Citizen Engagement:

- Are we observing principles of co-creation? Which strategies and tools proved useful, which were harmful?
- Are we keeping stakeholders engaged? What level of activity and/or communication is being maintained?
- Have we reached the stakeholders we need yet? Who might be missing?

When co-creating nature based solutions – Gender, Inclusion and Diversity should be given due consideration. To make sure this happens GoGreenRoutes will deploy a participatory multi-criteria group decision support method, to structure the co-creation process, led by the Citizen Voice Monitor. This may be more relevant than ever, as some evidence suggests Covid-19 further alienated already marginalized groups (Apostolopoulou et al., 2021; Haase 2020).

There is also opportunity in reaching out, both within the GoGreenRoutes consortium (a conglomerate of multiple research institutions, social enterprises, cities and creative firms) and beyond. Other H2020 projects come to mind, both for comparison and the possibility to collaborate. Although some cities still shy away from local stakeholder engagement, worrying it leads to lengthy processes (Ferreira et al., 2020), there is a growing awareness of its importance. Yet, even those cities willing to tackle citizen engagement, may not have the tools to do so, and could benefit from GoGreenRoutes experiences. From the get-go GGR planned to expand to other cities, so called seed cities, but already existing municipal networks could be another starting point. Many are focused on sustainability and best practice when it comes to innovative solution to improve life in the city, which means GoGreenRoutes can also learn from their knowledge. Such networks include the Cities Alliance, EUROCITIES, EUROTOWNS or G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance, among others. Infact, having ICLEI as a partner in the project and one of the main authors of this report, we already connect with a global city network and expand the reach of such learnings.

Preparation by WP3

The Preparation for the Seedbed Intervention was completed in a close collaboration between each Cultivating City and the partners RWTH, ICLEI and Connect the Dots. These three partners worked together with the city partners to develop their ideas to the seedbed intervention.

This included:

- **Webinar on different methods to be included in Seedbed Interventions**
- **Seedbed preparation workshop**
- **Graphic illustrator guidelines**
- **Individual meeting to discuss logistics including signage for canvas and photovoice - worked together with the team to discuss the best way to word the canvas question**
- **Developing together with WP3 partners, under the tasklead of RWTH, the report D 3.4 “Co-Creation in the making: Introducing and Co-Planning seedbed interventions”, available soon [here](#).**

In advance of the seedbed intervention RWTH in collaboration with ICLEI and Connect the Dots, created a question for the canvas method and plan for the photovoice method. This was replicated for each city and translated into their language.

In the planning of a temporary event such as the seedbed interventions, provision of the correct material, equipment and flow of the event activities is essential to success. Connect the Dots and ICLEI worked to ensure that the participants were initially informed about the development of the target area before moving on to the canvas and photovoice activities. On the day, all city partners set up a at least one table with informational flyers and surveys.

Work package 3 sent information ahead of the seedbed intervention event asking city partners to provide equipment.

The material required on the day included:

- Polaroid camera and film
- White board
- White board markers
- Blu Tack
- Tables
- Informational posters and signage
- Easels or flip charts for the canvas

“The event was very well prepared; on reflection it was helpful to complete a site visit the day before and arrive early to help with preparations.”

(Anonymous participant in Tallinn)



Fig. 15 Umeå Kommun info tent / photo credit: Aine McBeth

Methods used

Canvas Method:

All cities carried out the Canvas Method. This method consisted of a Canvas placed somewhere on site, accompanied by WP3 personnel or city partners and a question posed above the Canvas. The question could vary slightly according to local needs, but always centered around people's wishes and imagination for the NBS intervention. For example Versailles question was: "You have 3 wishes free for the space Blaise Pascal, what would you wish for?" Passersby were encouraged to discuss and visualize their opinions on the canvas, so that the next person would have a starting point.

Photovoice Method:

This method consisted of the use of Instant Cameras handed out to volunteer participants, who could choose to bring back pictures that seemed relevant to them in the context of the seedbed intervention. Participants were asked to match a photo to a specific feeling from a pre-prepared list, followed up by one evaluating question. This method needed some refinement throughout the process, as initial experimentation in Limerick did not lead to optimal results.

Survey:

All cities carried out a survey to gain insight into citizens opinions about nature connectedness, well-being, perception of greenspaces and the seedbed intervention. The survey had a set list of questions provided by partners of GoGreenRoutes, cities were able to add further questions if they wanted to. Most cities carried the survey out online, before the seedbed intervention but a few cities bolstered the survey during the seedbed intervention in person.

City	Survey	Photovoice	Canvas
Burgas	● (90 participants)		●
Versailles	● (38 participants)	●	●
Limerick	● (24 participants)		●
Tallinn	● (47 participants)	●	●
Lahti	● (20 participants)	●	●
Umea	● (47 participants)	●	●

Fig. 16 Overview of the different methods used during the Seedbed Interventions/
credit: Miryam Bah

The methods used to collect information during the seedbed intervention were chosen to paint a comprehensive picture of public opinion.

Therefore, a mixed method approach was selected. The survey, a classic method in various fields of research, was already familiar to the city partners, and could be tailored to include local realities.

Another consideration was the GID aspect, both the Canvas and Photovoice method center the participants and can be seen as empowering, they also work for different ages and abilities. The latter methods can be adjusted in scope, so that they were able to be conducted by one or two researchers on site.



Fig. 17 Invitation to participate in the survey/
photo credit: City of Versailles

Methods used

Why ask different questions? Findings from our project on the health impact of green space have been covered by the World Economic Foundation. The key recommendation from the WHO about urban green space is that all citizens should have access to 0.5 hect. (approx. ½ a football pitch) within 300m (i.e. 5 mins. walk) of their residence (World Economic Foundation, 2022). Evelise Barboza of partner ISGlobal led a study published in Lancet Planetary Health which estimated that if the WHO recommendation was met across 1,000 European cities, then up to 43,000 lives could be saved annually. Only approximately 40% of Europeans meet the criteria (Evelise Barboza, 2021). In our surveys across the six cities we attempted to address this issue by asking participants to estimate if they fit the criteria (rather than estimate by satellite imagery as in the Lancet journal study). We also included additional items from the Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2015 specifically about how multi-functional green spaces and NBS can be (European Union, 2015). In the surveys gender perceptions of greenspace and public spaces with regard to safety were also explored. If we are part of an urban re-greening agenda then we must ensure that the natural areas we develop are perceived as being inclusive, safe and health promoting. How we connect with the natural environment may be central to our degree of concern for it. Sustainability, environmental behaviours and environmental concern or stewardship. A widely used definition suggests that nature connectedness refers to person's affective, cognitive, and experiential aspects of human-nature relationships. It is measured typically using a brief survey inventory. In our surveys we used the Nature connectedness scale "NR-6", a six item scale measured using rating on 5-point scales (1 = Disagree strongly, 5 = Agree strongly) with the score calculated as the mean response. Higher scores indicate a stronger self-reported relationship with nature. We predict that levels of nature connectedness will differ across cultures as nature is embedded differently in different social contexts (Nisbet et al., 2013). For example, in Ireland and the UK, we predominantly view nature as distinct from us, whereas in Nordic countries, a oneness with nature is a more accepted viewpoint.

Item	NR Dimension	Item Text
1	Experience	"My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area."
2	Self	"I always think about how my actions affect the environment."
3	Self	"My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality."
4	Experience	"I take notice of wildlife wherever I am."
5	Self	"My relationship to nature is an important part of who I am."
6	Self	"I feel very connected to all living things and the earth."

Fig. 18 NR-6 Items/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Overall recommendations

Nature connectedness question items led to highly variable results. For example, the question items "My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area" and "My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality" had the most variability (e.g. highest Standard Deviation) across the samples. Future evaluation of nature connectedness should use a more comprehensive scale to ensure greater internal reliability and internal consistency.

Access to green space across the Cultivating Cities has also been calculated from GIS but city level information may vary significantly with specific districts or quarters. Questions about this key health determinant should be included where possible in our diverse methodologies.

Climate anxiety was probed using a 1 item question and conveyed a high level of awareness. The inclusion of further items on this is recommended for future research to determine the respective role of eco-anxiety and climate anxiety.

Variation in gendered experiences of safety in green space are indicative of a broad range of systemic, structural, cultural or individual experiences and merit further exploration.

Local target areas

In the following, the areas where the seedbed as well as the NBS interventions have been and will be implemented are shown again for a better understanding. These areas were identified, analyzed and defined in the course of various tasks according to the GA in 2021 with the cities.



Fig. 19 Overview of the areas in Burgas/
credit: Google Earth

Burgas

Next to a large parking lot, approx. 3400m²



Fig. 20 Overview of the area in Limerick/
credit: Google Earth

Limerick Castleroy Greenway

3.5m wide cycleway, 2.5m wide footpath, grass edges. Extends for approx. 820m



Fig. 21 Overview of the area in Umeå/
credit: Google Earth

Umeå Bölevägen

Area extends for approx. 1600m, four little parks along this street

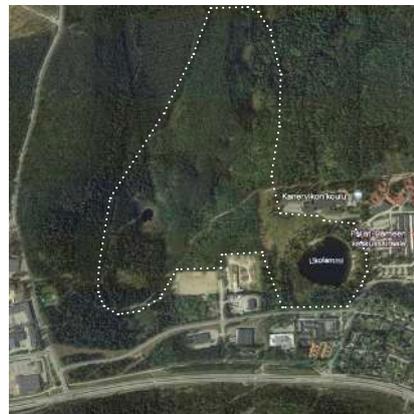


Fig. 22 Overview of the area in Lahti/
credit: Google Earth

Lahti Kintterö Health Forest

Forest next to the hospital, Likolammi pond, approx. 52 ha



Fig. 23 Overview of the area in Tallinn/
credit: Google Earth

Tallinn Vormsi green area

Approx. 40.000m², playground, green area and trees

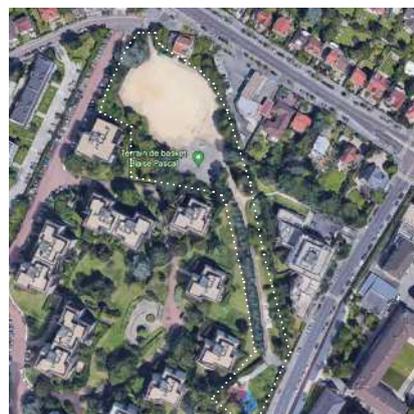


Fig. 24 Overview of the area in Versailles/
credit: Google Earth

Versailles Square Blaise Pascal

Approx. 9900m², basketball court, footbath with grass edges and trees

Ch.3

Seedbed intervention

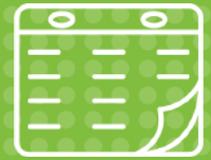


Burgas



Fig. 25 People filling out the survey/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Burgas



5th to 6th of July, 2022
9 am – 6 pm
Gurko parking lot



140 people visited the info point



90 people filled out the survey



Fig. 26 People filling out the survey/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Burgas organised its seedbed intervention in close proximity to one of the two pilot areas. The green area between “Gurko” parking lot and Oborishte street is the pilot site for the GoGreenRoutes project in Burgas. It is located in an area of the city centre which is heavily built with large and medium sized multifamily buildings, several hospitals and a big parking lot. There are very few green areas in this part of the city, which is the main reason for the selection and ultimately sustainable development of the pilot area to incorporate more green.

An information point was set up closely to the pilot area to answer any questions and concerns of people living and/or working nearby. They will also be the main users of the NBS, so their opinion of the area is highly relevant. The information point locations were different on the two days to inform more people about the GoGreenRoutes project as well as receive feedback about the general and preliminary concept for the renovation of the green space. The city team ensured that the survey was filled out. This was also facilitated by the canvas method where people would note down and also use drawings to indicate any major wishes and ideas for the development of the NBS.



Fig. 27 Family at the info point/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 28 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov



The two days of informing citizens were a good way to get feedback or to start discussions about the renovation of the green space. New ideas and aspects were gathered. The Canvas board helped to ensure locals to share their wishes and ideas for the NBS also visually.



An information point was set up within the seedbed site to provide background knowledge to the participants at two very frequented spots nearby. More than 95% of the respondents approved the concept of renovating the pilot area.



The results of the survey show that people generally want more green areas and playgrounds in the targeted area. All results were sent to the deputy mayors of Environmental Protection and Urban Development, which could aid the political decision making in favor of the NBS intervention in line with the demands of the residents of the area.

The organization and implementation of Seedbed Interventions is a new approach for communication and discussion of the intentions of the local administration and future users of the area. The development of a preliminary concept which is presented early to the public is useful to integrate participants wishes and opinions.

I like the concept of green space for play and leisure in the city centre!

It's good to get a place for relaxation!

We need a safe space for our children to play!



Pictures of the day



Fig. 29 The provided plans with visualisations helped discussing the future of the pilot area/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

The city officials prepared large posters with visualisations of the pilot area under development. The passersby gathered around and took part in presenting their views about the areas greening plans and the social as well as environmental improvement such actions would bring about in the area.



Fig. 30 Discussions about the future appearance/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Under a bright clear blue sky on a sunny day, the seedbed intervention gave the residents of the area and passersby a chance to come together and discuss what would be beneficial in the area in terms of nature based solutions.



Fig. 31 Also children visited the info tent/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

The info tent set up as part of the seedbed intervention was frequented by children and adults of all ages. They shared their opinion by either directly discussing their opinions about the nature based solutions to be implemented to help resolve some challenges of the city, with the city staff or by filling the survey.

Preparation by the city

The Burgas seedbed intervention was prepared majorly by the city partner in charge of the GoGreenRoutes project in Burgas along with 5 other city staff who took different roles in supporting the intervention on site, including encouraging passersby to fill in the survey and providing information about the project as well as guiding them to the canvas to record their wishes for the area where NBS is being implemented.

The city partner indicated that the preparation of the event was done by representatives of:

- Directorates “Strategic development” and “Public relations” in Burgas Municipality
- Regional Info Centre
- Architectural bureau “Think Forward”

The city officials also included some preliminary design posters and other informational banners for drawing attention of the passersby and for engaging with them on the topic of NBS. Unfortunately, since none of the project partners (ICLEI, RWTH or CtD) could be on-site due to the summer month vacations and flight cancellations, the onus of preparations and organisation of activities on the days of the intervention fell on the city partner. However, a partner from ICLEI was always on stand-by in online mode and had several calls and meetings with the city partner to ensure smooth delivery of the intervention. The survey was printed out and handed out to passersby who showed interest in the city’s activity in the area towards NBS. It was also available online for about a month. Before the event days, a press release was published on the official web site and facebook profile of Burgas Municipality, as well as distributed to local and national media. The press release presented information about the dates of the seedbed intervention workshop, general concept for renovation of the green area, as well as link and barcode to the on-line survey.

2 large roll-up banners were prepared with the information about the potential renovation plans for the NBS intervention site. Some tents were acquired to be placed at two different sites in close proximity to the potential NBS site on the 2-day seedbed intervention to gather as much public opinion and relay the information about the project with a wide outreach. One tent was planned to be occupied by those filling out the surveys, where chairs and tables were placed to provide a conducive environment for the passersby to take a moment to engage with the city staff and fill in the survey.

The city partner have already planned the preliminary design of the area for the NBS intervention, sparking some imagination and new ideas for the passersby and especially residents of how the area could look like with implementation of NBS in 2023.



Fig. 32 Presentation of the ‘Nature Island’ plans/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Day of intervention

Owing to the unfortunate absence of any other project partners except the city partner, the various methods to be implemented on site did not take place. Meaning the photovoice, the Burano method nor the walking interviews could be done since these were seen to be done by the project partners to not overburden the city staff with many asks for public engagement processes. However, the canvas was installed and many did leave some wishes on it. One passerby went on to draw a bird on a tree on the canvas and this was also video recorded where one can hear actual birds chirping in the area, giving a feeling of peace and nature connectedness in the selected area for the seedbed intervention.



Fig. 33 Women filling out the survey/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Another drawback due to limited and (merely) online support from the project partners was that the documentation of the entire seedbed intervention was single handedly dealt with by the city partner, which also then only depicts the city perspective which of course was valuable but might miss out on some details the project partners could have spotted. In general, on the two days of the event about 90 people engaged with the city staff, assuring and reconfirming to the city staff that such engagements are welcomed by the public and that they acknowledge and appreciate the efforts the city is taking to place value on bringing nature closer to the residents of the potential NBS intervention site.

The days of the seedbed intervention saw mostly residents of the area pass by and voice their opinions. About 90 people filled in the survey but about 50 of them did enter the tents and talked with the city staff and still did not wish to fill in the survey, which could indicate lack of time, opinions or even interest in the topic.

Timeline

- 9:00am
Start of the event
- 9:00am - 6:00pm
Survey
- 6:00pm
Logistics to wrap-up

● Scan to find more photos of the set-up!



“There was a lot of engagement by the residents and most people would like to see more green in the area.”

(City Partner)



Fig. 34 Revising the survey results/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

To the city partner this exercise was very fruitful since the city seldom does such activities of engaging with the public and especially asking for public opinion. Good and constructive feedback was observed by the people mostly living in the area which goes to say the intervention would be welcomed and might foster the nature connectedness which the project aims to support with in all cities.

“Even though we could not be on site, the feedback that the city partner got by the residents instills trust in this process of public participation and co-creation of NBS intervention in the area.”
(Project Partner, ICLEI)

As a result of the visits made to the info point and after analysing the results of the on- site survey it can be said that more than 95 % of the respondents approve the concept for renovation. The results from the more general questions in the survey show that people want more green areas in the city and more playgrounds. Results from the survey were sent to the deputy mayors of Environmental Protection and Urban Development. In addition, they were translated in English and sent to relevant project partners for further analysis.

Canvas

The canvas method deployed the use of a white board with specific questions such as adding to the sentence 'I like...' and 'I have an idea...' and the passersby who stopped and were interested were in fact encouraged to draw what is special about the area and write their individual wishes. Apart from that, there were a couple of large posters detailing the preliminary plans that the city had in terms of improving the area with more green and healthy outcomes over the course of time. The city officials introduced the primary concept of the NBS to the community members who stopped to inquire or showed interest. There was a small booth, in the form of a tent with a table and chairs for people to sit down and fill the survey in, and/or ask any questions to the city officials. This interaction was one of a kind, as explained by the city partners of GoGreenRoutes which brought interesting perspectives and a lot of positive remarks for the work the city was doing towards the implementation of NBS, with the starting idea of seedbed interventions.

The results from the more general questions in the survey or specifically through the canvas method show that people want more green areas in the city and more playgrounds. The most preferred place for outdoor activities in Burgas is the sea garden. Results from the survey were then sent to the deputy mayors of Environmental Protection and Urban Development, which could aid the political decision making in favour of the NBS intervention in line with the demands of the residents of the area.

Since none of the other project partners, except the city partner, could be part of the event, it was difficult to direct discussions in a particular direction. However, ICLEI and the city partner Ivalyo had multiple calls before and after the event to ensure that the preparation was good and that the results would then also be translated into English for the use of the project.

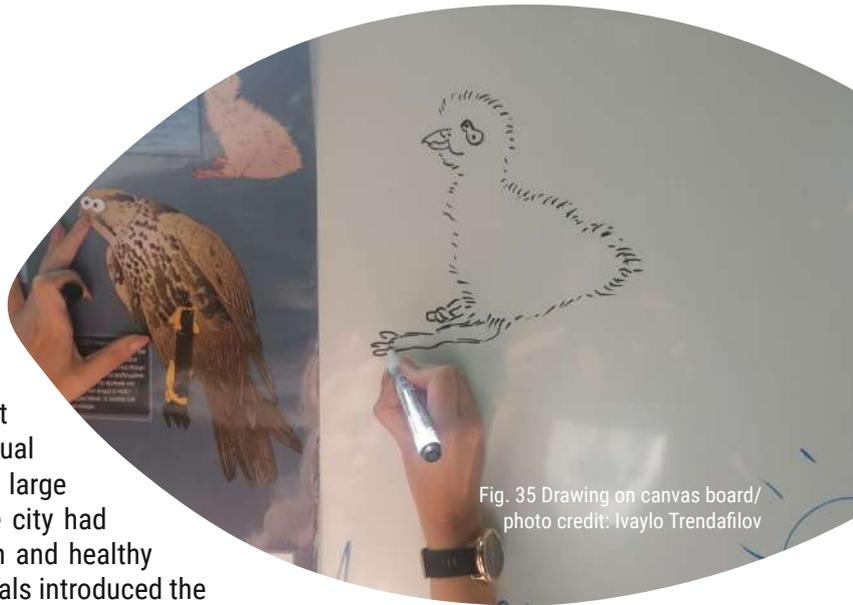


Fig. 35 Drawing on canvas board/
photo credit: Ivalyo Trendafilov

“This was a unique experience for us and also for the community members since it was a good place to come together to discuss the development of the area.”
(Burgas City Partner)



Fig. 36 Discussions at the info tent/ photo credit: Ivalyo Trendafilov

Photovoice

This method could not be deployed since no project partner from ICLEI, RWTH or CtD could be present on site due to problems in air traffic. Another reason for not having the photovoice method is that the seedbed intervention in Burgas was conceptualised and done as the first of all 6 cities leaving no time to procure all relevant material or support the city staff in doing so.



Fig. 37 Visitors discussing the future plans regarding the pilot area / photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Survey results

Main findings in Burgas

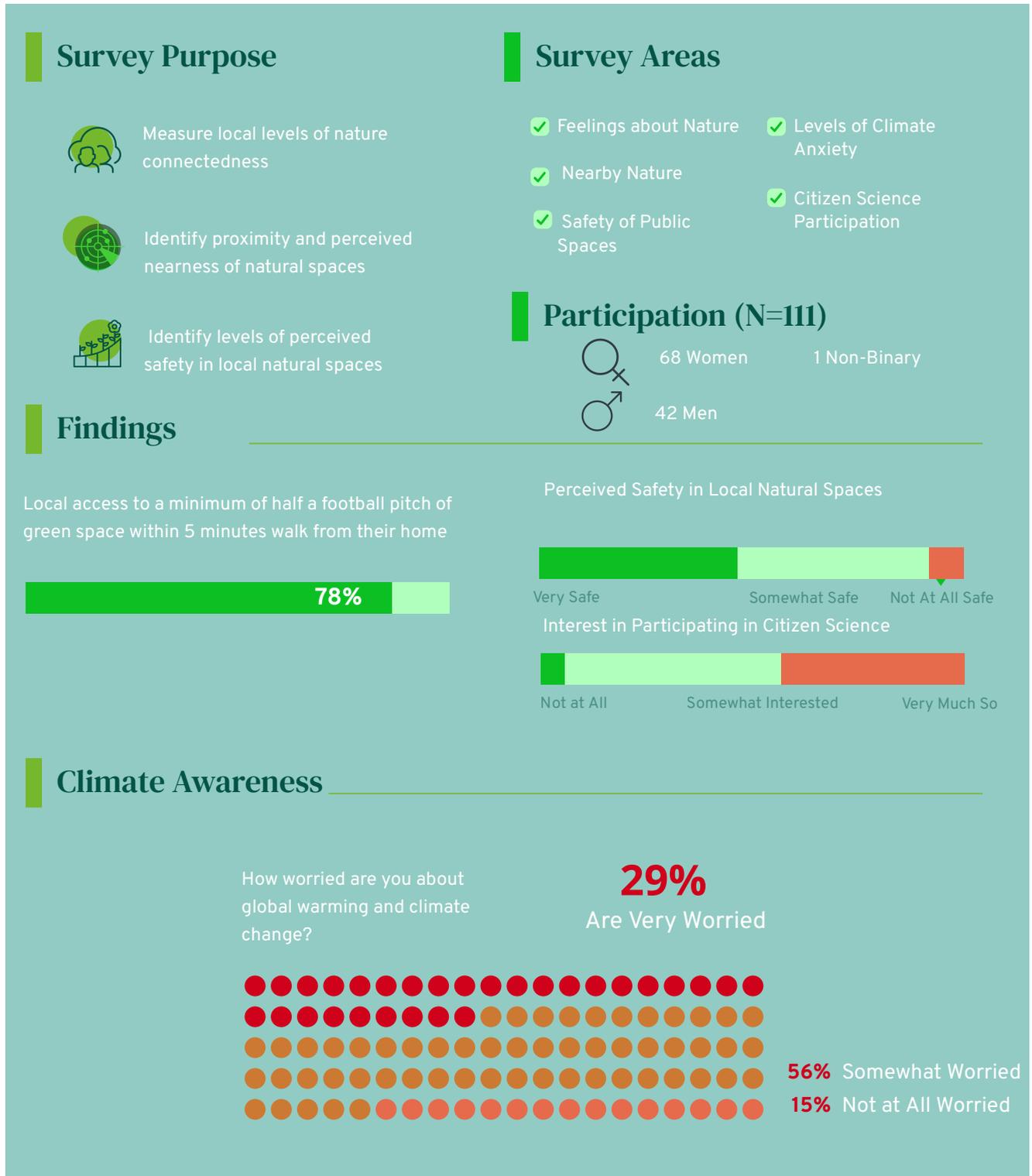


Fig. 38 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Burgas

The total number of responses received for the first set of questions was 93. 90 responses were collected for the second set of questions, which were location specific. Of those who surveyed, 61% identified as female, 38% male and 1% non-binary.

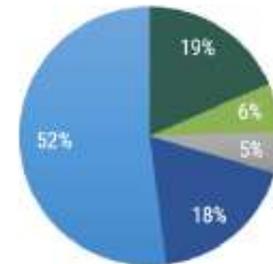
Experiencing a close contact with nature, reducing stress levels and recreational activities linked to staying fit are the “main benefits of introducing more natural features in a neighbourhood or city” for more than half of respondents. The largest percentage (84%) very much so agreed that “these nature-based solutions promote health”. Similarly, 77% very much so agreed that “these nature-based solutions promote nature and biodiversity” and 76% very much so agreed they “promote sustainable action”. The majority also felt that these nature-based solutions “promote coping with climate change” as only 4% did not at all feel this way. Interestingly, when asked “How worried are you about global warming and climate change” 29% were very worried but only 4% were not worried at all.

Of the 93 responders 30% did not have “access to a minimum of 0.5 hectares green or blue natural space within 5 minutes’ walk “of their home. Regarding respondents’ cities’ natural spaces, the majority perceived these spaces as safe. Also, public gardens or parks and seaside or coastal areas were depicted as participants’ favorite local natural areas to visit.

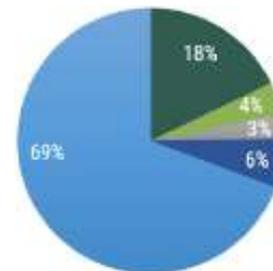
Second Set of Questions (Local)

Of the 90 responses collected 66% were from those who live in the area with an additional 21% working locally. The majority of respondents pass through the area every day (66%) or several times a week (26%). 54% of those surveyed spend more than 6 hours in the local area. Nevertheless, only 11% think “there are enough spaces in the area for spending more time outside”. Some reasons being “Not enough spaces, too many cars,” “There are only buildings and parkings.,” and “Overbuilt.” The bulk of responses were in favour of spending more time outside if there was more green and benches. Most responses suggest the need for more parks and green space NBS in respondents’ neighbourhoods. Concerning the concept for renovation of the green area, most liked everything and would not change anything. Also, the sea garden is the green/blue space visited most often, with most people walking there; on average most participants spend 8-12 hours in this space with friends or spending time with family.

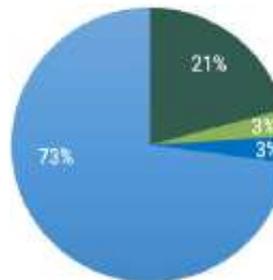
„Experiencing a close contact with nature”



„Recreational activities linked to staying fit”



„Reducing stress levels”



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4. Agree a little
- 5. Agree Strongly

Fig. 39 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul

Seedbed intervention



Fig. 40 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Ruth Graham

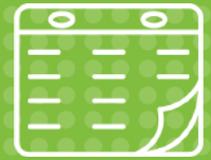


Limerick



Fig. 41 Public nature walk along the greenway/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Limerick



9th of July, 2022
2 pm - 5 pm
Castletroy greenway



35 people attended the workshops



24 people completed the survey



Fig. 42 Natural play area/ photo credit: Julia Gäckle

In one of our Cultivating Cities, in Limerick, the Seedbed Intervention took place on the Castletroy greenway, which is the target area for the GoGreenRoutes project as it provides connectivity between Castletroy College secondary school (students 12-18 years of age) and Castletroy Gaelscoil (children 4-12 years of age). The greenway consists of a 3.5m wide cycleway alongside a 2.5m wide footpath with 1m wide grass edges.

Various activities took place on the day of the intervention. At the beginning, the temporary nature playground was opened. Afterwards, visitors could inform themselves about the contents of GoGreenRoutes at several tents as well as participate in 2 actions that were carried out during the entire duration of the Seedbed Intervention: The Photovoice Method and the Canvas Method. More info on these at page 7 and 8.

The highlight of the intervention, especially for the local children, was the workshop to build their own bug hotels, which was run by the City of Limerick in cooperation with colleagues of RWTH and CtD.

Prior to the intervention, a flyer was sent out to register for the workshop and to take part in a survey developed for the Seedbed interventions. More information about the survey can be found from page 9 onwards.



Fig. 43 Coffee station/ photo credit: City of Limerick



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 44 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: City of Limerick/ Julia Gäckle



A landscape architect drew a design for the greenway that incorporated the use of felled trees and participants recommendations from March 5th when 25 visitors participated on a public nature walk along the greenway. Construction of the natural play area began in mid-May 2022. It was officially opened for the seedbed intervention on 9th July 2022.



Pavilions were set up as a hub to connect, create, build, draw and meet. There were activities for all walks of life and thus intergenerational. The coffee bar was especially appreciated and proved to be a good place to meet for discussions about the future of the greenway.



The bug hotels as takeaway elements were made from gathered material we collected as we took a walk along the greenway. Insights and knowledge were shared about what habitats and shelter small insects need and how everyone can do actions in their own gardens/ balconies and public spaces.

The greenway should be decorated! That's attracting attention.

There are so many possibilities to make this area more vibrant!

A key outcome of the seedbed intervention is an appreciation of time management! Residents, local stakeholders and community interest groups were informed about the purpose and the preparation months before the Seedbed Intervention took place. The coffee station was important for people to chat, connect and resume refreshed the event of the day.



Pictures of the day



Fig. 45 Invitation to build bug homes/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Under the guidance of landscape architect Esther Gerrad, the workshop she planned on building insect hotels was very well received and motivated and inspired people to take their built objects home and participate in such actions more often.

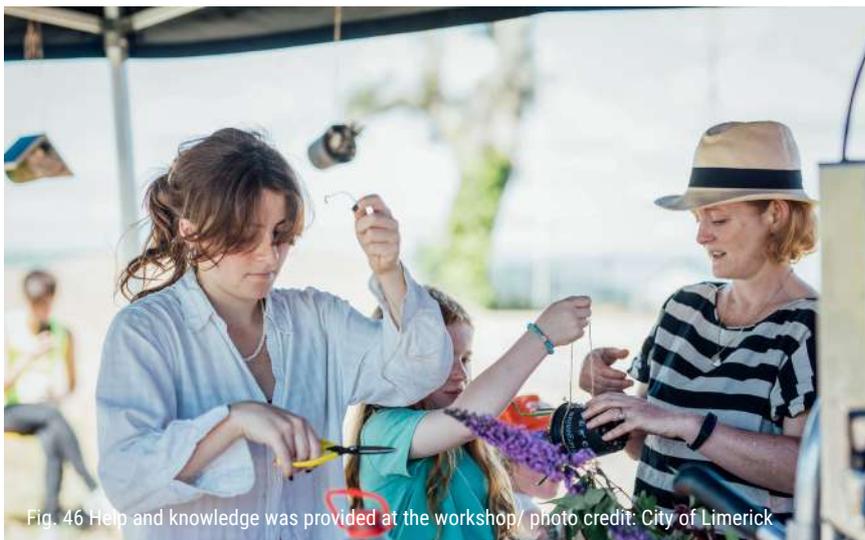


Fig. 46 Help and knowledge was provided at the workshop/ photo credit: City of Limerick

All participants crafted and drank homemade lemonade together. The communal activity also inspired further conversations about the role of insects and nature experience in general.

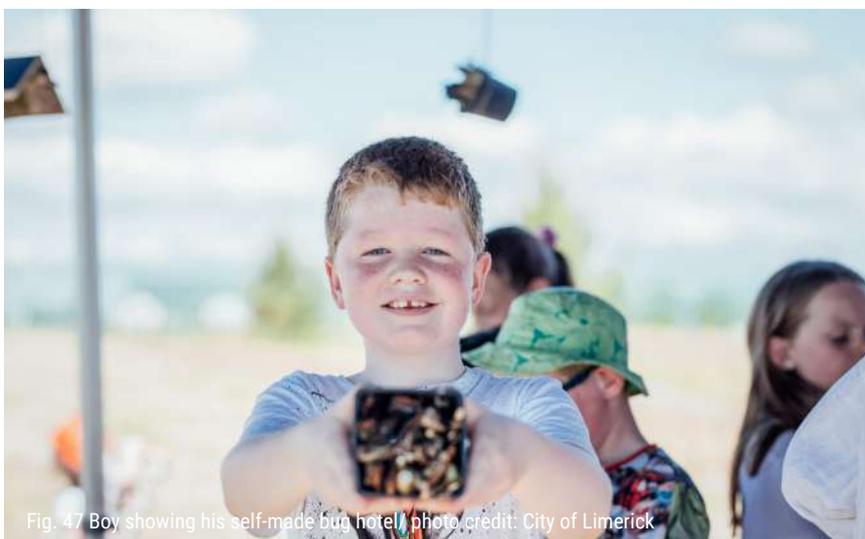


Fig. 47 Boy showing his self-made bug hotel/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Especially the children had great fun and asked many questions about insect diversity and would like to participate in such activities more often.

Preparation by the city

The Limerick Seedbed Intervention was prepared collectively by Limerick City and County Council, landscape architect Esther Gerrard (Elements of Action), Ruth Graham (Graphic Recorder), GoGreenRoutes partner Connect the Dots and other GoGreenRoutes partners. In parallel, the team in Limerick (Sarah O' Malley) attended various meetings with WP3 in particular and WP5 and WP7.

The Seedbed intervention was promoted in different ways. A flyer was created based on a template from WP9 and distributed in the area around the greenway, as well as in shops and playgrounds. The flyer contained information about the project and how to register for the event. The flyer also contained a QR code to access the survey for this seedbed intervention. Registration and participation in the survey was also possible via the website eventbrite.ie and via social media.

Prior to the Seedbed Intervention a public nature walk along the greenway was organised on the 5th March 2022, led by landscape architect Esther Gerrard.

In groups, participants explored:

- **Factors such as sunlight / Weather / Views / Wind / Safety**
- **Features on the route that allow for places to pause/rest/sit**
- **Opportunity areas for planting, ground cover**

After the exploration the participants gathered ideas for the Seedbed Intervention. Please see the map at page 6. The city of Limerick decided that a natural play area would incorporate many of these ideas by using natural materials onsite. The space could be developed overtime for play, gathering in community, biodiversity, and greening. The location of the natural play area is marked by the three little trees in the drawing (halfway point).

Following the nature walk on 5th March, Limerick City and County Council sought advice from Féidhlim Harty of FH Wetland Systems Ltd in relation to designing and planting constructed wetland systems along the greenway. Additionally, there are a number of ash trees along the greenway that have a disease called ash dieback. This invasive tree disease was detected in Ireland in 2012, and likely introduced by imported ash planting stock from continental Europe (Teagasc, 2017). The disease will affect all ash trees in Ireland, causing the majority of them to die over the next two decades. To reuse or repurpose the trees once felled also aligns with participant's calls for seating, shelters, steppingstones, carved stumps, nature inspired sculptures, encourage habitats for wildlife and insects.

Based on this information a landscape architect employed by Limerick City and County Council drew a design for the greenway that incorporated Féidhlim's design, use of felled trees and participants recommendations from March 5th. Please see the final draft design of the natural play area below (Figure 2). Construction of the natural play area began in mid-May 2022. It was officially opened for the Seedbed Intervention on 9th July 2022.

Good time management is important! Preparation of the site and purpose of the Seedbed Intervention was informed by residents, local stakeholders and community interest groups months before the Seedbed Intervention took place.

Furthermore, it was very helpful to create the flyer for the information about the project and with the link to the survey well in advance. It was made available to the interested people, so that many participants already knew what it was about when they visited the seedbed intervention. Also other visitors who do not live in the area were informed via social media or other channels.



Fig. 48 Public nature walk along the greenway/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Day of intervention

Preparations for the seedbed intervention began in the morning and were led by Sarah O`Malley. The day was exceptionally hot for the Irish climate and a lot of water was organised on short notice, in preparation for the organisers and implementers of the Seedbed Intervention. A mobile coffee station was set up for everyone, which was a real highlight. Many of the visitors gathered next to the coffee station under the tent (protection from too much sun). In total, four tents were erected, which were absolutely necessary to protect from the sun and the high temperatures. Besides the tent of the mobile coffee station, there was another tent for everyone to stay in, another one for the construction of a stand on which white paper sheets were attached. This stand was used as a canvas within the framework of the Canvas method.



Fig. 49 Some requirements regarding the protection of insects/ photo credit: City of Limerick

A banner was hung above the stand with the question: "Close your eyes, it's a sunny day, what do you, see, smell, feel? Participants of the intervention were asked to share their answers on the canvas.

The last tent was where the Bug Hotel workshop was held, and comfortable seating was set up.

Timeline

- 2:00pm
Co Design Workshop-
Introduction and
explanation of the bug
hotel workshop
- 2:20 - 4:45pm
Bug hotels were built as a
takeaway element
- 2:00 - 4:00pm
Pictures by a professional
photographer were taken
- 2:00 - 5:00pm
Implementation of the
Canvas method

There were small bags with information about biodiversity and the project as well as a shirt with the Limerick City logo - this was a real highlight especially for the children among the visitors and was well received.



Fig. 50 Girls visiting the workshop/ photo credit: City of Limerick

The purpose of the workshop was to introduce the group to insect/wildlife habitats and the importance of biodiversity in our local landscapes. Participatory, experiential and intergenerational in approach, the group gathered natural materials along the greenway to make shelters for wildlife to take home or to leave along the greenway. The workshop was an opportunity for ecological education, to develop an educational space for children, parents and visitors and to get to know one another. Especially the graphic illustration by Ruth Graham (next page) shows many valuable parts of the conversation that took place informally during the day.

Building small insect hotels for the little animals was a very valuable experience for all. The hotels were later taken home.

At the beginning, the canvas was just a white sheet of paper for many people, and no one wanted to start. After a question was added to the canvas and a lot of drawing was done at the beginning, more and more participants joined in and participated. Especially intensive discussions about their wishes helped to enrich the process.

At the event, the researchers from GoGreenRoutes collected preliminary data and tested a particular research method which was also a part of the seedbed intervention (e.g. canvas method). From Limerick City and County Council's perspective, this was a great opportunity to host research or 'action research'. For future events, an agreement between the city and researcher(s) would be desirable to manage expectations of what can be achieved (from a research perspective) during the intervention. After the intervention, a city may benefit from researcher feedback (in writing/online call), and the sharing of literature relevant to a city's context/intervention. The latter is particularly useful for informing relevant strategic policy documents 'in house'.

Canvas

Together with three GGR PhD researchers and two other partners from GGR preliminary data were collected. In Limerick, the Canvas method was tried out for the first time during a seedbed intervention by asking a question in advance and collecting participants answers on a canvas visible to all. The question was developed at short notice, as it was not planned to ask a concrete question, but to give the participants the opportunity to associate freely. However, when it became clear that participants found it hard to engage this way, the development of a question was a quick, proactive solution. As a result, valuable local knowledge could be gained. For example, some local residents would like to see the land used for growing food there. The wish for a lot more wildflowers was also expressed several times.

By nature of being the first seedbed intervention, data collection and documentation of the event were a little more experimental. Nevertheless, the seedbed intervention enjoyed great participation, spirited discussions and served as an excellent opener for the seedbed intervention phase. The experience in Limerick helped fine tune the other upcoming interventions and led to optimized approaches there.



Fig. 51 Girls drawing/ photo credit: City of Limerick

“Close your eyes, it’s a sunny day, What do you, see, smell, feel?”
(Question on canvas)

“This area is of great potential and should be used permanently as a kid’s playground, even as such a experimental one which citizens can develop together”
(Anonymous participant)



Fig. 52 Pictures drawn by children from Castletroy Gaelscoil/ photo credit: Julia Gäckle

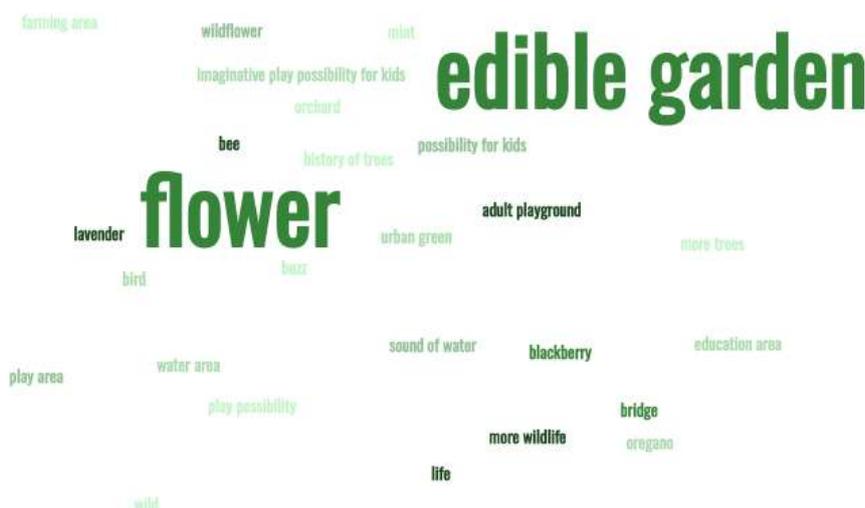


Fig. 53 Word cloud based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Julia Gäckle

It was a hot, sunny summer day, perhaps the warmest all year, and all participants gathered under the tents to get some shade. The temporary coffee bar was much appreciated, and the constellation of gathering under the tents next to the coffee bar sparked many interesting conversations.

Photovoice

The seedbed intervention was the first in-person-event in Limerick, where GoGreenRoutes partners and researchers were on-site. The methods to be implemented were the Canvas Method, the Photovoice Method and the Burano Method, a method of observing use of space. Of these methods, only one method, the Canvas method, could be carried out in the end. The whole approach was still quite experimental and needed to be optimised. The Photovoice method could not be carried out fully, as hardly any participants wanted to use the camera, this was attributed to lack of clear guidance (in later seedbed interventions participants were asked to match a photo to a specific feeling from a pre-prepared list, followed up by one evaluating question. The Burano method was categorised as too time-consuming on site, as at least one more person would be needed on site and much of the insight was already covered within the notes taken by Illustrator and GoGreenRoutes partners. The Photovoice method was still considered valuable and was modified in approach for the next seedbed intervention.



Fig. 54 Exploring the new natural play area/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Survey results

Main findings in Limerick

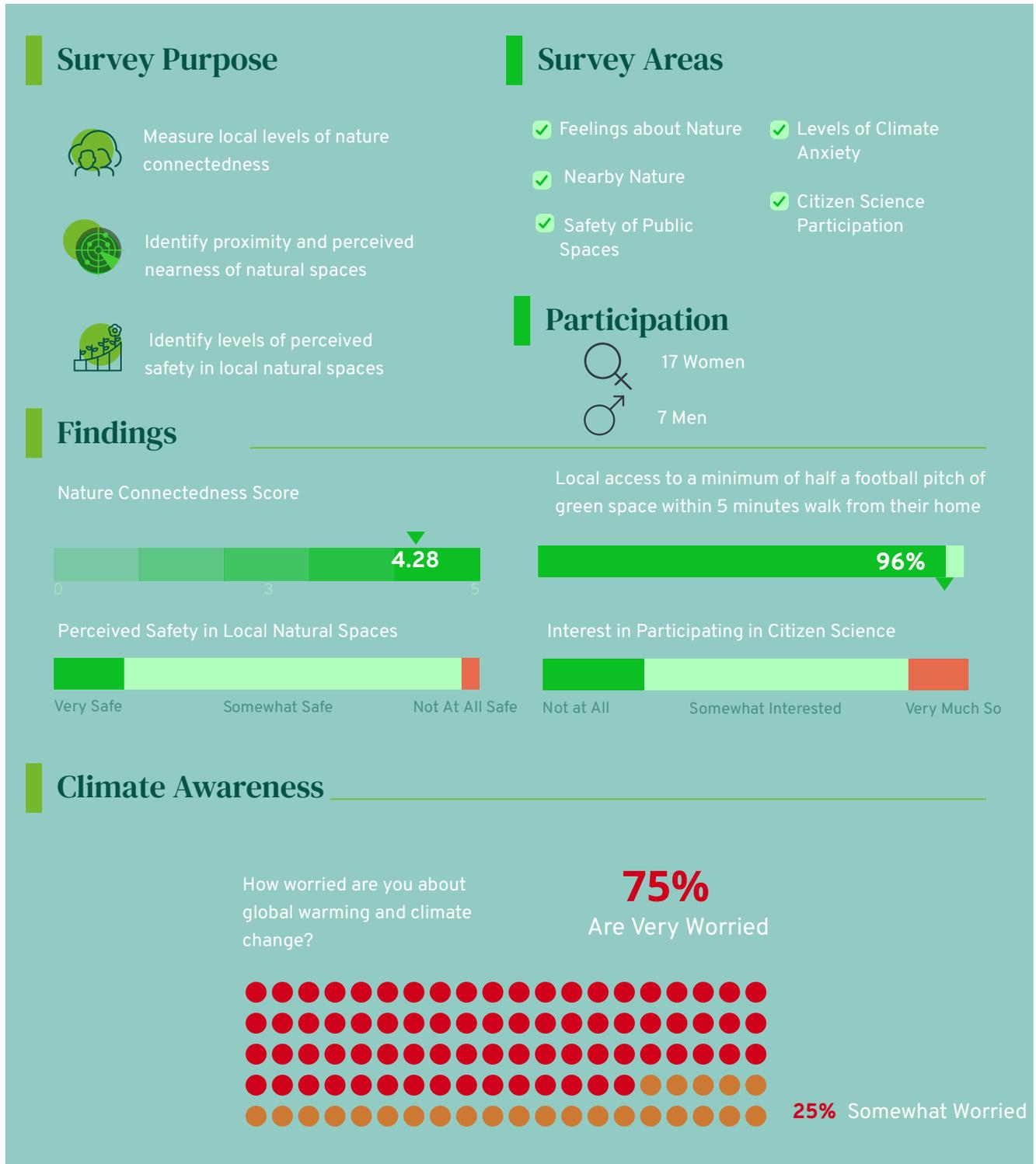


Fig. 55 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Limerick

The total number of collected survey responses that can be used for the analysis is 24. This includes online and paper questionnaires. There were 16 woman and 8 men who filled out the survey.

Every participant answered that they take (at least a little) notice of wildlife wherever they are, and the majority (71%) stated that their relationship to nature is an important part of their personality.

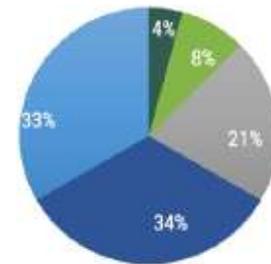
Every respondent is at least somewhat worried about the climate change.

In this context 75% of the people believe that Nature Based Solutions can promote to cope with climate change and 84% believe that NBS can promote their own sustainable actions. Even more participants (96%) see NBS also help nature and biodiversity- just one respondent does not see the influence by NBS that big on nature. Also the promotion of NBS related to the participant's own health is considered as high.

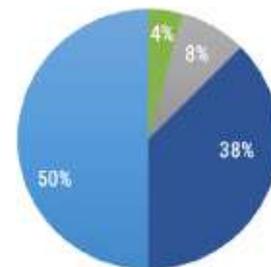
Regarding to the question about their favourite natural space nearby 71% chose the forest, mountainous or coastal area, while 25% considered the private or public garden/ park to be their favourite. 84% of the participants are able to reach natural spaces by the size of at least 0.5 hectares within 5 minutes.

It can be seen that most of the people (92%) see the main benefits of natural features in their neighbourhood in experiencing a connection with natural environment followed by a reduction of stress levels (71%). Least of the citizens, 42%, believe in a learning aspect triggered by natural features.

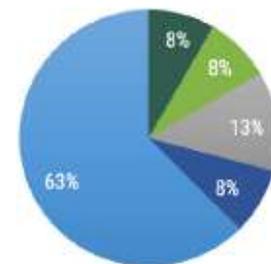
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 56 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul

Seedbed intervention



Fig. 57 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Linda Blåfors



Umeå

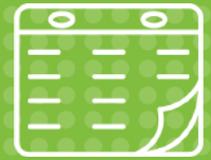


Fig. 58 Pop-up playground/ photo credit: Áine McBeth

Umeå



Fig. 59 Pop-up playground/ photo credit: Áine McBeth



2nd of September 2022
1 pm – 6 pm
Bölevägen



Estimated 200 people
visited the event



47 people filled out the survey

The Cultivating City of Umeå carried out its seedbed intervention. Bölevägen is the name of the street that will be reconstructed over the next two years, along four green spaces that will be designed and developed. The seedbed intervention site, Aspgården, was an empty area close to an English school along Bölevägen. The aim of the seedbed intervention was to collect ideas of the citizens on how to design the largest of the green areas at Bölevägen and to raise awareness of the possibilities to re-design the surroundings. The event was a drop-in style with a set agenda including talks and concerts. Visitors could find out about the reconstruction of Bölevägen, GoGreenRoutes and new housing schemes that will be developed in the area. Visitors discussed the project with municipality members and were encouraged to fill out a survey relating to the parklet. In addition to the families who came to the event, there were also a group of five-year-olds from Böle Preschool, a large group of schoolchildren and a school-age childcare group. Pictures of the children from Böle Preschool where they had previously drawn how they wanted the green patch at their pre-school to look like were hung up for public viewing. The event was promoted using posters for advertising, a press release, flyers posted to property owners and targeted Facebook advertising.



Fig. 60 Band playing/
photo credit: Áine McBeth



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 61 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun/ Julia Gäckle/ Áine McBeth



Alejandro Hajek Coll and his School of Architecture students built an amphitheatre, called “Pallet Parliament” out of pallets. The School of Architecture also painted patterns in the asphalt to bring vibrancy to the abandoned car park. They had borrowed decorations and flowers from the city hall reception and the UmeCom festival to increase the greenery in the area.



The amphitheatre gave space for two bands to perform, attracting visitors, even those who usually don't get involved in consultation processes. One of the bands had an average age of over 80, their fans seemed to be around the same age. This helped ensure that insights gathered covered an intergenerational perspective.



The municipality team cleared the area, removed mounds of soil, swept the asphalt and assembled the ‘Cado box’ (a pop-up playground). Children who visited the seedbed intervention played here. The Cado box and benches remain at Aspgården until it is taken in during the winter.

How nice that something is happening in our area!

I like that you can go there and roll snowmen, make snow angels, etc. I don't want the whole area to be shovelled or rebuilt, it's nice that it's a little open and untouched.

Coffee, play and relaxation



Bölevägen will be under reconstruction for two years with the addition of a preschool and flats. During this time the Umeå Municipality will allow the citizens to use the space where the seedbed intervention took place (Aspgården). The event closed with a discussion on how to organize the people who want to animate the space during reconstruction.

Pictures of the day



Fig. 62 GoGreenRoutes info tent setup/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

There were two tents set up at the seedbed intervention. At the first tent participants could find out about the detailed plans for the area over the next 2 years, before moving to the second tent where they shared their thoughts on what could be incorporated into the green space for the new plans.



Fig. 63 'Swingin' Grandpas' performing at the event/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

Over 200 participants came along as there was an exciting schedule with bands playing and a pop up playground!



Fig. 64 Tent to fill out the survey/ photo credit: Áine McBeth

The local school students attended the event and took part in the photovoice method of engagement. They took photos of elements of the area that they liked using an instant polaroid camera. Many photographed the flowers and nature around the carpark.

Preparation by the city

The Umeå seedbed intervention was prepared collectively by the Umeå municipality team (led by Eva Lövheim), Alejandro Hajek Coll (Umeå municipality) and GoGreenRoutes partners. The Umeå city GoGreenRoutes team helped make posters for advertising, flyers to send to the property owners in the Bölevägen area and targeted Facebook advertising. A press release was also sent out on the 25th of August. Printed flyers advertising the event were hand delivered by members of the team. Unfortunately, a large local employer in the area Volvo dropped out of the event unexpectedly, but wrote about the event in their weekly newsletter and urged its staff to attend, which many did. A sign was erected at the target area a week beforehand, with text explaining the development of “Bölevägen”, so people would understand the abandoned car park would be animated with a temporary amphitheatre and pop up park as part of the seedbed intervention. The survey to be completed by participants was created on esMaker, an online survey and analysis tool.

A member of the preparations team removed mounds of soil, the asphalt was swept and the Cado box was assembled (a pop-up playground). This pop up playground was constructed from an old metal freight container. Additionally benches and six large flower pots were put in place. Alejandro Hajek Coll and his School of Architecture students built an amphitheatre, called “Pallet Parliament” out of pallets. Pupils from the English School adjacent to the seedbed intervention site helped Mr Hajek Coll and the students to build the Pallet Parliament. The School of Architecture had also painted patterns in the asphalt bringing vibrancy to the abandoned car park. Alejandro also assisted the municipality in completing a layout sketch of the area that could be sent to the Police for the police permit. Decorations were borrowed from the city hall reception and the UmeCom festival that took place the weekend before in Brosparken. The preparations were highly collaborative with sustainability built into the heart of the process, through the use of recycled materials.

The English school had an open house from 3-5pm and they sent people over to the seedbed intervention event. Interns documented with mobile cameras and other municipality staff members from the planning department were also there for a while and helped where it was needed at the time. The municipality also hired a sound technician, and Linda Blåfors a graphic illustrator who captured the activities and feelings on the day in a fun illustration.

The city partner had planned to hire a specialist in public consultation event planning, however this did not work out. The event came together with the help of many within the city’s municipality.

“We had completely forgot about coffee, but fortunately the 9th grade pupils sold coffee and fika at the school yard.”
(City Partner)



Fig. 65 Decorated Pallet Parliament/
photo credit: Julia Gäckle

Day of intervention

On the day there was one information tent with material detailing the development of the road over the next two years and information about GoGreenRoutes. In the information tent visitors could talk about and ask questions concerning the detailed plans for the area. They were also able to discuss pollinators and urban gardening with a member of the County Administrative Board. Additionally, they could speak to an urban planner from the municipality about Bölevägen's reconstruction. There was a second tent within which the canvas method and photovoice activity took place. Participants could write what they wished for Enbärsvägen/Bölevägen and borrow polaroid cameras to take pictures of places they like. Members of the city's Overview Planning team were responsible for ensuring that the visitors answered the survey about the park Enbärsvägen/Bölevägen and the nine questions from GoGreenRoutes.



Fig. 66 Visitors playing or talking at the Pallet Parliament/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

At the end of the event Umea city partner hosted an "UmeCom Live session" with focus on the area where the event was held (Aspogården). A property including a pre-school and flats will be built there in some years, but until then Umeå Municipality will let citizens use the area as they would like. The conversation focus was not on what they could do there, instead participants of the UmeCom session brainstormed ideas of how to organize the people who want to do something together on the site. A lot of people came to Böledagen! There were all ages, both families with children and preschool children from Böle preschool, pupils from the English school and Volvo employees. One of the bands from Evelyn had an average age of over 80, their fans seemed to be around the same age.

Timeline

- 1:00 - 6:00pm
 Information about projects in the area:
 - Bölevägen and GoGreenRoutes
 - Survey of parklet Enbärsvägen/Bölevägen +GGR-questions
 - Böleå 12:2 (Housing and a new pre-school)
 - Aspgården (Housing and enlargement of the English School)
 - Bölesholmarna and Lundabron (A green area nearby)
- 1:00 - 1:45pm
 Böle förskola visit (5- years old)
- 1:30 - 3:30pm
 Bands playing:
 Pupils from the International English School and a local band rehearsal room organisation
- 4:00 - 5:00pm
 UmeCom (Umeå's citizen workshop to help realising ideas that make Umeå better and more fun)
- 6:00pm
 End of the day



Fig. 67 People visiting the Pallet Parliament/ photo credit: Julia Gäckle

Unexpectedly, many visitors were positive about the changes, even though they were told that Bölevägen will be under reconstruction for two years, meaning the bus will run a detour and that deep shafts will be dug into the road. There were a few people who were unhappy about the development in the area however it was felt that the negativity was diluted with a lot of positive people. An estimated 200 people visited Böledagen, possibly more. At one snapshot, there were 70 people there at the same time, just after 1pm when the event started. However, despite the high turnout at the event, there were only around 30 survey responses. The survey was kept online until the 25th of September and the municipality advertised it further bringing the total to 47 surveys answered.

“It was a cool and initially quite windy day, but the sun shone all the time and it got warmer towards the end of the day.”
(City Partner)

Having a pop up playground and band playing encouraged those who do not usually attend public consultation events to come along. It’s a great way to gather insights from locals while being fun and engaging.

The children loved the pop up playground meaning many of the comments gathered through the canvas method related to park equipment. As many participants were at the event to find out about the construction work to take place over the next two year on the road, they had comments unrelated to the green spaces but to the housing development. The main concern about the future residential development is that it is much taller than anything in the area, some were unhappy with the height of the building.

Canvas

The canvas was located under the first tent as participants arrived along with the polaroid cameras and a station to sort all the paper surveys. Most visitors have a look around the site, watched the music and discussed the development with the city team members before coming to members of RWTH, ICLEI and Connect the Dots to share their wishes for the green area of Bölevägen. It is important to note that participants were not asked what they would wish for in the area that they were standing at the time, but in general for the road to be developed, including the 4 green spaces. Many of those who attended came along with their kids to play in the pop-up park. Due to the large number of children and young people, the majority of comments related to child friendly activities or developments e.g., a park/ play equipment/ a skate park etc.

Interestingly, in general the adults with children had little to ask for other than a playground. When asked what they would like for themselves they did not have any thoughts. One or two parents noted that a cafe would be nice so that they could have a coffee while their kids played. Some of the older participants (around age 50+) had more ideas to suit their needs, e.g. 'A community garden to grow vegetables and become self-sufficient' or 'a dog obstacle course with the goal of combating loneliness'. Young people (teenagers) found it difficult to come up with ideas, this may be because they are rarely asked for their opinion on these types of developments. A teacher who worked in the neighboring English school referred to the hectic traffic and lack of safety in the neighborhood, especially outside the school. He explained that this is a thorough road to Volvo and a shortcut for some drivers. Many drive over 40 mph some at 50 and he felt that 20/30 mph speed limit should be implemented.



Fig. 68 Talking about the visitors' wishes/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

“Unfortunately, the target area is not a good place for playing, because of the street with buses, cars, and fast bicycle lanes nearby. Instead, we are planning to refresh the two existing playgrounds in the area with inspiration from the [canvas] input.”
(City Partner)



Fig. 69 Word cloud based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Áine McBeth

of responses related to play there were other interesting wishes, such as an increase in greenery and flower planting, water features, additional benches, edible fruit bushes and apple trees and a cafe or somewhere to get coffee.

The photovoice method was

Photovoice

positively received by the youth in Umeå. Initially participants were allowed to take the polaroid camera with them while they walked around the site to take a photo of something that aroused an emotion. This approach worked well with adults; however, it was difficult to keep track of the polaroid cameras when groups of young people and children participated. The approach was changed slightly on this reflection and a member of ICLEI walked with the school children, keeping an eye on the polaroid camera. This ensured that the 20 polaroid photos were representative of all age groups and that none of the polaroid's were lost.

“Handing out the cameras to parents with children unaccompanied was complicated after a while because, despite instructions, photos were often taken of the families or friends and not of the surroundings in combination with the indication of a feeling. After a while we went along with the participants and helped them with questions.”

(Julia Gäckle)



Fig. 70 CardoBox playground/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

Survey results

Main findings in Umeå

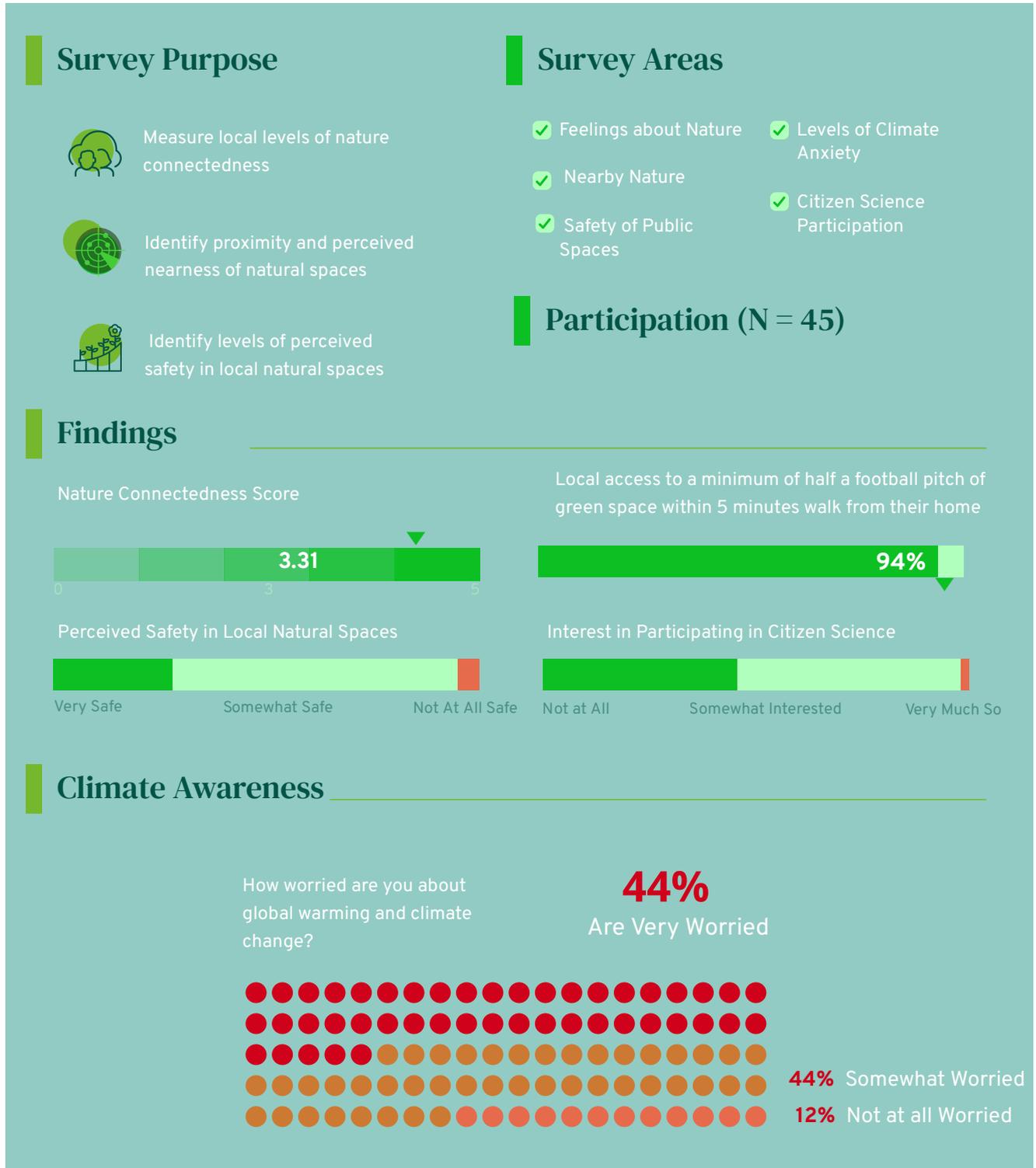


Fig. 71 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Umeå

The total number of survey responses collected in Bölevägen, Umeå, was 47. This included online and paper questionnaires.

Of the 47 participants, 58% were female, 36% were male and 6% preferred not to say. 13% were 18 years or older while 13% were 17 years or younger. 93% of the respondents have access to a minimum of 0.5 hectares of green or blue natural space within a 5 minutes' walk of their home.

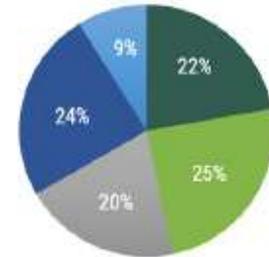
75% of the respondents 'take notice of wildlife wherever they are', with only 53% agreeing that 'their relationship to nature is part of who they are'. 42% agree that they 'feel very connected to all living things and the earth', with 36% neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

Interestingly, 30 of the 47 respondents believe that one of the main benefits of introducing more natural features in a neighbourhood or city is to reduce stress levels. Other common benefits included 'experiencing a connection with the natural environment', 'enjoying scenery' and 'sharing time with family and friends'. Only 9% of the respondents believe that nature based solutions 'very much so' promote their health. Respondents also felt the same about nature-based solutions promoting 'nature and biodiversity', with only 9% choosing 'very much so' and 55% choosing 'not at all'. However, the respondents did feel that nature-based solutions promote 'sustainable actions' with 18% choosing 'very much so' and 43% choosing 'somewhat'.

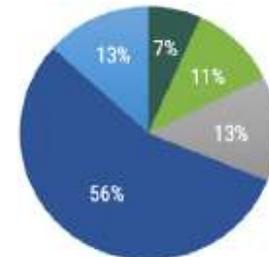
Respondents were asked to rate their response to a number of questions from 0-10. The responses show that respondents would like the green area to have fruit bushes and contain good conditions for pollinators. While the majority would like the green area to be designed to delay storm water, there were 13 ratings at 5 and below. Interestingly, the majority of respondents were less enthusiastic about room for urban farming on the green area, 7 respondents answered this question with a 0, highlighting a strong opposition to this idea.

The results show a preference for designing the green space as a park with many in favour of it benefiting biodiversity. It is not as clear cut as to whether the respondents would like the surface to be planted with trees, 20 responded 5 or below while 23 responded 6 and above. There may be fears that trees will lead to shading of some nearby houses as alluded to in the quote. Similarly, when asked if they would like the green space to reduce noise, many fell between 2-8, this may be due to a lack of noise in the area as it is currently.

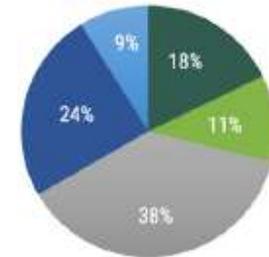
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4. Agree a little
- 5. Agree Strongly

Fig. 72 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul

Seedbed intervention

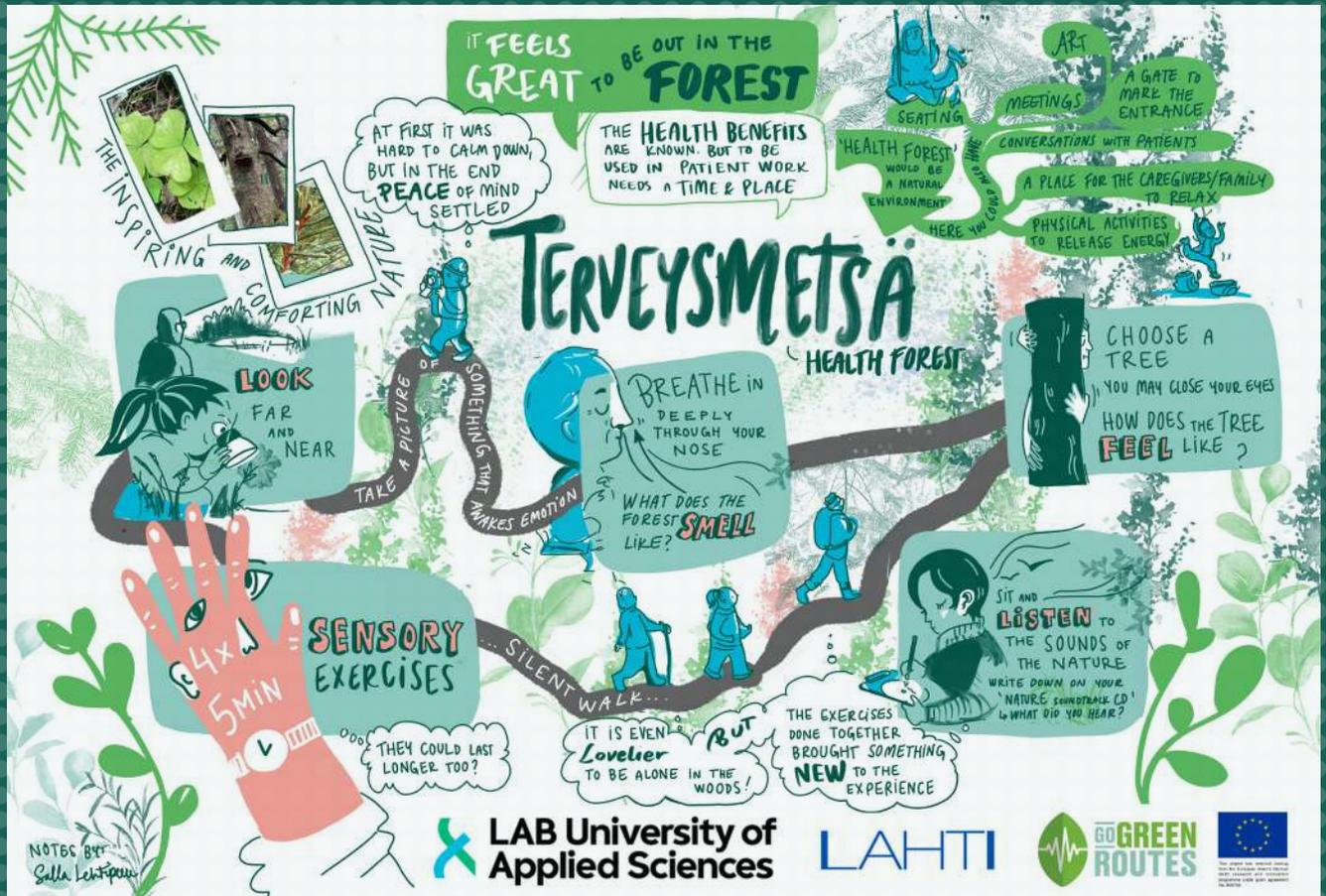


Fig. 73 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Salla Lehtipuu



Lahti

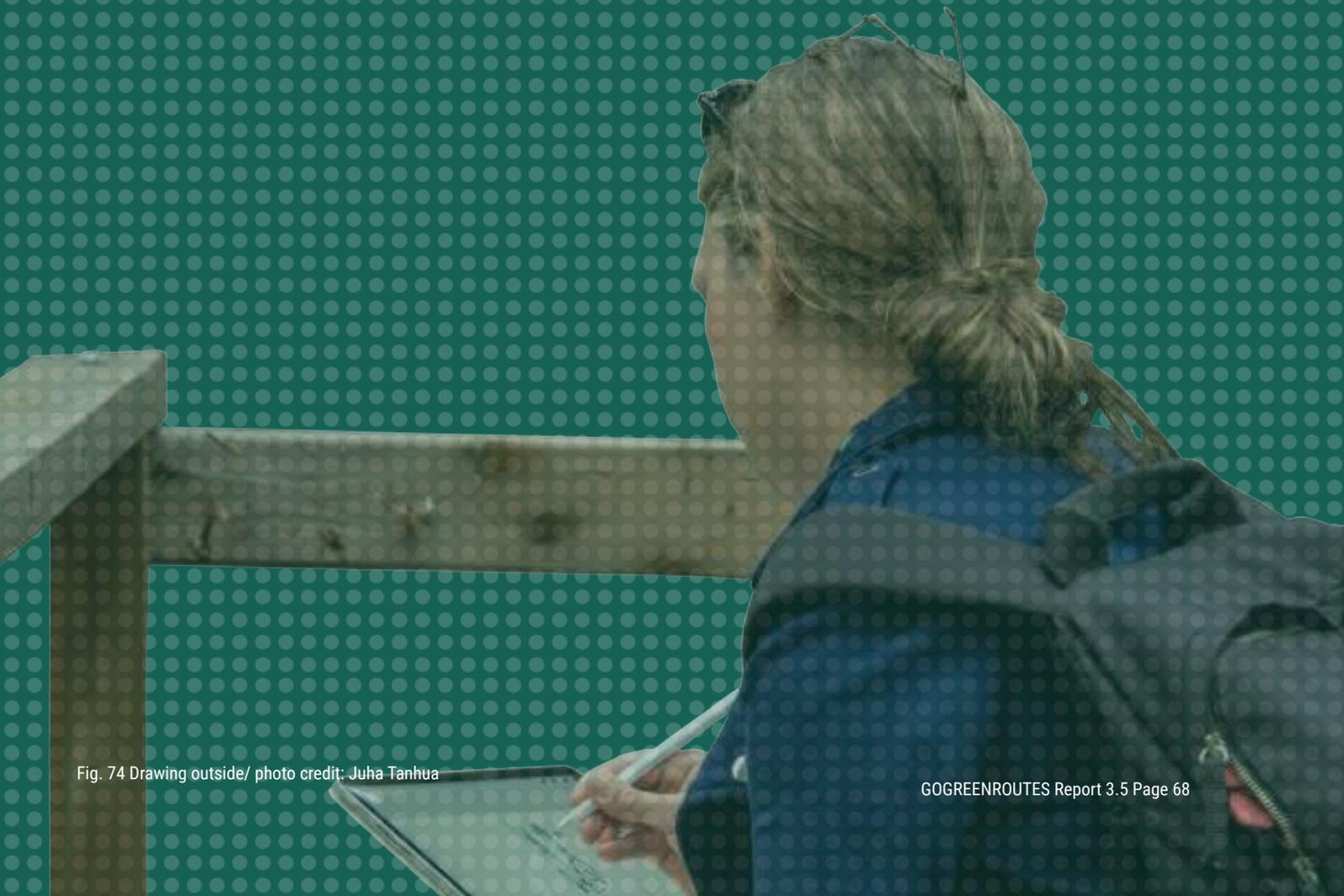
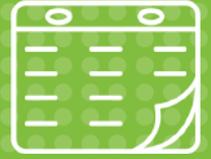


Fig. 74 Drawing outside/ photo credit: Juha Tanhua

Lahti



5th to 8th of September 2022
2 pm – 5 pm
Kintterö



20 staff members from the local hospital participated in guided sensory walks



20 people filled out the survey

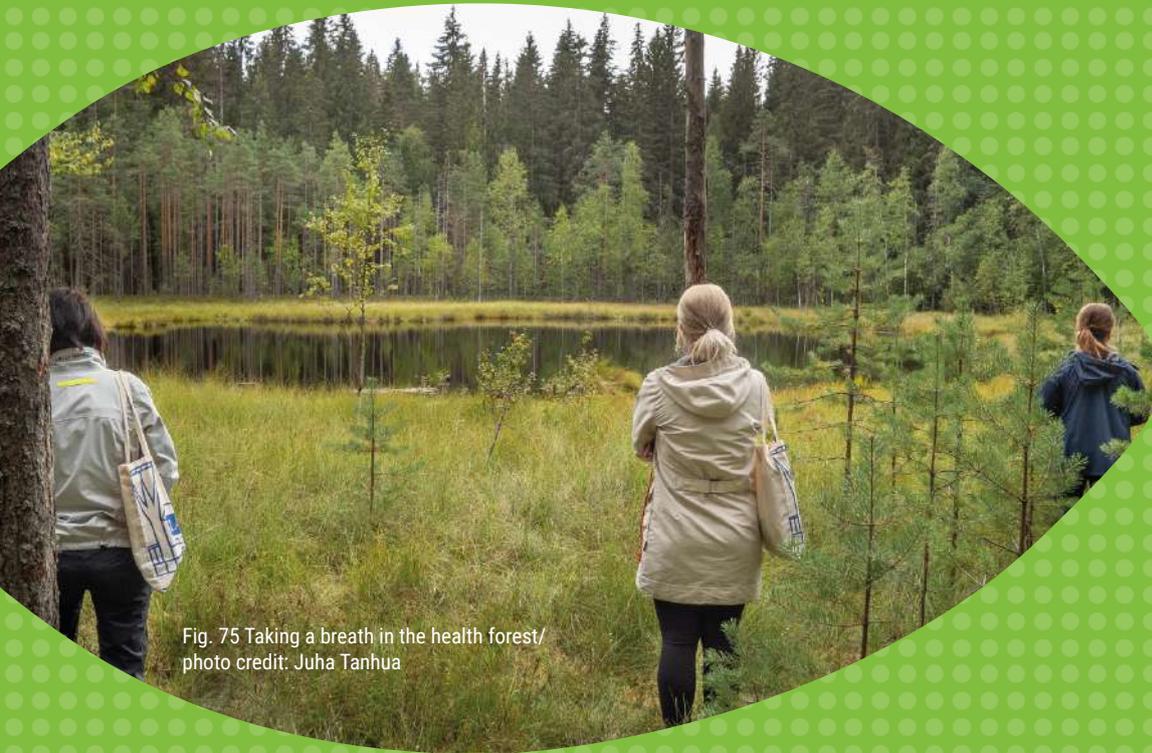


Fig. 75 Taking a breath in the health forest/
photo credit: Juha Tanhua

The City of Lahti's seedbed intervention took place at the Lahti health forest (pilot area). There are discussions on connecting the pilot area with the nearby Likolampi route to increase the positive impacts on health and wellbeing. The nature reserve of Kintterö is located on the western side of the city of Lahti right next to the Päijät-Häme Central Hospital. Therefore, easy accessibility for the hospital staff and patients is important. This area is going to be transformed with NBS interventions in 2023.

Staff members of the Joint Authority of Health and Wellbeing (PHHYKY) volunteered for the Seedbed intervention in the Lahti health forest. The intervention consisted of guided sensory walks over the period where each day five staff members participated. Before, as well as after the intervention, the volunteers were asked to answer a short survey about their feelings and experiences in the health forest. At the end of the Seedbed intervention a group interview was conducted with the volunteers which was recorded. The canvas and photovoice methods were also implemented during and at the end of the walks. The volunteers were also provided with information about the project GoGreenRoutes along with a goodie bag to take home.



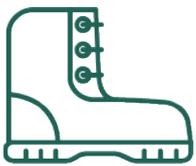
Fig. 76 Drawing outside/
photo credit: Juha Tanhua



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 77 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Juha Tanhua



For the main activity the city organised guided sensory walks in the pilot area which took participants along a possible trail in the health forest. The senses of listening, smelling, seeing and touching were recorded at different points and parts of the walk to understand how they feel, when they hear, smell, see and touch nature.

At first it was difficult to calm down but in the end the peace of mind settled



The aim of the guided sensory walks was to generate a sense of nature connectedness and understand if the participants felt rejuvenated and refreshed from the walks in the health forest. They were later asked about what they missed and how their experience went.

The health benefits are known. But to be used in patient work needs time and place



The health forest is an open forest for all, especially for the hospital staff and patients nearby. With the sensory walks and exercises, the emotional mapping was a key outcome. This was done to ascertain what hospital individuals wish for the health forest, to know what they would value in the health forest and to understand their collective picture of nature.

Because of the interactions with the hospital staff, the city of Lahti now has a better idea of what the nature-based solutions could look like. The volunteers and the local task force helped to plan activities which will be made accessible to all. In addition, the learnings will support the planning on designing the area.



Pictures of the day



Fig. 78 Starting point of the guided sensory walk through the health forest/
photo credit: Juha Tanhua

Hospital staff volunteers and project partners gathered around to hear about the project as well as the event details from the city official. With goodie bags on our shoulders and fresh energy and inspiration, we all entered into the health forest to kick off the seedbed intervention.



Fig. 79 Feeling nature connectiveness/ photo credit: Juha Tanhua

Acknowledging the sense of relaxation and comfort when being surrounded by the trees, the volunteers took moments like this to feel the nature connectedness.



Fig. 80 Talking about individual experiences/ photo credit: Juha Tanhua

Towards the end of the event, the participants sat on a fallen tree trunk and talked with the city officials about their perceptions about the health forest and the several benefits nature brings to people. What seemed like a lively discussion (in local language) went on for about an hour before the media persons came for a further interview that was broadcasted in Finnish national media.

Preparation by the city

The Lahti seedbed intervention was prepared since quite some time by the city partner in charge of the GoGreenRoutes project. The involved city official then took into account the scientific and research needs to understand the significance of health forest for the hospital staff in the area. Although there was a change in staff in Lahti, the methodology used in the intervention was transferred well to the new city staff taking in Lahti. In addition to a new coordinator staff within the city, a trainee was involved in the preparation and the implementation of the intervention. A graphic illustrator and a professional photographer were hired as well, mostly for the for days of the intervention. In Lahti, the intervention was spread across four days, allowing for five staff members per visit to the intervention site of the health forest, and only one day was considered the main day for the intervention where all different methods were applied as well as the press were invited, along with the graphic illustrator and the photographer. The city partner and the trainee also arranged for transport of the material such as the canvas and the GoGreenRoutes banner prior to the seedbed intervention and placed them at the last resting spot, before closing the event. The survey was pre-filled by the hospital staff who had volunteered to join, resulting in 20 filled-in surveys in advance to the seedbed intervention.

The project partners, RWTH, ICLEI and CtD had previously discussed the entire concept, methods, and logistics of the seedbed intervention. It was clear that the seedbed intervention in Lahti would have a different and unique touch, since it would be focusing on hospital staff specifically, and not targeted towards the wider public. This was agreed upon, since it supported the overall research focus of GoGreenRoutes, as well as the adoption of the methods for fewer people, yet those who are affected the most by the design and the area in question for NBS implementation.

The involvement of a professional photographer and a graphic illustrator in advance was beneficial. The researchers and city officials were able to brief them on what angles of the seedbed intervention would be most relevant and interesting to focus on. It was also interesting to have different guided sensory walks, some with silence along the way while in others talking about the forest and the nature connectedness and hence connecting with others on the walk, was encouraged.



Fig. 81 Concentrating on thoughts and feelings/ photo credit: Juha Tanhua

Day of intervention

On the day of the seedbed intervention, everyone gathered at the entrance to the health forest, where a board depicting the area and the diverse information related to the area was displayed. This installation had been there previously. Since it was a small group of people, everyone got a chance to introduce themselves and say a few words on why they were there and what they would like to get out of this engagement/activity. The city staff offered goodie bags, with informational pamphlets of the GGR project, a small water bottle filled with water and some snacks for the walk. All communication was done in Finnish solely, making it difficult for the project partners to actively participate. On one hand, it was good to allow for local context to be at the centre but it affected the documentation and observational parts to be done by the project partners.



Fig. 82 Walking through the health forest/photo credit: Juha Tanhua

The guided sensory walk with intermittent stops at places to rest and do exercises of engaging different senses in the surrounding forest space lasted around three hours. Over the course of the walk, the photographer and the illustrator were busy capturing interesting moments. From time to time the project partners also encouraged the five hospital staff volunteers to reach out and take the polaroid camera in their hand and take a picture of the area based on their emotional connection to it. They also noted any feeling they had. Most people shared they were comforted and excited to be in the area. They also shared that the guided walk helped focus attention on their senses, breathing, smelling, touching, and seeing, to which they would usually not pay the same amount of attention if they did it alone. However, they also said they would like to go on their own from next times and continue exploring the health forest without the guidance as well.

At the last resting spot, there were hammocks and the canvas as well as the photovoice method were all displayed. A focus group interview also took place which the city conducted for their purposes of understanding the opinion of the volunteers on the walk. The YLE media people came in after some time and interviewed the city partner, the volunteers based on consent as well as the project partner from ICLEI.

Timeline

- 2:00 - 2:15pm
Introduction
- 2:15 - 2:30pm
Overview of the project and event
- 2:30 - 3:30pm
Guided sensory walk through the health forest
- 3:30 - 4:00pm
Canvas method and group interview
- 4:00 - 4:30pm
Media interviews with finnish national broadcasting station YLE
- 4:30pm
Wrap up



Fig. 83 Taking time to relax and feel the nature connectedness/photo credit: Juha Tanhua

There was a dedicated and organised effort by the city partner to ensure an optimal setting for a relaxed but also conducive environment. This was helpful in collecting the opinions of the volunteers with least influence from the present city and project partners. The volunteers felt it was refreshing for them to be in nature and go along the health forest trail. Although they confessed that they hardly could make time due to work to come and enjoy the nature, even though it is close to their workplace.

“It was a clear evidence of nature connectedness feeling and so relatable to see a volunteer express their emotions with tears in their eyes, talking about how hugging a tree in peace and quiet made them feel comforted from all worries and stresses of daily life.”
(Project Partner, ICLEI)

A very interesting outcome of the intervention is that the trainee in the city will be using the information collected to work on her thesis in the field of health and nature. Also, a researcher from LAB University was on-site during the seedbed intervention, meaning there is great potential for knowledge transfer from primary source to research. Additionally, with the canvas method it became clear that the volunteers would rather have less interventions in the area but more promotion and awareness raising for the people living close to the health forest to make use of the trail. In concrete infrastructural changes, there were ideas to make a yoga space, install swings or so (inspired by hammocks in the forest, during the intervention) and perhaps picnic spots for people to rest and take in the beauty of the nature of the health forest.

Photovoice

This method yielded five pictures of specific areas with emotions written on them from the volunteers. Majorly the consensus was feelings of relief, comfort and excitement to be in the forest. Having one volunteer express their feelings and tearing up explaining how beautiful the forest, and trees were and how it was comforting for them was very touching and just provides evidence of how the connection to nature is essential and can induce or reveal feelings in people.

"It was very interesting to see how participants relaxed during the sensory walk in the forest. Nature inspired, comforted and refreshed. It was a perfect place to have conversations and collect ideas."
(Taru Suutari)



Fig. 86 Explaining how to use the polaroid camera/ picture credit: Juha Tanhua

Survey results

Main findings in Lahti

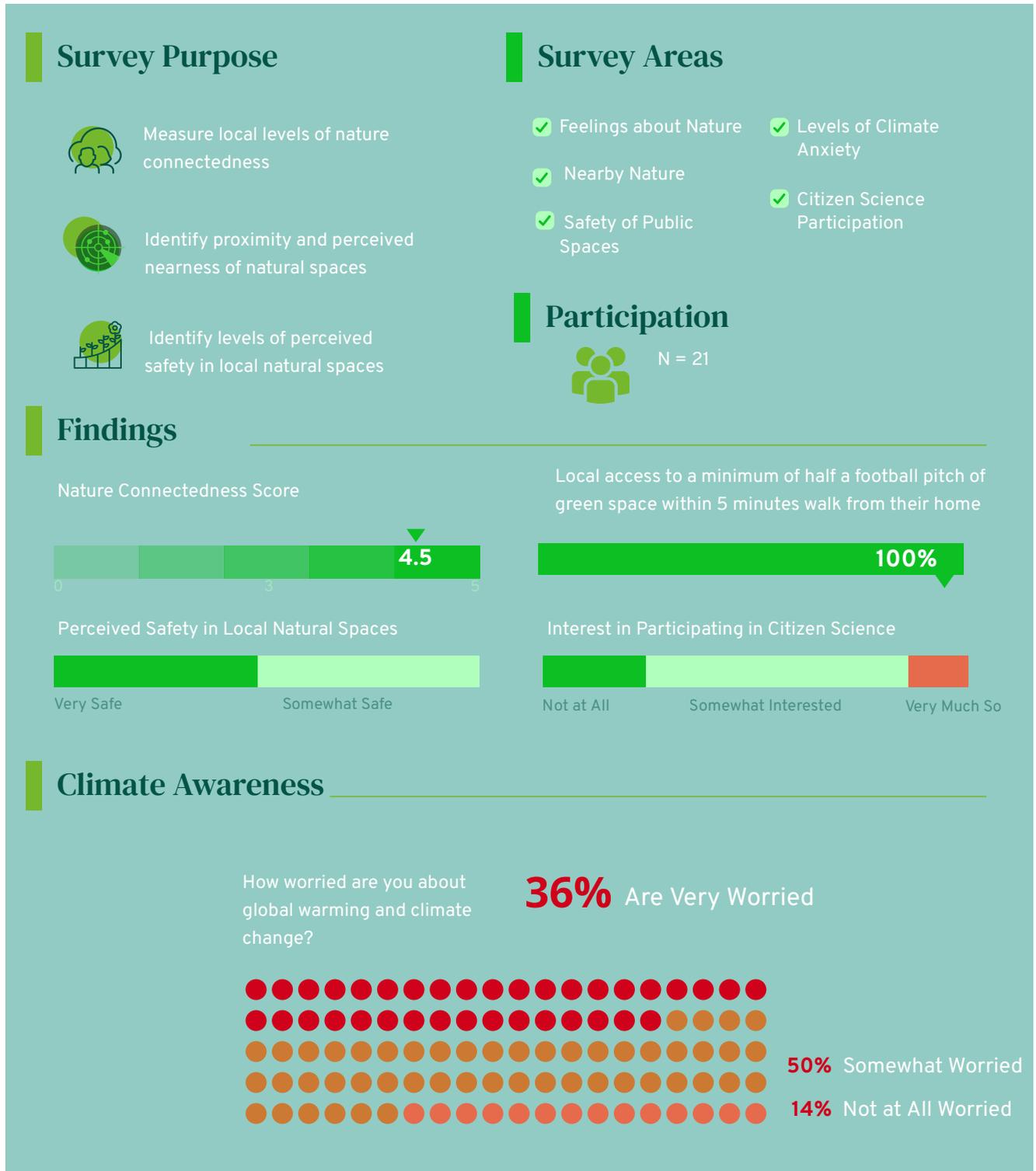


Fig. 87 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Lahti

The total number of survey responses submitted for the city of Lahti was 21. 95% of those surveyed were women and 5% were men. All of the 21 responses came from those aged 18 and older.

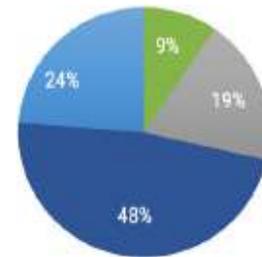
Results show that 48% of respondents agreed a little, that “My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area”. Also, 57% of the respondents agree a little that “I always think about how my actions affect the environment”. Furthermore, over half of the respondents (57%) agreed strongly that their “connection to nature and the environment is part of their spirituality.”

87% of the 21 respondents strongly agreed that they take notice of wildlife wherever they are. Comparably, 81% strongly agree that their relationship with nature was an important part of who they are. Also, responses depicted that 38% agree a little that “I feel very connected to all living things and the earth”. The majority of those surveyed stated that reducing stress levels was the “main benefit of introducing more natural features in a neighbourhood or city.” The smallest number of people believed that learning and sharing was the most beneficial.

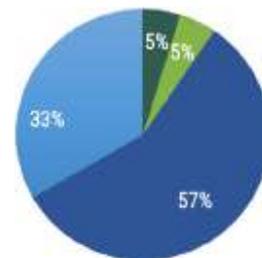
Data showed that 71% felt that this nature-based solution very much so “promote health” while only about half (52%) felt it very much so “promote nature and biodiversity”. Similarly, only 52% felt that this nature-based solution very much so “promote sustainable actions by you”. Nevertheless, respondents did feel strongly that this nature-based solution “promote coping with climate change” whereas only 5% felt this was not at all the case. However, when asked “How worried are you about global warming and climate change” only a small proportion of respondents (5%) were not very worried with most (57%) somewhat worried.

Moreover, it is of note that all 21 of those surveyed “have access to a minimum of 0.5 hectares green or blue natural space within 5 minutes’ walk of their home”. Regarding natural spaces, results show almost an even split between those who somewhat (52%) versus those who very much so “perceive natural public space (e.g., park) in your city to be safe” (48%). Also, results suggest strong favour toward the forest areas being participant’s favourite area to visit in their local area followed by seaside and coastal areas as well as shrubland. Also, 62% of responses indicate that participants are “interested in participating in nature-based citizen science” in their city.

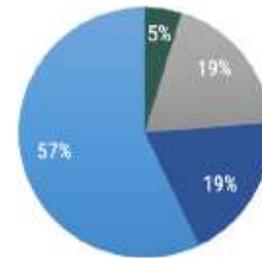
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 88 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul

Seedbed intervention



Fig. 89 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Julia Valtanen

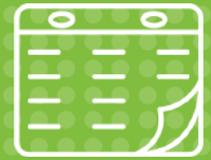


Tallinn



Fig. 90 Reading the info board/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

Tallinn



10th of September, 2022
12 am – 3 pm
Vormsi park



80 people visited the event
50 people participated
in the guided walks



47 people filled out the survey



Fig. 91 Guided walk through the area/
photo credit: Anton Semenyura

The City of Tallinn’s seedbed intervention took place on the 10th September 2022 at Vormsi park’s green area in Lasnamäe district. There were guided walks organised in two languages - Estonian and Russian, in order to engage residents with different nationalities.

Both walks were guided by two experts - one focusing on historical context and the other on ecological aspects. An information tent was set up where passers-by were informed about the GGR project and seedbed intervention activity. Throughout the whole event visitors were asked to fill out the survey.

In cooperation with Connect the Dots and ICLEI the canvas and photovoice methods were implemented. Information about the event was sent to an email-list that included the local task force and a press release was sent out to the newspapers and on social media. There were flyers available during the event explaining the project, activities regarding the pilot area and the online survey.



Fig. 92 Analysing the forest/
photo credit: Anton Semenyura



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 93 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura



Guided tours took participants along a possible future study trail. The aim was to introduce the local residents more closely to Vormsi green area's historical, cultural and ecological values but also to discuss the area's development possibilities, to talk about the ongoing activities and gather people's opinions.



Thematic information boards were installed recording historical and ecological aspects of the pilot area. The information boards cover the importance of nature based solutions in the city, urban nature's impact on mental and physical health and ecological diversity. The information boards were installed along existing walking paths.



The area has both historical and ecological significance as in the 1930s Nehatu primary school was established with an adjacent fruit tree garden and beehives. The fruit tree garden has been left untouched, over time growing into urban wilderness. It remains a valued urban nature spot for the locals.

Through the engagement of experts (Russian and Estonian speaking) both on historical and ecological aspects Tallinn managed to bring forward the two most important values of the area and foster discussion among the residents. Some members of the Task Force helped to organize the seedbed intervention and were engaged in spreading information about the upcoming event.

Accessible paths for all abilities

Natural park with natural materials and rules to ensure conservation of the area!

Something to prolong the life of the elderly – to enhance their active lifestyle and health



Pictures of the day



Fig. 94 Starting point of the guided walks/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

During the guided walks participants learned about the historical and ecological facts of the site. They also discussed potential designs and elements that could be incorporated into the NBS intervention. These insights were captured by a graphic harvester who drew these ideas, creating a digital poster that could be easily shared with participants after the event.



Fig. 95 Guided walks/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

The guided walks were carried out both by local residents who are part of the Local Task Force and also by well known respectable experts.



Fig. 96 Thematic information about the area/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

About 50 people participated in the guided walks (30 people in the Estonian language walk and 20 in Russian language walk).

Preparation by the city

The event was announced on August 16 on Facebook and Tallinn webpage. A poster was designed and put up on the information board at the pilot area that was installed in mid-June during a pre-seedbed intervention. In addition, the poster was put up in some of the restaurants, cafés, and educational facilities (schools and kindergartens) nearby. Information about the event was also sent to the email-list including Local Task Force contacts. In the same week of the event a press release was sent out to the media. An announcement about the event along with an explanation about the project and survey was published in the September issue of the Lasnamäe district newspaper.

On site during the event, flyers were handed out explaining the project activities regarding the pilot area and the online survey as well as survey forms on paper. As a seedbed intervention for the event Tallinn city partners put together thematic information boards about historical and ecological aspects of the pilot area prior to the event. The information boards covered, among other topics, the importance of nature-based solutions in the city, urban nature's impact on mental and physical health and ecological diversity. The information boards were installed along existing walking paths to indicate possibility of a future study trail on the site.

To attract attention to the event Tallinn city partners considered several aspects. First of all, both the communication of the event and its organisation was completed in two languages. Secondly, the guided walks were undertaken by people who were already well known as respectable experts. Thirdly, the guided walks were free and flexible to attend without the requirement of prior registration. In addition, the event was held on the weekend during a day with good sunny weather that definitely affected people's willingness to spend their time outside. Goody bags were given to participants at the end; in addition to being a motivation to take part in the event, these were meant to serve as a nudge towards a more sustainable and greener lifestyle. The bag made from recycled fabric contained a thermos mug from recycled plastic (both bag and the mug to reduce single-use packaging) and a jar with seeds for sprouting (promoting healthy diet). A similar approach was used to motivate people to fill out the survey. It was announced that all respondents can take part in the lottery. The three prizes put forward were an annual pass to the botanical garden, a balcony kit for growing plants in the apartment and a gift card to a horticulture shop.

It is important to arrive to the site well before the event starts for last minute preparations.

Tallinn city partners provided a flip chart to hold the canvas and the instant polaroid photographs taken by the participants. This worked very well and was very inviting to people who were walking past the target area.



Fig. 97 Woman taking notes during the walk/
photo credit: Anton Semenyura

Day of intervention

The Vormsi green area is the pilot area for GoGreenRoutes in Tallinn. It is a small orchard beside a new playground and open grassland, opposite a supermarket and bakery. This is the place where in the 1930s Nehatu primary school was established with an adjacent fruit tree garden and beehives. Despite its overgrown appearance, the area remains a valued urban nature and leisure spot by locals. The main activity of the seedbed intervention event was guided walks in the pilot area which took participants along a possible future study trail with information boards that were installed prior to the event. The purpose of the guided walks was to introduce the local residents more closely to Vormsi green area historical, cultural and ecological values, discuss the area's development possibilities, talk about the ongoing activities and gather people's opinions on it.



Fig. 98 Visitors at the info tent/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

The guided walks were organised in two languages, Estonian and Russian, in order to engage residents with different nationalities. Both walks were guided by two experts: one focusing on historical context and the other on ecological aspects. In this way the event was able to bring out both the past and the present aspects of the area. The Estonian language walk started at 12:00 and was guided by local resident and hiking guide Peeter Pihlak and urban ecologist Tiina Elvisto. The walk in Russian language took place at 13:30 and was also hosted by urban ecologist Tiina Elvisto together with historian Josef Kats. In addition to the guided walks, there was an informational tent where passers-by were informed about the GoGreenRoutes project and seedbed intervention activity.

Timeline

- 9:00 - 12:00am
Logistics and preparation by the Tallinn City Team
- 12:00am - 1:30pm
Guided study trail walk in Estorian (Peeter Pihlak and Tiina Elvisto)
- 1:30 - 3:00 pm
Guided study trail walk in Russian (Tiina Elvisto and Josef Kats)
- 12:00am - 2:00pm
Continuous exchange of information with participants and passersbys at the Canvas (focal point of the event under a tent with water and snacks)
- 3:00 - 3:30pm
Logistics to wrap-up Tallinn City Team)

Throughout the whole event participants of the guided walks as well as passers-by were asked to fill the survey on the spot or explained how to do it online.



Fig. 99 Guided tour around the pilot area/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

Those who attended the guided tours varied in age with the youngest around 4 years old. The participants were generally residents of the locality and had an interest in the future of the site. Many had never walked around the target area as it is very covered and dark giving it a feeling of unsafety. There were many passersby who participated in the activities as the target area is adjacent to a children's park and in close proximity to a supermarket and many residential developments. The event engaged approximately 70-80 people. About 50 people participated in the guided walks (30 people in the Estonian language walk and 20 in Russian language walk). The survey was given out to 73 people (44 in Russian, 29 in Estonian language) of which 47 were filled in on the spot and returned (27 in Russian and 20 in Estonian). In addition, there were a number of passers-by, who only participated in canvas and/or photovoice methods. A survey was completed online as well.

"It was a pleasant, sunny day which lent itself to the engagement process meaning a considerable number of both Estonian and Russian language speakers were engaged."
(Connect the Dots)

"Some Local Task Force members were closely engaged in spreading information about the upcoming event and helped in finding some of the necessary equipment for the event."
(City Partner)

Tallinn city partners also considered local businesses in the planning of the seedbed intervention. A bakery across the street was chosen to cater the event in order to raise local businesses' awareness towards the area they are located in.

Canvas

The canvas was located beside the tent and table with informational flyers and tea. Insights were gathered through this method after each guided tour. This allowed participants to have the opportunity to walk through the seedbed site, understand its heritage and ecological significance then discuss the potential of the area. Based on the feedback received during the guided walks and through the canvas method, residents value the existing natural environment of the Vormsi green area and would like it to remain as such. Although, there are issues regarding feeling of safety due to the area being quite dark under the trees. While there are several paths throughout the area, its accessibility is limited for the elderly and others for whom uneven and rough paths are difficult to use. Additionally, the seasonal wetland located between the pilot area and children’s playground creates another accessibility issue. People also found that ecological diversity needs to be preserved and increased. In addition, there were many opinions that the area lacks sitting places and maintenance to keep it more clean and reduce vandalism. Some were also concerned about the large number of rats living in the green area. Many people referred to the area’s potential to combat loneliness by providing a safe and comfortable outdoor space for the elderly to spend time.



Fig. 100 Visitors/
photo credit: Anton Semenyura

“In general, residents’ opinions gathered during the event align with the feedback that the city has received through previous workshops as well as with the direction we have taken so far in development of the area.”
(City Partner)

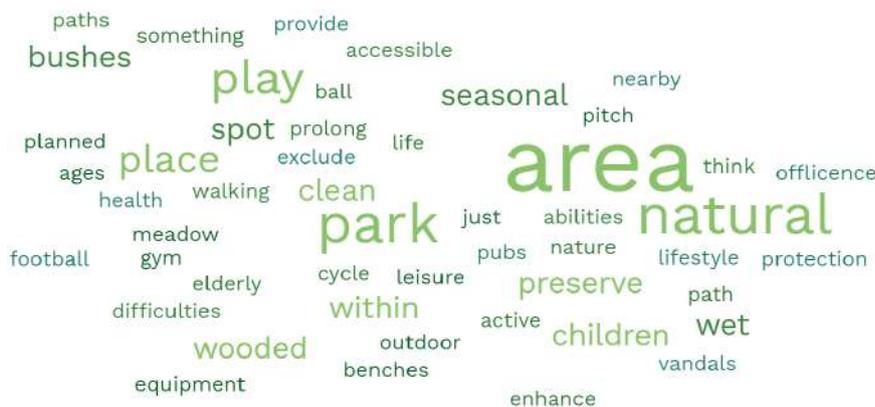


Fig. 101 Word cloud based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Áine McBeth

Several proposals for improvement in the area were for different leisure activities connected to sports while others focused on more relaxing recreational possibilities suitable for elderly e.g., a permanent chess board. For many, the historical heritage of the area should be more emphasised and brought forward in the form of information boards, conservation of the ruins etc. It was agreed by at least 10 participants that this park should remain a “looduspark” (natural park).

Photovoice

At first participants were hesitant to take the polaroid camera into the target area to take a photo. The first photo was completed by a member of the municipality team, as an example to depict the activity. Over time, as the board filled up with photos, many more participants came forward to take part in the activity. On reflection, participants required more instruction than what was translated on the signage. Members of the municipality team helped to explain the activity, this resulted in a larger number of participants. The exercise worked well with those who had taken part in the guided tours however it was not as intuitive for passersby. Those on the guided tours identified areas that they had a connection with while walking through the area and so were more confident in finding a spot to take a photo.

Many participants were keen to capture the natural beauty of the area. Photos captured the sunlight filtering through the leaves; ...

One participant in particular wanted to take a photo of the hawthorn bush with its red berries. She explained the natural medicinal properties of these berries (crataegus). Interestingly, these berries were used to make the tea that was provided on the day.

“I photographed the berries from the Crataegus, the tea here today was created from these types of berries.”

(Anonymous participant)

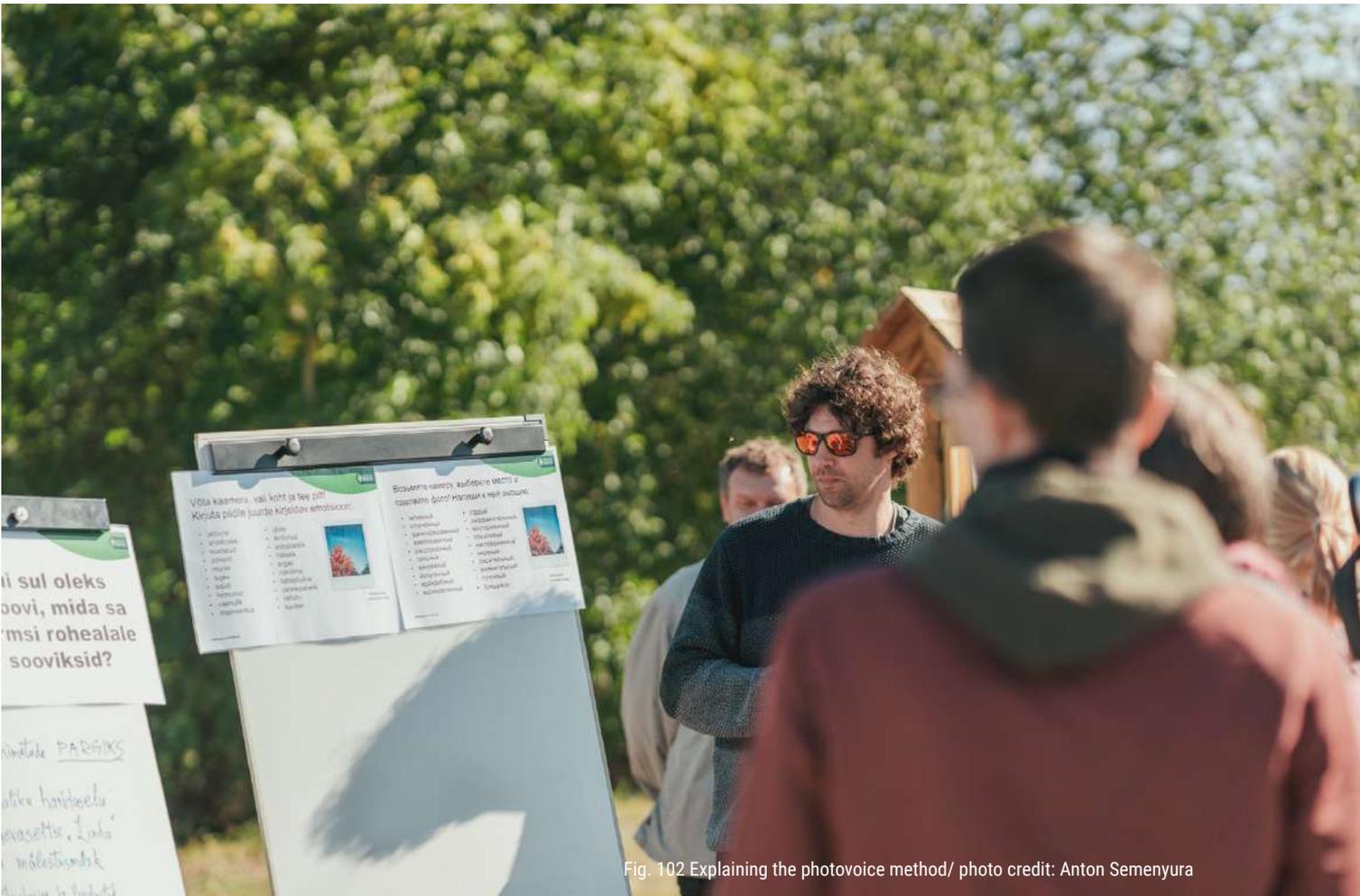


Fig. 102 Explaining the photovoice method/ photo credit: Anton Semenyura

Survey results

Main findings in Tallinn

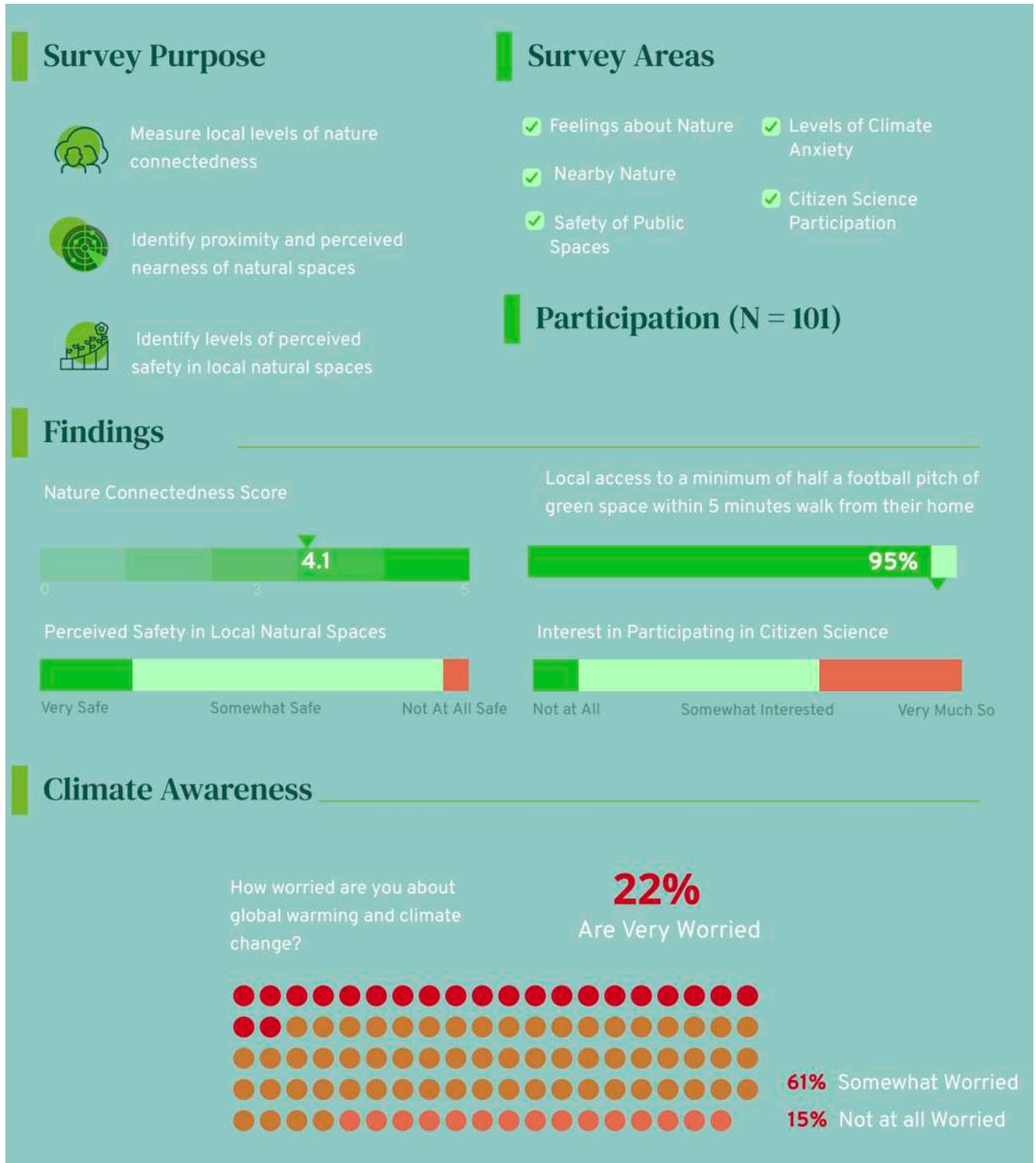


Fig. 103 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Tallinn

The total number of collected survey responses that can be used for the analysis is 101. This includes online and paper questionnaires. From all the survey participants in Vormsi 62 % answered that they visit the green area at least once a month, the rest has reported that they visit Vormsi less than once a month. From those who reported that they frequently (at least once a month) visit Vormsi, 84% are women and 16% are men. Frequent visitors are full time employed (51%), married or cohabiting (67%), or women living with children (54%).

Having a pet does not influence the decision to come to Vormsi more often: 49% of those who come more frequently have a pet and 51% does not have a pet.

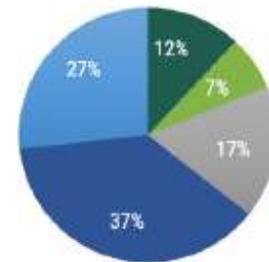
The second biggest category of frequent visitors is retired citizens (19% of all who visit Vormsi at least once a month). Participants in the age over 60 prefer either go for a walk or walk with a pet. The main reason why they come to Vormsi is because they live close by. Participants who are younger than 60 either prefer to walk or play/walk with children. Frequent (as well as non-frequent) visitors live mainly in Lasnamäe district of Tallinn (94% of all interviewees), a small proportion has reported they are coming from neighbouring Kristiine (3%) and Pirita (3%) districts. 5% of those, who reported that they visit Vormsi less than once a month, live in Mustamäe district.

The distribution of main activities that citizens are engaged with in Vormsi are to walk and play with children. Surprisingly, doing sport takes only 6th place in the ranking of preferred activities in Vormsi green area.

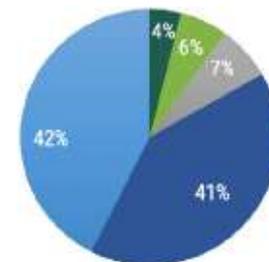
Visitors who are between 30 and 40-year-old are clearly prevailing among those who were eager to answer survey questions. The mean age of all the participants is 46.7 years- the youngest participant is 19 years old, the oldest 87 years old.

81% of all who answered the survey are women. The median age of female participants is a bit higher than the median age of male participants. Women also cover a wider age-range in this survey.

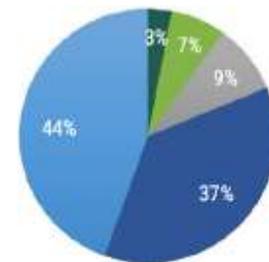
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 104 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul

Seedbed intervention

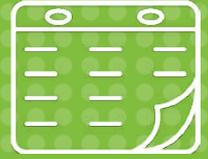


Versailles



Fig. 105 Set-up of the tents for the workshops/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

Versailles



14th and 22th of July, 2022
2 pm – 5:30 pm / 6pm – 8:30 pm
Square Blaise Pascal



80 people attended
the workshops



38 people filled out the survey



Fig. 106 Producing apple juice/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

The seedbed intervention in Versailles took place in the Square Blaise Pascal which will be the site of the NBS interventions and is currently composed of 3 sections: 1300sqm park for children with many play facilities, 1730sqm park intensive green space with cherry trees and ping pong tables and a 6900sqm area for football and basketball. The workshops on the 14th of July attracted a total of about 80 participants.

The objectives of the day were to raise awareness about nature and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of ideas for the future square.

Fresh apple juice was pressed to show how apples are turned into a product like apple juice. In parallel, the photovoice method and the canvas method were carried out. Insight into the results on page 6 and 8!

There was also the opportunity to take part in a survey on the future of the park via a QR code. In addition, the city of Versailles organized an action during the event where participants could draw their park of the future and include their wishes.



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 107 Photographic expression/
photo credit: Pierrick Daul



Fig. 108 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul/ Julia Gäckle



An apple juice workshop was offered to learn how to produce fresh apple juice “from tree to belly”. Visitors were able to taste handmade apple juice while talking about the wide range of possible nature-based solutions and about their own ideas how to transform the city.



The Photovoice method was very successful: at least 20 photos were taken by participants and described with personal feelings. The participants were enthusiastic about the action, especially that they could freely choose a place and go on a search with the camera.



All visitors were invited to draw their own ideal parks and playgrounds which were collected afterwards to create green spaces more suitable to their users. This was also a good way to start discussions about each other’s ideas and to learn more about the different wishes.

The networking of different local actors can be seen as the main success of the day. Neighbors came together with members of the city or with guests from other cities/countries and engaged in lively discussions. Furthermore, the simple production of apple juice on site generated valuable knowledge in terms of local food production!

The marketing of local products should be promoted more!

An “edible” park with many different plants would be my wish!



Pictures of the day



Fig. 109 Explaining the photovoice method to interested visitors/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

One of the actions in the course of the Seedbed interventions, the Photovoice method, was very well received by the visitors after partners of GGR together explained everything in detail in French and English to the participants and accompanied them while taking photos.

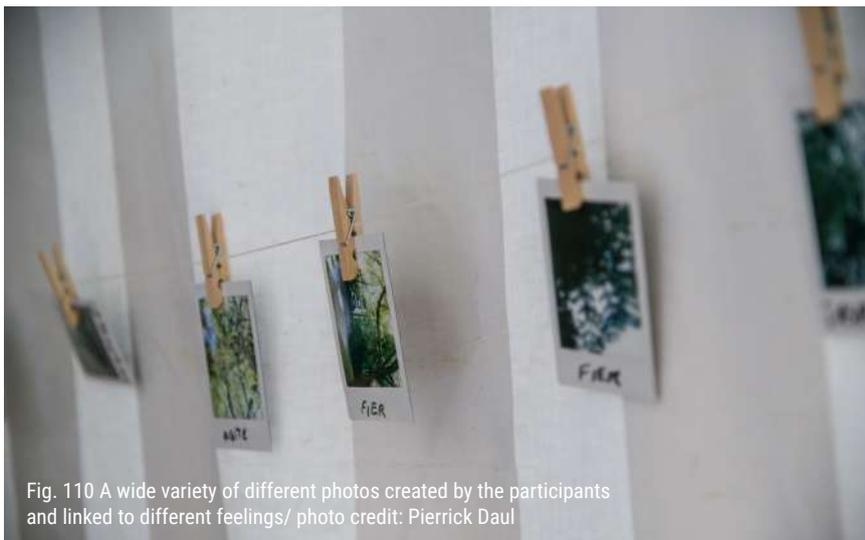


Fig. 110 A wide variety of different photos created by the participants and linked to different feelings/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul



Fig. 111 Picking apples to produce fresh apple juice/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

Another highlight, also to promote the sense of community, was the joint apple juice making. Everyone pitched in and there was a lot of discussion about the fact that urban greenery should also be more edible again.

Preparation by the city

The team in Versailles (led by Franck Remy) promoted the event on the City of Versailles website and local Facebook group prior to the implementation of the seedbed intervention and invited people to participate. Furthermore, a poster with relevant information about the GoGreenRoutes project and the seedbed intervention event was created in advance and displayed at the two entrances of the park, in the two Montreuil neighbourhood houses, and during a local event, the association forum, previously organised by the neighbourhood life, youth and leisure department.

The local taskforce was invited and informed about the seedbed intervention via three emails beforehand.

Several partners of the City of Versailles were heavily involved both in the preparations and on the ground:

- Director of the Green Space department: present to discuss the redevelopment project
- Biodiversity officer: organisation and animation of the Land'art, Draw your park and a scavenger hunt
- Eco-gardeners: organisation and animation of the apple juice workshop
- Solidarity Department: three elderly people from the neighbourhood who took charge of the organisation of a mid-afternoon snack
- Director of the Montreuil - Vauban neighbourhood house: present to represent the neighbourhood and discuss the project
- Innovative projects unit: GGR project manager in charge of coordinating the teams and providing various materials (posters, paper, felt pens, 30 kg of apples)
- Local taskforce
- Technical services: in charge of preparing the site (installation of tents, tables, and chairs)
- Landscape designer: Co-Creation Workshop: Draw your park

No temporary structural changes had to be made onsite, the event was equipped with temporary furniture on the morning of the event.

1. It took a lot of preparation time- always plan in more time and people who can help. Even if the activities on site seemed easy and informal to set up, it took quite some effort to create a trustful atmosphere in which people are open to share their thoughts.

2. The event started around 2PM, maybe an earlier start would have enabled more people to join in the activities.



Fig. 112 Fresh apple juice/
photo credit: Pierrick Daul

Day of intervention

On the day of the intervention, two tents were set up. In the first one information about the GoGreenRoutes project and the event was provided. The team in Versailles also organised a scavenger hunt. The aim was to find clues in the park with the help of a map. Each of these clues was related to nature. All the clues together solved a riddle. Another activity was “Draw your park”, in which participants were asked to draw their dream park of the future.



Fig. 113 Set-up of the tents for the workshops/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

In the second tent, the Versailles team offered another activity parallel to the Draw your park workshop: A land art workshop in which visitors could create animals using natural elements from the park. The canvas method was also performed in the second tent. For this, a table was set up on which several large white sheets were attached, and a specific question was asked:

If you had 3 wishes for the place, what would you wish for?

The task was explained to the participants in different languages (French, German, English). In addition, the photovoice method was carried out in this tent. An Instax camera was placed on a small chair and instructions were given for the tasks of taking a photo and selecting one of the listed emotions for the photo. Between the two tents, visitors, some of them organisers, chatted and provided chairs. The “Apple Juice Workshop” took place between the two tents. The machine for pressing apples was presented and the product, the juice, was distributed among the visitors. Everyone could take part in pressing the apples.

Timeline

- 2:00pm
Opening of the event by Franck Remy, information about local projects
- 2:00 - 3:00pm
Orientating race with riddle
- 2:00 - 5:30pm
Photovoice and Canvas method were introduced and done together with participants
- 3:00 - 4:00pm
Apple juice workshop
- 3:00 - 5:00pm
Draw your park workshop, Landart workshop
- 2:00 - 5:30pm
Survey was open to access and explained via QR-code
- 2:00 - 5:30pm
Talks and walks with participants during the time they e.g. took photos for the photovoice approach

The apple juice workshop was truly a highlight, and well received. While being informative of the production process, it also provided neighbors the opportunity to connect. Soon, ideas were exchanged about what could happen with the remaining fruit products of the apples.
(Observation Julia Gäckle)



Fig. 114 Process of making apple juice/ picture credit: Pierrick Daul

Outside of the context of the event, but directly linked to the seedbed intervention, a follow-up co-creation workshop was organised on 22 September from 6 to 8.30 pm at the Montreuil - Vauban neighbourhood house, near the Square Blaise Pascal.

The objective of this workshop was to invite the members of our local taskforce to reflect on the development project with the help of a model and examples of nature-based solutions. The co-creation workshop was mainly organised by the landscape designer from the city of Versailles who was also present on the day of the seedbed intervention. A large-scale plan of the square, models of urban furniture, sports areas and other green spaces represented to scale, was prepared for the workshop. Additionally, the room was decorated with boards presenting best-practice examples of nature-based solutions. Also invited was the sports Director of the city of Versailles who participated in the organisation and the workshop itself in order to share his experience on the development of sports areas.

„It was nice sunny day in September in Versailles, lots of opinions were collected and showed the main interests of the people in an easy way.”

“The games/ workshops/ action raised the awareness of the people for their surroundings and caused them to view the area in a different light, causing new questions and possibilities.”

The event left a positive impression on participants. They were surprised that they could express their opinion so early in the process and were curious to see if they would really see parts of their wishes implemented later. The activities were also seen as positive by both organisers and participants and stimulated reflection on local nature. As a result, some of the visitors came back a second time to add their wishes to the canvas, as other ideas occurred to them.

Canvas

As part of the seedbed intervention, a canvas was set up under one of the tents. The canvas method includes large, white sheets of paper laid out on a table. Above the table hung a banner with the question, participants were supposed to answer. Participants were able to discuss intensively with GGR partners about their wishes and, if needed, also walk through the area and further address what changes they would see. Often this led to valuable insight, as they shared local knowledge in the process. For example, many visitors were keen to see the coloured markings for the basketball area renewed, and the area made more secure. The wish for a “water element” was also at the center of many discussions. Overall, the wish for more flower diversity was also central. Overall, the exercise was very well received, and participants were excited to be consulted before decisions are made regarding the redesign of the place and to be able to contribute in this informal way.



Fig. 115 ‚Draw your park‘/
photo credit: Pierrick Daul

“You have 3 wishes free for the space Blaise Pascal, what would you wish for?”
(Question on Canvas)

“Thank you for asking us beforehand of planning, and we are looking forward to seeing what influence our ideas will have on the final design”
(Anonymous visitor)



Fig. 116 Word cloud of wishes for the area/ picture credit: Julia Gäckle

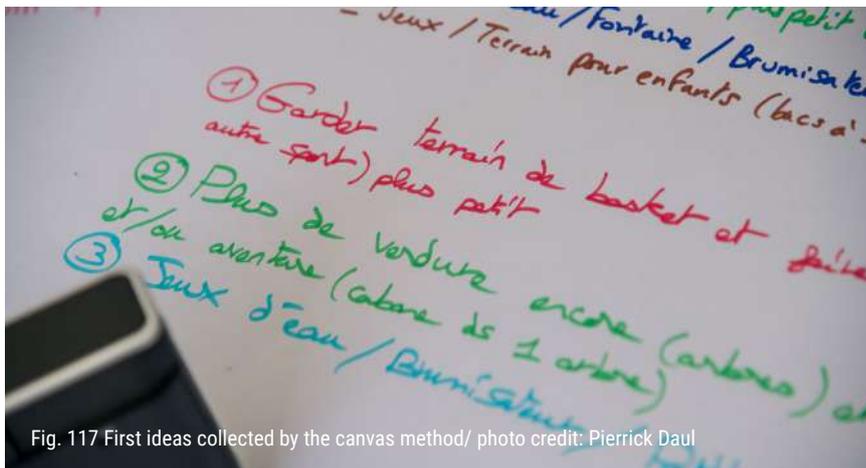


Fig. 117 First ideas collected by the canvas method/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

At least 10 participants agreed that the place needs an area with water for more enjoyable use during the hot summers in Versailles. There was also great demand for relaxation spots- small, cosy places within the area.

Photovoice

The action was well received after explanation and initial hesitation. Participants first created the photos and then chose to associate it with one of the feelings from a list prepared for the exercise. This usually worked well, so that the feeling and the photo to some extent matched and were made understandable. There were some photos where the chosen feeling and the content of the photo did not fit together; in this case, the photo was only taken in the heat of the moment and a specific feeling was selected for the park.

„Interesting activity, I noticed many features, only through photographing, I deliberately photographed an evergreen planting - this inspires me and should be planned more in the park.”

(Anonymous participant)

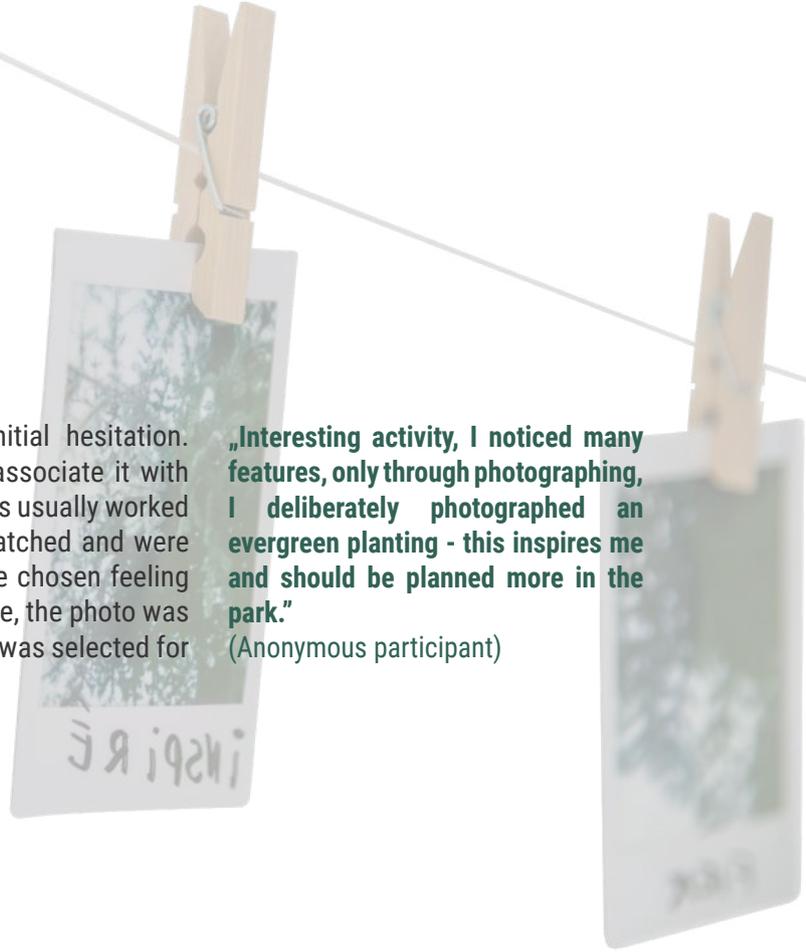


Fig. 118 Photographic expression/ photo credit: Pierrick Daul

Survey results

Main findings in Versailles

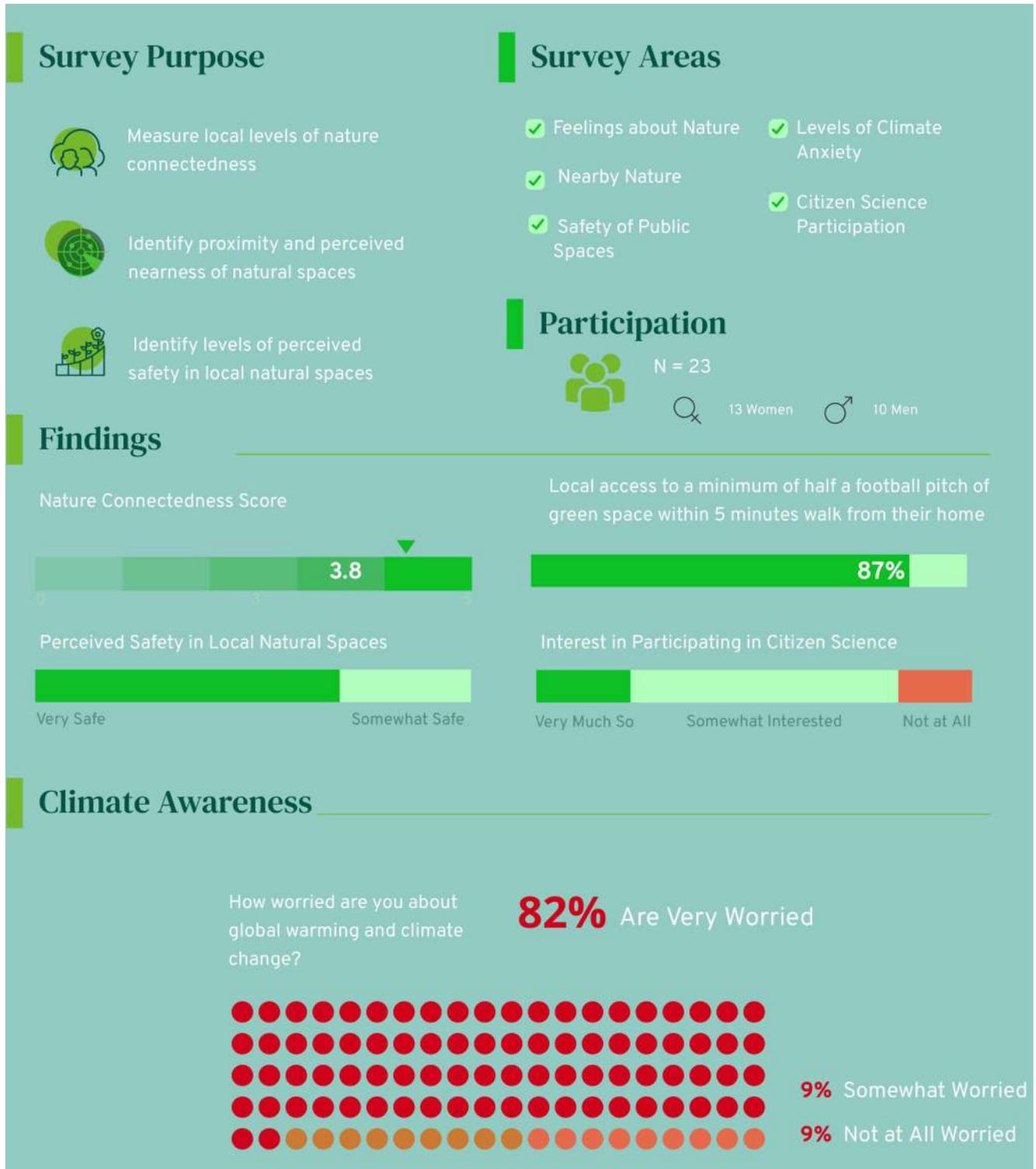


Fig. 119 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

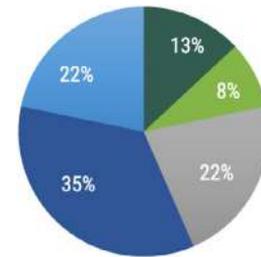
Survey results

Main findings in Versailles

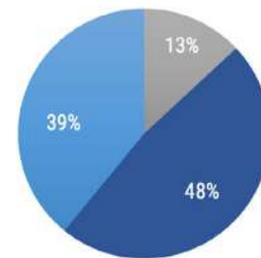
A total of 24 people participated and the average age was 40 - 54 years. From all 24 responses, the majority of 14 people (57%) agreed strongly or at least a little on a wilderness area to be their ideal vacation spot. The majority (87%) also indicated that they are thinking about how their actions are affecting the environment. 81% of the respondents considered their connection to nature as a part of their spirituality (at least a little). A dynamic contradictory finding was that regarding whether their relationship with nature was an important part of who they are, 35% agreed strongly 30% agreed only a little on that. Furthermore the majority agreed very much so that NBS helps nature and biodiversity. Another interesting result was that the most people here are worried about climate change: 83%!

Finally one other result should be highlighted here, because it shows that the city of Versailles has already quite a good net of green infrastructure: 87% of the people asked have access to greenery in their immediate environment (access to a minimum of 0.5 hectares).

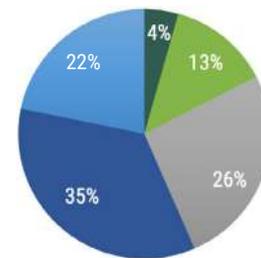
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 120 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul

REFLECTING

CHAPTER 4

Cross-cutting reflection

Six seedbed interventions in six cities

The seedbed interventions were carried out at different times between July and September 2022 and across six Cultivating Cities. Every intervention was tailored to the particular city and local conditions and needs. Still some general observations could be made:

- The engagement of the local taskforces was critical in each case. Early involvement of local stakeholders ensured a community tailored intervention, some cities even received operational support by local taskforce members during the event (e.g. Versailles).
- The photovoice method can be a suitable method to engage passersby. If successful, participants can gain new insights on the site and feel empowered. However, it is highly dependable on a good set-up and clear explanation of the action it-self beforehand. E.g. participants are hesitant to pick up the cameras without encouragement.
- Providing food and drinks is always a good idea. Passersby stay longer and conversation and discussion can develop naturally.
- Most cities focused on engaging passersby, gathering opinions, trying to understand how people feel about the development of the local target area and collecting ideas for the NBS interventions.

In summary, from the perspective of the WP3 partners who were actively involved in the seedbed interventions, it became clear through the seedbed interventions and we can confirm current research trends that co-creation and engaging with urban residents is essential for the improvement of urban spaces and definitely paves the way to define NBS in this context as more locally appropriate and as a facilitator of social innovation. For example, this insight is similarly shared and confirmed in the publication "Seven lessons for planning nature-based solutions in cities":

„We recommend that urban planners remain open to learning with other urban actors for co-creating and co-maintaining nature-based solutions while shaping institutional spaces in cities that allow for this co-creation, social innovation and collaboration to continue. A way for such open approach to collaborative governance is experimentation that allows to advance urban planning and urban governance through learning about and with nature-based solutions“ (N. Frantzeskaki, 2019, p. 109; Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)).

Cross-cutting reflection

Six seedbed interventions in six cities

Reflecting our role

As we take a look at the whole process of implementing the seedbed intervention, we must also reflect our own role as overall coordinators.

In the lead-up to the implementation WP3 provided various inputs, training webinars, planning templates and conducted regular zoom meetings with all relevant partners. We believe this continuous engagement with the city partners led to the successful implementation of the seedbed intervention in all cities. Naturally this depended in large part on the city partners themselves, we recognize this and thank them for their cooperation.

However, any process can be optimized and after observing a lack of streamlining communication with the city partners, WP3 is now the port of call for all other WP's wanting to engage with the Cultivating Cities. Of course, direct communication is still welcome, however topics are now flagged first in a joint bi-monthly Zoom meeting.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, WP3 consists of a small team of researchers, thus the logistics of being present at every seedbed intervention were challenging, in fact one missed flight resulted in absence in Burgas. When possible WP3 doubled up on personnel on-site, something we highly recommend for bigger teams or for those still in the planning stages of their projects.

Most practitioners will know, working in the field requires a high level of flexibility. Maintaining an open mindset and adapting methods on the spot where needed, led to better results. For those working in various contexts, such as six different European cities, arriving well-before any activities to conduct in-person meetings and if possible, site-visits, was helpful for WP3.

In the following, under the heading “Thoughts and learning”, all cities are considered individually and a short reflection of the activities during the seedbed interventions will be presented.

Burgas

Thoughts and learnings

The green area between ,Gurko' parking lot and ,Oborishte' street is the local target area in Burgas. In that area of the city, there is limited availability and access to well planned green areas. To enhance the health and well-being of the population living in the vicinity of the selected area, there seemed a need to discuss the potential of NBS implementation in the area.

In terms of the goals prior to the planning intervention workshop, it was clear that there was a need to understand what the local population needed and what was lacking in their area to promote a healthy lifestyle. Hence, the primary goal was to set up a framework for participation and engagement of local population in the area to ensure their needs and interests were aligned with the NBS implementation that is to happen within the project.

During the seedbed intervention, a huge number of passerbys and those mainly living in the area came forward to discuss with the city staff what could be done to support more greening in their neighborhood. Overall it was shown that the need for a well developed park is urgent. Most of the participants agreed with that. This would help the locals to be in close proximity to the greenery, which has proven to provide many health and well-being benefits. Most people were happy with what was proposed by the city and wanted to see more green in their surroundings. Potential risks could of course arise if the maintenance of the park area is lacking beyond the project duration. An ill-maintained park can turn into a place where some locals might feel unwelcome and even be concerned of their safety issues. But this can be the case with urban park development in general, and does not correspond specifically to the case in Burgas.



Fig. 121 People filling out the survey/
photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov



Fig. 122 Info tent setup,
photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Limerick

Thoughts and learnings

In Limerick the local target area is the Castleroy greenway. The landscape in the area is characterized by a wide bike path, footpath and a lot of grassland on the edges. The goal was to make this area more connected to the surrounding areas, particularly the housing area, and to increase the diversity of uses. For example, the green infrastructure should possibly be more actively used.

Before the planning intervention workshop, it was decided that ideas should be generated together with the stakeholders on how the first objectives mentioned above could be achieved or prepared. It should also be decided which concrete actions should take place on the day of the seedbed intervention.

In the course of the seedbed intervention in Limerick, valuable local knowledge was generated, such as the fact that many residents would like to use this area again for local food production. Furthermore, it became clear in the survey that the majority of the participants see a close connection to nature in their city and in the conversations and during the workshop on building bug hotels a high interest to engage more with natural materials was shown. The experimental playground, which was presented as a playground in the making, was very well received and used.

A big challenge during the implementation of the intervention in Limerick was definitely the right timing. Because in the course of the strong participation of Limerick stakeholders in the process, the preparation naturally became more complex, but in this way the opinions were included and taken into account in advance.



Fig. 123 Bug hotel workshop/ photo credit: City of Limerick

Umeå

Thoughts and learnings

The Cultivating City of Umeå is focusing on Böledagen as a target area, the street and four nearby greenspaces will be redeveloped in the next two years. The place of the seedbed intervention, Aspgården, an empty car park, served only as a stand-in, the final location of the NBS intervention will be elsewhere.

The seedbed intervention had various objectives. Primarily the event was an opportunity to generate interest and incorporate a wider audience than previous stakeholder-focused workshops. Another benefit was the public discussion and feedback on previous ideas and visions for Bölevangen. Finally new insights for the NBS intervention were gained through the canvas method and survey on site.

Results from the canvas method and the survey will help inform the NBS intervention in Umeå. Results from the canvas show that most participants are interested in creating a new playground, however due to traffic conditions the area is not suited for it, the city instead plans to redesign existing nearby playgrounds. Still this insight is valuable for two reasons, participant ideas can inspire other playgrounds in the city and the municipality now knows that there is a need to explain traffic and manage expectation when it comes to the final NBS intervention. The methods also revealed an interesting generational split, older people were interested in using the spaces for urban farming, whereas younger people preferred recreational or even re-naturing purposes.

Overall, the event was successful, over 300 people attended throughout the day, from little children to senior adults, showcasing the potential impact of future Böledagen. Accordingly, the seedbed intervention showcased the range of stakeholders, by involving local primary schools, architecture students and a senior band. One obstacle the city had to overcome was the sudden withdrawal of the company Volvo from the event, however the latter still invited their employees to attend, which many of them did. One part of the seedbed intervention was an open forum, "UmeCom Live session", which focused specifically on the area where the event was held, although not part of Bölevangen and the permanent NBS intervention, the city will allow people to use the area as they wish until a later re-development. Instead of focusing on what the area could be used for, discussion was around how to organize a community of people with endeavours for the site. It was an interesting discussion and some of the insights can be used also for future stakeholders of the NBS intervention.



Fig. 124 Info tent setup/
photo credit: Umeå Kommun

Lahti

Thoughts and learnings

The local target area in Lahti is the Lahti health forest, which is primarily part of the natural reserve and in close proximity to the Päijät-Häme Central hospital. The primary goal is to use the framework of nature based solutions and deploy measures such that more people (specifically those living in the neighborhood as well as the hospital staff and patients) use the forest for the health and well-being benefits it can provide. With some guidance on how to use the health forest to get the maximum benefit of being in nature, the city wants to promote nature connectedness.

The goals prior to the planning intervention workshop were to understand the positive impacts of being in nature by introducing the health forest concept to the hospital staff. The idea was that if the hospital staff are made aware and conscious of the major benefits on health and well-being that can arise by being close to nature, then this can also propagate a sense of active decisions on visiting the health forest in leisure time but perhaps also during work. From the seedbed intervention, it became evident that all volunteers understand and appreciate time in nature and would be keen to see some additional support by the city in making the health forest more accessible and easy choice for taking a break from the hustle bustle of the city life. The volunteers indicated that some spots for making picnic and some swings in the forest could be very welcoming for all visiting the health forest. In fact, suggestions came also regarding making the area easily accessible and hence barrier-free for differently-abled people (for instance those using wheelchairs). Hence, such ideas can be incorporated when planning additional infrastructures in the health forest. The major criticism that can be seen of such development is the question of whether any development is even needed in a forest and why not to just leave nature be. However, from the discussions with the hospital staff it was clear that although they would ideally prefer going on their own and in their pace within the forest, a guided sensory walk definitely opened their mind to focus on their presence and in particular the different senses in the forest.



Fig. 125 Feeling a strong connection to nature/ photo credit: Juha Tanhua

Tallinn

Thoughts and learnings

The City of Tallinn's Local Target Area is Vormsi park's green area in Lasnamäe district. The site of the seedbed intervention, Vormsi Park is a small orchard beside a new playground and open grassland. This is the place where in the 1930s Nehatu primary school was established with an adjacent fruit tree garden and beehives. Currently the site is very overgrown and unkept, meaning the area is rarely used by the local residents.

The seedbed intervention aimed to engage local residents with the pilot area while informing them about the GGR project and its activities. The intention was to gather feedback from local residents about their expectations concerning the pilot area and the planned activities of GGR project in the area. The seedbed intervention helped to understand local habits concerning nature relatedness and habits regarding spending time in nature while gathering feedback on the wellbeing, recreational and ecological values of the pilot area. The seedbed intervention also sought to introduce concept of nature based solutions to the local residents.

The participants provided many valuable insights that can be used to inform the NBS intervention design. Based on the feedback received during the guided walks, through the canvas method and through the survey, residents value the existing natural environment of the Vormsi green area and would like it to remain as such.

The community would like the design to address feelings of unsafety and accessibility issues of the current area. This could be achieved by flattening and removing obstacles from current desire lines (natural paths) in the area. Participants would like to see an increase in comfortable seating allowing people, especially to stay in nature and socialise. Several proposals were for different leisure activities connected to sports while others focused on more relaxing recreational possibilities suitable for elderly e.g. a permanent chess board. The main takeaway from the seedbed intervention is that the site should remain natural and the existing ecosystem should be preserved as the site is regenerated.

Participants referred to vandalism and littering in the area. This could be a possible maintenance issue in the future. A possible solution to combating this, is to 'bring the community along' constantly informing and engaging them when designs are created and changed. This allows the community to take ownership of the space helping to maintain the site going forward. Additionally, the seasonal wetland located between the pilot area and children's playground creates another accessibility issue. This is an element of the NBS design that will require expert knowledge to ensure that the site is preserved but also accessible. It is important that the design team work alongside other municipality departments with expertise in this area to come up with an acceptable solution.



Fig. 126 Walking through the area/
photo credit: Anton Semenyura

The seedbed intervention was very successful due to an engaged Local Task Force team who helped to organise the event and carry out walking tours of the site. This support ensured that the event was bespoke to the community and that the local residents learned about the heritage and ecological diversity of the site. It was important that the guided tour was undertaken in both Estonian and Russian, had this not been the case, the numbers of participants would have been much lower.

Versailles

Thoughts and learnings

The seedbed intervention in Versailles took place in the Square Blaise Pascal which will be the site of the NBS interventions and is currently composed of three sections: a children's playground, an area for football and basketball, and a green space connecting the other two sections. Square Blasé Pascal is part of the Montreuil neighbourhood, close by are a private school, several residential complexes and a community house.

The objectives of the day were to raise awareness about nature and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of ideas for the future square, while getting the local population involved.

There are several takeaways that can be incorporated into the NBS intervention. One component of the seedbed intervention, expressing apple-juice from nearby orchards, was particularly well received. This activity touched on a few interesting concepts, urban farming, local businesses and nature connectedness, while providing participants with a sensory experience. Therefore it would be a great idea to incorporate similar activities throughout the NBS intervention. Both the canvas method and the photovoice method generated various ideas for the NBS interventions, such as including a water element in the final design. Overall, participants were thrilled to be involved at such an early stage of the project, the municipality should capitalize on this enthusiasm and keep up the involvement of local citizens going forward. The seedbed intervention also demonstrated that nature connectedness is still a new concept to most people, so even though it may feel repetitive within GGR it is worth explaining again when it comes to the NBS intervention.

There were two big challenges facing the team implementing the seedbed intervention. Firstly, there were a lot of moving parts, as the coordination of the GGR project lies with only one person, who depended on other departments and organizations to chip-in on the day. This might seem like a disadvantage but the fact that the GGR project in Versailles depends on collaboration from the get-go also represents a big potential, as a different level of dissemination has been reached within the municipality. Secondly the previous workshops mostly involved one stakeholder, the local neighbourhood association, there was some doubt whether many people beyond them would show up however, the seedbed intervention was well attended in the end.



Fig. 127 Making apple juice/
photo credit: Pierrick Daul

LOOKING AHEAD

CHAPTER 5

Looking ahead

Where are we headed?

What does this mean for the NBS interventions?

The results of the seedbed interventions were made available to all city partners as soon as possible in the form of initial drafts. Already in November 2022, barely 2 months after the last seedbed intervention, excerpts of this report would be made available to the Cultivating City Partners as well as to all other partners in the project. After the seedbed interventions, the Cultivating City Partners started to further develop their initial ideas for the NBS interventions to be implemented as permanent interventions in 2023. They have met again with their local taskforces in the field and discussed. Furthermore, WP3 plans to review the existing and upcoming policy instruments regarding NBS, which are discussed in chapter 2, with the city partners before they finalise the NBS intervention concepts in spring 2023. This should serve to test their concepts and to see whether they can be further optimised. In this context, the aspect of gender, inclusion and diversity (GID) will not be left out (also explained in more detail in this report in chapter 2).

In several meetings with WP3, the Cultivating Cities were explained what needs to be considered in particular when developing the NBS interventions:

- The different results of the seedbed interventions should be taken into account when developing the final NBS intervention idea in each Cultivating City. The voices of the visitors and participants of the interventions should be heard and their wishes and ideas should be taken into account.
- As the NBS interventions are developed, the extent to which the Cultivating City Partners have addressed the findings of the Seedbed interventions will be further explained.

It should also be mentioned here that all data material and the findings listed in this report will be further utilised in addition to the use for NBS intervention concepts.

In 2023, condensed versions of this report will be produced and published. Two documents are envisaged: one document explaining the seedbed interventions on 2 pages per city and one document showing more detail on 10 pages per city. The seedbed interventions themselves should also be further elaborated and communicated as case studies. It is also possible to aim for further publications in cooperation with the cities.

The goal of these efforts and the seedbed interventions as temporary interventions before the actual permanent NBS interventions is to realize locally appropriate and resident-oriented concepts in particular, so that a public space designed by NBS emerges that particularly integrates social parameters. This approach shall contribute to the development of sustainable and locally relevant NBS in each city.

Looking ahead

Where are we headed?

How to keep people motivated to engage?

The partners in the project and especially the Cultivating City partners who organised the seedbed interventions, have been motivated and very engaged as permanent partners in the project over the whole time span of the development of the interventions.

At the beginning of the project stakeholders were identified through a mapping exercise resulting in a list of stakeholders and a Local Task Force in each city. A challenge for the City Partners is to keep the volunteers in the project, the stakeholders and especially the Local Taskforce (LTF) participants motivated over a longer period of time. The key to maintaining stakeholder engagement is clear communication on the scope and timeframe of the project. This includes regular updates on the development of the project, as well as input into the design of the development of the target area in their cities. Active formats of participation, such as group walks, planting exercises and other workshops complemented by meaningful discussions found great resonance with people. The regular meetings between stakeholders and City Partners have been tracked in a document since 2021 as part of WP3. However, despite these efforts, it is acknowledged that over time the level of engagement with these stakeholders may have changed. With the support of project partners, the City Partners will review their stakeholder list and expand this list, responding to changes that have occurred since 2021.

Project partner Connect the Dots (CTD) have set up a timeline builder¹ for each city, in order to effectively communicate the project’s next steps with stakeholders and the LTF. CTD is also creating a practical guide on how to complete meaningful community engagement through city municipalities. This guide will respond to the City Partner’s needs, giving practical solutions to elements of stakeholder engagement that they have found to be a challenge.

Additionally, this report should also help to follow the developments in an easy and interesting way. The additional effort to make this report graphical and smoothly readable was gladly accepted, so that this document will be read by many interested people.



Fig. 128 Example of the Timeline Builder (GoGreenRoutes, 2022) /Áine McBeth (CtD)

Looking ahead

Where are we headed?

How to connect with research being carried out within GoGreenRoutes?

Since the finalisation of the on-site seedbed interventions by September 2022, the WP3 has been sharing information on the processes, preliminary findings, what worked and what could be improved on several occasions. At the Barcelona consortium meeting, the WP3 team not only talked all consortium members through the processes and outcomes towards the seedbed interventions but also brought the city officials voices to the front so that if there were major questions, they could be answered. Besides that, the WP3 team also developed a timeline of all work to be conducted by all the WPs on a timeline sheet during the Barcelona meeting. This would support the planning together of activities in cities so as not to miss out on collaborative opportunities and possibilities of piggy-backing off of already ongoing work. This has definitely led to greater understanding of who is in which city at which time and what research direction is being taken there at that time. This process would be an added advantage in pursuit of common research objective of the project while focussing on small bits of work via tasks, deliverables and milestones.

Another key element which connects the research well is the formation of a voluntary group comprising of members of different WPs. There is ongoing collaboration efforts discussed in these online meetings between WPs to ensure cohesive and coherent processes to serve the cities well in reaching the goals of solving some real-life challenges with NBS and to promote health and well-being. Although this group is not specific to the needs of the WP3 only, it very much is supported also by WP3 members and the tasks within the group are understood as a collective way forward to better approach cities and conduct meaningful research.

Moreover, the involvement of some WP3 members in other activities such as the GID panel ensures that there is knowledge transfer and the concept of citizen voice monitor can be integrated within the cities over time, supported also by WP3 then. Since the WP3 had a headstart in the project work owing to very tight timeline on approaching the NBS planning and implementation, a large wealth of knowledge and practical understanding of the local contexts of the cities, resides with the WP3 members. However, understanding that there is a need to combine efforts and not stray away from the main objective of the project, the WP3 partners continue to strive towards closer collaboration and for providing immediate support as and when needed by other WPs.

Looking ahead

Where are we headed?

Wrap-up

As we close this report, we look back on six vibrant, comprehensive, joyful and successful seedbed interventions. Although no event was like the other, it is clear that all cities followed a co-creative, experimental approach that proved conducive to engaging local citizens. Locals were able to learn about nature connectedness and the ideas and concepts behind NBS, as well as opinion on ongoing plans for the local target areas. Whereas the cities are now able to better gauge what kind of activities and designs may work for the final NBS intervention. It might be interesting and worthwhile to follow up with the locals based on the first discussions had at the seedbed interventions. Of course the seedbed intervention will continue to resonate within GoGreenRoutes and perhaps others, you the reader, will find it inspiring as well.

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