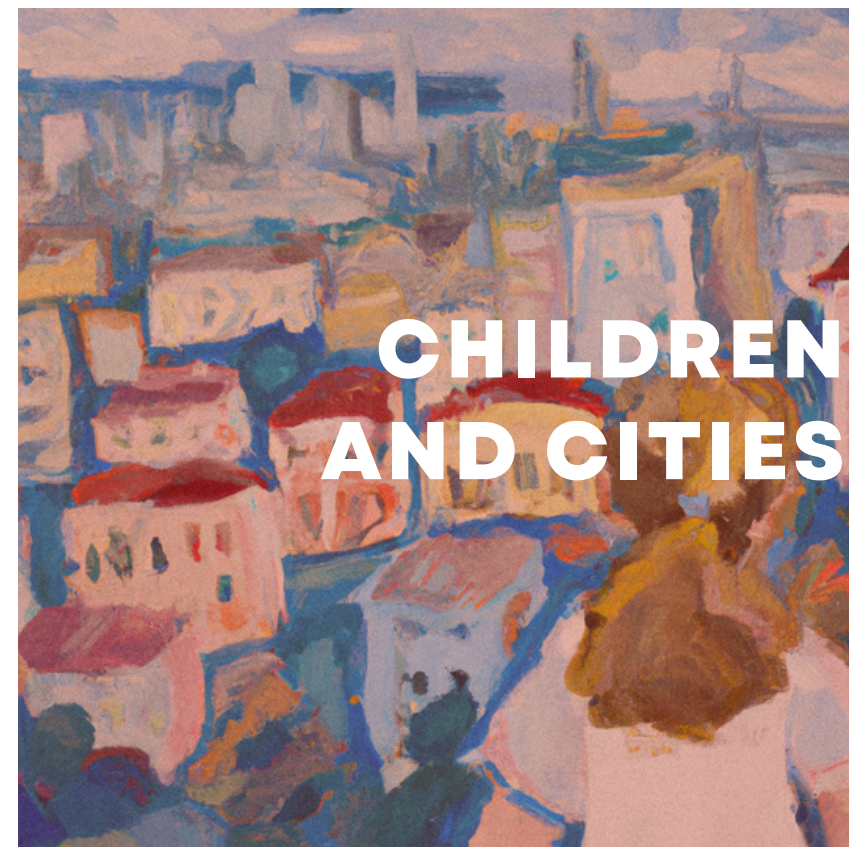


**PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS
IN WARSAW**

31.03-2.04.2023



Locations:

ZODIAK
Warsaw
Pavilion of
Architecture



Organizer:



Cooperation:



Supporters:



Sponsored by:

THE MARCHUS TRUST

Katarzyna Gromek



PROJECT SAFE REFUGE

About us:

Project Safe Refuge consists of architects, designers, and students. We have been established as an informal organization in the wake of the war in Ukraine, in March 2022.

Transitional Housing Unit

- Develops the design of the housing unit for people rebuilding cities in Ukraine
- Carried out with the support from FAST University grant from TU Delft and The Marchus Trust
- Currently in the phase of searching for funding to get to the phase of building the full scale prototype in Ukraine

Research & Education Project

- Aims to support Ukrainian citizens in facing the challenge of the reconstruction of their country in peacetime.
- Discussions and workshops for Ukrainians living in Poland, related to cities reconstruction and participatory urban planning.

CONVERSATION ON CITIES

Conversation on cities

31.03.2023 Solatorium, Jazdów 3/9 18.00-20.00

Participants: 4 Ukrainians

PSR team: 3

Discussion and workshops allowing to access memories of urban places not from a formal point of view, but from subjective experiences.

Encouraging to think that one can change the spaces she/he lives in.

Discovering memories of cities/ villages/countryside from different points of views.

Goals_workshop_1

- creating collective memory
- informing the second workshop



Tasks and methodology

The task was to **draw/write and talk about the city** in a way that one would present it to a friend.

After an introduction, we spent time to visualise our cities characteristics, that we find peculiar. The time for this task was not limited, regarding small group we could allow participants to take as much time as they need to think and express their thoughts.

Each participant was **working individually**, but sharing the same sheet of paper, using common means she/he wanted to choose: pencils, crayons, markers to draw and write.

Then we moved to the second part: **conversation**. Participants were presenting their work and describing their cities to us, as their imaginary "friend". The "presentations" smoothly changed to talks with additional questions from listeners and reflections were shared.



Results and lessons learnt

What we, as organisers learnt, is that **our participation** in workshops is needed both as observers and as participants ourselves.

Another lesson we can learn from this workshop is that the **choice of the place** is very significant, as it can act as a resonator and help setting the right atmosphere or the opposite.

Conclusions and recommendations

Participants were drawing their cities, but also rural areas, where they come from.

What is frequently repeated as an aspect important for participants in their cities is **access to green areas** and **relation human-nature**.

Also, access to **water basins for swimming** is also important, for some of them.

We discussed several topics related to wild natural areas: their preservation and restrictions for visitors (varying for different countries).



Urban Planning

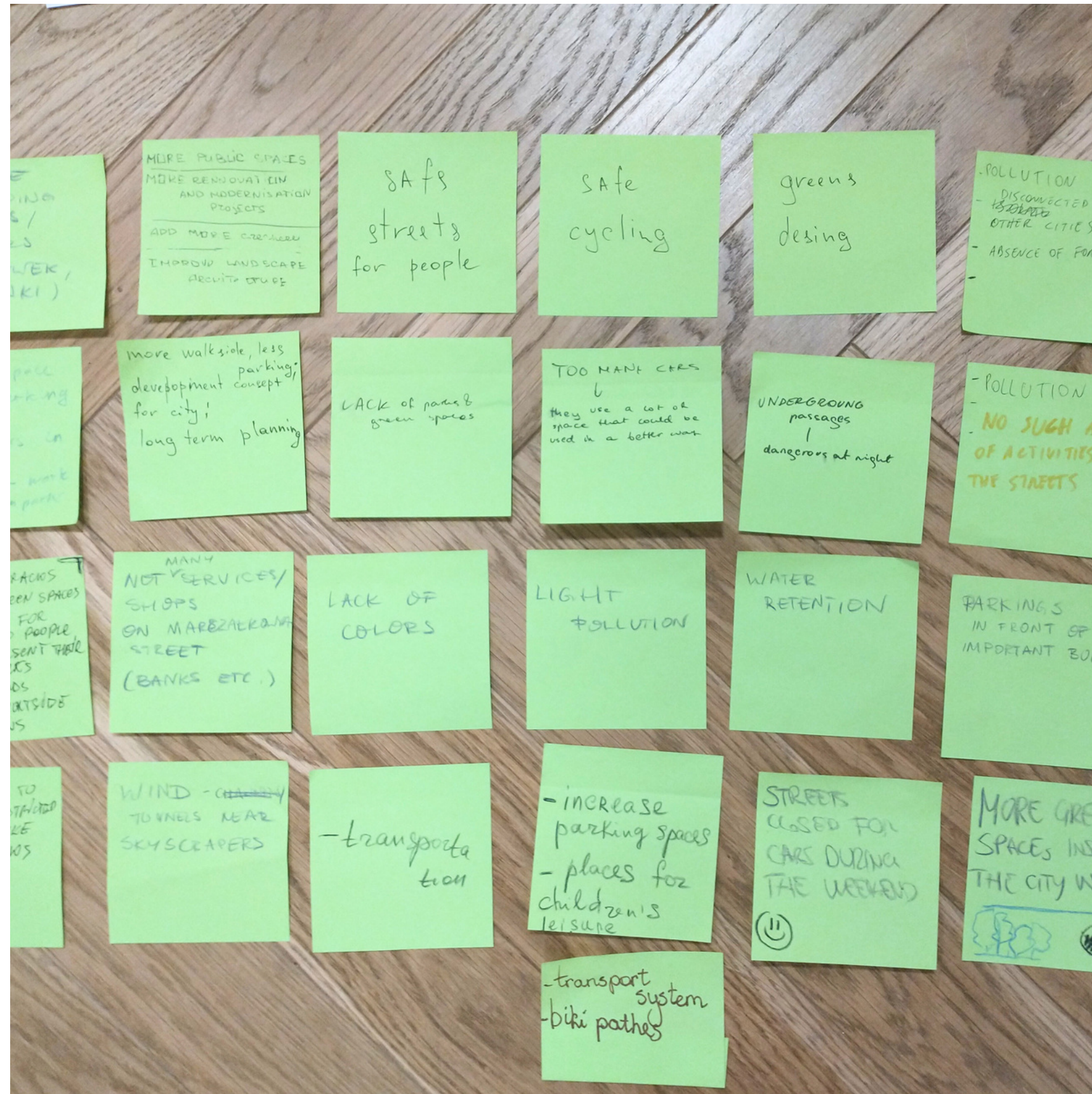
01.04.2023 Zodiak Warsaw Pavilion of Architecture
13.00-16.00

Participants: 9 Ukrainians
PSR team: 3 + 1 translator

Workshop and presentation from our team, showing case studies of successful participatory urban planning and bottom-up initiatives. Followed by discussion on good examples of how architecture can be participative, critically thinking about the cities we live in and ideas how to improve their quality.

Goals_workshop_2

- Encouraging participatory planning
- Motivation of having a role in the reconstruction process



Tasks and methodology

The participatory urban planning workshop was based on our presentation and discussions with the guests.

During first part of the meeting, the idea of participatory planning and examples in different countries were presented, **also from Ukraine**. Most importantly, participants shared examples they were familiar with, as well as their view on the subject.

Presentation was followed by a task: participants were asked to write (using sticky notes) **what problems they could outline of their cities and which solutions they were foreseeing**.

To do so, post-it notes were supposed to be gathered and organized by problems and possible solutions. However, due to limited time, we only discussed some of the problems and ideas to solve them.



Results and lessons learnt

Examples of participatory design from participants:

- Kiev FAB LAB HANG 159,
- walkable streets Kharkiv,
- urban planning platform UA: "Mistosite".

What we learnt, as organisers, are aspects related to **organisation and time management** during workshops.

In fact, **time of the presentation** from our side could be reduced. It should give just some ideas, while **more time should be devoted to tasks and discussion**. Also, we learnt that, it is very important to moderate the discussion in a way that it is encouraged the exchange of thoughts, but in an organised way, so that the translators can easily follow along: it happened, during the discussion that the participants started a lively exchange, but in their own language, so not everyone could participate in the discussion.

Conclusions and recommendations

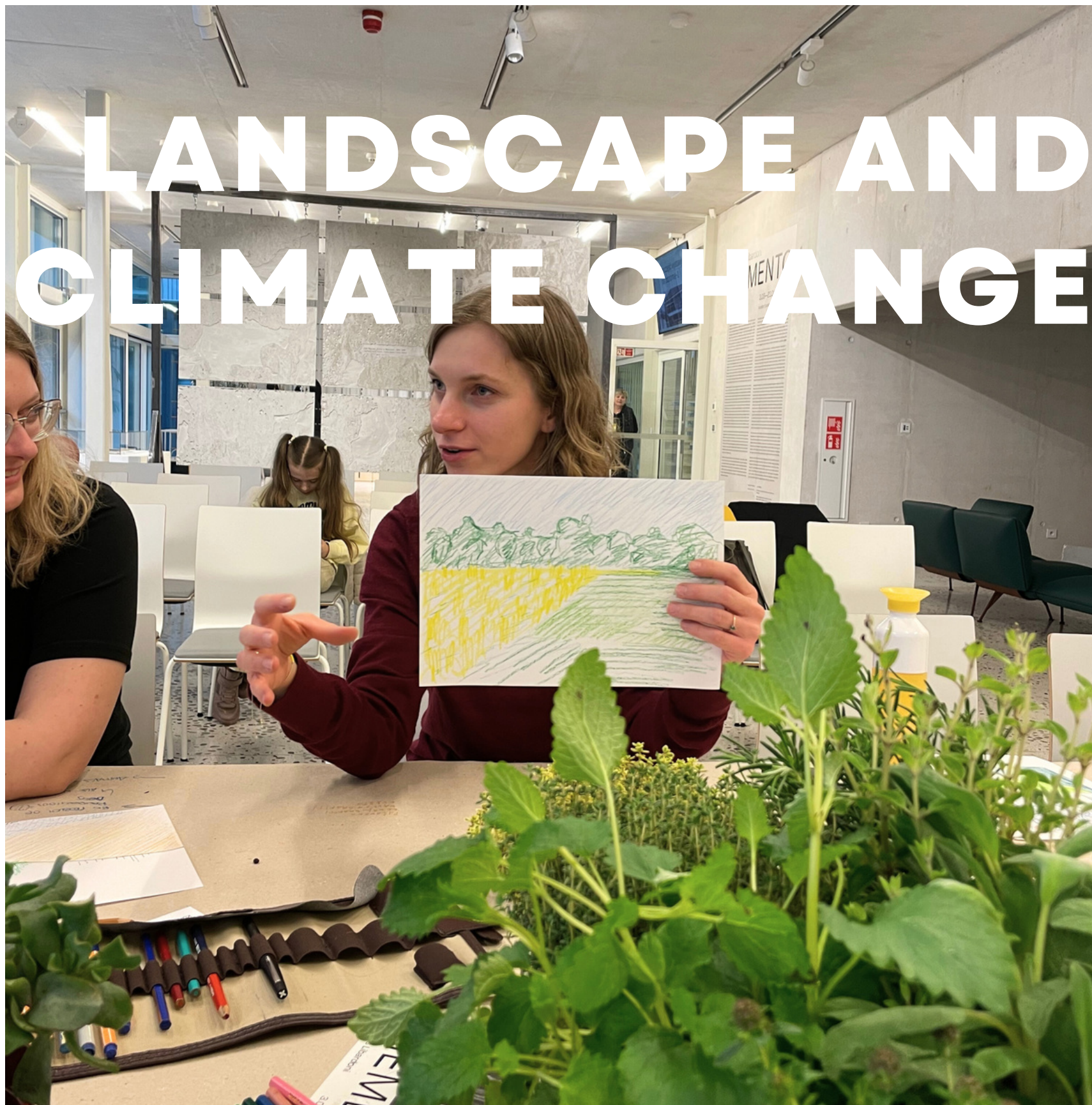
There were problems discussed by participants, e.g. **cars** in the city or **lack of greenery** which are general issues of many cities.

Private-public parks in Ukraine are also an issue. This includes parks in towns, which are sometime managed by privates and are not allowed for the public.

Participants also indicated issues related to **public transport** - lack of mobile application for route and bus/tram schedule finding. They compared the situation in Ukraine to Warsaw, where public transport is very easily accessible and efficient.

One of the participants mentioned **graffiti** as a problem. He suggested devoting more areas in the city for that to encourage legal street art.

Another issues for Ukrainians in their cities are: stray animals in the cities and trash problems.



Landscape and climate change

01.04.2023 Zodiak Warsaw Pavilion of Architecture
17.00-19.00

Participants: 4 Ukrainians
PSR team: 3

Workshop and lecture - landscape heritage and infrastructure. Sustainable development and awareness through preservation of landscape both for memory and broad meaning of sustainability. The lecture is going to bring awareness of the importance of shelterbelts.

Goals_workshop_4

- Collective memory of the landscape/countryside.
- Create awareness of the relation between landscape and climate change.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Create awareness of the importance of agroforestry.



Tasks and methodology

The workshop started with a presentation about landscape. From general question "**What is landscape**" we moved to drawing our memories, discussion, followed by next parts of the presentation about detailed issues, such as **shelterbelts'** destruction and **urban farming** related to war.

Last part of the meeting was to **plant together**: herbs and other plants, using empty plastic bottles as pots. Participants were allowed to take their plants home.



Results and lessons learnt

One of the most important lesson for us is about **sensitivity** while talking with refugees. During the presentation we showed an aerial photograph of bombed shelterbelts in Ukraine. The image was too strong, that could be seen on participants faces. We understood that the images we show during presentations should be informative, however not showing war destruction or other sensitive content.

We should also remember about the atmosphere of **personal exchange** we want to keep during workshops. During presentations, it is easy to turn into a lecturer, instead of presenting and discussing the topics together with people present on the meeting.

Planting part of workshops was a successful task. It is an activity that **brings participants together**, gives a distraction and allows to take an object home as a souvenir. It would be nice to repeat it.

Conclusions and recommendations

This workshop did not give us as much information about participants experience, as previous ones. However, they shared their **memories of landscape**.

We have learnt that landscape is an important topic for people who joined the workshop. They seem interested in the topic of Ukrainian landscape, shelterbelts and urban gardening. Therefore, further development of research on the topic is needed.

Planting is a task that can bring people together. It can be the breaking ice activity for further workshops, in this sense it would be better to have it at the beginning and not the end.

Children and cities

02.04.2023 SOLIDARNY DOM KULTURY
„SŁONECZNIK” 17.00-19.00

Participants: 3 Ukrainians
PSR team: 3 + 1 translator

Workshop about places designed by children in a non-realistic environment.

Similar questions to the ones from the first workshop, but with kids - what is their perception of the city. What are childrens' dreams? What changes in their surroundings would they like to implement?

Goals_workshop_3

- understanding what's important for children
- understanding children priority when they think about urban planning



**CHILDREN
AND CITIES**



Tasks and methodology

Request to design a place for (a friend, a toy, themselves?) in space - e.g. on Mars.

First task was to **draw imagined city in space**, using pencils/crayons and markers. After everyone finished, an "exhibition" of drawn images was made and we all gathered to listen authors stories behind the images.

Second activity for children was to make a **model of a city** on a planet they imagine. The medium children preferred for model making was white clay. Then the planets were gathered and described by authors, which was the last part of the meeting. In order to keep childrens attention during final part of the workshop and not to lose their creative imagination, we needed to tell a surrealistic story about one of the planets. This led to a very **abstract conversation** with children.



Results and lessons learnt

Children were very creative. The way they designed their cities reflected how important for them is having **spaces to play**: playgrounds, jumping areas, slides.

All of the children thought about houses where to feel welcomed, safe with plenty of spaces to play.

One boy created a planet named "Ukraine" with a little flag attached to it. What is important, we did not discuss aspects of war or nationalities with these children before. This strength of **patriotism** and emphasizing is significant.

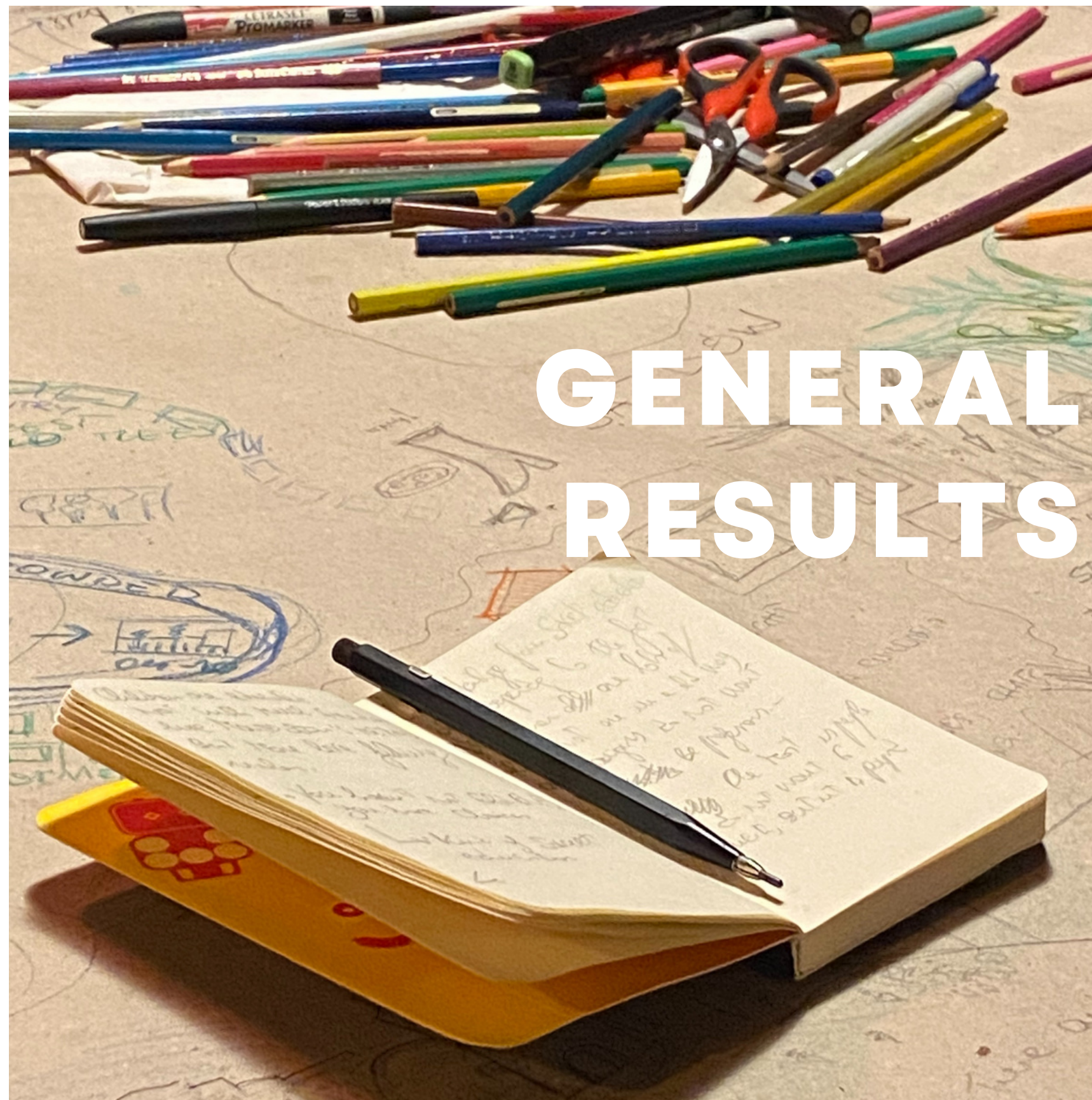
We have learnt that **working with kids can be challenging** - they are very smart and can easily get bored. Therefore, we need to be creative and flexible for adjustments of the program, still achieving workshop's goals. For future, we need to prepare more defined structure and alternative tasks of such workshop.

Conclusions and recommendations

Children consider playgrounds important parts of their cities. They find activities, such as jumping, as very attractive.

During workshops, there was a moment when inspiring children's creativity was needed. One of methods can be telling surreal stories and encouraging young participants to listen and add their parts in it.

One can learn a lot from kids if the meeting is well structured and conducted, allowing children to develop their imagination and ideas.



GENERAL RESULTS

Goals achieved:

- foster discussion about reconstruction among people who aren't experts in the field
- encourage participatory urban planning
- learn how does participatory planning work in Ukraine
- give kids some distraction
- learn what is the most important in human settlements from children perspective

Additional:

- very personal and emotional meetings with Ukrainians
- we learned that there's a strong connection and need to interact with nature
- we encouraged discussion between us, but also between Ukrainians themselves - different perspectives on their cities
- new collaborations

The workshops allowed us to better understand the context and citizens' perspective.



Next steps:

- The need to interact with nature -> focusing on part related to landscape. Connecting the two aspects of community spaces and agriculture in further research
- Exploring contacts for understanding and sharing what is already happening in Ukraine in the field of participatory projects.
- Giving people tools to proceed with. So that when someone indicates a problem in his city, knows what are possible ways to solve it, what are next steps, where to address his ideas etc.
- Explaining the importance of shelterbelts and agroforestry to a broader audience.
- Collaboration with communities from Ukraine to achieve points described above.
- Encourage the inclusion of children's need and perspectives in urban planning.

**our conclusions are based on a small sample, further experiences will be necessary to enlarge the data and verify.*