



Urban Regeneration Mix

TRANSNATIONAL NETWORK MEETING

17-19 September 2019

Lodz

WEAVING A COLLABORATIVE CITY



Transnational Network Meeting "Relations with Residents"



The Meeting and its Logic

4th Transnational Network Meetings was dedicated to cooperation with residents in revitalisation areas. Special attention was paid to mediators - their profile, competences and working methods, so that our partners could get to know the main pillar of our transfer in detail.

Mindset and change:

- ❖ Capacity to work face - to- face with inhabitants
- ❖ Producing change in community's development pathway

Foundations & triggers:

- ❖ Participatory processes of collective designing of public spaces

- ❖ From mediators to managers: differences, responsibilities and profiles of project managers
- ❖ Competences and ways of functioning of mediators - exchange between partners

Deep dive – Changemakers:

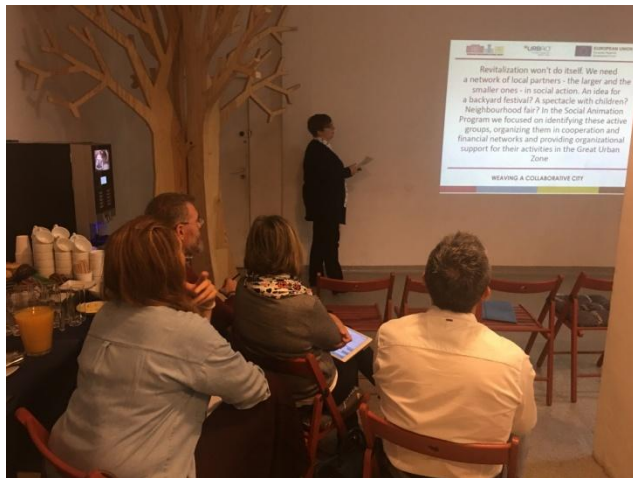
- ❖ Mediators: Changemakers in community

Introduction

The first day of 4th Transnational Network Meeting in Lodz took place in the premises of a local NGO “Socially Involved” located in the Stare Polecie district in the revitalization area in the city Centre of Lodz. Location was selected purposefully, as this is where ULG in Lodz operates and few social projects are being implemented. We started with a short integration exercise to allow new people to meet one another within the network, which was instantly followed by the very first presentation on the **theme of the 4th TNM** that is Area Revitalisation (urban regeneration programme) in Lodz and its social component – **mediation**, being one of the core elements in the “Urban-Regeneration-Mix” Transfer Network.



Community Development Path - from individual needs analysis to specific action



Representative of the city of Lodz and a ULG member Aleksandra Trzcińska told the story of a local community development path, explaining how urban regeneration activities began in Lodz and how the municipality prepared for the complex urban regeneration process in the historic city centre.

Since revitalization won't happen on its own, she described how a network of local partners has been developed in order to implement, among others, a Social Animation Programme including regular network meetings, fieldwork of animators and support for micro-activities.

Local authorities posed themselves a question: "what the renovated city centre should look like?" A series of public consultations were conducted to gather various viewpoints which allowed residents to give answers to the abovementioned inquiry. To give voice to as many people as possible, there were other forms of social participation introduced, e.g. **neighbourhood microfestivals** with numerous entertainment activities to attract and involve people of different ages and walks of life. These opinions were taken into consideration in planning the spatial and functional changes in the municipal infrastructure: renovation of tenement houses and public spaces with multi-dimensional support to, often underprovided, residents aiming at changing their social status.



The Remixers gained a thorough insight into the Municipal Revitalization Programme, explaining how the degraded area and then the actual revitalization area were delimited. The latter of which is covered by various urban regeneration projects being currently implemented.



- ❁ More than 60 renovated properties, with approx. 600 municipal flats
- ❁ More than 250 residents still to be moved out
- ❁ 7000 people queuing up for communal housing

There were also examples of social activities described, such as: Zielone Polesie project, Multi-generational House, a Model Community (microgrant programme), to be showcased in site visit later that day.

How to create a social mix in a revitalised space - a model of resettling tenement houses and new social functions in revitalised areas City ?



After the introductory part, a couple of ULG members Marta Ignaczak and Natalia Rydlewska explained how to create a social mix in a revitalized space. In their presentation of a model of resettling developed by the City of Lodz they focused on results of a study conducted among residents to be moved out (only 2% of them wish to return to their previous homes). Based on the results of an analysis on future housing planned in each renovated tenement house in the city centre and respondents replies a resettlement model was drafted to guarantee as various and complementary residents' profile as possible in all renovated tenements in the revitalized area. Earlier this part of town was mainly inhabited by elderly, underprivileged and poor people who have not been paying their rent for years.

Hence many of them either do not want to move out and in twice (the elderly) or often are not able to afford living in renovated communal flats (the indebted ones).



Moreover, Natalia gave an overview of **new social functions to be introduced in the revitalized buildings** in the historic city centre, among others: Local Activity Centres, Protective houses, Civic Centre, Consultancy and Educational Point in the field of youth counseling, Work Activation Centre, Childcare Facilities, Crisis Intervention Centre, Social Work Point, Social Support and Development Centre, Houses of Daily Stay, Community Self-Help Houses etc.

Having learned the basics of Municipal Revitalization Programme in Lodz, participants of the meeting had many questions to presented solutions. The presentations were thus followed by a discussion on the Lodz case in relation to experiences of other European cities in the network.

Remixers tried to answer the following questions:

- ❖ What **functions** make up an area of a city?
- ❖ What do you understand by “**social mix**”?
- ❖ What **decisions** do you need to make to achieve action to build “social mix”?

In the discussion Remixers stressed the importance of:

- ❖ creating a **common identity** as a goal of social integration.
- ❖ image / (sometimes bad) **reputation of an area**
- ❖ **higher prices of living in city centres** which are becoming more exclusive, expensive, tourist zones
- ❖ **cultural centres** for local communities
- ❖ **problem of gentrification** as often “social mix” appears a utopia (financing as tool of prevention)
- ❖ **communication between various social and ethnic groups** (gypsies, Roma people)
- ❖ **listening to residents** and taking their opinions obtained in social consultations into considerations, **putting residents words into actions**, responding to their needs

Participatory processes of collective designing of public spaces



After the workshop, representatives of the Revitalisation Bureau, City Urban Planning Laboratory and a local NGO explained the **participatory processes of collective designing of public spaces** in Lodz – the case study of the Stare Polesie District where the meeting on the Day 1 was held. Anna Sokołowska from the City Urban Planning Laboratory showed and

described us the whole process of spatial planning of the Stare Polesie area to provide new public spaces addressing the needs of local residents. Anna Kobalczyk (Revitalisation Bureau) and Agnieszka Reiske (Socially Involved

NGO) provided us with details of participatory design methodology applied including how the key stakeholders were identified, what means of communication were used and how needs of residents were determined. We learned about “project ambassadors” working locally to collect opinions from as many residents as possibly, **diagnostic walks** held with residents of various age groups (also children and elderly) and the consultation part of **participatory design and its tools** (work from white sheet of paper, not on ready-made solutions), e.g.:

- “Street Alphabet” – a guide for residents on “How to design streets and public spaces?”
- Social needs analysis tool.

The presentation on participatory design inspired a lot of questions. We discussed some problems the municipality of Lodz faced, drawbacks and obstacles that appeared on the way (e.g. social protest against non-consensual tree felling by one of the City’s subcontractors).

3 TOGETHER WITH THE RESIDENTS

DIAGNOSIS

- Recognize the potential, but also problems of the area. This can be done through field observations and diagnostic walks, social diagnosis, surveys and interviews, workshops.
- ▶ **WARNING!** It may come up that **CONFLICT** is present in the area.

CREATING A STRATEGIC VISION

- Show project participants what could be implemented in each place.
- Develop a strategy for change, including traffic organization, parking, greenery, infrastructure elements and other public amenities.
- ▶ **WARNING!** You will probably need an architect or an urban planner at this stage.

CROSS-CHECK

- Present developed and detailed visions of area transformations.
- Determine the final direction of planned changes.
- Remember to also reach those who are not present at the meetings.

PROTOTYPING - live testing of project proposals allows for simultaneous development of possible solutions and their verification at the same time.

Do not expect all divergent opinions to be reconciled. Also remember that participation is not a plebiscite. Avoid voting unless a referendum is organized

1 BEFORE YOU START THE PARTICIPATION PROJECT

If a decision is made to redevelop a public space (no more than two years from now) and financial investment is provided:

- Set the investment goal and planned results of the participation project
- Specify the scope of investment
- Determine the role of public space in the structure of the city
- Check what other investments are planned in the area - maybe you can consult them at the same time
- Determine who will be the manager of the participation process

2 BEFORE YOU INVITE THE RESIDENTS, START PREPARATIONS

PARTICIPANTS

- Specify the target groups for the project (residents, local entrepreneurs, other space users)
- Identify key officials in investment preparation
- Determine if external experts will be needed

CONDITIONS

- Study the planning and strategic documents carefully and check the properties of the plots
- Plan the project schedule
- Check whether participatory projects or social research have been carried out in your area before
- Check whether participatory projects or social research have been carried out in your area before
- Set up communication channels with the project participants

REMEMBER THAT REGULAR COMMUNICATION IS KEY IN THE PARTICIPATION PROJECT

Choose how to communicate with the participants:

- in the place of the project (e.g. posters, leaflets, information boards)
- electronically (website, social media)
- face to face, e.g. through the “project ambassadors”

Make sure that the different channels allow:

- feedback
- regular updates

Study Visit: Stare Polesie District, Legionów Street and Multi-Generational House

In the afternoon, having a background knowledge on the selected revitalization and social projects in Lodz The Remixers took part in field visits carried out in order to show discussed examples on site.

There was a walking tour around the Stare Polesie District where participatory design approach was used (1), Legionów Street where backyards space and activity were financed with microgrants (2) and the Multi-Generational House in which a Neighbourhood Club operates (3).

1. Stare Polesie District - It is a space where pilot actions in the field of participatory design were carried out. It is also the area where the Zielone Polesie revitalisation project is being carried out. The project of the Zielone Polesie programme focuses on developing a sustainable concept of a communication system and a coherent network of public spaces and green spaces. There are specific requirements concerning the spatial form of streets and green areas and activities crucial for the development of the district planned.



2. Legionów Street - during this visit we focused on the courtyard of the tenement house located at 50 Legionów Street, where a very active neighborhood community operates. We learned about the history of building this community, which was created as a result of moving from tenement houses intended for revitalization. With the support of our ULG, they managed to obtain funds from the municipal microgrant program to improve the infrastructure of the courtyard in such a way that it could become a meeting place not only for the people living in the building, but also for the local community from the neighboring tenement houses.



3. Multi-Generational House Multi-Generational House - The idea of this innovative housing model in Poland is to create bonds between people, also outside the family. The values of the Multi-generational House are mutual help, cooperation regardless of age, kindness and openness to the needs of others, respect and acceptance. An important place in the Multi-generational House is the Neighbourhood Club, i.e. a common space where residents can meet, pursue their passions and interests, and share common ideas. The property consists of 3 buildings: a front building, a villa and an annexe. As part of this investment,



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16 residential units were built, out of which 11 were adapted for the needs of disabled people, 1 common room and 1 commercial space. In a neighborhood club operating there Agnieszka from NGO Społecznie Zaangażowani and Małgosia, an animator, made us feel like the inhabitants of this extraordinary house. We participated in the workshop, just as the residents of this house and the surrounding tenement houses also learned about the history of this place, the way it functions and how its residents were chosen.

The first day ended with an informal barbecue in the premises of Socially Involved NGO during which participants could mingle together with the Lodz ULG members, mediators and local leaders, residents engaged in the NGO activities.



Mediators & Capacity to work face – to - face with inhabitants



On the second day of 4th Transnational Network Meeting in Lodz the Remixers were hosted in the premises of another local NGO "OPUS" located in one of the Revitalization Areas in the historic city centre. Again the location was selected purposefully, as the ULG activities cover the area in the neighbourhood where numerous social projects are being

implemented. After a welcome speech by the Director of the NGO who explained the idea of how OPUS works and gave examples of local projects financed with microgrants distributed in a call managed by the NGO, we moved directly to the topic of **mediation in urban regeneration**. There was a whole panel devoted to the City of Lodz Good Practice, i.e. **work of mediators in the revitalization process**. Participants not only had the opportunity to meet the whole team of Lighthouse Keepers and Area Hosts working with residents of Lodz, but also learned what **competences and skills** are necessary to work as a mediator

(open-mindedness and empathy appear crucial here) **and what are their responsibilities on the job** (in a later discussion it turned out that mediators deal with absolutely everything).

Ewa Grabarczyk, the ULG coordinator and manager of the mediators team in the Revitalization Bureau described the **process of recruitment** carried out with the specificities of local authorities administrative regulations. A couple of newly recruited mediators shared their motivation for such a face-to-face work with residents from different social backgrounds and reflections from applying for



these positions. In many cases the primary reason for taking up the job as a Lighthouse Keeper or an Area Host is the willingness to help people in need and support the ambitious and complex process of urban regeneration aiming at changing the image and quality of life in Lodz.

Remixers took advantage of mediators' presence and asked numerous questions about their work experiences. We discussed **challenges of this job**, e.g. among women mediators whether they feel vulnerable working with people from difficult backgrounds (families with social problems as drug dealing, alcohol abuse, domestic violence or deficiencies as regards the sanitary conditions). In general, female mediators declared that their insecurity in some of the abovementioned circumstances is not related to their gender. Lighthouse Keepers and Area Hosts described how they gradually build relationships with the residents and gave examples of memorable, difficult case studies from their work experience so far (e.g. when handing a resident a notice of eviction, informing a disabled person of being moved to a flat on the 3rd floor and negotiating with the Housing Department another flat option). **Mediators** also stressed that they play the role of **intermediaries between residents and the City Hall and civil servants** from numerous departments dealing with administrative issues on behalf of families

their support. What is important, to avoid professional burnout and decrease work-related stress mediators are provided with psychological help and are regularly supervised.

Key job skills declared by the Lodz mediators:

- ❖ autonomy, independence in work
- ❖ capacity to listen people with understanding
- ❖ capacity to talk to inhabitants and other civil servants
- ❖ openness and capacity to deal with difficult situations
- ❖ not being judgemental
- ❖ good sense of humour
- ❖ genuine desire to help people
- ❖ faith that there is always a solution

Another topic raised during the 2nd day was cooperation between the City of Lodz Office and local entrepreneurs operating in the revitalization area. Representative of the Revitalisation Bureau, Mr. Rafał Lewonowski afforded us a glimpse of his work that is supporting SMEs and self-employed craftsmen

whose economic activity is located in buildings to be renovated within the revitalization programme, eg. accompanying them in administrative procedures to move their economic activity to another location, offering new rental space and negotiating preferential rates, encouraging to carry on their businesses despite difficulties stemming from construction works



(temporary limited access to their shops and offices, decreasing number of clients), facilitating communication between entrepreneurs and respective city departments and units. Then, Marta Ignaczak gave a brief overview on the training programme for employees preparing for work as mediators lasting for 2 weeks after employment. Trainees took part in numerous lecture and workshops with experts in the fields of: housing allocation,

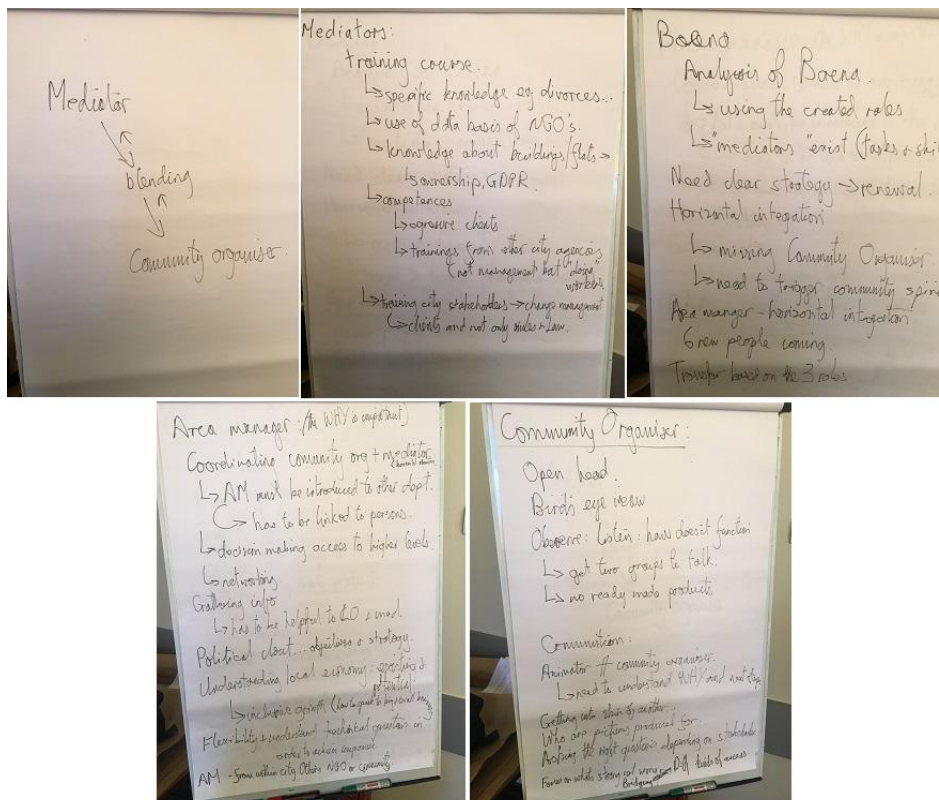
debt collection, social work, medical help, cooperation with NGOs, social psychology. The presentation was followed by an exercise during which Remixers divided into groups in which they tried to answer a question: “How can we improve our training for the new (mediating) roles? (area managers)” and discussed the functioning (also potential) of Mediators in the City.



The main conclusions of the discussion:

- ❁ Mediators like host area and light house keeper :
 - ❖ Need more specific knowledge and trainings in topic like: housing law, how to deal with difficult situations, how to talk with difficult / aggressive clients,
 - ❖ It would be useful to create databases that can be accessed by residents and officers
 - ❖ Training on revitalisation should be given to low-level employees and not to managers
- ❁ Area Manager:

- ❖ Needs to have a decision-making power
- ❖ Should have established relationship with various municipal departments and have a mandate
- ❖ Without political support it is difficult to him to achieve goals set
- ❖ Coordinating role in communities
- ❖ Social community organizer:
 - ❖ Has to be an open-minded person, seeing the whole process globally and Has to observe how such a local community is structured, see how it functions, listen to people
 - ❖ Such a community organizer has to have the ability to bring people together, be a mediator. Not using ready-made solution, it has to be somebody who will bring tools to allow residents to develop something together. We need to be able to communicate to all stakeholders
 - ❖ There is a difference between an animator (a promotor: good with children, running single projects, events) and the community organizer (more complex role). Whose role to help people to believe that certain change is possible, stimulate energy but cannot fail, make promises and deliver them.



Study visit to the Revitalization Area of the Centre of Łódź and ULG activities



In the afternoon, The Remixers took part in a field visit around selected areas within the Area Revitalization Programme. They were accompanied by mediators and ULG members who familiarized them with renovations and social activities being carried out and planned.

Networking Evening Event

In the evening there was a guided tour around the Museum of History of Lodz in former residence of a textile manufacturer Israel Poznanski, which is an exquisite example of the city's cultural heritage and a complex urban regeneration project under the Municipal Revitalisation Programme co-funded by the EU, the City of Lodz and state budget. The event began with an address from Mr. Slawomir Granatowski, the Director of the Revitalisation Bureau who greeted the participants and partners in the network on behalf of the Mayor of the City of Lodz.



Building pro-active relations between the city and residents – summary & discussion

On the third day, the panels were held to summarize our activities within the network and the ULG established in each of the cities. Each partner gave an overview of the functioning of ULG.

- ❁ In Lodz the ULG members were recruited from local NGOs, school and a religious institution operating on the Revitalisation Area (about 15 stakeholders). The idea was to bring together people who either live or work in the area and could engage in implementing models and solutions developed in the process of urban regeneration. One of the first initiatives to be carried out together inspired by the URM network is a flea market and a thematic newspaper. Lodz decided that each ULG meeting will be

organized in different stakeholders' / NGOs premise as I turned out that although they work on the same area they often do not know each other and the City of Lodz moderates and inspires the ULG activities.

- ❖ **Braga** noted a lot of similarities with Lodz in terms of how their ULG functions as it mostly gathers people who are excited about the project and urban regeneration, who want to make a change in the city (around 10 members, representatives of NGOs and academia). What representatives of Braga find the most important about their ULG is the positive energy around several actions to be taken, e.g. cooperation with the local university and engaging students to make a diagnosis of the revitalization / cultural heritage area from various perspectives.
- ❖ Partners from **Birmingham** shared a different perspective. What has happened there so far was trying to respond to the process that was already on its way, which started before the URM and ULG formation. There was a lack of co-design, as it was a top-down process. ULG work was to channel and build local community. One of the first milestones of their work in a consortium of local NGOs was to develop a response (in a form of a printed booklet) to the council plan on a revitalization area (Edgbaston Reservoir). ULGs expectation is to see the "can do" attitude in the City Office and the council to realise where the potential is. In Birmingham there was a policy document on localism drafted, as a pilot project "Pioneer Wards" about mediation. Its goal is to make residents and local authorities work together. According to partners from Birmingham, their ULG is an eclectic mix of people who probably would not meet together otherwise. They have a logic of one ULG model to be extrapolated to 10 areas thanks to the pilot project.
- ❖ In **Zagreb** the ULG brought together members from the municipality and other institutions, e.g. galleries and academia. However, there is a plan to invite more external stakeholders including a school and a kindergarten. Together with local university it plans to make a research on the

revitalization area and a workshop with local NGOs. For now the ULG coordinated by the URM network team managed to initiate communication between the municipality and residents and brought the two sides together to cooperate in the field spatial planning.

- ❖ **Bologna** found some similarities with Lodz and Braga with regard to the functioning of their ULG. Art laboratory in a city made by university, civic associations, NGOs, Modern arts Museum, Film Foundation (the latter two are big, not open to collaboration, difficult to involve them). Together they develop a new methodology to bring new life to the regenerated area, which has been empty for years. In some meetings there are as many as 20-30 participants (because of engagement of the university) and we divide into subgroups. The cooperation is of intergenerational nature, as members represent different age groups. The topic around which Bologna works differs slightly from other partner cities case studies, but modus operandi seems alike.
- ❖ The most important thing so far **Baena** learned from this network is the idea of social integration. Regarding the work in the local group the most important goal is to change the way we work and to involve residents, to engage them in cooperation with the City. To do that we need to work with 2 levels of ULG: core group (representatives of various municipal institution) and a wider group with external stakeholders. The idea is to talk about very small interventions to make people feel that something is going to really happen. So that the impact was clear, tangible and not to create expectations that have not been met. The core group has been reformed from the Phase one. In the wider group there are stakeholders meeting, now we know what kind of people and organisations are missing. Now we have only associations, and there not this kind of leadership that comes from trust.

In a wrap-up of our 4th TNM the Good Practice City collected reactions from the partner cities on mediation being thoroughly presented during the past 3 days in order to learn which tools, e.g. mediators profiles: Lighthouse Keeper, Area Host

(or ones to be developed like Area Manager and Social/Local Community Organiser), trainings, microgrants, participatory design model used in Lodz are most interesting and applicable in other environments.



Summig up

On the the third and final day of 4th Transnational Network Meeting in Lodz there was also the coordinators' meeting during which we discussed about the forthcoming Mid-Term Reflection Meeting (scheduled for 10–12 December in Bologna) and its requirements (together we went through the URBACT questionnaire) and project budget reporting and monitoring in the Synergie-CTE with deadlines to be observed.