

Lisbon, 19th May 2022



Erasmus+ Call 2021

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T. 3.1 EXPLORATORY WALKS AND PARTICIPATORY
COMMUNITY HEI STUDENT TRAINING

TRANSNATIONAL TRAINING FOR HEI STAFF

Raffaele Pelorosso

T3.1: Exploratory Walks and Participatory Community HEI Student Training

Task leader: UNITUS // Other partners involved: all // Timing: M3 – M12

1. Construction of the exploratory walk survey:

Based on inputs from T1.1, T1.2, T1.3 UNITUS and UNICT will define the framework, the general content and design of the delivery formats for the exploratory walks. Explorative walks will be designed to cover different aspects of accessibility according to the characteristic of the case study and the suggestions of the local partners. Definition of spatial delimitations and case study typology, i.e., focus on accessibility in different urban contexts (e.g., peripheral or central districts) or for public services (e.g., public transport, cultural sites, urban green areas). The setting-up of the trip and its adaptation to the local context in each city will be realised by the local partner responsible for each explorative walk.



May-June
2022

Virtual
meeting

2. Transnational training for HEI staff.

A training event will be organized concurrently with TM2 (M 6/May 2022) in order to tailor the methodology developed within WP1 within the specificities of each case studies. A first part will be devoted for sharing WP1 methodology with the leaders coming from Case study partners and a second part the UNITUS trainer team will design with each leader the specific measures to apply in order to conduct the walks.



TODAY
Focus on
**explorative
walks**

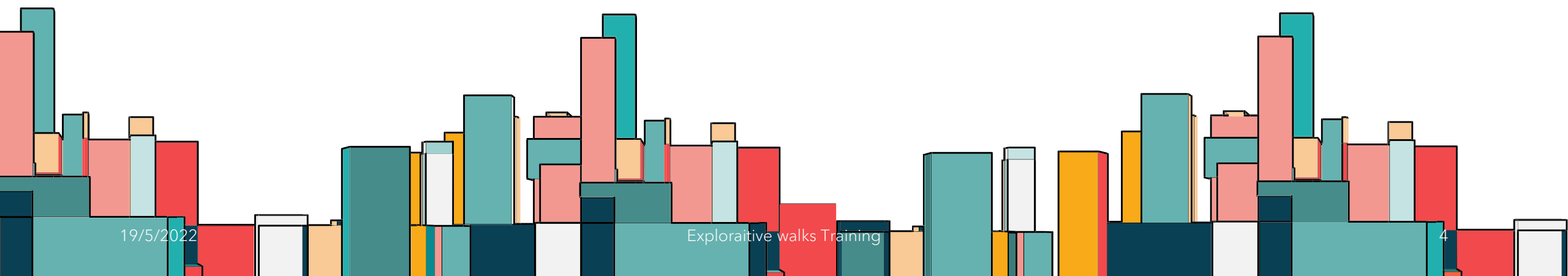
3. Mobilisation of people and training of local walk leaders:

outreach, communication about the walk (cf. WP4). HEIs (UNICT, SWU, ESCP) and ARFIE will ensure the mobilization of students (including students with disabilities). The ambassadors / walk leaders will be 5 students engaged per city through the student unions of the universities who have volunteered to receive guidance on how to organise small scale grassroots urban walks. They will be guiding the teams of students participating in the successive urban walks and will be actively participating in the engagement of students and volunteers for the mapping parties (multiplier event).

Following the physical and virtual trainings and conducting their own exploratory walks, local partners will provide local walk leaders with the means to train ambassadors within the students in their respective university.



June-
September
2022



4. Conducting the exploratory walks, including 1 explorative walk per city:

the task will be carried out in 4 cities: Catania, Italy; Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria; Berlin, Germany; and Lisbon, Portugal. In all 4 participating countries approximately 10 people, led by at least 1 walk leader (HEI staff or student ambassadors), will explore an assigned area, for a duration of 2 hours to identify issues in the area and their integration in the urban environment, specific needs depending on the type of population, solutions to be initiated. Tablets, providing better accessibility for people with disabilities, will be acquired to conduct the exploratory walks. A working prototype for the PWA will be tested during explorative walk (see T2.1)



September
-October
2022

5. Data consolidation and construction of the urban walk survey.

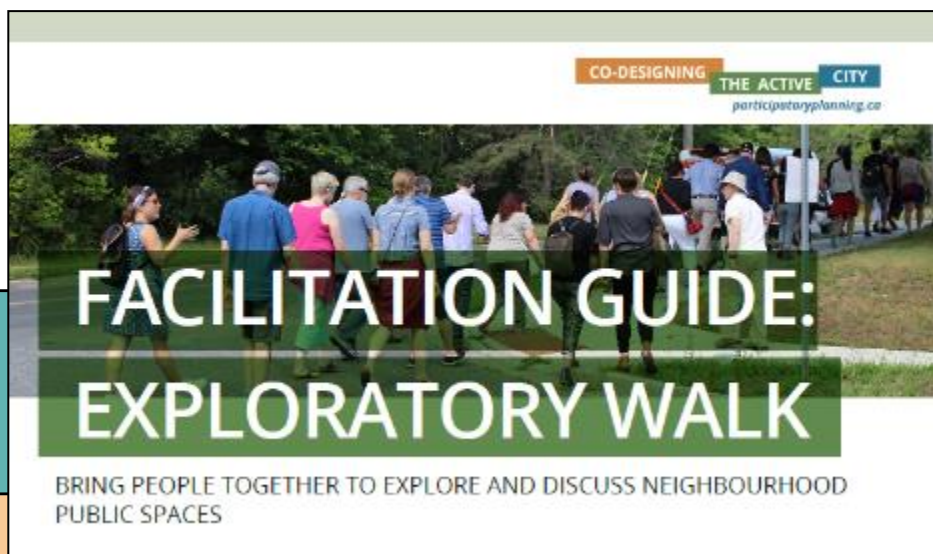
UNITUS and UNICT will then update the methodology they have used for the exploratory walks and adapt it for the urban walks in T3.2 - T3.5. The emerged difficulties and suggestions in the explorative walks will then feed the Map4Accessibility Service-Learning and Community Mapping Methodology developed in WP1.



October-
November
2022

SUMMARY of CONTENTS

- Walking research
- Walking interviews
- Explorative Walks (EW)
- How to build EW



19/5/2022



Explorative walks Training

6

MOBILITIES
https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2021.1999775

2021

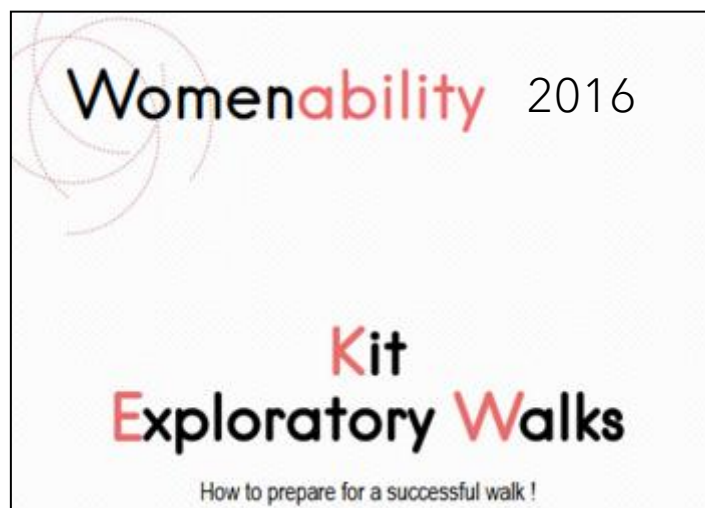
 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group

 OPEN ACCESS  Check for updates

Exploratory walk and local cohesion— the concept and application

Dorota Bazuń and Mariusz Kwiatkowski

Institute of Sociology, University of Zielona Góra, Zielona Góra, Poland



2018

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Article

'Overjoyed that I can go outside': Using walking interviews to learn about the lived experience and meaning of neighbourhood for people living with dementia

Elzana Odzakovic 

Division of Nursing Science, Department of Social and Welfare Studies, The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Linköping University, Sweden

Dementia
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EXPLORATIVE WALK concept falls within the so-called WALKING RESEARCH

'Walking research'

- as an area to research (i.e. how, why, amount, and so on);
- as a methodology to gain materials (via recording and interview and 'subject's relation with the surrounding environment); and
- as a methodology to for dissemination of 'findings' (e.g. through a 'performance event')

List of alternative terms for research involving both interviews and participant observations during a walk:

- 'walking interviews',
- 'go-alongs',
- 'walk-alongs',
- 'mobile interviewing',
- 'walking probes',
- 'walking fieldwork',
- 'dwelling in-motion',
- 'stretched out belonging',
- 'walking with ethnography',
- 'shadowing',
- 'pedestrian enquiry',
- 'pace in place'.

One of the most popular terms is 'walking interview'.

A **walking interview** is when the researcher walks alongside the participant during an interview in a given location. Each has a slightly different focus, purpose and aim, but they all involve the researcher talking with a participant while accompanying them, usually on foot, around a specific location

Walking interviews have been shown to:

- enable more spontaneous conversation with participants, while generating focused and specific data about the place and social life of the neighborhood.
- be more closely aligned to 'naturally-occurring' interactions and therefore more true-to-life than other methods.
- involve embodied patterns of movement, offering opportunities to learn from the non-verbal aspects of people's engagement with their local environment.

For those individuals who are able to do so, walking as an act, per se, could support a sense of freedom of movement, empowering people to take control of their movements and choice of direction and through this generating a degree of well-being.

The term **Exploratory Walk (EW)** includes 'walking interview' as an important aspect,

EW refers to a scope of activities broader than just observing and interviewing. It also refers to the mobile version of participatory action research. According to this method, participants as the 'cowalkers' moving together on foot (or via a wheelchair) in a selected space explore the relationship between this space and community life and conduct conversations regarding observed phenomena, processes and regularities.

Main features of the Exploratory walk



Bazuń, D.; Kwiatkowski, M. Exploratory Walk As a Method of Studying Urban Tourism Space: a Case of Charles Bridge in Prague. J. Spat. Organ. Dyn. 2020, 8, 92-106.

EW concept emerged in the 1990s in Montreal, Quebec, Project against women and children violence.

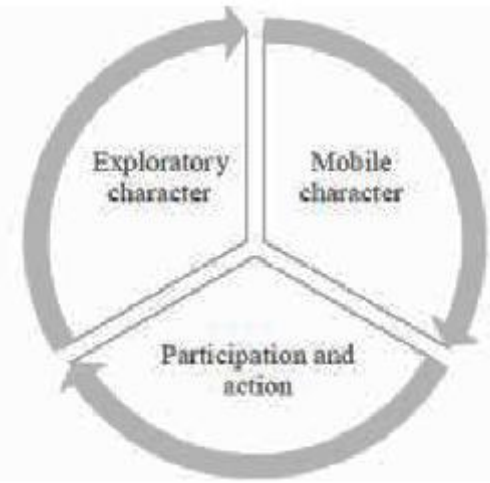
EWs are a response to a need for participatory planning, to gain a deeper understanding of urban life and urban spaces, and to find shared and sustainable solutions.

The DEFINITION in Map4Accessibility WORKPLAN

Explorative Walks are a community participatory tool for needs assessment in public spaces (squares, streets, green spaces, but also public institutions such as university campuses). During a period of 2-3 hours, participants are encouraged to walk within the city in order to (i) identify the issues that limit their possibility to access and enjoy it and (ii) collectively explore solutions to make public space more adapted to their needs. Depending on the issues at stake, targeted participants can be disabled people, women, children, the elderly, local citizens. EW are a way to "empower" them, to make them acquire a "right to the city". EW gather qualitative information on the urban environment.

Urban Walks provide quantitative data. UW involve mapping the urban environment through a questionnaire that has been prepared based on the exploratory walks. Anyone can potentially participate in an urban walk, contrary to exploratory walks.

Main features of the Exploratory walk



As an **exploratory study**, it combines cognitive and practical functions to explore the means to think about something very carefully before it is decided upon.

A joint exploration can give a chance to understand social phenomena better and to formulate recommendations on solving perceived problems more accurately than traditional research.

As a **mobile method**, it involves joint movement on foot (or via a wheelchair) and the exchange of perceptions and opinions about phenomena, processes, and regularities observed in the cognised space.

Talking while walking can create different research conditions that are more conducive to exploration than those during a sedentary interview.

As **participatory action research**, it focuses on the relationship between space and the community.

A joint exploration during a walk focuses on the issues of common space, helps strengthen the collaborative potential of participants as the 'cowalkers,' and contributes to the expected social change in the given neighbourhood or community.

EW refers to a comprehensive method of walking research with the following attributes:

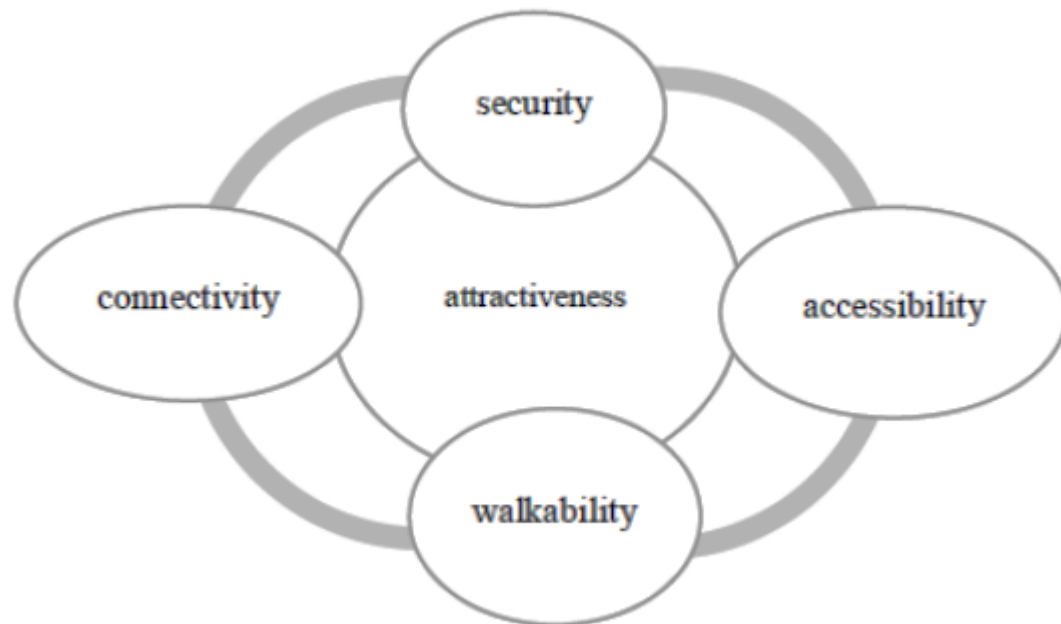
- (1) combining research and intervention functions. The goal of the walks is both to increase knowledge and to enable social change by social cohesion;
- (2) ensuring active roles for participants ('cowalkers') in the exploratory walk, including initiators, experts, or guides;
- (3) going beyond the form of an interview. The interaction among the participants of the walk can have both the form of an 'interview in motion' and the form of a planned or spontaneous exchange of insights, opinions, and conclusions under the influence of the jointly studied space.

EW as a method of studying and shaping our cities by the:

- 1) revitalization of public space (Urban regeneration projects)
- 2) empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized groups. The walk is the most democratic form of movement. It is available to people belonging to different social and demographic classes and categories: children, women, the elderly, the sick, the disabled, immigrants, the homeless, etc.
- 3) use of new technologies (app, digital maps, etc.)

EW: Directions of research and interventions

5 interconnected characteristics of an urban area can be investigated by EW



Bazuń, D.; Kwiatkowski, M. Exploratory Walk As a Method of Studying Urban Tourism Space: a Case of Charles Bridge in Prague. J. Spat. Organ. Dyn. 2020, 8, 92–106.

1. Attractiveness

A specific space can be considered attractive if users want to stay in it if they feel connected with it and feel comfortable in it. The assessment of the attractiveness of a given space is exposed to the subjectivity of different tastes and needs.

During EW, opinions on the following topics can be determined quite easily: (1) the condition of buildings; (2) the condition of roads, pavements and squares; (3) the presence and condition of trees, shrubs and other greenery elements; (4) the presence and condition of distinctive elements given space (e.g. fountains, sculptures, murals); (5) air purity and perceived smell; and (6) acoustic sensations.

2. Security

A secure space is one in which we are not afraid to be, and which is favorable to our health.

When assessing the state of safety, we should consider:

- the day of the week and the time of day.
- which categories of people are most exposed to danger in a given space (e.g., children and women). The selection of participants and the choice of time will therefore affect the effects of the walk.
- the same set of indicators for the assessment of attractiveness: degraded buildings, leaky roads, noise, and polluted air.
- Additional indicators: (1) lighting conditions; (2) city surveillance; (3) the organization of road traffic and road markings; and (4) places where people who threaten others' safety gather (e.g. night shops with alcohol).



3. Accessibility

Full accessible space is one everyone, including disabled persons, can use. Accessibility applies to urban services in general terms, or to streets, pavements, parks, and buildings for specific urban features.

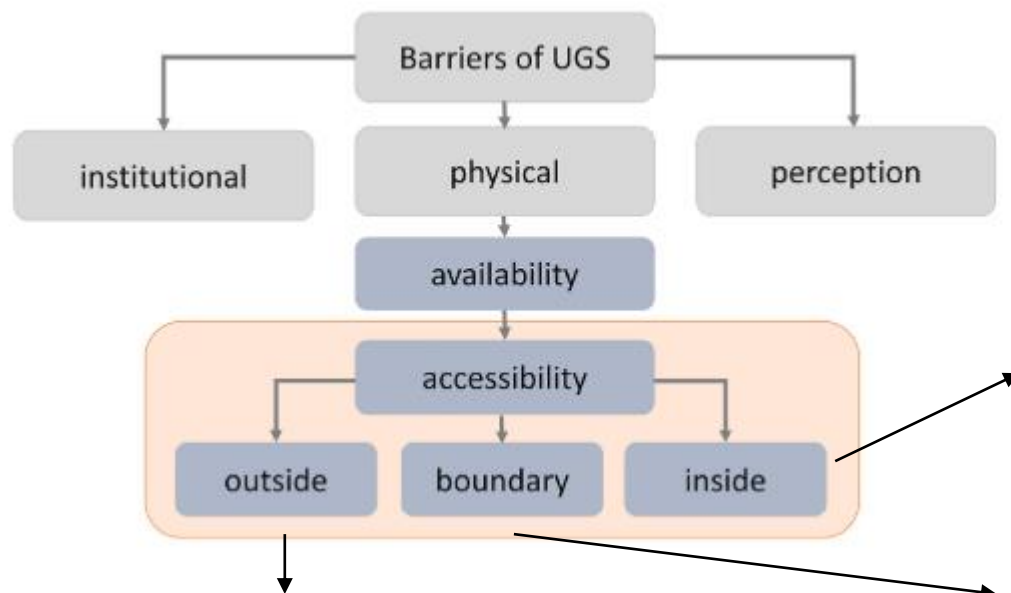
Limitations to accessibility can be related to age, psychophysical condition, social status, nationality, and ethnicity. There are many sets of available space indicators.

In general , a space that can be accessible to everyone should be as follows: (1) pavement and terrain facilitating the movement of people with reduced mobility; (2) technical assistance systems in places where independent movement is difficult (elevators, lifts, ramps); (3) contrast markings for the visually impaired; and (4) simple messages for people with intellectual disabilities.



Particular attention should be paid to places with a greater likelihood of the appearance of people with mobility difficulties (health clinics, offices serving the elderly) and those that may pose the greatest threat (pedestrian crossings, busy streets).

Accessibility of urban green spaces (UGS)



(1) high-speed streets, railways, water bodies, construction sites, large and closed residential or commercial built-up and fenced areas, lack of road crossings etc., (2) inadequate connection between pedestrian crossings of some of the above barriers with official entrances to UGS as well as (3) a lack of public and private transportation facilities.

Availability of UGS: the amount of green area in certain defined distance to where urban residents live

(1) limited facilities such as benches, benches without backrests, low seats, missing waste bins, or public toilets, condition of paths; (2) forest-like UGS that might create a perceived unsafe space, particularly for women and the elderly; (3) paved surfaces which may translate into high temperatures and dust bowl effects; (4) the (low) quality of the green infrastructure itself can be an inside barrier.

Fences, walls and buildings around a park, dense undergrowth and hedgerows, an uneven or otherwise specific number and distribution of official entrances that restrict a direct access to the UGS.

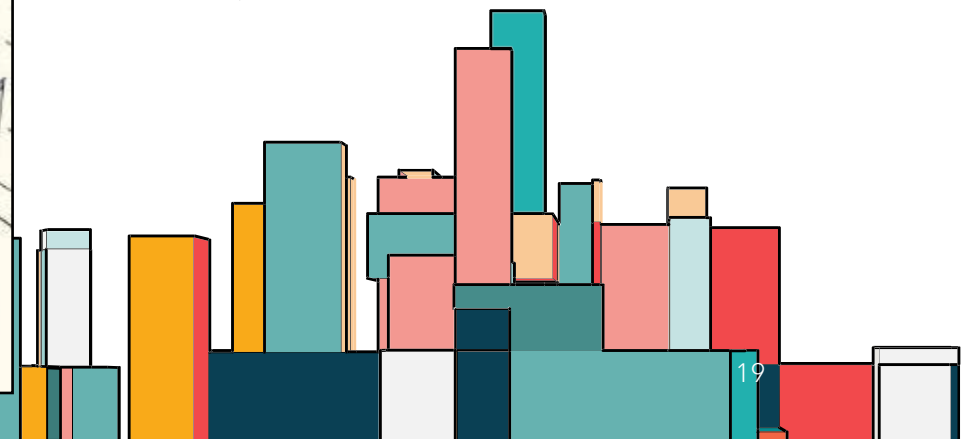
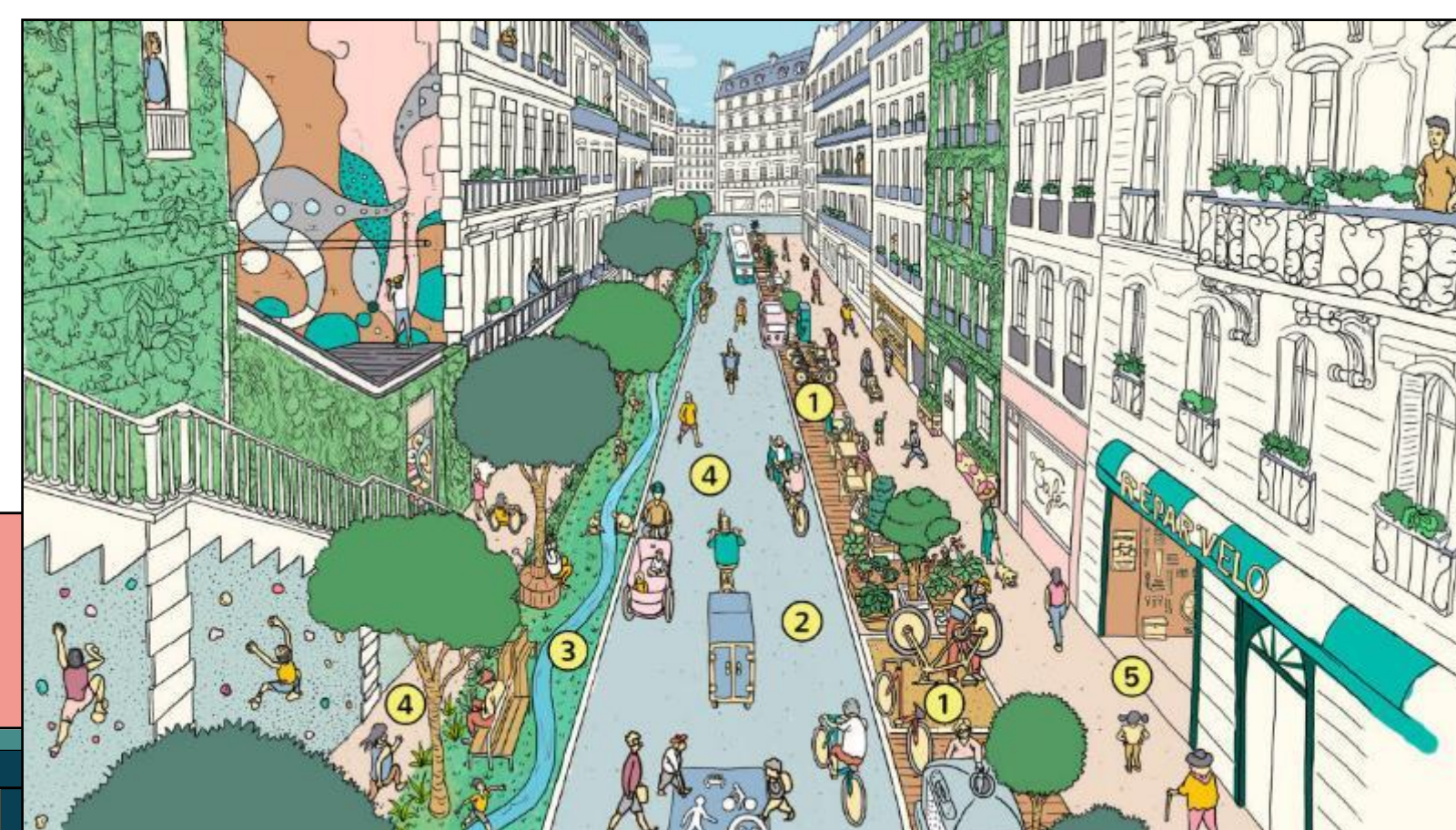
Barber, A.; Haase, D.; Wolff, M. Permeability of the city - Physical barriers of and in urban green spaces in the city of Halle , Germany. Ecol. Indic. 2021, 125, 107555.



4. Walkability

A walkable space is one where people can easily walk and ride a bike. Walkability as a feature of shared space is associated with accessibility.

In order for a walk to be chosen by residents as an alternative to driving a car, it must meet four conditions at the same time: it must be (1) useful, i.e. most aspects of everyday life are carried out in close proximity, and it is possible to execute them by walking; (2) safe, that is, pedestrians are safe on the streets; (3) comfortable, that is, the buildings and landscape encourage people to stay in it; and (4) interesting, meaning that 'sidewalks are lined by unique buildings with friendly faces that signs of humanity abound' (Speck 2012, 11)





5. Connectivity

A connecting space is one where we can meet other residents and users of public or semi-public places.

We can assume that people are more likely to contact each other in an environment that they find attractive, safe, accessible, and walkable.

When examining a specific area of a city or village in terms of connectivity, we pay special attention to the following phenomena: (1) places that favor spontaneous contacts with others (silence, greenery, shade); (2) devices that allow a longer, more comfortable stay and conversation (e.g. benches); (3) spaces that enable purposeful organization of meetings with friends, families, and neighbors (squares, roofing); and (4) the tendency of residents and other users to use the common space to establish and develop contacts.



The strong relationship between the **possibility of walking** in a given space and **good interpersonal relationships** and **quality of life** is confirmed by empirical research described by neuroscientist

Shane O'Mara: *".. those who spend approximately 150 minutes walking per week are more socially active and have a sense of better overall well-being than those who are less active"*.

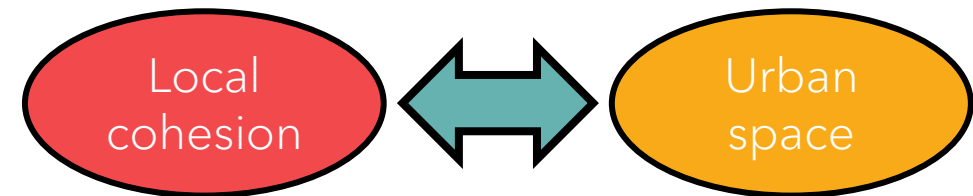


The relationship between the state of the **common space** and the level of **local cohesion** is close.

The greater the attractiveness, security, availability, walkability, and connectivity, the stronger the relationships between users, the greater the shared resources, and the greater the attachment to applicable rules.

The weaker the features listed, the greater the deficits in local cohesion.

However, this relationship is not unidirectional. Space, of course, affects relationships, but there is also a reverse direction. The state of relations between residents and other users is reflected in the state of common space.



Exploratory walks - three goals to achieve:

- (1) determining the symptoms of crisis phenomena in the area of revitalization;
- (2) identifying the potentials of stakeholders in the revitalization process;
- (3) determining the areas and directions of revitalization activities.



Figure 1. Study area before revitalisation (photo Patryk Bagiński).



Figure 2. Study area after revitalisation (photo Patryk Bagiński).

Project: 'Defensive Walls Will Connect Us', Strzelce Krajeńskie, Poland.
The transformative potential was tangible

To achieve these goals, the interviews during the EW should be in line with several **general assumptions**.

- to conduct walks in a deliberately selected, degraded area, but with development potential, if only because of its location.
- to select interlocutors – guides who represented various environments, professions and forms of activity. E.g., a city official, an architect, an entrepreneur from the construction industry, a restaurateur, an educator, a person with disabilities practicing sports, a journalist, a city councilor, a cultural activist and a priest, a representative of the NGO.
- To prepare a list of issues to be discussed during the walk tailored to the places and people participating.
- To determine the methods of recording, analysing and presenting data.
 1. a long walk with many points – conversation first, numerous photos during the walk, taking a note after completion (approximately 60 minutes);
 2. a walk related mainly to one or two points – taking a note on the fly and taking a few photos at the same time (20–30 minutes);
 3. a second researcher who will focus on documenting, recording short videos and taking photos

Some recommendations for EW in Map4Accessibility

- Present the general objectives of EW to students following the Service-Learning pedagogical approach
- Organise discussion about possible issues and routes, make the choice of EW born from students
 - WHERE? Central-popular locations / Routes with a lot of problems / Important urban services
 - → Consider the study cases suggestions provided by UNICT in Task 3.1
- Invite expert to the scheduled EW
 - The presence of elected officials can shift the focus on politics.
 - Technicians from the city hall (e.g., urban planning department) are very welcomed!
 - Walkers with different disabilities are very welcomed
- HEI Students can be mobilized by teachers during their courses (around 10 student per EW)
- WHEN? When the most people are free / during lesson time as an activity linked to the exam

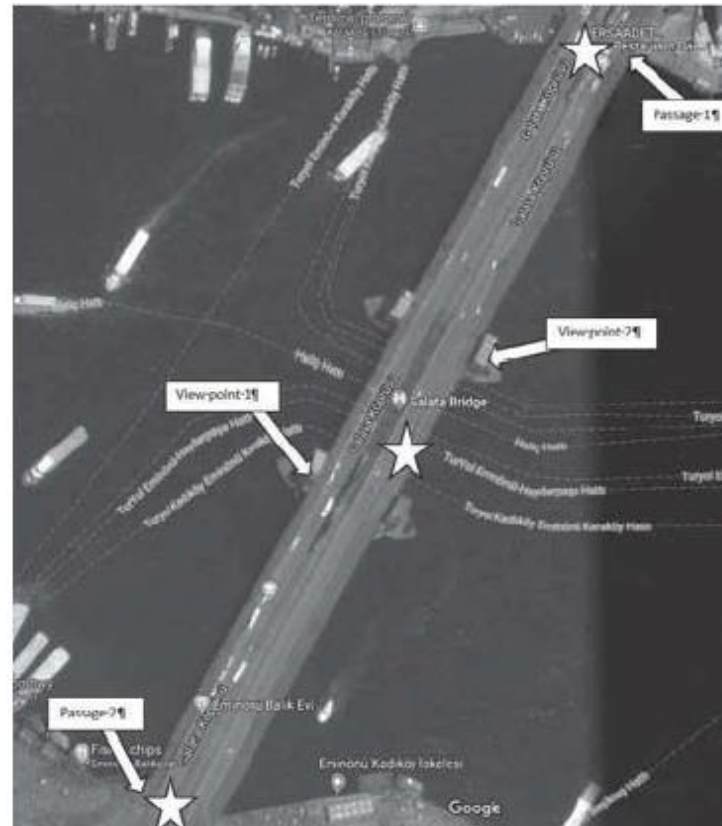
Some recommendations for EW in Map4Accessibility

- Designate 1 coordinator (also student) for the EW
- Do not focus only on negative aspects during the EW but also what people like in the area
- Do not limit the participants in their recommendations (let them be creative)
- Do not let some people monopolize the discussion
- Use social media (e.g., Facebook) or local media to valorise the walkers
- If weather is bad, reduce the number of stops and » amount of information to record and plan to hold the discussion periods in a sheltered area
- Limit the length of the walk to 90/120 minutes.
- Insure a follow up for a long-lasting engagement also in successive urban walks
- Make the walk fun but make sure the walkers take it seriously

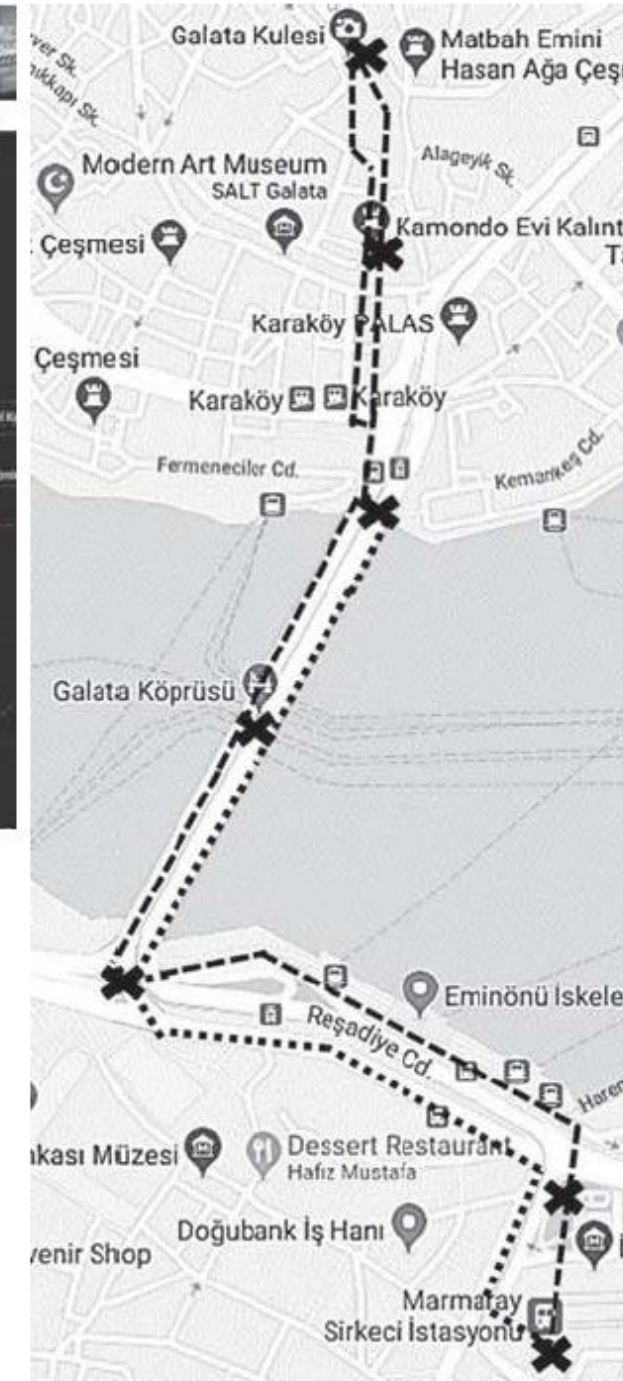
Some recommendations for EW in Map4Accessibility

Materials needed for walkers

- Clipboards/tablet
- Maps with nodes displayed (printed or/and digital)
- Pens or pencils
- Organizer with pen and paper to write down participants' comments throughout walk
- Smartphones/digital camera to make pictures and videos
- A working prototype for the PWA to be tested during explorative walk



The route description (actually two versions of the routes, located very closely): both starting from the Galata tower (Galata Kulesi) and visiting its immediate surroundings, the walk continued along the streets, the end of both routes was Sirkeci train station.



Istanbul

Some recommendations for EW in Map4Accessibility

Option: Printed rating table and criteria / To fill digital questionnaires during the walk (Google forms) / Use a web gis (<https://www.outdooractive.com>) to support participants during the walk

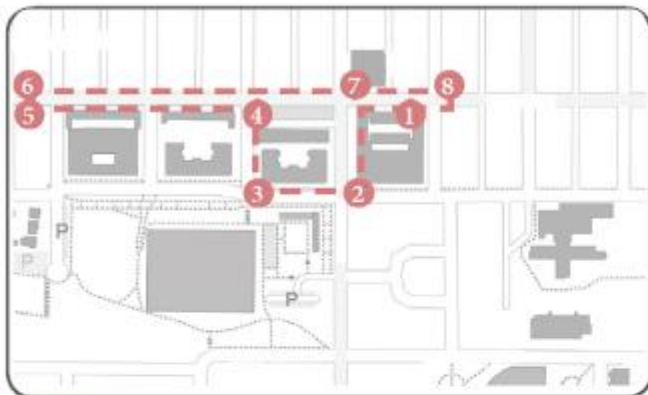


Figure 1.1 Go on a street loop walk audit.

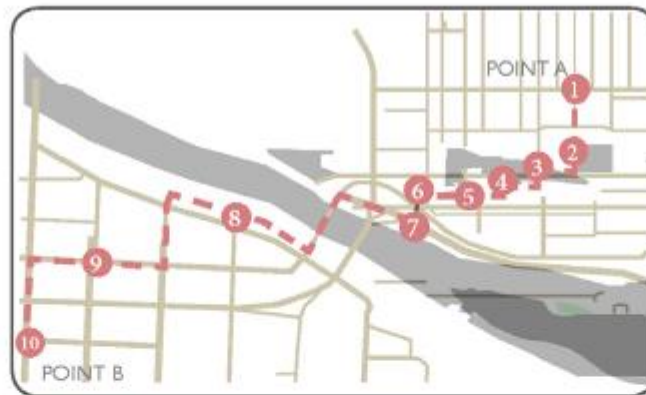


Figure 1.2 Go on a destination walk audit, from A to B.

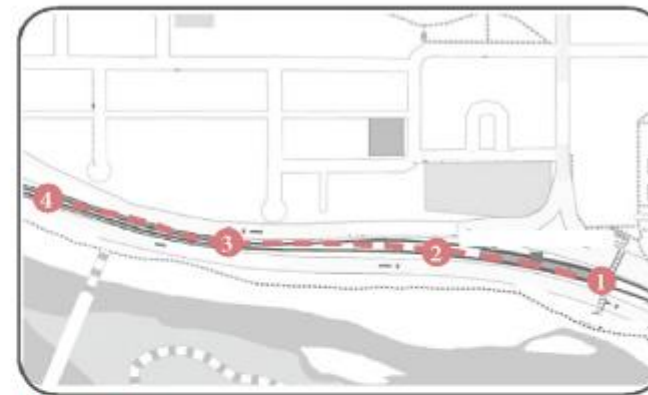


Figure 1.3 Go on a boundary walk audit.








Rating from 0 to 5	 Walking	 Biking	 People	 Children	 Seniors	 Safety	 Streetscape
Node 1	2	4	2	2	2	3	2
Node 2	5	2	3	2	3	1	2

Figure 2. Evaluate each node on a scale from 0 to 5 (5 being most adequate for each activity) as shown in the sample above.

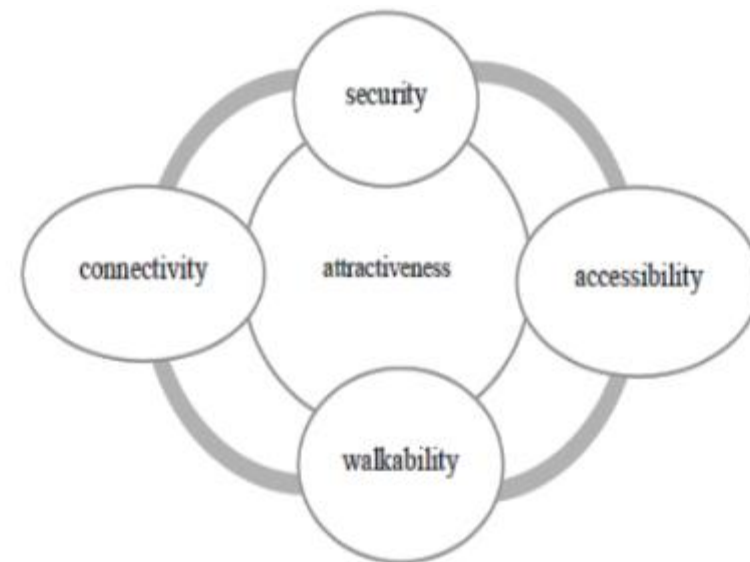
Some recommendations for EW in Map4Accessibility

Facilitation Process

1. Provide participants with a map of nodes.
2. The organizers/walk leaders (HEI staff or student ambassadors) will lead the walk with selected stops determined in advance and listed. At each stop the participants consider how safe, connected, accessible, walkable and attractive the node is for disabled people and citizen (groups, children and elders).

If you desire more quantitative information, the participants can rate the node on a scale of 1-5 (5 being the most adequate) on criteria including walking, wheelchairs or biking

3. Use conversation at each node as a way to discuss the principles of good design regarding possible observed physical or digital barriers.



Some recommendations for EW in Map4Accessibility

Facilitation Process

4. Have at least one organizer recording participants observations at each node.
5. Once you have completed your walk, discuss participants' experiences. Ask a few open-ended questions to encourage discussion around additional community improvements (e.g. you can ask participants which node felt the least/ most accessible and why).
6. Collect all the participants' maps and audit pages and compile the data.



The final reports on EW

The local organizer of the EW (or EWs), with the possible involvement of students, makes a report (at M11) on the emerged: 1) features and issues of the urban spaces and routes; 2) difficulties and suggestions in the explorative walks.

The report will inform

- the organization of the following urban walks;
- the PR Map4Accessibility Service-Learning and Community Mapping Methodology developed in WP1 (M12)

➡ Task 3.2 to Task 3.5

➡ Task 1.4

The final reports on EW: specific contents

Issues linked to and suggestions for:

1. Involvement of community organisations and stakeholders
2. Student engagement
3. SL
4. Embedding SL pedagogical approach in the EW and HEI courses
5. Mapping tools
6. Local urban settings of the study cases

Thank you very much!!