‘THE CITY GIVES ME CHALLENGES HERE’

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH ON THE USE OF URBAN SPACE BY CRACOW WOMEN

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„The City Gives Me Challenges Here"
Report on the Research on the Use of Urban Space by Cracow Women

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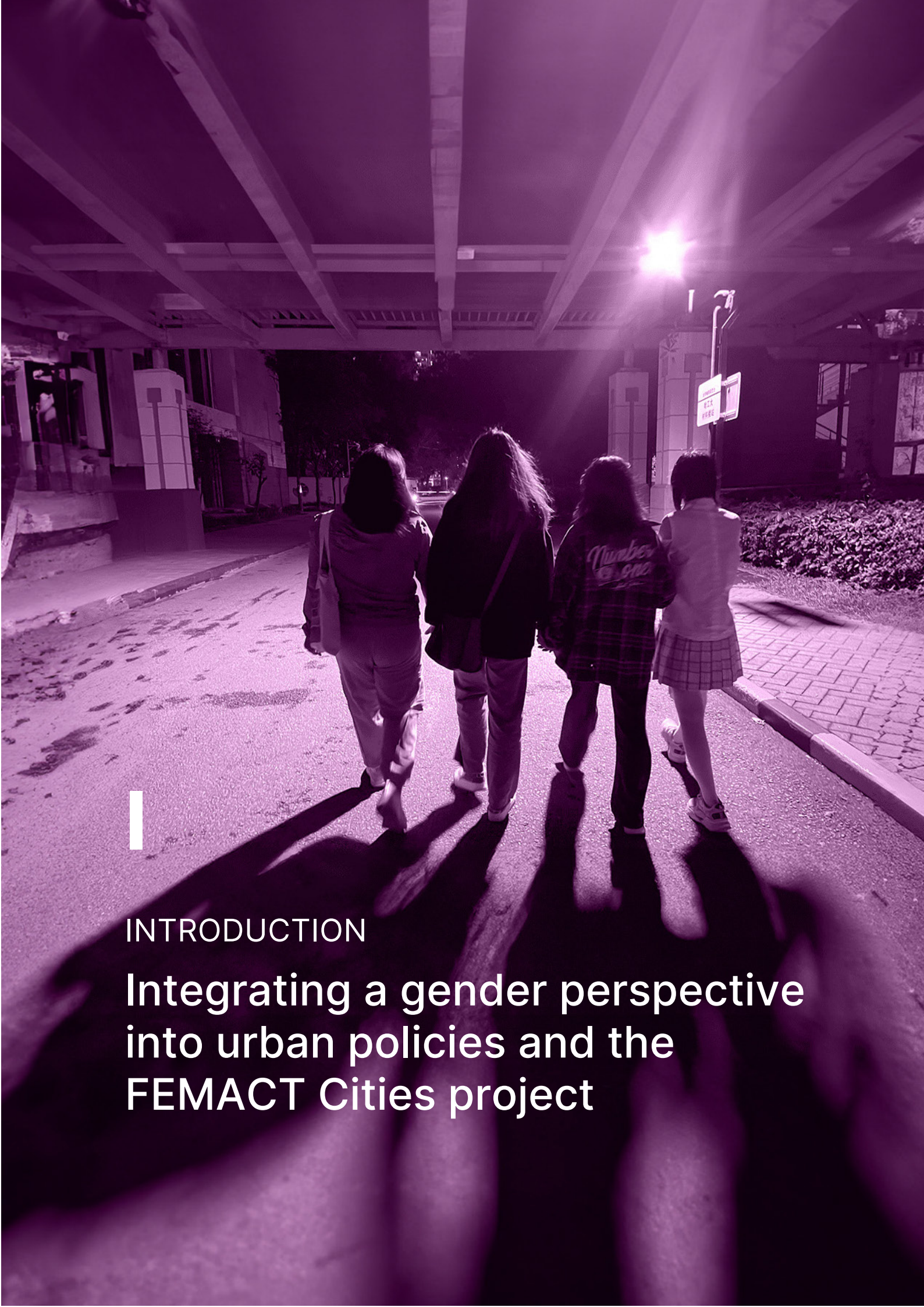
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I

INTRODUCTION

Integrating a gender perspective into urban policies and the FEMACT Cities project

Gender mainstreaming is a relatively new concept. In the 1990s, Vienna became the first major city in the world to introduce gender mainstreaming as standard practice in city planning. Since then, the approach has been gaining popularity, with cities that have adopted it including Barcelona, Glasgow, Umeå in Sweden, and Lyon.

„Including a gender perspective into spatial planning is not about feminism alone. It is about doing things better than before." said Maria Vassilakou, former Deputy Mayor of Vienna, responsible for City Planning, Traffic and Transport, Climate Protection, Energy and Public Participation.

Gender mainstreaming is defined by the European Institute for Gender Equality as the inclusion of a gender perspective in the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulations and budget programmes, with the aim of promoting equality between women and men and combating discrimination. So far, in Krakow, much attention has been paid to the representation of women in urban space – both among public authorities, local administration structures, and symbolic representation, e.g. by promoting the names of streets and squares named after women or encouraging the discovery of the city's history from the perspective of female residents through Women's Trails. This is a very important dimension of gender mainstreaming, but not the only one. It is equally important to ensure that decisions made by city authorities take into account their impact on all people living in the city – women and men, as well as non-binary people. Integrating the gender aspect into the planning of urban policies is precisely this dimension that the FEMACT Cities project deals with.

The City of Krakow has been implementing equality postulates for a long time, wishing to guarantee equal treatment of all people living in the city. The priority is to make public space increasingly accessible and to effectively combat barriers that

[1] https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming

affect the participation of women and residents in public, educational, professional, etc. life.

The FEMACT-Cities project allows us to extend these activities to include an analysis of barriers in public space from a gender perspective. The project includes research on selected common places in terms of responding to the needs of women and girls, indicates the most important challenges in this context, maps social demands and will end with the development of guidelines for standards for inclusive spatial planning. The aim is to reduce the sense of threat in the city among female residents and improve the well-being of women of Krakow in everyday life.

Both historically and currently, architecture and urban planning have prioritised a “one man fits all” approach to behaviours and needs, as a result of which cities are not gender neutral. So far, the city has been designed for the default user, who is an able-bodied person of working age travelling (usually by private car) from home to work – most often, but not always, a man. Therefore, an important perspective adopted in the project is the intersectional perspective, close to the so-called “City of Care” or “Care Cities” [2]. It assumes that women’s needs are important, but presents a much more holistic approach. The City of Care has the ambition to take into account the needs of all groups that do not identify with the one described above. Among others, women, but also the elderly, children, people with limited mobility, refugees, sexual or ethnic minorities, as well as people in the homeless crisis. Importantly, these groups do not exist separately - refugees can be children and at the same time struggle with health problems.

In the FEMACT Cities project, the gender perspective was supplemented with the dimensions of age, level of mobility, caring functions and sense of security. The research team analysed the way in which urban space is used by boys and girls, people with disabilities, in particular mothers of children requiring care, people performing caring functions for dependent adults and children, as well as the use of urban space after dark by various groups of women. The result of the research is this report. The methodology of each research component is described in the appropriate subchapter. The

[2] Sim D, „Miasto życzliwe. Jak kształtować miasto z troską o wszystkich”, Wydawnictwo Wysoki Zamek, Kraków 2020

entire research work was embedded in the broader context of the URBACT methodology.

URBACT

URBACT is a European territorial cooperation programme supporting sustainable, integrated development of cities across Europe, which has been operating since 2002[3]. The aim of the programme is to provide a structure for the exchange of knowledge and good practices between cities from all over Europe. One of the support paths under the programme is the so-called Action Planning Networks, which result in the development of an action plan in a specific area by each partner city. This plan should be developed in a participatory manner together with the Local Group consisting of representatives of the local community.

Since 2023, the Municipality of Kraków has been a member of the FEMACT Cities network[4], which aims to improve the implementation of gender equality at the local level and increase innovation and knowledge exchange in the field of gender equality in four thematic clusters shared by partners: urban development, labour market and training, and health and safety, supported by internal and structural consideration of the gender perspective in partner organisations. This work will be accompanied by four cross-cutting themes - stereotypes, differences between the city and the countryside, intersectional identities and the role of men. The aim of the network is to create spaces where all residents, regardless of gender, can experience freedom of movement, freedom from violence, freedom from fear, freedom to pursue their dreams and freedom to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve those goals, eight partners (LänsstyrelsenSkåne (SE), Comunidade Intermunicipal da Região de Coimbra (PT), Clermont AuvergneMétropole (FR), Kraków (PL), City of Turin (IT), Municipality of Postojna (SI), Association for the Development of the Cluj Metropolitan Area (RO) and Association for the

[3] https://urbact.eu/
[4] https://urbact.eu/networks/femact-cities

Regional Development of Szabolcs 05 (HU)) will share their experiences and test solutions to create integrated action plans for their local communities

The URBACT network projects are based on close cooperation with urban actors – representatives of the City Hall and municipal institutions, activists from non-governmental organizations and informal movements, researchers from academic centers. As part of the work of the Local Group, various stakeholders consult on activities and set further directions for work in the project.

The Krakow Local Group (GLK) is exceptionally broad and, thanks to its outstanding expert background, can carry out activities in many areas.



Fot. Meeting of Local Groups

The experts work in 4 thematic subgroups related to the topics of age, care, disability and safety. They also consulted on the methodologies of the individual stages of the study, which will be presented later in the report.

THE GLK CONSISTS OF:

1. **Janina Czapska** (Uniwersytet Jagielloński)
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7. **Wiktor Hunek** (Wydział Polityki Społecznej i Zdrowia UMK)
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10. **Marta Kapusta** (Wydział Polityki Społecznej i Zdrowia UMK)
11. **Anna Karwińska** (Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Krakowie)
12. **Klaudia Kasprzak** (Akademia Sztuk Pięknych)
13. **Beata Kowalska** (Uniwersytet Jagielloński)
14. **Piotr Kwapisiewicz** (Stowarzyszenie Czulent)
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16. **Monika Materna-Słoma** (Wydział Architektury i Urbanistyki UMK)
17. **Caroline Pietyra** (Krakowskie Biuro Festiwalowe)
18. **Mateusz Płoskonka** (Wydział Polityki Społecznej i Zdrowia UMK)
19. **Katarzyna Przyjemska-Grzesik** (Zarząd Zieleni Miejskiej)
20. **Beata Seweryn** (Małopolskie Centrum Nauki Cogiteon)
21. **Marta Smagacz-Poziemska** (Uniwersytet Jagielloński)
22. **Katarzyna Struzińska** (Uniwersytet Jagielloński)
23. **Ernestyna Szpakowska-Loranc** (Politechnika Krakowska)
24. **Agata Teutsch** (Fundacja Juniper)
25. **Aldo Vargas-Tetmajer** (Krajowy Punkt Kontaktowy URBACT przy Związku Miast Polskich)
26. **Dorota Wantuch-Matla** (Politechnika Krakowska)
27. **Maria Wojtacha** (Centrum Wielokulturowe, Fundacja Internationaler Bund Polska)



II

RESEARCH AREA NO 1

Gender Identity Constraints: An Affective Perspective on Experiencing Space

Women do not use public spaces as freely as men, partly due to concerns about safety, and one third do not feel safe after dark[5]. In Ireland, 55% of women do not feel safe travelling on public transport at night[6], and in Glasgow, Scotland, as many as 95% of its residents are afraid to visit city parks after dark. Fears of being attacked or harassed are exacerbated by, among other things, poorly designed, poorly maintained and insufficiently lit urban spaces, which make women feel unsafe or forced to take much longer routes.

A key problem for women in open public spaces is lighting. Dark spaces cause anxiety, but poorly installed lighting can also increase feelings of insecurity. This also happens when bright lights pierce the darkness, creating areas of high contrast. Just as street lighting can affect women's safety, so too can the layout and shape of streets. Rapidly developing cities are often geared towards vehicle traffic, pushing pedestrians to the sidelines. The transport hierarchy that pushes pedestrians to the sidelines negatively affects women's experiences of streets and urban spaces, as well as their safety and sense of security.

Women's mobility and safety are interconnected. In cities around the world, many women do not feel safe when moving around. A study conducted in 28 cities around the world showed that women are 10% more likely to feel unsafe on the metro and 6% more likely to feel unsafe on buses than men[8].

In Poland, there is still a lack of research on women's safety in urban spaces, but there are some studies that allow us to develop hypotheses and a methodology for their verification for the FEMACT Cities project. Based on the quantitative research "Safety in Krakow"[9] , on the fear of crime among the city's residents conducted in 2014–2016, it can be concluded that there is a strong correlation between the sense of security and gender. Women from Krakow are much more likely to feel fear in public spaces. Additionally, the study observed a significant

[5] Candiracci S., Power K., Cities Alive: Designing Cities that Work for Women, Arup 2022
[6] Report: Travelling in a Woman's Shoes, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, 2020
[7] Roach M., Navigating Glasgow: Discussing the Impact of Urban Planning on Women's Safety, Wise Women, 2023 https://www.wisewomen.org.uk/post/navigating-glasgow-discussing-the-impact-of-urban-planning-on-women-s-safety-by-michaela-roach [dostęp: 8.08.2024]
[8] Ouali, L. A. B. et al. (2020). Gender differences in the perception of safety in public transport. Statistics in Society Series A, 183(3), 737-769.
[9] Kabzińska J., Szafrańska M., Strach przed przestępczością mieszkańców Krakowa w latach 2014–2016 w świetle wyników badań empirycznych, Archiwum Kryminologii, 2018/TOM XL, s. 11–51

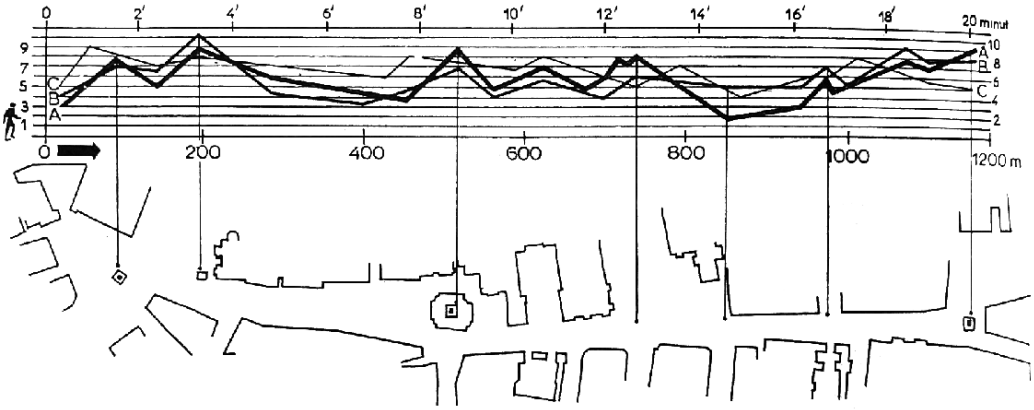
(compared to the assessments of safety during the day) decrease in the respondents' sense of security in the area of their residence after dark. Taking into account the aforementioned study, the researchers and the Local Group decided to conduct a night-time exploratory walk as part of the research.

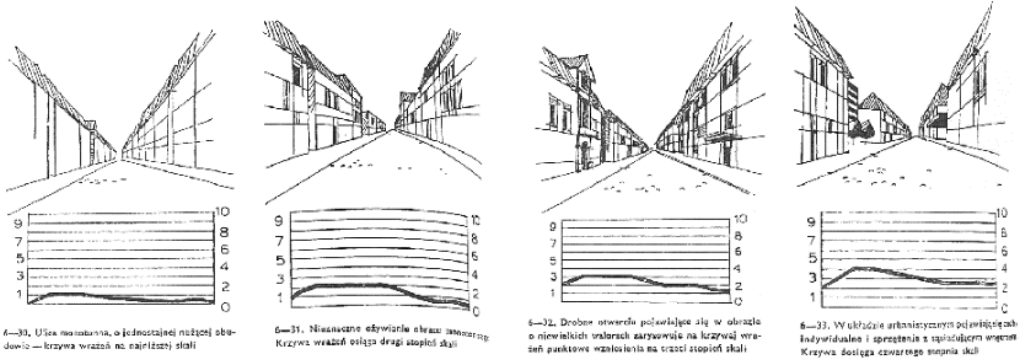
A. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Night walks are a method used by feminist collectives all over the world, but they are primarily activities that raise awareness and strengthen the self-confidence of participants. Initiatives such as Women Walk at Midnight[10] or Feminist Night Scapes[11] are primarily a way of resistance and opposition to what is socially and culturally "unacceptable" for women. Female participants of the walks draw strength from their community, wear what they want, often turn on music and walk around the city at night. This approach to reclaiming urban space by women was supplemented by the researchers from Architektoniczki with a theoretical component that allows for presenting the results of the walk in the context of urban analysis based on the key concepts of "gender-equal space" and the ability to "imagine a decent future". In this way, a new methodology called the Equal Space Sequence was outlined.

This methodology has its roots in the pioneering work of Kazimierz Wejchert, an outstanding Polish urban planner, who in 1974 introduced the concept of the "Curve of Impression" and the Space-Time Sequence[12], focusing on the analysis of the urban order of space. The curve is a visual representation of the impressions experienced by individuals in a given urban environment. However, it only takes into account factors related to the physical built environment: urban form, architectural form.

[10] https://www.womenwalkatmidnight.com/
[11] https://www.instagram.com/feminist_night_scapes/?hl=en
[12] Wejchert K.,Elementy kompozycji urbanistycznej, Warszawa 1984.



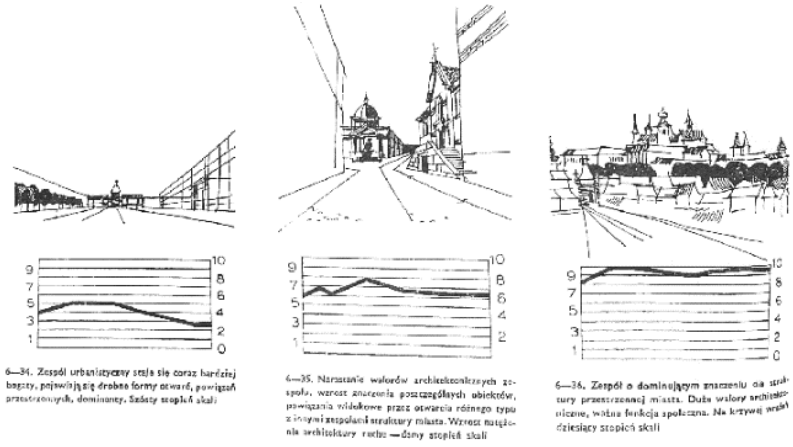


6—30. Ulica monotonna, o jednostajnej nużącej zabudowie — krzywa wrażeń na najniższej skali

6—31. Niesmaczne odtwórcze obrazy [illegible] Krzywa wrażeń osiąga drugi stopień skali

6—32. Drobne otwarcia pojawiające się w obrazie o niewielkich walorach zarysowują na krzywej wrażeń punktowe wzniesienia na trzeci stopień skali

6—33. W układzie urbanistycznym pojawiające się indywidualne i sprzężenia z sąsiadującym wnętrzem. Krzywa dosięga czwartego stopnia skali



6—34. Zespół urbanistyczny staje się coraz bardziej bogaty, pojawiają się drobne formy otwarć, powiązań przestrzennych, dominanty. Sięgnęły stopnia 5 skali

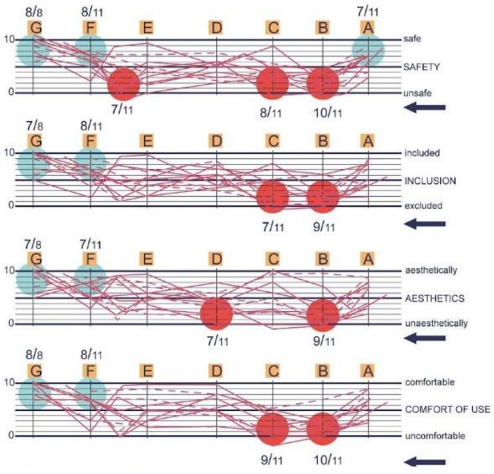
6—35. Narastanie walorów architektonicznych zespołu, wzrost znaczenia poszczególnych obiektów, powiązania widokowe przez otwarcia różnego typu z innymi zespołami struktury miasta. Wzrost natężenia architektury ruchu — dosięgły stopnia 6 skali

6—36. Zespół o dominującym znaczeniu dla struktury przestrzennej miasta. Duże walory architektoniczne, wielka funkcja społeczna. Na krzywej wrażeń dziesiąty stopień skali

Fot. Methodology Space-Time Series and Curve of Impressions. K. Wejchert 1974

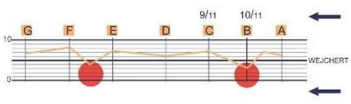
The current approach builds on Wejchert's framework and uses it as a comparative tool to illustrate disparities and divergences. The 4E Methodology, i.e. Equal-Spatial Sequence, when designing cities places emphasis on our functioning in space as well as on technical solutions. Although emotions are difficult to precisely define, the awareness of their existence and the ability to express them defines our behavior both in the built environment and in society. Therefore, it is extremely important to expand knowledge in this area and take emotions into account when changing our cities. Using Wejchert's comparative scale, a Curve of Emotions and Equal-Spatial Sequence, that includes (a) safety and (b) inclusion, next to (c) comfort of use and (d) aesthetic.

By comparing the new 4E methodology with Wejchert's Curve of Impression , we can identify differences between the two approaches - the first created by men and the second based on a female perspective. The pilot study of the methodology was conducted on the main shopping street of Warsaw (Aleje Jerozolimskie), which was exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Warsaw in November 2022. Since then, this methodology has been used to study cities during night-time exploratory walks.



Fot. Places marked in red require changes according to the 4E methodology (on the left) vs. according to K. Wejchert's methodology (on the right).

VS



4E METHODOLOGY:

(1) offers a diverse perspective on the design of the built environment;
(2) enables excluded groups of residents to have a voice;
(3) raises awareness of how space is perceived;
(4) helps guide decisions about spatial planning and design by taking into account the subjective experiences of individuals in relation to the physical space they inhabit.



Fot 1. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

Based on the 4E methodology - Equal Spatial Sequence -Curve of Emotion , a walk was conducted on the night of March 26-27, 2024, in which 13 people identifying as women aged 24-65 took part, with two of them over 60 and 4 under 30. In this case, all the participants of the walk had higher education and live in Krakow. The walk was led by 2 researchers.

The walking route was marked out based on the proposals from the Local Group. Three routes were marked out, running through similar districts and partially duplicating the route. The routes were verified by the organisers, then a compilation of these routes was made and arranged into one that touched on various spatial issues. The walk was organised so that it ran through the most diverse spaces possible, i.e. busy streets, underpasses, alleys, squares, plazas, parks. Its final route was not published for safety reasons. The participants met at 10 p.m. in front of the Qubus Hotel on Nadwiślańska Street. There, they were presented with the route and worksheets that

they were to fill in during the walk. Each of the 11 points was to be assessed on a scale of 0-10 in 4 dimensions:

1. Feel of safety
2. Feel of Inclusion
3. Aesthetic
4. Comfort of use

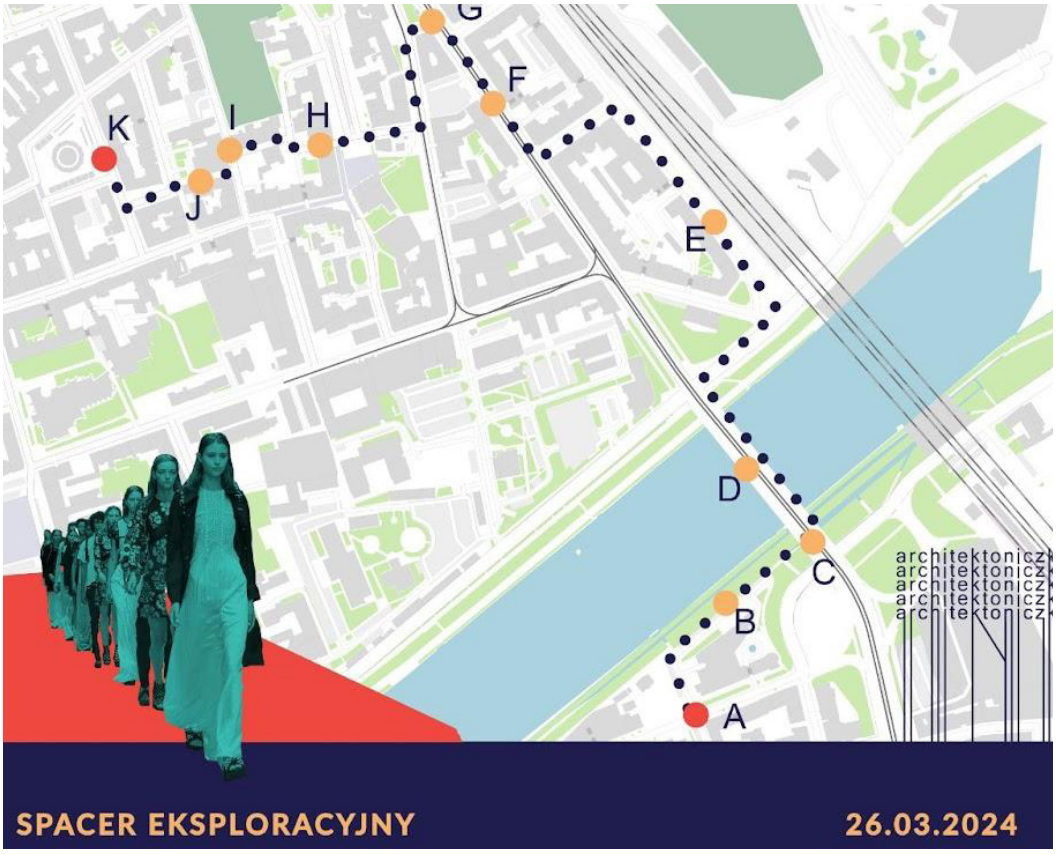
At the same time, at some of the points of the walk, more general topics related to the functioning of women in urban space after dark were discussed, e.g. the presence of lighting,



Fot 2. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

graffiti, greenery, etc. These threads will be presented in the subsection "Research results".
In addition, all participants of the walk were asked to walk the same route individually, after dark, and fill out the same worksheet as during the night walk. The aim is to compare the perception of the surroundings depending on whether we are alone in the space or in a group.

B. WALK ROUTE



Fot. The route of the exploratory and research walk on March 26/27, 2024 in Krakow.

A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel)
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards)
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)
E (Halicka Street)
F (Starowislna Street)
G (Berrecci Square)
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings)
I (Kazimierz District)
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets)
K (Nowy Square and public toilet)

A: THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE QUBUS HOTEL



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

The Qubus Hotel building is characterised by large glazed windows and a red sign, creating a 'modern' look with extensive use of glass and metal elements. In front of the hotel there is a pavement with a lit entrance area. The central part includes the main glass facade of the hotel and a brightly lit 'Qubus Hotel' sign, which is clearly visible from a distance. There are Vistula boulevards on the left side, the city lights are reflected in the river, and further in the background there is a brightly lit bridge. The lighting of this space is mainly provided by street lamps and building lights, the pavement is unlit. However, limited human activity suggests that the area is dead at this time.

While walking around the hotel there were a few parked cars, but there were practically no people moving around the area.

FEMALE PARTICIPANTS' OPINIONS:
The participants had mixed emotions about this space, indicating a mixed perception of safety.

A hotel may seem like the only place where you can seek help in an emergency. With a 24-hour reception, the hotel seems like a place where you can find people and get support.

However, this sense of safety can be deceptive, as one of the participants of the walk found out when she told about her experience. Once, while walking past this hotel at dusk, she

was hit in the head by a man riding a bike. After this incident, she went to the hotel to ask for intervention and help. To her surprise, she did not receive any support there, nor was she provided with a CCTV recording. The participants of the walk shared their observations on how to cope in such situations. *"Sometimes screaming can help, but it's not always easy to scream in a stressful situation."*[13]. *"You have to practise to get used to it and be able to react effectively."*[14] It was pointed out that such reactions can be trained in self-defence courses, but men do not have to think about such things.

THIS AREA SCORED THE LOWEST ON THE "INCLUSION" DIMENSION – PARTICIPANTS FELT THAT IT WAS NOT A SPACE FOR THEM, AND ALSO ON THE "COMFORT OF USE" DIMENSION, BUT THEY DID NOT TREAT IT AS DIRECTLY DANGEROUS.

B: PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PATH ALONG THE VISTULA BOULEVARDS



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

[13] Participant 1 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[14] Participant 2 of night walk March 26-27 2024

The boulevard is limited on one side by the river and on the other side by a high stone wall, which means there are no so-called “eyes on the street”. The descent to the boulevards via stone stairs is not accessible to people with disabilities, and there is no possibility of descending or bringing a bicycle or a stroller down a ramp. Along the Boulevard, on its sides, there are a number of benches, but the lighting is modest, only a few lanterns. Once again, the bridge turns out to be a clear point of light.

ALTHOUGH THE BOULEVARD SEEMS TO BE A POPULAR PLACE FOR WALKS AND RELAXATION, IT IS RATED THE LOWEST OF ALL THE ANALYSED POINTS ON THE SAFETY DIMENSION. AESTHETICS AND COMFORT OF USE ARE RATED AS GOOD.

C: EXIT TO POWSTAŃCÓW ŚLĄSKICH BRIDGE



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

The area at the entrance to Powstańców Bridge from the left bank of the Vistula is located in a busy part of the city during the day, near the center, designated for pedestrians and public transport. However, the only stairs leading to the bridge are those that are neglected, with grass and weeds growing between the steps. The path to the stairs is compacted earth, which had a puddle in the middle during the walk. The stairs do not have a ramp or elevator, which makes them inaccessible to

people with disabilities and difficult for parents with prams or cyclists. In addition, the handrails on both sides are in very poor condition, which does not make it easier for people who need support. Due to the lack of adequate lighting, the group of respondents entered the bridge in a place inaccessible to pedestrians and in order to continue the route, they had to turn around and go under the bridge. This area was very poorly lit and led along the wall.

PARTICIPANTS' OPINIONS:
The participants of the walk indicated that the problem of lack of lighting rarely affects such centrally located points of the city, but it is a daily, or rather nightly, experience for people living on the outskirts and in non-tourist districts.*„It is not the worst in the city centre, which is often also lit for tourists, but in residential districts, where we live."*[15] They indicated that the problem is not leaving the centre of Krakow in the evening, but moving around after reaching your district. *„I often run or walk quickly there, looking around me, because I pass through places that are completely dark."*[16]

THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THIS PLACE IS NEGLECTED AND IS NOT FULLY ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY, WHICH CAN MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO MOVE AROUND THIS AREA SAFELY AND COMFORTABLY. IT IS THEREFORE NOT SURPRISING THAT THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE WALK WERE EMOTIONAL WHEN THEY INDICATED THAT THIS PLACE AROUSED THEIR CONCERN ON THE SAFETY DIMENSION (AS MANY AS 2 PEOPLE INDICATED „0" OR COMPLETE LACK OF SAFETY). THIS WAS DUE TO POOR LIGHTING, THE NEED TO MAKE A DETOUR AND THE LACK OF SOLUTIONS ENABLING PEOPLE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY TO USE THIS SPACE.

[15] Participant 4 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[16] Participant 2 of night walk March 26-27 2024

D: POWSTAŃCÓW ŚLĄSKICH BRIDGE



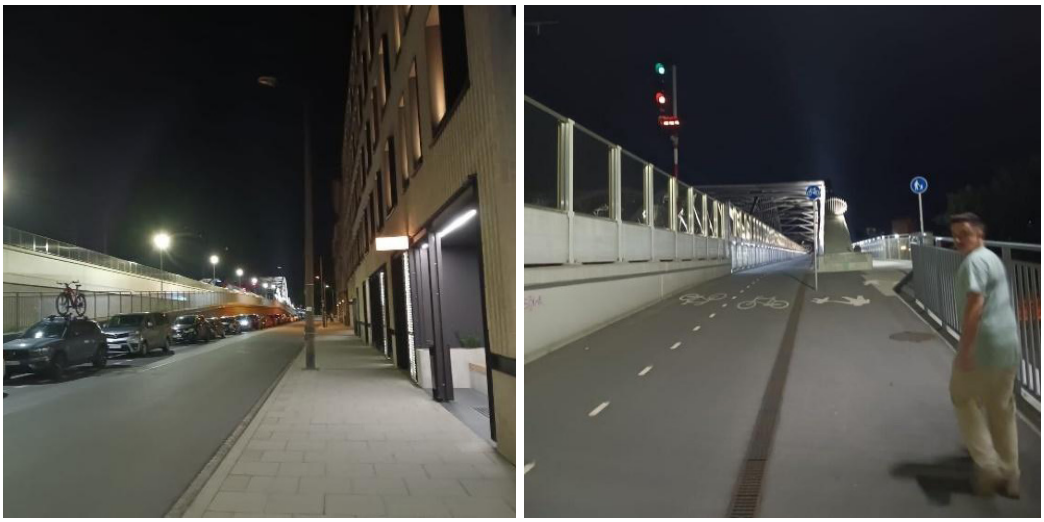


Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

What does the city tell you through its lighting? This is another point on the map of the walk. The bridge we come out onto is lit. Behind the bridge, you can see a characteristic pedestrian footbridge, and on the other side, the Poniatowski Bridge with its illuminated truss structure. However, the sidewalks in between are not lit to such an extent, and the sidewalk on the bridge is also poorly lit. In the background, apart from the bridge, you can see the city buildings, lit by street lamps and neon signs, the Father Bernatek Footbridge and the Tadeusz Kantor Art Documentation Center Cricoteka are perfectly lit. We quickly come to the conclusion that cultural facilities, monuments, memorials, and streets for cars are lit in the city at night. Sidewalks and smaller streets, which the city's residents pass through as part of their daily mobility, are omitted.

THE FACT THAT IT IS “ABOVE THE CITY” SEEMS TO CONTRIBUTE TO A SLIGHTLY HIGHER LEVEL OF SAFETY IN THIS LOCATION THAN IN THE PREVIOUS AREAS ANALYSED. HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT PARTICIPANTS FELT COMPLETELY SAFE ON THE POWSTAŃCÓW ŚLĄSKICH BRIDGE. THE LACK OF LIGHTING AND THE COMPLICATED WAY TO GET TO THE TOP CONTRIBUTED TO MIXED RATINGS ON ALL DIMENSIONS EXAMINED (SAFETY, INCLUSION, AESTHETICS, COMFORT)

E: HALICKA STREET



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

Halicka Street is a side street located between the frontage of buildings and the railway tracks with a sidewalk and a bicycle path. The street lighting is evenly distributed, providing good visibility, but there is no sidewalk lighting on the side of the frontage of buildings. On one side, there is a long, multi-storey tenement house with numerous windows, some of which are lit, suggesting that they are inhabited. The street is limited along its entire length on the sides, which means there is no potential escape to the sides. Here, the participants wondered what, apart from poor lighting, increases the sense of danger. At this point, the participants were also given symbolic whistles.

Although the infrastructure in this area seems to be modern and well-maintained, the low pedestrian traffic made the participants feel unsafe there.*"I always feel like I'm alone here, there are few people here after dark. If there were more people here, I would feel safer. Currently, if something happened, I wouldn't have anyone to ask for help."*[17] The participants pointed out that the hotel on this street does not give any sense of security, with the course of the street it does not even give the impression that you can go there.

One of the participants admitted that she returns home from work this way and after dark, she asks her husband to go out

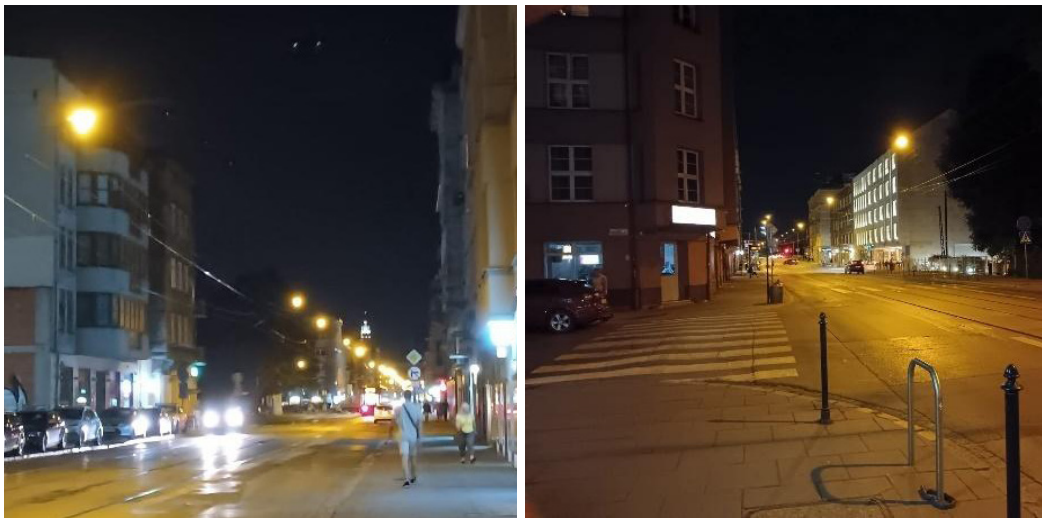
[17] Participant 5 of night walk March 26-27 2024

to get her. During the walk, it also turned out that this is the street that fans return from football matches, which additionally increases the feeling of danger.

"Their [fans - note EJ] presence is unpredictable and often stressful. I do not feel safe then." [18] The participants mentioned how such groups take over urban space. *„They are often drunk, loud, shouting and taking up all the space on the sidewalk, there is nowhere to hide, how to get past them"* [19]

ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SPECIFIC CONCERNS ABOUT THIS POINT ON THE WALKING ROUTE IN THE CONTEXT OF SAFETY, IT DID NOT STAND OUT NEGATIVELY FROM THE OTHERS. THIS COULD HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY THE MODERN AND WELL-MAINTAINED INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE AREA.

F: STAROWIŚLNA STREET



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

One of the main streets in Kazimierz in Krakow is lit only by street lamps, with no lower lamps to illuminate the pavements. The pavements are of standard width, but there is visible unevenness and crumbling, suggesting that it may cause difficulties for people in wheelchairs or high heels. The street

[18] Participant 3 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[19] Participant 6 of night walk March 26-27 2024

also has an uneven surface, which may impede the movement of vehicles and pedestrians. There is no visible street furniture, such as benches.

At this point of the walk, the participants were asked to pay attention to the signage of urban space for women and men, and to the symbolic presence of women in the city. Some of them pointed out that in recent years Krakow has taken action to increase the representation of women in the city. The city initiated the "Krakowianki" project, which aims to name streets, squares and plazas after women who had a significant impact on the history and development of the city. As part of this initiative, many distinguished figures were selected, such as Anna Polony, Wisława Szymborska, Irena Sendlerowa and Zofia Nałkowska, whose names appear on the map of Krakow. This is an important step towards a more balanced gender representation, showing that the city is trying to honour women who had a significant impact on its history and culture. However, the participants of the walk admitted that they rarely pay attention to how few women are commemorated in cities. *„We are used to men being the heroes of monuments and street names. That often someone has to make us realise that they are not there and could be. It is sad that we accept this state of affairs so easily, that we do not see it ourselves."*[20]

STAROWIŚLNA WAS PERCEIVED BY THE PARTICIPANTS PRIMARILY AS A COMFORTABLE PLACE – THEY DO NOT FEEL PARTICULARLY SAFE OR DANGEROUS THERE, AND IT DOES NOT DIFFER FROM THE AVERAGE IN TERMS OF AESTHETICS. HOWEVER, IT GIVES THEM A SENSE OF COMFORT IN USING THE SPACE.

[20] Participant 1 of night walk March 26-27 2024

I. BERRECCI SQUARE





Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

The square is lit only by street lamps, there are no lower lamps illuminating the pavements. The pavement is narrow and in poor condition, with visible unevenness and crumbling fragments, which suggests that it is neglected.

There is one bench with armrests under the tree, but it is not lit, so it does not encourage you to sit on it and rest. The completely unlit greenery around the bench looks neglected and not very safe at night. Additionally, it creates dark, shaded areas, increasing the anxiety of the participants of the walk. Here, attention was drawn to urban furniture, including the bench as one of the most important elements of the city space equipment.

Benches in the urban space arouse mixed feelings among the participants. Some of them were bothered by the noise under the housing block resulting from the lively social life taking place "by the bench" *("When there are benches, they are often occupied by people drinking alcohol or are located in inconvenient places"* [21]), others would prefer to increase their number, as they make it easier to use the urban space, especially when travelling longer distances *(„I remember my grandmother complaining that it was difficult for her to cover a long distance without being able to rest. I had similar feelings when I was pregnant."* [22]).

COMPARED TO OTHER WALKING SPOTS, THIS SQUARE WAS RATED AS ONE OF THE SAFER ONES.

[21] Participant 5 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[22] Participant 5 of night walk March 26-27 2024

H. CIEMNA STREET AND SURROUNDINGS



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

This part of the city is characterised by narrow, cobbled streets, lit mainly by street lamps and lights coming from buildings. These buildings have a diverse character - some of them are old tenement houses, others are modern buildings, and there are some covered in graffiti. There is a lack of visible street furniture such as benches and developed greenery. At the same time, the participants indicated that the greenery is chaotic, neglected. Its height and density increase the sense of threat, because there is a fear that someone will jump out from behind the bushes and attack a woman passing by.

"The greenery is neglected and dark, which even during the day looks uninviting, especially since if there are bushes or low trees, this space is often treated as a toilet."[23] Urban greenery, although often perceived as a friendly and aesthetic element, in this case created dark, shaded areas that could be perceived as dangerous. In addition, street lamps provide only basic lighting, creating bright spots along the street, but there are no lower lamps dedicated to the pavements. This is not a convenient space for people with limited mobility - cobbled pavements and no lowered curbs or ramps.

DESPITE MANY COMMENTS, THIS AREA WAS RATED THE HIGHEST ON THE INCLUSION DIMENSION - PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN THE WALK FELT THAT THIS WAS A SPACE FOR THEM.

[23] Participant 6 of night walk March 26-27 2024

I: KAZIMIERZ DISTRICT



Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

The city's tourist district with narrow streets in the older part of the city, preserving its historic character. It is lit mainly by lanterns hanging on the facades and lights coming from the buildings. It is practically fully paved, the sidewalks are quite narrow. The historic character of Kazimierz is evidenced by, among other things, multi-storey buildings, mostly old tenement houses, with well-maintained and aesthetically lit facades. There is a lack of visible street furniture, such as benches or bike racks. Bikes are tied to a road sign, and cars are parked along the streets.

The women taking part in the walk notice that on the left side of the street there is a building with large windows through which you can see the interior of the premises with neon lighting, which gives a sense of safety. Additionally, the general character of the district – a tourist one, with aesthetically maintained buildings and clean streets – makes the women feel less anxious during the walk.

IN THIS PART OF THE ROUTE, THE WALK FOCUSES ON THE ISSUE OF "WHAT THE WALLS ARE SAYING TO US." THE FOLLOWING INTERPRETATIONS EMERGE DURING THE DISCUSSION ABOUT GRAFFITI. SOMETIMES MURALS MAKE WOMEN FEEL SAFER, ESPECIALLY IF THEIR MESSAGE IS PRO-WOMEN. AFTER THE NUMEROUS WOMEN'S PROTESTS DURING BLACK MONDAY AND THE FIGHT FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, SUCH STICKERS, TAGS OR STENCILS ARE EASY TO SPOT IN SPACE. AT THE SAME TIME, WHEN THE GRAFFITI IS UNSIGHTLY, CHAOTIC, THE RECIPIENT DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ITS MESSAGE, WHICH MAKES HER FEEL UNSAFE.

J: CORNER OF IZAAKA, KUPA, JAKUBA STREETS





Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

This area is located deep in the Kazimierz district, full of narrow, cobbled streets, mainly lit by lanterns hanging above the street. There are many bars and cafes there, and many cameras directed at the entrances. The buildings are mainly multi-storey, with facades full of graffiti. Many of them have stylish architectural details. The pavements are narrow and cobbled, and there is a lack of street furniture.

The cameras and open bars make the participants of the walk feel the safest here of all the places analyzed. Although as for the monitoring itself, the participants of the walk had mixed feelings. Some women said that they were not sure whether the cameras actually worked, others admitted that there were spaces in which they felt safe thanks to the monitoring. When asked about specific spaces where the monitoring strengthened their sense of safety, they indicated housing estates. There were opinions that the camera itself does not have a function to support women in the event of a threat. **„Cameras only give the illusion of a sense of security, because they do not prevent what may happen to us."[24] One of the participants even had concerns that the monitoring was a façade, a check-off point for the city authorities. „If the city instals monitoring, it doesn't have to do anything else in a given space, believing that it will be enough."[25]** Relying solely on technology can create a false sense of safety if it is not accompanied by a real need to take care of the safety of residents.

GENERALLY, HOWEVER, IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THE STREETS IN THIS AREA ARE WELL-LIT AND EVEN GRAFFITI DOES NOT CAUSE SUCH CONCERN HERE. HIS IS ALSO A PLACE CONSIDERED TO BE RELATIVELY AESTHETIC AND COMFORTABLE.

[24] Participant 8 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[25] Participant 5 of night walk March 26-27 2024

K: NOWY SQUARE AND PUBLIC TOILET





Fot. The Night Walk in Krakow / March 26-27, 2024/

A historical square, with a large number of people walking and sitting outside. In front of the buildings there are stalls and stands that people used. There was rubbish lying on the streets, including paper and bottles. This place is clearly frequented by tourists who spend time outside. That day the Polish national football team won a football match and the square was full of loud fans who were under the influence of alcohol. In a sense, they took over this part of the city. Due to the fact that it was around midnight, the restaurants in the area were closed. The participants of the walk said that they did not feel comfortable at all, that they were worried about the men and their shouting. There was no police or municipal guard in sight. *„Why do men take over places in the city centre when matches are taking place?”*[26] – women were asking.

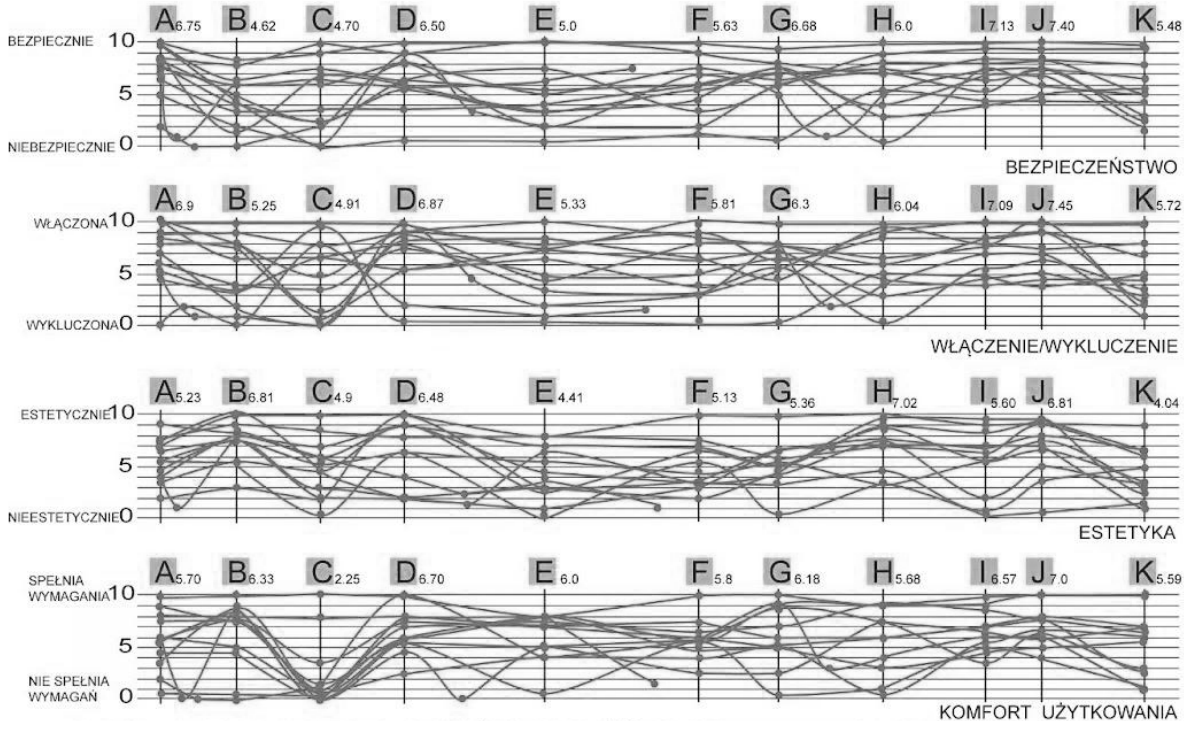
On the corner of the square there is a building for public toilets. It is one-story, painted in a light yellow colour, with several green windows protected by bars. The entrance to the toilet is at street level, but there are stairs leading down to the interior, which makes the toilet inaccessible to people with disabilities. There are handrails by the stairs, which make it easier to get down. The participants indicated that the toilet does not look friendly, and they would rather enter it with reluctance. *„There are very few accessible toilets in the city in general, and if there are, there are no toilets with a sink, so that you can change a menstrual pad or wash a menstrual cup.”* [27]

COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS LOCATION, NOWY SQUARE WAS ASSESSED AS SIGNIFICANTLY LESS SAFE. SOME PEOPLE FELT EXCLUDED THERE AND PERCEIVED THE AREA AS UNSIGHTLY.

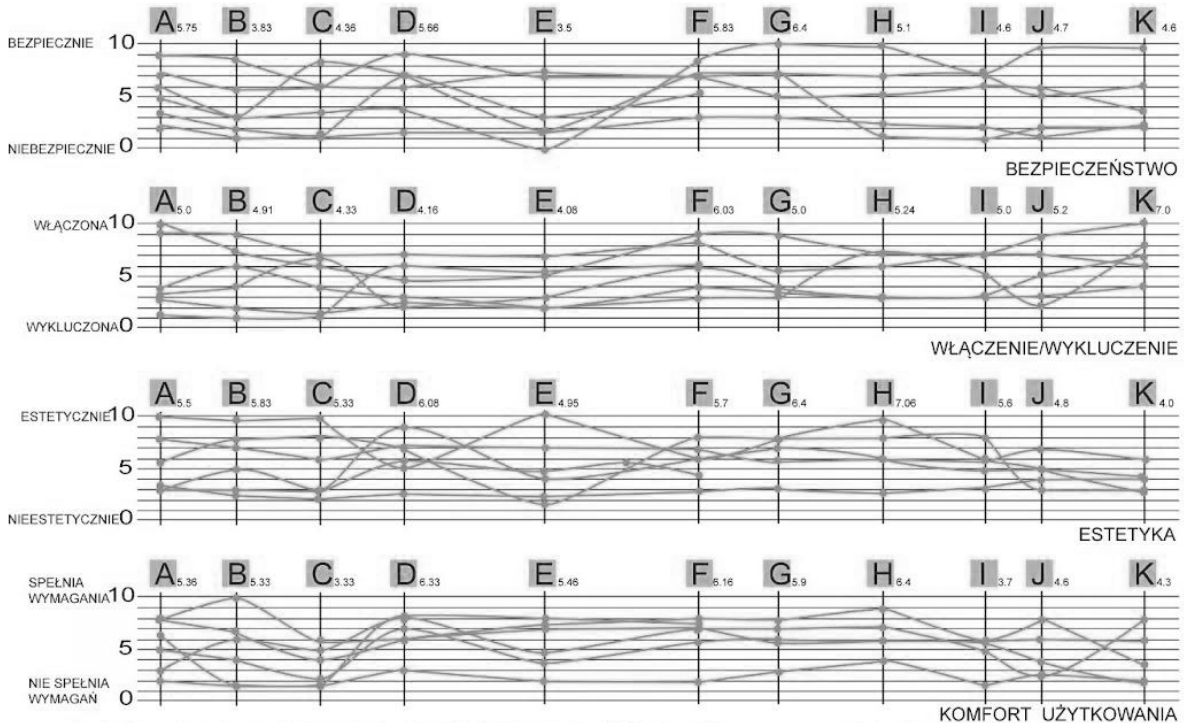
[26] Participant 1 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[27] Participant 3 of night walk March 26-27 2024

C. RESEARCH RESULTS

Using the 4E method, the following Equal Space Sequences were developed for the selected route.



Fot. Curves of Emotions 1. Aggregated data for the emotion curve from all walk participants. Individual letters correspond to points marked on the route. - results of the group night walk

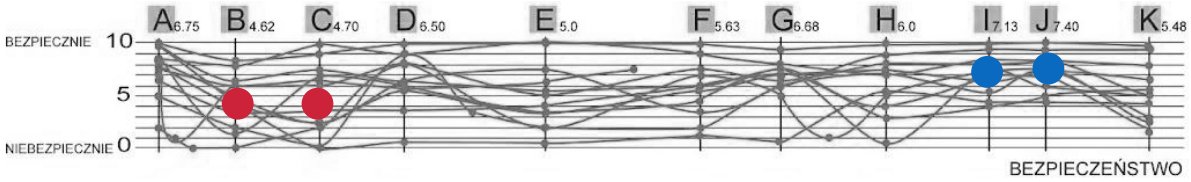


Fot. Curves of Emotions 2. Aggregated data for the emotion curve from all walk participants. Individual letters correspond to points marked on the route. - results of the individual night walk

Below the conclusions regarding specific places highlighted along the walk route are presented:

SAFETY:

Below there are the average scores for each point (A to K) in the group assessment:



A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel) **A: 6.75**
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards) **B: 4.62**
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **C: 4.70**
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **D: 6.50**
E (Halicka Street) **E: 5.0**
F (Starowislna Street) **F: 5.63**
G (Berrecci Square) **G: 6.68**
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings) **H: 6.0**
I (Kazimierz District) **I: 7.13**
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets) **J: 7.40**
K (Nowy Square and public toilet) **K: 5.48**

SAFE





Highest rated points:
J (7.40) i **I (7.13)**: Kazimierza District streets are the place where women feel the safest.

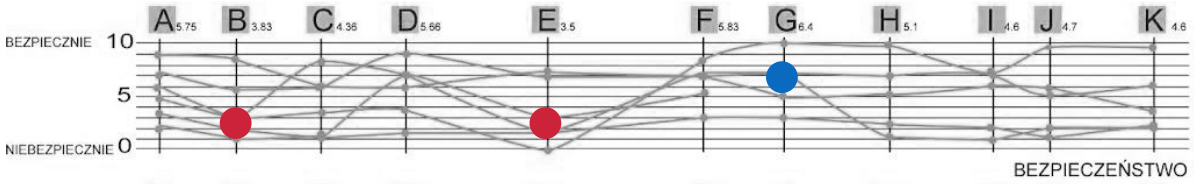
UNSAFE





Lowest rated points:
B (4.62) i **C (4.70)**: The Vistula Boulevards are perceived as the most dangerous space, and the exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge (point C) received two scores of 0, indicating a strong sense of threat.

Below there are the average scores for each point (from A to K) in the individual assessment:



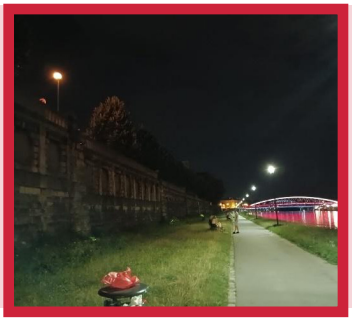
A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel)
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards)
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)
E (Halicka Street)
F (Starowislna Street)
G (Berrecci Square)
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings)
I (Kazimierz District)
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets)
K (Nowy Square and public toilet)

A: 5.75
B: 3.83
C: 4.36
D: 5.66
E: 3.5
F: 5.83
G: 6.4
H: 5.1
I: 4.6
J: 4.7
K: 4.6



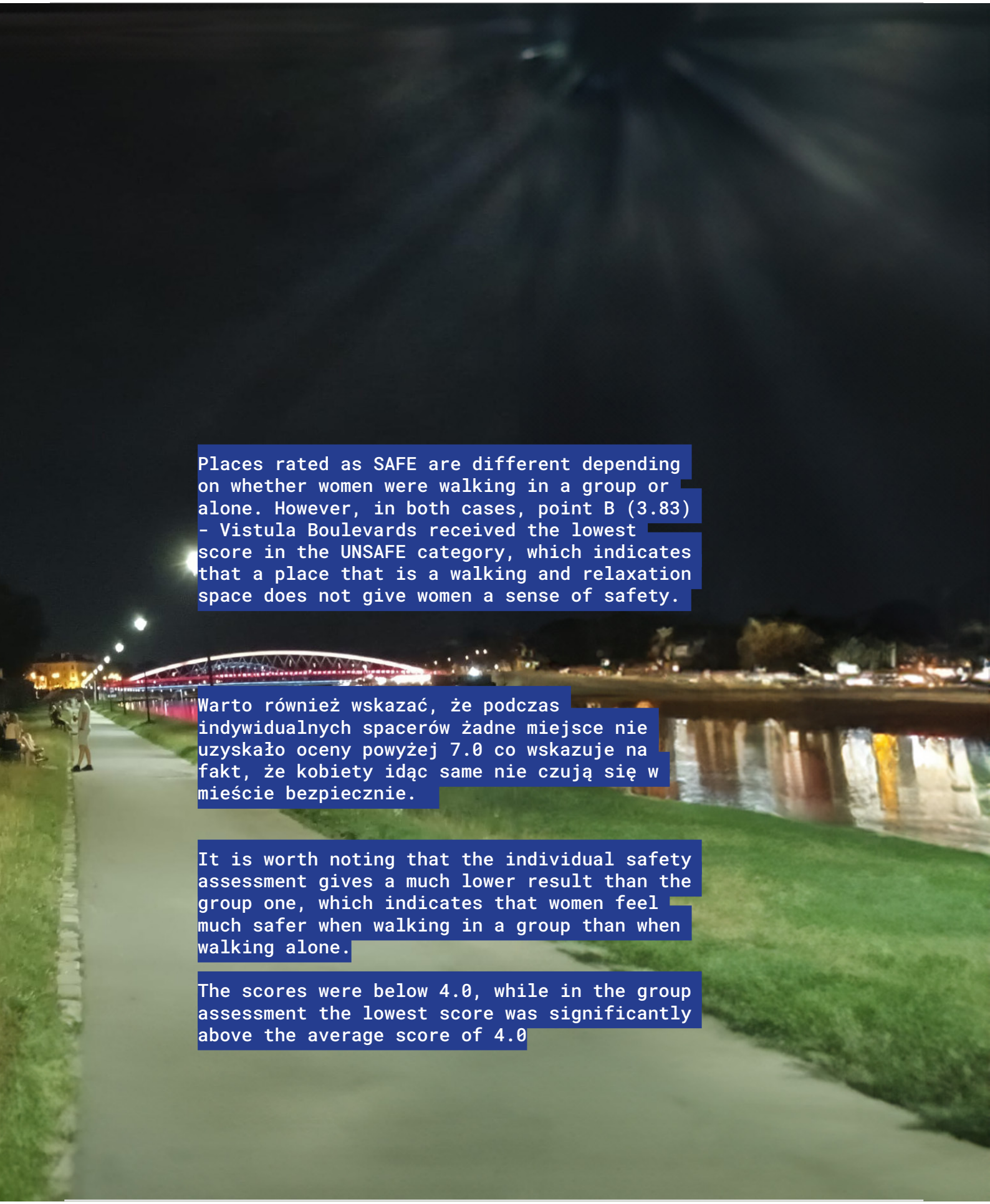
Highest rated points:
G (6.40) Skwer Berrecci Square is a place where each woman felt the safest when walking alone. It is also worth noting that during individual walks, no place received a score above 7.0, which indicates that women do not feel safe in the city when walking alone.





Lowest rated points:
E (3.5) Halicka Street: This point has the lowest average score, indicating that it is perceived as less safe. Only this place received one score of 0.
B (3.83) – The Vistula Boulevards also received a low score - similar to the group assessment.





Places rated as SAFE are different depending on whether women were walking in a group or alone. However, in both cases, point B (3.83) - Vistula Boulevards received the lowest score in the UNSAFE category, which indicates that a place that is a walking and relaxation space does not give women a sense of safety.

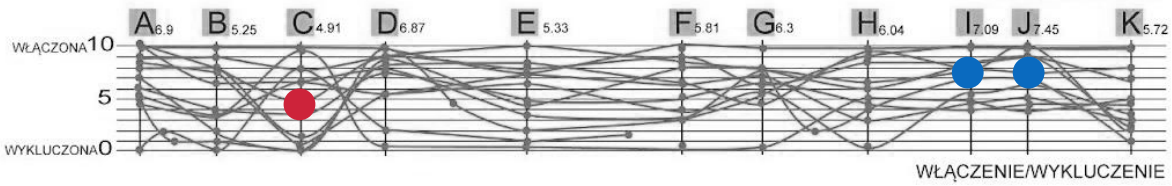
Warto również wskazać, że podczas indywidualnych spacerów żadne miejsce nie uzyskało oceny powyżej 7.0 co wskazuje na fakt, że kobiety idąc same nie czują się w mieście bezpiecznie.

It is worth noting that the individual safety assessment gives a much lower result than the group one, which indicates that women feel much safer when walking in a group than when walking alone.

The scores were below 4.0, while in the group assessment the lowest score was significantly above the average score of 4.0

INCLUSION:

Below there are the average scores for each point (A to K) in the group assessment:



A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel) **A: 6.9**
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards) **B: 5.25**
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **C: 4.91**
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **D: 6.87**
E (Halicka Street) **E: 5.33**
F (Starowislna Street) **F: 5.81**
G (Berrecci Square) **G: 6.3**
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings) **H: 6.04**
I (Kazimierz District) **I: 7.09**
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets) **J: 7.45**
K (Nowy Square and public toilet) **K: 5.72**

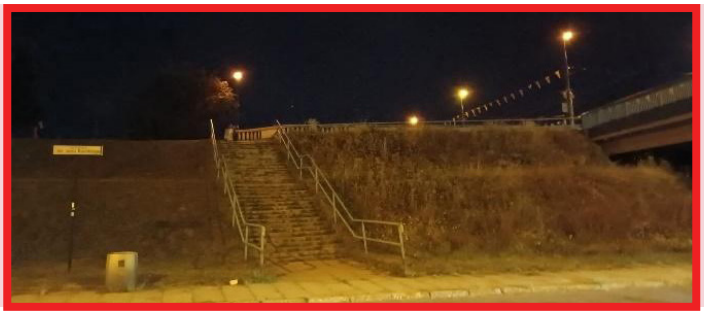
INCLUSION





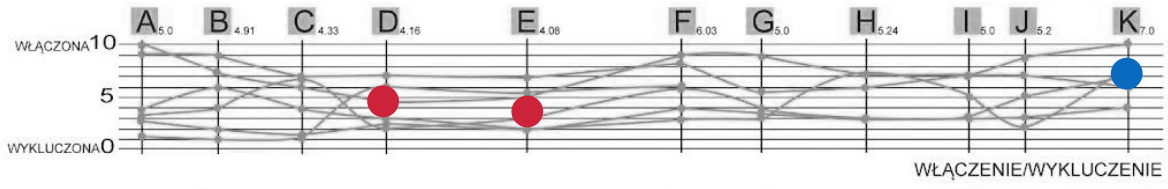
The highest rated points:
J (7.45) and **I (7.09)**: i.e. the streets of Kazimierz are a place where women are not excluded from the space. It is worth mentioning that exclusion can be for various reasons / social, gender, economic, aesthetic /

EXCLUSION



Lowest rated points:
C (4.91) Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge: This point has the lowest average rating, indicating that it is perceived as the most excluded place.

Below there are the average scores for each point (from A to K) in the individual assessment:

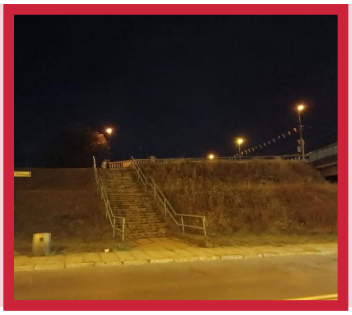


A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel) **A: 5.0**
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards) **B: 4.91**
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **C: 4.33**
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **D: 4.16**
E (Halicka Street) **E: 4.08**
F (Starowislna Street) **F: 6.03**
G (Berrecci Square) **G: 5.0**
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings) **H: 5.24**
I (Kazimierz District) **I: 5.0**
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets) **J: 5.2**
K (Nowy Square and public toilet) **K: 7.0**



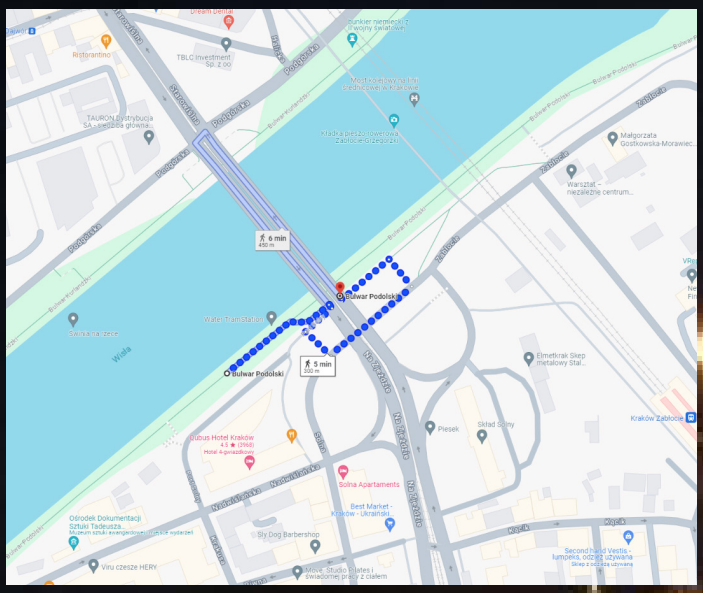
Highest rated points:
K (7.0): Nowy Square is perceived as the most inclusive place.



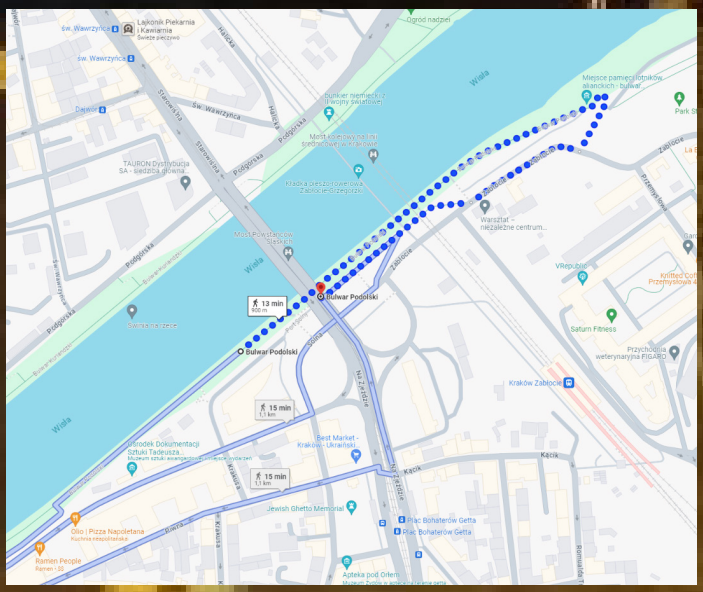


Lowest rated points:
E (4.08): This point has the lowest average rating, indicating that it is perceived as very excluded.
D (4.16): This point also has a low average rating.

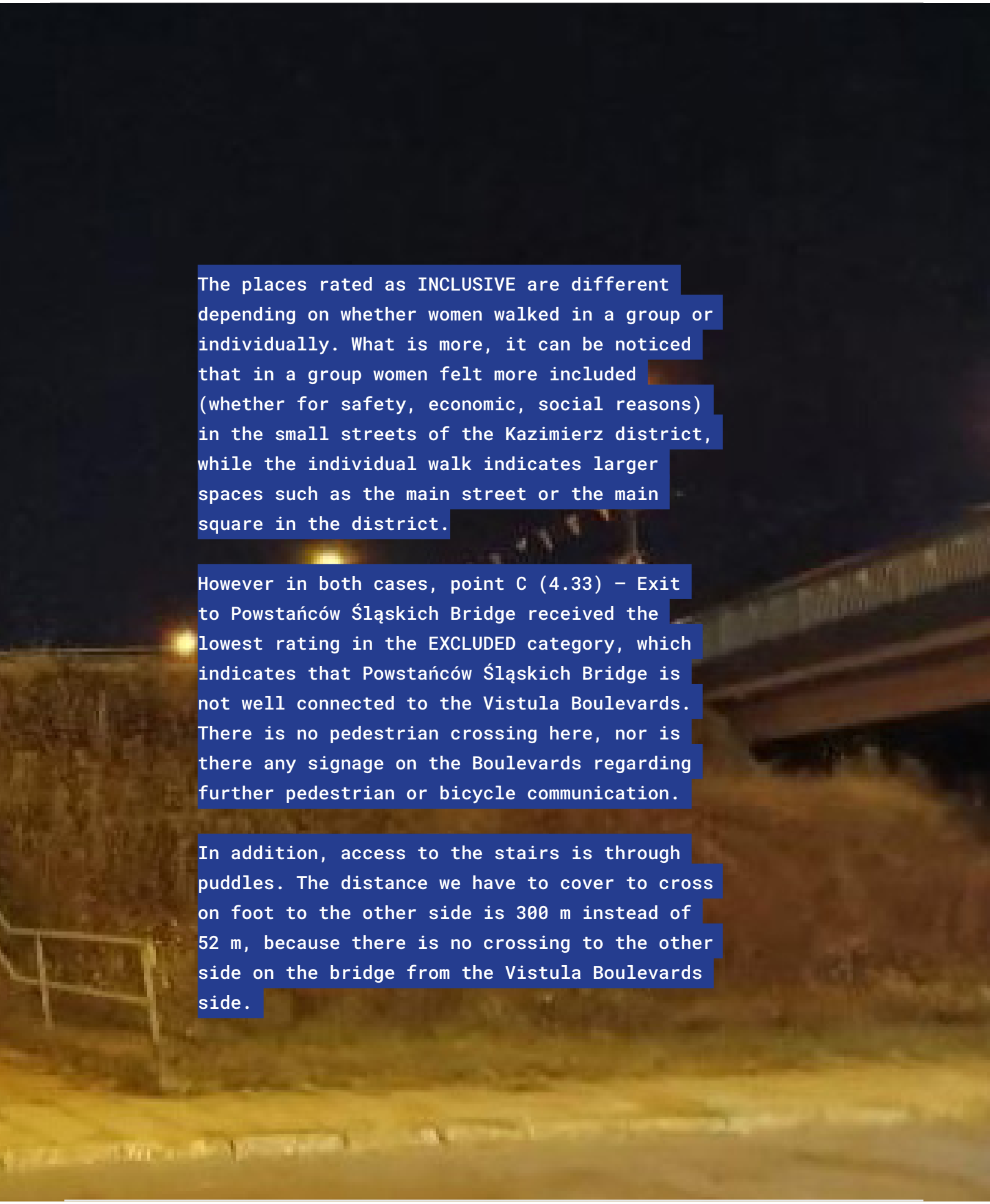
In the case of people with mobility impairments or those pushing a wheelchair or bicycle, the difference in the length of the route is even greater - 900 m instead of 52 m.



Fot. The distance we have to take to be able to cross the bridge on foot



Fot. The route we have to take to get onto the bridge in the case of a person with a mobility impairment, a person pushing a wheelchair, a bicycle, etc.



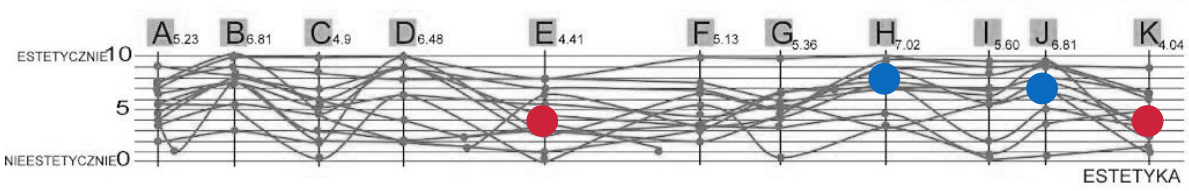
The places rated as INCLUSIVE are different depending on whether women walked in a group or individually. What is more, it can be noticed that in a group women felt more included (whether for safety, economic, social reasons) in the small streets of the Kazimierz district, while the individual walk indicates larger spaces such as the main street or the main square in the district.

However in both cases, point C (4.33) – Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge received the lowest rating in the EXCLUDED category, which indicates that Powstańców Śląskich Bridge is not well connected to the Vistula Boulevards. There is no pedestrian crossing here, nor is there any signage on the Boulevards regarding further pedestrian or bicycle communication.

In addition, access to the stairs is through puddles. The distance we have to cover to cross on foot to the other side is 300 m instead of 52 m, because there is no crossing to the other side on the bridge from the Vistula Boulevards side.

AESTHETIC:

Below there are the average scores for each point (A to K) in the group assessment:



A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel)	**A: 5.23**
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards)	**B: 6.81**
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)	**C: 4.9**
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)	**D: 6.48**
E (Halicka Street)	**E: 4.41**
F (Starowislna Street)	**F: 5.13**
G (Berrecci Square)	**G: 5.36**
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings)	**H: 7.02**
I (Kazimierz District)	**I: 5.60**
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets)	**J: 6.81**
K (Nowy Square and public toilet)	**K: 4.04**

ESTHETIC





Highest rated points:
H (7.02): This point is seen as the most aesthetic. It is the only point above the average rating of 7.0
J (6.81): The next highest rated point.

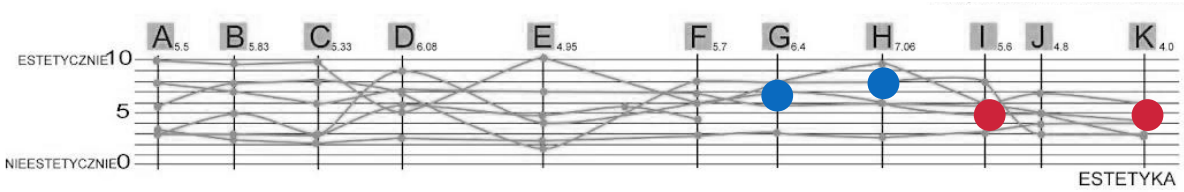
NEGLECTED





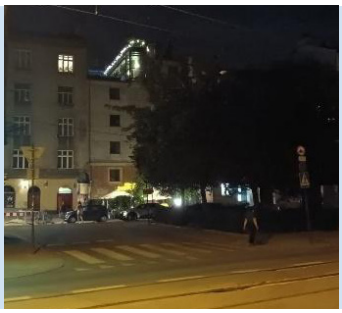
Lowest rated points:
K (4.04): This location has the lowest average rating, indicating that this place is perceived as the most chaotic, least aesthetic and neglected.
E (4.41): Another lowest rated point in terms of aesthetics.

Below there are the average scores for each point (A to K) in the individual assessment:



A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel) **A: 5.5**
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards) **B: 5.83**
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **C: 5.33**
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge) **D: 6.06**
E (Halicka Street) **E: 4.95**
F (Starowislna Street) **F: 5.7**
G (Berrecci Square) **G: 6.4**
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings) **H: 7.06**
I (Kazimierz District) **I: 5.6**
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets) **J: 4.8**
K (Nowy Square and public toilet) **K: 4.0**





Highest rated points:
H (7.06): This place is perceived as the most aesthetic.
G (6.4): Another highly rated point indicating the aesthetics of the place.





Lowest rated points:
K (4.0): This location has the lowest average rating, indicating that it is perceived as the most chaotic place.
J (4.8): This point also has a low average rating.



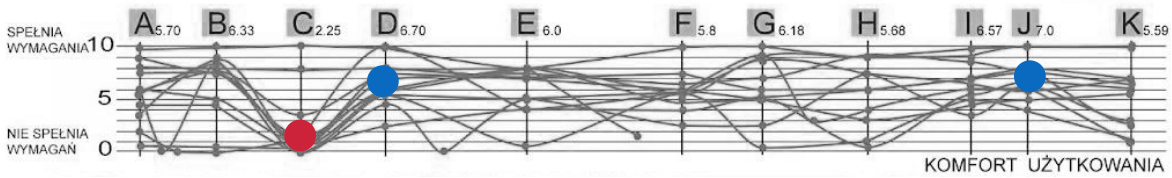


The participants, both in groups and individually, indicated the most AESTHETIC place on the route, point H (Ciemna Street and the surrounding area), giving a score above 7.0 in both cases.

Also in the UNAESTHETIC category, the same place was indicated during the group and individual assessment, point K (Plac Nowy and public toilet), giving an average score of about 4.0. This place is one of the most important spaces of the historic district Kazimierz. Over the years, the square turned into a disorderly space dominated by tourists and party people, and the problem was the temporary shelters and stalls that were open at night, making this space very chaotic.

COMFORT OF USE:

Below there are the average scores for each point (A to K) in the group assessment:



A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel)	A: 5.70
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards)	B: 6.33
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)	C: 2.25
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)	D: 6.70
E (Halicka Street)	E: 6.0
F (Starowislna Street)	F: 5.80
G (Berrecci Square)	G: 6.18
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings)	H: 5.68
I (Kazimierz District)	I: 6.57
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets)	J: 7.0
K (Nowy Square and public toilet)	K: 5.59

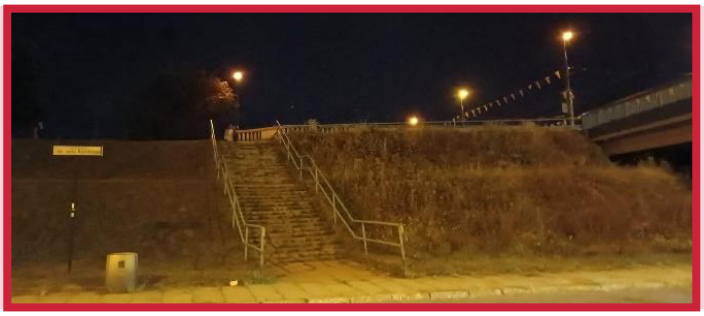
COMFORTABLE





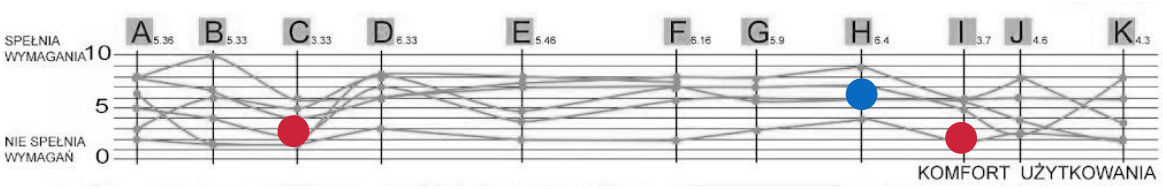
Highest rated points:
J (7.0): This point is perceived as the most comfortable.
D (6.70): Another top rated point.

UNCOMFORTABLE



Lowest rated points:
C (2.25): This place is the least comfortable and does not meet the needs of users. This is the only point rated so low.

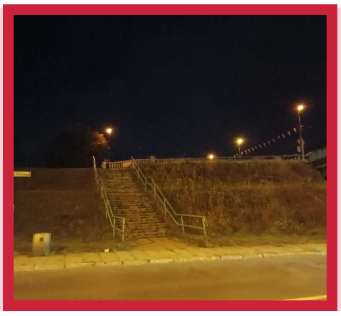
Below there are the average scores for each point (A to K) in the individual assessment:



A (The surroundings of the Qubus Hotel)	**A: 5.36**
B (Pedestrian and bicycle path along the Vistula Boulevards)	**B: 5.33**
C (Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)	**C: 3.33**
D (Powstańców Śląskich Bridge)	**D: 6.33**
E (Halicka Street)	**E: 5.46**
F (Starowislna Street)	**F: 6.16**
G (Berrecci Square)	**G: 5.9**
H (Ciemna Street and surroundings)	**H: 6.4**
I (Kazimierz District)	**I: 3.7**
J (Corner of Izaaka, Kupa, Jakuba streets)	**J: 4.6**
K (Nowy Square and public toilet)	**K: 4.3**



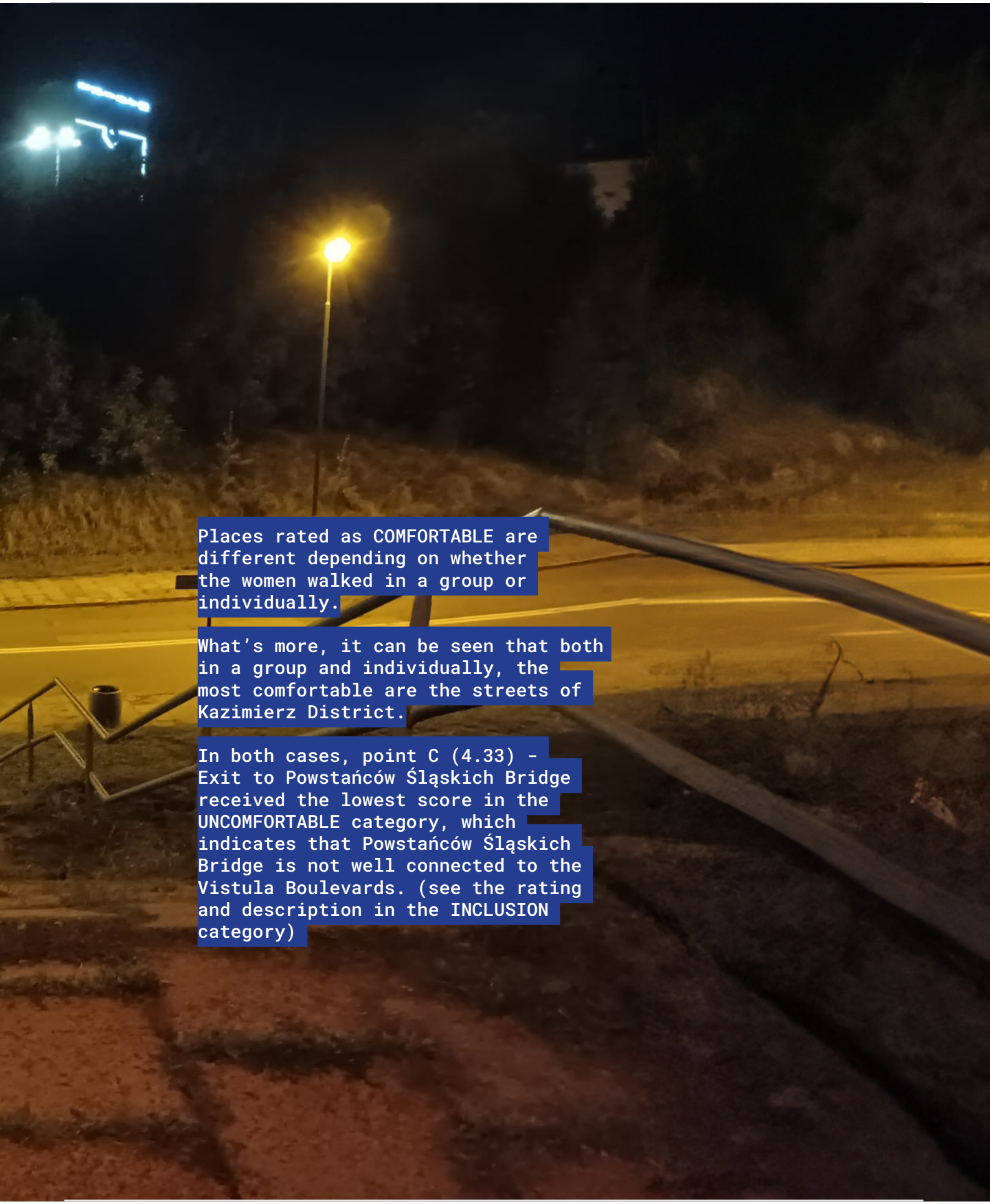
Highest rated points:
H (6.4): This place is perceived as the most comfortable, although its rating is close to average.





Lowest rated points:
C (3.33): This point has the lowest average rating, indicating that it does not meet the expectations of the site's users.
I (3.7): This point also has a low average rating.





Places rated as COMFORTABLE are different depending on whether the women walked in a group or individually.

What's more, it can be seen that both in a group and individually, the most comfortable are the streets of Kazimierz District.

In both cases, point C (4.33) - Exit to Powstańców Śląskich Bridge received the lowest score in the UNCOMFORTABLE category, which indicates that Powstańców Śląskich Bridge is not well connected to the Vistula Boulevards. (see the rating and description in the INCLUSION category)

D. SUMMARY

The most important issue raised during the walks was safety. The table below, comparing the group assessment to the individual assessment, shows that in both independent assessments, the Vistula Boulevards were assessed as the most dangerous place.

During the walk, the participants shared their experiences related to harassment and violence in public spaces. Unfortunately, most of them had to deal with various forms of harassment, such as verbal harassment, physical attacks or the lack of response from the surroundings to their requests for help, which frustrated them greatly. *"People often pretend not to see what is happening,"*[28] said one of the women. *"Sometimes they even look, but do not intervene."*[29]

One of the participants told her story from the tram, which illustrates this problem. *"I was returning home late on the tram when a man started to harass me,"* she said. *"I asked the tram driver for help and he replied: 'But what should I do, stop here?' This was a surprise to me, because I thought I could count on his support."*[30] The situation changed only when an older woman stood up for her. *"She came up to me and chased the guy away with her walking stick, I felt safer,"*[31] added the participant.

The participants also wrote their opinions during an additional survey conducted after the walk, in which they included their expectations of the city regarding equality and safety policies:

> *"I would like my city to have more benches (so I could sit down on the way to and from), more accessible toilets (open until late!), more drinking fountains (to fill a bottle of drinking water). I would like bus stops and streets to be better marked, especially at roundabouts and intersections, so I don't get lost. I would like public spaces to have more representation of diversity, e.g. on City Hall posters, I'm thinking about fat people, mixed kids, Roma people, the homeless - we are all part of the city."* [32]

[28] Participant 8 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[29] Ibid
[30] Participant 4 of night walk March 26-27 2024
[31] Ibid

"I expect the city to have a clear, directly expressed position on matters related to equality and safety, taking into account the gender perspective, that the demands will be operationalized and a budget will be allocated, that the education department will implement an equality and anti-violence education program, that the collected data will be disaggregated by gender, and that the city will systematically support initiatives involving residents related to equality and counteracting violence."[33]

"The city should take care of the needs of the weakest members of its community, improve the safety and comfort of public spaces, and constantly adapt public spaces to make them accessible to people with different needs."[34]

During the walk, the participants raised the issue of the lack of space dedicated to women, where they could freely spend their free time and feel safe. Many of them noticed that they did not even know that they might need such a space – a place that would be a kind of "playground" for adult women.

Such spaces could serve as a place to meet friends, play sports or simply relax, without fear of being harassed. Currently, many such places, such as parks or squares, are dominated by men, often involved in sports activities, which can be a barrier for women who would also like to use these spaces. This problem begins much earlier, at school, as we write about in the next chapter of this report.

[32] Participant of night walk March 26-27 2024
[33] Participant of night walk March 26-27 2024
[34] Participant of night walk March 26-27 2024



III

RESEARCH AREA NO. 2

Age-Restrictions: A Teenage Girls' Perspective on School Grounds

The school ground is the first public space for children where they learn to cooperate, live in a community and organize, outside the strict control of adults. The rules here are less rigid than in the classroom, which is why it is in this space that stereotypical social and cultural gender roles can be clearly seen being imposed. Here, children encounter both acceptance and exclusion for the first time, with the assessment of their appearance and physical fitness.

The basic issue of school grounds is their layout and types of functionality, because the quality of this space ultimately affects the health and well-being of children, and also determines the different ways of using this space. However, the vast majority of schools in the world were designed with a football-centric layout, imposing from above the form of use of this space.

A study conducted in Belgium found that boys spend time outdoors more than twice as often as girls.[35] A study in Sweden revealed that by the age of 8, for every 100 children in parks, 80 are boys and 20 are girls, with girls feeling ten times more insecure in public spaces.[36]

The failure to consider the needs of girls in public spaces has a significant impact on their health. According to Women in Sport, from the age of 10, girls' activity levels drastically decline, and by the age of 13-15, only 8% of girls remain physically active. This leads to increased sedentary behavior, affecting both their physical and mental health.[37] Every year, Gothenburg allocates 7.6 million euros to sports clubs, most of which is dedicated to boys' sports (36 out of 44 disciplines). As a result, girls have to pay for their own sports activities.[38]

[35] Kind und Samleving, Girls and Public Space, 2020
[36] White Arkitekter. LFA: Flickrum – Places for girls. 2018
[37] Women in Sport, 2018; Corder i in., 2016.
[38] Caroline Criado Perez, "Niewidzialne kobiety"

A. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Primary School No. 7 named after the Polish Army in Krakow agreed to participate in the study.

The methodology of the school area study was aimed not only at collecting data, but also at raising awareness of gender stereotypes in the use of this space. It was consulted with the Local Group and can be divided into 3 basic components:

1. SURVEYS

Two surveys were conducted:

(1) The first one is addressed to the entire teaching staff, canteen staff and administrative staff of the school (PAS),
(2) The second is addressed to all school students.

The surveys were designed to gather information about how children use the playground, the types of games they play, and the people they interact with. They also sought their suggestions for the new school grounds and to identify potential conflicts.

A total of 48 responses were collected: 36 responses from children (23 girls, 12 boys, and 1 person who preferred not to specify gender) and 12 responses from school staff.

The surveys for students in grades 1-3 were sent via email and completed by children and their parents at home. For students in grades 4-8, the surveys were given to teachers and completed at school during computer classes.

2. MOVEMENT MAPS - OBSERVATION OF CHILDREN’S ROUTES

From 14.05.2024 to 14.06.2024, a series of observations of children’s paths were conducted while they were spending time on the pitch . Observations were conducted in the morning during recess and at noon to ensure tracking of all educational levels in different contexts (school break and lunch break).

The process was standardised and proceeded according to the following scenario: the observer had a blank map of the schoolyard and during each break followed two children of different age/sex. The male student was assigned the colour blue and the female student red and their route was drawn in these colours.

3. SITUATION MAPS - MAPS WITH STICKERS

A map on which children from grades 1-8 marked the places where they spent the most time during the break using stickers.

Teachers' participation was key in this activity, because it was carried out during class lessons. It consisted of students returning from the break marking the places on the pitch where they played and which they liked the most with stickers.

The aim was to make them reflect on their own use of the pitch, which is usually routine and automatic for them in everyday life. Thanks to this activity, they could see the pitch from a different perspective.

Students could choose from three types of stickers, different in shape but the same colour. The legend regarding the shapes was as follows:

- ● Circle for girls
- ▼ Triangle for boys
- ■ Square for children who did not want to choose their gender.

Research triangulation allowed us to address the following research objectives:

- Understanding how children perceive the school space and how they use it.
- Make a determination whether there is gender/sex segregation on the pitch and, if so, how gender/sex dominance manifests itself.
- Identifying areas occupied by children based on gender/sex.
- Exploring the school environment for inclusive planning purposes.

B. RESEARCH RESULTS

SURVEY ADDRESSED TO ALL SCHOOL STUDENTS:

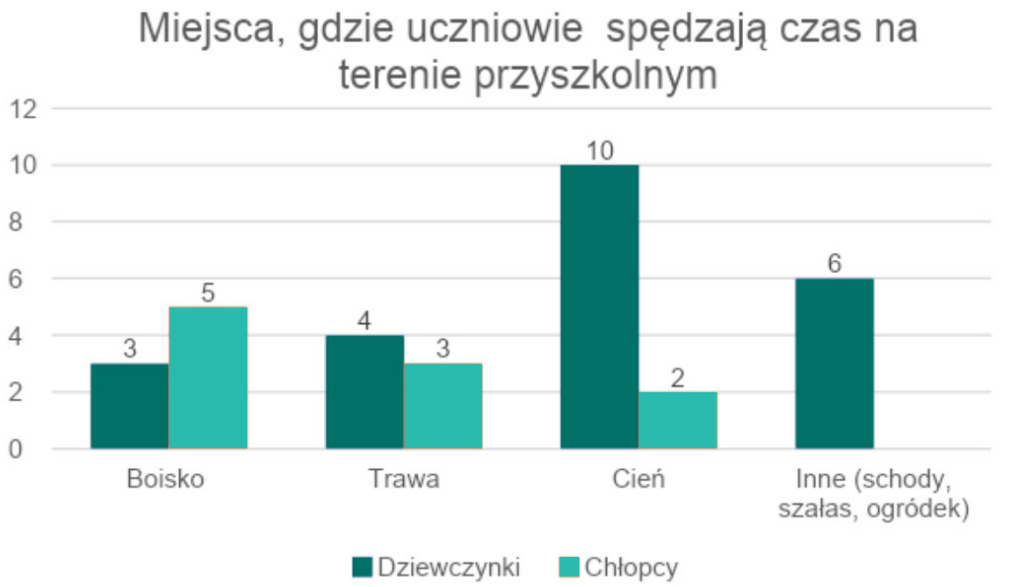
Regardless of gender, children indicated that the main reason for going outside was to meet friends. Responses related to physical activity or walking were less frequent. Interestingly, only girls admitted to playing as a form of spending time outdoors - this was over 1/5 of the response indicated by girls, while no boy admitted to playing as such. Girls are just as keen to spend time on social games such as “fortune telling from a basket”, “truth or dare”, as on sports and physical activity. In the case of boys, sports are definitely dominant, social games were indicated by only one respondent.

The results are similar when children describe how they spend their time during breaks at school. Sports and physical activity are chosen by both boys and girls, but girls are more likely to choose social games. Among the activities chosen by boys, there were also computer games, while girls mentioned board/ card games. It is very clear that girls are socialized to both social and sports activities, while boys practically only fulfill themselves in the framework of physical activity.



Fot. Graph no. 1. Own work

Analyzing the places where students spend their time around the school, we can observe that boys dominate the central point, which is the playing field, while girls function on the periphery – in the shade, on the stairs, in the garden, etc.



Fot. Graph no. 2. Own work

It is not surprising in the context of the above that girls like the shaded areas under the tree the most out of all the places around the school, while boys like the pitch and the sports ground, which is the central point of the school grounds. Girls more often indicated specific places, such as benches, huts or stairs, as their favourite places to sit and spend time. Boys, on the other hand, focused more on the pitch as a place of activity.

In turn, among the least liked places, both girls and boys mention the concrete sports ground, which heats up quickly and is not shaded. Due to safety reasons, they also do not like the space around the basketball hoop. The topic of safety is much more often raised by girls than boys. Girls indicated that the middle of the large pitch could be dangerous due to flying balls. Therefore, they indicated this place as less liked. Boys mentioned such concerns less often, focusing more on the possibility of playing football.

When creating a vision of the ideal yard, girls focus primarily

on more shade and trees, which provide respite from the sun and heat, as well as benches in shaded areas. Boys also appreciate this, but they would equally like to see more space for play in the form of trampolines, a playground or swings. Girls, on the other hand, more often mentioned plants and flowers as an element that could make the school grounds more attractive.

Additionally, girls more often connected places in the yard with personal memories or associations, e.g. bad memories related to an old tree. Boys less often mentioned such emotional connections. Girls also more often mentioned the need for specific elements of equipment, such as deckchairs, hammocks or benches in the shade. Boys, on the other hand, focused more on large elements, such as football goals or a volleyball court.

To sum up, both girls and boys appreciate places in the shade. They indicated the need for more shaded areas, such as benches under trees, steps in the shade, or generally areas protected from the sun. Both groups expressed dissatisfaction with places with strong sunlight. They were mentioned as the least liked due to the lack of comfort and high temperature.

Both groups mentioned physical activity as a common way to spend time in the yard. Football, tag, and volleyball were frequently mentioned by all respondents. Both girls and boys indicated the need for more attractions, such as playgrounds, swings, and even a swimming pool. Respondents would like more diverse elements for play and relaxation.

A SURVEY ADDRESSED TO ALL TEACHING TEACHERS, CANTINA STAFF AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF THE SCHOOL (PAS):

School staff seem to see greater gender differences in the use of the school grounds. Most of the adults surveyed recognized that there are different patterns of play between girls and boys. *„Students usually divide into boys and girls during play, but this is not a rule. Boys prefer to play football or tag, while girls prefer to draw, talk or play with balls."*[35] They also mention the difference in space occupied by male and female

[35] Answear in the survey

students, which is also confirmed by the movement maps of boys and girls discussed later in the chapter. *„Boys occupy the centre of the playground because they play football and are loud. Girls stay on the sidelines, they like quiet places where they can talk quietly. This is due to the needs of the children, the way they spend their free time, and the type of play."*[36]

School staff see a need for more benches and quiet places to sit, as well as interactive play elements such as swings, slides and sandboxes. They believe that their functionality can be appreciated regardless of the gender of the students. Most of the surveyed employees believe that games do not require the participation of teachers and that children should have freedom to use this time. Only 3 out of 12 people considered that active participation of teachers during games is necessary. Despite the obvious differences (according to the teaching staff) in the functioning of girls and boys in their free time, the topic of gender equality was not addressed by school employees in the context of using the school grounds. They see advantages in a common space for children to play, which is integrative, teaches patience, cooperation, building compromises. Some, however, point out that it is also important to designate places depending on the different needs of children. *„(…)there should be separate zones for children who want to play football and a separate zone for children who need peace, quiet and safety at that time (so that the ball does not fall on someone's head, etc.)."*[37]

In the opinion of the employees, the current format of the school grounds is functional in that it constitutes a large free space – however, it requires a lot of creativity from the children in terms of planning their own games, and also poses a risk that the only activity programmed within the space, i.e. team games - football and basketball, will dominate the activity on the school grounds. As indicated by one of the respondents, this area is reduced to *„a basketball or football pitch. The rest of the area is, yes, but the children staying there are at risk of being hit by the ball."*[38] The lack of infrastructure designed for girls' activities, e.g. a dance hall or artistic gymnastics room, was mentioned.

Among the employees' favourite places, shaded spaces and those with a lot of greenery definitely dominate. If they could add something to this space, it would be small architectural elements/street furniture, e.g. benches, tables, trampolines,

[36] Ibid
[37] Ibid
[38] Ibid

seats, swings, deckchairs, etc. It seems that this space is currently adequately equipped in the context of sports functions, but requires additional equipment as a space for spending time outside strictly sports activities.

9 out of 12 respondents considered that the school space does not take into account the needs of all children. They indicated the lack of a place where children who need to do their homework, read a book or draw could sit and have a comfortable place to do these activities. One of the respondents pointed out the future needs of children with disabilities who may attend school in the coming years, and their needs are not addressed by this space.

The results of the survey indicate the need for further optimization of the school space to better meet the needs of children, both in terms of safety, functionality, and adaptation to various interests and educational needs.

MOVEMENT MAPS - OBSERVATION OF CHILDREN’S ROUTES

50 maps of children’s movement were made. The maps of girls’ and boys’ movement confirm the observations of both school staff and students themselves - both sexes use this space in different ways.



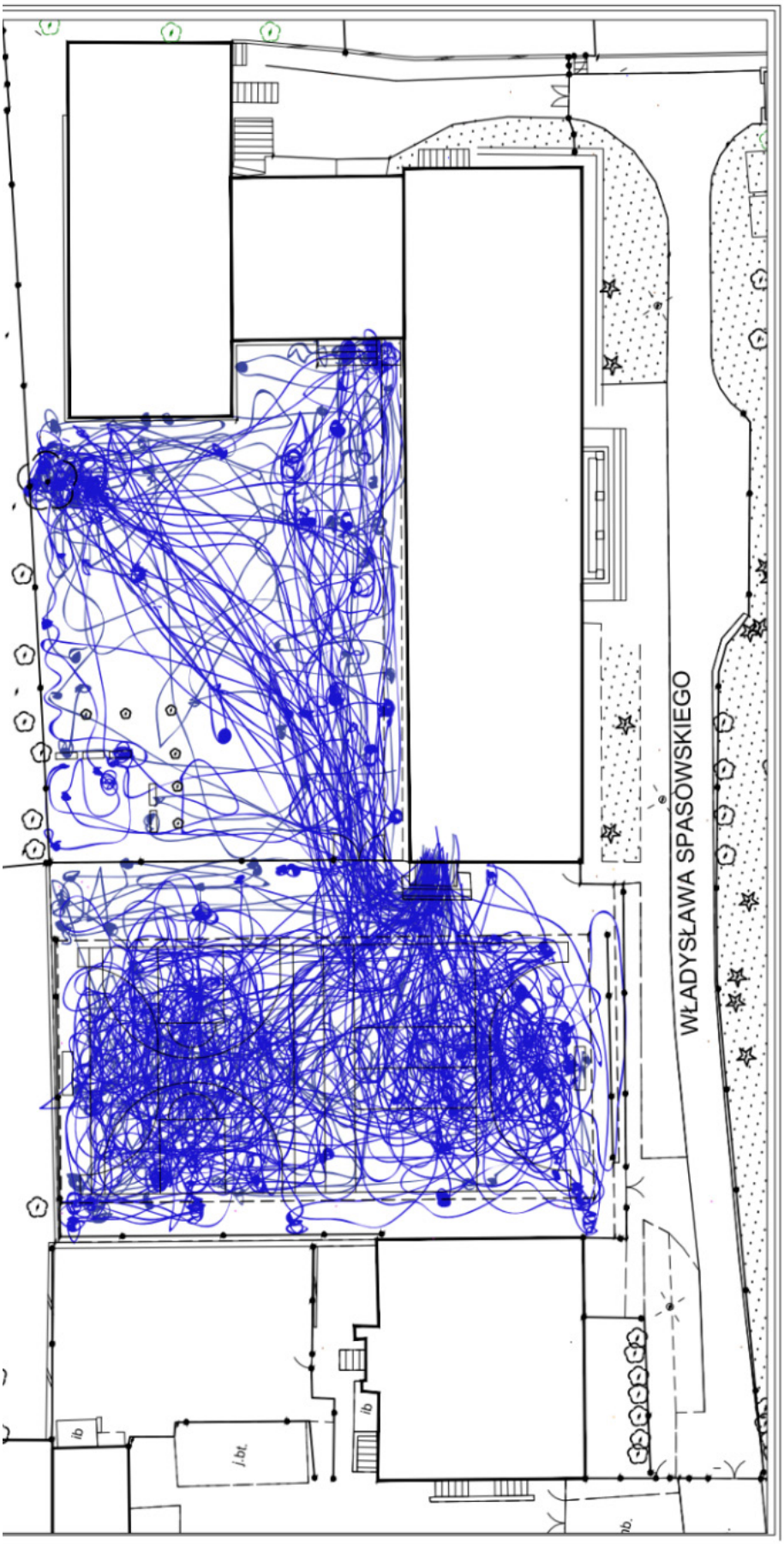
Fot. Plan 1. The area of the analysed school space. Own study



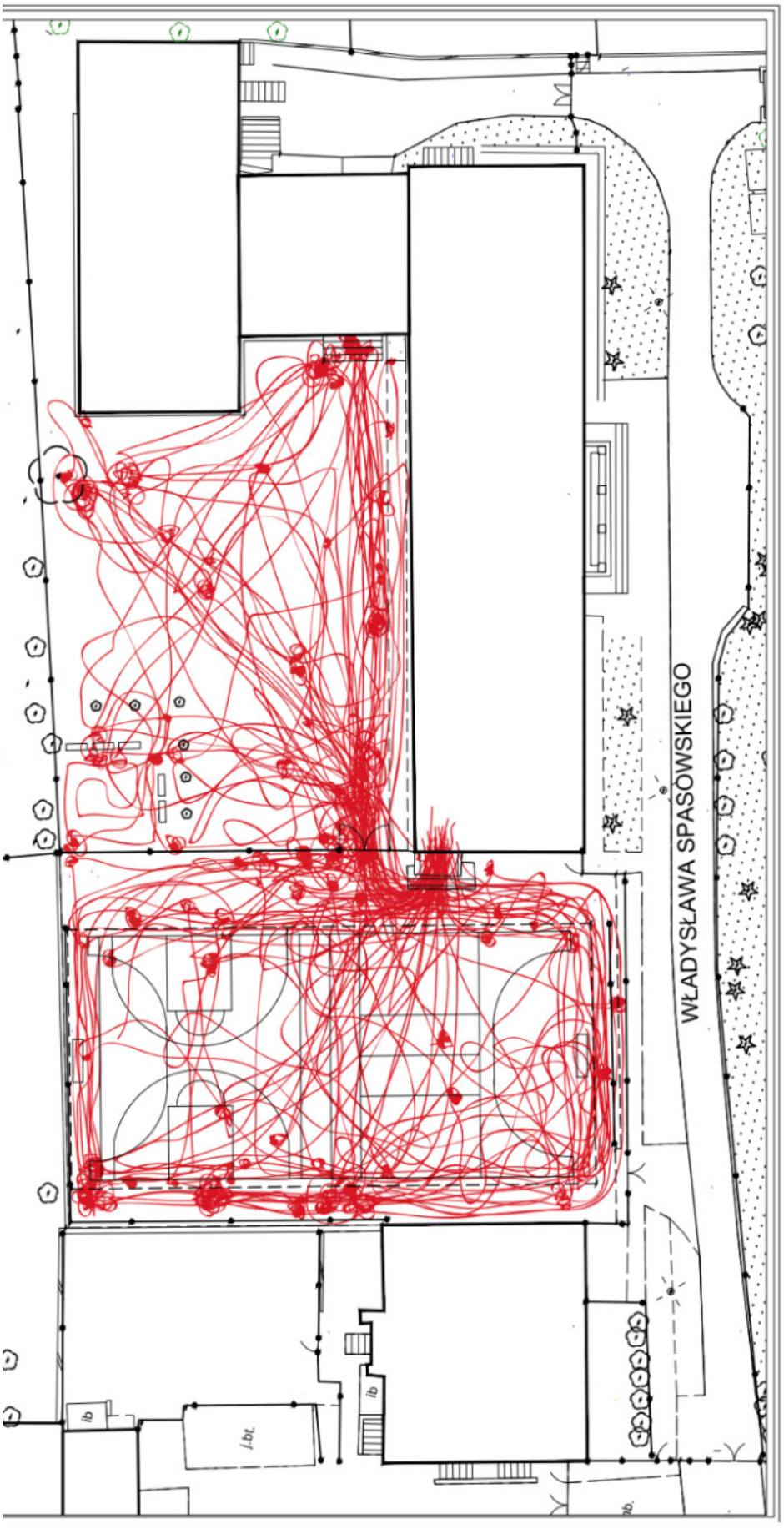




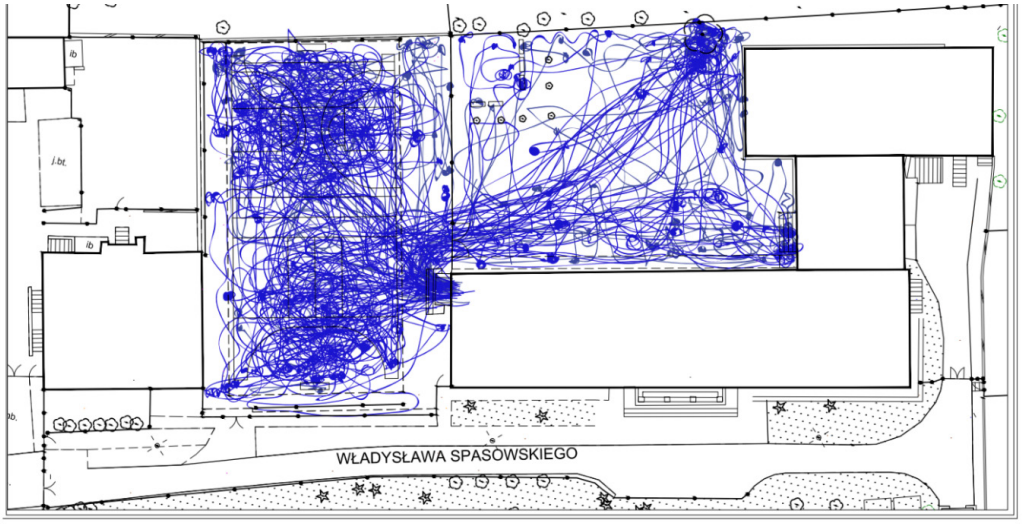
Fot. Photos taken during research on the school grounds



Fot. Drawing 1. Map of boys' movement in the school area. Own work



Fot. Drawing 2. Map of girls' movement in the school area. Own work

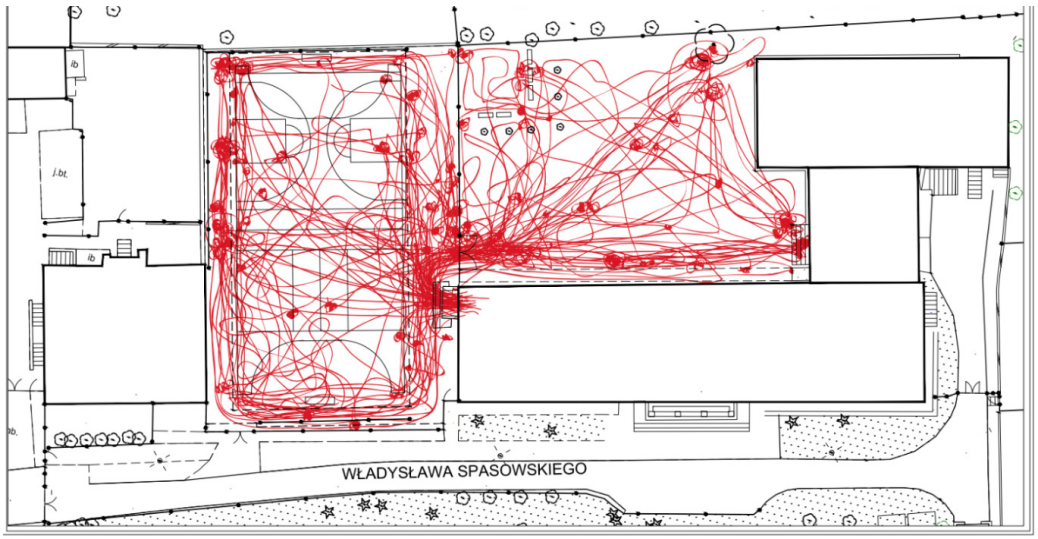


Fot. Drawing 1. Map of boys' movement in the school area. Own work

The boys' movement patterns involve intense, concentrated movement on the pitch. As they move, they cover almost the entire pitch, with particular emphasis on the central area. In the garden, on the other hand, the boys move more evenly, with more connections between movements. The garden is crossed by the boys in many places, but there are two significant concentrations of movement in two corners of one.

The girls' movement map has a different character. It shows the peripheral activity of the students. On the pitch, the girls walk around the playing area. There are three zones of movement concentration, all on the edges of the pitch. Several paths cross the pitch, but the girls spend little time in its central part. The greatest concentration of students' activity is right next to the entrance to the building. The girls also have clear paths and activity nodes, which indicate a greater planned nature of their play.

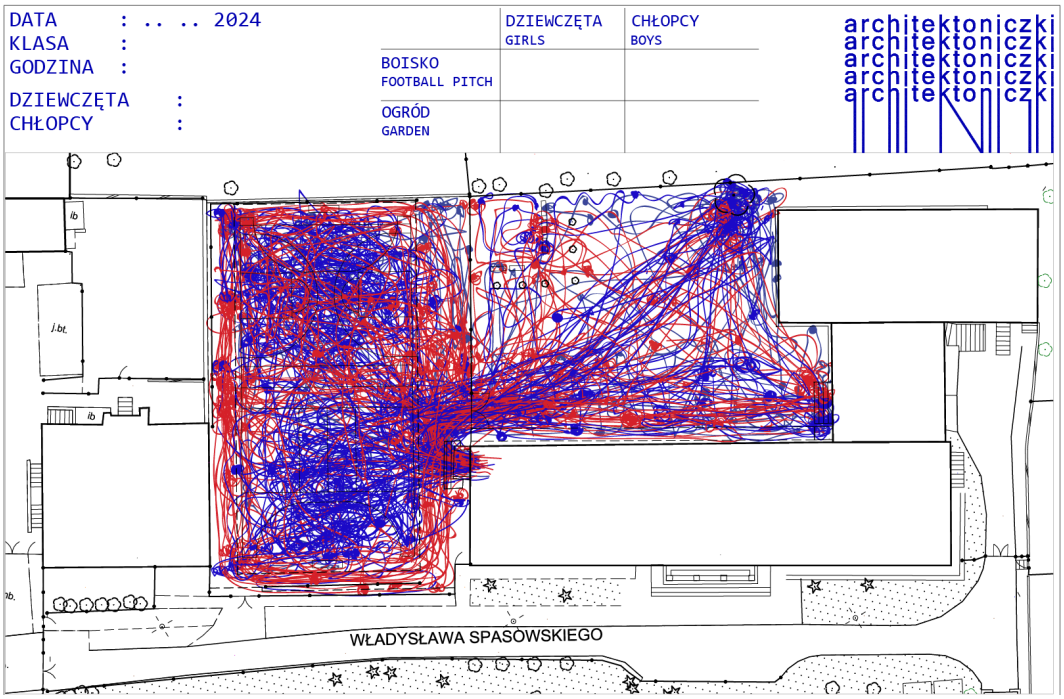
The movements of boys on the pitch are more concentrated and chaotic, indicating intense activity, while the movements of girls on the pitch have a clear pattern - around the perimeter and at specific points. Girls have more defined paths and less interwoven movements in the garden, indicating specific routes or activities.



Fot. Drawing 2. Map of girls' movement in the school area. Own work

Boys occupy a central position, girls have no position for any activity. Interestingly, in the context of declarations in the surveys, in which girls indicated being active in both sports and social areas, while boys admitted to mainly sports activities, is the fact that boys "take over" both areas - the pitch and the garden, while girls are practically invisible on the pitch. This may mean that despite the desire to use this part of the school space, for some reason girls do not feel "welcome" there or the sports activity they would like to perform does not fit the framework of a classic football or basketball pitch.

During the observations, it also turned out that younger children (grades 1-3) (girls and boys) play together, while older children (grades 4-8) divide games and activities according to gender.



Fot. Drawing 3. Map of children's movement in the school area. Own work

Differences:

- Boys' movements on the pitch are more concentrated and chaotic, indicating intense activity.
- Girls' movements on the pitch have a clear pattern - around the perimeter and at specific points.
- Girls' movements on the pitch are more structured and less dense.
- In the garden, boys' movements are extensive and interwoven, suggesting free movement throughout the space.
- Girls have more defined paths and less interwoven movements in the garden, indicating specific routes or activities.
- The length of boys' movements is greater than that of girls.
- Boys "take over" both areas - the pitch and the garden.
- Boys occupy a central position, girls have no central position for any activity.
- Younger children play together, while older children divide play and time by gender.

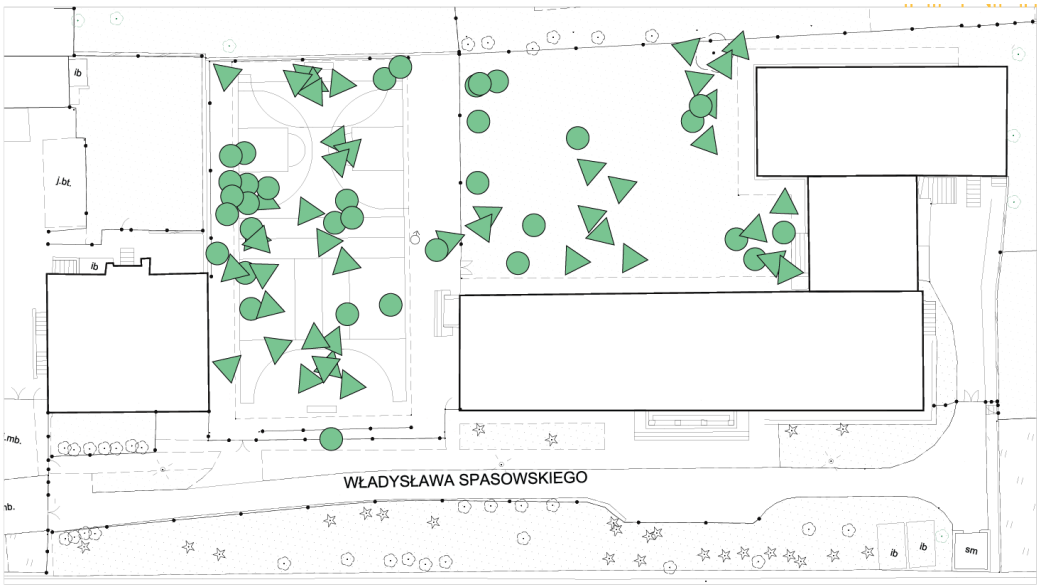
In the context of the declarations in the surveys, in which girls indicated being active in both sports and social games, it is interesting that boys, who admitted to being mainly active in sports, "take over" both areas - the pitch and the garden, while girls are practically invisible on the pitch. This may mean that despite the desire to use this part of the school space, for some reason girls do not feel "welcome" there or the sports activity they would like to do does not fit the

framework of a classic football or basketball pitch.

Similarities:

- Both boys and girls have areas of high concentration of movement.
- In the middle of the garden, where there is nothing, there is no concentration of movement for either boys or girls.

SITUATION MAPS - MAPS WITH STICKERS

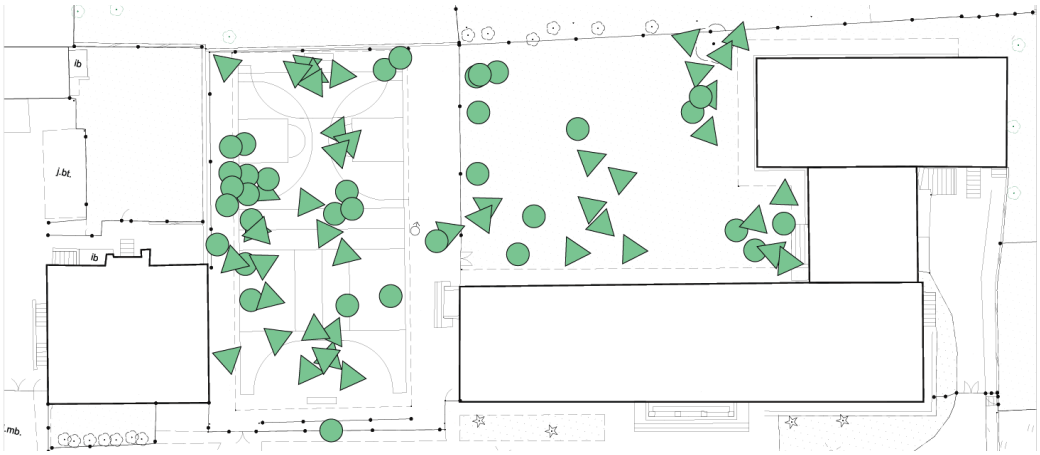


Fot. Map with stickers. Own work

Understanding how children use different parts of the yard can help you better plan those spaces to meet their needs. A division between a busy sports field and a more secluded grassy field can indicate different preferences for physical activity and leisure time among children.

There are no squares on the map, which means that all children chose to reveal their gender. A total of 34 girls and 45 boys attached stickers to the board, indicating that boys were more willing to participate in the study.

PITCH:



Fot. Map with stickers indicating zones dominated by boys (blue colour) and girls (red colour). Own work

Most of the triangles (boys) are concentrated in the football pitch area and in its centre. This suggests that most boys prefer to spend their time playing football or being on the football pitch. (21 boys to 10 girls). There are also a few circles (girls) in this area, but there are fewer of them compared to the triangles, and there is also a large concentration of girls on the periphery of the pitch, not in its centre (9 girls).



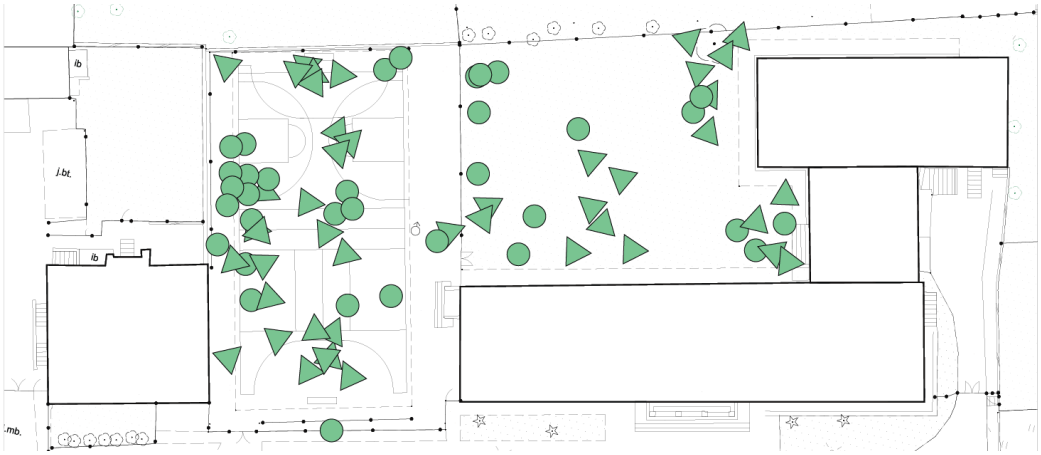
Fot. The space between the school fence and the ball catcher



Fot. Girls on football pitch

Observations by those conducting the research show that girls like to spend time between the school fence and the so-called ball catcher – despite the fact that only one sticker is visible on the board.

GARDEN:



Fot. Map with stickers indicating zones dominated by boys (blue colour) and girls (red colour). Own work









Fot. Photos taken during research on the school grounds.

Huts were placed in the garden under a tree. However, their space was dominated by boys (6 boys to 2 girls).
The school also placed benches in the garden space and according to the stickers, this place was dominated by girls - there is not a single boy here.

The circles (girls) spending time in the garden are located on its periphery, as in the case of the pitch. The triangles (boys) are located in the centre of the garden - as on the pitch, and in the place where the tents are, which indicates a large dominance in this space.

In addition, the layout and number of triangles suggest that fewer boys spend time in the garden compared to girls.
The observations of the researchers showed that teachers have a lot of control over what children do, limiting their ability to freely explore the space *"for safety reasons, because teachers taking care of children are responsible for their safety."*[39]

In the context of the declarations in the surveys, in which girls indicated the hut (tents) as one of their favourite places, it is interesting that according to the stickers they themselves stuck in this space, the representation of girls is minimal, which proves that this space has also been dominated by boys. This may mean that despite the desire to use this part of the school space, for some reason girls do not feel "welcome" there or the activity and type of play they would like to do does not suit the boys, who dominate this place.

Despite the differences in the use of the school area, both boys and girls have areas of high concentration of movement, which indicates that both groups are active in this space. However, in the middle of the garden, which is so well rated by both school staff and children, there is no concentration of movement for either boys or girls. This is the only place that does not have a defined function.

[39] Feedback from the interview with teachers

C. SUMMARY

Movement maps of girls and boys and situational maps confirm the observations of both school staff and students themselves - both sexes use this space in different ways. Research conducted in primary school showed differences in play preferences between girls and boys, with boys more often engaging in active play, while girls choose quieter forms of spending time. Although they sometimes play together (most often grades 1-3), they prefer separate spaces. Both girls and boys appreciate places in the shade. Both groups mentioned physical activities as their favorite forms of spending time in the yard, but looking at the movement trajectory of boys and girls, playing fields and places for physical activity are dominated by boys.

The research conducted also indicates the exclusion of girls from the space (movement map and stickers) despite their declarations in surveys regarding sports activity and indication of favourite places on the school grounds (e.g. huts). This may mean that despite the desire to use these spaces, girls do not have such a chance, because they are dominated by boys.

When designing the school grounds, caregivers or parents with disabilities should also be taken into account. This is a topic that usually does not appear in the topic of school spaces and in the context of the city. Usually, reports and documents concern people or parents of disabled children and their difficulties in moving around the city space. However, the problem of disabled mothers is the least frequently touched upon, who not only have limitations related to movement due to movement dysfunctions, but as caregivers, they also struggle with challenges typical for people taking care of small children, such as lack of space for a stroller, narrow sidewalks or a non-functioning changing table. In the next chapter, we analyse the situation of disabled mothers in the space of Krakow.



IV

RESEARCH AREA NO 3

Limitations Due to Mobility Impairments of Mothers with Different Needs

In accordance with the concept of the "City of Care" outlined in the introduction, inclusive planning requires a holistic view of the users of urban space not only from the perspective of one specific feature such as gender, age or economic status, but through the prism of individuals who represent affiliation to different groups and are characterised by many properties. For this reason, looking at the situation of women who are both mothers and have mobility impairments can allow us to better understand how the city works in the context of groups with specific needs that do not fit into the "typical" framework of marginalised groups, but stand at the intersection of several minorities. Such a truly intersectional approach allows us to look at the city from the perspective of a unique individual with their diverse needs and challenges.

There are relatively few Polish studies on the experiences of women fulfilling maternal functions who also have disabilities. They focus largely on socio-cultural and institutional barriers. Among them, the key stereotype is the belief that a mother with a disability will not cope with parental duties as a weaker person. Additionally, the belief that people with disabilities are asexual means that they do not have their own place in the social discourse for sexual fulfilment, and thus the realisation of parental roles. There is a lack of research specifically analysing the use of urban space by mothers with disabilities. The FEMACT Cities project had the ambition to fill this gap by contributing to broader research in this area. Previous reports indicate barriers that make it difficult for women with disabilities to fulfil their maternal role, among others, due to architectural obstacles, such as unadapted doctor's offices, kindergartens or schools. Due to these

[40] Wałachowska M., Wizerunek społeczny macierzyństwa kobiet z niepełnosprawnością, Forum Pedagogiczne 2017/1
[41] Ślęzak I, Realizacja potrzeb seksualnych przez osoby niepełnosprawne: Rzeczywistość-Perspektywy-Kontrowersje, Kultura i Społeczeństwo 2016/3

barriers, parents cannot fully participate in the education and upbringing of their child. Another problem is the lack of available accessories (e.g. prams adapted to wheelchairs), guides, and services providing practical support for childcare for women with disabilities. In turn, research by the Avalon Foundation on the sexuality and parenting of people with mobility disabilities showed that the most frequently indicated sphere in which respondents feel their disability is the sphere related to movement and transport (43%). This study also revealed large differences by gender related to discrimination against mothers on the basis of disability. 68% of disabled women of working age have experienced suggestions that they should not be mothers because they would not be able to cope with the day-to-day responsibilities of caring for a child, compared to 51% of disabled men.

A. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Due to the pioneering nature of this part of the study, the methodology was adapted to the abilities of the respondents. The initial assumption was based on a focus group of mothers with mobility disabilities in Krakow, but the limited number of such people and their very specific time possibilities for participating in the study meant that it was decided to conduct four individual interviews and one research walk, during which the researcher accompanied the mother with a disability on her daily route around Krakow. In total, we collected the perspectives of three people with experience moving in a wheelchair, one with vision problems, and one with thrombosis and heart problems that make it difficult to move.

The interviews covered topics related to motherhood in the context of disability, ways of moving around the city for mothers with disabilities while simultaneously performing care functions for children, and solutions that would make it easier for people / mothers/ in this situation to function in Krakow.

[42] Ciaputa E., Król A., Migalska A., Warat M, Macierzyństwo kobiet z niepełnosprawnościami ruchu, wzroku i słuchu, Studia Socjologiczne 2014/2 (213)
[43] Raport z badania „Seksualność i rodzicielstwo osób z niepełnosprawnością ruchową" zrealizowane na zlecenie Fundacji Avalon przez SW RESEARCH w dniach 20.01-19.02.2020 na próbie 803 osób z niepełnosprawnością ruchową, w przedziale wiekowym 18-64 lata metodą CAWI.

B. RESEARCH RESULTS

MOTHERHOOD WITH DISABILITY IN THE CITY

For the respondents, motherhood with a disability is defined by a situation of confinement. *„This one will stay at home because you can't afford to go out without generating a lot of stress and without costing a lot of energy.* **It's like a home prison."** The situation of being confined within four walls is unfortunately experienced by many people with disabilities, but in the case of mothers, it is intensified by the need to take care of a child. Mothers who do not have difficulties with movement often talk about the feeling of loneliness and being confined at home. Therefore, in the case of mothers with disabilities, it seems to be a doubly strong threat. This was particularly strongly experienced by women who, throughout their motherhood, had relapses and remissions of the disease, which significantly influenced their experience of the city as mothers.*„For the first year, I did not go out with my son at all, because I didn't even have the strength to push his stroller and I did not have an electric one. I lost so much weight at that time, because all my muscles fell off. I must have weighed 40 kilos, so I did not even have the strength to go down those stairs."*

The interviewees recalled the period when they enjoyed lower mobility as a time of helplessness and humiliation. *„There was a time when I was in a wheelchair because I had no strength at all. To get to the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS), which was on the first floor and there were stairs, and at that time there was no elevator, only these rails were installed. So, I asked the security guard to put it up, and he said no because it doesn't work. In the ZUS, where disability certificates are processed, which is a place with a large number of people with disabilities. And I remember that at that time two guys were carrying me up those 7 stairs in wheelchairs, because their infrastructure simply didn't work.* **I felt humiliated and so helpless then."**

[44] Wywiad nr 1
[45] Aktywni niepełnosprawni - narzędzia wsparcia samodzielności osób niepełnosprawnych. Diagnoza potrzeb osób z niepełnosprawnością. Raport zbiorczy., Fundacja im. Królowej Polski Świętej Jadwigi, 2021.
w kontekście modyfikacji istniejących i zaproponowania nowych instrumentów włączenia społecznego
[46] Szczepaniak C., W „mikroświecie macierzyństwa" – doświadczenie samotności macierzyńskiej w badaniu autoetnograficznym, Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej, 18(4)
[47] Wywiad nr 3
[48] Wywiad nr 3

They were accompanied by a sense of resignation, of missing out on something. *„I often simply gave up on certain activities because I would say 'no, I won't get there or I'll be so tired that it doesn't make sense'. Because when I get to the bus stop, I'm already drenched in sweat, all wet and I say 'well, that's a great start '. Because it really is such a hill to get to the bus stop. I could go the other way, lower down, but the buses there only go once every 20 minutes and not in the direction I want them to go."*

However, even if their health allows them to move around the city relatively smoothly, they still have to design strategies for their activities outside the home, especially if the building does not have an elevator. *„I live on the third floor of a four-story building without an elevator. And that's exactly the problem for me, because when I leave the house,* ***I leave once a day,*** *so I do everything I need to do and I come back and I already know* ***I won't go out again.*** *It's a kind of lockdown."*

FAVOURITE PLACES IN KRAKOW

The respondents notice changes for the better in terms of adapting the city of Krakow to the needs of mothers with disabilities and mention the places where they feel best. They like green areas, although they lack wide alleys and concrete or asphalt paths (more on this later in the chapter) - Jordan Park, green areas in Nowa Huta.

The younger respondent - a student - likes the Market Square because of its dynamics and energy, but women in their thirties preferred Kazimierz, as a more intimate place. Despite the difficulties related to the surface, they like this place because of the atmosphere. *„The Market Square is so scary, there are a lot of people and it scares me a little - in the sense that there are crowds - you have to squeeze through, push through. It is similar in Kazimierz, but it is somehow more pleasant and it seems to me that the atmosphere is somehow better."*

They also mention specific cultural institutions. *„The Krakow Museum organizes a lot of events and activities available for people with disabilities, so we have been happy to participate so far and I hope that when my daughter grows up a bit more, we will also be able to participate in various cultural events."*There are also cultural centers with offers for children that take

[49] Wywiad nr 1
[50] Wywiad nr 3
[51] Wywiad nr 1
[52] Wywiad nr 4

into account the needs of people with disabilities. *„There is a parent's club called Kuźnia [Mistrzejowicki Klub Rodziców Kuźnia – note by EJ], which organises various activities and what is cool is that the registration form even included points regarding the special needs of mothers with disabilities. But not only that, because it is more in the context of people with special needs and not people with disabilities, so I also liked that and we are very happy to use it with my little one."*

LEAST LIKED PLACES IN KRAKOW

While the places liked by the respondents are sometimes not at all well adapted to the needs of people with disabilities, but they have their own atmosphere and evoke positive emotions, e.g. Kazimierz, the Market Square, the least liked places are actually indicated only in terms of the possibility of using them by people with limited mobility.

The main problems indicated by the respondents were:

- **Lack of elevators and lots of stairs**
  This is particularly visible in municipal offices and institutions. The headquarters of ZUS, PFRON, and the Department of Social Policy and Health of the Krakow City Hall are places where disabled mothers often appear, and sometimes the elevator is not working. *„The elevator in ZUS in Nowa Huta has not been working for a year."* The lack of elevators in educational institutions is particularly painful for mothers of school-age children. *„My friend is in a wheelchair and cannot participate in school life at all. Since Librus has been around, it has been easier every day, but it will not allow her to take part in her child's performance, and the school is not adapted to wheelchair users at all."*

- **Broken elevators**
  In some public buildings, the infrastructure needs renovation. If the problem is a broken elevator, it has a significant impact on the use of public services by disabled mothers. Although this also applies to other people with limited mobility. *„I was going up the stairs to the first floor, but this old woman was riding in the elevator and it got stuck, because the elevator was 40 or 50 years old and she was inside."*

[53] Wywiad nr 2
[54] Wywiad nr 3
[55] Wywiad nr 4
[56] Wywiad nr 1



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.

- **The pavement surface not suitable for people with mobility difficulties**
  Too slippery surface, unshoveled sidewalks - all this means that people with even mild mobility impairments have trouble moving around the city. Reagan Square was given as an example, where the marble floor is considered dangerous for people with disabilities.

- **Narrow sidewalks**
  Narrow sidewalks are a problem primarily from the perspective of operating a stroller (your own and the child's) and passing other road users. Additionally, cars parked on the already narrow sidewalk increase the difficulties in moving on such streets. An example is ul. Stachowicza, where one of the City Hall buildings is located.

- **Lack of benches**
  People with mobility difficulties need places to rest along the route. The lack of a sufficient number of benches at bus stops or simply in the free space of the city is an additional problem when moving around Krakow. *„I would need these benches not necessarily to sit down, but for example to put down my shopping for a moment and catch my breath.”*

[57] Wywiad nr 1

- **Problems with public transport**
  Mothers with disabilities use public transport due to the lack of a car, the cost of maintaining it, but also the intensive construction work in Krakow, which generates huge traffic jams. As a result, trams in particular are becoming a good alternative to cars. However, some of them are still trams on high platforms. The respondents complain about delays, which is a problem for all residents. From their perspective, an additional problem is the lack of space in the vehicles, which is a unique problem with equipment that helps them and their children move around. In addition, there are the standard problems that cities in Poland face in the context of climate change. *„In the summer, the problem with public transport is that we have very old tracks in Krakow and these rails jump out. Trams fall off the route, there are traffic jams and so on. However, in the winter, this year we definitely had to buy electric buses, which did not meet Poland's requirements. We have too low temperatures and they have batteries that are not what they should be in our country, and again delays."*

  In general, the respondents see advantages in the wide range of transport infrastructure and the possibility of reaching many places in and around Krakow, but they complain about the location of bus stops, which sometimes require a very long walk uphill, which is practically impossible for people with limited mobility. *„This infrastructure of public transport in Krakow is well thought out - there are many buses, trams. However, I think that there are many such places where elderly or sick people live, who have difficulty accessing this infrastructure."*

- **Lack of asphalt paths in parks**
- Even in places that are generally liked by disabled mothers - parks, green areas - there are elements that make them visit those places less often. „Jerzmanowski Park was built about 2 years ago. It really is beautiful, it's great, only one thing - there is no asphalt and there is gravel. So, for example, my son rides his scooter to school through this park, so he has to get off the scooter, otherwise he would knock his teeth out. The same, for example, my friend's friends who have small children in the stroller

[58] Wywiad nr 2
[59] Wywiad nr 3

do not go here either, because the children wake up; people in wheelchairs don't either, because there is no asphalt. I kind of understand the concept of it being more non-urban, just a little wild, but it would be good to adapt it to the needs of all residents."

CHANGES THAT TOOK PLACE IN KRAKOW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MOTHERS WITH DISABILITIES

In general, the respondents see major changes for the better that have taken place over the last few decades, both in the adaptation of infrastructure and the approach of residents. While in the case of many social problems it is said that changes in social mentality are much more difficult than institutional changes, in the case of mothers with disabilities this thesis is not fully justified.

„With architectural accessibility it is also the case that this is the most expensive accessibility. For example, when I see a historic building, this accessibility will go much slower than the accessibility in people's minds, because it is associated with the Municipal Conservator of Monuments, with costs, with time."

Adapting buildings and architecture to the needs of people with disabilities is a high cost, as well as the need to consult with the curator of monuments, especially in the case of a city like Kraków.

- **CHANGE OF MENTALITY OF THE SOCIETY**

The respondents indicated that the residents of Krakow are generally open and helpful in their relations with people with disabilities. Only one interview mentioned the topic of not reacting on public transport when a mother with a mobility dysfunction needs to take a seat. One of the interviewees sees this as a positive impact of the public debate related to the Accessibility Act.*„Over the last few years, there has been a lot of talk about accessibility in the context of the Accessibility Act for people with special needs, so people with disabilities are no longer such a taboo."* Campaigns educating people about

[60] Wywiad nr 3
[61] Ibid

building relationships with people with disabilities are also assessed positively.*„People are no longer so afraid to approach, ask for help. There was a bit of talk about it on the radio, there were various programs showing that people with disabilities are completely natural, so so far I have encountered more openness than hostility or even indifference."*

Stories about a positive attitude from employees of public institutions have appeared many times. Doctors, security guards in offices, bus drivers. *„Sometimes it happens that I have to take my child with me. I have never encountered such an attitude of a doctor saying 'where are you entering with this big stroller to the office', on the contrary, there is such openness, more understanding."; „Even when people see that we are getting on public transport and going somewhere as three - me with a stroller, my husband holding my arm with a white stick, well, there is such openness, the question is whether we would like to sit down."*

Sometimes the positive attitude and openness of employees are not enough, because the change in infrastructure does not keep up with them. *„Recently we were in the city office at Wszystkich Świętych Square. There is an elevator in the building, yes, but it turned out that I had to take the child in my arms, because to get to the elevator I had to climb stairs that I am not able to climb with a stroller. And here too, for example,* **the openness of the employees was very great, that the security guard hid the stroller for me, that I could take the child in my arms, but I had to carry her.** *It is only a few stairs, so I managed, but I have a problem with my spine and for example at the moment I wouldn't be able to take her."*

- **INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGE**

It turns out that changes in infrastructure are very slow, although the interviewees also notice progress in this area. *„It's getting better, because I remember the times, for example, 20 years ago, when there were no parking spaces for the disabled or guide paths, ramps. Now there are more and more of them, also in municipality offices."*

62 Wywiad nr 2
63 Wywiad nr 3
64 Wywiad nr 4
65 Wywiad nr 3
66 Wywiad nr 1

Respondents increasingly notice the following amenities:

- **Contrast markings for the visually impaired**

„I notice huge changes, even in contrast markings, now even in our Huta, when I walk, I pass stairs on the way that have their edges marked in contrasting yellow, which makes me very happy, because it is helpful for me, because I have a significant vision defect."

- **Handrails and contrasting stairs**

„I increasingly notice handrails in the context of blind people and contrasting stairs."

- **Guidance paths**

„It's great that they finally started consulting on this, because before there were often blunders. For example, I have a really nice deafblind friend with whom I often went somewhere. And she really liked the guide paths. And she's walking and walking and suddenly she hits a wall. I'm a terribly annoying person. We asked why this path leads to the wall, and it turned out that there was supposed to be an ATM there. But they didn't make an ATM, and the guide path ends at the wall. But there are fewer and fewer such blunders. I think it's partly because people with disabilities are consulted more often. For example, it looks great in Cogiteon - an open space and there's this guide path, which is great because it's easier to find your way around."

- **Ramps**

„There are more and more such ramps, not all of them meet the standards and indeed a person in a wheelchair may not use them, but a mother with a stroller can. For example, Tysiąclecia Estate Park, in many places, in addition to the stairs, there is at least a small ramp, although, as I said, a person in a wheelchair would be difficult to use, but it makes a difference and is much easier for a mother in a wheelchair. Because some of these wheelchair ramps are conjured up, so to speak, from outer space, it is very difficult for a mother without disabilities to use them, and I am with a disability, it is simply outer space."

67 Wywiad nr 3
68 Ibid.
69 Wywiad nr 2
70 Wywiad nr 4

Such a gentle ramp allows mothers with disabilities to use the city space to a greater extent, which we found out during the research walk. In photos no. 2, a presentation of ramps that make it easier for people with movement disorders to move around. Moreover, people without disabilities also use gentle ramps, choosing them as more pleasant than stairs.



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.

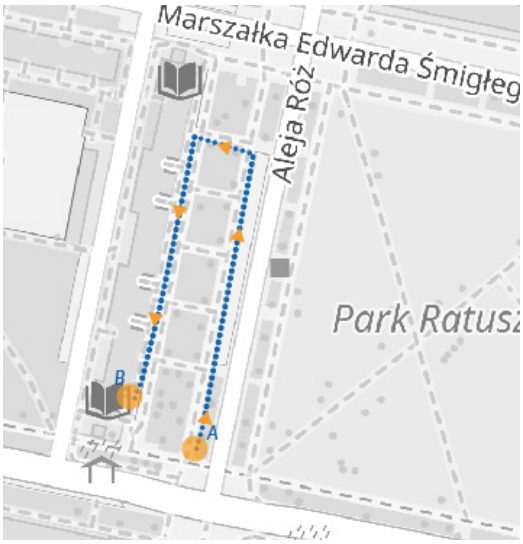
In turn, an example of a ramp that does not meet the requirements is the area at Regana Square.



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.

Therefore, to get from point A to point B via a ramp adapted to people with mobility dysfunction, you have to walk around a part of the building.





Fot. Map no 1. A screenshot of a fragment of a walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction. The route to get from point A to point B. Instead of short distance, it is quintupled.

- Pedestrian crossings

„4-5 years ago, there was such an action near Wawel, because there is a crossing there, thanks to one woman who works there in the commission for disabled people. She lived there next door and made sure that a pedestrian crossing was actually created. However, for many years, the descent for prams was so steep that I would not have dared to ride with my child in a pram, because the child would have simply fallen off."

An example of such a pedestrian crossing of appropriate dimensions is this one from the research walk.



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.

- Parking spaces for people with disabilities and for people with children

„There are a few places for mothers with children, but there are fewer parking spaces for people with disabilities. It would be nice if it was actually in a place where it would be close to the entrance, where there would be room to take the stroller out and unfold it, because what good is it if they designate a very narrow space? If the mother doesn't have one, she will still have to unfold the stroller on the street, right, to change the baby's diaper?"

- Elevators

„External elevators are appearing more and more often, even in those buildings where the conservator or someone from the monuments department probably has a problem with renovations and installing one inside."

An example is the external elevator in the ZUS building analyzed during the research walk.





Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.

- Published accessibility statements

„The first thing I do is look at the accessibility declaration, which is very cool in the context of public institutions: theatres, libraries, offices. The first place I look is this declaration, whether I will get there at all."

- Renovated, straight sidewalks

„„More and more sidewalks are being renovated. I noticed this because when a root comes out of the sidewalk, for example, there is a screw, then of course it is more difficult to walk, so I noticed that there are more and more of these simple, nice ones"

[72] Wywiad nr 1
[73] Wywiad nr 4
[74] Wywiad nr 1



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction.

- Benches or seats

There are plenty of seats along Al. Róż, but there are definitely fewer benches in the side streets, which means people sit on the windowsills of buildings or on their own walkers with a seating function.

- Change in the Social Services Offer

The least common examples were changes in the range of social services offered to mothers with disabilities and their children. The only specific case involved a mother with a mobility dysfunction whose child was on the autism spectrum. She rated the integrated school her child attended very highly, but she mentioned difficulties in getting into a public mental health clinic. *„These EU projects have great support, including those offered by the Krakow Municipal Social Welfare Centre. Thanks to one of them, a lady comes to our home to take care of him. She provides social skills training, and another lady comes once a week and provides psychoeducation. This is great support for me."*

[75] Ibid.

The fact that these services are provided in the respondent's home significantly facilitates her child's access to appropriate psychological care. Without such support, the woman would not be able to afford to leave the house again as part of her child's extracurricular activities, due to her limited mobility.

STRATEGIES IN ORDER TO MOVE AROUND THE CITY

The attitude that they have to cope on their own is dominant among the respondents. They often emphasize that they try to handle as many matters as possible on their own. They mention that their parents instilled in them the need to cope in life on their own, according to the principle *„Nobody here to help you, but yourself"*. *„I was taught to cope."* Some of them even try to say whatever they want reality to be by claiming that nothing is impossible, it is only uncomfortable. *„Nothing is really impossible. My husband [a blind person - note by EJ] is a diver, a parachutist, he skis, but he cannot see. In the context of moving around with a wheelchair, the difficulties are surmountable, but many elements of this type, such as stairs, very steep descents, are often uncomfortable."*

However, the aspect of strategic thinking and the need to plan every route and step is visible in all the statements. There is no place in the lives of mothers with disabilities for spontaneity, which is already quite alien to mothers who do not have to deal with movement disorders.*„I have to prepare for the route in advance - I make an appointment with a friend and go with her and work it out. Every outing is a bigger undertaking. To go on a new route, I have to have a whole day to work out the route and sometimes I don't get to the meeting on time.""*

Often, their choice of places to spend their free time is determined by the possibility of getting there and the architectural accessibility. *„Well, it's not easy, it's not easy, because the city gives me challenges here."*

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MOMS WITH DISABILITIES IN KRAKOW

The respondents indicated very specific areas that would require improvement to make it easier for disabled moms in Krakow to raise children in this city.

[76] Wywiad nr 5
[77] Wywiad nr 3
[78] Wywiad nr 5
[79] Wywiad nr 2

Parks are a popular area where women feel good, but it is necessary to provide at least two alleys where strollers or wheelchairs can move freely. They should therefore be of an appropriate width, which will also allow mothers with limited vision to use them, and above all, a surface of pavement suitable for vehicular traffic.

„More access to parks, because we now go to parks a lot, because they are really quiet places. At least one such park that has no access to the street at all is quiet, but there is only one route that we can walk on, because only one is accessible to a mother with a stroller."

The respondents **miss the space for wheelchairs**, especially since electric wheelchairs are even larger. Now, people using them do not know whether to move on the sidewalk or in the street. *„I dream of having paths for people with disabilities as there are bicycle paths. Because when they leave the house, go down the stairs or someone carries them, they want to be comfortable. to go somewhere and for it not to generate further problems and frustrations."*

The issue of properly adapting buildings to the needs of people with limited mobility is very important to them. In their opinion, the **appropriate size of elevators, the height of stairs and the width of doors** are issues that will become increasingly important in the future. *„Our society is ageing, there are more elderly people than children and it would be worth gradually enlarging these elevators or, if new ones are built, enlarging them, because there will be more and more people with walkers, wheelchairs or scooters who will use the elevator."*; *„For example, checking whether the height of the stairs is adapted to the person, because there are stairs that*





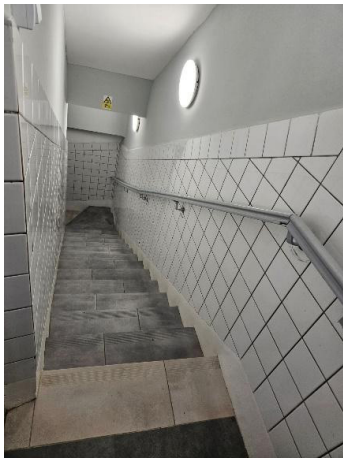
Fot. Spacer z mamą z dysfunkcją ruchową

80 Wywiad nr 3
81 Wywiad nr 1
82 Ibid.
83 Wywiad nr 2

were built a long time ago. I have such stairs in my building, they are totally unergonomic and when you go up one floor, you are so tired. A group of people who were old or sick either did not leave the house or sold their apartments.”

On the route of the research walk there was a bakery, to which a ramp led, but at the very end of the route you had to overcome a high step, which is not an easy task with a wheelchair.

The respondents also raised the issue of **adapting public institutions** to the needs of women with disabilities, including toilets and “office windows”. „Some time ago I was in the



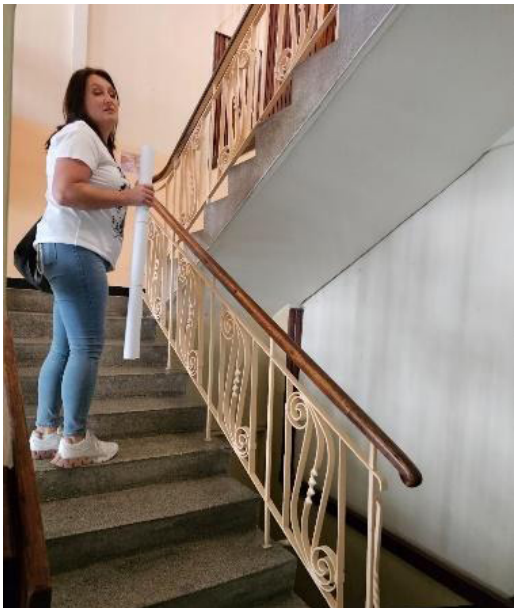



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction

passport office, because I was getting a passport for myself and my son, there was only one such platform for people with disabilities, low, and the rest of ramps were like that, so when you go up in a wheelchair, you lift your head and you can’t see. It was completely unadaptable.”



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction





Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction

The photos from the research walk below illustrate the problem of public toilets not being adapted to people with disabilities.



Fot. The Research Walk with a mother with mobility dysfunction

The walking route included a medical clinic, the entrance to which was adapted to the needs of people with disabilities, but the building itself did not have an elevator, and doctors see patients on the first floor. The format of the makeshift waiting room (first photo from the right) also does not seem to be adapted to the needs of people with mobility dysfunctions.

Another public building whose access was difficult due to a steep driveway was the library.

[85] https://www.cim-regiaodecoimbra.pt/en/transportation/

In the face of problems with public transport, the respondents postulated the creation of a **system of cheap taxis for people with disabilities**, which could serve a specific area and facilitate, for example, access to public transport stops located far from housing estates, which require a longer walk uphill. Similar solutions in terms of access to the network of cheap taxis are used in the partner region of FEMACT Cities – Região de Coimbra.

Finally, the respondents emphasized the **importance of information campaigns and the inclusion of women with disabilities in the design of urban solutions**. It is also important to **train employees of municipal units** in the issue of accessibility and working with clients with disabilities.

The information campaign for residents would be to raise awareness of the problems of people with disabilities and indicate good practices in the field of cohabitation. *"It would be nice to have such an information campaign among Krakow men and women on how to deal with people with disabilities. I have had such a situation more than once when they did not want to give up their seat on public transport, despite showing my ID."* Consulting the solutions introduced directly with the interested parties can protect against costly mistakes. In addition to the story about the guiding path leading straight to the wall presented above, another respondent shared the following experience: *„Sometimes funds appear, but then people do just for the sake of doing it. For example, my husband and I were in a city institution and in a narrow corridor they made a guiding path with attention fields, which in my opinion is stupid - just for the sake of doing it - because that money could be invested in something that would really be useful, and with such a narrow corridor there is no need for a guiding path. Sometimes there is already knowledge that 'aha this is needed', but the problem is that the people responsible for it in public places sometimes do not know what it is for, how to use it, and it is* **the lack of consultation with potential recipients that means that money is wasted."**

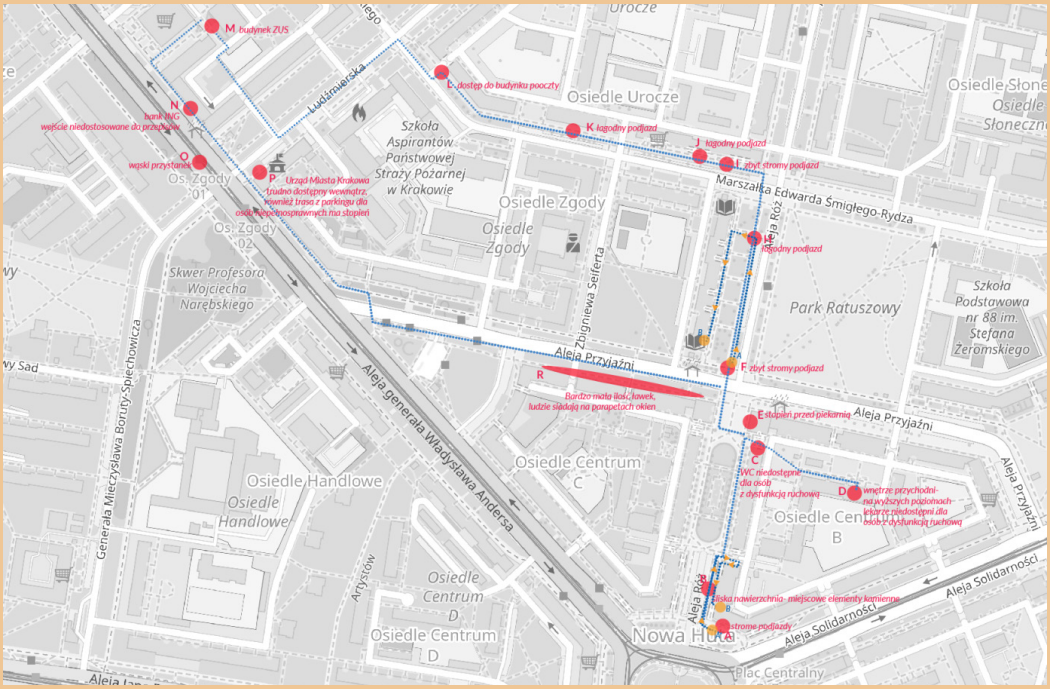
Finally, it is very important to prepare employees of city institutions to serve disabled mothers in various situations. *„Training the employee, e.g. at the information point, at the reception or in specific procedures. What do we do if, for example, a mother who is deaf comes in. Is there any way to communicate with her or do they have a video interpreter or some other system?"*

[86] Wywiad nr 1
[87] Wywiad nr 3
[88] Ibid.

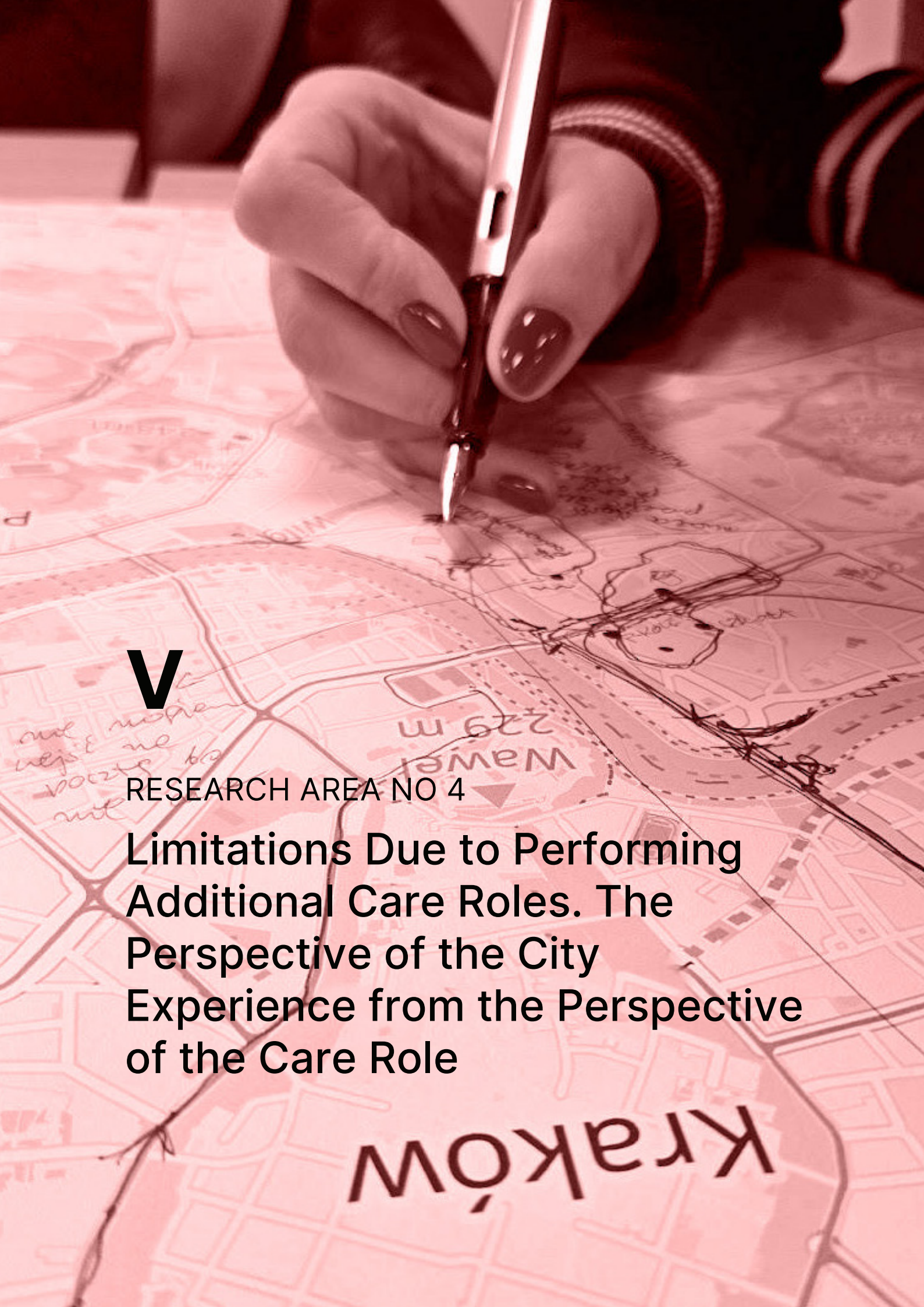
B. SUMMARY

The situation of people with disabilities is changing towards a more inclusive city, but the development of infrastructure does not keep up with the changes in the mentality of society. People with movement disabilities are still largely dependent on the approach and attitude of officials, building service staff, public transport drivers, healthcare workers or fellow residents. Without their support, moving around the city was a big problem for people with disabilities, due to the lack of adaptation of the infrastructure to the needs of people using wheelchairs or having difficulties moving independently.

Mothers with disabilities have a doubly difficult situation related to the need to care for a child and at the same time with limitations resulting from the level of their ability. That is why it is so important to prioritise actions to increase the accessibility of those spaces that are often used by parents, e.g. parks, green areas, educational institutions, offices dealing with matters related to childcare. Addressing these spaces first would relieve mothers with disabilities and allow them to "escape the prison of the four walls of their own apartment".



Fot. Walking route



V

RESEARCH AREA NO 4

Limitations Due to Performing Additional Care Roles. The Perspective of the City Experience from the Perspective of the Care Role

Data from the European Institute for Gender Equality indicate that significantly more women in Poland than the average in the European Union countries perform daily care functions for children, the elderly or other dependents. In 2022, almost half of Polish women (48%) took care of someone every day, while in the EU it is just over 1/3 (34%). Only 32% of Polish men perform daily care functions. In turn, data from UN Women show that in developed countries women spend 3.5 hours a day on unpaid work, while men spend less than 2 hours.

In Krakow, as many as 43% of women stated that their household chores limit their opportunities for professional development. In turn, in second place after workshops and training courses (71%), Krakow women indicated providing care for children or other dependents (47%) as the most necessary support for their professional work. 90% of Krakow women agreed with the statement that women still do more household chores today.

Taking into account demographic trends, Krakow will be home to more and more people over 85 who will need constant care. Seniors already make up over 25% of the city's population. In 2022, the share of this age cohort among the population aged 65 and over in Krakow was 12.9%. There were 156.4 thousand people over 65 living in the city.

The development of infrastructure providing institutional care for children, seniors and other dependents is indicated as a key element of the system enabling women to participate in the labour market. Providing care services to residents is one of the municipality's own tasks. Local governments carry out this task in various forms: care facilities, day care providers, care vouchers. Krakow has a fairly high level of nursery placement - 43.4%, and the number of municipal and subsidised places

[89] Badanie Europejskiego Instytut Równości Płci dot. nieodpłatnej pracy, 2022: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2023/domain/time/PL
[90] Women at Work, Trends 2016, International Labour Organization, 2016: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_457317.pdf
[91] Badanie o sytuacji zawodowej kobiet. Raport z badania ankietowego, Kraków, październik 2022 roku,https://www.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/264968,32,komunikat,przedsiebiorcze_krakowianki.html
[92] Raport Sytuacja demograficzna województwa małopolskiego w 2022: https://krakow.stat.gov.pl/publikacje-i-foldery/ludnosc/sytuacja-demograficzna-wojewodztwa-malopolskiego-w-2022-r-,1,17.html

by the municipal is almost 11.5 thousand. The 33% nursery placement rate defined in the Barcelona objectives, understood as the ratio of the number of places in entities providing institutional care for children up to three years of age to the number of children under three years of age, was achieved in Krakow in the first half of 2019. Data on the availability of care for young children at the subregional level from 2018 indicate that in Poland, Krakow can boast the largest number of places per thousand children up to three years of age (307.9)..

Currently, there are in Krakow:

- municipal nurseries – 22 nurseries with a total of 2,353 places,
- nurseries run on behalf of and financed by the Municipality of Kraków, in premises provided by the City of Kraków (fees in these nurseries are the same as in local government facilities) – 10 nurseries with a total of 726 places,
- private nurseries, children's clubs - 256 nurseries and children's clubs with a total of 8,262 places,
- day carers – 58 day carers with a total of 305 places.

One of the forms of institutional child care in Krakow are also clubs for parents with children up to three years of age. Clubs are places for meetings and integration of parents with children, especially those up to three years of age and people expecting their child. This is where you can share your experiences, good practices, problems related to having and raising children and create informal support groups. Currently, there are 45 clubs on the map of Krakow. In total, there are 346 institutions in Krakow that care for children up to three years of age (nurseries, children's clubs and day carers), with a total of 11,646 places, of which 321 institutions are financed or co-financed by the Municipality of Krakow.

Although Krakow definitely stands out from other Polish cities in terms of the range of institutional forms of care, not only for children, but also through the Senior Activity Center system, of which there are currently 56, available in each of the 18 districts, care for dependent people still is lying mainly on the shoulders of women. When thinking about the spatial planning of the city, it is worth considering the routes of women performing care functions and what their needs and challenges are in this area.

[93] https://www.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/263389,29,komunikat,prezydent_krakowa_chce_ zmniejszyc_oplaty_rodzicow_w_prywatnych_zlobkach.html[dostęp: 22.10.2022],
[94] https://samorzad.pap.pl/kategoria/archiwum/polskie-zlobki-instytucjonalna-opieka-nad-malym-dzieckiem-w-swietle-danych-gus [dostęp: 22.10.2022],
[95] Rejestr żłobków i klubów dziecięcych oraz wykaz dziennych opiekunów. Dane dotyczące liczby dzieci do lat trzech na podstawie informacji Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego.

Unpaid care work remains a key element of women's lives in cities, often intensified by difficulties such as higher prices for food, water and transport compared to rural areas, insufficient housing conditions, often characterised by overcrowding, uncertainty of ownership and lack of access to basic services. Most women in cities balance between household duties, paid work and difficult commutes between home and work. The greatest deficiency that women in cities face is lack of time. Once again, research by the European Institute for Gender Equality shows that 2/3 of women in Poland spend time every day cooking or doing other household chores, while only 1/3 of men are burdened with such daily duties.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the case of analysing the situation of Krakow women from the perspective of their caring functions, the Local Group proposed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

As part of the research, an online questionnaire was prepared and completed by 75 people representing most districts of Krakow. More than half of the respondents were between the ages of 36 and 45. The questionnaire was distributed through groups of mothers and people performing care functions, as well as the Municipal Social Welfare Center. The survey concerned their experiences and problems they face while performing care functions and at the same time moving around the city, using its infrastructure or city services. It consisted mostly of closed questions, but respondents also had the opportunity to share their experiences by answering an open-ended question. The answers were collected for 3 weeks - from May 8 to 29, 2024.

[96] Badanie Europejskiego Instytut Równości Płci dot. nieodpłatnej pracy, 2022: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2023/domain/time/PL

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

After analyzing the results of the quantitative questionnaire, workshops were held to deepen the issue of the city's influence on the performance of care functions. On June 14, a 3-hour workshop session was held, in which 5 people participated. During the live meeting, participants discussed how the city can influence gender equality and the daily lives of women.

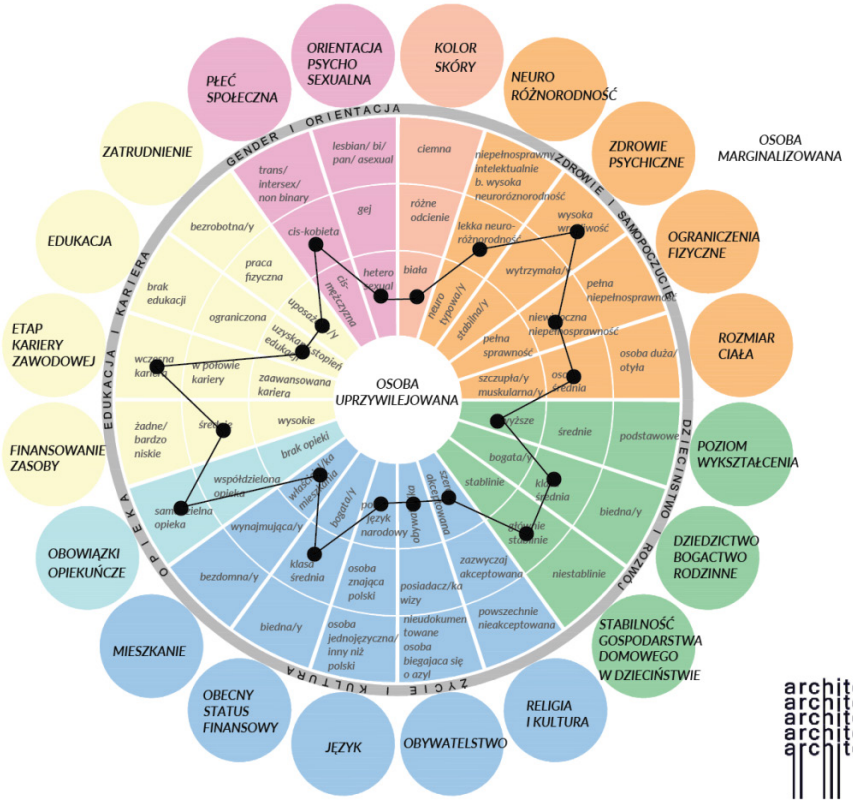
The starting point for the discussion was the privilege/power wheel developed by Sylvia Duckworth and adapted for the research. The wheel is based on twenty identity types and seven categories: life and culture, care, education and career, gender and sexuality, race, health and well-being, and childhood and development. These identity types function as circles connected to three concentric rings (outer, middle, and inner) of "identity" circles with increasing privilege as you approach the centre.

The circle is an interpretation of the ARCHITEKTONICZKI based on the privilege circle created by the UK Research Integrity Office,, but changed and adapted to Polish culture and Polish way of life. The privilege circle is dynamic - depending on the moment in life at which we fill it, our result may be different (our financial and social situation, age, environment change, etc.). The innermost ring is the most privileged/powerful. People who occupy a place in this ring will have the most power. This means that their opinions will be more often listened to and taken into account than the opinions of others.

The middle ring is often the forgotten ring (think "middle child syndrome" but on a societal scale). People in this area often have their identities erased and are marginalised in unique ways. The people that exist on either extreme see those in the middle as "passable" for the other extreme. Essentially, it is believed that they can "choose" to be marginalised or privileged when it benefits them.This is an incredibly hurtful myth because your place within these rings is rarely by choice. This is where most of the covert discrimination exists through dismissal and minimization, often from both sides.

The outermost ring is the most marginalised because these people experience more overt discrimination (in addition to the covert stuff) than the other rings. In areas where erased identities can pass, marginalised people cannot and are often affected the most by systemic discrimination.

[97] https://kb.wisc.edu/instructional-resources/page.php?id=119380
[98] https://ukrio.org/ukrio-resources/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/academic-wheel-of-privilege/
[99] https://just1voice.com/advocacy/wheel-of-privilege/ tłum. własne
[100] https://just1voice.com/advocacy/wheel-of-privilege/ tłum. własne
[101] Ibidem



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Fot. The Wheel of Privileges - interpretation and adaptation to Polish conditions of the UK Research Integrity Office's wheel of privileges. An example of a wheel of privileges completed by one of the workshop participants

At the beginning of the workshop, participants individually completed their privilege wheel to check their place in the social hierarchy, wondering where they had privileges and where they might be exposed to discrimination in the context of functioning in the city.

Participants then drew a typical day or week on a map, including key locations such as home, work, childcare, shopping, social and recreational activities. They also noted any challenges or feelings (e.g. concerns about safety, comfort, accessibility) at different points on their routes. This allowed for a visualisation of how women moved around the city, the challenges they faced, and how the urban environment supported or hindered their daily activities.

B. RESEARCH RESULTS

SURVEYS

Over 50% of the women who responded to our survey were professionally active full-time, and only 15% were housewives and did not work for a living. Thanks to this, it was possible to capture women's problems related to reconciling professional and family life from the perspective of urban space. This issue also appeared in qualitative research. One of the dimensions placed them in the second ring, which is exposed to indirect discrimination. This was the dimension related to the difficulty in combining care and paid work.

14% of the respondents turned out to be single mothers, which is an additional challenge in reconciling professional and family life. Over 45% of the respondents take care of 2 or more dependent people on a daily basis. 40% of the respondents admitted that among the people they take care of on a daily basis are adults. These are either people with disabilities - physical or intellectual, or the elderly. Almost 2/3 of them are unable to move around the city on their own (62%). In the case of 13% of respondents, the so-called "sandwich generation" applies - the "sandwich model", i.e. women around 40 years old who simultaneously take care of their own offspring and older people in the family.

Over 30% of respondents claim that Krakow is not a friendly city for people performing care functions. On the other hand, 15% of respondents are convinced of Krakow's friendliness in this area.

Graph no. 3. Considering the planning of urban space and the way it is equipped, do you consider Krakow a city friendly to people caring for others or not? Choose an answer on the scale from 1 to 5 below, where 1 means that it is not a friendly city at all, and 5 means that it is very friendly.



The respondents had difficulty in indicating which district is the most or least friendly to people performing care functions. Among the positively distinguished districts, we can mention Nowa Huta, Stare Miasto and Krowodrza. Stare Miasto also stands out negatively, which means that it has several different specific features that are key for people performing care functions. The women who indicated that Stare Miasto stands out positively have children, but only one of them uses a wheelchair. The road surface may be key in this regard - the respondents who take care of people who move independently, regardless of age, see positive aspects in Stare Miasto as a place where they feel safe, there are many service points, places to stop. Among other negatively distinguished districts, respondents pointed: Podgórze, Dębniki and Prądnik Biały.

The vast majority of respondents experienced problems with moving around Krakow due to their caring functions.



Graph no 4. Problems moving around Krakow due to caregiving.

The situations described mainly concerned narrow sidewalks blocked by cars, lack of elevators and ramps, and lack of toilets. All quotes below come from answers to an open question about specific challenges that the respondents had to face.

- **BIKES AND SCOOTERS**

In the context of moving around the city by bike and scooter, the main concern was the safety of pedestrians due to the very high speed of these vehicles. *„Older people cannot feel safe on the sidewalks because of cyclists and those who move on scooters. Very old people move clumsily and need more space. They are pushed by cyclists, which exposes them to falls and more. I have had several such situations. I believe that cycling on sidewalks should be more limited and controlled."*

Another problem is the scattered scooters around which people with strollers or in wheelchairs have to manoeuvre. There was also one comment about riding a bike with a small child. *„I often travel by bike with my children or a trailer in which they sit. There are no safe bike paths that I can use (those that exist are narrow and often end in unexpected places/suddenly)."*

- **BENCHES AND STREET FURNITURE**

The lack of places to rest while moving around the city was also pointed out. Residents are particularly bothered by the lack of benches in green areas and parks. This is especially important for caregivers of the elderly and sick. *„Walking short distances is the main activity of a person with Alzheimer's. My mother is unable to climb most stairs, although she can walk. The small number of benches is inconvenient (when walking down a street in the Old Town, there is no way to rest even on the pedestrian walkways)."*

- **PUBLIC TOILET**

The lack of opportunities to relieve oneself is one of the main problems of women in the city. However, for mothers of small children, an additional difficulty is the lack of a place to change the diaper or wash the child. *„When planning a trip with a child when giving up diapers, access to a toilet is important, and there are very few public ones. Not to mention a sink in the playground."*

The lack of toilets adapted to the needs of people with disabilities is also exceptionally inconvenient. *„The public toilet in Sukiennice, which is adapted for people in wheelchairs, does not meet the requirements at all, there are few public*

toilets available for the disabled. When taking care of my father, I had a problem finding public toilets. This situation slowly began to exclude him from moving around the city."

- **ENTRANCES TO SHOPS AND SERVICE POINTS**

Doors that are not adapted to the needs of people performing care functions limit the possibilities of using urban space. *„In the Old Town district, even entering a pharmacy with a baby stroller is a problem, not to mention most service premises or shops (narrow entrance doors, and stairs)."*One of the solutions indicated by caregivers of the elderly was the installation of automatic revolving doors, which make it easier to enter the building by leading another person by the hand.

- **SIDEWALKS**

Sidewalks are the most important communication route for women, because they are much more likely to walk between several points on one route. In Krakow, their condition is one of the biggest problems for residents. *„I damaged the wheels of my stroller on a too high curb when I was trying to push up the wheels. My child had an accident when his scooter fell into a hole in the pavement."* In addition, the sidewalks are narrow, which is especially bothersome for women pushing strollers. *„Narrow sidewalks when you are walking with a stroller and another child by the hand."*; *„Narrow and uneven sidewalks, which are difficult to move on with a stroller."*

In addition, the situation is not made easier by cars parked on the sidewalks, which obstruct pedestrians' passage. *„Cars parked in such a way that they make it difficult to walk with a stroller, what is a person in a wheelchair, for example, supposed to do in such a situation?"*; *„Often on Kalwaryjska Street, cars stop on the sidewalks, completely preventing you from walking with a stroller, and entering the road with it is dangerous."*; *„I couldn't get through with a stroller because there wasn't enough space between the parked car and the wall of the building."*

Difficulties also arise in winter, when roads are cleared of snow as a priority, and sidewalks remain covered in snow. *„I couldn't easily get through with a stroller because the sidewalk wasn't cleared of snow in winter."*; *„In winter, for example,*

sidewalks along streets weren't cleared of snow, e.g. Rydlówka Street, Szafrana Street, making it completely impossible to move around with a child in a pushchair."

- **BUS, TRAM STOPS**

The stops turn out to be unsuitable for the needs of people performing care functions due to the curb and lack of shelters that protect against sun and rain. *„Many tram stops still do not have a raised pavement, in order to be able to freely use the platform from the tram, you have to get off only at stops adapted for this."*; *„Problem with getting on the tram from a stop, e.g. Wawel, Stradom - difficult with a child, and with an adult in a wheelchair downright unattainable."*; *„Heat, transfer with a stroller, stop without shade (stop at Inwalidów Square towards Kleparz). The bus was late, the child almost had a heat stroke."*

- **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

The respondents experienced a lack of understanding by passengers and drivers of the needs of people with disabilities or those taking care of children. *„Stroller and pregnant women's spaces in public transport - always occupied, unfortunately you often have to ask to leave."*; *„Buses pulling up too far from the curb."* They also pointed to the need to create a system that provides priority spaces for people with invisible disabilities.

Functioning in the high-floor tram fleet is difficult for people moving with a stroller *„When my son was still small and rode in a stroller, it was a problem to get on a high-floor tram and when I was travelling alone without my husband, I had to ask for help."*

- **STAIRS AND ELEVATORS**

The problems noticed by the respondents include both the total lack of lifts or ramps (*„No lift in some public buildings"; "No wheelchair ramps even to public buildings"*), and their inadequate adaptation to the needs of users (*„had to carry the pram up and down the stairs because the existing descent was not safe at all (e.g. it was too steep). I had to carry the pram*

up and down the stairs when there was no crossing at Bohaterów Getta Square."; „Stairs at the Bronowice loop - a ramp only for the very brave, and when you are in a hurry to catch a bus, those minutes to walk around are valuable")

The respondents also pointed to broader problems that Krakow is struggling with in the context of climate change, which affect raising children in this city. *„Very high temperatures in the summer and air pollution in the winter make it impossible to leave the house with small children."*

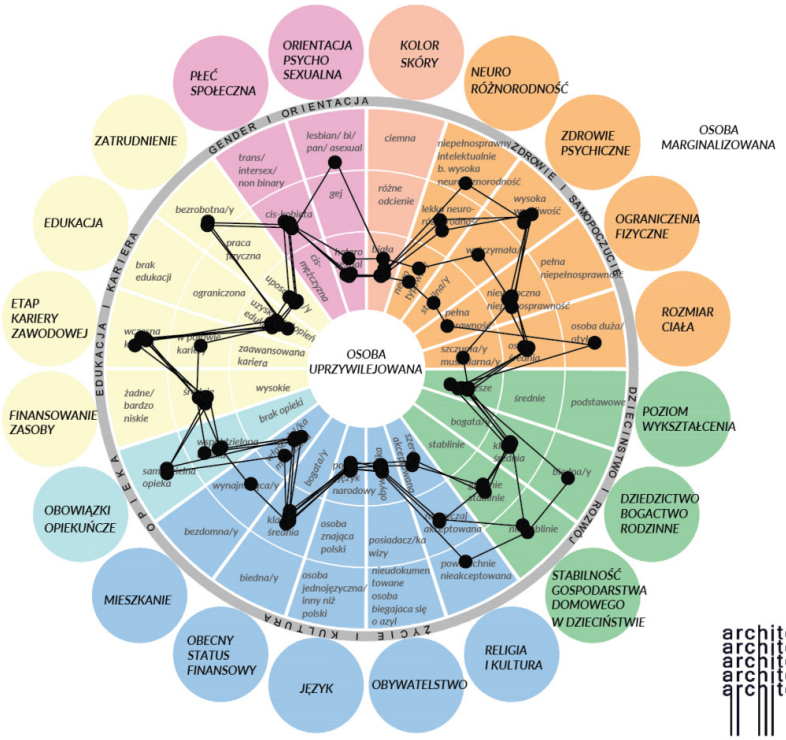
Analysing the frequency of problems indicated by the respondents, the most troublesome problems in the urban space of Krakow in the context of performing care functions are:

- Cars parked on pavements - 44 responses
- Unsuitable entrances to buildings (too narrow for a stroller, difficulty opening doors) - 42 responses
- Crowds when getting on and off buses and trams - 40 responses
- Uneven surface and holes in pavements - 40 responses
- Lack of public toilets - 30 responses

Among the slightly less frequently mentioned but recurring difficulties were also high curbs; stairs at the entrances to shops, schools, kindergartens or nurseries; steep stairs; no ramps for strollers; no space to comfortably change a baby's diaper; no toilets for people with disabilities; no elevator; narrow pavements, unshovelled pavements; no shade on hot days.

Among the problems mentioned by the respondents themselves, there were also too few waste bins on pavements; no possibility to leave an elderly person in a safe place while dealing with official matters, under the care of a person employed by the institution, on the basis of children's clubs; no equipment on playgrounds dedicated to children with disabilities.

WHEEL OF PRIVILEGES



Fot. The Wheel of Privileges - interpretation and adaptation to Polish conditions of the UK Research Integrity Office's wheel of privileges. Aggregated wheels of privilege of all workshop participants

The aggregated wheels of privilege of the workshop participants indicate that they do not have a clearly privileged position (43% of all responses), 39% of responses are in the middle circle, which, as stated above, may indicate hidden discrimination. 18% of the responses were located in the outer circle by the participants.

All participants are in a marginalised position in the following aspects:

- **caregiving responsibilities** - single or shared caregiving
- **career stage** - early or mid-career. None of the participants have a stable career
- **funding, resources** - average
- **household stability in childhood** - unstable or mostly stable
- **inheritance/family wealth** - poor or middle class
- **gender** - cis female

All participants place themselves in a privileged position in the following aspects:

- education
- level of education
- language
- citizenship
- skin colour

The last three points (language, citizenship and skin colour) are given values. Only education and level of education are acquired values. It can therefore be concluded that women are in a privileged position only in terms of their education.

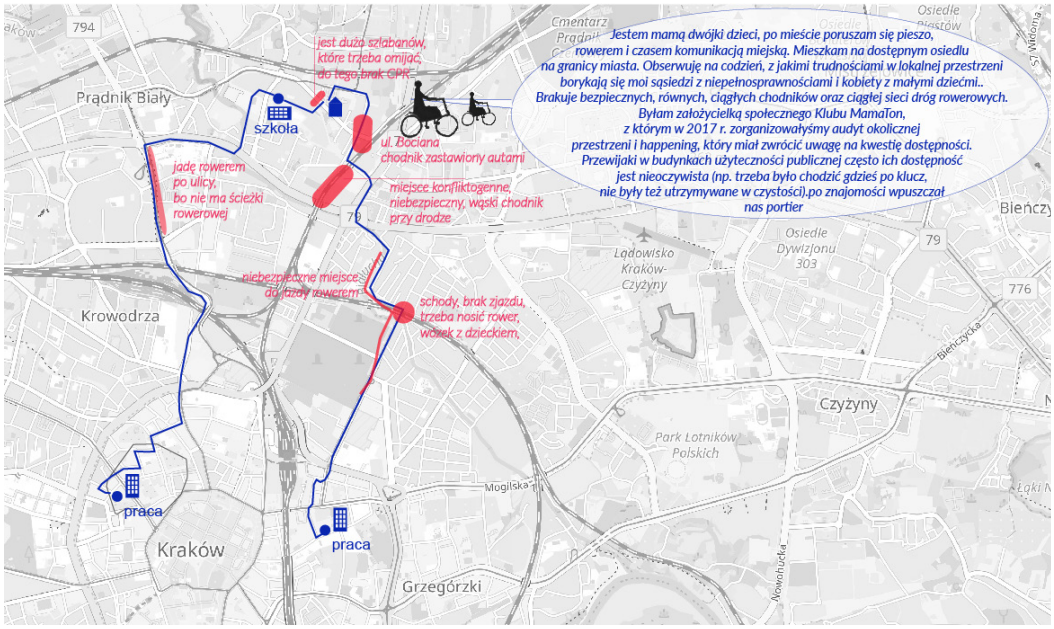
WORKSHOPS



Fot. Workshops on city walking paths for mothers from Krakow

During the workshops, where participants presented their daily routes through the city and discussed the main challenges they face, similar themes emerged as those from the quantitative research. Additionally, different patterns of using urban space as a mother of a small child were revealed.

(1) CYCLIST MOTHER

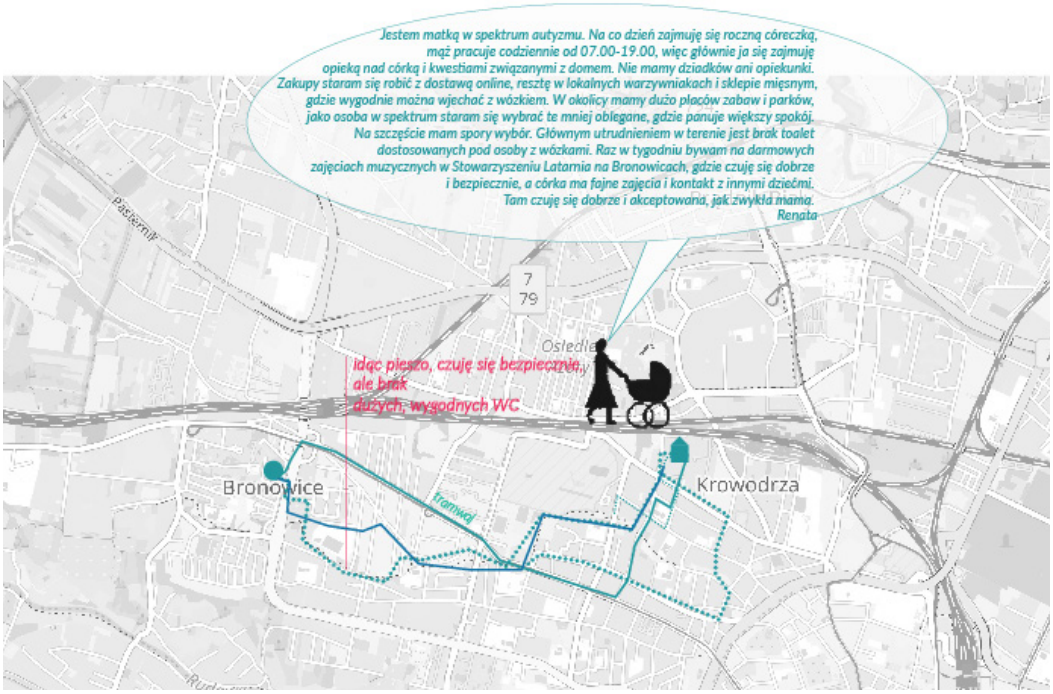


Route 1: Workshops on City Movement Paths for Mothers from Krakow

A mother who primarily moves around the city by bike with her child highlights the need to adjust her route based on the availability of restrooms. The challenges she faces as a cyclist also include:

- **Sidewalks blocked by cars** and the lack of contraflow bike lanes, making it difficult to safely cycle with a child on the street;
- Staircases everywhere, with **no ramps**, forcing her to carry both her own bike and her child's bike;
- **The absence of bike paths**, which necessitates cycling on the street even when there is heavy traffic;
- **Numerous barriers**, which force her to zigzag and take longer routes on her bike.

(2) MOTHER ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

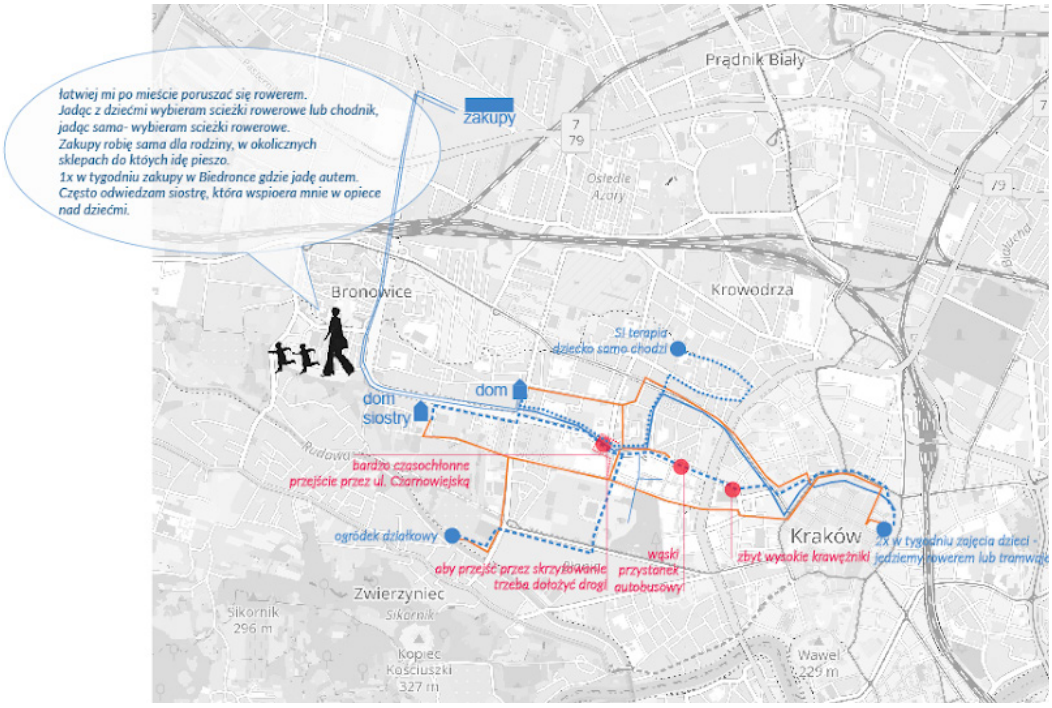


Route 2: Workshops on City Movement Paths for Mothers from Krakow

A mother on the autism spectrum pointed out that she adjusts her routes according to the level of traffic and the intensity of sensory stimuli while navigating the city. The availability of restrooms adapted for people with strollers is also very important to her. Since she doesn't have daily support in childcare—her husband works, and her family doesn't live in Krakow—she is fully responsible for taking care of her child.

She appreciates that in her neighborhood (Krowodrza), there are many parks and green spaces that are not overcrowded, allowing her to use them without anxiety as someone on the spectrum. She has also found a cultural institution that offers activities for children and provides her with a sense of safety (Stowarzyszenie Latarnia in Bronowice). In general, she moves on foot during her daily routes.

(3) MOTHER ON THE MOVE



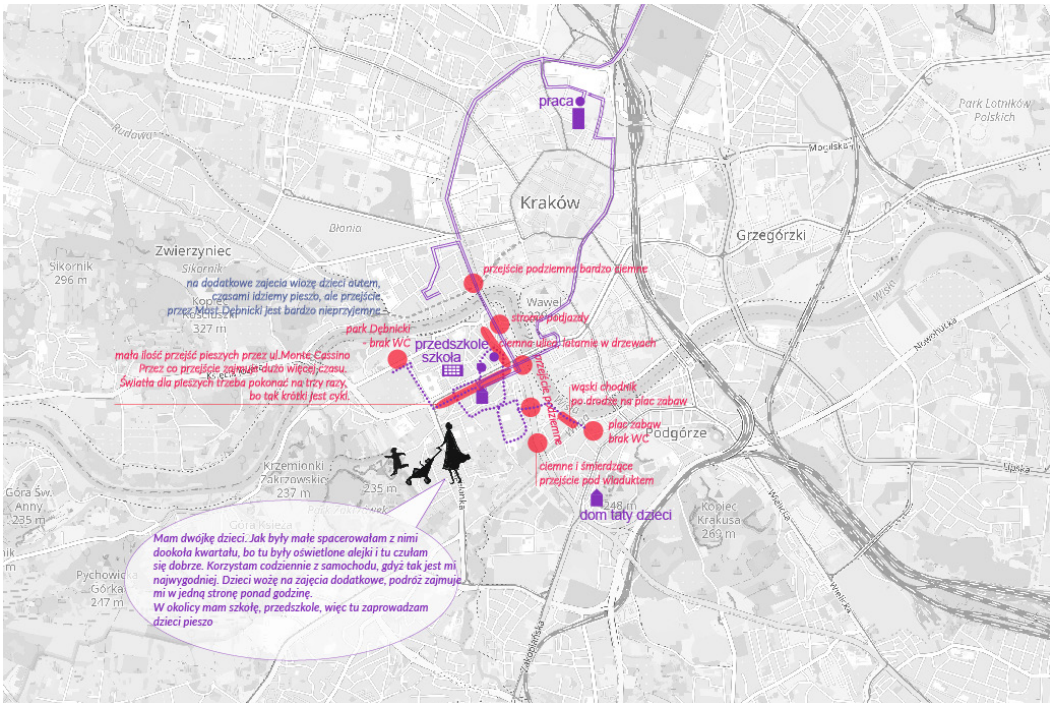
TRoute 3: Workshops on City Movement Paths for Mothers from Krakow

Another type of mother is one who uses various modes of transportation—bike, tram, car—and also frequently walks. The fact that she has more than one child means she follows many regular routes. The challenges she encounters include:

- Curbs that are too high, making it difficult to cycle and push a stroller;
- Narrow bus stops, where it’s hard to fit with a baby stroller;

Lack of pedestrian crossings, which forces her to take longer routes to safely cross intersections.

(4) INDEPENDENT MOTHER



Route 4: Workshops on City Movement Paths for Mothers from Krakow

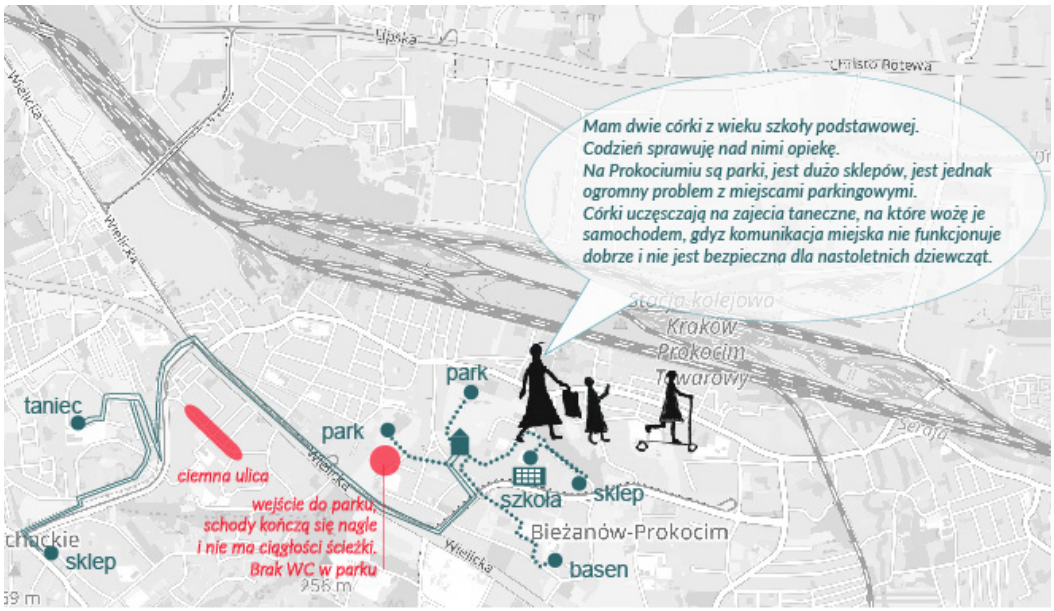
An independent mother of two is a logistics master, especially if she ensures her children attend specialized extracurricular activities that require over an hour of commuting. In this case, the car seems like the only reasonable solution, and she uses it daily. However, the fact that educational and care facilities are close to home means she also walks with her children around the neighborhood every day. As someone who is responsible for her children most of the time, she pays much more attention to safety.

The main challenges she faces include:

- Lack of safety: dark and smelly underpasses, poorly lit streets where streetlights are obscured by trees, and poorly lit pedestrian tunnels;
- Lack of restrooms at the playground and in Dębnicki Park; Narrow sidewalks on the way to the playground and steep ramps, which are particularly challenging when pushing a stroller;
- Extended crossing times due to traffic light cycles not being adapted for people with small children or mobility issues;
- Few pedestrian crossings on Monte Cassino Street.

As the mother of daughters who are now relatively independent

(3) MAMA W RUCHU



Route 5: Workshops on City Movement Paths for Mothers from Krakow

in getting around the city and attending primary school, her focus on safety has shifted. The issues of restroom availability or pedestrian crossings adapted for strollers have taken a back seat. She now pays more attention to the availability of parking spaces, as her daughters attend dance classes that are not offered in their neighborhood. The dark street near the dance studio and issues with public transport force her to drive her daughters. The limited number of pedestrian crossings on Monte Cassino Street remains a concern.



Fot. Warsztaty dotyczące ścieżek poruszania się po mieście dla mam z Krakowa

C. PODSUMOWANIE

Mothers in the city are constantly on the move, and their routes are much more complex than those of men, as illustrated by the compilation of routes of the mothers participating in the study. They face both accessibility issues, similar to mothers with mobility impairments: narrow sidewalks, inadequate surfaces, lack of elevators and pedestrian crossings, but also emotional challenges such as the sense of safety, which was frequently discussed by the participants of the research walk held on March 23-24, 2024. This shows how many different aspects intersect depending on the groups being analyzed.

From the perspective of mothers living in Krakow, the main challenges are:

1. **Poorly designed urban space in terms of:**

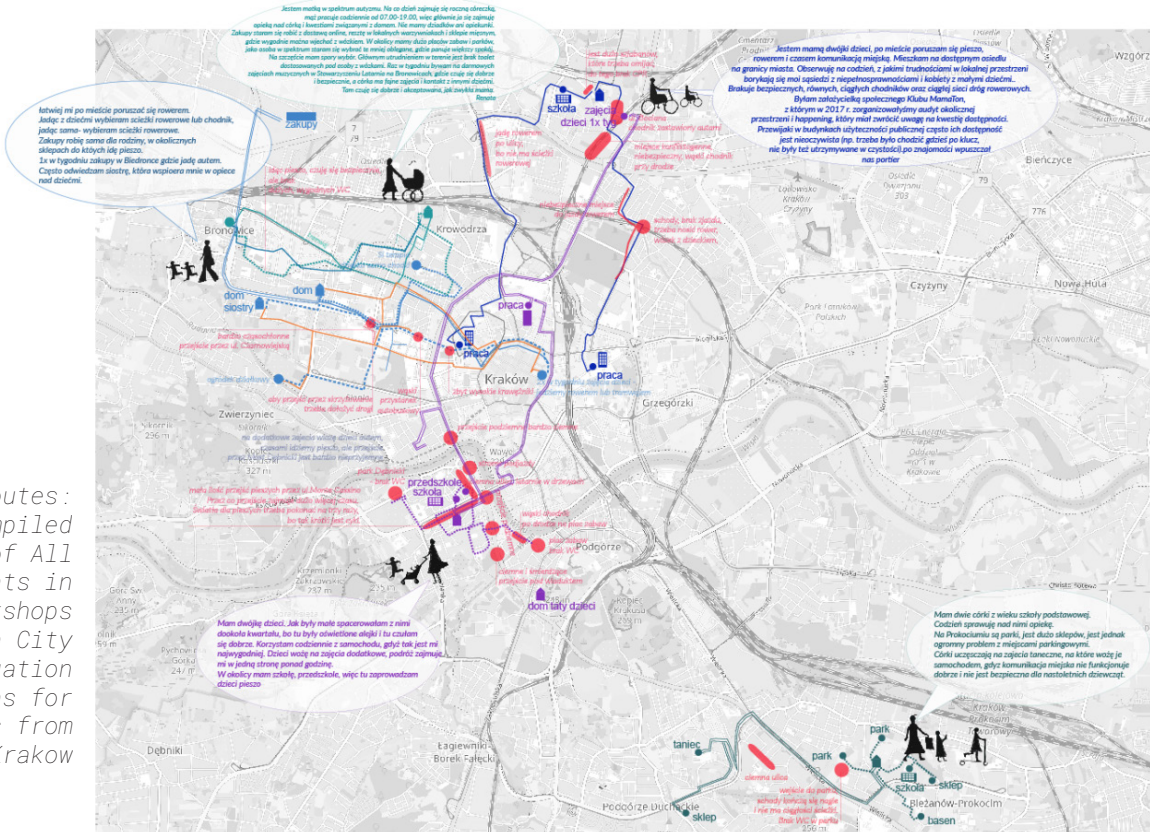
- Distance to children’s extracurricular activities from their place of residence,
- Difficulties in getting to school / issues with bike paths,
- Limited access to playgrounds – lack of restrooms at playgrounds, and routes to playgrounds often require using an underpass or going under a viaduct.

2. **Lack of intuitive connection between the city and the river:**

- Using the Vistula Boulevards requires a well-thought-out and carefully planned route.

3. **Crossing the street:**

- Traffic light cycles at pedestrian crossings are too short.



Routes: Compiled Routes of All Participants in the Workshops on City Navigation Paths for Mothers from Krakow

4. Sidewalks and pedestrian-bike paths (CPR):

- On the way to school, the sidewalk sometimes ends, forcing children to walk on the street,
- Sidewalks are often too narrow and additionally occupied by parked cars, making it difficult to navigate with a stroller,
- Sidewalks and CPRs are not adapted for children riding bikes.

5. Lack of public restrooms in the city space.

6. Lack of parking spaces and bike racks near educational facilities.

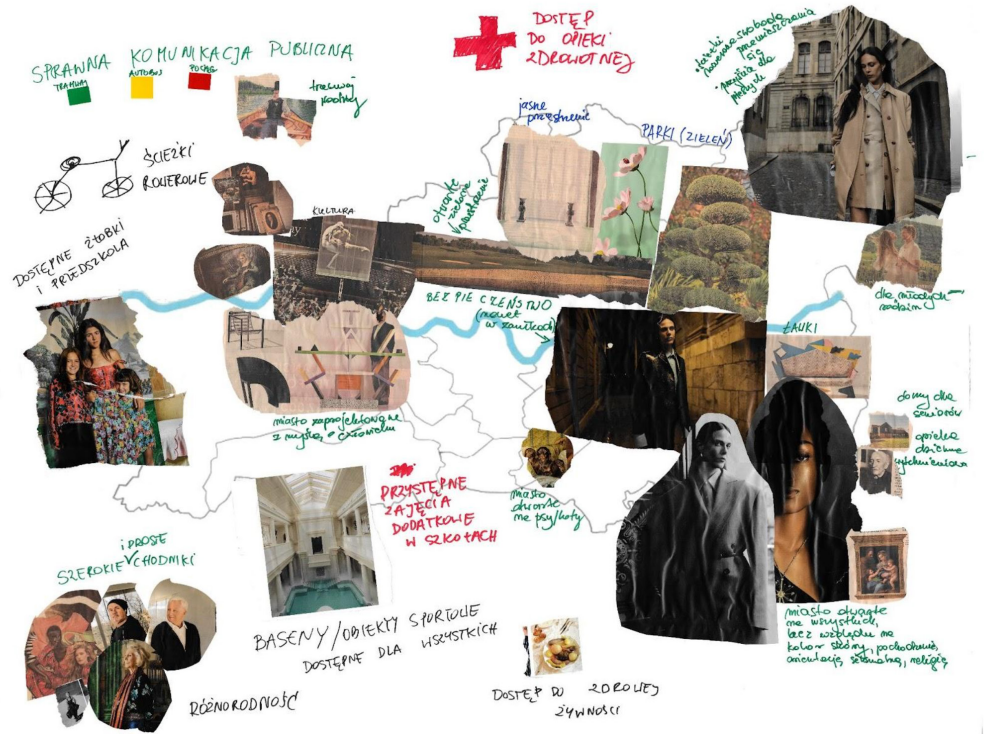
7. Limited lighting in some parts of the city, which increases anxiety.



VI

SUMMARY

Conclusions and Recommendations



THE CITY HAS A GENDER

The city may seem like a neutral space, but in reality, it has a "gender." This report shows that urban spaces are constructed and organized in ways that reflect and perpetuate gender inequalities rooted in society. From the design of buildings to the layout of public infrastructure and access to various services, all of these factors impact the experiences of residents based on their gender. This report highlights public spaces that have been analyzed from the perspective of women, considering various aspects of their daily lives and their interactions with the city.

DIALOGUE WITH THE CITY:

Every time we step out of a building, we engage in a dialogue with the city. Whether this dialogue is smooth or more complex is influenced by our gender, as evidenced by this report. Below are the conclusions and recommendations aimed at reducing these differences:

WOMEN AND THE NIGHT:

The fact that functioning in a city is conditioned by gender becomes particularly visible, or even more so, after dark. It’s not just about where you are going, but most importantly, which route you choose. Women face such decisions every evening. Safety is one of the main topics discussed during the Women’s Night Walk.

EYES ON THE STREET:

The ability to see or be seen in a space. The proper physical configuration of space allows visibility of elements and people in the surroundings, and makes it easier to locate potential exits in case of danger. For this purpose, we recommend:

- Activating urban spaces to make them more frequented, and therefore safer.
- Activating certain streets by placing service establishments at ground level, increasing the presence of people in the surroundings, and ensuring “eyes on the street,” thereby providing women with a sense of safety.
- More frequent patrols by police or municipal guards in less-frequented spaces or areas used exclusively by city residents.
- Uniform, continuous lighting of pedestrian spaces.
- Establishing help points or places for reporting cases of harassment.
- Campaigns highlighting opposition to violence and support for gender issues.

WHAT THE CITY TELLS US WITH ITS LIGHTING:

City lighting reflects inequalities in access to public space. Cities often invest in lighting tourist attractions and landmarks that draw tourists and generate profits, while neglecting everyday functional spaces like underpasses or less representative streets used by residents. This marginalizes daily mobility, especially for women who may feel more discomfort and danger in poorly lit areas. To improve this situation, we recommend:

- Better lighting for spaces such as underpasses, sidewalks, stairways, ramps, and entrances/exits from underground areas.
  Consistent, continuous lighting.
  Uniform lighting of pedestrian spaces, cycling infrastructure, and public transport stops and stations.

WHERE YOU ARE AND WHERE YOU ARE HEADING:

Proper signage throughout the city's mobility network is essential for easy navigation and spatial legibility. It is important to provide:

- Continuity of routes and visual connections.
- Proper, gender-neutral signage of all communication routes and information on what lies ahead.
- Increasing the number of pedestrian crossings so that the city does not marginalize pedestrian traffic.
- Maps and information about the surroundings at stations/stops.
- Signage of information/help/emergency points.
- Eliminating hidden corners or designing and lighting them properly.
- As much as possible, moving pedestrian traffic to surface levels / eliminating underpasses.
- Arranging urban furniture so as not to obstruct visibility.
- Designing and trimming excessively tall greenery.
- Using transparent materials in bus stops, stations, and parking areas.



TOILETS – A TABOO TOPIC?

Urban mobility also includes access to toilets. Current regulations do not ensure a sufficient number of toilets for women, and the design of public restrooms often does not fully meet their needs (e.g., sinks outside the stalls). Nevertheless, we recommend:

- Increasing the number of public toilets with adequate dimensions.
- Locating toilets at street level in frequented places.
- Placing sinks inside the toilet stalls for hygienic reasons (women need the ability to change a tampon and immediately wash their hands or rinse a menstrual cup).

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN THE CITY – WOMEN’S VISIBILITY

Social prejudices, whether conscious or unconscious, often stem from gender representation. It is no surprise that we continue to face inequalities when we don’t see women represented in the city’s public spaces. From a gender perspective, it is crucial to:

- Increase the visibility of women through monuments and street names that commemorate women who contributed as much to the city or country as men.
- Promote social education on diverse gender roles.
- Remove advertisements and billboards that often represent stereotypical gender roles.
- Introduce elements that make women and diverse communities visible in everyday mobility, sports, culture, and business.



THE ~~IN~~VISIBLE TEENAGE GIRL

Teenage girls are the most excluded social group in the city. The lack of space that addresses their needs is largely unnoticed. The absence of spaces for young women and their resulting absence in public spaces is, among other things, the result of pushing them to the margins of space on school grounds, which are designed in a football-centric manner. Our research shows how gender divisions and stereotypes are unconsciously shaped by the built environment. To give all students equal opportunities regardless of gender, we recommend the following actions:

DECENTRALIZATION

- Design school spaces to eliminate the football-centric hierarchy and organize spaces for various sports and activities.
- Avoid placing one themed space centrally.
- Evenly distribute high-activity areas interspersed with relaxation spaces, enabling interaction between children with different interests.

DIVERSITY

Expanding and diversifying facilities will increase the attractiveness of spaces. We recommend:

- Adding new attractions.
  Introducing zones for various physical activities that meet the needs of both girls and boys.
- Organizing spaces and themed zones by creating areas for different purposes, such as spaces for physical activity, quiet relaxation areas, and play zones. This will better organize space and allow children to choose areas based on their needs and mood.
- Reorganizing existing zones to meet the needs of different age and social groups and allow more children to use the spaces.
- Considering the needs of children with disabilities and parents with disabilities.

EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM:

Outdoor educational integration will diversify children’s learning experiences. We recommend:

- Enabling outdoor learning by adding urban furniture or designing it from natural elements to allow for group seating.
- Adding new shaded areas.
- Modernizing existing spaces to transform underused or less functional areas into more pleasant and diverse spaces offering various ways to spend time.

PARTYCYPACJA SPOŁECZNA

- Listening to children’s opinions and proposals and involving them in decision-making about spaces for them.
- Regular evaluation and improvement of spaces: implementing a system of regular monitoring of the state of school spaces and adapting them to changing children’s needs and new challenges.



MOTHER WITH VARIOUS NEEDS

When analyzing caregiving in the context of disability, we often think of able-bodied parents caring for children with disabilities. However, a social group that is completely overlooked in public space is mothers with different needs, including mobility, vision, and speech impairments, or those who are deaf or hard of hearing. These women carefully plan every outing outside their home, analyzing the route they need to take. However, their exclusion is not only due to architectural barriers but also to the social exclusion they may encounter. This exclusion reflects the emotional cost of navigating the city and social life.

ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS:

This is the first obstacle faced by people with various needs:

- Adapting ramps to current regulations.
- Increasing the accessibility of public and cultural facilities.
- Improving user comfort through appropriate sidewalk surfaces, street crossings, or access routes.
- Increasing the number of benches or rest areas along streets, which will strengthen the independence of people with various needs and significantly improve the quality of life for residents.
- Providing public restrooms adapted to people with different needs.
- Improving public transportation by expanding the fleet with low-floor vehicles and placing stops more densely in accessible locations.
  Improving bus stop infrastructure by ensuring each stop has shelter from the weather.

SOCIAL BARRIERS:

- Social education about different needs (types of disabilities) combined with a focus on caregiving to prevent exclusion.
- Awareness campaigns about mothers with different needs and their children.
- School education about parents with different needs, sensitizing and familiarizing children and youth with the topic.

REPRODUCTIVE CITY

CARE IS NOT WORK

The concept of a “reproductive city” refers to urban spaces that support daily life and caregiving needs, often tasks performed by women. Unlike the traditional view of the city as a place for work and consumption, the reproductive city emphasizes the importance of infrastructure that facilitates family life and caregiving. These are cities where caregiving for children and the elderly is made visible, and public services such as kindergartens, schools, benches, and green spaces are accessible. Such spaces enhance the quality of life for all residents.

- Visibility and accessibility of day care centers.
- Visibility and accessibility of rest areas: benches, green spaces, and squares.
- Visibility of reproductive work through the placement of care spaces in central or nearby public areas.

DAILY MOBILITY

Traveling through the city with a young child or an elderly person is a challenge. An additional difficulty arises when a child begins walking but cannot move at the pace of an adult. From a gender perspective, it is essential to:

- Increase the number of pedestrian crossings.
- Extend the duration of traffic light signals to allow crossings in one cycle, especially for those with children or mobility issues.
- Improve the quality and width of pedestrian paths to accommodate strollers while holding a child’s hand.
- Improve public transportation by increasing the number of low-floor vehicles and placing stops in more accessible locations, so those with caregiving responsibilities do not have to take detours.
- Improve bus stop infrastructure to ensure every stop has weather shelters.
- Establish public transportation connections between residential areas and other activity centers, so teenagers can travel independently without needing to switch modes of transport.

CHILDREN HAVE NO VOICE

The fact that children are often overlooked in street design is evident by the lack of safe cycling spaces for them. Although children under 10 are required to ride on sidewalks, after that age, they are exposed to dangers while cycling on bike paths. Therefore, cycling mothers see the need to::

- Improve pedestrian-bike paths and cycling lanes in terms of quality.
- Increase the number of bike paths to allow safe cycling to different areas of the city.
- Increase the number of bike racks and create dedicated zones around them, ensuring that cars do not block access.

CHILDREN ARE BORN AT AGE 3

Parks and playgrounds in cities are typically designed for children aged 3 to 12. To allow younger and older children to be active and included in these spaces, we recommend:

- Creating diverse areas in playgrounds tailored to all age groups.
- Designing age-segregated zones in playgrounds, and designing parks and playgrounds to cater to all age groups.
- Locating public restrooms near playgrounds.
- Increasing the number of public toilets with appropriate dimensions to accommodate strollers, with convenient access to changing tables.



DIVERSITY AND ATTRACTIVENESS

To enhance the diversity and attractiveness of public spaces, we recommend:

- Expanding the range of extracurricular activities in each district, allowing children to pursue their passions without the need for long commutes.
- Making public spaces such as parks, squares, and areas between apartment buildings more appealing for teenage girls.

HOW ONE BENCH CAN CHANGE THE LIVES OF TWO FAMILIES

A bench – a simple element of urban infrastructure – holds great significance for many city residents, especially for the elderly, people with permanent or temporary disabilities, pregnant women, and others. For them, a bench becomes a key resting spot during daily walks, allowing them to move freely without needing to rely on others. Its absence can mean being confined at home, limiting one's ability to move independently or use public spaces. We recommend:

- Increasing the number of benches, seating areas, or rest spots along streets, which will enhance the independence of people with different needs and significantly improve the quality of life for residents.
- The placement of benches should be preceded by an analysis of location, proper orientation to provide a good view, the number of benches, and varied seat heights, among other factors.



Collecting gender-related data in relation to urban spaces is a relatively new area of interest, meaning that there is currently a lack of available data and guidelines to drive change. Krakow is a leader in this effort, positioning itself as a pioneering city in Poland and one of the few in Europe to take these steps.

We live in societies marked by deep systemic inequalities, where differences create privileges and oppressions depending on whether we are women, men, or people of other identities. These inequalities permeate all aspects of our lives, including housing, mobility, paid work, and urban planning. The urban environments in which we live recreate and reinforce structural inequalities and spatial power relations. As private spaces shrink in urban agglomerations, the importance of streets, squares, and courtyards as alternative living spaces grows, making the imperative for inclusive city design more urgent than ever. To meet the requirements of an inclusive city, it is essential to incorporate a gender and intersectional perspective that analyzes these inequalities and proposes transformations in our environments to guarantee the right to the city for all people, particularly those who have historically been excluded and made invisible.

Architects and urban planners face new challenges and must adopt a different role, one that emphasizes asking critical questions rather than providing ready-made solutions.

This report serves as a foundation for more advanced research and analysis. We recommend developing innovative verification tools for the city, supported by detailed design guidelines tailored for architects and urban planners. These guidelines should include a set of criteria precisely adapted to the specific needs of individual urban spaces. The proposed tools will not only facilitate the evaluation of the current state of a given area but also be crucial in supporting the development of strategies and plans for future improvements, allowing for more effective and sustainable management of urban spaces.