

A photograph of a park area with a cobblestone ground. In the foreground, a young girl with long brown hair and a pink top is crouching, looking at a white paper template on the ground. In the background, a young boy is walking. The ground is decorated with various colorful painted shapes like triangles, circles, and lines in yellow, blue, and pink.

A tool to spread the Playful Paradigm philosophy and co-design the future playful cities

Resources, analysis and stories to help cities include play
and gamification in their local urban development

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Lead Partner



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(Italy)



Cork
(Ireland)



AJUNTAMENT
D'ESPLUGUES

Esplugues de Llobregat
(Spain)



KATOWICE
for a change

Katowice
(Poland)



Klaipėda
(Lithuania)



Larissa
(Greece)



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Graphic design: Creaa

A testimony from the Good Practice City

Play can make the difference for a better urban future of cities!

We know that nowadays cities provide unique opportunities for addressing global challenges such as urbanization, population ageing, climate change, marginalisation, migration, etc. Our Playful Paradigm project can increase the capabilities of urban areas to answer these challenges, by promoting social inclusion and participation, healthy lifestyles and energy awareness, intergenerational solidarity and fair behaviours, as well as a smart integrated urban planning and inclusive and resilient urban settings. In fact, the playful approach can produce benefits not only in terms of improving individuals' health and well-being, but also in terms of co-creating inclusive, enabling, empowering and enjoyable places, by suggesting new perspectives and place-making strategies.

Play is a universal principle, a fundamental activity of the human being, involves the cognitive, physical, emotional, relational sphere of individuals and is beneficial for people of all ages. The holistic nature of games makes them excellent media for promoting inclusion and belonging, enabling individuals, overcoming inequities and frailty, pulling down walls, building bridges.

The role of play has become of primary importance especially in the current times and in the next future, when we will be facing the dramatic effects of this crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the increase in loneliness, mental disorders, stress, resentment, discrimination, dis-connection, health inequities.

Being a member of the WHO Healthy Cities European Network since 1995, Udine has always been committed to promote the physical, mental and social/emotional well-being of its citizens and also to develop innovative and more effective approaches based on participatory processes, creativity and networking. The Playful Paradigm is one of these approaches and now more than ever has proven to be of great help to policy- and decision-makers in facing local challenges and promoting a more equitable, liveable and resilient society.

By Giovanni Barillari
Councillor for Health and
Social Well-being,
Municipality of Udine



A testimony from the Good Practice City

Play is a serious matter!

The European project “The Playful Paradigm” focused on a series of actions that converged in a true urban strategy that made game an element of connection between generations, an extraordinary method to reuse public spaces, a remarkable cognitive stimulation for the elderly and an excellent revitalisation of abandoned spaces.

Covid-19 pandemic represented a huge challenge for the project that forced us to re-examine and re-orient the activities of the project, but it turned out to be a unique opportunity for the partnership. We took advantage of the Playful Paradigm to develop some APPs that, as soon as it was possible to be away from home over 200mt, citizens had the possibility to play around, discovering the city within a shared urban game, playing together along the streets, squares and parks of the city, while remaining at that physical-temporal distance allowed by technologies and by the digitised games within the urban environment.

Among the others, I would like to mention one of the main results of the project which was the Italian National Games Archive with the aim of establishing the first Italian classification and storage of traditional and modern games. The archive, which was co-funded by the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, is located within an area that housed the former municipal slaughterhouse that remained in disuse for many years and that, thanks also to the games archive, has come back to life.

I would like to thank all my colleagues who played a crucial role in the full accomplishment of the results of the project.

By Giulia Manzan
Assessore alla Pianificazione
Territoriale e ai Progetti Europei
e Partecipazione,
Municipality of Udine



Welcome to the European playful cities!

By Ileana Toscano, Lead Expert

Play offers unique opportunities for engaging stakeholders in cities. European Cities face challenges of ageing, climate change and social exclusion: we need to find enjoyable ways to co-create solutions. The URBACT Playful Paradigm transfer network is based on the use of “play” as innovative concept for promoting social inclusion, healthy lifestyles and energy awareness, place-making and economic prosperity.

An easy tool as “play” can help cities to face urban challenges. Ageing population, migration, social exclusion and climate change are the main challenges tackled every day by European Cities. Cities need to define enjoyable and simple ways for engaging citizens and stakeholders. A paradigm based on a playful approach could be the answer.

The Municipality of Udine (IT) has developed an urban practice focusing on the use of play as a flexible, innovative place-making paradigm to develop an equitable and democratic society. Play is used as a vehicle for addressing healthy lifestyles and energy



awareness, it fosters the inclusion of migrants, the involvement of elderly people and promotes a better relationship between parents and children.

In Udine the play-based approach has become an urban policy priority which enables citizens' participation and a peaceful civic environment. The “Playful Paradigm” initiatives is part of a comprehensive strategy that the Municipality has been implementing for more than 20 years under the umbrella of the Healthy Cities Project (World Health Organization) and the European Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, being a tool to promote the principles and goals underlying these movements.

Among other national and international recognitions, Udine has been awarded as a Good Practice city by URBACT in 2017 for the Playful Paradigm practice. As a result, Udine has become the lead city of an URBACT Network for transferring such good practice

to other seven European cities, that are Cork (IE), Klaipėda (LT), Esplugues de Llobregat (ES), Larissa (EL), Novigrad (HR), Katowice (PL), and Viana do Castelo (PT).

Why play is so important for cities?

Paolo Munini, chief officer for gaming activities for the Municipality of Udine, says “Play is essential for child development. It is also important for elderly people because they keep physically active and prevent the mental cognitive decay.

Playful activities are powerful tools when applied in cities. Play can be used for working in deprived neighbourhoods with **local** community or in schools with students. It can trigger the participation of civil society,

An easy tool as “play” can help cities to face urban challenges.



engaging citizens and local associations.”

The gaming approach could open opportunities for urban renewal. This is why Udine Administration uses “play” as a flexible co-created place-making paradigm. This innovative gaming approach leverages on participation to stimulate responsible change, and promote a healthy environment, by turning urban settings into incubators of sustainability and wellbeing (physical, mental and social/relational).

A long story of Play initiatives in Udine

In 2000 in Italy the importance of play was recognized by a National Law ([“La legge di riforma dei Servizi Sociali - Dal centralismo sociale al federalismo solidale”](#)), which introduced the possibility of launching the Ludobus-initiatives in cities. The “Ludobus” is a mobile toy library, generally a van full of games moving through city neighbourhoods and

bringing playful activities making games available to local population. In Udine the Ludobus began as a grass-root initiative thanks to a voluntary organization and afterwards it was turned into a permanent activity, managed and funded by the Municipality.

In Italy the Ludobus-initiative has been a starting point for raising awareness on the value of games and for implementing the first gamification policies and actions in many cities.

In 2012 the Municipality of Udine decided to make the Ludobus-initiative a permanent experience, opening a “public Toy Library” in the city centre. The idea was to set up a playful meeting space for families, elderly people, children, for all. The Toy Library has been a successful measure and has provided answers to concrete needs of citizens to be active subjects and not mere passive spectators.

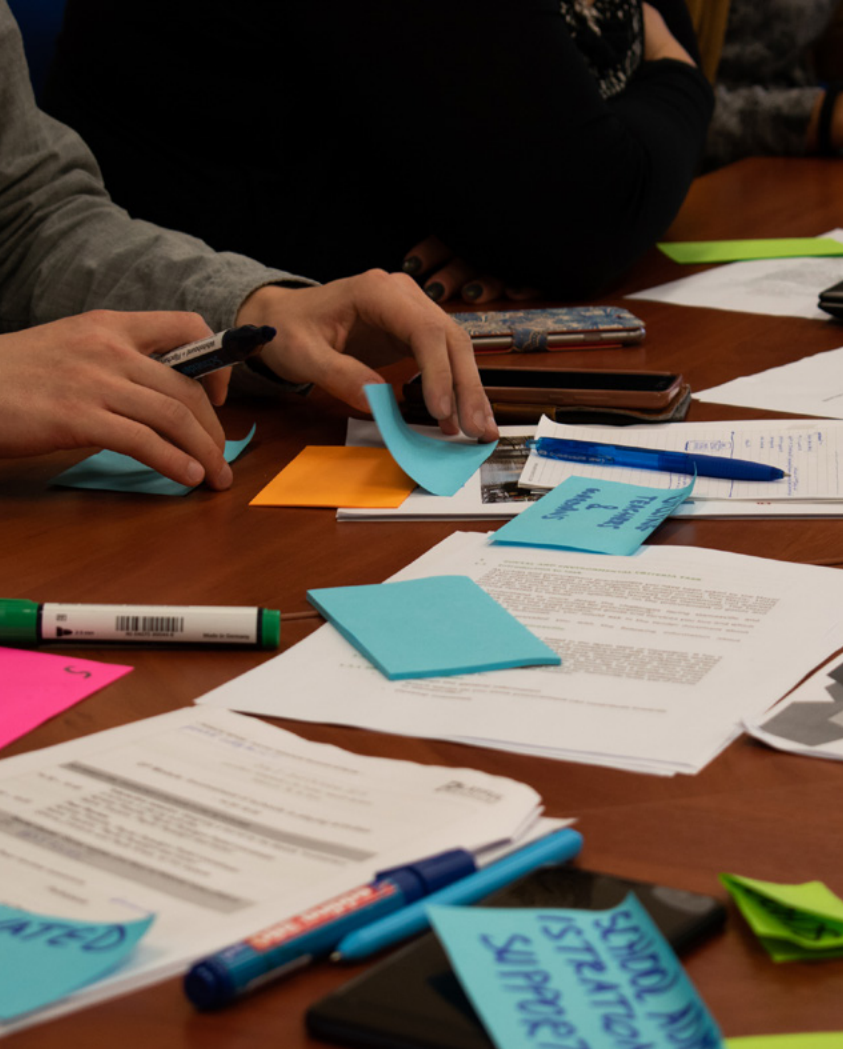
Since 2013, 40.000 people have visited this place.

It is a fully accessible place and there is no age, gender or language limitation. It has become the emblem of social inclusion, cognitive stimulation, entertainment and lifelong learning.

During these years, the Municipality has invested about 150.000 Euros per year for the maintenance and equipment of the infrastructure and staff.

Since 2010 the City of Udine has been the leading city of the Italian Playful Cities Movement (GIONA), coordinating and sharing knowledge and experience with about 30 cities in Italy willing to implement gamification strategies. Udine is also a member of the national association [“Ali per Giocare”](#), which gathers private and public organisations of activity educators at national level.

On 25 November 2017, Udine launched the Italian National Games Archive with the goal of establishing the first Italian classification of traditional and modern games. The cataloguing activity of the Archive will rely also on crowdsourcing in the coming years. The National Games Archive has been financed by the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia with an amount



very popular across the region and bring to Udine many visitors. By way of example, we mention: CamminaMenti – Move your minds run in community centres for dementia prevention and inclusion of elderly people, the Energy in Play annual Fair, the World Games Day, Pi Day, Darwin Day, The library of living books, etc.

“An healthy gaming habit prevents the problem of gambling” says Munini. “The Municipality of Udine is developing a new project funded by Friuli Venezia Giulia Region to counteract the problem of gambling and promoting healthy games”.

The Municipality of Udine has been promoting an innovative project to fight gambling. Bars, Pubs and restaurants have been engaged by providing a toolkit of “healthy” games replacing “slot-machines”. Unfortunately, the latter are more and more present in public venues, especially in deprived urban areas. Low-income people are more deeply affected by gambling which contributes to further deprivation. The introduction of healthy games in such areas can therefore be seen as an important form of prevention and protective factor for the most disadvantaged population groups.

Don't try to direct Play, just make the Space Playful

“Don't try to direct Play, just make the Space Playful” said Denise Cahill project coordinator of Playful Paradigm in Cork.

What we learned from the Playful Paradigm experience so far is that people don't need explanation about where and how playing. They need more places open for play for children, youth and adults and public spaces car free where playing.

People need colors, nature, safety and comfortable places where staying together for play, for sharing ideas and keeping alive the creativity we need to continue imagining a better future to live, where none is left behind.

400.000 euros (for the period 2016-2020), according to the Regional Law n. 30/2017 “Regulations for promoting the right to play and to engage in play, physical and recreational activities”. It is worth mentioning that the location of the Archive has been meaningfully chosen in the renovated area of what was the abandoned area of Udine's slaughterhouse.

Moreover, Udine has a rich yearly calendar of events where games and gamification strategies are meaningfully put into practice. The events are



Network Partner Cities

The Playful Paradigm aims to adapt and reuse in other 7 European cities the good practice developed in Udine (Italy), the project Lead Partner. The cities involved are: Cork (Ireland), Esplugues de Llobregat (Spain), Katowice (Poland), Klaipėda (Lithuania), Larissa (Greece), Novigrad (Croatia) and Viana do Castelo (Portugal).

Consultation guide

*By Federica Ferrarin and Federica Manaigo
Creaa, Communication Consultant
for the Playful Paradigm project*

This publication sums up 2 years of insights, do's, don'ts and case studies arose during the Playful Paradigm journey towards transferring and adapting the Good Practice defined by the City of Udine.

It aims to be an inspiration and a practical guide for other cities willing to include play and gamification in their local urban development policies, to stimulate social inclusion, healthy lifestyles, environmental awareness and civic engagement.

Specifically, the Playful Paradigm Good Practice is easily classified in 6 modules, concrete activities for the partner cities to adapt and put into practice, in order to be included in the city's development strategy: random games and gamification events; involvement of schools in playing activities; Ludobus; annual programme of games events and activities; Toy Library; playful projects for local communities.

We hope to offer you a tool to spread the Playful Paradigm philosophy and co-design the future playful cities.

Transfer Stories

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Each city of the Playful Paradigm Network has its own characteristics, transfer objectives and, of course, transfer journey. All of them share both the challenges every modern European city has to deal with and global threats, such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Here, they illustrate the transformation that took place in the local community and reflect on the overall network experience.

Thematic Reports

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URBACT provided the Playful Paradigm Network with a team of experts to support Municipalities in the improvement and implementation of the Good Practice.

Here's their analysis on the use of play that the Cities of the Playful Paradigm network made to directly or indirectly achieve specific goals.

Feature Articles

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Warning! URBACT Experts at work with reflections and practical recommendations to innovate and improve implementation of the Good Practice at multiple levels.

Toolkits

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Four illustrated guides to summarise the main tips to be considered during the implementation of the Good Practice.

Transfer Stories



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Udine (Italy, Lead Partner)

How Udine improved the Playful Paradigm and addressed COVID-19 challenges

★ P 11

Cork (Ireland)

Experimenting, improvising and evolving playful strategies to improve the lives of our citizens

★ P 19

Esplugues de Llobregat (Spain)

When Play Transforms the City

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Katowice (Poland)

From a Toy Library Idea to a Game board space in every home

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Klaipėda (Lithuania)

Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau: promoting children's healthy lifestyles in educational settings

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Larissa (Greece)

Promoting sustainability and citizen's engagement

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Novigrad (Croatia)

How to support local sense of Community and Unity

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Viana do Castelo (Portugal)

Viana do Castelo's Transfer Story

★ P 46

Udine

Country Italy

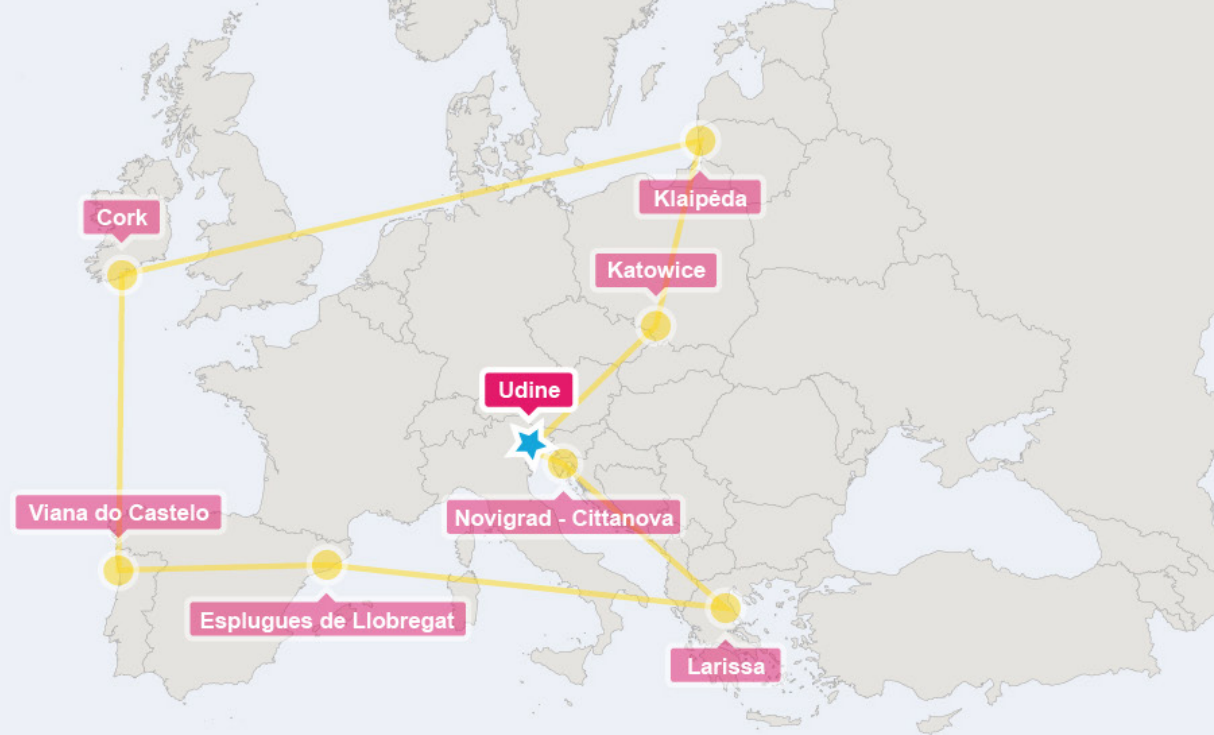
Inhabitants 99.518

Size 56,81KM²

EU Region Development More developed Regions

European and international networking membership

Lead city of the WHO Healthy and Active Ageing Task Force, WHO European Healthy Cities Network, European Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate Change, EU partnership on Energy Transition.



“ Cultural differences or physical and cognitive deficiencies, or mere unawareness, can be easily compensated by emotional reactions

”

How Udine improved the Playful Paradigm and addressed COVID-19 challenges: From the Ludobus to new digital urban games, we retrace the steps of the City of Udine in its implementation of the playful paradigm approach as a flexible and innovative tool to improve the quality of life in cities

Where, When, and Why the Playful Paradigm was born...

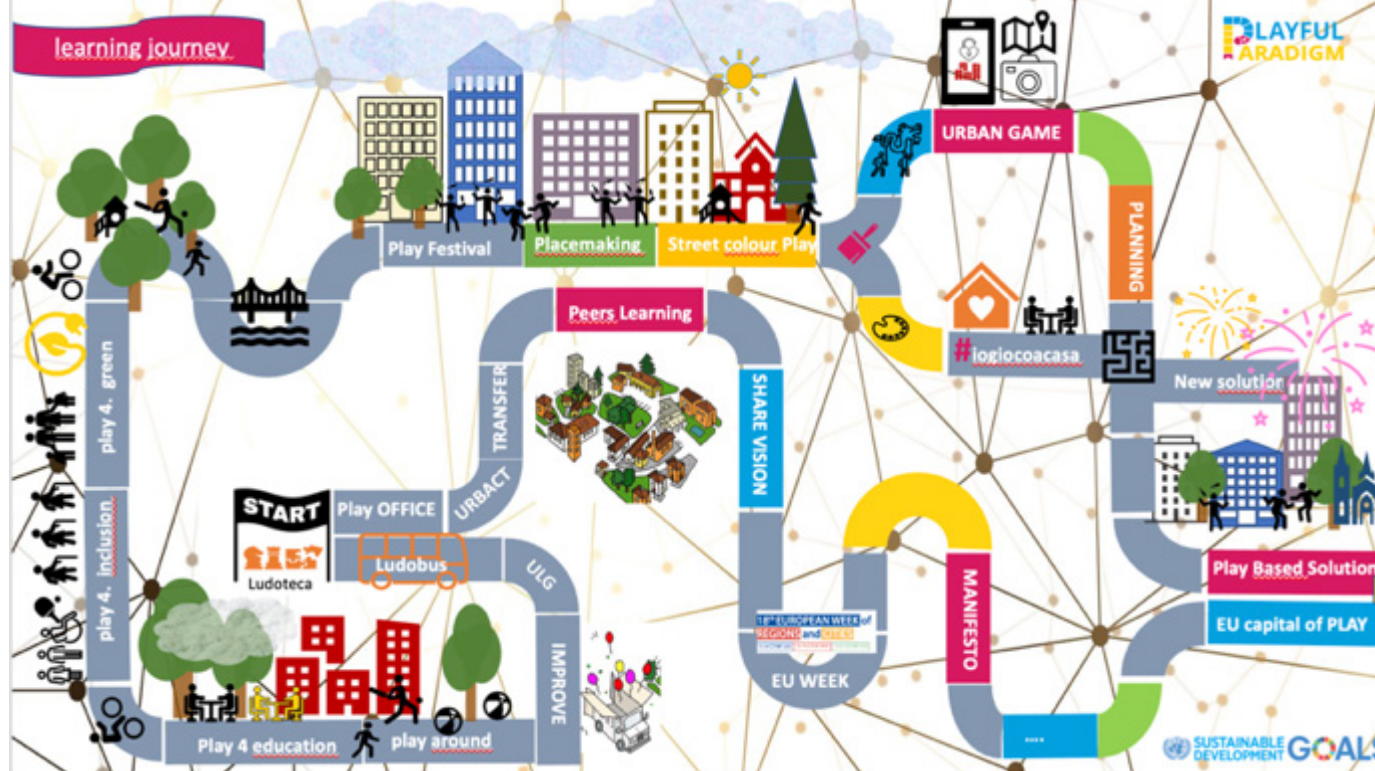
Udine joined the WHO Healthy Cities European Network in 1995 and is a member of the political

vision board of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, and the lead city of the Italian Playful Cities Movement. From 2013 to 2015, Udine was the Lead Partner of the URBACT Healthy Ageing Project. During all these years Udine has strongly committed

By Bruno Grizzaffi, Project Coordinator;
Raffella Lioce, Project Coordinator;
Stefania Pascut, Good Practice Expert

to make health central in the vision, strategies and policies of the city, and health objectives integrated in the social, economic and environmental goals regarding the whole community. The long experience of membership in numerous networks (WHO Healthy Cities, WHO Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, Covenant of Mayors, Mayors' ADAPT & COMPACT, Covenant on Demographic Change, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, etc.) and projects at regional, national and international level has offered unique opportunities of learning, exchange of good practices, knowledge and tools. The result at the local level is a number of successful middle-out initiatives that have been co-created and undertaken in Udine in the last decades, achieving healthier lifestyles, better solidarity among citizens, ownership of long-term social programmes and city branding.

The Playful Paradigm good practice is one of these initiatives and stems from the idea of using 'games' as a flexible and innovative co-creating place-making tool, as a way to actively address the needs of health promotion, active ageing, healthy lifestyles, community participation and as a chance to increase awareness of environmental issues, inclusive and equitable society. Acknowledged that it is easier to learn and establish relations through playing, because cultural differences or physical and cognitive deficiencies, or mere unawareness, can be easily compensated by emotional reactions, UDINE started to make use of Play and games to promote social inclusion, remove disparities, overcome barriers and build bridges between people, generations and places, thus advocating more easily for change and innovation, and fostering social inclusion. This was helpful also to engage communities in rethinking the places where they live in and to provide hints for a smarter



and sustainable integrated urban development. Primary examples of playful places in UDINE are the CamminaMenti community centres, the Municipal Toy Library and its public park, the Energy in Play annual fair, the Travelling ToyBus, the city squares during the World Games Day, Pi Day, Darwin Day, The Night of Living Books, etc. This paradigm allowed Udine to boost and enhance several existing grass-root initiatives which promote sports, physical activity, healthy and eco-friendly lifestyles, channelling them towards the overall health and sustainability goals of the municipality and involving all citizens, not just practitioners.

During the years, the practice has thus achieved a vertical integration between different levels of government establishing relations and partnerships with stakeholders from the city, the region and the international context.



public spaces by citizens; can involve communities in giving new meaning and use to abandoned places and can advance play-based solutions to increase the awareness on the need of a much more inclusive, smart and green society.

A never-ending story, inspiring new solutions of Play to encourage inclusion, education, place-making, and promote well-being, happiness, participation. adic tenimus

In a time of colliding megatrends such as urbanisation, population ageing and climate change, cities are facing serious challenges, but also unique opportunities for achieving sustainability and enhancing the quality of life and well-being of communities. The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network demonstrated how much play can help cities to become more and more mediators and facilitators, improving their capacity to leverage on city health and social innovation and to turn into wellbeing and environmental brokers. Many European cities, as those in the Playful Partnership, have important gaming traditions which are yet unexploited. The PLAYFUL PARADIGM Network demonstrated the great potential of games as place-making tools, promoters of dialogue, participation and education.

The process of transferring within the network started with the LUDOBUS, a colourful bus carrying games from the LUDOTECA (the games library) all around the city and wherever there was a possibility or a need to use play as a way to improve the citizens' quality of life. Udine showed to the partners how the LUDOBUS represented a strategic means to play around, to play



The phenomenon of gamification has been explored through various processes and on different scales within the urban context. The central idea driving the application of gamification is that the mechanisms fostered by this approach can be explored to support collaboration, participation and decision in planning and policy making, thus raising the hypothesis that games in general and their mechanics can function as a support for more inclusive processes of socio-spatial transformation or urban planning. In this sense, they can stimulate the re-appropriation of

for education, to play for inclusion, to play for place making. The awareness of the importance of play for the wellbeing of urban communities led cities to create and manage public spaces more effectively, as well as to improve the greening of the urban connection networks, and therefore to create real places for the happiness of people. On one hand, the cities of the Playful network have understood the importance of becoming promoters of gaming initiatives for everyone or for specific target groups, but at the same time, they have re-acknowledged the value of ecosystem services, green spaces, playgrounds and areas intended for free play in urban contexts.

The transferring journey has enriched UDINE, which was able to observe multiple declinations and facets of the initial good practice, thanks to the process of learning and sharing with partners. In the Playful Paradigm project, the transfer journey has become a great opportunity of exchange, which has made it possible both to improve the way to integrate plays and games into different urban policies, but also to jointly depict the vision of a Playful City which has led to the co-creation of the Manifesto for the European Capital of Play.

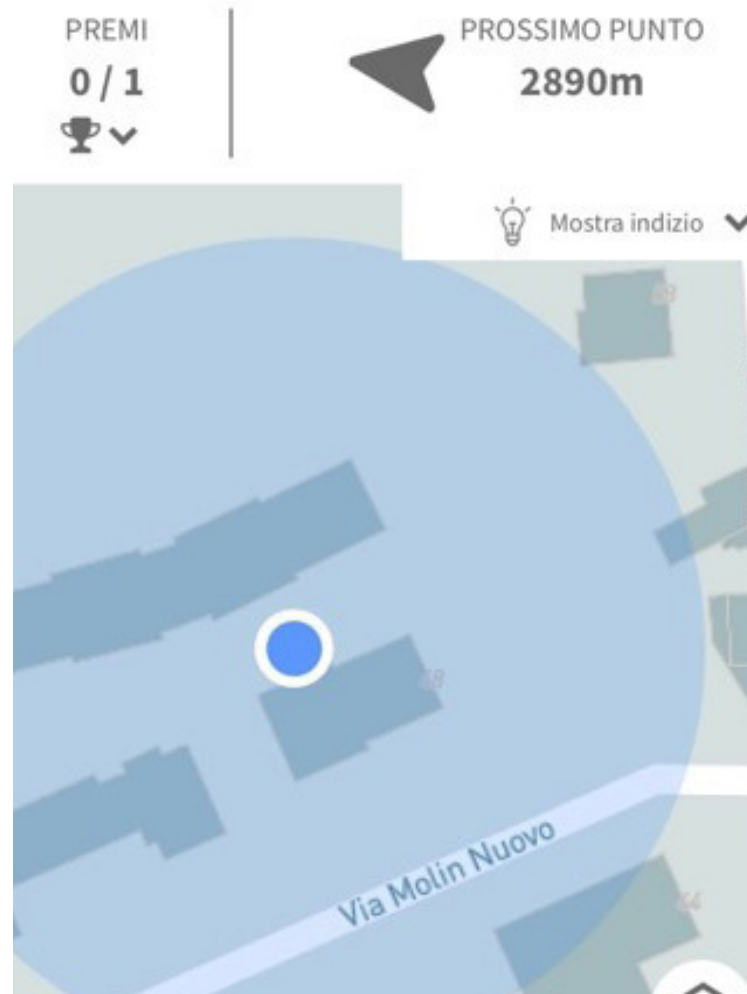
Yet, at a certain point ... The Covid came and everything seemed to stop

During the Pandemic the partners of the Playful Paradigm, as all the other cities in the world, faced new challenges: social distancing, sense of loneliness and abandonment, discouragement in the face of a too uncertain future, rich in fear, anxiety and concern. The partners deeply explored how the playful approach could represent a possible solution in helping people to get through this pandemic crisis.



They understood that the Playful Paradigm could be adapted to tackle a changing world: they strongly believed that this paradigm could generate a new shifting and sustainable perspective and provide cities with tailored solutions to make communities much more resilient. It could have brought important benefits to people both in terms of mental health and emotional well-being; it could have created the precondition to restore the sense of belonging posed at risk by the pandemic. Various playful solutions have been tested by the partners starting from the rental of games to families, to the development of neighbourhoods' challenges through for example online quizzes and contests.

It was in this time of social distancing that Udine, together with the URBACT Local Group, not only promoted online games, but began to experiment the integration of the digital environment with the



The Project final event in Udine

By the end of the project Udine tested a new mechanism to explore and revitalize the city, engaging citizens and the first small groups of tourists.

This virtual urban game can become a powerful and novel way to increase the knowledge and experience of cultural heritages and those historic urban places, more or less visible, which witness the history of a city/region/country, and also a way for the city to face the dramatic pandemic crisis, meaning the risk of disappearing in the face of the new, unknown emergencies and its consequences, i.e. the lockdown, lack of tourism, etc. Moreover, it is a means to rediscover the unchangeable bond of friendship with places, history and with all the city actors.

This digital urban game was a sort of a treasure hunt developed on a web platform accessible from any mobile device with geolocation and without the need to install external applications. It was set along the streets of the center of Udine and consisted of 7/8 stages. The game has been co-designed by the Municipality, the ULG and other relevant cultural stakeholders as a common thread. The narrative guide which brought the players around the city was originated with the intention of enhancing the value of Cultural Heritage, especially regarding the painter Tiepolo's works. The game stops are located in settings connected with Tiepolo and with places which have a special meaning and importance for the city.

At each stage the participants have to solve a quiz or answer a question, which may concern various topics from a cultural, health, environmental, historic, educational field, thus the game proves to be much more exciting for people. Once you answer a question,

built, physical one of the city. By means of diverse applications Udine offered citizens, as soon as it was possible, the opportunity to get away from home over 200mt, to play around, discover and virtually 'live' the city, feeling part of a community within a shared urban game, playing together along the streets, squares and parks while remaining at that physical-temporal distance allowed by technologies and by the digitized games within the urban environment.

“Living the places, “living the city” means developing motor, sensory, cognitive, emotional skills

it is necessary to solve a further enigma that brings you to the next stage. Furthermore, along the path, participants are enriched with several additional contents and calls to action and this creates fun but also the opportunity for sharing and cooperative learning. It is usable and shareable by anyone and open to all. It was firstly designed to address families and groups, but it was used by single individuals during the pandemic lockdown. It is a perfect tool also for disabled, older and frail people, who cannot move from their homes and play around the city.

The game was a sort of skein unrolled through the city and this is not an accidental coincidence. In fact, the idea originated from an ancient game with dice and pawns which is exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of the city and was part of the funerary objects of the Roman necropolis of Aquileia kept in the rooms of the Castle of Udine.

“Thread” that unravels through the streets, historic places and events, anecdotes, curiosities, leading us to Casa Colombatti-Cavazzini, renovated according to a design by the architect Gae Aulenti, and hosting the Gallery of Modern Art. In this building there is a room whose walls retain the decorations by the young Afro Basaldella from 1938, dedicated to country life and life in the city, between occupations, leisure and entertainment. In particular, there is a scene in front of the entrance, in which some children are portrayed intent on playing, in particular two young girls playing “headbands”.

The topic of the skein unrolled through the city was also used in 2019 in the occasion of the XXI IFOTES-International Federation of Telephone Emergency Services congress, which took place in Udine. The Congress addressed different aspects of loneliness as well as possible ways for individuals and communities



to deal with the condition. The city of Udine has always been a laboratory for social connections and creativity, a place to inspire people and strengthen the commitment to the field of social health and well being. In this occasion, a video was produced with a ‘fil rouge’ unrolled through the city, representing the leitmotiv of relationships, which create networks, which create partnerships, which create the social life in the city. This leitmotiv is fundamental in our city which has a long tradition of co-created initiatives, involving citizens, voluntary associations, inter-sectoral partnerships, inter-institutional alliances, mutual solidarity networks.





fotografia di Maurizio Lubrano

The project has just ended, but the story continues because Udine is a Playful City, caring for citizens' health, happiness and well-being

Play is one of the possible threads that bind individuals, generations, territories, cities and cultures, and can support us in every phase of our life. Starting from this premise, the experience of the PLAYFUL PARADYGM project wanted to explore, among the many interpretations, how playful activities

can promote identity values, places, monuments, stratifications that arise from urban transformations and, last but not least, investigate the use of spaces in which people live, love, learn, work, and play. Udine, as many other cities in Europe, joined the Copenhagen Consensus of Mayors of the WHO Healthy Cities Programme, through which mayors commit to take action together to improve the health and well-being, also by ensuring healthier, sustainable environments. "A healthy city leads by example by emphasizing a human focus in societal development and by prioritizing investment in people to improve equity and inclusion through enhanced empowerment. A healthy city leads by example, with the social, physical and cultural environments aligned to create a place that is actively inclusive, and facilitates the pursuit of health and well-being for all." The Playful Paradigm is key in pursuing these objectives.

Living the places, "living the city", means developing motor, sensory, cognitive, emotional skills, in order to promote knowledge, perception, participation, identity, belonging, inclusion. Games allow to activate urban co-design processes, involve people at risk of social exclusion, engage local communities in urban regeneration processes, map urban resources, and look, perhaps with greater distance or more understanding, at the more contradictory situations of our cities. This can ensure that the vision becomes a sort of redesign, whose purpose is also to perceive and understand the relationship between us and the reality, the interaction between the individual and the space, and thus find sustainable solutions to urban challenges.

During the project the city became a playful living lab where it was possible to experiment, to play and to generate new capacities and skills, to engage



fotografia di Maurizio Lubrano

different stakeholders and citizens in placemaking activities. We understood that building a city does not mean investing in new buildings or restoring them, but it means creating inclusive and smart communities, regenerating and innovating urban public shared places, thus to enhance a real sense of belonging, ensure safety, health and wellbeing for all.

A city is a factorial product that multiplies and overlaps a multitude of urban narratives which, if properly integrated into new perspectives with a play-based approach, can guide city leaders towards unexplored horizons where sustainable and human-centered cities can grow.

The future holds new challenges for the city, in terms of sustainability and resilience of the entire urban community. The paradigm that enhances participation through play has proved its effectiveness in triggering a responsible change in urban policies and in the design of places and not just of spaces. We understood that play-based solutions are a mean for social inclusion, that overcomes barriers more easily and builds bridges between people, generations, supporting changes and innovation; but they are also a strategic TOOL for city marketing and branding,

for the enhancement and acknowledgement of local tradition, culture and heritage.

UDINE looks at play as a sound thread for participating and implementing policies for sustainability and health in the next future: indeed, in a playful city all interested parties, public and private - profit and non- collaborate to build new urban ecosystems. Gamification is used not only with the intention of urban planning re-design and regeneration but also as an innovative transformative approach for safe, inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies. It is not just a question of the quality of the built and natural environment, but it is a question of the quality of life and happiness of citizens.

...The game must go on!



Cork

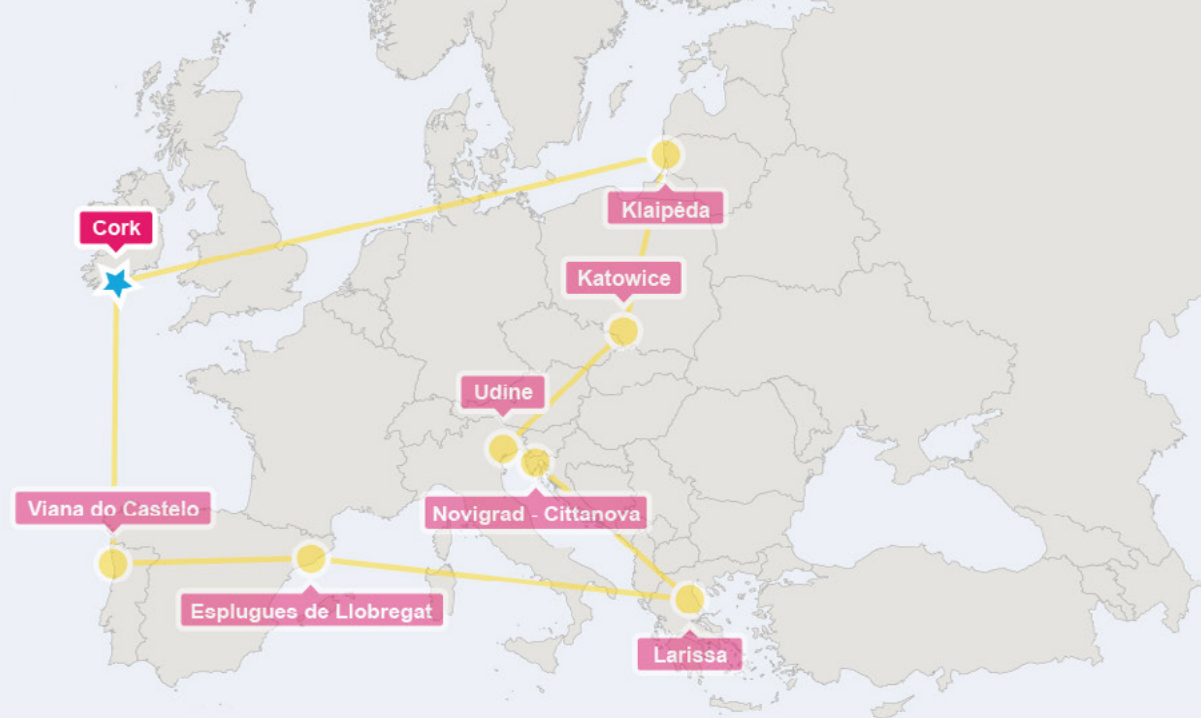
Country Ireland

Inhabitants 125.622

Size 39,6 KM²

EU Region Development More developed Regions

European and international networking membership Covenant of Mayors, UNESCO Learning Cities Network, WHO Healthy Cities Network



Experimenting, improvising and evolving playful strategies to improve the lives of our citizens

By Martin O Donoghue, ULG Coordinator;
Denise Cahill, Healthy Cities Co-Ordinator

We held a creative workshop with play activists in the City to imagine a new way to make this happen. This led to the development on Community Play Bags

Let's Play Cork is the steering group in Cork City, Ireland that has evolved out of our cities experience as part of the EU URBACT programme, The Playful Paradigm. A diverse and multi sector group, it is coordinated through Cork Healthy Cities and Cork City Council along with members of Cork City Libraries, Young Knocknaheeny, Foróige, Cork Lifelong Learning Festival and Meitheal Mara. Our objectives were shaped by our learning journey on the Playful Paradigm. Together we exist to influence, promote and lead on the development of our city as

a Playful City.

We now understand that Play as a tool has great power to deliver positive change for the lives of our fellow citizens and is a universal language that unites many sectors across the city. As a methodology for inclusion, it has no equal, anyone can play, at any age. Play has measurable impacts, can help form novel partnerships and yield surprising results. These impacts can be achieved with relatively low levels of investments.

Two years ago, Play was predominantly about

playground development for Cork City Council. As a city, a holistic understanding of Play did not exist, outside a handful of practitioners who used Play in their everyday work. Now it has become part of local authority consideration; shaping the current city development plan drafting process.

Play Streets

The Playful Paradigm was transformative for the partners in the URBACT Local Group, citizens and institutions in our city. Translating our learnings into action, through experimentation has led to significant changes in both local, regional and national policy, resulting in new and fruitful partnerships between organisations. Along the way we also learned to interject play into our interagency networks, allowing us disseminate the core values and objectives of play. Partnering organisations subsequently incorporated play into their ways of working as well as to their services and events, engaging in new ways with the communities that they serve and reach. This has unlocked new forms of creativity to help tackle some of the societal challenges that every city faces.

Great credit is due to the facilitators and adhoc experts who guided us through the theory, presented examples and organised study visits, so that the paradigm shift, could and did occur.

Four aspirational transfer models were selected based on twenty years of evolution in the lead partner city of Udine and as a result of study visits to other cities. Extrapolating the rationale, benefits and steps needed to understand these was facilitated during the intensely programmed translational meetings.



From a Toy Library to Toys in a Library

The toy library was one key component of this. In Ireland, libraries are still places where the traditional format of books and reading take precedence. Cork City has 10 libraries, under the control of Cork City Council. On the study visit to Paris, a key member of the City Library executive and a member of Young Knocknaheeny, a group that specialise in early childhood development had the opportunity to see how a Toy Library works, ask operational questions and witness the impact such facilities have. The visit was transformative and initiated a transformation in policy in Cork City Library service.

Back in Cork, both worked to communicate the value of this resource to the ULG and their wider networks. While the cost of such a facility was beyond



Community Play Resources

Another feature developed by Udine was the Ludo bus, essentially a vehicle that contains a set of large outdoor games that can be driven to any public space/ gathering and made available to the local community as a play resource for a number of hours.

While we in Cork desired to develop such a resource, the costs of purchasing a vehicle, making the games, storing them and administering them was deemed prohibitive. Taking a playful approach, we held a creative workshop with play activists in the City to imagine a new way to make this happen.

This led to the development of Community Play Bags; oversized sports gear bags containing play equipment that is durable, enables outdoor non-competitive and cooperative play and is appropriate for different ages. With the objective of building a sustainable funding model for the project Cork Healthy Cities partnered with Cork Local Sports Partnership to develop a successful proposal to avail of national funding from Healthy Ireland to purchase equipment for 10 bags and resource a part time Play Development Officer. The community Play Bags are stored in the 10 libraries throughout the city and a universal system has been developed to allow for borrowing by community based organisations seeking to incorporate play in their activities. Again it was taking the model of the Toy Libraries in Udine and Paris and adapting it to our local environment and resources that was key to this aspect to the success of this plan.

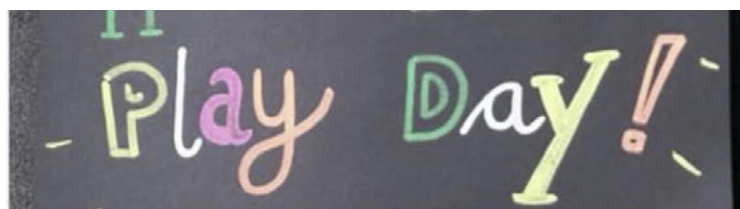
the scope of the City Council, a new creative way was found, to introduce toys to the library catalogue and win staff over to the benefits of such transformative change. This was achieved through staff training, where Young Knocknaheeny contributed a model on the benefits of play in early childhood development and through national policy change, resulting in the first ever budget line item for purchasing toys. The National Library Cataloging system also had to be upgraded to include toys and new procedures developed to allow borrowing. Thus, the benefits of toys, could be implemented into existing facilities.

Playful Problem Solving with our Partners

A large challenge faced by community and voluntary groups seeking to organise pop up play events in the city due is the legal requirement for public liability insurance. Costly insurance premiums are a major deterrent and obstacle for events in general in Ireland and for outdoor play events with this legal requirement for public liability insurance for all events on public property owned or maintained by local authorities. In order to have a public event on a public space, there is a legal requirement to obtain an event license by the organising committee as well as the public liability insurance for that event. For many voluntary and community groups this is unaffordable or legally impossible due to their constitution. This initially presented us with problems in the scope of the Play Bags; we had intended that they be available for use across a wide section of the local community which is why they would be based in local libraries.

The ULG sought a solution with the support of a key partner with experience in this area; Cork Sports Partnership (CSP). Cork Sports Partnership has a system of training volunteer sports facilitators, are connected with communities through their work in sports development. Through the Playful Paradigm experience and experiencing the implementation of the Ludobus in a plaza in Udine the CSP staff developed a new understanding of Play to activate communities through new noncompetitive approaches and games.

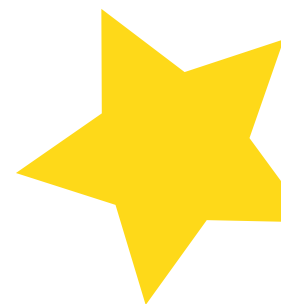
To overcome the insurance problem, we innovated and adapted a model from Cork Sports Partnership, to train voluntary Play Leaders. We now have 26 “Play Leaders” certified and insured and play events that they coordinate with the Play Bags will be covered for liability by the existing Cork Sports Partnership volunteer programme. It was a roundabout but



creative away of overcoming insurance barriers, which in their current models in Ireland are restrictive, prohibitive and expensive.

Playful Placemaking – transforming how Cork people use Public Places

As part of our experiments with pop up play events and play in all festivals, we chose to trial this concept on a riverside road known as the Marina, designating the road as ‘Open for Play’ - rather than closed to cars. The Marina in Cork City has traditionally been a recreational space for walkers, runners, cyclists, scooters and rowers in Cork City; predominantly those living on the south side of the city. For many years’ local residents have sought the closure of the



Community Play Leaders Workshop

Modules

- Why play is important.
- Engaging children.



“
Stakeholders with an
interest in the city’s
river came together for
the first time to discuss
how we celebrate and
create new spaces

”

roadway parallel to the river to allow for great active mobility in the area. The Playful Paradigm provided the impetus to trial a closure to traffic and open the space up for play and other activities.

Playful Paradigm took over the 2.5km stretch of road with outdoor play equipment and closed the street to motorised traffic, local community groups were invited and the space was transformed into a multi-generational playground. With its flat hard surface, it’s also ideal for wheelchair users and people with

reduced mobility, enabling a really inclusive play space. Over the course of the four Sundays, crowds increased as word of mouth and photos circulated on social media. The effort was very positively received by members of the public, local officials and residents becoming a flagship scheme of Cork City’s Playful Paradigm URBACT effort. With the advent of social distancing measures after the COVID-19 lockdown this year, the Marina was the first new public realm in Cork to be pedestrianised for three months during summer 2020. The community has begun to appreciate and reclaim the space as their own. The growing numbers of people using the Marina for recreation and its potential for more development has been formally recognised by City Council for full and permanent pedestrianisation and is now earmarked for a near €4m promenade project. By demonstrating potential and reframing how a place can be used, an appetite for permeant positive change was created in the local community and within Cork City Council.

Developing a River Lee Network – Placemaking Training

Armed with confidence and the theoretical basis for placemaking provided by Wessel Badenhorst in Viana di Castello in January 2020 the Playful Paradigm in Cork City decided to build capacity on a larger scale at city level to implement a placemaking approach, with a specific focus on the River Lee. River based organisations (Meiteal Mara, Naomhoga Chorcai, Boat Clubs, Anglers Associations, Rebel Plunge open water swimmers) have struggled in the past to engage with planners and engineers in the local authority to highlight challenges and opportunities along the river.

The training was a step towards building relationships across and between the river based organisations as well as with the relevant local authority staff, and was a resounding success.

Funded by Cork Local Sports Partnership and Cork City Council, during July and August 2020 the ULG organised a series of placemaking workshops focusing on a new concept called Playful Placemaking and specifically on the River Lee in Cork City for the above named stakeholders. Playful placemaking is a way to co-develop playful ideas for public spaces Cork City with the community. The playful elements are used to showcase ideas and unlock the potential, using low cost and engaging events which community participate in. As an iterative process, the learning from each of the events feeds back into a larger process which helps communities engage with the planning and contribute to the development of their urban spaces. Four sites along the River Lee, including the Marina, were selected for the training purpose. We now have a blueprint for how further developments of the Marina could be progressed and a River Lee Placemaking network, composed of river users, members of the community and employees from several departments of Cork City Council.



'The Placemaking training was a really valuable experience. There was great commitment from the participants and as it turned out the concentrated format worked to help generate a sense of community. The framework allowed for informal, non-confrontational interaction between a mix of people, all with their own understanding of the River Lee and its contribution to our sense of Cork as a place. It was great was of learning more about the potential of the river and exploring inexpensive options to make better use of it' - Cathy Buchanan, Manager Meithal Mara

Looking to the Future

The success of our work has been down to the hard work of the steering group but also to the receptive nature by the community and our funding agencies of our playful initiatives.

In Cork City we have sought the development of a sustainable approach to the URBACT Playful Paradigm, cognisant that the programme is funded for just 2 years by URBACT we have continually sought seed funding from alternative sources.

The Playful Paradigm in Cork City has demonstrated the variety of opportunities and importance of a city activating play for all ages, in its many different forms; quiet play, sensory play, active play, indoor play, outdoor play, informal play, formal play. A wide variety of inviting and engaging places, spaces and accessible buildings are needed to allow Cork City to promote play and provide opportunity for play for all ages. To achieve this will take an agreed vision with long term commitment. With this in mind, the Playful Paradigm URBACT Local Group in Cork City

developed a submission Cork City Council to adopt the following core objective as part of the delivery and implementation of the for the forthcoming City Development Plan:

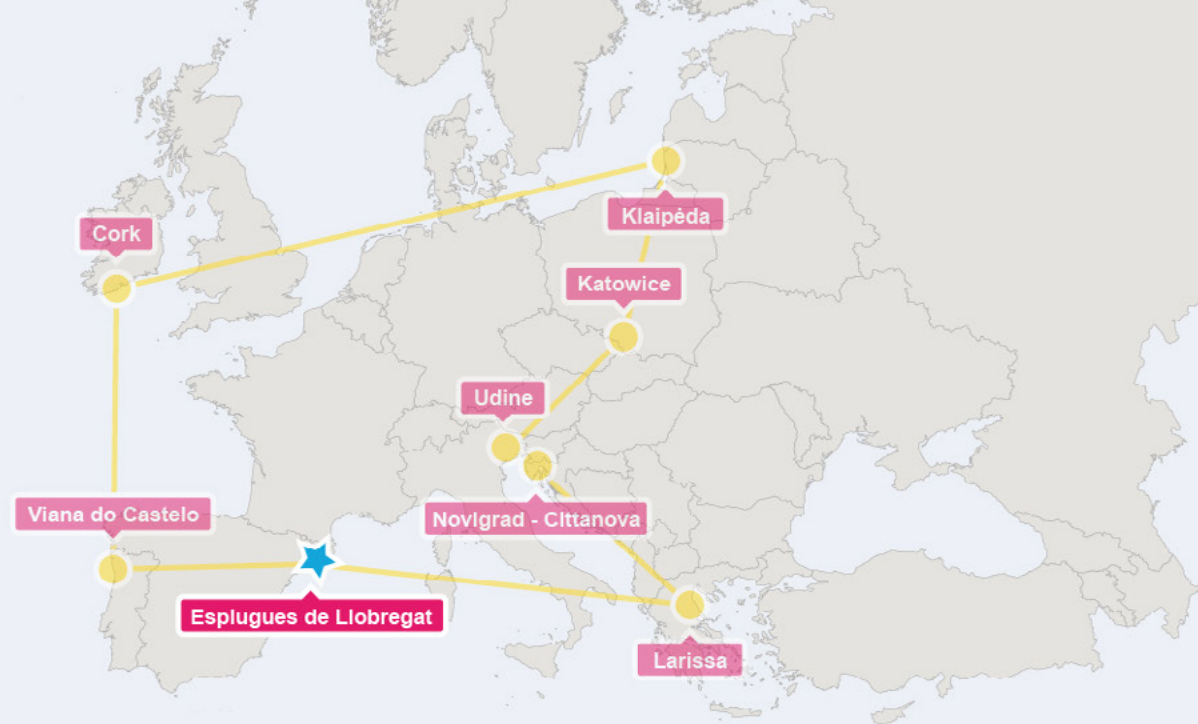
Cork City aims to be a Playful City where people of all ages can enjoy access to play in a wide range of different settings that offer variety, adventure and challenge to play freely and safely while creating excitement and freedom of choice about where, how and when to play.

"In the post Covid-19 world words such as solidarity, added value and working together will become even stronger themes to harness as cities and regions recover. The ambitious Playful Paradigm consistently deep dives into these themes and has presented and activated ideas, which are not only very practical in their nature but also very relevant to citizen engagement, in particular to families and young people. All who have encountered the Playful Paradigm have come away seeing the urban spaces of their city in a different light. The Playful Paradigm in Cork led directly to the reconsideration of the re-imagining of the traffic-filled historical Marina walkway and ultimately its pedestrianisation in COVID-19 times. It also led to the creation of an important ecosystem where stakeholders with an interest in the city's river came together for the first time to discuss how we celebrate and create new spaces within the river and on the river bank. In truth the Playful Paradigm project captures the imagination and enthusiasm of all those who engage with it and continues to create a win-win outcome as part of the evolving urban agenda of my city. My sincere thanks to all involved in this fantastic initiative". - Cllr Kieran McCarthy, Cork City Council & Member of European Committee of the Regions



Esplugues de Llobregat

| | |
|---|--|
| Country | Spain |
| Inhabitants | 46.932 |
| Size | 4,6 KM² |
| EU Region Development | More developed Regions |
| European and international networking membership | Covenant of Mayors; Spanish Network of Healthy Cities; International Association of Educating Cities; International Association of Educating Cities; URBACT Good Practice city |



When Play Transforms the City

The mobile toy library of Esplugues begins to roll despite the pandemic

By Playful Esplugues

Game for all ages and in every corner of the city. Who could resist this invitation?

When Esplugues de Llobregat joined the European transfer network The Playful Paradigm, it chose the creation of a mobile toy library, or Ludobus as it is known within the network, to help transform the city through play and promote inclusion, social cohesion, healthy habits and sustainability. Esplujuga, the mobile toy library, was inspired by the experiences of Udine, the leading city of the project. It took shape through a participatory process in which the suggestions of local stakeholders, the Urbact Local Group (ULG), were collected. Finally, it was tested in a school in Esplugues before setting it up in other spaces.

Objective: Transform the City

Esplugues de Llobregat is a neighbour of cosmopolitan Barcelona, it has more than 560,000 m2 of parks and gardens to enjoy different outdoor activities. The ratio is 12.27 m2 per inhabitant in inner urban areas, two points above the 10 m2 / inhabitant recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). If we add the Collserola Natural Park, one of the largest metropolitan parks in the world, we speak of 28.07 m2 / inhabitant. These spaces are vital for the daily socialisation of the inhabitants. However, a

lack of intergenerational interaction derived in growing fragmentation of spaces is clearly appreciated in public spaces.

This was one of the initial challenges that Esplugues face up when it joined The Playful Paradigm network in 2019, which started with the objective to incorporate four of the Udine good practice actions: involving schools in playing activities, an annual program of games events and activities and, finally the Ludobus Initiative.

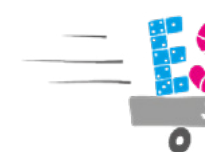
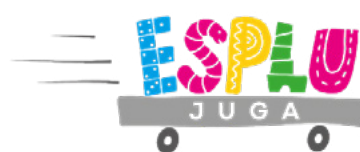
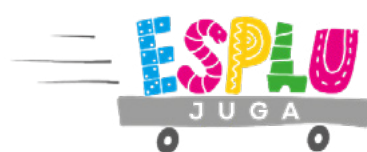
The pandemic forced the project to adapt to the health, economic and social crisis that had significantly affected people's lives. To incorporate playing in this context appeared an innovative opportunity to address these crises the Ludobus became a fundamental tool to make Esplugues a more playful city.

As the Mayor of Esplugues, Pilar Díaz, explains *“Esplujuga, our mobile toy library, is designed to overcome barriers and end the beliefs that, perhaps, made us stop playing one day. It is an invitation that arrives on wheels to share, imagine and look at the problems from another point of view. Game for all ages and in every corner of the city. Who could resist this invitation?”*

Udine's inspiration

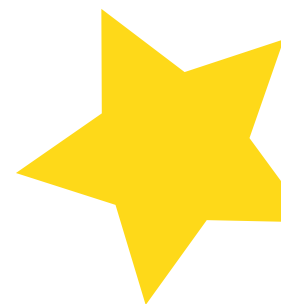
Having embedded a form of best practice in Udine, the local technical team has been able to share different initiatives and projects with other partner cities. The Ludobus of Udine experience showed how play transforms spaces and people, as well as being a source of inspiration for the Esplujuga in Esplugues.

The Udine model, integrated into a broader network, embody an excellent case of how to involve the third sector and add them to the project, types of games that favor intergenerational relationships, materials



best suited to sustainability goals and creativity, as well as how to energize sessions that favor free and respectful play.

According to Paolo Munini, Director of gaming activities for the municipality of Udine in an interview given to Urbact, *“Games are essential for child development. Games are also important for older people because they maintain physical and cognitive activity and prevent mental cognitive impairment... Games can be used to work in deprived neighborhoods with the local community or in schools with students. They can trigger the participation of civil society, involving citizens and local associations”.*





Participatory Design

One of the hallmarks of the Ludobus, is the participatory process that has made it a reality. Lluís Just, director of technological innovation of the City Council and head of Playful Esplugues, considers that *“The process of shape the Ludobus as could not be otherwise, was participatory. Involving local stakeholders in the definition and creation process, helps us to deploy these city initiatives, with a better predisposition and a better commitment and involvement of all the participating agents”*.

In October 2019, social entities, public schools and the municipal technical team that set up the Urbact Local Group, joined a creative and collaborative session to design the future mobile toy library of Esplugues. More precisely, the session was done “playing” with Lego pieces to decide what types of games the Ludobus should incorporate, mapping the city to identify the most suitable spaces and creating possible logos. The methodology proposed that the spaces must be accessible, with inclusive games that consider the needs of people with reduced mobility, visual, auditory, cognitive and relational difficulties. The requirement was that the games be made of wood, where possible, or from recycled materials and, above all, that it promoted interaction between people, facilitating coexistence between groups.

The mobile toy library must be a free space open to the public. For the dissemination, it was proposed to publish the activities on the Playful Esplugues website, created to centralize and publicize all the events and news related to play in the city. These activities are also usually shared on municipal social media sites and social networks.

The different parks and squares were chosen in order to reach all the neighbourhoods of the city. It was also considered important to propose a variety of times and days to allow more people to enjoy the project.

The name of the Ludobus was decided through a popular vote on the Esplugues Participa platform. The result was Esplujuga.

On the road despite the pandemic

The cessation of face-to-face activities as a result of the pandemic was a fact in all European cities and Esplugues was no exception.

The situation delayed the launch of Esplujuga. Although the team behind Playful had already adapted several of its activities, parties and training to the virtual format, the nature of Esplujuga required a face-to-face space for the magic to happen.

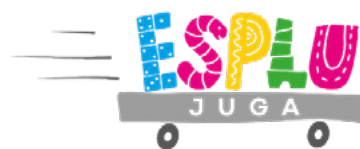
Due to the prolongation of the situation, it was proposed to test the Esplujuga in a safe and controlled place such as a school, where the students were already divided into stable groups, called 'bubbles'. In December 2020, the pilot test was launched at the Lola Anglada School (an active member of the ULG). Students aged between 3 and 12 years could participate in play spaces adapted to the different age groups; from symbolic and psychomotor games to traditional games, construction and board games, among others.

The activity was very well received by the students and the teaching team.

Karol Burillo, head of studies at the Lola Anglada school, valued the experience very positively stating, *"The game proposals were very appropriate for the different ages, well thought out and well presented. The materials were perfect, lots of unstructured materials and most of them made with natural elements, totally following the school line"*.

The experience was recorded on video to share the philosophy of the project and inspire other teams.

Although the idea is to be able to take Esplujuga



to public spaces open to all inhabitants, currently the epidemiological situation does not allow it. Hence, Esplujuga is expected to continue touring the city's schools until the situation allows it to reach parks, squares and streets of Esplugues.

And we keep playing ...

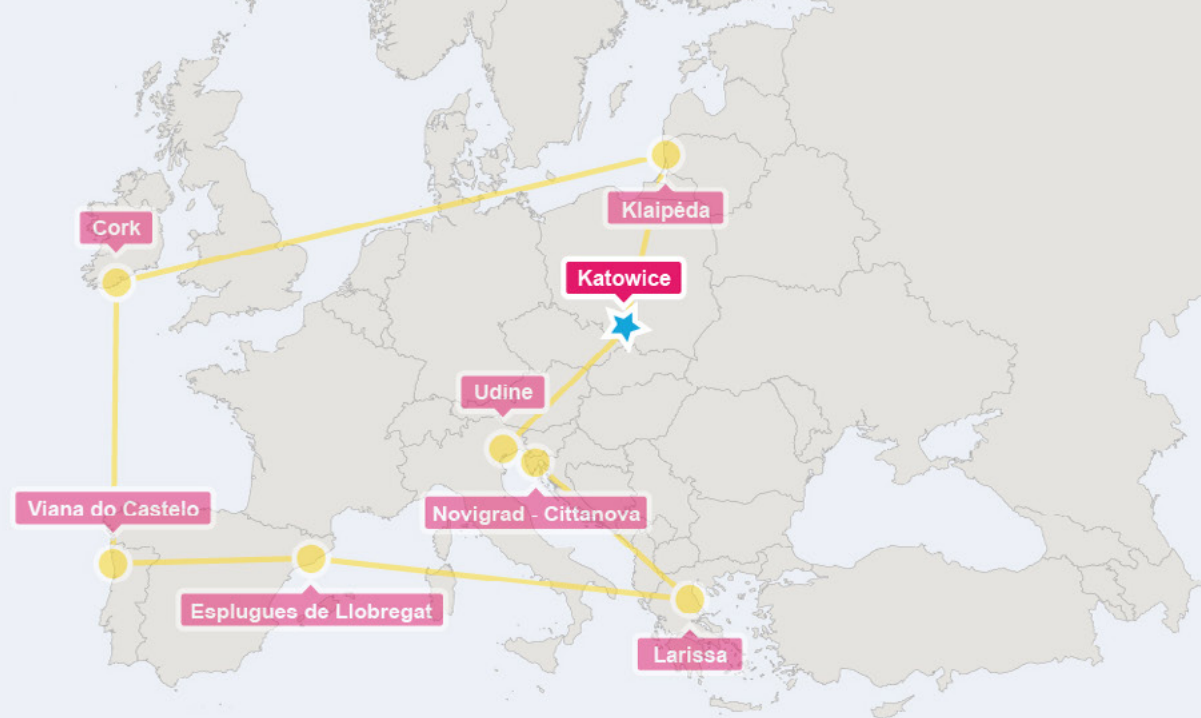


Play transforms spaces and people, as well as being a source of inspiration for the Esplujuga in Esplugues



Katowice

| | |
|--|---|
| Country | Poland |
| Inhabitants | 281.953 |
| Size | 165 KM² |
| EU Region Development | Less Developed Region |
| European and international networking membership | International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC); EUROCITIES; UNESCO-Creative City of Music |



From a Toy Library Idea to a Game board space in every home

By Michał Kucharski, ULG Coordinator;
Marek Cichoń, Municipality of Katowice

The whole idea was extremely motivating, but it was the real action that stimulated the local group.

When we think about places where we can spend a long time playing together along with our families and friends, we rarely think about... libraries. Associated mainly with such duties and pleasures executed in a solitary and quiet atmosphere, as reading and revising for lectures, libraries are not fun. And yet, as one of the greatest Polish artists of 19th century once said: "nothing characterizes a person more than the kind of fun they are looking for". Being aware of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer's famous quote, as well as being inspired by Toy

Library and Ludobus projects, the municipality of Katowice has decided to change the current image of city libraries. We had no idea where that new concept would take us in a few months...

From the very beginning of the project, the idea of creating a Ludobus or a Toy Library has seemed very attractive to us. However, despite a fascinating idea, there have been two main problems related to this enterprise i.e. high cost of its implementation and the lack of clear political will. Unfortunately, at the stage of

joining the “Playful Paradigm” programme, the city’s main representatives were not convinced enough to launch a large project of that kind. The chances of creating Katowice’s own Ludobus or Toy Library, as was the case with Udine – the main project initiator, were quite low.

On the other hand, creating a social space dedicated to enjoy games and activities solely in one place of such a large city as Katowice, would imply that municipality is rewarding a specific district. We wanted to avoid that. Therefore, following the example of Toy Libraries and the Ludobus project, the city of Katowice decided to change the way libraries were perceived as unattractive spaces and offered the possibility to use and borrow games in those places, rather than bet on one location.

How it all started...

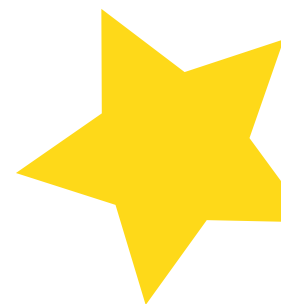
But let’s start from the beginning. We focused on implementing all of the other good practice modules, such as involving schools in fun activities or the annual programme of games and events. These events, just to mention board games meetings being held at the municipal public library, questing (“Skarbek’s Secret”) or game exchanges (“Pass your board game on”) were, however, short-term activities. Almost all of them were discontinued due to the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020. As the planning and implementation of large-scale public actions and events being part of the “Playful Paradigm” project were impossible to carry out for almost a year, we were forced to create a new strategy that would allow the implementation of the project assumptions in new conditions.

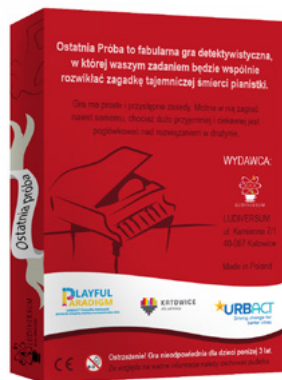
And there we were... faced with the first major



problem last year. Pandemic restrictions effectively thwarted the city’s plans for the events, resulting in postponement of the interschool tournament of the “Virus” card game, which was scheduled for last March, for an indefinite period. The lack of active measures also forced the individual members of URBACT Local Group to stagnate, and the constantly changing situation made preparation and planning impossible. Thus, the first barrier we had to overcome was the personal barrier, resulting from COVID stagnation. Being confined to their homes, people suffered from a lack of entertainment. All streaming television series were watched, many of the books and games were finished.

With the questions that we all asked ourselves - what should we do now, we began to reflect on the matter of aid and solution to this state. This brings us back to the idea of the Toy Library, implemented by





When the problem starts...

As we have already mentioned - we did not want to focus on the specific area of the city, there were also economic and political problems we had to face. If that was not enough... the pandemic started. One thing after another. But we focused on the potential solution. We examined our resources and in October of 2020, the so-called Board Games Library was opened, which currently functions in nine facilities of the Municipal Public Library. Thanks to an electronic system, similar to the book borrowing system known to readers, the inhabitants of Katowice can use hundreds of card and board game titles on the spot or simply borrow them.

Amazingly enough, the existing obstacles let us get closer to the citizens. Games available for borrowing from the neighbourhood's library brought the project closer to people. Citizens do not have to travel to a distant part of the city during a pandemic period, but they can borrow their favourite game quickly with the help of modern technology and use it at home!

the municipality of Udine.

For this purpose the city of Katowice decided to use the idea of residents' access to board and computer games, which developed since 2019. Initially on their own, and then with the help of the URBACT Local Group, the new sections of board games began to function within the several facilities of the Municipal Public Library in Katowice.

...but there is a solution

The inspiration to re-model the idea with a single games library came from the good practices of the Cork city in the early pandemic period. That aspect had the most powerful impact on ULG members encouraging them to take action. We were very impressed with the 'Keep Active with Cork Sports Partnership' document presented by the City of Cork, which was addressed to the specific age and social groups. The guide included a set of exercises and health-promoting behaviours which were to be

useful during a pandemic period. The whole idea was extremely motivating, but it was the real action i.e. getting the residents involved in the project that stimulated the local group. The Guide brought fun into residents' homes - we wanted to follow the same approach. We expanded the Board Library project and its promotion. And in a further step...

We created our own board game. Over the next few weeks, as part of the "Playful Paradigm" project, copies of the crime game called "The Last Trial" will be distributed to the libraries and the residents willing to get involved. The game was created by the founder of the Ludiversum board cafe and partner of ULG, Łukasz Piechaczek. In this way, we could attractively promote the new game rental initiative and support the local business during the pandemic!

So what have we learned?

The lack of commitment to transfer good practices related to Ludobus or the toy library implementation has shown that it is possible to act on these ideas, without necessarily implementing them all. Thanks to such projects as the Board Library, the city of Katowice focuses on creating a network of smaller initiatives that bring together the inhabitants of different districts.

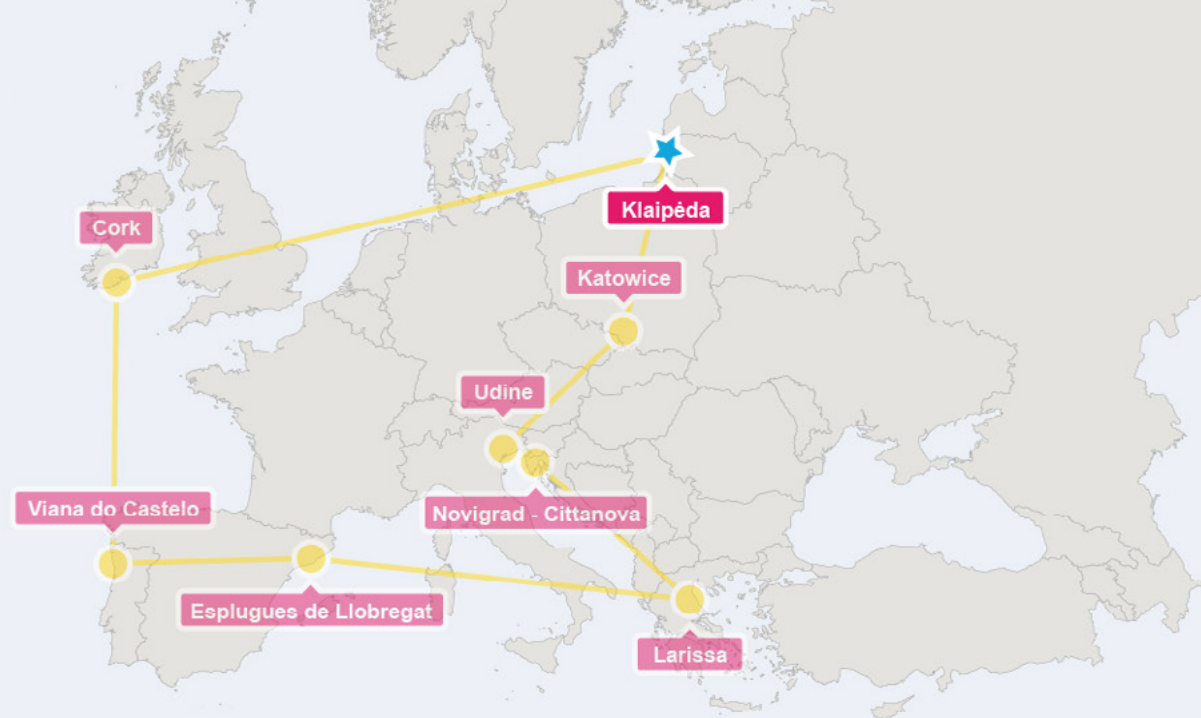
In addition, we are pleased that the whole project has achieved a certain synergy - where one implementation strengthens our action in another area. By creating the game and delivering it as close as possible to the inhabitants, we have saved a wonderful place in the heart of our city from bankruptcy.

Thanks to this idea, after the pandemic our residents will have a place to return to... and spend their time in a playful way!



Klaipėda

| | |
|---|--|
| Country | Lithuania |
| Inhabitants | 148.908 |
| Size | 98 KM² |
| EU Region Development | Less Developed Region |
| European and international networking membership | World Health Organization – Healthy Cities Network |



Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau: promoting children's healthy lifestyles in educational settings

By Laura Kubiliūtė,
Laura Kubiliūtė,
City Public Health
Bureau

In Lithuania, schools are committed to a long-term strategy to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyle

Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau (Lithuania), as a partner of the Playful Paradigm Transfer Network, is seeking for inspiring and creative approaches to use games and playful education methods for promoting social inclusion and healthy lifestyles in educational settings. In this article we would like to share our insights and experience in transferring the good practice of the municipality of Udine (Italy).

The municipality of Udine, the lead partner of the Playful Paradigm Transfer Network, promotes the use

of games and gamification concept in connection with healthy lifestyles, engagement in civic participation. The good practice of Udine has been arranged into different modules and project partners have chosen some of them to adopt and re-use in their cities. One of the modules selected to be adapted and transferred by Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau was module "Involvement of schools in playing activities". Moreover, this module been chosen for a transfer by other members of the Network: Novigrad (Croatia), Esplugues de Llobregat (Spain) and

Katowice (Poland).

What is a role of Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau (hereafter referred to as the Bureau) in promoting healthy lifestyles and well-being in educational settings? The Bureau has established an effective collaboration with schools and kindergartens due to public health care specialists working in educational institutions and being the Bureau's staff members. Public health care professionals at schools collaborate with teachers, parents, specialists of psychological and social assistance and schools' administrations. The Bureau offers playful activities for primary and secondary schools in Klaipėda city in addressing important messages of well-being.

Children currently are spending a lot of time in sedentary activities. The inactivity of younger generation is an important problem in many cities, as well as in Klaipėda. In Lithuania, schools are committed to a long-term strategy to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyle, via the Healthy School programme led by the Ministry of Health. However, the survey of lifestyle (2020) carried out in all municipalities in Lithuania revealed schoolchildren physical inactivity problem: only 16,3% Klaipėda's and 13,6% Lithuania's schoolchildren are physically active. Many schools in Klaipėda belong to the National Network of Health Strengthening Schools or have status of an Active School. In order to promote healthy lifestyle and actively engage schoolchildren, playful and creative events are organised at schools by the Bureau, e.g. competitions "The Most Active Class" and "The Healthiest School". The aim of the implementation of these competitions is to encourage children to become more physically active in an



enjoyable way. The participants of both competitions during the whole school year organise hikes, physically active weeks using whole-class (or school) approach, count daily steps, contribute to creation of a favourable psychological microclimate.

Through participation in the Urbact Playful Paradigm Transfer Network, a new element from the playful methodology was introduced and tested mainly in primary classes – a playful active break. What is an active break? It is a short physical activity after a lesson to energise school curriculum. It can be dance-along songs or a short exercise. Playful active breaks help schoolchildren to enjoy school more, have fun, relax and achieve better learning results. Bernutė Juškienė, a public health care specialist at Sendvaris Progymnasium, created an exercise with toys for primary schoolchildren which has been shown



during the transnational project meeting in Klaipėda, 2019. Since then, this playful activity has been promoted and applied in other Klaipėda's schools. Moreover, teachers and public health care specialists use GoNoodle videos with energetic music, where performers show the moves and children have to repeat them.

Playful education is especially important during the Covid-19 pandemic. During the quarantine the Bureau's public health care specialists working in

educational institutions tailored a website offering playful activities children and parents at home – a set of suggestions, information, games and much more for children physical activity, nutrition, mental health, hygiene: <https://padlet.com/klaipedavsb/b8bbth0toprtc5u3> (Password: karantinas). Printable templates of different games are available, so children and parents are able to play, solve crosswords or be physically active together playing active indoor and outdoor games and improving health literacy in different topics.

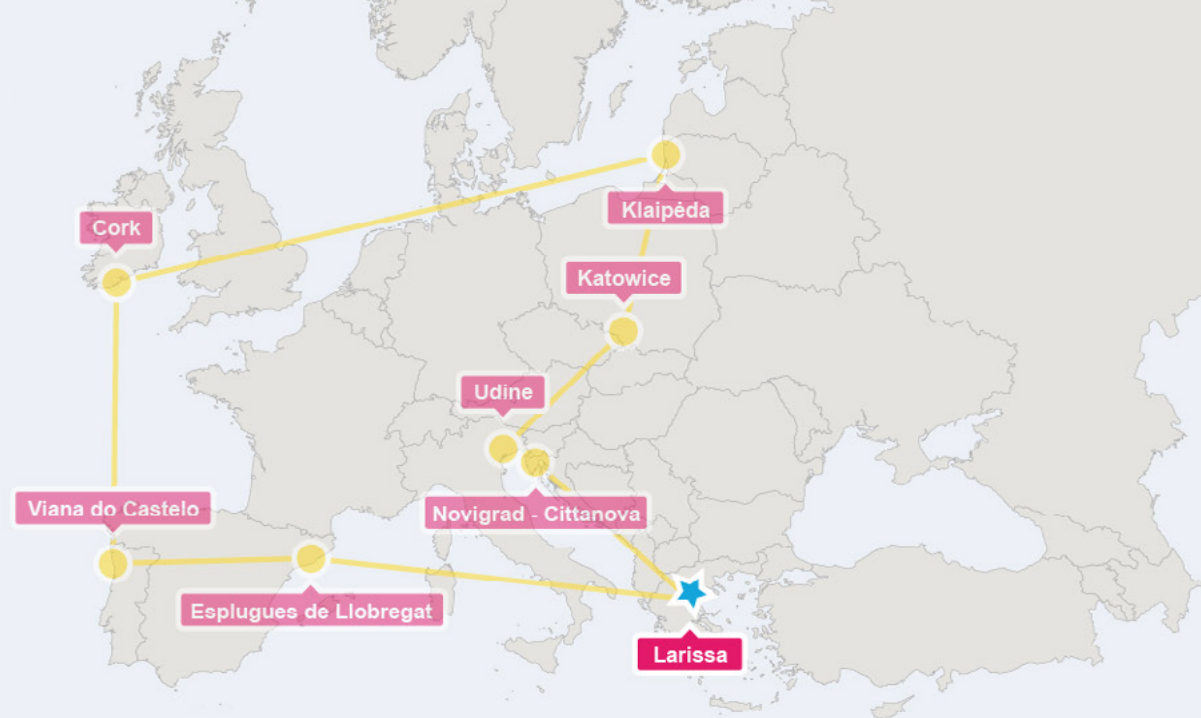
The help and support provided by the Urbact experts in transferring the good practice modules was precious. A useful toolkit for cities to promote Play Activities in schools served for inspiration in developing playful education methodology (<https://urbact.eu/toolkit-cities-promote-playful-activities-schools>).

Playful education is an innovative concept to boost the level of children physical activity, promote social inclusion and healthy lifestyles. Playful activities and methodology can be transferred to other schools locally, as well as internationally. The involvement of educational institutions in playful activities in Klaipėda has been successful. In the future it is planned to provide more playful initiatives for pre-school children in order to promote their healthy lifestyles.



Larissa

| | |
|---|--|
| Country | Greece |
| Inhabitants | 144.651 |
| Size | 122,58 KM² |
| EU Region Development | Less Developed Region |
| European and international networking membership | Covenant of Mayors, UNESCO Learning Cities Network, CIVITAS Forum, ICLEI, Major Cities of Europe – IT Users Group, River Cities. |



Promoting sustainability and citizen's engagement

By Vasilis Mitsios,
ULG Coordinator;
Marilia Lelli,
Municipality of
Larissa

“As a result of this action is the creation of a playful “map guide” for the city.

”

Larissa, as a modern European city, faces challenges such as urbanization, population ageing, and adaptation to climate change but most of all improvement of the citizens' living conditions. For this reason, it is a priority for the Municipality of Larissa to design and implement actions towards this direction and take advantage of national and EU funds in order to achieve its goals. Through these initiatives, communication and cooperation have been developed with institutions, agencies and other local organizations, as well as with European Union

agencies and authorities, which have lead to local and transnational partnerships and cities' networks, such as the UNESCO Learning City Network, Healthy Cities Network, and Covenant of Mayors etc. Among those partnerships also stands “The Playful Paradigm” project, based on the Good Practice of the City of Udine and which is co-funded by the URBACT III European Territorial Cooperation Program.

The participation in this Transfer Network was a challenge for the Municipality of Larissa from the very beginning. The city of Larissa is a well-structured,

organized, extrovert city, while being a center of agricultural, industrial, economic and commercial activities. It has also significant cultural activity thanks to its museums, galleries, ancient theaters, libraries as well as local associations and NGOs. Annual events such as festivals (Pineios River Festival, <https://www.festivalpineiou.gr/>, L.A.Comics Festival <https://www.allaboutfestivals.gr/en/festivals/lacomicsfestival-2/>), cultural events, exhibitions, conferences, workshops and sports activities are organized with high citizen involvement. In addition, the Municipality of Larissa, in its attempt to help and support all individuals to spend their leisure time, has created Cultural Clubs that are a vital part in the people's daily activities since their aim is not only to entertain but also to educate the people involved in their actions, as a creative way out of the current social and economic problems and deadlocks.

All these favorable conditions have helped to improve the quality of life of Larissa's citizens. In addition to that, and through the participation at 'The Playful Paradigm' project, the municipality intends to include a new and innovative tool, the games and the gamification activities in the everyday lives of citizens regardless of age, gender, social background, without any discrimination and exclusion. Its aim is not only to entertain people, but also to help them to collaborate, to coexist; to compete and to share ideas and views as it helps citizens take a short break from their anxious life and to escape from their various problems.

In the beginning of the project's implementation, the Municipality of Larissa faced a challenge; the identification and engagement of various local public and private stakeholders to support this effort, to help, to co-operate with the Municipality and simultaneously



collaborate with each other. By organizing the first ULG, the organization saw the opportunity to reach many different stakeholders/organisations with many years of gamification activity of any kind(namely Municipal Departments of Social policy, culture, urban planning, environment, sports and life-long learning, the University of Thessaly, Adult education associations, Museums, NGOs, Local organizations, Local Associations, SMEs like bookstores and toyshops, Theaters etc.). They were informed of the aims of the project and discussed how to identify and gather their activities taking place in the city of Larissa during the year, setting as a goal of grouping all these actions under the umbrella of Playful Paradigm. As a result of this action is the creation of a playful "map guide" for the city. The ultimate aim of this is to give the city of Larissa a separate identity, the identity of the Playful City at both national and European level.





Notable is the fact that in each ULG there are more and more stakeholders who share their work and wish to be informed and contribute to the implementation of the project. These discussions have led us to the decision of collecting actions/activities from the city's stakeholders, register them and integrate them into a "unique calendar of games and related/playful activities". As part of its creation, the Municipality of Larissa will make this calendar easy to use and accessible to every citizen/visitor, through a web application, which will be a calendar of activities/games for the citizen/ the visitor of the

city and will help him select the most appropriate activity to participate, in a user-friendly and dynamic manner. The application user will be able to obtain an overview of all events and playful activities taking place in the city on a daily basis, since in addition to the municipality there will be the possibility for those organizers of actions who wish to upload relevant information/invitations for their events/activities. This implementation will be created with specifications allowing it to be active and sustainable after the end of the project, as this is the main objective.

Another innovative challenge for the Municipality of Larissa is to create a Toy Library in collaboration with the Municipal Library in the city of Larissa, as a new meeting point for all. The city of Larissa decided to implement the Good Practice of the city of Udine (Italy) by operating/inaugurating the "Toy Library" which will enable young and elder people to spend their leisure time entertaining, regardless of age, economic and social background and other forms of discrimination and promote a healthier life, improve living standards, integrate social, vulnerable groups, immigrants and address/confront addictive behaviors. For this reason, a representative of the Municipality of Larissa participated in a Bilateral Meeting with Udine in order to learn how the Toy Library operates and visits the site. In addition to the Good Practice of Udine (Italy), the case of another partner, Klaipėda (Lithuania), could be mentioned. During the 3rd Transnational Meeting in the city, the partners of the project visited the Immanuel Kant Public Library, where and through the "The Playful Paradigm" project, playful activities were added, creative activities with schools, art therapy, board games, quiz etc.

At the moment, the design and the configuration of

the Toy Library of Larissa has started according to the manual of the Italian city but and due to a lack of financial resources, the Municipality of Larissa had requested the collaboration of local bookshops and toy shops, which donated board games, enriching the existing collection.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the project has been hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has resulted in exceptional circumstances, in the last year, for all countries in the world. Countries have been affected and suffer because of the coronavirus, following measures in favor of public health to limit the spread of the pandemic. The project partners have all been affected as well as the “Playful Paradigm” project itself. However, the Municipality of Larissa continues to implement actions in accordance with the project timetable and the results of meetings between local authorities within the period of the restrictive measures. Additionally and in order to assist people during the lockdown, a website was created, titled “Larissa Together ” (<https://www.larissamazi.gr/>) that contains performances, concerts, digital library, museum tours, entertainment and sports in the home, plus various useful information as well as medical guidance. Also, other entities, like the Doll’s Museum, in collaboration with the puppet show “Tiritomba”, have created for children a cycle of online performances featuring hand-made dolls called “Kouklokamomata”. In these episodes, there are short stories, small parts of performances, commentary, songs and many ideas about puppets, construction and puppet games. It’s worth mentioning that the Doll’s Museum is a unique museum in Greece, as well as a world-renowned member of UNIMA, the World Puppet Theater Organization and UNESCO.

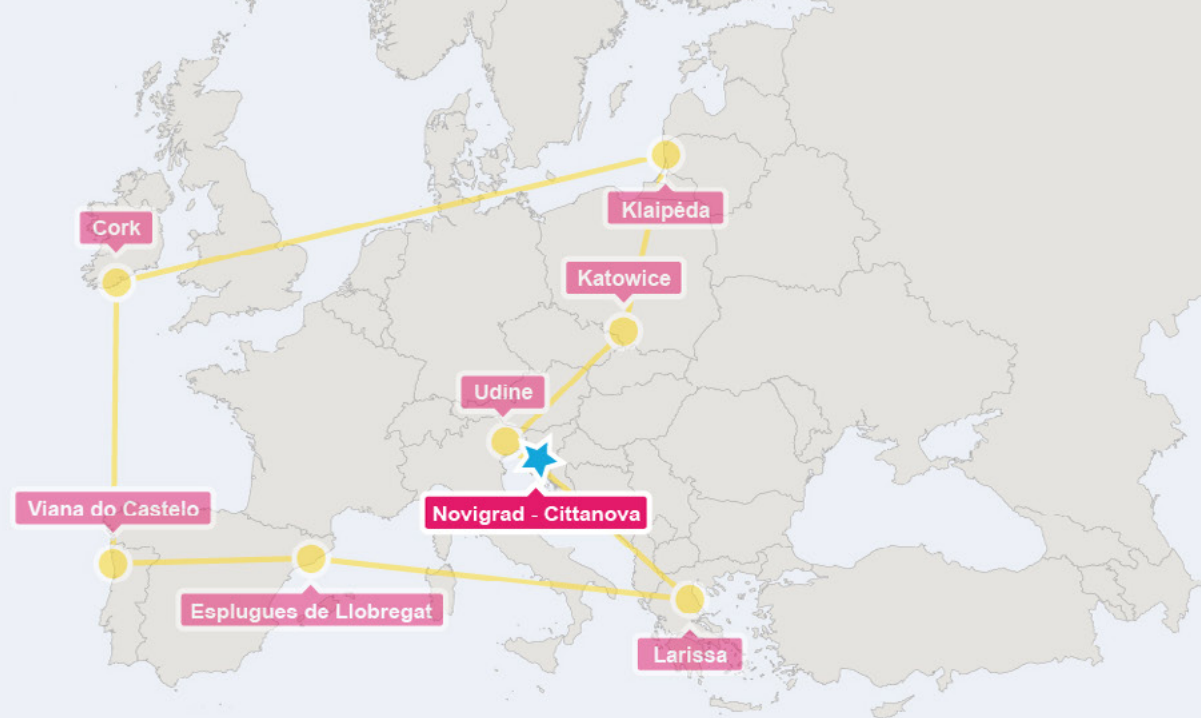


During this journey, the City of Larissa has had exceptional collaboration with the project partnership and lead expert as well as guidance and support from the URBACT Secretariat and its National Contact Point through webinars, educational activities run by URBACT Secretariat and URBACT Experts, as well as transnational meetings among partners. This has become more intense over the last period and due to lockdown measures, as online meetings and webinars have been organized constantly on the implementation of the project despite the exceptional difficult circumstances. These activities provide an opportunity for continued education and training of partners, exchange of views, and acquaintance with different cultures, knowledge exchange and local visits on the basis of the Good Practice of each partner city.

Our organization knows very well that despite the

Novigrad

| | |
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| Country | Croatia |
| Inhabitants | 4.345 |
| Size | 27 KM² |
| EU Region Development | Less Developed Region |
| European and international networking membership | Covenant of Mayors, TAFISA World Challenge Day, Walled Town Friendship Circle. |



How to support local sense of Community and Unity

By Corinne Pozzecco,
Senior Administrative
Project Office

I hope that in the near future our city will accept that bottom up approach which encourages civic activism.

Novigrad has always been a city with a great sense of belonging and unity. Being a small city, of only 4.345 inhabitants, social life is pretty active and the level of collaboration is remarkable.

Having the chance of being a project partner in the „Playful paradigm“ for Novigrad was a great opportunity to learn to maximize and valorize this feature and learn new and inventive ways to make people connect through games and playing, using it as a tool to create new content for our community.

The main modules we decided to transfer were about the involvement of schools and playful events

for the community. Obviously, the situation at global level with the pandemic stopped us from realizing all the foreseen activities but we still managed to achieve a part of them, and also to modify other.

Talking about community and unity, a tradition in Novigrad is to organize the New Year's Eve celebration during the day, in order to let everybody celebrate together – children, adults and elderly. On NYE 2020 we managed to set up a “Playful corner” with face-painting and animation. Even if it was meant to be for the youngest, in the end a lot of adults got their faces painted and enjoyed the singing and dancing, so...

mission accomplished!

Another traditional event in Novigrad is the open-air event for the 1st of May (Labour day). On a beautiful spot, a park just near the sea, everyone can spend all day socializing with a special gastronomic offer, sports and recreational facilities, music animation and other activities. Also, a recreational walk and bike ride is taking place, everyone can participate for free. All-day entertainment consists in sports and retro games such as „three on three” beach volleyball tournament, “border guards”, “rubber bands”, “shins”, “school” and so on. Our idea was to upgrade the existing event with the already implemented “Playful corner”, brand a part of the existing well-known event and enrich it with more games and playing specially designed to include all age group and enhance interaction and engagement. Unfortunately, just a few months before the event the lockdown started so we weren’t allowed to organize gatherings of any kind.

Even if we couldn’t organize further events and activities which includes social interaction due to the pandemic, we focused on what we can do at the moment so during the first lockdown the ULG sat down and collected a set of classic social games to do at home with only pen, paper and imagination which has been posted and reposted on various local web pages and social media. We realized that in a totally new and unknown situation, additional stress is to avoid as it’s negative impact on the immune system is well known. What better way to relax than play?


As we are limited at the moment with the actual implementation of the modules we decided to transfer, we dedicated our time to the learning process and comparison with the other project partners, to discover the similarities and practices we can replicate locally.

Both the Cities of Udine and Cork really are great



examples of adding the playful ingredient into existing events to increase social inclusion and healthy lifestyles.

The ULG coordinator in Novigrad, Mrs Morena Moferdin states: “Although I already knew that games help in social integration and socialization, it was only by joining this project that I learned that these concepts can be included in the city’s development strategy, as the city of Udine has done. I realized that what we had been doing for some time at the Novigrad city library, of which I am the director, and that was the use of games for children’s learning, could be raised to a higher level, creating a network of all public institutions that promote healthy lifestyles. Although this has not yet happened, primarily due to the advent of the new coronavirus, I am optimistic, and I believe that over time we will be able to connect the local library, the



museum, local schools, the city administration and the retirement home into a network that will provide its users with the ability to play at every corner. It is certainly important that such a network is accepted and financially supported by the city authorities. For me, the lectures of experts or the experiences of other cities involved in this project were of particular importance. This time I would like to highlight the topic of city planning or revitalization of neglected parts of the city, with the participation of citizens. It is incredibly important to give citizens the opportunity

to say what they want, what their ideas are, and to come to a solution in a participatory way. In this way, we would create public spaces that citizens use, take care of, and come to on purpose to play and socialize. I hope that in the near future our city will accept that bottom up approach which encourages civic activism. Although many ideas and best practices that I have had the chance to hear during Playful Paradigm study visits and transfer networks were inspiring and great, they were not suitable for transfer for such a small city as Novigrad that has less than 5.000 inhabitants. We could not implement a ludobus, a toy library, or a dedicated office for play activities, but nevertheless, we were able to transfer a few smaller scale best practices. At the library, we set up a small corner dedicated to books and toys for toddlers and their parents that would facilitate play activities between kids and parents. Together with the project coordinator at the City of Novigrad, Corinne Pozzecco, we created an online guide of “stay at home games” that could be played during lockdown.

The City of Cork has done a great job with many thoughtful games that they have incorporated into existing events (...) Through their examples I realize how important playing in public spaces could be for social inclusion and urban development in the process of placemaking.”

The City of Cork gave us some great advices, so Denise Cahill states: “As a result of Playful Paradigm we have learned that play is for everyone and that the experience of play is best when it is unplanned, unguided and self-directed. The games we have introduced to events and festival in Cork City include cooperative games such as tug or war and giant jenga, creative games chalked out

by graphic artists and children e.g. hopscotch and free play with bags of equipment on offer to anyone to take what they choose and engage with it. We learned from the Ludobus experience in Udine that adults should not direct play, they should step back and only engage if requested or if there is a safety issue. Children then use their imaginations to create their own games with their own boundaries. During our School Streets event children transformed Giant Jenga into Giant Dominos and developed their own races with hula hoops and parachutes and bean bags. The key to a good play set up is a variety of equipment for all ages and levels of ability and lots of space to create and interact and have FUN FUN FUN”

Different cities tackle with different problems. The City of Udine gave a great example of social inclusion with their event “Coloriamo la citta” (Let’s paint our city) organized in a specific area of the city (Borgo Stazione). The use creativity and the city itself as a scenography for playing and promoting social inclusion is very inspiring so it can definitely be a great event to replicate in Novigrad when it will be feasible. In Novigrad the problem with immigration is non-existent but we can use an idea like the one from Udine to stimulate children’s creativity and revitalize less frequented city locations.

With the great examples and new knowledge about playmaking and placemaking gained during the transnational meetings and online meetings of the project, we now have plenty of new ideas how to make the existing events even more playful and inclusive.

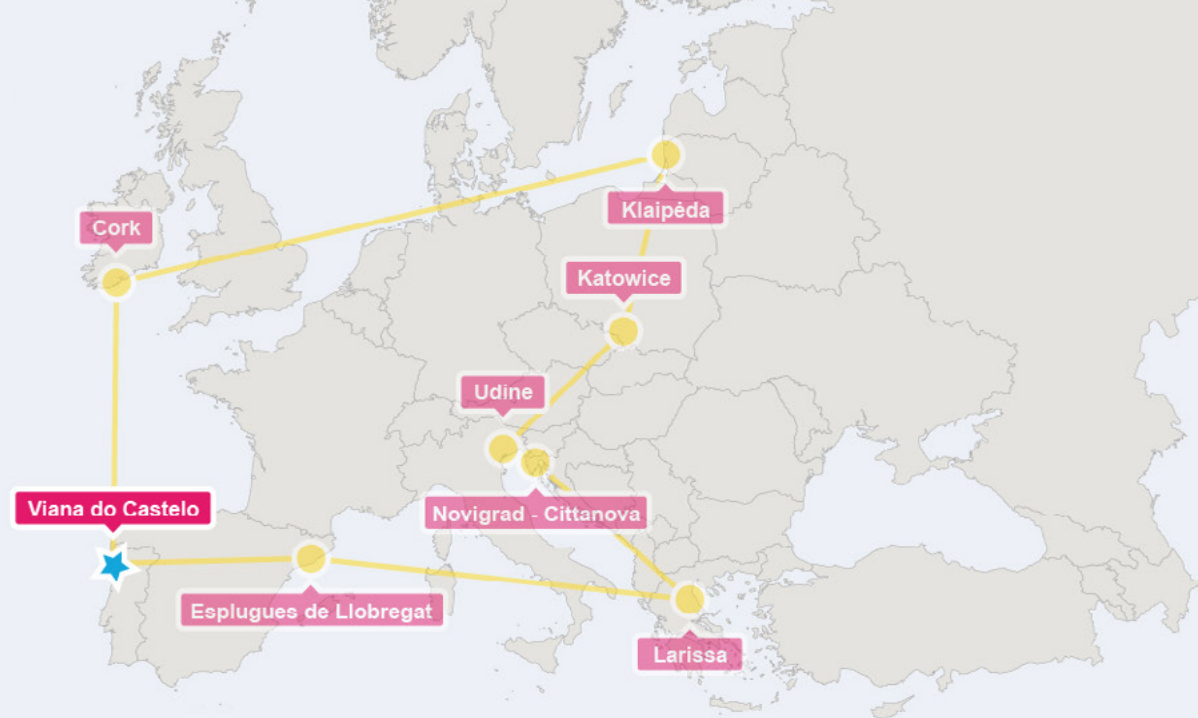
As we couldn’t enter the schools and other institutions due to the pandemic, we decided to come up with an idea to disseminate the key idea of the



project and promote it in a playful way. We decided to produce promotional materials in the form of branded wooden social games as domino, ludo, memory and a puzzle. This way, we can do some promotion of the project and motivate the community to play together. We distributed the promotional materials to kindergartens, the retirement home, schools, so that the brand “Playful Paradigm” is spreading all over and making everyone play. We thought that branding games that keeps the mind active and stimulates memory are valuable for both children and elderly and at the same time the promo materials are made of wood, to make them sustainable and in line with the key philosophy of the project – inclusive, sustainable and healthy living.

Viana do Castelo

| | |
|---|--|
| Country | Portugal |
| Inhabitants | 89.000 |
| Size | 314 KM² |
| EU Region Development | Less Developed Region |
| European and international networking membership | WHO - European Healthy Cities Network, Covenant of Mayors, World Surf Cities Network, RETE international network of Port Cities, European Blue flag Association. |



We learned that Viana do Castelo needs this network to valorize even more and the Playful activities to promote interaction between generations.



Viana do Castelo's Transfer Story: from the Social City Network To a Playful and Sustainable City Vision

By Câmara Municipal de Viana do Castelo

What was our starting point?

From the very beginning, we always had the Political support. In addition to that, a "Social Network" (which later had become group for the URBACT Local Group) was already constituted. The city wanted to find a participative way for implementing innovative Projects and it already had a good collaboration with local associations and NGOs.

Within the Social Network and in the framework of the WHO Healthy CityNetwork, Viana had already

decided to set up a Toy Library in a deprived neighbourhood, for fostering the social city integration.

What were the modules of good practices implemented?

Random games and gamification events or activities, annual programmes of games events and activities, a Toy Library, many Playful Projects for local communities and the involvement of schools in playing activities.

In particular, the involvement of schools in playing activities had seen the implementation of athletics in schools with the participation of more than 1.000 students of the first

cycle of basic education. Even the implementation of nautical activities in schools such as surfing, canoeing, rowing and sailing had had great success. In fact, 7 main schools composed by 10 “minor” schools, corresponding to 90 classes, for a total of 1950 students were passionately involved in those new disciplines, and even handicapped children - thanks to “Nautical for Everybody”.

The Playful Projects for locals were divided in two sections: the first was the “Senior Community Intervention Project”, where active ageing was promoted. The second was the “Most Active Senior”, enriched with a full annual activity program.

Due to the COVID pandemic and its restrictions, the Annual Program of games/events/activities had changed a bit. The Children’s Day was a broadcast of a circus show through transmitted to all the social networks of the Municipality and also on the RADIO GEICE.

The Teatro do Noroeste, ULG member, broadcast on its Facebook the play “O Gato das Botas” and on its Youtube’s channel the show “O Autômato”.

In addition to that, the Municipal Library of Viana do Castelo published stories on its social networks for the youngest.

URBACT LOCAL GROUP

We had 2 Work Meetings in 2 months with our URBAN LOCAL GROUP. During these meetings, we distributed the tasks for a period of 24 months, we promoted action on the field and we discussed about



the community’s involvement during and beyond the duration of the project.

The ACEP, an ULG MEMBER is an Elderly Support Project that has collaborated with young people and children who offered drawings, letters and phone calls to elderly people confined in homes and institutions. They support the project of “Centro de Promoção Social e Paroquial de Darque”.

We organized even more Playful Projects for our locals with the collaboration of ArtMatriz- Cultural and Artistic Association. Even if the ULG member had its activities suspended, according to the guidelines of the DGS, it has continued to promote his role as a promoter of socialization and Healthy coexistence, maintaining one of his regular activities: the Wednesday of Board Games. This association also managed to promote his online meetings, through the TableTopia and Boa Board Game Arena platforms





Our Toy Library

The municipality is now providing SIRD with infrastructures, resources and materials for the implementation of the Toy Library, but meanwhile we are always ON THE ROAD with our truck!



What type of goals we successfully achieved?

We have identified and adapted the Good Practice and we have approved and implemented a plan.

Viana do Castelo already has activities that fit the modules to be transferred.

We have adapted the practices to the local reality and to the specifics of each partner and the project.

Other activities was created, but in terms of methodology and procedures, they were worked on with the ULG.

Nowadays we are convinced that we are able to implement good practices in our territory and overcome the difficulties that we identified at the beginning of this journey.



using Discord for the interaction between players.

The Teatro do Noroeste Centro Dramático de Viana, an other ULG member, was the first National Company to broadcast live a theatre's play. In the past, it performed more than 27 shows that were transmitted over the internet daily and were seen by a hundred thousand spectators. TheViana's company designed a daily program of shows on Facebook and Youtube,designed for the millions of people who are in confinement

ULG -MEMBERS

We have choose a diverse set of partners such as schools, Social Solidarity

Associations, Youth Associations, Theater Group, Disability Support Associations and Environmental Associations.

In order to transfer our Good Practices we have created realities such as WORLD CAFÉ OUTCOMES to study BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS and we

organized WORKSHOP ULG Playful Paradigm with several presential and on –line meetings.

The ACEP's participation in the URBACT work team has been very rewarding.

It has allowed us to know the diversity of work of other institutions at local level, with which we may eventually establish long-term partnerships.

URBACT has been helpful in creating synergies, developing ideas and activities for the sake of play. ACEP has been developing projects for 45 years linked to the importance of playing as a promoter of community well-being, and it is essential to participate in this European project that covers all age groups.

The sharing of experiences, forms of organization, work and ideas and their discussion, teamwork, a cooperative spirit and the partnership created between different institutions and associations, as members of ULG, have allowed us to find integrated and organized solutions for using the “game” as a tool for social inclusion, intergenerational promotion and development for different levels.

As a representative of SIRD and an active element in this process, I feel that this “experience” has contributed to my personal and professional

growth. This “trip” has been a delightful adventure of discovery and learning and, just as importantly, is to feel that we are part of something that contributes to improvements in the community that we integrate.

Therefore, I believe more and more, that the interconnection of such different parts will give a whole more sustained and capable of making a difference!

An other ULG Member was The Youth Association of Deão, which seeks to be involved in projects that allow the development of networking and that fosters the creation of synergies. We have developed



numerous activities in national and local networks of associations and we find it very important to integrate this working group promoted by the municipality to carry out the Urbact Playful Paradigm project.

The working group was very diverse, which allowed the exchange of ideas and the sharing of contributions and values for carrying out the proposed activities. It also promoted the sharing of the work developed by each association / institution, allowing the creation of contacts and possibly the development of future joint projects. This sharing also allowed the growth of the professionals who work at AJD and the development of values and potential of networking.

We therefore feel that the AJD contribution to this project, once again, made us reinforce the commitment and attitude that we always place in the face of the challenges that are proposed to us, namely in quality management, organization, methods, constant and





effective communication in the projects with which we commit.

As a member of the ULG of Viana do Castelo the APPCVC's participation was a great opportunity to know the activities of each partner and their strategies to successfully transfer the playful paradigm good practices. What we learn with the partners and advisors experiences will improve the work of our ULG, allowing more creative proposals, always adapted to our reality.

The concept and potential of the playful paradigm

showed us that we are doing a good job as a ULG and inspired us to embrace the challenge to mix and match the placemaking methodology with playmaking knowledge.

The creation of a Playful paradigm space, like the "Cathedral of the game", as a distinctive brand image; the adaptation of a Bus with games, however of a wider scope than Udine, with periodic and systematic incursions to the towns surrounding the city (covering the entire municipality); special focus on games for the 1st and 2nd childhood, on the one hand, and over 65 years old, on the other; effective incorporation into the game design and game dynamics of foreign communities resident in Viana do Castelo.

Finally, it is essential to affirm the relevance for the knowledge of the network and the establishment of relationships between partners. As a final reflection, it should be said that the evolution of the network and the success of the project, here and there, must undergo extensive meetings with partners with experience in context.

Only with the direct involvement in practices, experiences and emotions, the potential of the game for cognitive stimulation, social inclusion and team dynamics is perceived and given meaning.

The URBACT project was important because it offered the young women of Lar de Sta Teresa at the foster home, the possibility of doing group activities more regularly, changing every day dynamics.

The games have enhanced the interpersonal relationships and have promoted team spirit. The young women are learning to help each other and to include the children and teenagers with multi-handicaps, that are also lodge in the institution, as well. These games are also playing an important role in terms of behaviour improvement, since they promote

the following of rules and the respect for others, and they enhance concentration. Moreover, since they are a leisure time activity, the young women have played gladly and they promote personal satisfaction and self-esteem.

Viana do Castelo has lots of potential regarding the development of the project, because of the city's characteristics, but also because of diversity of its environment and of the agents involved.

What were the Key Learning Points at city level?

During the first semester of 2020 it wasn't possible to replicate good practices in the field together with ULG. The dissemination of activities was hampered by the pandemic and the emergency measures taken that prohibited contacts between the target population of this project, as they are group of risk. The stakeholders mentioned above have reinvented their intervention on the ground and continue the activities adapted to the circumstances.

Overall conclusion on progress

Even if it was not possible to organize many presential actions, we were able to make virtual meetings, broadcast, transmissions in the social networks and we continued to organize virtual ULG meetings, in order to create find other ways to communicate.

An example was the "Largest Online" project to digitally inclusion of 541 elderly users in homes, with the delivery of tablets. This project involves the students of the Academic Federation of IPVC, inviting them to "adopt" an elderly person without a family



and living in a home so that, weekly, they make a video call (articulated with the voluntary bank of the municipality) with the objective of creating bonds between generations.

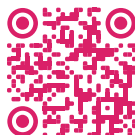
We learned that Viana do Castelo needs this network to valorize even more and the Playful activities to promote interaction between generations. Despite the crisis caused by COVID 19 having conditioned all activity and interaction, Viana do Castelo thinks it has managed to exceed expectations.

Thematic Reports



The Playful Paradigm Network recorded a podcast series to deeper examine such themes, engaging the Cities' representative and the

URBACT Experts that followed their progresses over a span of two years. Find the link to the recordings by the introduction of every Thematic Report.



ALL THE EPISODES

<https://anchor.fm/playfulparadigm>



URBACT provided the Playful Paradigm Network with a team of experts to support Municipalities in the improvement and implementation of the Good Practice.

Here's their analysis on the use of play that the Cities of the Playful Paradigm network made to directly or indirectly achieve specific goals.

Play for Re-thinking City Spaces

★P 53

Play for Citizens Participation and Inclusion

★P 58

Play for Sustainability and Health

★P 63

Play for Education

★P 66

Play for Solidarity

★P 70

Play for Re-thinking City Spaces

By Wessel Badenhorst, URBACT Expert



Playmaking – the art of making people happy in their city

The Role of Play in Placemaking

Often when we ask what makes people happy, the answer is ‘the little things’. It is the things which does not cost lots of money, but brings people together and helps people to feel part of their city. It often happens more ‘every other day’ than only ‘once in a while’.

The opposite is also true. Lots of things can divide people. And a deserted space is a lonely place. Let us not dwell on these. Let us rather celebrate how an intercity project managed to create momentum for the ‘playfulness’ of cities.



Cities are not only a ‘concentration of buildings’ with a range of uses for its inhabitants. The public spaces ‘between buildings’ serve to bring people together. The connectedness between people living in a city is key to the establishment of community networks and to strengthen a sense of belonging. Dar Williams calls this connectedness ‘positive proximity’ and the question she says we should ask ourselves in the places where we live and work is: “When does a roomful of strangers become a town of people?” (What I found in a thousand towns, 2017)

The Playful Paradigm Project investigates and demonstrates the role of play in creating such positive proximity. During the Project the partner cities initiated play in public spaces as a way of placemaking. The intention was that through co-creating and delivering play activities in targeted spaces, communities could be brought together and explore other uses for

Want to know more?
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spaces.

Play (just like ice-cream and trees) have an instantaneous effect on people gathered in a space, by making them feel more comfortable with each other and to be more open for engagement with each other. Thus play is supportive of placemaking, for which the intention is to activate spaces and instigate new uses of such spaces resulting in more meeting opportunities for local inhabitants.

In a recent podcast of the Playful Paradigm Project (recorded on 24 February 2021) two of the partner

cities in the project discussed the impact of such play activities in public spaces on inhabitants and on city policies.

Cork

Denise Cahill of Cork Healthy Cities in Ireland reflects on how underutilised public spaces have been in the city of Cork and how it is changing. The lack of use can mainly be attributed to the weather in Ireland with its many rainy days that discourages



people to go outdoors; the cost of insurance to cover public liability that inhibits organised activities in public spaces; and the culture of socialising indoors, which is the bedrock of the night-time economy in Ireland i.e. the pub culture.

Things have changed however. The Covid19 pandemic together with the city's involvement in the Playful Paradigm Project has helped to shift the mind set in Cork. As Denise says: "A lot of people thought play is about playgrounds. The Playful Paradigm Project gave the city opportunities to explore play in a different and creative way."

A very important example is the change in perceptions to what the use of the Marina can be, which is a road of approximately 2.5 km along the River Lee in the city. This road was mainly used for car traffic, yet it has so much potential as an amenity for outdoor recreational activity and for the general enjoyment of the river. The Cork project team decided to test two project actions namely to organise a playful festival and some pop-up play events by applying to stop car traffic on the Marina road for car traffic on four Sundays in the summer of 2019. The communication was not on 'closing the road' per se, but rather on opening the road for play. This was done as part of the city's annual Lifelong Learning Festival.

The impact was dramatic as people positively responded to the invitation to use the road for play. When in 2020 the city had to cope with the Covid19 pandemic, the precedent was set of using the Marina road as a pedestrianised area, leading to more permanent restrictions of car traffic on the road.

The project was very successful in managing to insert a playful theme into the existing festivals held each year in Cork such as the Culture Night involving all creative organisations each September. In this



way the project aimed to mainstream play in the city. A play practice that was successfully transferred from Udine to Cork was the lending of play equipment to local communities to transform local public spaces into play places during community events.

Udine

Marco Pollastri of the Centro Antartide based in Bologna gave an insight into a transformative project in Udine using play to activate public space while also bringing diverse sections of a local community together.

The Borgo Stazione is a residential area close to the train station and the city centre. It is located in a part of the city which experienced significant demographical change with the arrival of many immigrants giving the area a new character. The area has an impressive architectural heritage but has become less appealing with persistent levels of petty crime.

The project team of the Playful Paradigm Project in Udine selected this area to explore ways to use play to deal with some of the social challenges in this area. The aim was to find ways to improve the use of public spaces using play activities while also positively influencing community relationships.

The team used a placemaking methodology by first listening to stakeholders, while making adaptations for the Covid19 pandemic restrictions, to interview local inhabitants of different ages and ethnic origin. The team also used a model from a previous project to do a comparative analysis between perceived and real data on the quality of public spaces. This included examining options to bring in equipment or to use the natural context for activities including the need for safety measures. These initial engagements

helped the team to create a focus for participation of citizens in the co-creation of more play activities.

It also laid the foundation for experimentation with playmaking by involving local inhabitants working with artists to create surface drawings in public spaces that could be used for play.

Given the Covid19 pandemic restrictions on active physical social play, the project concentrated on using digital Apps namely Echoes and Wallace to enhance the experience of the local neighbourhood. For example, with the Echoes App inhabitants could walk around places in the neighbourhood and hear pre-recorded tracks with comments and ideas of local people about those specific places. With the Wallace App the users who walked the local neighbourhood could leave their own messages or drawings on virtual walls depicting noted spaces in the neighbourhood.

Marco concludes that play and playmaking helps local people to better understand the neighbourhood where they live. “It helps them to imagine, discover and signal in a creative way the spaces that compose the same territory.”

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Impact of the Playful Paradigm

These initiatives of two partner cities in the Playful Paradigm Project demonstrate how making a city playful is a successful strategy to practically address issues of people and place, such as the better use of roads in the case of the city of Cork and the increased attachment of inhabitants to their neighbourhood in the case of the city of Udine.

It also showcases how playmaking can be an integral part of placemaking. As Dar Williams says, placemaking is about activities that show there is a there, there. And with this play of words, one can conclude that for us, to make our cities great places to live, starts with the basics of making our cities playful and socially connected, which also helps to boost happiness in our cities!



Play for Citizens Participation and Inclusion

By Ileana Toscano, Playful Paradigm Lead Expert



Playful approach and games: new ways to foster civic engagement in cities

In 2018 when Udine promoted the Playful Paradigm Good Practice the cities interested to join the Network expressed the intention that they have been looking for new methods and tools to involve their citizens.

All across Europe, there is a strong need to foster the feeling of belonging and find novel approaches to include people and local communities in the decision-making process. The COVID-19 Pandemic has drastically contributed to people isolation. Elderly people, single parents, adolescents and women felt the oppression of loneliness and the distance from public institutions.

Cities have been looking for engaging methodologies to re-call people to the civic life and re-build the sense

of community, in order to be able to take care of the marginalized people and find new methodologies to satisfy citizens' needs.

The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network has experimented new approaches for triggering citizens' participation by using PLAY and gaming activities.

Play is a catalyst to foster the participation of families, children, women, young and elderly people. It provides innovative methodologies to involve target groups generally difficult to reach, as adolescents and migrants.

Adapting and Reusing the Good Practice developed by Udine, Esplugues de Llobregat in Spain, Katowice in Poland and Larissa in Greece have been testing novel playful approaches to promote grassroots movements, civic participation and inclusion.

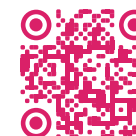
These three cities, also supported by the other cities partner of Playful Paradigm, Cork (Ireland), Klaipėda



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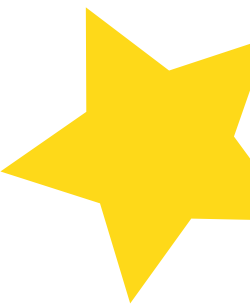
(Lithuania) Novigrad (Croatia) and Viana do Castelo (Portugal) have promoted a playful environment to ensure participation through play.

“Esplujuga” – the playful movement in Esplugues de Llobregat

“Esplugues de Llobregat, is a medium city located in the metropolitan area of Barcelona. It has 47.000 inhabitants, with a lot of green areas and parks where we could explore new possibilities to boost

socialization. In Esplugues, there is a significant income difference between neighbourhoods, some are very popular where working class lives, but other areas are very rich where there are also first-class football players” – said Pilar Diaz, mayor of the city.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has manly affected the working class, in terms of social care and economy capacity in Esplugues as well as all across Europe. The city invested in a re-building plan of 1 Million of Euro trying to stay close to youth, families, self-employers, retailers and citizens in need.



Esplugues is a Child friendly city recognised by UNICEF and it has a long tradition in the use of games for education and social cohesion. Children and adolescents have been engaging through a Forum and a Children City Council.

“Being part of the Playful Paradigm, Esplugues could use games as tool to face the challenges of ageing population, climate change and social inclusion.” - Pilar said - “We wanted to update our city programme incorporating the playful vision, shared with other cities partner, in order to define a new roadmap. The Pandemic has affected this plan and we had to modify the forecasted activities, but we keep walking”.

The Playful approach offers to Esplugues the possibility to animate the local community through play activities and provide a concrete and innovate tool to foster the civic engagement and social cohesion.

The city launched the playful campaign “Esplujuga” (a Catalan word that in English sounds like “Esplugues plays”), together with the city play-branding “play connects us”. It implemented a series of play activities: a play-programme for schools and the Ludobus (the Mobile Toy Library). All of these activities have been co-designed by a participatory process which engaged the ULG and relevant local stakeholders.

Esplugues has been committing in providing blended approaches for games and play activities, in order to ensure the social distance required by the emergency protocol due to COVID-19. Among them, it was launched the “Children rights escape room” to celebrate the human rights of children and youth. A training programme targeted youth were also organised aimed at supporting kids and adolescents in becoming “influencers of games”

Pilar concluded “Esplugues de Llobregat is willing to spread games over the city following the inspiration provided by Udine”.



A participatory crowdsourced experience for Katowice

Katowice experimented blended approaches of civic participation connected with play activities.

“A Crowdfunding system was launched by a “boardgames café” in Katowice, which was closed for a long time due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the Municipality decided to support it” – said Michal Kucharski, ULG coordinator for the Municipality of Katowice

The “boardgame café” is a private space in the city where people can play board games while drinking and eating. It promotes also activities connected with local NGOs with purposes of social inclusion.

Michal continued “At the beginning the aim of the crowdfunding was just helping this place surviving, but it was much more than that. It was a project helped also the local society”.

Katowice is a big city with almost 300.000 inhabitants and with the surroundings there are more than 3 Million people living in the area. There is a lack of feeling of being part a society and people suffer isolation. This situation has been drastically increased by the COVID-19 Crisis.

Thanks to this Crowdsourced project, a virtual community of board gamers was founded. A platform was opened where people can discuss about games and share playful activities, which also supported families and parents during the difficult lockdown period.

“The added value of this activity for Katowice was to have the possibility to stay connected to something real we lost during the Pandemic time,” said Michal.

Because people need to be connected to the real world and play offers the opportunity to find a concrete

space behind the digital world and the masks people must wear.

A games donation scheme to upscale the Playful Paradigm in Larissa

Larissa experimented another crowdsourced participatory activity through a donation process for setting up a toy-library.

“This Donation scheme came more as a need than an initiative”– said Vasilis Mitsios ULG coordinator.

The Municipality of Larissa has been willing to transfer the Toy Library Module by using some spaces inside the public Library. The city was looking for games, gameboards and toys, but due to the bureaucracy and economic crisis suffered by Greece it was a challenge. “We were looking also for the more suitable games to buy and provide to citizens” said Vasilis “Therefore we tried to change the paradigm and brought back to the market”.

A donation call was opened for games retailers which had a high number of participants. Bookstores, games and toys stores and games café provided the needed games and equipment to launch the pilot Toy Library now situated in Public Library.

The COVID 19 restrictions and the health quack problems haven’t allowed the city of Larissa to have a full feedback from the users about this donation scheme, but the first impact was very positive. Indeed, the open call was also a vehicle to promote the Playful Paradigm project itself and engage with local stakeholders.

Through the donation scheme initiative, the city mobilized many people and enlarged the stakeholders involved. It was a successful mechanism also to better connect the playful policy with the other International

Networks Larissa is part of: the UNESCO Learning city and the Healthy Cities Network.

The learning experience of Playful Paradigm is that the playful approach and play activities could positively impact on the citizens participation. Play could mobilize people to transform normal streets in play streets, activate creative crowdsourced systems and include marginalised people in a more equal community.

The Playful Paradigm supports the participatory processes by offering playful methods and engaging sessions with a friendly atmosphere, where participants could share their thoughts by having fun.

The playful approach contributes to bring us in the right direction of a more democratic and engaging city life!



Play for Sustainability and Health

By Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson URBACT Expert



Public Procurement, Covid-19, health inequalities, and Playful Paradigm

On the face of it the title of this article seems confused by discussing four topics. Public procurement is the process used by municipalities and other organisations to buy goods and services. Covid-19 is the pandemic that has affected all our daily lives and our economies. Health inequalities are the gaps that communities face in their access to health services and in the longevity of lives. And Playful Paradigm is an URBACT Transfer Network which seeks to use

play as a means of enabling sustainable economies and social cohesion.

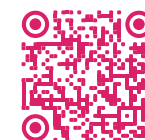
So how do all these topics fit together? Through the Playful Paradigm Transfer Network, led by the City of Udine, the transfer cities have sought to adopt different and more strategic thinking to the process of procurement. All of the cities buy goods and services to promote playful approaches and activities, whether that be gaming events, or toy libraries, or the construction of playgrounds – and through the development of a Guide, Playful Paradigm has sought to provide a step-by-step guide as to how these procurements can become both more playful in their nature and more strategic.

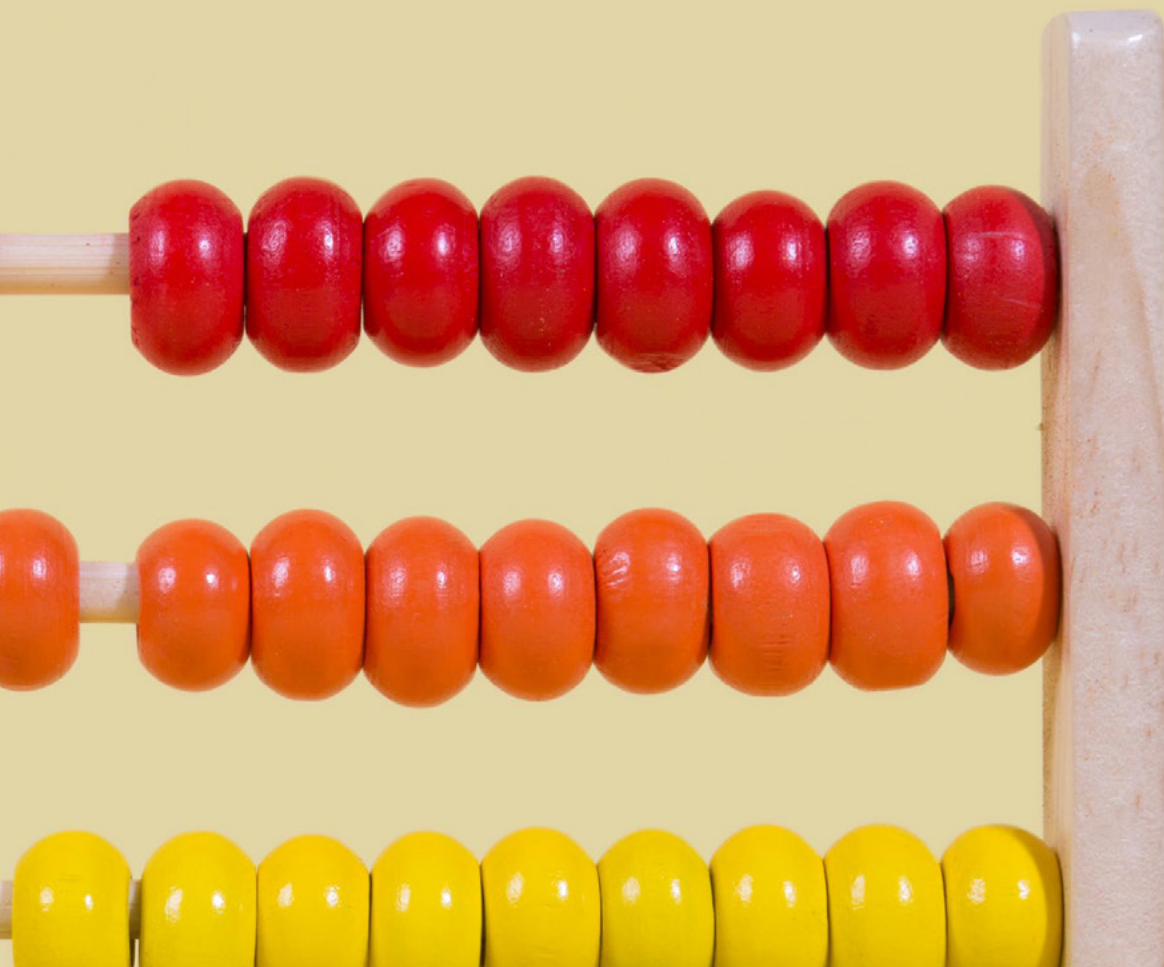
By more strategic, we mean using procurement as lever to contribute towards addressing the economic, social and environmental challenges that Europe faces. Contemporarily, Europe is facing increasing

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challenges around unemployment, low skills, poor business sustainability, poverty, deprivation, migration, and tackling the climate emergency. With an annual public procurement spend of 2000 billion euros by the public sector across Europe, accounting for 14% of GDP, it is clear that we could and should be using this spending power to contribute to some of these wider challenges.

In many EU Member States and cities, Covid-19 has exacerbated the challenges described above. In the coming years, levels of unemployment will increase, levels of businesses closing down will increase, the

gap between the rich and poor will get wider, and the threat of climate change will continue threaten our planet's sustainability. In addition, Covid-19 has and will widen health inequalities as mortality rates change, as the pandemic affects different demographics in different ways, and as different communities have different levels of access to health services.

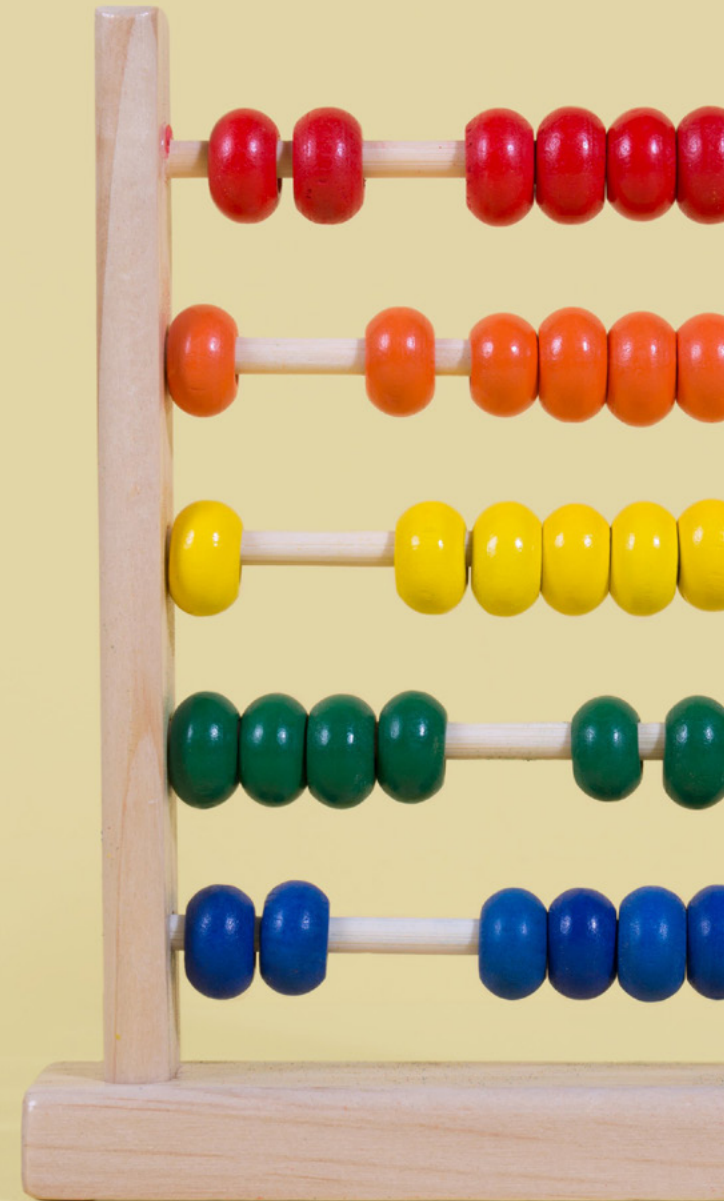
And this is how the words in the title of the article fit together – public procurement can be used as a lever to address the exacerbation of economic, social and environmental challenges posed by Covid-19,



and subsequently contribute towards reducing health inequalities. And Playful Paradigm can contribute to this by sharing with a wide audience its toolkit that supports municipalities in particular to purchase play related goods and services in a playful and strategic manner.

The process of public procurement is however not just about play related goods and services. URBACT has been focused upon the strategic role of procurement for a number of years now and has developed an online training course on how cities can embed social and environmental considerations into procurement. It is our firm belief that we should not see procurement as a boring, technical and dull function; but something that is exciting and can be used address the contemporary challenges that Europe and cities face.

The future is playful, the future is being more strategic in procurement.



Play for Education

By Ileana Toscano, Playful Paradigm Lead Expert



Playful activities for better educational programmes in cities

Involving schools and cultural/academic sectors for promoting a new way to co-design and stimulate educational innovation in cities should be at the top priorities of the political urban agenda.

Cities partner of the Playful Paradigm have had the opportunity to promote play in education both in schools and in non-formal education system.

The experiences of Klaipėda in Lithuania and Esplugues de Llobregat in Spain show the role of play as part of educational paths for promoting active life and creative thinking for students and families.



Active Breaks and Playful activities for boosting learning in Klaipėda

“Children are spending a lot of time in sedentary activities.” Said Laura Kubiliutė, head of public monitoring and projects department for the Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau. “The inactivity of younger generation is an important problem in many cities as well as in Klaipėda. Children lifestyles survey done in 2020 showed that in Klaipėda only 16% of school children are physical active. That’s why we decided to implement Playful initiatives, aiming to increase children’s physical activities through developing physical activities and physical education in school communities.”

To foster the objective to promote the physical activities in schools for bodily and mental health purposes, the Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau

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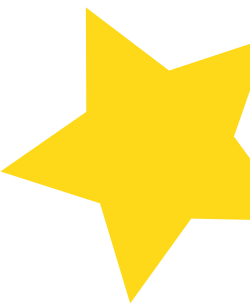


has established a collaboration with Public Health Specialists. These experts are uncharged to share with schools' staff health principles and embed in school programmes the importance of physical activity for young people. They are committed to provide several playful activities to students, also in collaboration with children and young people, such as the "active breaks", the competitions of "the most active class" and the "healthiest school", Hikes, counting daily steps and "Physical Active weeks".

The "Playful active break", also experimented by

all the partners of the Playful Paradigm during the Transnational meeting held in Klaipėda in 2019, is a physical activity after or during a lesson. It can be a dance with music or a short exercise. It's demonstrated that the active break empowers the learning ability, helps pupils' concentration and fosters a friendly and welcoming environment in classes.

Moreover, during the quarantine the Health Specialists team offered to children the "yoga zoo", which is an online yoga class addressed to kids and families.



Thanks to that healthy schools' programme promoted by the Public Health Bureau and with the support of the Public Health Specialists many schools of Klaipėda applied to be a member of the National healthy and active schools Network.

Laura said: "To summarize, we see the Playful activity as a way to energise school days and improve physical activity"

Esplugues de Llobregat - a novel board game city!

The Municipality of Esplugues de Llobregat has a long tradition of working with the young generation, focusing on children and adolescents. Esplugues is a Child friendly city recognised by UNICEF and promote the use of playful activities to actively engage youth.

"In Esplugues we have been working for many years on participatory processes, especially focused on children and young people" said Guadalupe Penas, ULG coordinator "The Playful Paradigm practice allows us to incorporate the different views that consist in the city, where sharing problems means also sharing solutions. In Esplugues we face many problems, but first of all there is the difficulty to have a stable participation of children and young people".

In 2010, Esplugues de Llobregat established a Forum and a Children City Council, aimed at promoting democracy and participation at city life from the young age. Through this activity, Children and Adolescents can interact with the Formal City Council and provide advice from their perspective to city challenges. This initiative as well as the other activities dealing with the participation of the youngest is forecasted in straight collaboration with schools.



Esplugues has a strong political vision focused on the role of young people in city life and the playful educational approach has been the methodology to engage with children and teenagers.

“Education is generally understood as a topic related to schools, but for Esplugues the education must be present in all spaces of the city. That’s why we have a city plan, for 10 years, focused on education”. - Guadalupe said - “The Potential of play in learning is still unknown, that’s why through Playful Paradigm we have offered different trainings for teachers and educational staff.”

During the quarantine period, Esplugues organised online classes and workshops to spread the playful spirit in homes to face the isolation due to the Pandemic. They have been using games and play activities even through a blended approach to promote accessible spaces in cities, fight the xenophobia, address a sustainable environment. They supported young games influencers and a Network of game friendly spaces in the city. Recently, Esplugues launched the Ludobus initiative – Mobile Toy Library and the Toy Library pilot project in a school.

The long-term vision is to bring play in all areas of the city and connect all playful friendly spaces to transform Esplugues in novel board game city!

Education, Culture and Play: invisible bricks to design cities

Other URBACT Transfer Networks have been working on topics dealing with education, arts and culture, fostering a playful environment. Among others “On Stage” and “ON BOARD”.

There is a red thread across Playful Paradigm, On stage and On Board. The Networks dealing with Play, Education and Arts (culture as a broader approach) which, despite being intangible assets, greatly contribute to the wellbeing and provide opportunities for people living in cities.

Shall we think how people could live if we removed culture, education, art and play from cities? Those elements have always been shaping urban environment, because they lay the foundations for society in cities. There is the need to put those invisible aspects in the spotlight, while too often they aren’t taken seriously, cutting their funds. Only giving the right relevance through city policies to culture, arts, education and play a better city life could be expected focusing on the needs, feeling and emotions of citizens.

Play is one of this fundamental brick of our society which helps children growing, elderly people in maintaining an active lifestyle, families in fostering better relationship between parents and children.

But it is not enough, Play could also re-shape city public spaces and support urban planning activity in designing better cities for children, families, girls, youth and for all.



Play for Solidarity

By Simone d'Antonio, URBACT Expert



Play for Solidarity – How Playful cities are using games to make cities more inclusive and reduce inequalities

The Role of Play in Solidarity

Games are not usually perceived as a possible tool for reducing inequalities. The narrative on deprived and marginalized groups just present these people as persons in continuous struggle for basic needs, while

in fact the fight for better living conditions include a series of element directly or indirectly connected to a playful dimension. Among these, the access to digital technologies, the use of public spaces, the collaboration between elderly persons and young people.

All these elements are part of the Playful Paradigm transferred by Udine to the cities of the Transfer Network that explored different dimensions of play. The pandemic time we are living in constituted for some cities an opportunity for testing the integrated policies fostered by the network to revive the community spirit in disadvantaged groups and families.

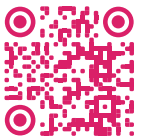
Combining the use of games to actions of digital literacy or to social and inclusion policies was crucial for addressing some of the most urgent challenges faced by specific categories of residents, such as



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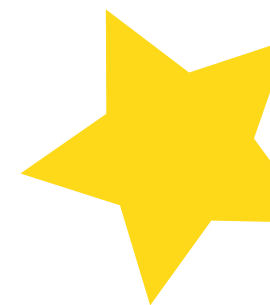


elderly persons or families in need. It showed how the implementation of the playful paradigm can be a cross-cutting tool for improving the way local authorities collaborate with people and support local cohesion, leaving no one behind.

In a podcast produced by CREA for Playful Paradigm, Larissa and Cork highlight the role of games in the local welfare policies and how play helped in reducing the digital divide and inequalities in the access to public services

Larissa

Branded at national and international level as an “Open City”, fostering the active inclusion of different categories of residents, Larissa has a long tradition in the use of events and playful initiatives for reducing the gap between different areas of the city. The Pinios River Festival, taking place every summer in one of the most deprived neighbourhoods of the city, is a powerful example of an integrated strategy aimed at



raising living standards for all also through solidarity initiatives, cultural events and smart use of public spaces.

“We are very proud of this kind of initiatives and Playful Paradigm is one of them. We try to use them as a tool to minimize exclusion” says Vasilis Mitsios, URBACT Local Group Coordinator of Larissa.

The city decided to test the use of digital technologies to replicate this integrated approach online and test how games can be relevant for enhancing social cohesion. During the lockdown in spring 2020, Larissa launched a website (<https://www.larissamazi.gr/>) with games and cultural activities for the residents, enhancing the access to free audiobooks readings or concerts. The website is part of a wider strategy of online assistance to people in need, offering medical and psychological support to residents (particularly the ones living in deprived areas) stuck at home.

“We tried to use every tool available, taking into consideration the question of the accessibility for this type of people, that is not very easy. Even though, we tried to do our best in a minimum way” says Vasilis.

Digitalization proved to be crucial to enhance the range of playful services and activities offered to residents, paving the way to new initiatives in the future or to better supporting existing ones in reaching users more effectively. That is the case of the centres for elderly people, located in different neighbourhoods of the city, that can improve their services to seniors through the use of digital technologies.

An interesting input in this sense can be provided by the Udine's experience of Camminamenti, a local programme which is also using online tools for cognitive stimulation of elderly persons through playful activities that can be done from home (such as memory games, musical quizzes, breathing exercises).



Cork

In a city with consolidated strategies of promotion of games and playful activities for social cohesion and well-being of the local community, the pandemic time posed new challenges in terms of how to engage with people at home, and in particular with families who were already struggling in the pre-Covid time.

Teaming up with the community and voluntary sector, the Cork City Council's Social Inclusion Unit created a Play Pack, with booklets, video-tutorials and materials to create games at home, such as lollipop sticks, colouring pencils and crayons to produce puppets or other interesting games for kids.

The Packs were distributed to hundreds of families in need during the first period of the Covid emergency. The success of the initiative led the City Council to create similar packs to other sensitive groups.

"We knew that the winter would be hard for elderly persons and they were very much at home, probably fearful of coming out but we wanted to engage with those people as well" says Denise Cahill, Cork Healthy Cities Coordinator. The City Council launched a questionnaire to check how older people wanted to be engaged and the vast majority said that they didn't want to be engaged through digital platforms and social media.

After the Christmas period, over 4500 Play Packs were delivered to senior citizens of Cork, "and it was an absolute, overwhelming success" as Denise says. Each pack included a booklet with colouring pages, Sudoku, quizzes and stories about the city or old games that people were used to play in the streets of Cork. Following the indications of the questionnaire, showing that 89% of the respondents had a direct access to green spaces, the pack included also a bird feeder and seeds.

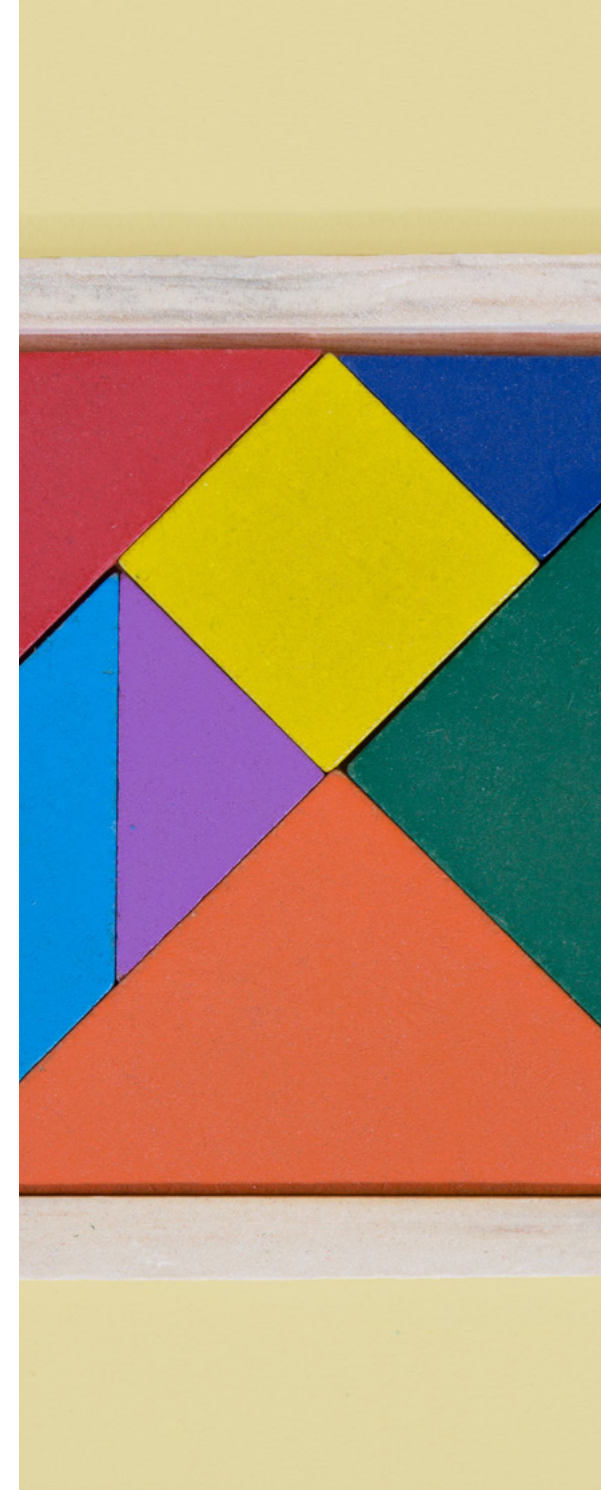
The Play Packs created a buzz in the local community and were seen as an useful tool also for other disadvantaged categories. Cork recently decided to start a new wave of distribution of play packs to people with intellectual disabilities, using games similar to the ones previously sent to the seniors, but also to people living in nursing homes and long-stay hospitals.

Cork was active also in reducing the digital divide and in fostering the access to new technologies for deprived groups. 200 tablets with access to internet connection were purchased by the Cork's City Council and distributed through the Friendly Call service of the city to isolated and vulnerable residents. The collaboration with public libraries and the university college of Cork will be crucial to help users in using digital devices, through the organization of educational and training initiatives.

Actions with an impact

The actions carried out by Larissa and Cork show how the transfer of practice promoted by Playful Paradigm was useful to create a flexible model of intervention, which improved urban resilience and the ability of local authorities to deal with unexpected situations in which the use of games proved to be particularly useful and appreciated by different groups of residents.

Putting community spirit and collaboration among people at the core of structured, integrated policies on medium and long term is the main challenge for Larissa, Cork and the other cities of Playful Paradigm, that are showing in practice how games are not only for kids and how decisive are for making urban life better and more inclusive for all.



Feature Articles

Warning! URBACT Experts at work with reflections and practical recommendations to innovate and improve implementation of the Good Practice at multiple levels.

The Playful Paradigm: cruising across complexity of URBACT Transfer Plans

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Visiting French Toy Libraries: what's at stake

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4 ways to involve residents in playful activities

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Playmaking – making places for play in our public spaces

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Playful Paradigm going global: the universal power of play for better cities

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The Playful Paradigm: cruising across complexity of URBACT Transfer Plans

by Paola Amato, URBACT Expert



Transfer Networks aim at increasing capacity of cities to adopt or rather adapt successful urban practice in order to shape their competitive profile and anticipate changes in society



Gaming and gamification are broader concepts that can help cities cope with demographic changes and the complexity behind an evolving society. This requires a shift in mentality and adoption of participative models where local communities are called to actively share and co produce solutions. But every context is different and much depends on the local governance and the role subsidiarity plays in each and every context.

Gaming and gamification are broader concepts that can help cities cope with demographic changes and the complexity behind an evolving society.



This requires a shift in mentality and adoption of participative models where local communities are called to actively share and co produce solutions. But every context is different and much depends on the local governance and the role subsidiarity plays in each and every context. Based on that, URBACT new experimental Transfer Networks aim at increasing capacity of cities to adopt or rather adapt successful urban practice in order to shape their competitive profile and anticipate changes in society.

And this is what is the main aim of the Playful paradigm, Udine's Good Practice (GP) and one of the 25 approved operations. The Playful Paradigm lies on a policy framework (umbrella) which combines different sector policies aiming in an integrated way towards achieving different goals: promoting social inclusion, healthy lifestyles and energy awareness,



place-making and economic prosperity. It also demonstrates that when urban policies are clearly linked to EU/international/national/local protocols/initiatives, they can contribute to build cities' durable capacity towards greener behaviours and more social cohesion. It must be observed that most PP cities, and EU cities in general, do not have a direct legal competence in all policies emerging from the GP application/transfer and such difficulty can largely determine a sound/weak local governance as well as a strong/weak commitment of stakeholders (vertical/horizontal subsidiarity). So finding a local road map, getting inspired by the exchange and learning at transnational levels, have been the main scopes behind the URBACT Transfer Plans elaborated by each of the 7 EU partner cities of the Playful Paradigm in the project's first three months on the base of URBACT guidance.

Based on a modular adaptation which represents a new set of interrelated activities that will feed the cities' final urban plan/programme at the end of the project, the Playful aims to make cities reflect on the best way to embed the new approach within the city's individual capacity to shape future innovative policies.

So how can cities adopt more innovative and inclusive urban policies but rather what are the basic factors that can make transfer of a good practice successfully adopted by another city according to the URBACT guidance?

As the Playful Transfer journey demonstrated the answer is there is not one fits all path: on the other hand by means of the Transfer Plan, PP have been called to clearly identify and reflect on their own

barrier, assets, resources, ambitions all elements that start, first and foremost, on the capacity of the city to co-produce solutions with their stakeholders. As adaptation also requires finding the right scale of implementation at local levels, the elaboration of the Transfer plan has been a very complex and demanding task as the Plan itself is and will be a “work in progress” that can change and be further improved all across the next 2-year duration of the URBACT network. Among the successful factors that have clearly emerged during elaboration, are:

- Setting of an open and inclusive process to identify relevant ULG and stakeholders;
- Setting of a detailed ULG agenda in order to have continuous feedback and support that in perspective will enhance the city’s reputation and reliance on the part of local communities;
- Identifying a clear methodology to incorporate finding at transnational to local level and vice versa;
- Individual city’s specific internal factors based among others on cooperation among different departments and cooperation with local politicians;
- Strong willingness and capacity to communicate outside the network.



Visiting French Toy Libraries: what's at stake

by Ileana Toscano, Lead Expert and Paola Amato, URBACT Expert

“Games have social values and when you play, you have to define certain rules.”

Toy Libraries were the focus of the Study Visit, organized in Paris and its surroundings on 1st and 2nd July 2019, by the Urbact Transfer Network “The Playful Paradigm”, a partnership of 8 EU cities led by the Municipality of Udine and aimed at adapting Udine’s Good Practice about games and gamification experience as tools for boosting a better urban governance and an innovative urban planning.

When we think about promotion of games across communities, Toy Libraries are key within new innovative and more dynamic urban policies reflecting the huge demographic change happening

in societies. In the case of The Playful Paradigm, Toy libraries represent a core experimental module to be fully studied, adapted and implemented by project partners taking into account the leading role long played by France and its good practices to which Udine took inspiration years ago prior to establishing its own hands on Toy Library “Ludoteca”.

Play is a positive and strong driver to trigger social inclusion, intergenerational transition, life-long learning, and healthy behaviors. In other words behind a superficial look, gaming can however be intended as a social vehicle or can enhance the distinctiveness of local cultural values of a given community.

However, play is mainly meant for leisure and fun and there is a saying that tells paramount among toy-librarians in France: all games are educational, except





educational games. In other words: when you play, you play for pleasure and not for learning but indeed you do learn by playing. And curiosity also resumes the attitude towards games and the very skill of a Toy librarian, a profession that still struggles to get full recognition in many countries including France.

So what toy libraries are for, how they work and what kind of social added-value they have for a local community or for cities?

On a general term, Toy Libraries are part of a consolidated worldwide phenomenon that started as niche but that over time has strongly grown both in relevance and presence in many Countries. Sometime started spontaneously thanks to non-profit associations or even organized citizens, Toy Libraries are often set up by initiative of enlightened politicians at city level as in the case of Les Ulis and Issy les Moulineaux in the Paris area. Overall, as highlighted by Michel Thomas, President of French Toy-library Association (ALF), Ile-de-France area, their role has still to be fully recognised, as they do not get the attention and funding, they deserve.

Regardless of the organization/authority managing it, a Toy Library helps meet different objectives: promoting play, educating children but also supporting families. In deprived neighborhood when the street means the only option kids have to socialize, Toy libraries can help families keep kids away from the dangerous exposure to petty crimes or drugs.

Now why France is an interesting example when it comes to Ludothèques and their integration within urban policies?

France has a long tradition of Toy Libraries and playful activities. French cities have been developing play strategies for engaging with local communities. In suburbs they use play for involving vulnerable groups of people and promoting participation.

In France gaming has become very popular, as the French “model” succeeded in making playing first and foremost a social and cultural vehicle and obviously a leisure activity. Some events brought in spontaneously by non-profit organizations as Paris Ludique in the XII Arrondissement started with a mere 1000 participants attracting today 10.000 paying visitors. But the numbers are also growing and apart from large events such as Cannes International Games festival, some remarkable initiative take place in small places as in the case of Parthenay, a castle city that was able over time through games to reinvent and reaffirm itself as the centre of international Ludique festivals.

Today only in the Paris Ile-de-France area, the number of Ludothèques accounts for 267 with over 50% managed by NGOs or private associations and nearly as much by city councils, the latter usually providing more funding as well as dedicated and trained employees.

Working for improving functional standards of Ludothèque, ALF for example organizes each year a Summer University. The event draws the attention on the important role of playing tools as vehicles of



education and inclusion. The initiative brings in Paris once a year educators, facilitators and toy-libraries staff from all around France to get training, insights and inspiration about playing activities.

Toy libraries in France can be a place where, as Michelle Thomas of ALF puts it, “immigrant kids that never speak French at home, can use French and communication happens for leisure and not because, as at school, they are somehow forced to express themselves in what they end up to regard as a



FOREIGN language. When playing all barriers vanish and adults and kids come to know each other better”.

The above remarks reflect also the distinctive elements a Toy Library can mean whether located in a deprived or in a central posh area of a city: they all share the idea that games have social values and when you play, you have to define certain rules.

What Project Partners learned by the Study Visit?

During the intensive two-day study visit, The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network joined the ALF Summer University, visited 3 major Ludothèques and exchanged views and experiences via interactive sessions.

In day one PPs joined the ALF Summer University in Paris, which marked in 2019 its 40th anniversary. Here they had the opportunity to meet and discuss with professionals and volunteers directly involved in playing activities.

Part of day and day 2 were dedicated to the visit of 3 linchpin model initiatives of Toy Libraries located around Paris, 2 very different places for geographical location, access, mixed population, grade of social integration, and funding: “Ludothèque Municipale” and the “Espace Ludique Marcel Aymé”, both in Issy Les Moulineaux, and the Toy Library of Les Ulis. All 3 experiments have been particularly successful in maintaining the true and social values of games as culture vehicle.

With “Ludothèque Municipale” and the “Espace

Ludique Marcel Aymé”, the posh city of Issy Les Moulineaux has made games an extraordinary and much popular social attraction open to citizens of all ages. Here specific playing events are generally organized for children and adults together and for adults only. Some evening playing events for adults include also baby-sitting facility. In Issy Municipal Ludothèque in particular, PPs cruised inside the playing spaces and the storage where they were briefed on how to manage, repair and lend games and toys.

Use and landing of games and toys are all digitally managed by ICT softwares, while kids have to return landed games with a full inventory of all the assemblage pieces in order to make them responsible when passing over to the next lender.

Les Ulis is a different social and built environment, a new town built in 1977 around the advanced concept of social housing, its community today being a melting pot of different cultures. The city counts 25.000 inhabitants and groups a large number of not for profit organizations, that are well encouraged by the Municipality to promote inclusion projects. The Toy Library is owned by the Municipality and is managed by the “Association pour Vivre l’AutoGestion”, which cooperates with the administration to promote citizens’ welfare.

The Municipality with the collaboration of Toy Library organizes every year numerous projects for children and youths.

In particular, the Toy Library promotes projects to involve teen-agers and from time to time Toy



Librarians organize open playful activities to attract and invite them inside the Toy Library space.

A special attention is given to children during summertime when schools are closed. Due to economic conditions of their families, they don't have the opportunity to leave the city.

Tips for a Toy Library

During the interactive sessions that followed the visit of Ludothèques, 4 elements emerged as much important for a Toy Library:

- **Space:** Toy libraries need a well-designed space, with areas dedicated to different types of games. The minimum space includes a reception; a kitchen; an internet room for ICT games.

- **Space for logistics:** The store and the place for repairing games have to have enough capacity. Toy Libraries need space to stock games for events activities, games to repair and games to be cataloged.

- **Staff:** The Toy Librarian is a specific job and then hiring the right people is essential. Training for Toy Librarians have to be provided, where they can learn games and how to involve people in playing. They also have to learn how to lift "big and heavy games" in order to avoid common injuries. But, most of all they have to love games and have fun when playing.

- **Games:** Each toy library needs to buy or repair games and toys every year. The average annual budget ranges from 3000 to 16000 euros depending on the size of a Toy library, its geographical location (metro or decentralized areas), or on whether it gets public funding as when, for example, it is directly run by a local authority



People need spaces where staying with small children, where having the opportunity to meet other people. older people need a place where playing with friends. Families wish to have a free space where parents and children can relax together. migrants and low-income children need a safe place as an alternative to the street.

Toy Libraries compensate for all such citizens 'needs.



4 ways to involve residents in playful activities

by Simone d'Antonio, URBACT Expert



A combination between the use of communication tools and relational skills proved to be in many cases effective in raising awareness towards games and playful activities



Making residents aware of the opportunities and benefits connected to the use of games is one of the main challenges faced by the cities willing to replicate the playful paradigm. Different strategies have been put in place by Udine and the other cities of the network to attract the attention of different categories of residents towards playful activities and its effects on quality of life and well-being.

A combination between the use of communication tools and relational skills proved to be in many cases effective in raising awareness towards games and playful activities and include them into wider schemes and programs on topics such as public health, education and innovative use of public spaces.

The comparison of experiences and solutions carried out by the partners of Playful Paradigm can

be resumed in some concrete tips and suggestions, useful for all the cities active in including games as a cross-sectorial activator of innovation.

Delivering clear messages to the residents

In a strategy based on the principle of making the healthy choice the easy choice, games need to be presented as a way to promote the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability. At this purpose, describing the city as a game board for all the residents where everyone can play and have fun is a key to introduce the playful aspects as elements of urban quality to different categories of residents.





While many cities choose children, families and elderly persons as main targets of their action of promotion of games, the definition of tailored messages can involve also other categories in a collaborative effort towards the promotion of the playful paradigm: social and youth workers, teachers and caregivers can be decisive in co-creating the right communication strategy for local community, to deliver positive and pro-active messages and act as powerful ambassadors of the role of games in the everyday life.

Using social media and interactive tools

Posting on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram news on events and playful activities can be useful not only to update residents on what the city and the local stakeholders are organizing but also to spread positive approaches on games and healthy lifestyles.

Providing through social media information on outdoor activities and cycle paths or fostering the participation to actions of placemaking and tactical urbanism can engage different categories of residents in retaking ownership of public spaces for playful activities.

The digital ecosystem on playful topics of Cork, promoting on Facebook and Twitter the wide range of activities organized by the city and its local stakeholders in the framework of the WHO Healthy City programme, is a good example of how social media can promote positive change and healthy lifestyle in the local community.

Connecting with other urban strategies and events

Games can be part of the everyday life of a city if they are able to permeate different aspects of the life of its residents. This is what many cities of Playful Paradigm are doing to make sure that the playful dimension is connected to other urban priorities and is co-produced in collaboration with the local community.

The active break tested by local schools in Klaipėda is a powerful example of how a simple action like the promotion of physical activity among students between different lessons can involve different categories (teachers, youth and families) in designing and implementing playful actions. On a different scale, taking into account games and promotional activities such as the mobile toy libraries into local participatory schemes, as Esplugues is doing in its Esplugues Participa programme, helps in giving visibility to this kind of activities in the framework of collaborative dynamics established by the city.

Involving games and sport champions as testimonials

The use of testimonials can be particularly important to engage specific categories of residents, such as local youth, in games and playful activities. The visibility given by the city of Udine to the Pi Competition, in which the participants are challenged to memorize as many digits of pi as possible, contributed to make the local champion of this mnemonic game a testimonial of the playful use of mathematics and scientific knowledge.



The involvement of sport champions is particularly relevant also when a city needs to plan and implement bold actions of communication and citizens involvement on games. The participation of football squads, such as Udinese playing in Italian Serie A, or the contribution of champions born in the city and active in philanthropic activities, as the football player Arkadiusz Milik in Katowice, can be important in improving the visibility of the urban strategies on playful activities.



Playmaking – making places for play in our public spaces

by Wessel Badenhorst, URBACT Expert



People commute, shop, linger, meet friends and play games ‘on the street’



The vibrancy of a place can be attributed to a number of factors. One is the use of public spaces. If spaces are well used, the impression is given of a place that is ‘alive’. In my experience no place is more alive than the Via dei Tribunali in Napoli. It is a narrow street for general traffic (no more than 6 metres wide in most places), but it is so much more. It is used by everyone in a ‘shared’ way. People commute, shop, linger, meet friends and play games ‘on the street’. Visitors stand and stare at historical buildings while youngsters zig-zag past them on their mopeds. Neighbours hang their washing from their windows while having loud conversations with practically everyone in the vicinity. So, what makes it a great place and who are the placemakers?

These questions were asked at a workshop of the Playful Paradigm Project in Viana in January 2020.



In particular, participants from partner cities wanted to examine skills and processes which will help them to make places for play in the public spaces of their home cities.

The essence of placemaking is action at a hyperlocal level. It is not simply a variant of urban design. The design and planning professions prefer to use the term ‘place making’, with a general understanding that it is a statement of the desired outcome of their designs. In ‘placemaking’ however the role of experts and professionals is to support communities and local active citizens in a process of understanding the uses and potential of existing public spaces and to acknowledge the agency of local communities and citizens to make changes and improvements. The emphasis on a community-led process therefore means that besides design inputs, the art of



placemaking entails the creativity of people using several tools to facilitate community participation, social inclusion, place analysis and experimentation (i.e. try-out of ideas to improve a public space) as well as the animation of a place (e.g. events and activities of people to creatively use public spaces).

In the workshop participants were introduced to the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Spaces and to place analysis tools which can help with broadening their understanding of how targeted public spaces are used with regard to the four categories in the Place Diagram namely Sociability, Uses & Activities, Access & linkages, and Comfort & Image. Participants examined specific targeted spaces in their cities to determine what potentials and blockages can be anticipated for new usages and creative changes. They mapped their understanding with observations and key points for further analysis.

In a final exercise, participants specifically focused on those vulnerable groups that tend to get excluded and not considered when we make improvements like play in public spaces. Participants identified specific groups who they intend to include in a process of placemaking for play spaces in their cities.

Participants are also excited to meet with their ULGs to generate ideas for the experimental phase of a placemaking process that often follows quickly after completion of the place analysis and once a shared vision for the place is articulated. With small interventions (e.g. a bench here, a new game there) partner cities will be able to activate public spaces and hopefully make their cities more playful.

The Playful Paradigm: a tool to re-think cities

by Ileana Toscano, Lead Expert

The city succeeded in hiring a dedicated Development Officer to support and follow all play activities

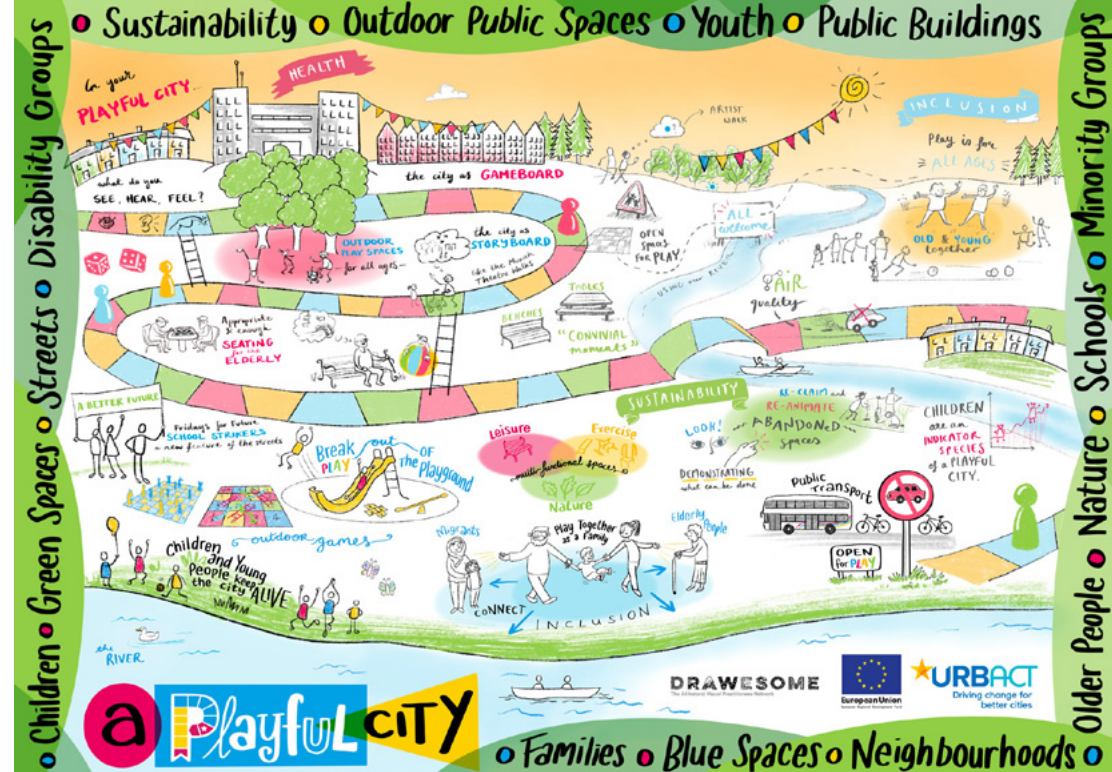
On 8th October 2020 a “Play participatory lab” has been organized during the European Week of Regions and Cities to involve policymakers and urban practitioners for co-designing measures and sharing insights dealing with the idea to launch the “European Capital of Play”.

Based on the experience of the Municipality of Udine, the Lead Partner of the Playful Paradigm URBACT Transfer Network and a contribution from Cork (Ireland) and the other partner cities of the Playful Paradigm, proposals and insights have been shared on the possibility to promote a Playful Policy approach aimed at transforming urban environments into great places to live.

Almost 70 participants joined the event conceived as an online experimental laboratory, so called Playful Paradigm to re-think cities, divided in two phases. The partner testimonials introduced the topic presenting their own experience with examples of playful activities for families, children, adults and the most marginalized people to boost healthy lifestyles and promote a sustainable placemaking. A participatory session using a gamification approach was opened to call participants to share ideas about the vision of a Playful City.

A long Story to build the “infrastructure” of Play in Udine

“Twenty years ago, Udine started to build an urban policy where play has been used to re-invent the city and tackle the challenges of urbanization, ageing





population and pollution” said Agnese Presotto, project coordinator of Playful Paradigm and Head of the Environmental Department of the Municipality of Udine. Indeed, Udine has set up activities and infrastructures based on the philosophy of play which has been using as a cross cutting tool to foster health, inclusion, participation and sustainability.

“In Udine – continued Presotto - the first brick to build the infrastructure of PLAY was the Ludobus, a mobile toy-library used to promote play activities during summertime both in the suburbs and in the city centre. But infrastructures are not enough when you are willing to promote play”. An office of play was established by the Municipality of Udine uncharged to coordinate the Ludobus and Toy-library activities, promote the permanent “play education” for schools and other institutions, organise the numerous playful events and boost always novel play initiatives.

Udine has been labeled by URBACT Good Practice City for its experience dealing with play so far. In 2017 Udine decided to run a Transfer Network in order to give the possibility to other cities to benefit from the play approach.

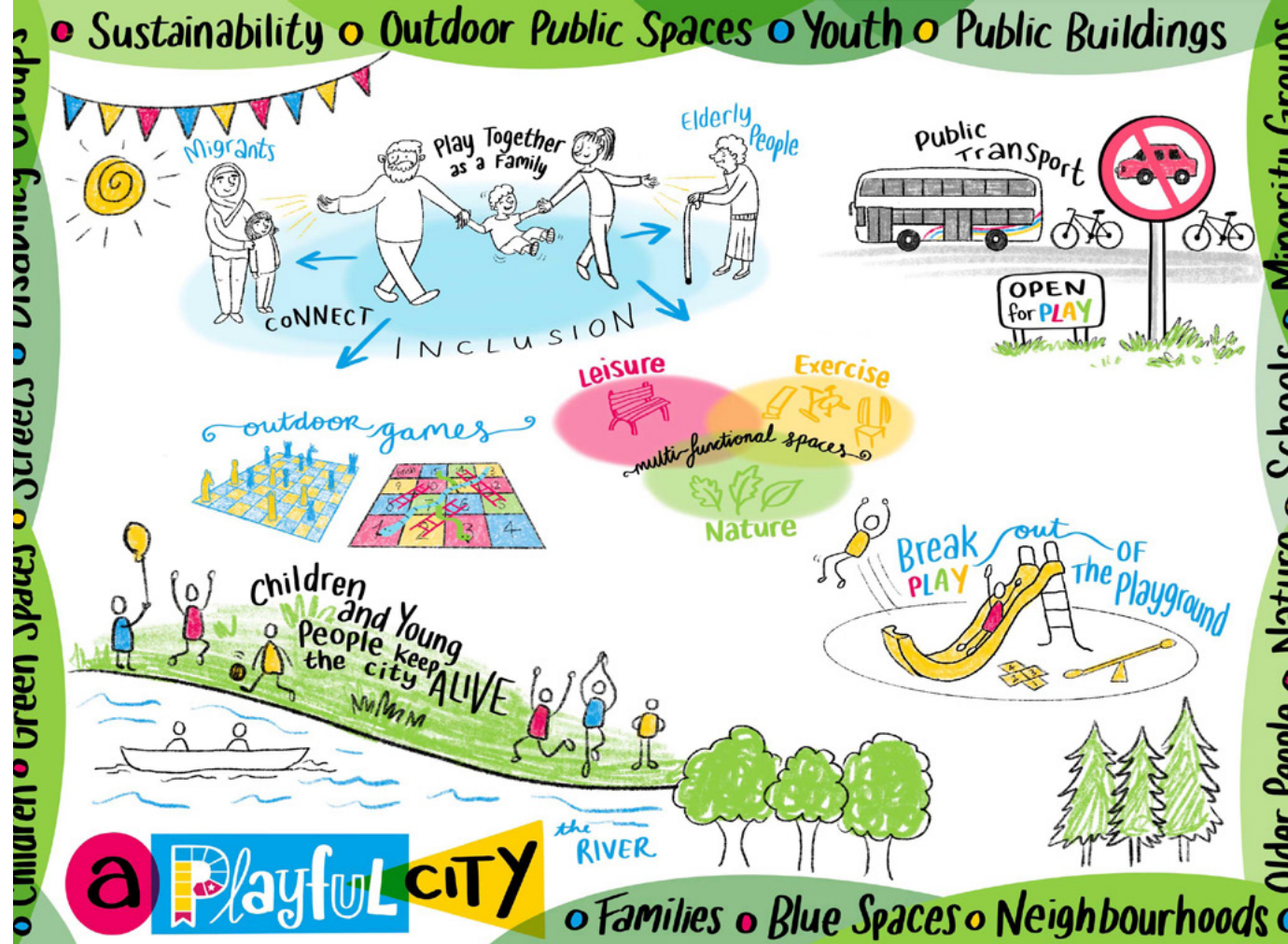
“Open for play”, a motto for Cork to promote the Playful Paradigm

Cork is one of the partners of Playful Paradigm. It started to work with Udine inside the WHO - Healthy Cities Network, sharing the vision “to make the easy and enjoyable choice the healthy choice”. Cork joined the Playful Paradigm Transfer Network embracing the philosophy of the Playful approach to trigger the civic participation and transmit messages of health and inclusion.

“We were really excited to bring a culture of a playful city to Cork based on our experience in Udine” said Denise Cahill, Playful Paradigm Lead for Cork and Coordinator of Cork Healthy Cities. “We involved our local stakeholders by launching a Play Forum which was fundamental to work in a collaborative way. This approach helped us to bring Play in the various existing festivals in the City in order to motivate the people around play and disseminate the play philosophy”.

In adapting at local level the Good Practice of the Playful Paradigm, Cork took the opportunity to re-think city’s spaces as the area closed to the river so called “Marina” and the public spaces in front of the schools. “Through Playful Paradigm we tried developed the courage to be brave and trial new approaches. The playful paradigm supported us to remove cars from a key area in the city to open the space for play, pedestrians and cyclists. Rather than say <the road is closed we opted for the concept that the Street is Open for Play> and we adapted a place-making approach”.

The transfer process of Playful Paradigm in Cork was a big success. The city succeeded in hiring a dedicated Development Officer to support and follow all play activities. Many people have been engaged as “play leaders” to bring in the city’s neighborhoods the play initiatives. Play corners were opened in the Public Libraries and through the play leaders and play packs for the home Cork reached people in need also during the first lockdown offering playful activities for children, families and older people.



A common vision of a Playful City in Europe

As Udine and Cork also the other partners of Playful Paradigm, Esplugues de Llobregat, Larissa, Klaipėda, Novigrad, Viana do Castelo and Katowice, believe in the impact of play as a boosting tool to engage citizens and foster the social inclusion. They are keen in launching the idea of the “European Capital of Play” and for doing that, a “common charter/manifesto” of what means being a Playful City is needed. “Play for

Green”, “Play for Inclusion” and “Play for placemaking” are the three pillars of this Manifesto, shared by the Playful Paradigm TN, where activities and values are described to become a Playful City.

“Play for Green” collects all the actions aimed at promoting the Culture of Sustainability and addresses Healthy and Sustainable lifestyles; “Play for Inclusion” focuses on the play solutions to include marginalized people and those in need; “Play for placemaking” identifies play participatory tools to support the urban planning activity and claims squares and streets open for play.

Considering those three themes of a Playful City, a Play Participatory Laboratory was launched during the workshop to call people to contribute and share the vision they have about an ideal playful city.

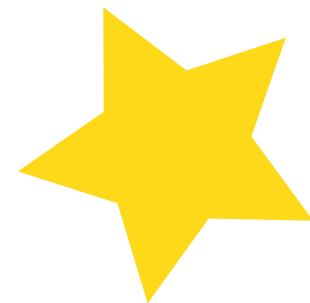
A Picture of a possible Playful City

For this full digital edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities we designed a play interactive session, based on a storytelling dice game. Indeed, after the first part of the event, where the Playful Paradigm Transfer Network was presented which a focus on Udine and Cork as partner’s testimonials, we launched the participatory session aimed at collecting insights dealing with a common Vision of a Playful City.

“Close your eyes and visualise your idea of a Playful City. What do you hear? What do you feel? What is visible? Who is visible? What are they doing?”

These questions drove participants in imagining a Playful City. A digital dice rolling invited attendants to share their vision of a playful city by creating a storytelling of their imagination using the categories appeared in the dice sides.

In the ideal common Playful city shared during the workshop, people could better connect each other: elderly people with children, migrants with locals. The relationship between parents and children are fostered by playing together. The public transportation and pedestrian and cyclable mobility are favored while cars are drastically reduced in the urban areas. Streets, squares and all urban public spaces are open for play. Public spaces are designed as multifunctional spaces and outdoor games. Physical activities and leisure are encouraged by the nature widely present in this ideal city. Children and Young people keep the city alive and the playful city is planned to break play out of the playground.



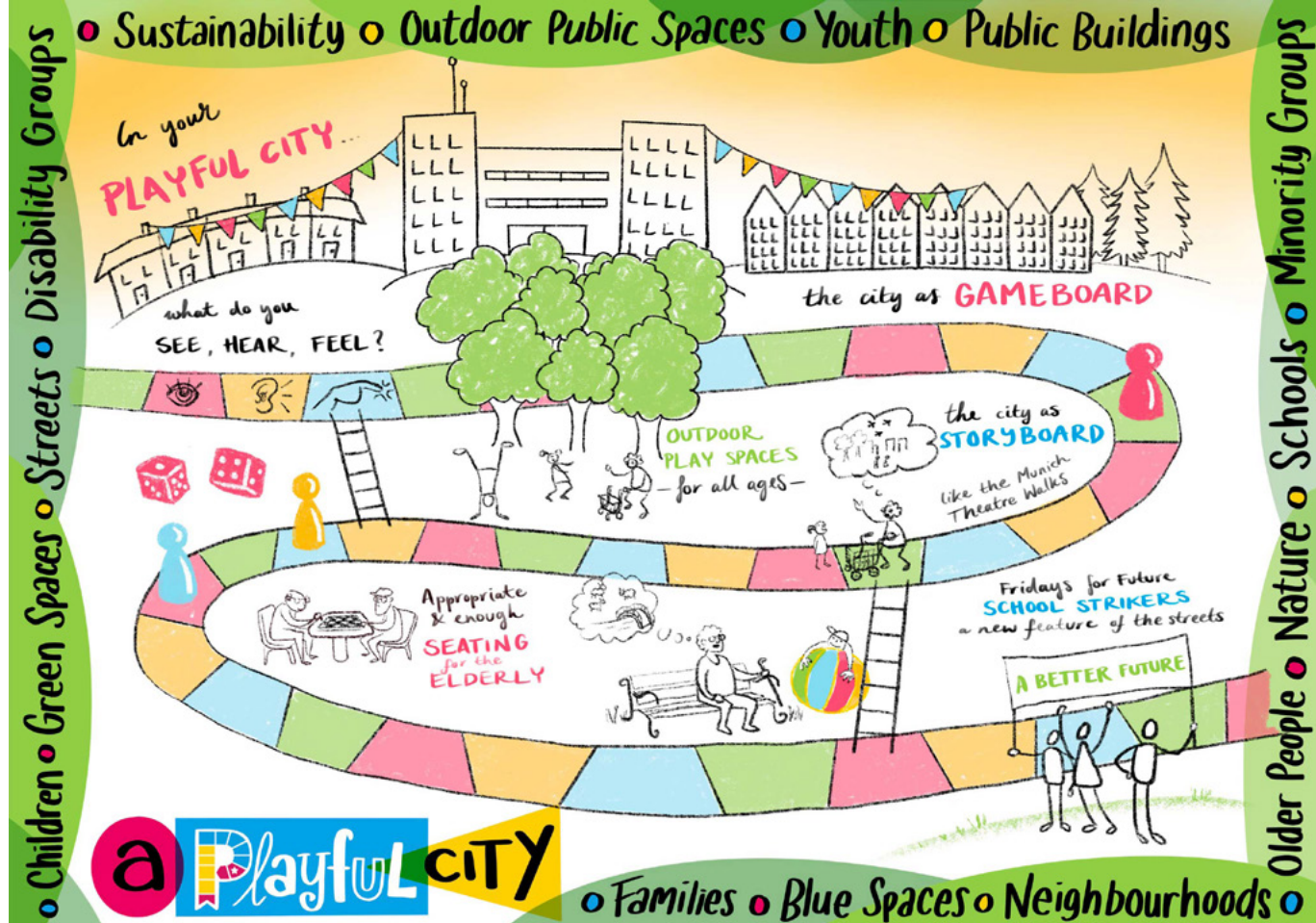
Don't try to direct Play, just make the Space Playful

“Don't try to direct Play, just make the Space Playful” said Denise Cahill summarizing the vision of a City shaped to favorite play. Indeed, what we learned from the Playful Paradigm experience so far is that people don't need explanation about where and how playing. They need more public spaces car free and open for play for children, youth and adults.

People need colors, nature, safety and comfortable spaces where staying together for play, for sharing ideas and keeping alive the creativity we need to continue imagining a better future to live. continue imagining a better future to live.

And a conclusion from the Committee of the Regions

Cllr. Kieran McCarthy based in Cork City and from the European Committee of the Regions provided the closing statement to wrap up of the meeting. He said “When I was in Portugal in 2019 and I met the Playful Paradigm partners I saw for myself the passion and the enthusiasm to promote play. And I thought the Committee of the Regions need to be connected into this. I suggested a presentation by the Playful Paradigm at the Week of the Regions and Cities in 2020. We shouldn't take partnership for granted, it is a collaborative way of working which is constantly evolving. And the Playful Paradigm is a fantastic stepping stone for that.”



Play and Public Procurement

by Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson, URBACT Expert



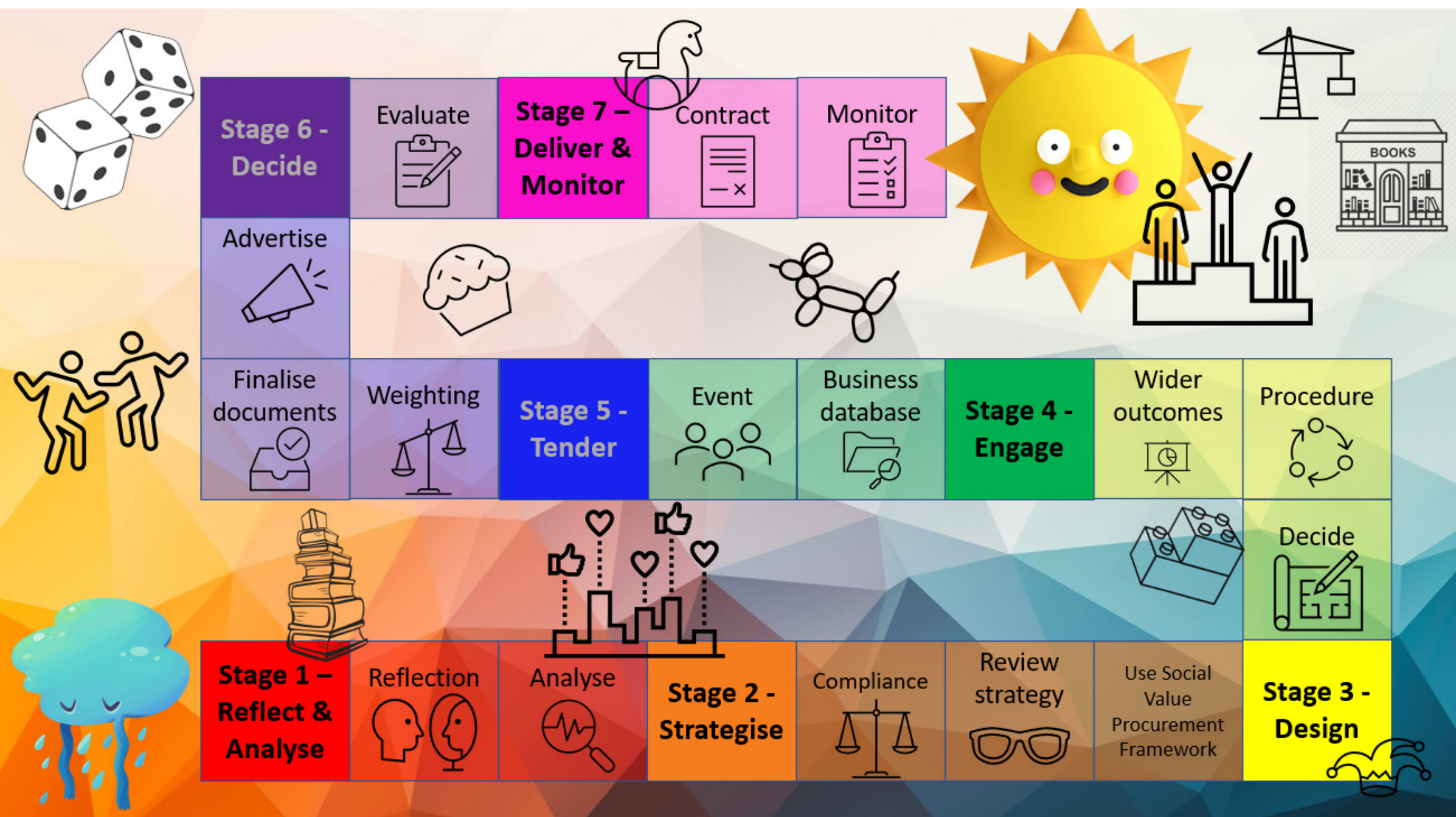
“We can procure goods, services and works for Play and Games in a more efficient, effective and playful manner”

Services and activities require Municipalities to buy goods, services and works through the process of Public Procurement, historically viewed as very bureaucratic and technical. How can we procure goods, services and works for Play and Games in a more efficient, effective and playful manner?

The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network focusses upon using Play and Games as a means of enabling inclusive, healthy and sustainable cities. Shaped by the Good Practice of the City of Udine in Italy, the Network is seeking to transfer a number of playful products, services and activities, including Toy Libraries, Games Festivals, and the development of Physical Play Space.

All of the products, services and activities require Municipalities to buy goods, services and works through the process of Public Procurement. Historically, the process of Public Procurement has been viewed quite rightly as very bureaucratic and technical and defined by European and National level legislation. Indeed, on the face of it, Public Procurement seems very far removed from the playful objectives of Playful Paradigm.

However, as part of the network, and to enable the improvement of the Good Practice of the City of Udine and the practice of the Partner Cities, we have placed an emphasis upon how we can procure goods, services and works for Play and Games in a more efficient, effective and playful manner.



Utilising the skills, knowledge and experience of our AD-Hoc Expert, Matthew Baqueriza-Jackson we have facilitated sessions on Public Procurement and have produced the 'Playful Paradigm Procurement Guide'. The Guide provides Cities with succinct advice upon the seven stages they need to go through to procure goods, services and works for Play and Games. The Guide focuses upon both technical aspects of Public Procurement, and additionally upon how the process can be used to achieve wider local economic social and environmental outcomes.

The seven stages are as follows:

- **Stage 1:** Is about Cities reflecting upon the existing provision of the good, service or work and in particular whether the provision has been of good quality and to time. It is also about analysing the type of supplier that is currently providing the good, service or work, for example whether they are an SME or not.

- **Stage 2:** is about Cities linking the procurement of the good, service or work to wider legislation and strategy. It is about identifying the type of procurement procedure that could be potentially used and the types of wider outcomes it could potentially contribute towards.

- **Stage 3:** is about Cities designing the good, service or work they want to procure – this is sometimes referred to as Commissioning. Here, Cities decide upon what they want the good to look like, for example, and how much budget they have to spend.

- **Stage 4:** is about Cities engaging with the market and particularly businesses that could be suppliers

of the good, service or work. Here, Cities may want to hold events to explain to the market what they are looking to buy, and what wider outcomes they are looking to achieve.

- **Stage 5:** is about Cities tendering for the good, service or work. It is here that they develop questions to ask the market to respond to and advertise the opportunity both locally and across Europe.

- **Stage 6:** is about Cities making a decision on the best provider for the good, service, or work dependent upon how they have responded to the questions and the price they have offered.

- **Stage 7:** is about Cities working with the chosen Supplier to deliver the good, service, or work effectively. It is also about monitoring any wider commitments which the Supplier may have agreed to.

We have tested the Guide with the Playful Paradigm partners and they will be piloting it further during the ongoing activities of the Network and beyond. It is important to note that the stages outlined in the Guide are not just applicable to goods, service and works procurement associated with Play and Games. Indeed, they could form part of the process for procuring any of the goods, services or works required by Municipalities and other organisations.



Playful Paradigm going global: the universal power of play for better cities

by Simone d'Antonio, URBACT Expert



City authorities, as urban planners or housing developers, have a limited understating of how games work and don't include play in city planning and urban policies



Play is a serious thing. It is one of the main messages emerged by the Playful Paradigm network, and highlighted by the final event of the URBACT network focused on the role of play for creating better and more inclusive cities.

The lessons learned by the project partners showcased how playful activities contributed to change public spaces, make local communities more inclusive and improve the way local authorities deal with a wide range of challenges, from active inclusion to civic engagement.

The final event of Playful Paradigm showed how the experiences carried out by the project partners, in the framework of the adaptation of the Udine's good practice, are part of a global movement of cities which are actively promoting games as cross-cutting tools for sustainable urban development. The comparison between these experiences paves the

way to a potential transfer of innovation to be carried out at global level, establishing forward-looking and unexpected collaborations between the cities of Playful Paradigm and other global players.

Block By Block and Minecraft as a participatory tool

UN-Habitat fostered the use of playful tools for involving people in planning cities with the Block by Block Foundation, and in the framework of its collaboration with Mojang Studios, the Swedish developer that created the sandbox videogame Minecraft.

“We found that Minecraft was a very easy tool for people to understand the urban dimension, more



A globe is the central focus, wrapped in a warm, golden string of lights. The lights are strung across the globe and draped around its base. Overlaid on the globe is the title 'PLAYFUL PARADIGM'. 'PLAYFUL' is in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, and 'PARADIGM' is in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. To the left of the text, there is a stylized graphic element consisting of a blue semi-circle, a yellow semi-circle, and a pink semi-circle with a white star inside.

PLAYFUL PARADIGM

than the fancy maps that as architects we were used to play with but people didn't understand" Christelle Lahoud of the UN-Habitat's Global Public Space programme says.

The popular videogame was used for engaging people in redesigning spaces by many local communities around the world, with a specific attention to categories usually left out by the co-creation activities. Kids, refugees and asylum seekers, elderly persons and people with disabilities were involved in the planning phase. Unexpected connections were established among groups that normally would not work together on the future of cities and its public spaces.

The process followed similar guidelines in different urban areas of the world, having for each project secured a small amount of money for implementing the measures co-designed by the participants. In the first phase of work information on how to transform the space were collected by the project team. Then, the space is transformed on Minecraft by the participants to the workshops, who worked in small groups to co-create and design ideas on the digital platform. Group presentations were organized to present the ideas co-created by the participants to civic officials and elected representatives. In that phase "people take ownership of the ideas they design, gaining confidence in expressing their vision in public" says Lahoud.

Even keeping the same rules around the world, the results of every workshop were different as the proposals made by the participants. Greenery for reducing pollution, benches and public toilets are

some of the ideas proposed while using Minecraft to redesign neighbourhoods. These ideas were delivered to architects and designers in order to be included in the final plans discussed with the local communities before the implementation phase. In some cases local communities were also part of the realization of the actions. In Niger kids were engaged in colouring the place they designed: being part of doing the space they co-created contributed to reinforce their sense of ownership. “Bringing this people in the workshops is important so they understand which is the value of the public space for their city, and they fight for it” adds Lahoud.

The Urban Play Coalition and the action of cities around the world

“Play is often underestimated: it is confined to children facilities, but all the cities can offer informal learning opportunity for kids” says Sara Candiracci of ARUP, the engineering company that is one of the members of the Real Play Coalition, involving also subjects as UNICEF, National Geographic, Ikea and Lego Foundation to change the perception of the value of play globally.

Making play more accessible as an essential right for children but able to create benefits to the whole society is the ambition of the coalition, that studied the role of play spaces as community hubs to improve social cohesion. The solutions developed by the coalition in many cities around the world aim at eliminating the barriers to playing posed by the recent urbanisation trends and the growing sense of urban insecurity which are reducing the access to open

spaces to kids.

“Designing playful cities is a challenge – says Sara Candiracci - City authorities, as urban planners or housing developers, have a limited understating of how games work and don’t include play in city planning and urban policies”. Covid-19 has dismantled play ecosystems around the world, with a huge impact on mental and physical well-being of kids, but also of parents and caregivers who can be seen as new frontline workers.



Some projects carried out by the Real Play Coalition can provide useful elements to integrate a playful dimension in post-Covid cities. The adoption by the cities of the Urban Play Framework, an holistic method co-designed with the LEGO Foundation to support play-based interventions in cities, can be useful to create a play-friendly environment and push decision-makers in taking action. The installation of pop-up playgrounds is one of the measures that the Mayor of Istanbul fostered for promoting early child development. In addition to this, the Mayor appointed also a Chief of Play and Recreation to promote the impact of play in different local policies.

In Cape Town the action was focused on shaping play-based solutions in the Khayelitsha township, where a co-creation process involving kids until 12 years old was activated through the use of participatory mapping tools and Lego bricks as well as with the organization of a photographic context. In Milan the collaboration with the City's Resilience Office was decisive to identify solutions for regenerating the area of Rogoredo-Santa Lucia, thanks to the ideas emerged by the focus groups with kids and local community. In Auckland the creation of a Play Innovation Lab was decisive to upscale practices and examples coming from all over the world and engage the local community of placemakers to put them into practice in the city.

How to connect Playful Paradigm to the global debate?

The relevance of the work carried out by Playful Paradigm was highlighted by all the international speakers who showcased global experiences during

the final conference. The collaboration with UN-Habitat, Lego Foundation and the other actors of the Urban Play Coalition can be an interesting perspective for all the partners of the URBACT Network but also for the whole partnership to integrate to the good practice of Udine, successfully replicated by all, some elements taken by the different global programs. Some aspects just partially explored in the framework of the transfer journey, such as the role of digital tools or the connection with urban innovation strategies, could be explored and be part of a bi-directional action of exchange in the next years.

Furthermore, some elements of the Udine's experience, such as the LudoBus or the Ludoteca (Play House), could integrate schemes developed in different areas of the world and consolidate models, such as the one of the pop-up playgrounds, that are emerging as temporary response to the Covid-19 restrictions to foster the use of public spaces for play.

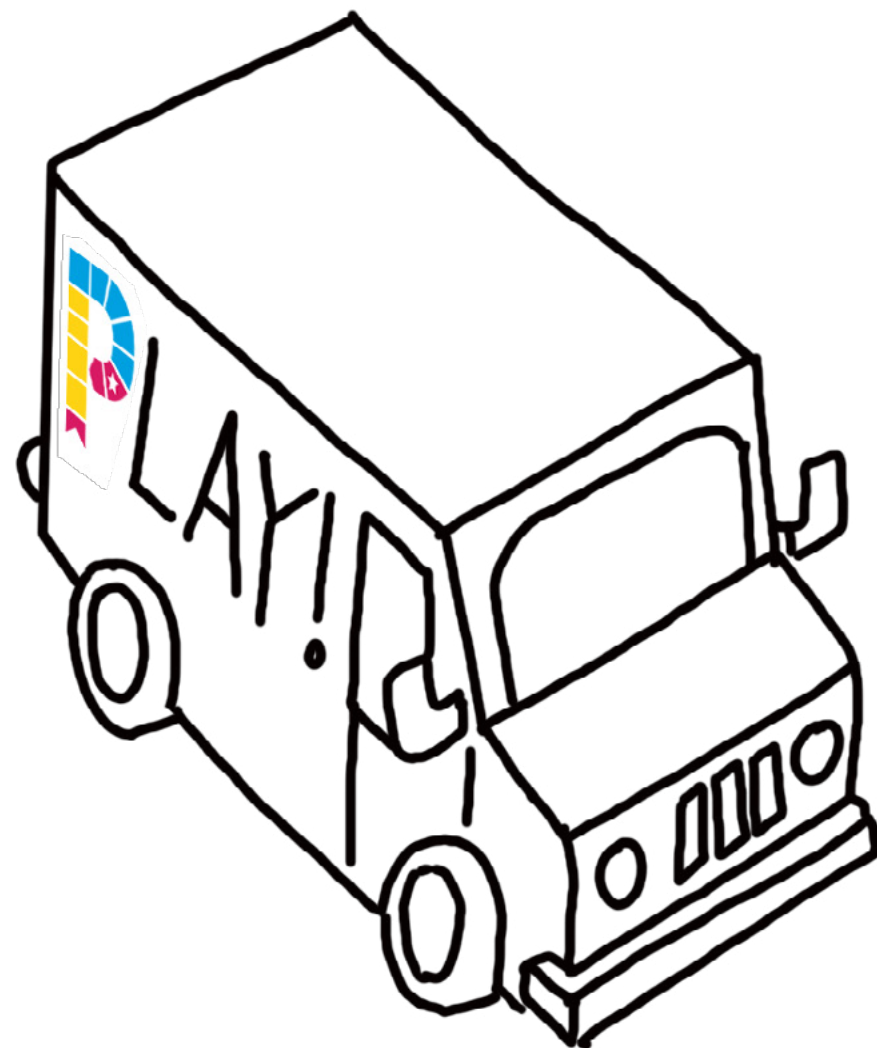
A global commitment towards stronger public policies, from local to metropolitan and regional level, to promote playful activities can be a common element on which institutional collaborations can be activated, in order to help local authorities in Europe and around the world to embed this approach in their local strategies.

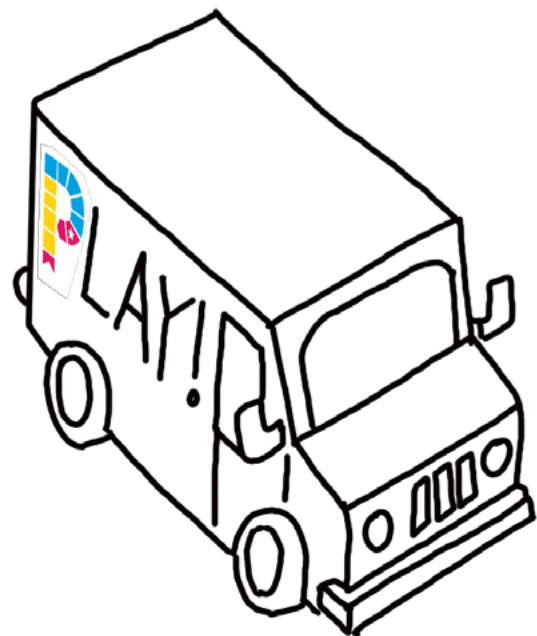


Toolkits

Four illustrated guides to summarise the main tips to be considered during the implementation of the Good Practice.

| | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| ★ <i>Ludobus</i> | ★ P 101 |
| ★ <i>Toy Library</i> | ★ P 115 |
| ★ <i>School</i> | ★ P 133 |
| ★ <i>Transfer Modules</i> | ★ P 143 |





The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network

A Tool kit for Cities to transfer
the Playbus - Ludobus initiative



Insights for cities and policy-makers to set and implement activities of a *Ludobus* - Playbus



Cities willing to jointly set new and innovative models of inclusiveness with their local community, should consider gaming as means for achieving active participation and healthy behaviour. Among the most successful models which deserve more attention today are the **Ludobus**.



The Ludobus-initiative has two fundamental dimensions:

1. play activities
2. open public spaces.

1. play activities



• The activities proposed by Ludobus are “street playing”

• The playing activities make a transformation in the use of streets and public space

The “Ludobus” is a van full of games moving through city neighbourhoods and bringing playful activities, in this way making games available to local population.

2. Open public spaces



- Ludobus can fit in in every kind of urban space without limitation. It can adapt games activity to different spaces.

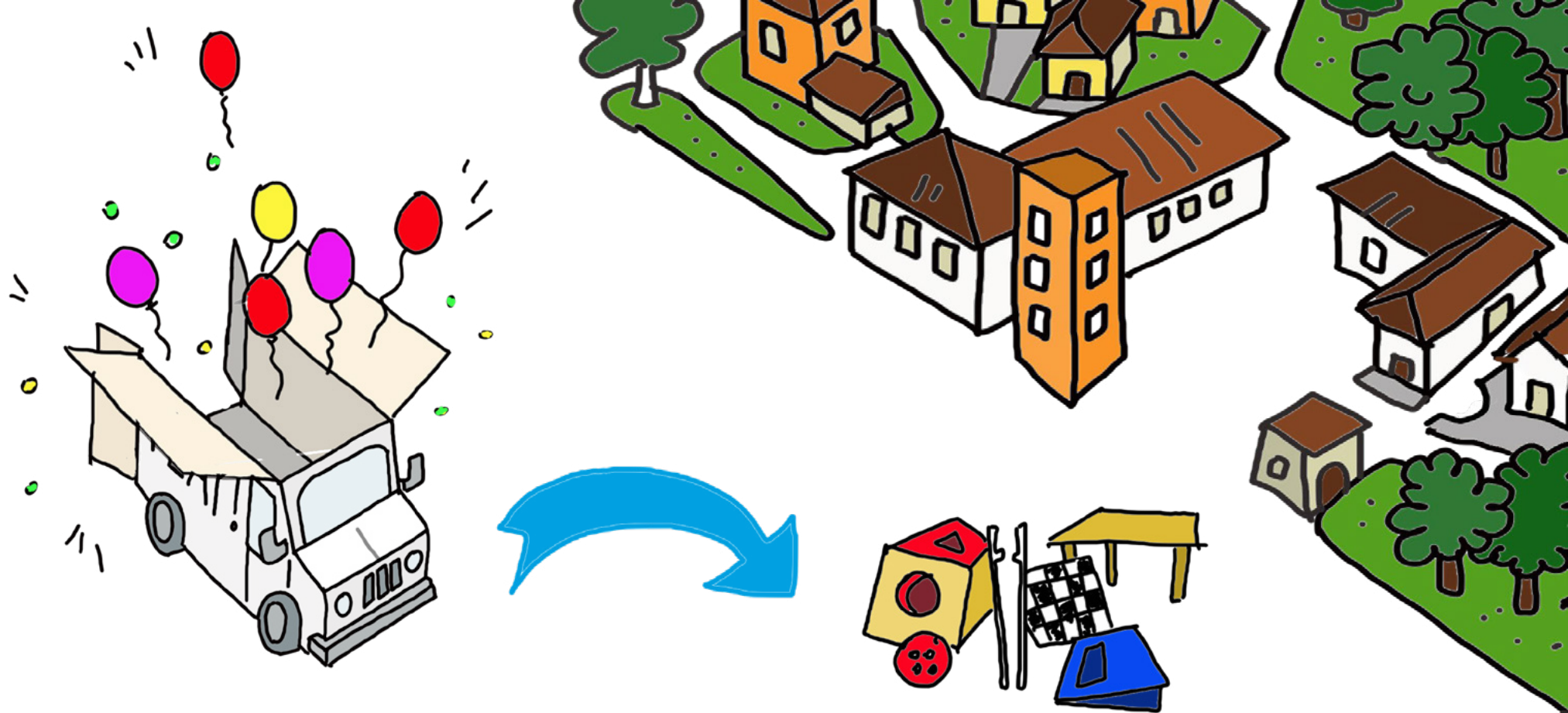
- Ludobus boots a space transformation acting as a place making catalysts

The Ludobus-initiative brings playing activities in parks, squares and neighbourhoods



To set up an activity of Ludobus there are some tips to follow

1. OPEN THE BUS



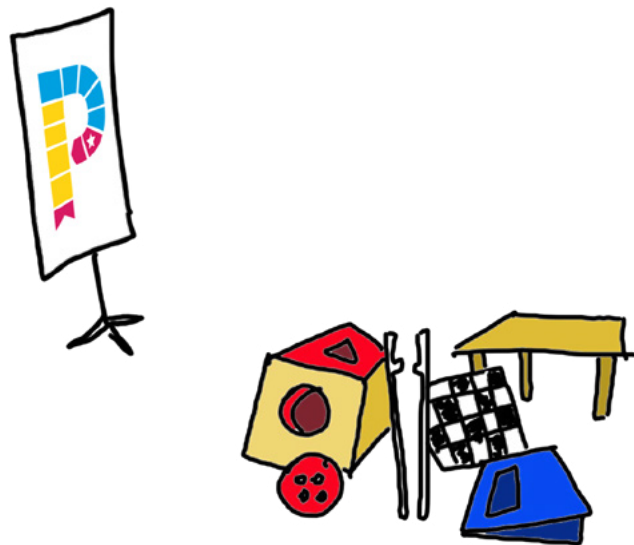
2. TAKE OUT GAMES



- Ludobus drops out of blue and can quickly grab people's attention **(without announcement)**



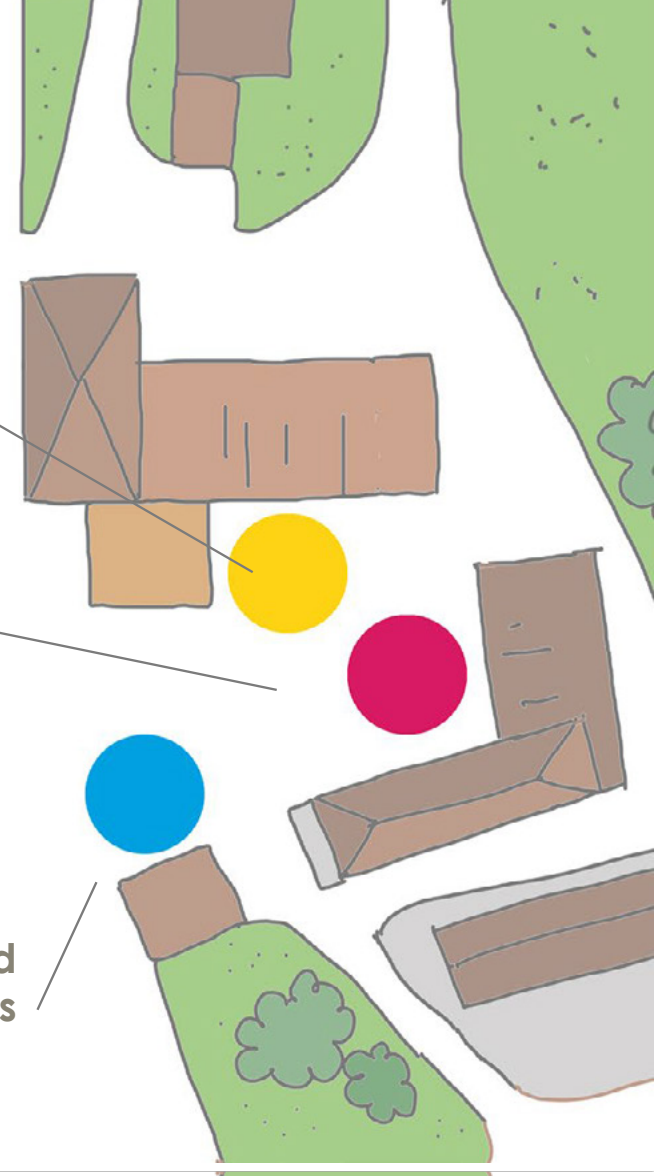
3. FACILITATE PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT



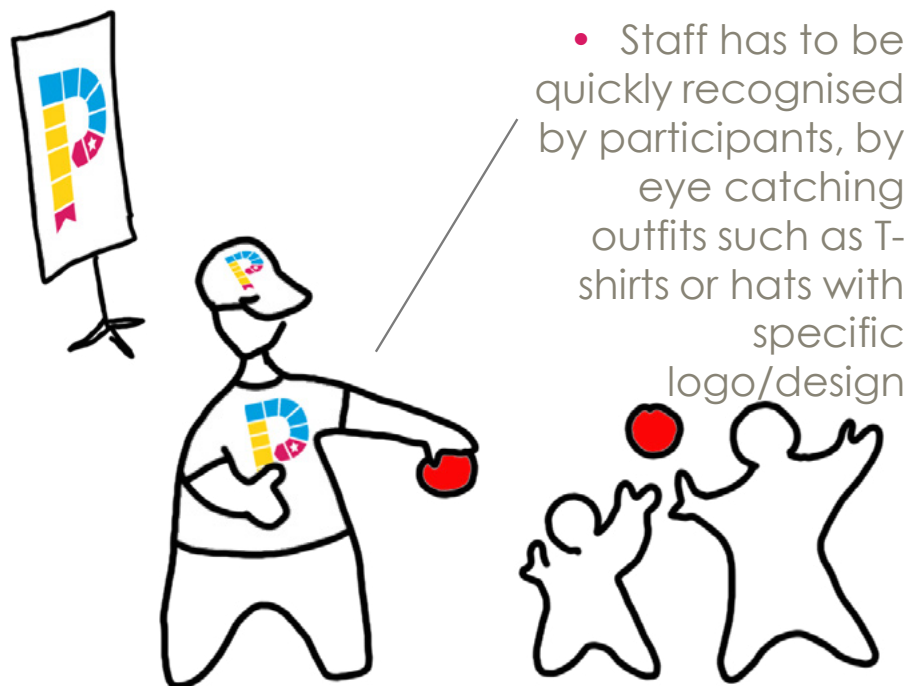
- Games for children

- Movement games

- Board Games



4. PLAN WHERE & HOW TO ARRANGE GAMES



5. STAFF AND EDUCATORS

• They facilitate participants in creating a peaceful, friendly and cooperative atmosphere

- Ludobus is a powerful tool of inclusiveness, because there are no barriers of culture, languages, gender or age



YES



NO

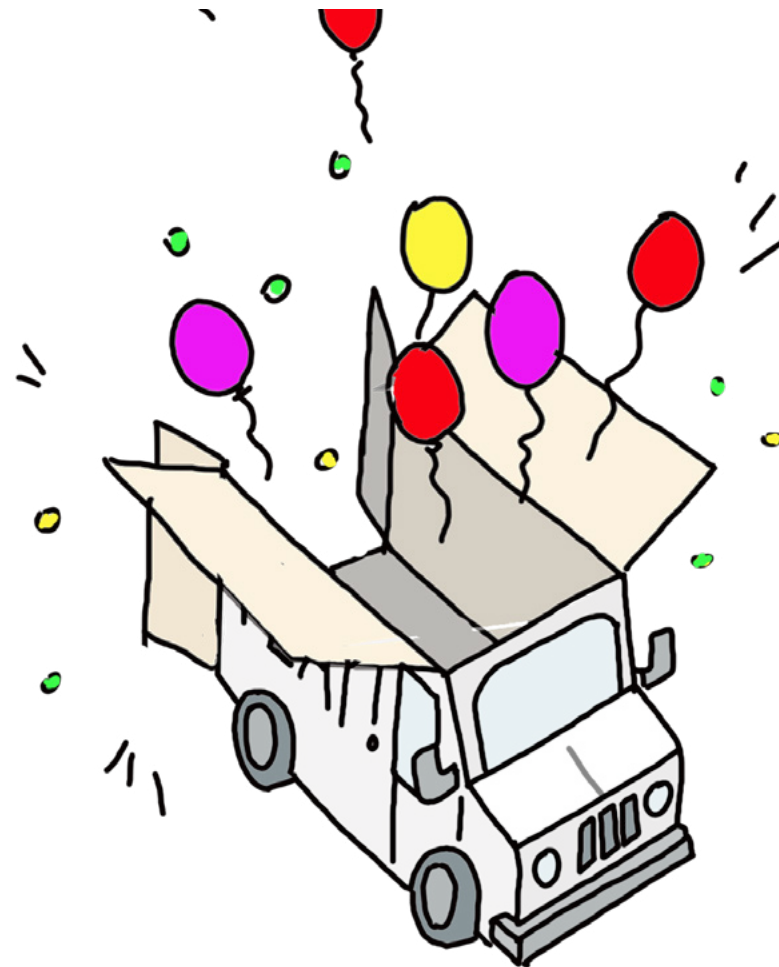
- The activities promoted by a Ludobus are not based on competition. Quite the opposite, the Ludobus gives the opportunity to try, to fail and to try again

6. PEOPLE/PARTICIPANTS



Ludobus should be considered a guest in the public spaces where it acts. It operates silently but it needs to be visible. Because visibility means advocacy.

Ludobus supports everyone's right to play



Ludobus brings a message for Local Authorities, local communities and policy makers about **the importance of play for children in every space of cities!**



Project Partner Cities

Cork (IE), Esplugues de Llobregat (ES), Katowice (PL), Klaipeda (LT), Larissa (EL), Novigrad (HR), Viana de Castelo (PT). Lead Partner: Udine (IT)

Cork City Council



AJUNTAMENT
D'ESPLUGUES



KATOWICE
for a change

KLAIPĖDOS MIESTO VISUOMENĖS
SVEIKATOS BIURAS



ΔΗΜΟΣ ΛΑΡΙΣΣΑΙΩΝ
MUNICIPALITY OF LARISSA



GRAD NOVIGRAD-CITTANOVA
CITTÀ DI NOVIGRAD-CITTANOVA



CÂMARA MUNICIPAL
VIANA DO CASTELO

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With the collaboration of
Paola Amato

Graphic design

Saul Darù

Communication office



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www.creaa.it

With the support of

Ali per Giocare - Ass. Italiana
dei Ludobus e delle Ludoteche
www.alipergiocare.org



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund





The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network

A Toolkit for Cities willing
to set up a Toy Library



Insights for cities and policy-makers to set and implement a Toy Library

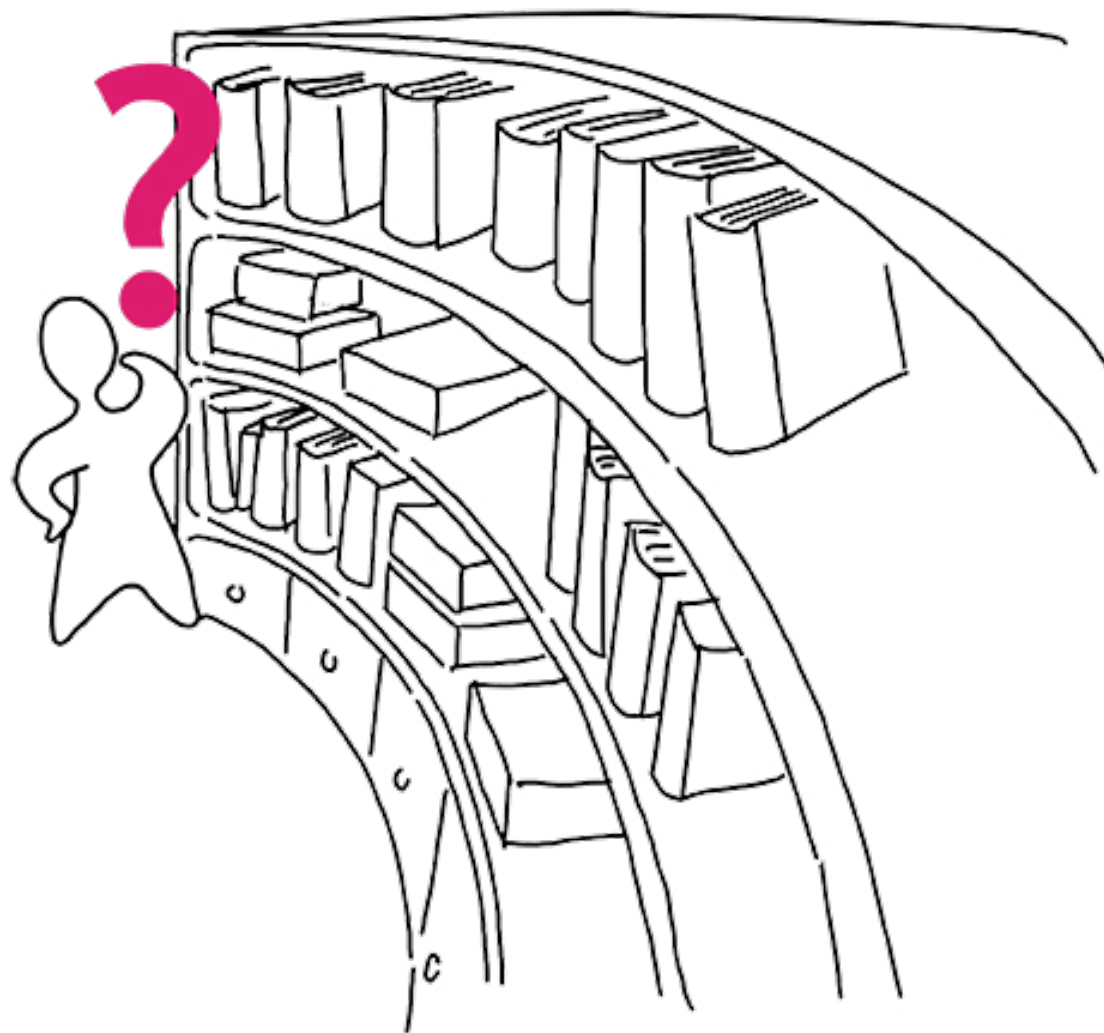
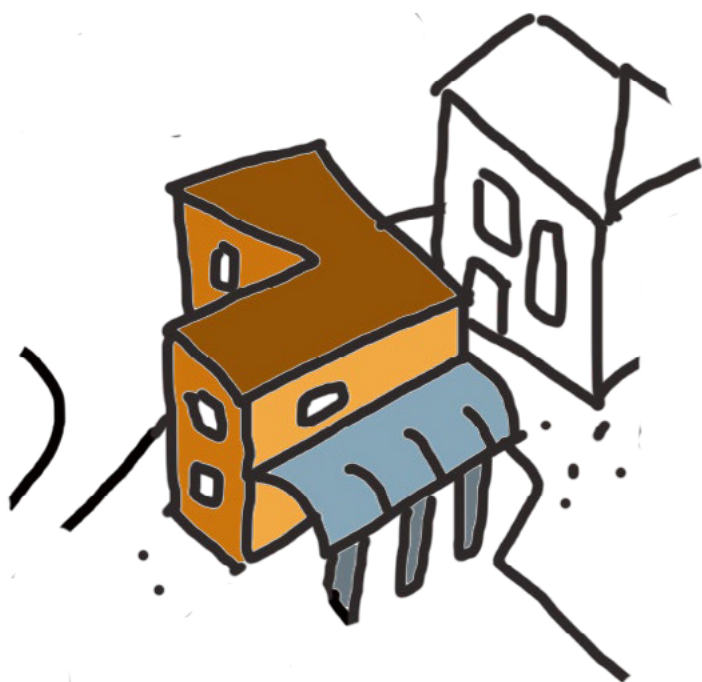
Cities, willing to host a meeting space for all Including families, elderly people and children, should open a **Toy Library**.

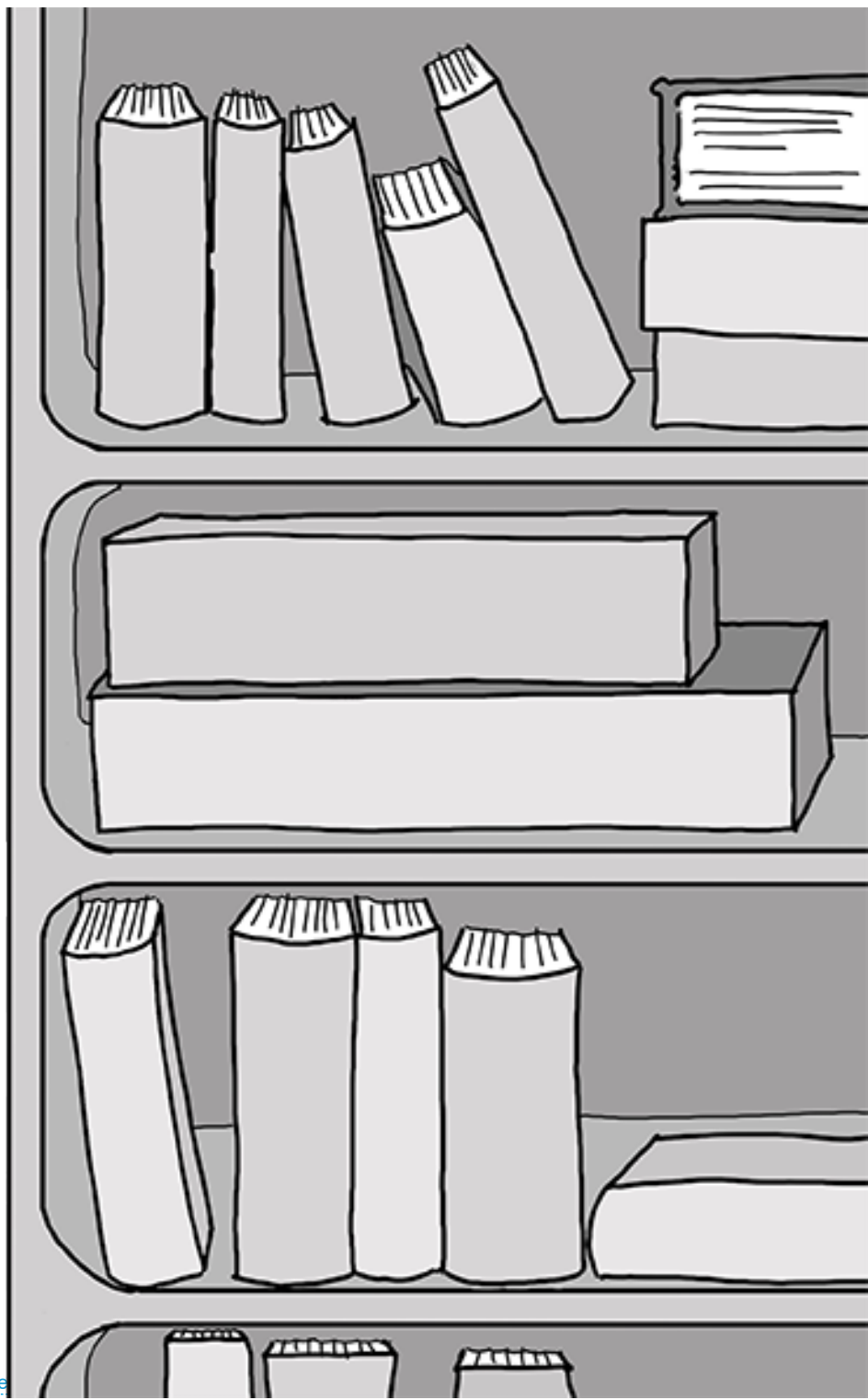
Toy Libraries have been considered a successful initiative for cities worldwide, because they have provided answers to the concrete needs of citizens to be active subjects and not merely passive spectators.

A permanent toy library is a true space for citizens empowerment and it improves relationships between parents and children.

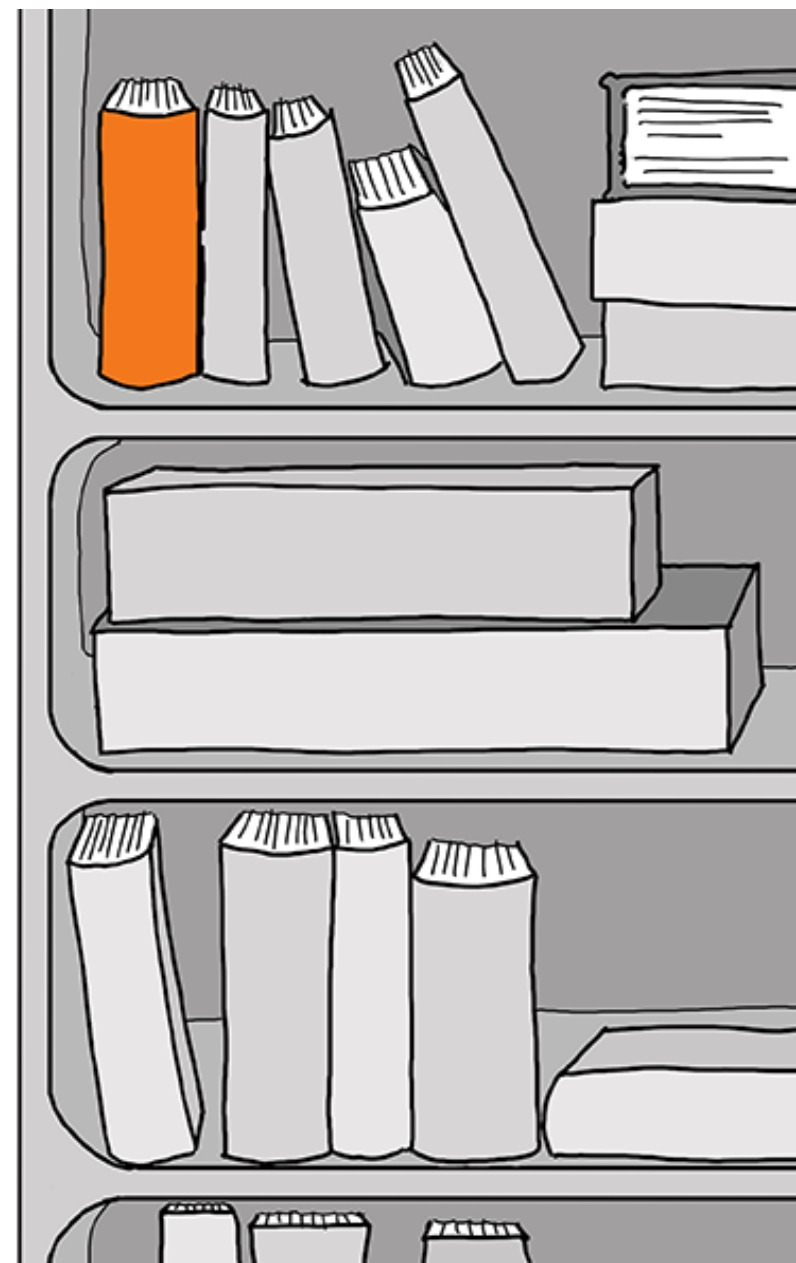
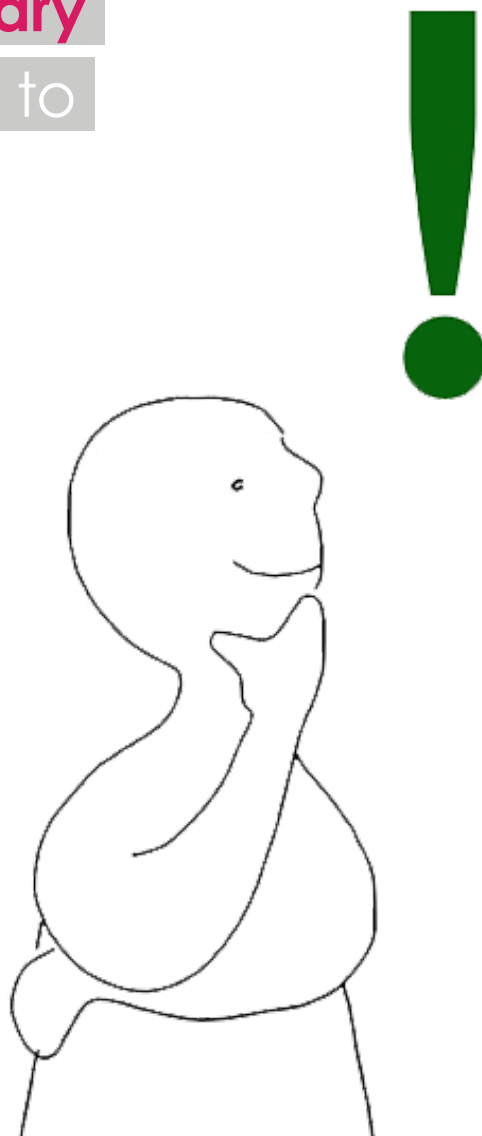


HOW DO YOU SET UP A TOY LIBRARY?

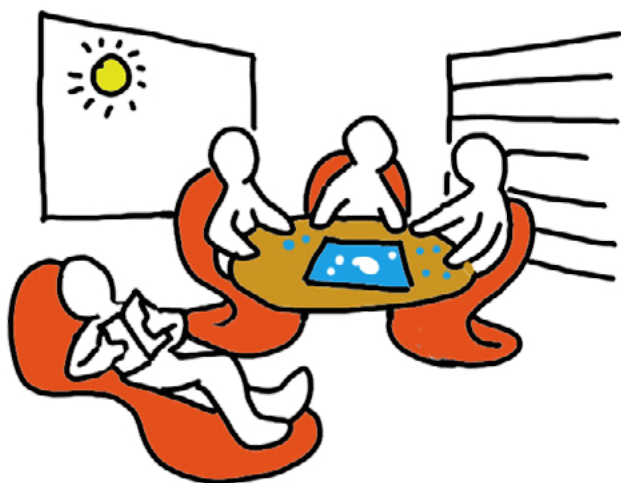




To set up a **Toy Library**
there are some tips to
follow...



1. The SPACE



- Comfortable, Safe and Bright



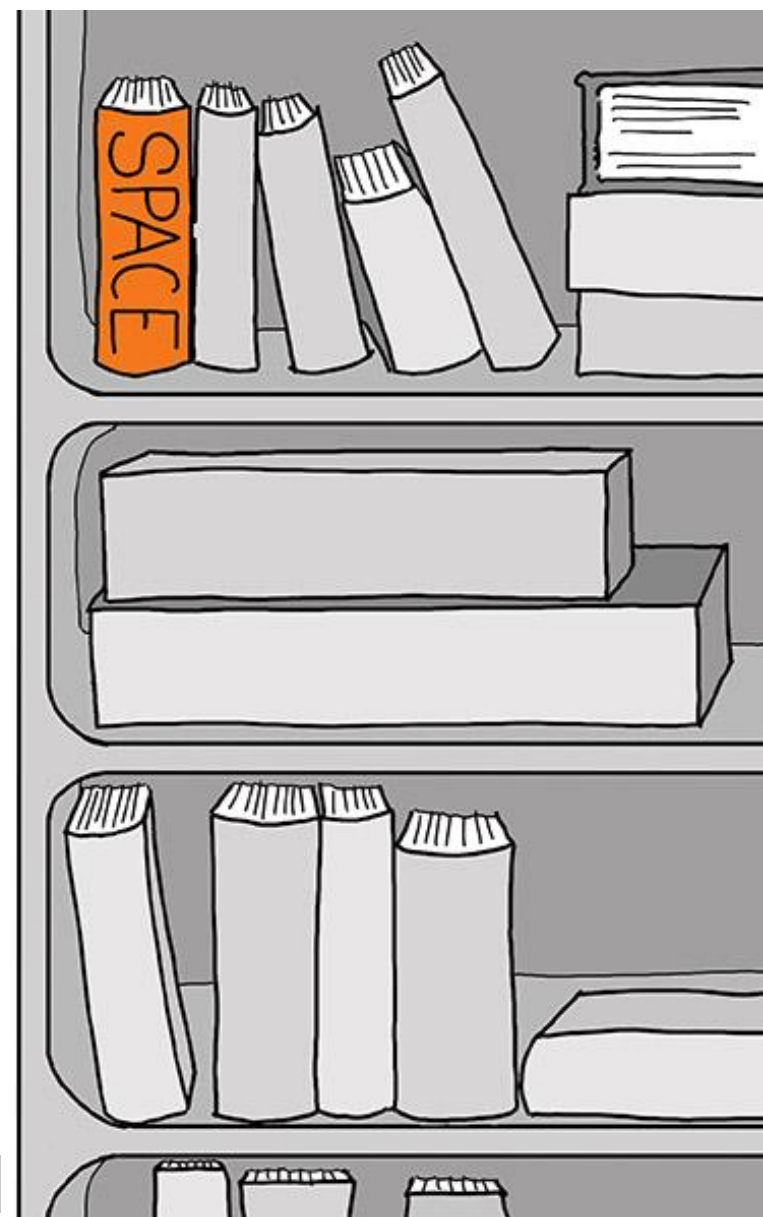
- Designed according to target group age



- Designed by a participatory process



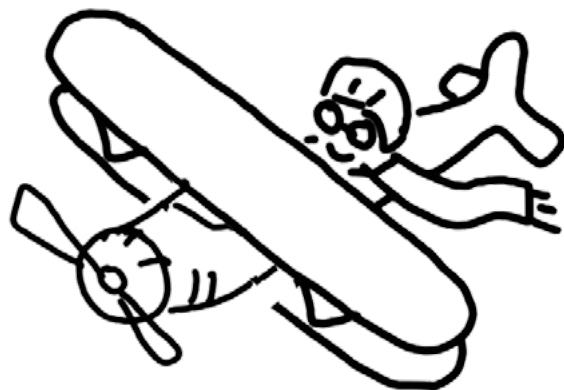
Toy Libraries should be accessible. They could be located in the city centre or in suburbs. It depends by challenges to address. And a Big storage is needed for hosting games



2. HUMAN RESOURCES



- The staff to enroll as Toy librarians needed to be trained. They need support to increase capacity for well-managing toy-library work.

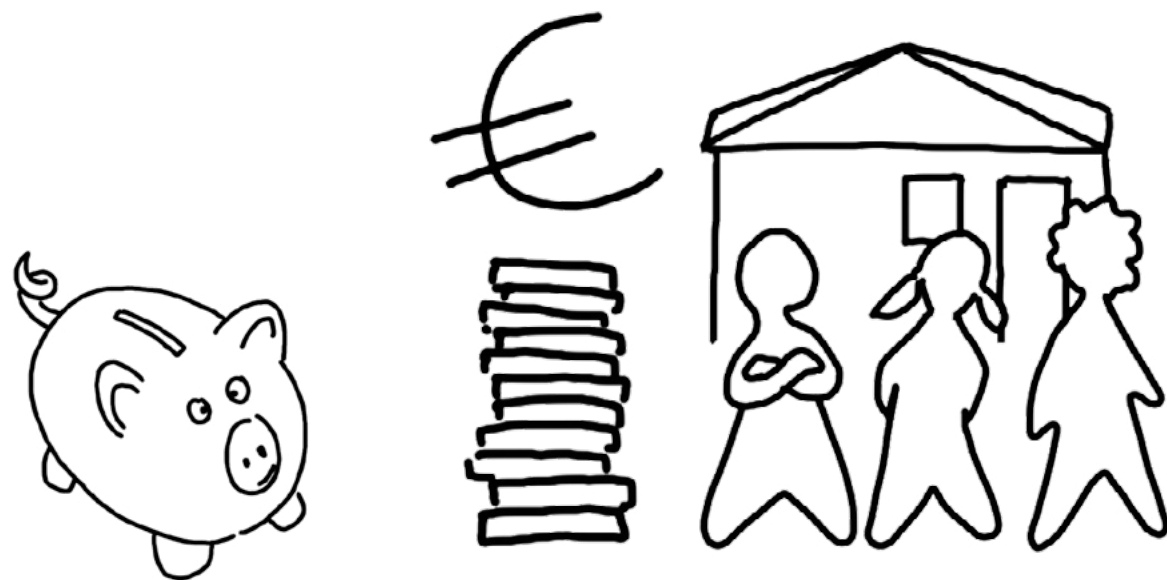


- They should be “housekeepers” of Toy Library, available to store and restore games and toys, etc...

The toy-librarians have to like playing. They must be curious and creative for engaging with children and adults.



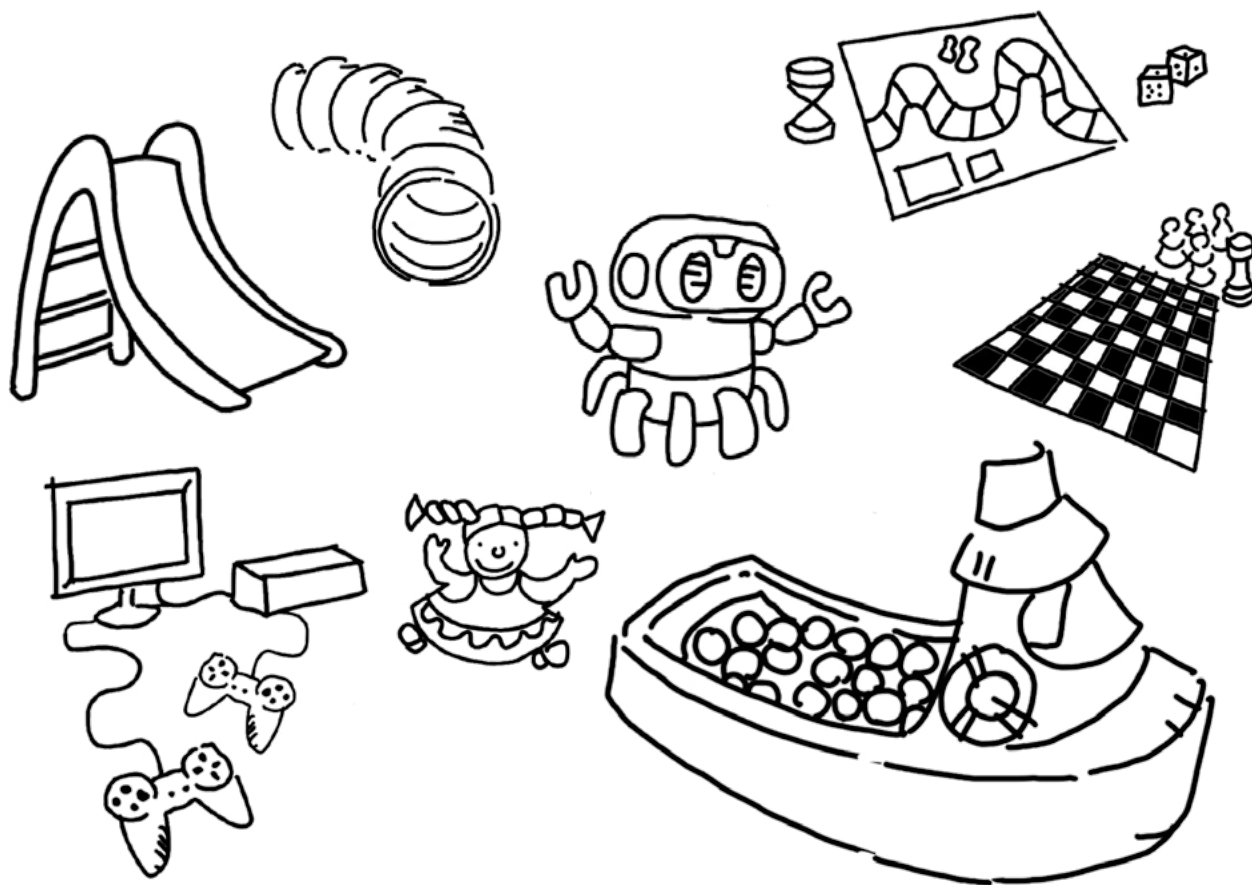
3. BUDGET



Toy libraries need a dedicated budget for maintaining the space, acquiring games and guaranteeing the payment of the staff cost. They also could need a budget line for promoting tailored play-activities



4. GAMES



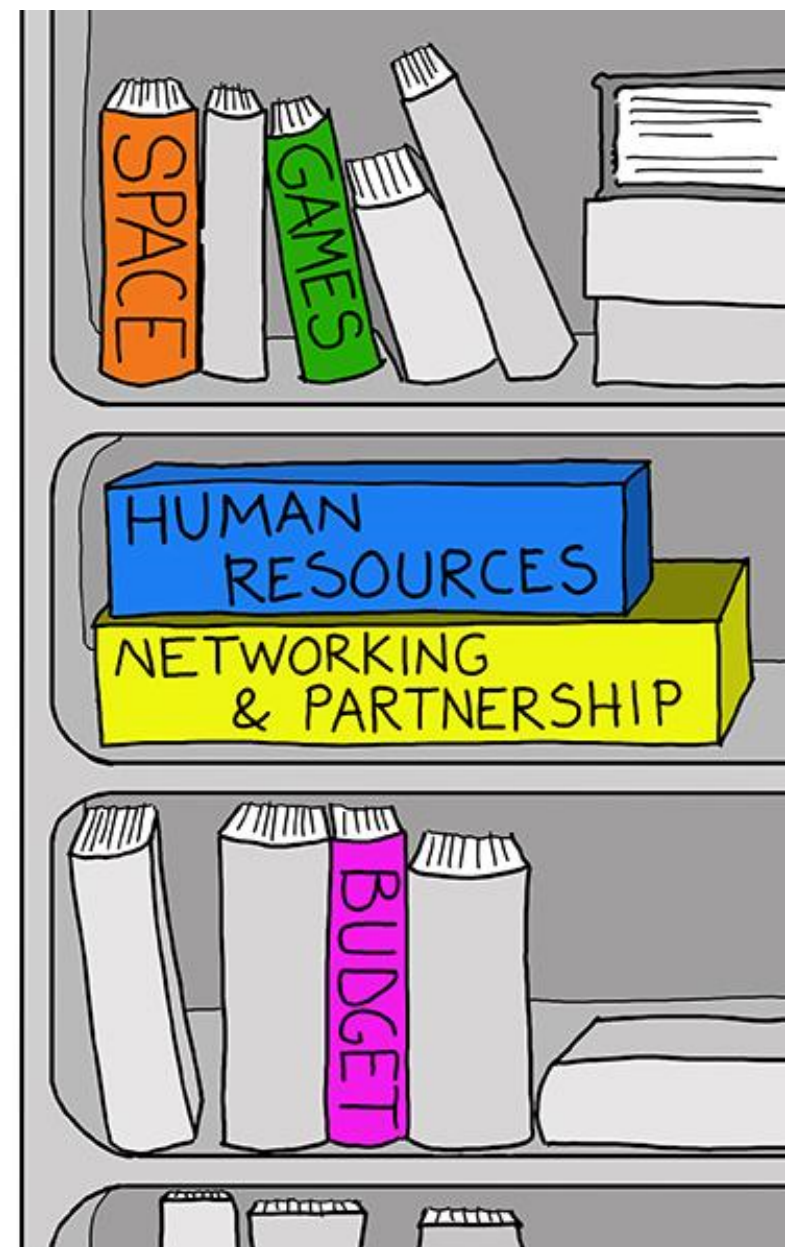
Toy libraries could host all types of Games and Toys!



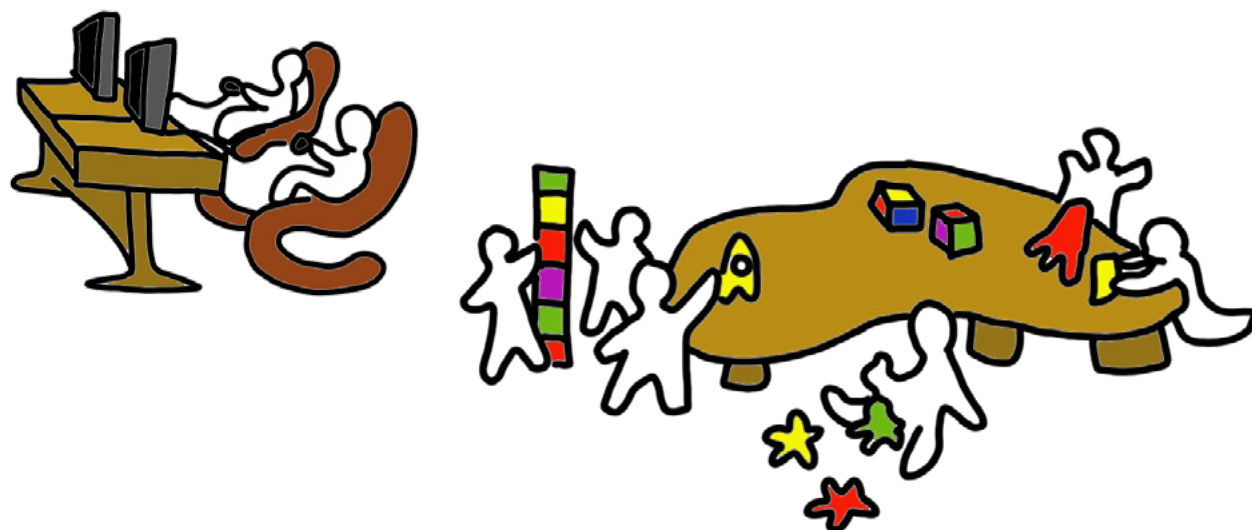
5. NETWORKING & PARTNERSHIP



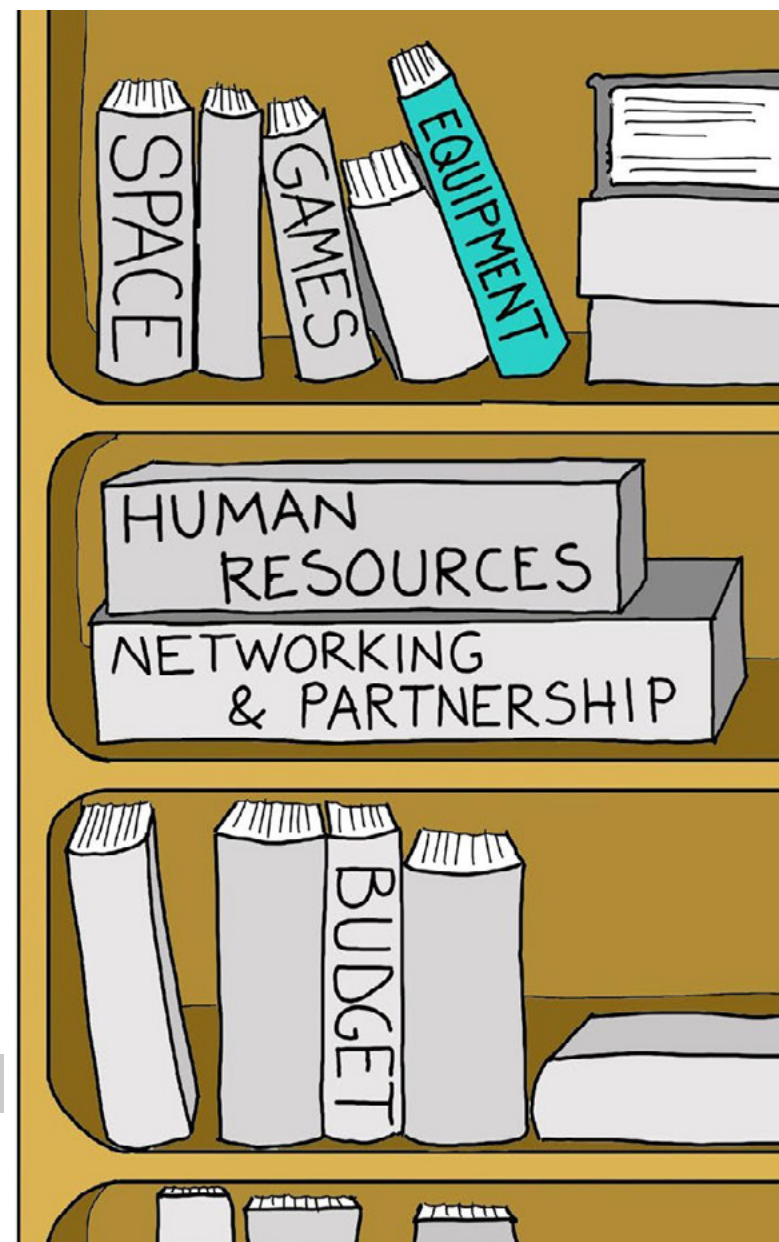
Toy libraries should promote playing activities, building a network with local organisations and public services



6. EQUIPMENT



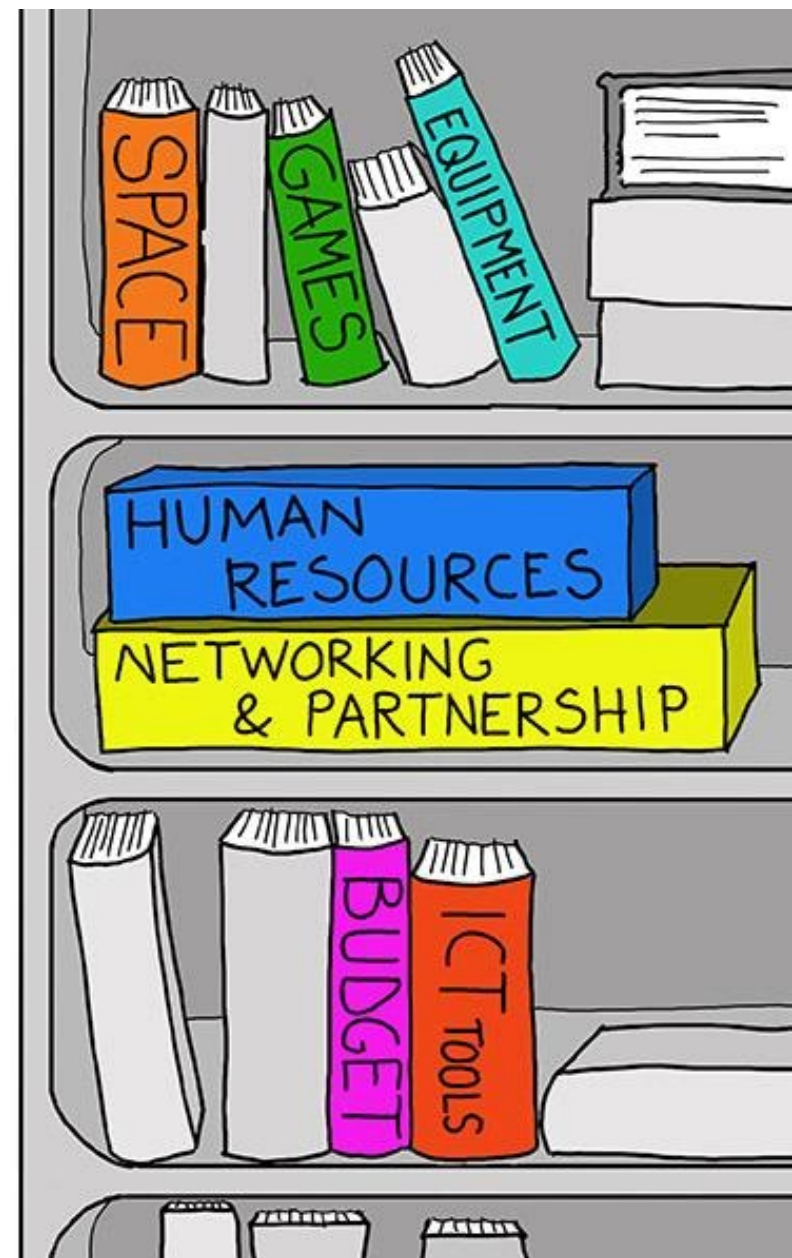
The equipment should satisfy the following requirements:
 1. Good quality of furniture; 2. Multimedia area with computers; 3. Shelves for hosting games (strong!); 4. Changing tables; 5. Data-systems for games and toys organisation; 6. Kitchen equipment with washer machine and washer dishes; 7. Equipment for storage.



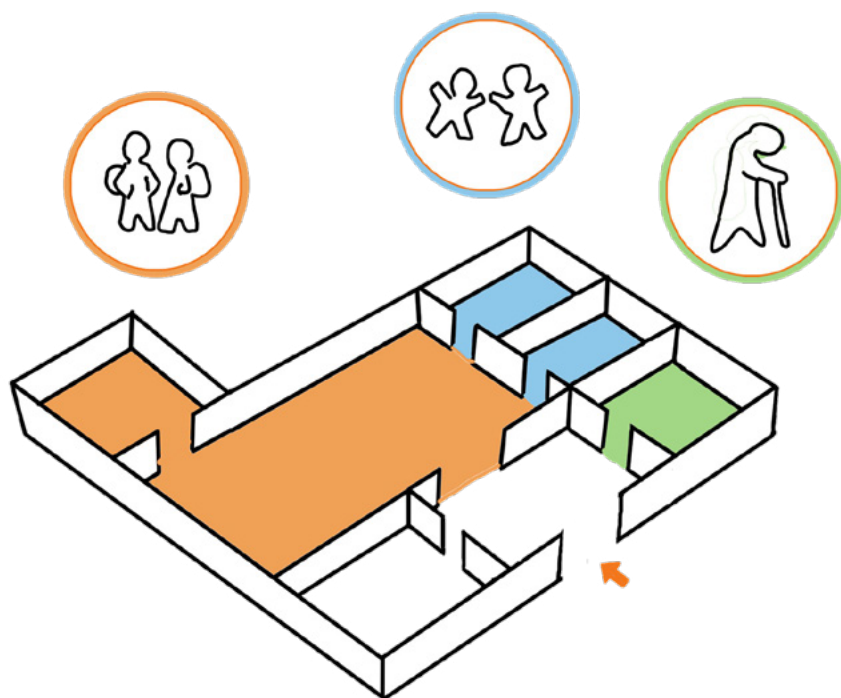
7. ICT TOOLS



Toy Libraries should organise a good management of the use of video games. It's necessary to provide trainings and educational events for families about the use of video games for children and teenagers.

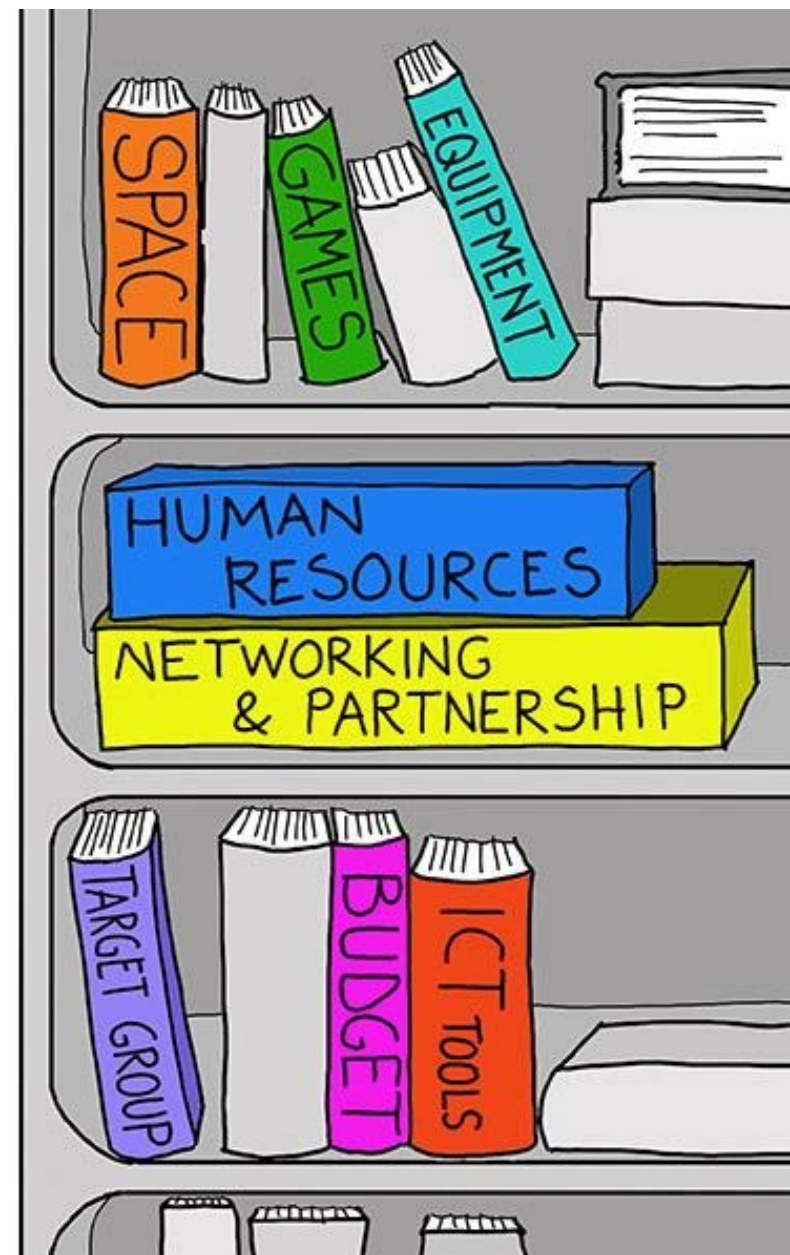


8. TARGET GROUP



- The space organization, type of games, equipment's, networking and partnership depend on the target group and specifically to whom toy libraries activities are addressed.

It is fundamental to set up the Toy Library thinking on specific target groups of people to address the activities

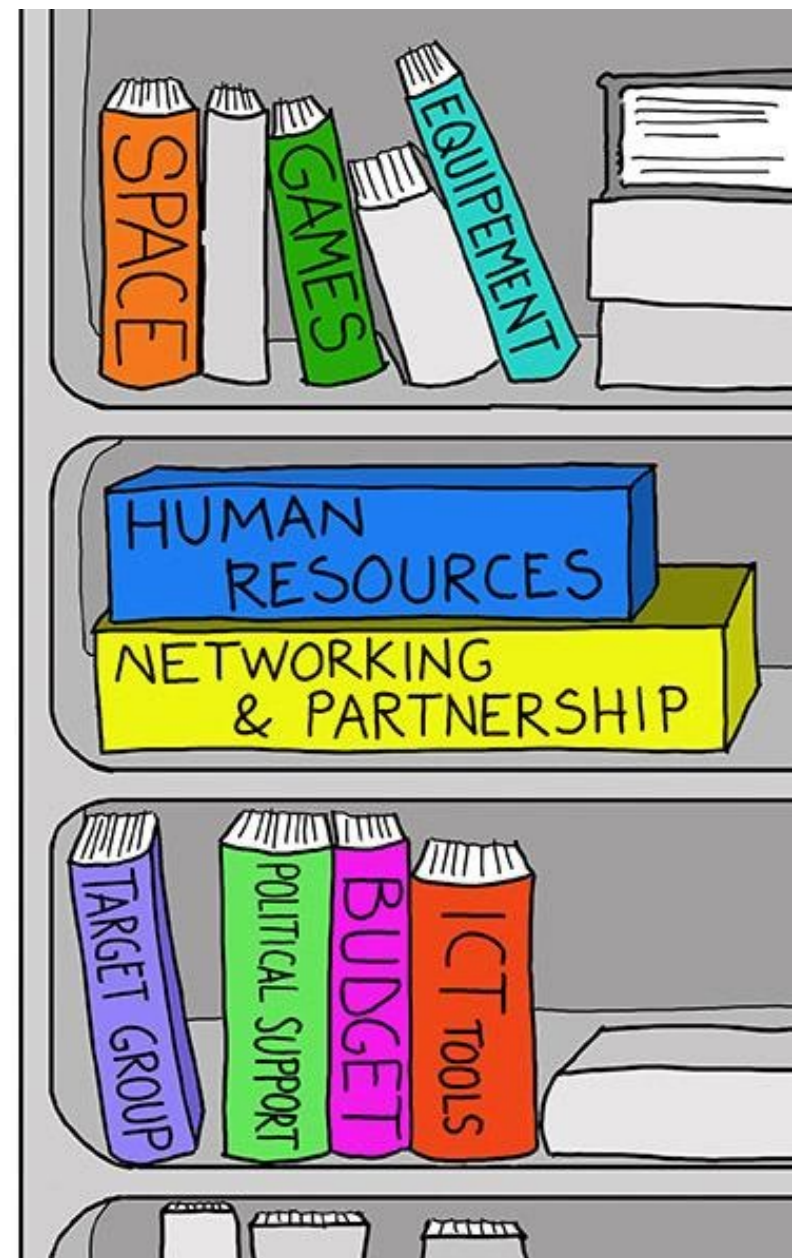


9. POLITICAL SUPPORT

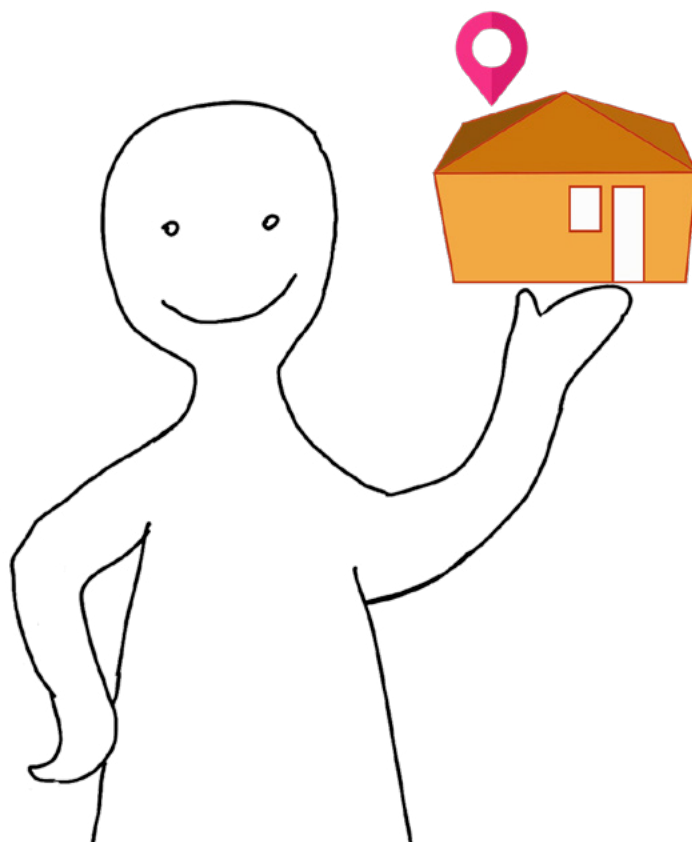


The political support is a fundamental key for setting up and maintaining a Toy Library.

To politically supporting Toy Library activities means to foster sustainability and social positive impact in order to meet citizens' needs



Based on these **9 tips**, you can start to design your local **toy library!**



Based on these **9 tips**, you can start to draft your local toy library and...



... Have fun!





Project Partner Cities

Cork (IE), Esplugues de Llobregat (ES), Katowice (PL), Klaipeda (LT), Larissa (EL), Novigrad (HR), Viana de Castelo (PT). Lead Partner: Udine (IT)



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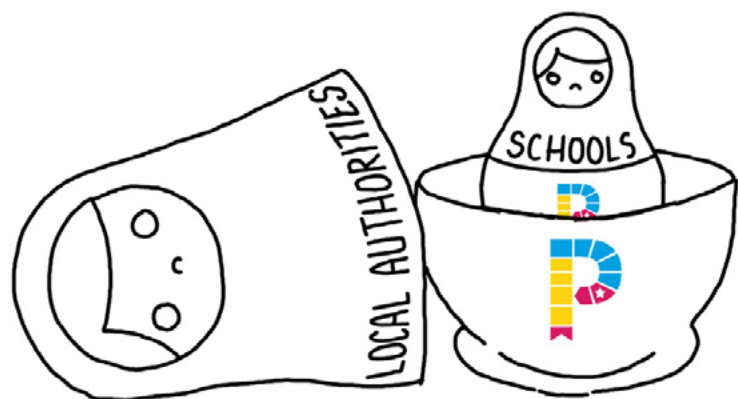
Communication office

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With the support of

Michel Thomas
ALF, the National Association
of Toy Libraries



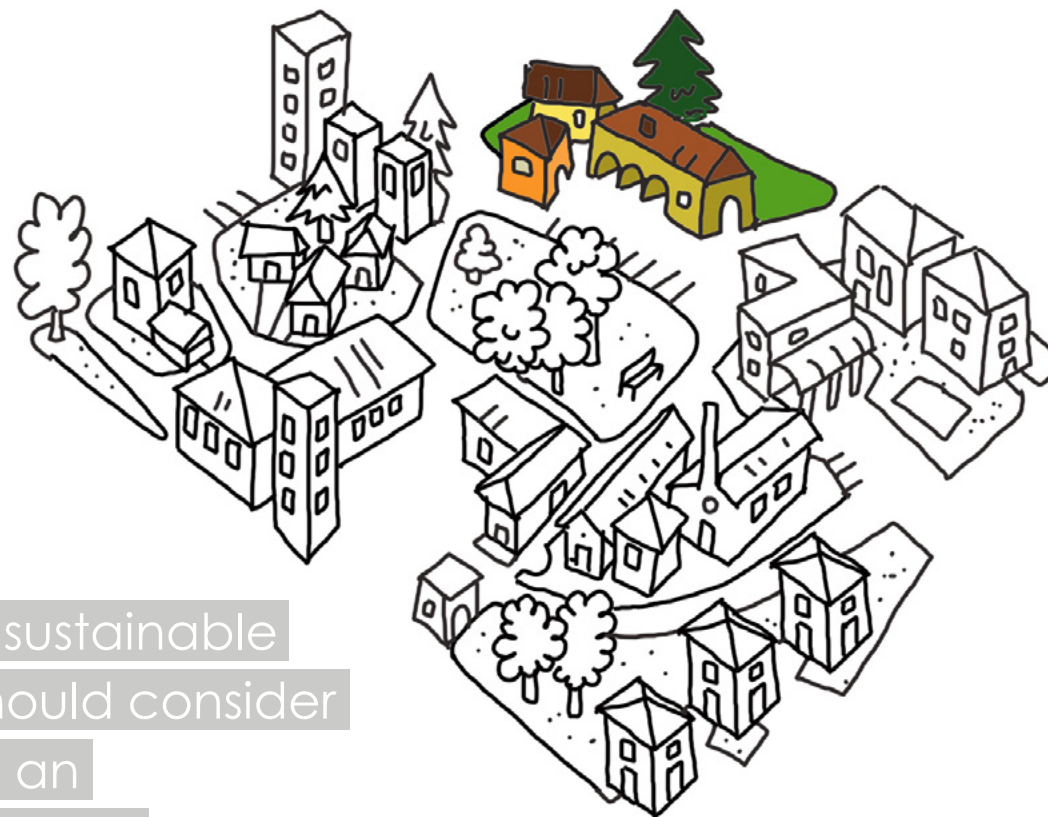


The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network

A Toolkit for Cities to promote Playful Activities in Schools



Insights for cities and
policy-makers to design
a strategy **to involve**
Schools Institutions for
promoting **PLAY** activities



Cities, willing to address healthy and sustainable messages to children and families, should consider to promote the **playing approach** as an innovative tool to foster good Educational Purposes.

Cities should promote **PLAY** as an educational tool for these important reasons:

1. To foster a comfortable school environment;
2. To achieve better results in education;
3. To ensure inclusion in school;
4. To foster mental health;
5. To prevent gambling phenomenon in youth.

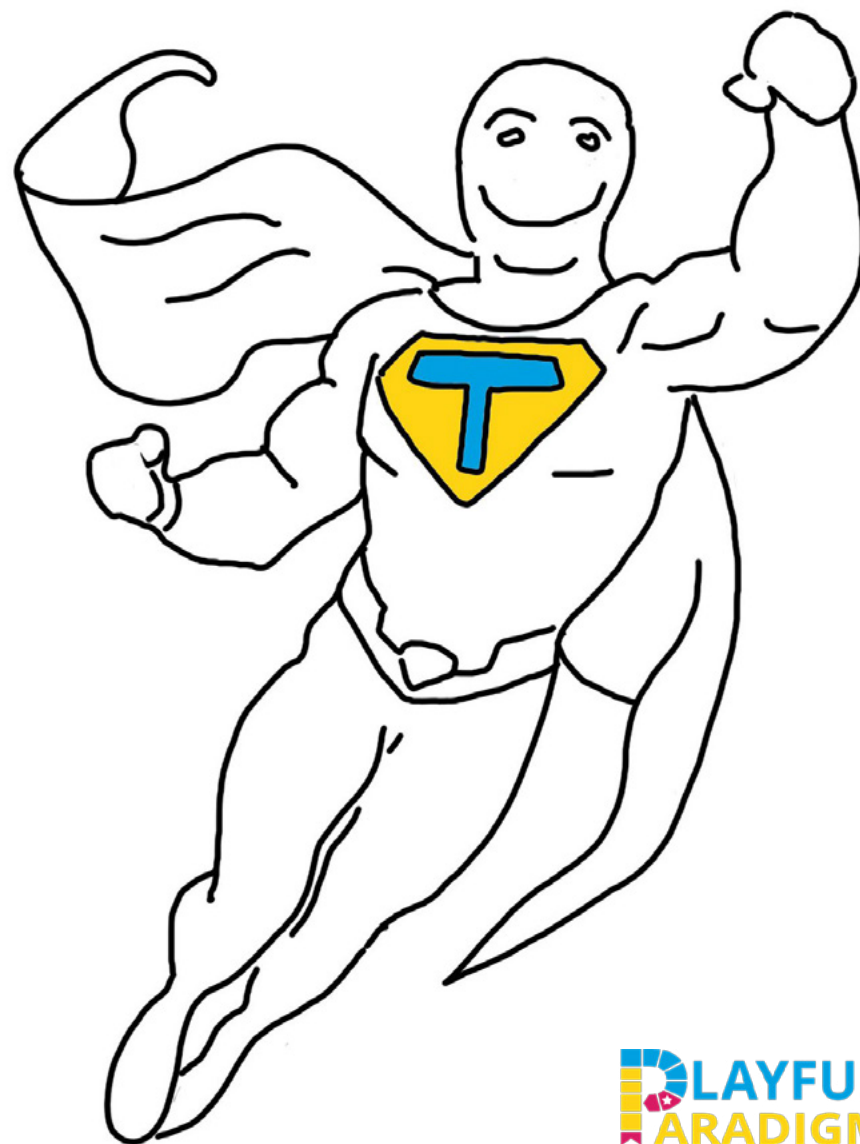


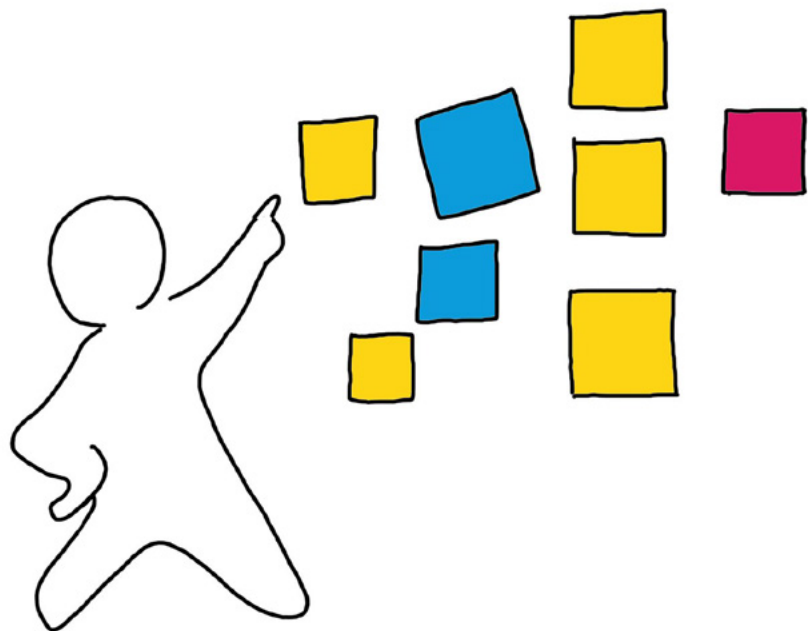
There is a **Recipe** with
4 important ingredients to ensure a
good result...

1. TEACHERS' ENGAGEMENT

Teachers could be sceptical at the beginning, but a successful implementation of games in schools needs them to get fully engaged in the definition of a playing approach. Among the main action required:

- provide a **training** for teachers;
- identify among them some **Play leaders** who will be responsible and facilitators of play activities;
- boost **pilot play programmes** to help demonstrate the positive impact of play in educational spaces.





2. COLLABORATIVE METHODOLOGY

It's important to engage the “**educational community**” in the identification and definition of a playful methodology for schools.

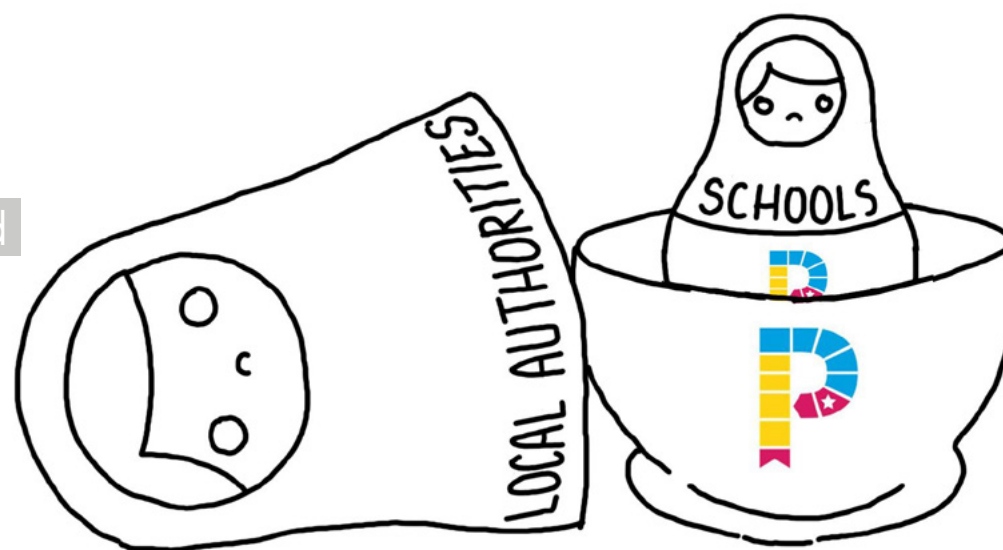
A **participative method** should be used to share tools and build abilities dealing with play in schools.

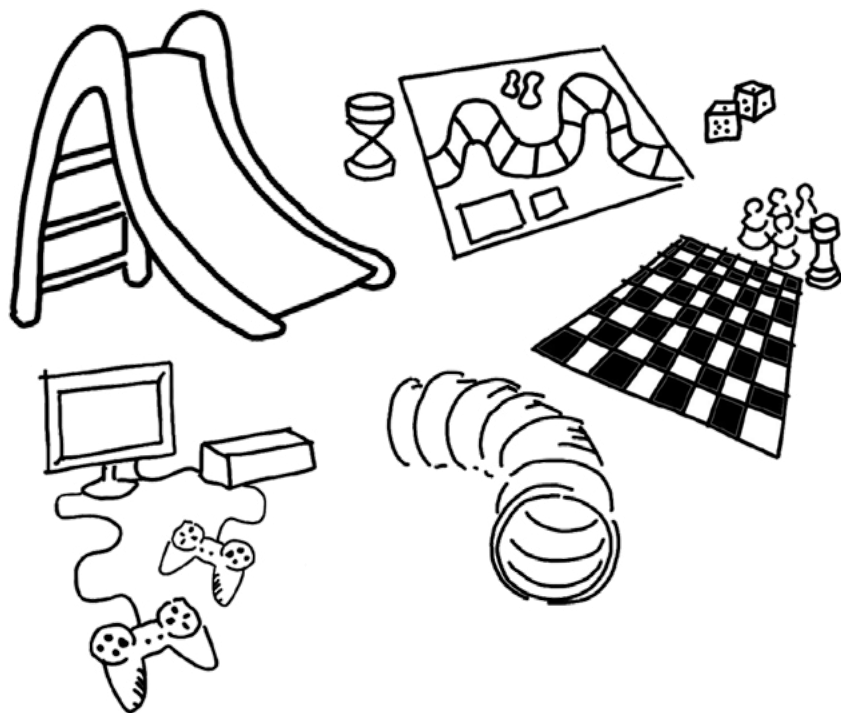
Innovative ideas coming from teachers should support the process implementation.

3. LOCAL AUTHORITIES AS EDUCATIONAL PLAY LEADERS

Municipalities and Local Authorities should support schools in promoting the playful approach.

They can involve **school's directors** and invite them in participating to the **community educational process** fostering the use of play in schools.





4. A GOOD PLAY EQUIPMENT

Promoting Play approach requires some playful facilities for organising gaming activities and play laboratories. Among others:

- Games and toys;
- ICT games
- Making available school open spaces.

And if you want an example...

The Sendvaris Progymnasium in Klaipėda, Lithuania, promotes playful activities addressing **healthy lifestyle messages**.

Among others, the “**active break**”, a dancing exercise during classes, has been implemented for boosting physical activity and refreshing minds for further concentration.

The Klaipėda City Public Health Bureau appointed some **health specialists** for working in schools and collaborating with teachers and parents to promote the psychological and physical wellbeing





Project Partner Cities

Cork (IE), Esplugues de Llobregat (ES), Katowice (PL), Klaipeda (LT), Larissa (EL), Novigrad (HR), Viana de Castelo (PT). Lead Partner: Udine (IT)



Written and designed by

Ileana Toscano
Lead Expert

Graphic design

Saul Darù

Communication office

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The Playful Paradigm Transfer Network

A Toolkit to make your city
Playful!





is a Transfer Network, led by the Municipality of Udine (Italy), which is committed in transferring the philosophy of PLAY to other 7 Cities.



PLAY could be used as a innovative tool to: trigger the **Citizens' Active Participation** & **Promote inclusion** by involving families, children, women, older and marginalised people

**CITIZENS
PARTICIPATION**

**INCLUSION,
HEALTH &
SUSTAINABILITY
PRINCIPLES**

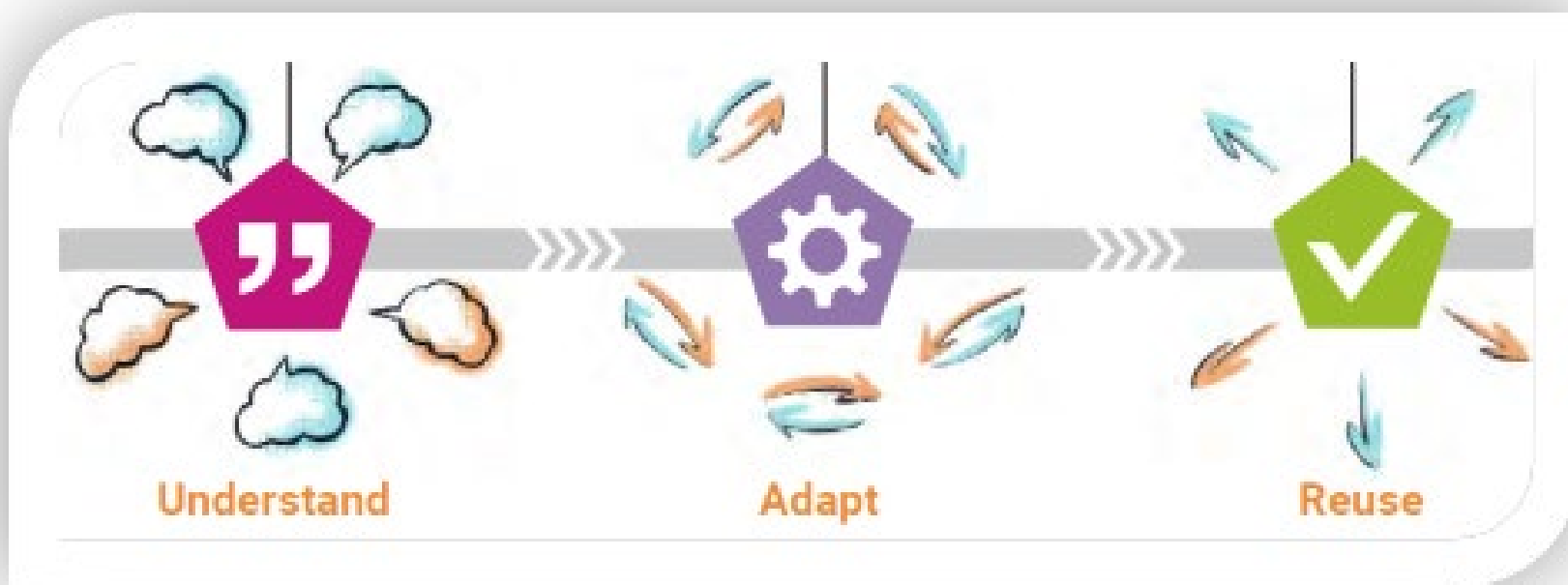
If your city is looking for novel approaches to
re-design cities,
claim streets open for play,
educate children and adults
about sustainability,

this is the toolkit for you!



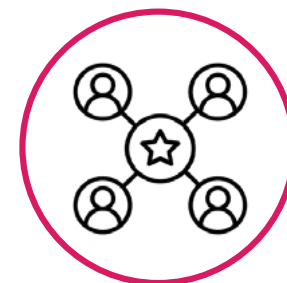
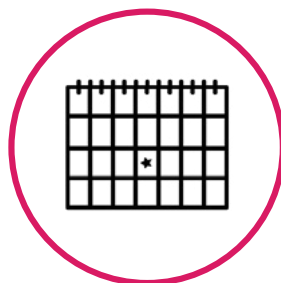
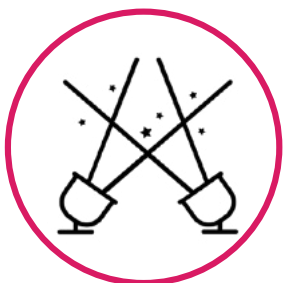
The Transfer Journey

following in the footsteps of the Good Practice dealing with play, developed in Udine over 20 years

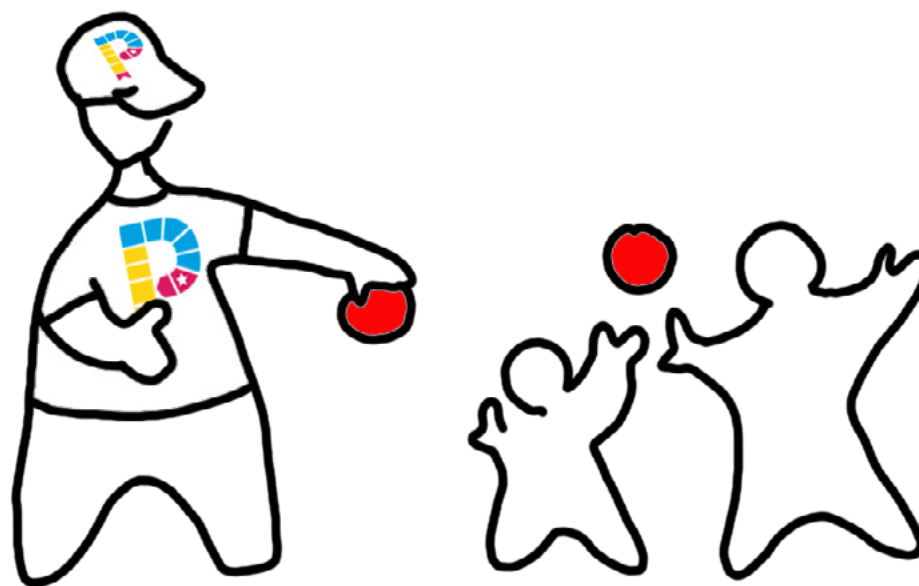
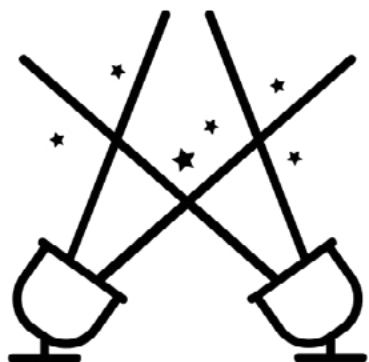


6 Transfer Modules

Udine's Good Practice and all its related initiatives have been translated into modules, concrete activities for the partner cities to adapt and put into practice, in order to be included in the city's development strategy.

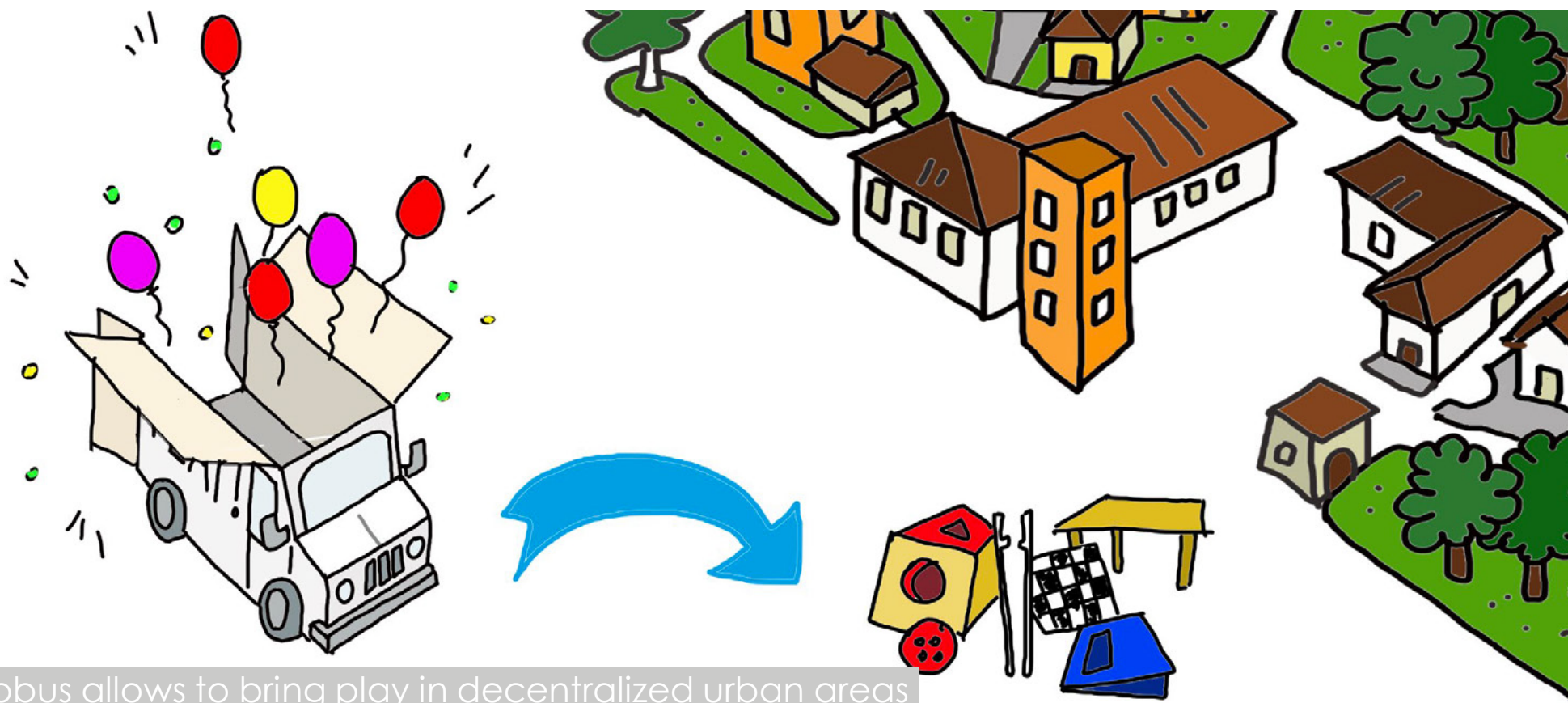


1. Random Play events



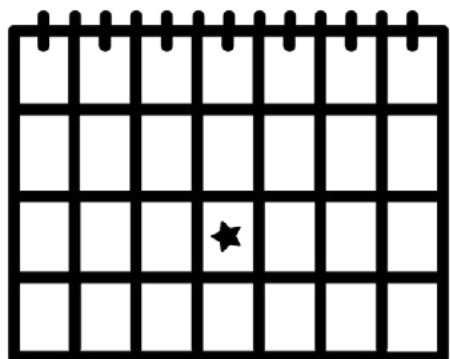
A Pilot Play event is a good testing to try the power of play in cities as a catalyst of participation and inclusion!

2. Ludobus – Play bus



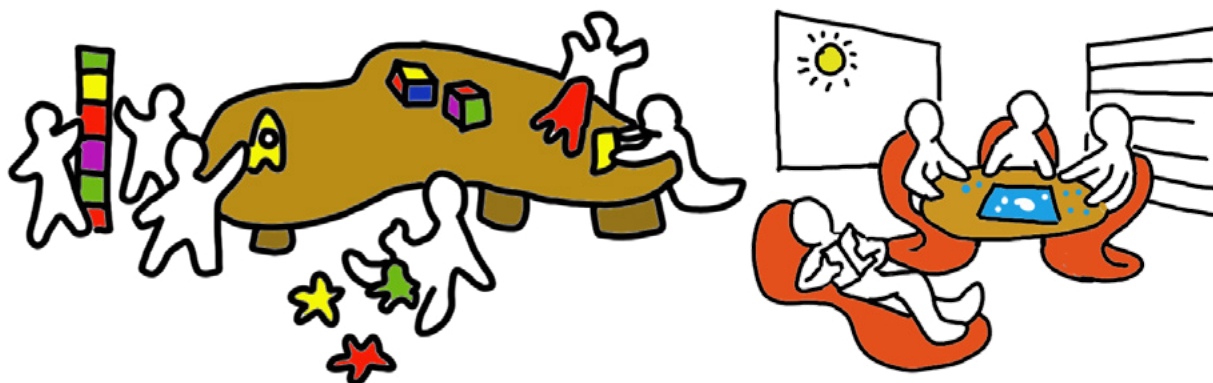
Ludobus allows to bring play in decentralized urban areas and the city centre. It triggers the civic engagement and promote inclusion

3. Annual program of Play events



Make your Pilot Play activity an annual event for your city!

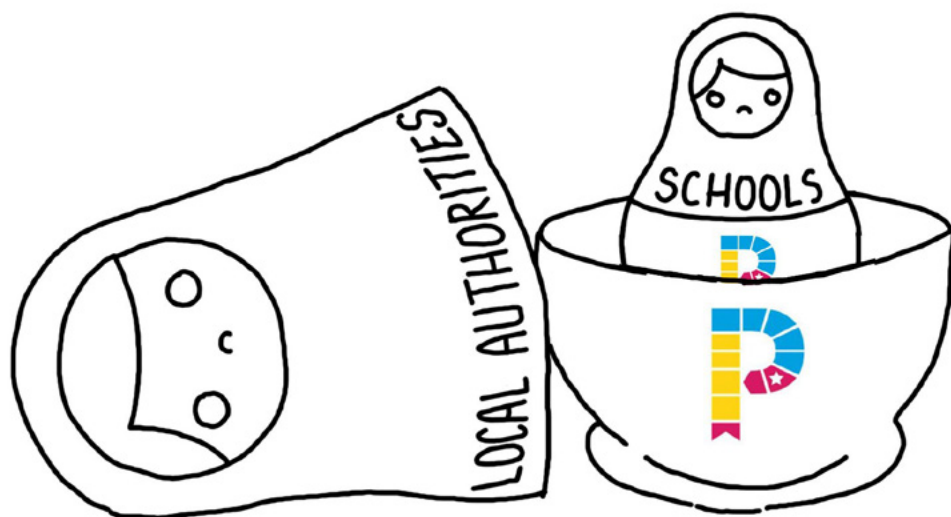
4. Toy Library



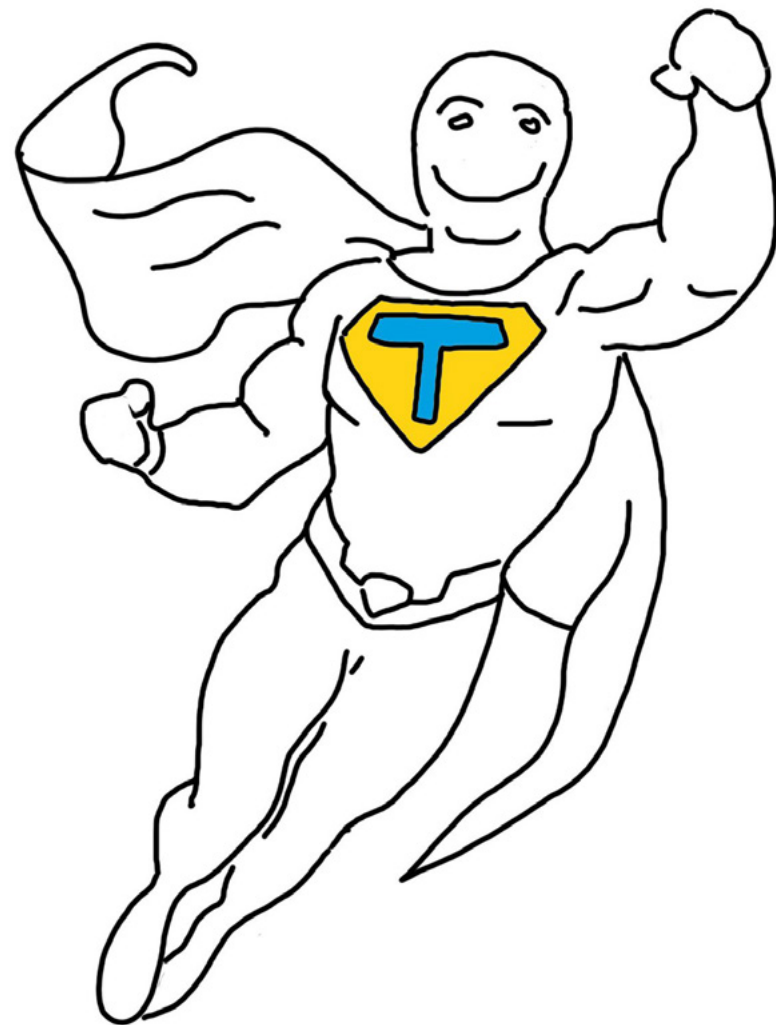
The Toylibrary should be set up as an urban hub and a living lab for local communities, families and children. Play is the vehicle to foster better relationship between people and provide the inclusion of the most marginalised.



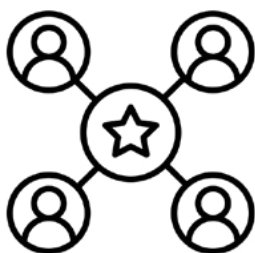
5. Playful activities in schools



Involve your schools in your play activities and make the educational approach more playful in formal and informal education programmes.



6. Playful Projects for local communities

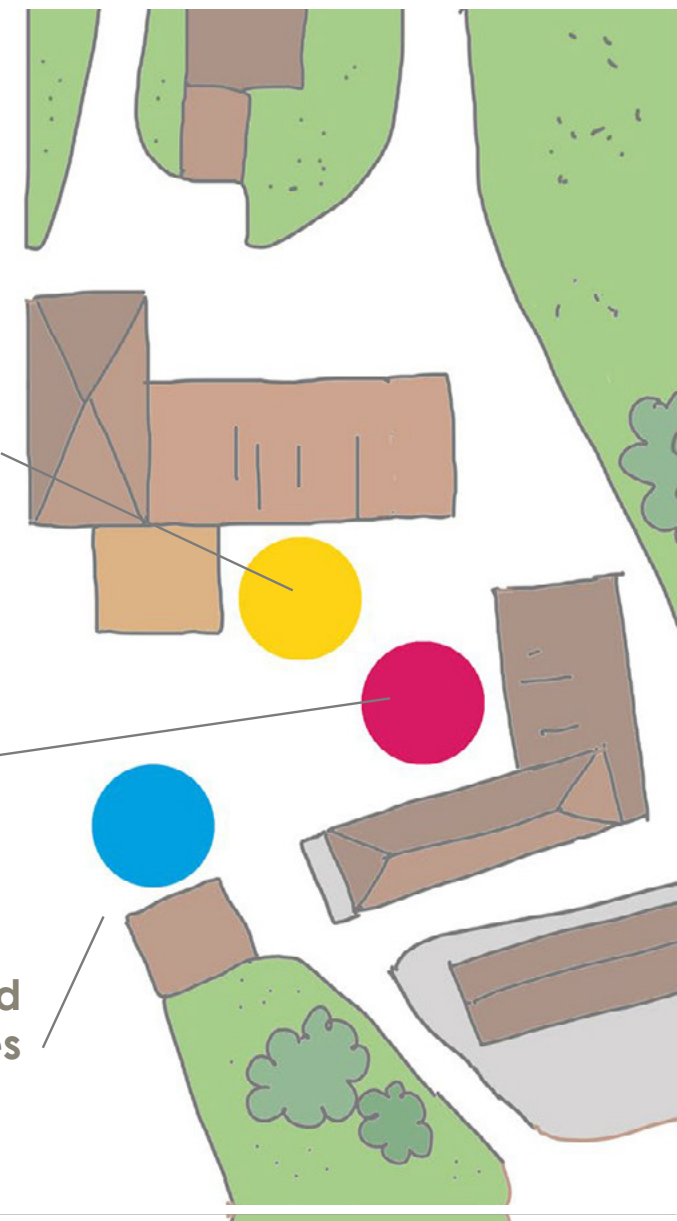


Connect your communities through play!
Organise tactical urban activities and placemaking
experiences (playmaking).

- Games for children

- Movement games

- Board Games



The Playful Paradigm has also promoted

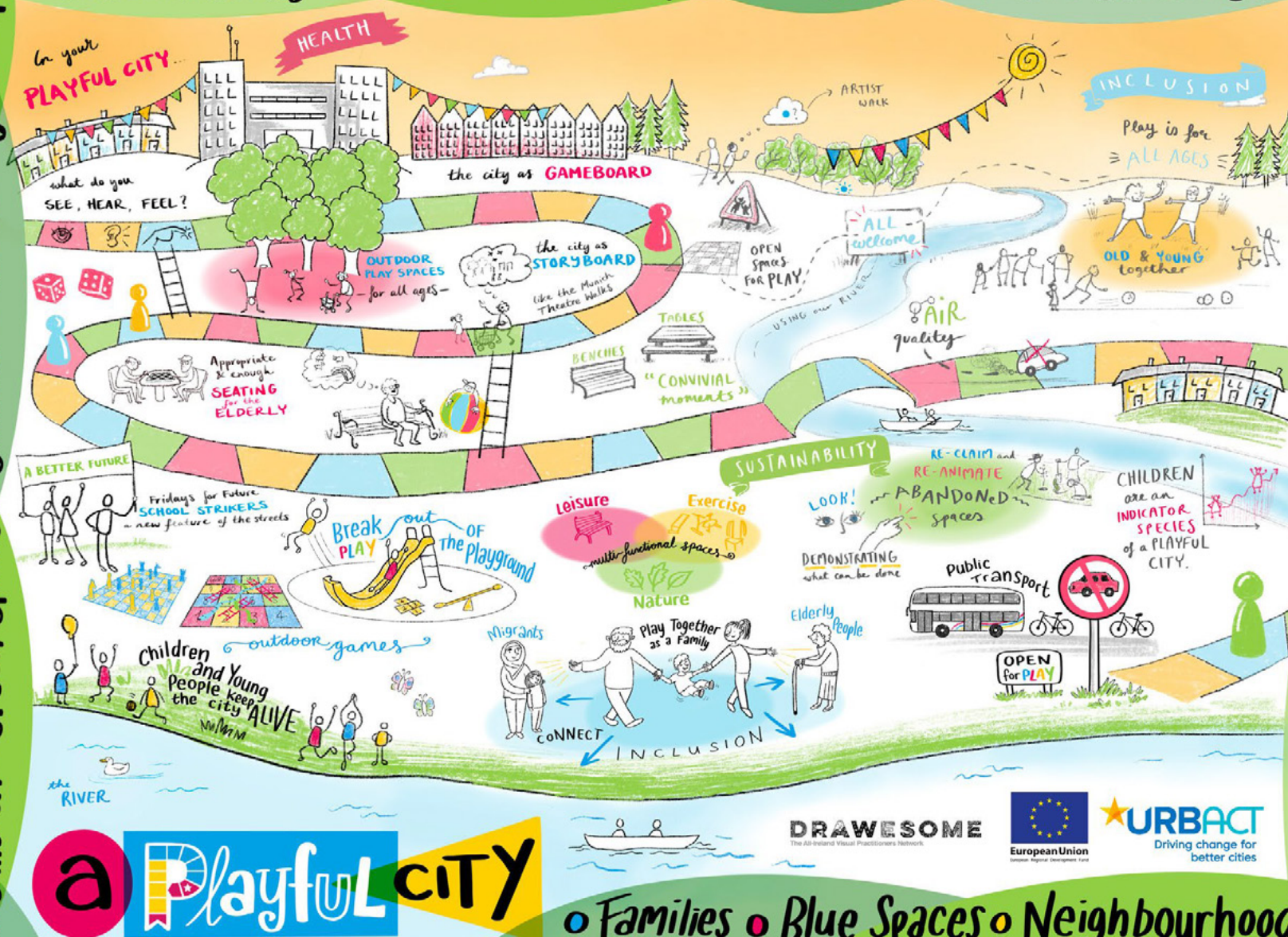
- Play-Placemaking and city branding
- Public procurement for play
- Urban planning activity through play
- The Political Manifesto of Playful Cities to launch the European Capital of Play

The ideal Playful City

The Playful Paradigm TN has co-designed a Playful City with the idea to promote the European Capital of Play

• Children • Green Spaces • Streets • Disability Groups

● Sustainability ● Outdoor Public Spaces ● Youth ● Public Buildings



Older People • Nature • Schools • Minority Groups

• Families • Blue Spaces • Neighbourhoods •

What we learned from the **Playful Paradigm** experience so far is that people don't need explanation about where and how playing. They need more **car free public spaces** and **areas open to play for children, youth and adults**.

People need **beauty, colors, nature, safety and comfortable spaces** to stay together for playing, sharing ideas and keeping alive the creativity we need to continue imagining a better future to live.

“Don’t try to direct Play, just make the Space Playful”

Denise Cahill, Healthy City coordinator Cork



Project Partner Cities

Cork (IE), Esplugues de Llobregat (ES), Katowice (PL), Klaipeda (LT), Larissa (EL), Novigrad (HR), Viana de Castelo (PT). Lead Partner: Udine (IT)

Cork City Council



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KATOWICE
for a change



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