

D.T2.4.1 - REPORT ON CAPACITY BUILDING FOR URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACUPUNCTURE

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CAPACITY BUILDING FOR URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACUPUNCTURE

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Introduction

This report is part of work package T2 and headed by the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER). The purpose of the deliverable, D.T2.4.1 - Report on Capacity Building in integrated environmental management with urban environmental acupuncture (UEA, cp. Hemingway et al. 2019) in functional urban areas (FUA's) is to report on capacity building such as local workshops or urban living labs conducted with local authorities in the context of action plan implementation.

Data has been collected by the IOER using a questionnaire that was distributed to the four pilot project cities: Alessandria Italy, Impuls Region (Erfurt, Weimar, Jena, Weimarer Land), Germany, Liptovsky Mikulas, Slovakia and Chorzów, Poland - in December 2020.

The questionnaire included 28 questions separated into 4 thematic sections. The thematic sections included:

- Identifying information on person completing the form (to be able to match answers with the person responding)
- Purpose and content of action plan for UEA in the city or FUA (to aid in reporting on the framework of the 4 action plans)
- Creating action plans (to aid in understanding the planning process, success factors and problems occurred providing the opportunity to identify potential solutions)
- Feedback from the action plan team regarding action planning for urban environmental acupuncture (to understand the experience of project partners utilizing urban environmental acupuncture)

Project partners were instructed to have the person leading the action planning team answer the questions or have someone answer the questions they feel is the more knowledgeable. This report is based on the responses to the questionnaire.



1. Purpose of capacity building in the SALUTE4CE project

The main objective of the SALUTE4CE project is to protect and develop natural resources via integrated environmental management of green and blue infrastructure, accomplished specifically by planting native and climate resistant vegetation within selected functional urban areas (FUA's) (SALUTE4CE 2019). Urban Environmental Acupuncture (UEA) provides the opportunity of improving the urban fabric by increasing the availability and prevalence of green space. Green spaces may complement one another by bridging large and small sites and contributing to the urban green network as a whole. In order to successfully accomplish the project objectives, it is necessary to conduct capacity building. Capacity building in origin is understood as a conceptual approach to social or personal development that focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations from realizing their development goals while enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results (Jänicke 2002, GIZ 2015). Since the 1970s the concept was developed in several contexts, among others in the global development policy.



Figure 1: Visualisation of Urban Environmental Acupuncture (UEA) (Source: Franka Strangfeld, 2019)

In the SALUTE4CE project, capacity building is interwoven into the action planning process for improving urban green where project partners are guided through steps including general considerations, creating action plans (i.e. preparation, analytical and developmental phase) and plan implementation. According to the United Nations capacity building is defined as “the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world. An essential ingredient in capacity-building is transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within; transformation of this kind goes beyond performing tasks to changing mind-sets and attitudes” (United Nations n.d.). The logic of this approach was and is to strengthen local actors and communities to master the manifold challenges of ecological, social and economic development. In the SALUTE4CE project capacity building includes assembling human and other resources to ensure success of planned UEA sites. This includes involvement of neighbourhood residents, school children or city officials, for instance. The public has been heavily involved in the planning process of pilot project creation. Optimistically, the involvement of the public in all action planning phases (i.e. initial project stages, during project planning, implementation and beyond as part of maintenance and monitoring) will contribute toward transformation of “mind-sets and attitudes” in the expansion of greenspace in dense urban areas.

On the ground, pilot project partner cities were required to implement urban environmental acupuncture and specific communication activities, there was a certain degree of flexibility in deciding on the specific



actions. For example, specific focus of planning goals and selection of internal and external stakeholders were left for the pilot project cities to decide.

This report will describe those activities as conducted by the 4 pilot project cities or FUA's.

2. Summaries of Capacity building activities in Functional Urban Areas (FUAs)

In this chapter summaries are provided based on feedback given by project partners in each of the 4 pilot project cities. Opinions have been collected as mentioned above from a questionnaire distributed by the IOER. For the most part, the text has been left unchanged. In some cases the text has been slightly altered to improve readability (i.e. shortened or small English corrections). A special thank you to the individuals from each FUA for their willingness and effort in completing the questionnaire.

Each capacity building summary is broken down into subject areas:

- Information provided by (i.e. the person that completed the form)
- Action planning goals (i.e. specific goals addressed in the action plan within the FUA)
- Main internal and external supporters throughout the planning process (i.e. the action planning team, the public and other stakeholders)
- Satisfaction with the composition of actors in the planning process (i.e. how satisfied the FUA was with their selection of stakeholders)
- Public involvement with the planning process (i.e. when and how the public has been active in the planning process)
- Were set targets and measures met (a description of whether each pilot project city was able to meet their goals set by the action planning team).



Figure 2: Map of pilot project locations (Source: Hemingway, J. & Witschas, S., IOER, 2019)

2.1. Capacity Building in Alessandria, Italy

Information provided by: Angelo Ranzenigo, Botanical Garden of Alessandria City

Role in the SALUTE4CE Project: Leader of Action Planning Team

Action planning goals: The city of Alessandria, Italy focused on the implementation of thermo regulating effects, increasing urban biodiversity, environmental monitoring in the city centre, solid particulate mitigation, implementation of discussions and engagement of citizenship on environmental thematic in their action plan.

Main internal and external supporters throughout planning process: The main internal supporters for the action planning process were the action planning team. External to the action planning team a consultant, a not-for-profit Association (Natura e Ragazzi) was involved in all planning phases (preparation, analytical and the development phase). A local group (Sorooptimis) participated in the developmental phase.

Satisfaction with the composition of actors in the planning process: The Italian partners were satisfied with the composition of actors and attribute this success to the structural composition of the action planning team, mostly internal to the administration, acknowledged as excellence, political and local administrators' support, scientific preparation of the external experts and direct knowledge of local issues.

Public Involvement in the planning process: The general public has been informed of the project as soon as it was approved. Citizens have been actively involved in the action planning since the very beginning of the project, thanks to the willingness of citizens in the selection of the 4 pilot action sites and during all the elaboration phase where they took into consideration local problems and suggestions. It is also planned that citizens will be involved in the implementation phase. The public has been informed of project activities via press releases, conferences, local training, the city of Alessandria homepage and educational activities within schools. Public feedback has influenced the selection of the spots and the selection of 1 project (City Tree that was altered as a result).



Figure 3: Pilot project site in Alessandria, Italy (Source: Max Dorigo Visuals, 2021)

Were set targets and measures met? The set targets and measures decided upon by the action planning team could be met as a result. The finalization of local stakeholder involvement has been slightly postponed due to the COVID pandemic. According to our Italian project partners the key to meeting deadlines and targets was a direct result of the scientific level of members participating in the action planning team and the detailed work agenda.

2.2. Capacity Building in the Impuls Region (Erfurt, Weimar, Jena and Weimarer Land), Germany



Erfurt
LÄNDERSHAUPTSTADT
THÜRINGEN
Stadtverwaltung

Freiflächengestaltung Bolzplatz Körnerstraße

Die Stadt Erfurt möchte die Grünfläche um den Bolzplatz in der Körnerstraße 10 gestalten und ruft alle Interessierten Bürger und Bürgerinnen dazu auf, sich mit Ideen an diesem Projekt zu beteiligen. Wir stellen uns vor allem einen naturnah gestalteten Platz für Familien, Kinder und Jugendliche vor.

Das war unsere erste Ideenskizze. >>>

In der Zwischenzeit haben wir konkretere Vorstellungen:

- Spielmöglichkeiten (z.B. Sand für die Kleinen, Baumstämme und Findlinge zum Balancieren und Klettern, Barfußpfad, Schaukel, Graffitiwand)
- Sitzmöglichkeiten
- Grillmöglichkeit
- mehr Grün als Schattenspender, Raumbildner und Abgrenzung zu Verkehrsflächen (Bäume und Sträucher, teilweise mit essbaren Früchten und Nüssen)
- lebendige Pflanzflächen zum Entdecken und Probieren für Alle (essbare Kräuter, Stauden mit auffälligen Blüten und Blättern, Duftpflanzen, fleischfressende Pflanzen, Gräser und Wiesenblumen)
- Nahrungs- und Rückzugsmöglichkeiten für Tiere (z.B. Brut- und Nistkästen für Vögel und Fledermäuse, Insektenhotel für Bienen, Wildblumen für Schmetterlinge)





<<< Hier sieht man Fotos vom Bolzplatz.

Das sind Beispiele für die Umsetzung. >>>



<<< Gibt es noch mehr Ideen und Wünsche? Bitte hier ergänzen.

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Figure 4: Pilot project draft and implementation ideas of a site in Erfurt, Germany (Source: City Administration Erfurt, 2021)

Information provided by: Christian Bachmann, Office Manager Impulsregion, e.V.,

Role in SALUTE4CE project: Project Coordinator

Action planning goals: The main goals of the Impuls Region were to develop a long-term effective green space development strategy. The core of this strategy is to be an interconnected, comprehensive network of small-scale green spaces that contribute to coping with the consequences of climate change; considering that green spaces in cities are becoming increasingly important. This is related to improving access to parks



and playgrounds or mitigating the effects of climate change. Demographic changes and the associated urban redevelopment have led to different demands on open spaces. The concept aims to meet these challenges.

Main internal and external supporters throughout planning process: In addition to the green space and urban planning offices, climate protection managers were an important source of information. In addition, important insights were gained in various citizen participation formats. The garden departments and urban planning departments of the cities of Erfurt, Weimar, Jena and Apolda (Weimarer Land) were heavily involved in the creation of the action plan. The involvement took place in all three phases of the creation process.

Satisfaction with the composition of actors in the planning process: Through the involvement of various offices and actors with a specialist focus, it was possible to make good additions to the content of the Action Plan. This concerned, among other things, the planning and content of the concept. The Impuls Region attributes the success to creation of a common basis at the political level so that the project would have good framework conditions. The resolution of the concept and the measures to be implemented by the board of the Impuls Region was an indispensable basis for the subsequent realization phase. The resolution at the political level created the necessary binding force for the planned activities. After that, a working group had to be set up, which was responsible for the content of the project. Responsibilities and deadlines had to be clarified. At joint meetings held at specific intervals, the current processing status was discussed, and solutions worked out when problems or challenges arose.

Public Involvement in the planning process: The public was included in action planning in different phases. After the development areas were determined, meetings were held with the local district councils and residents. First, the project was presented. Afterwards, the stakeholders were asked for their suggestions on how the measures should be implemented. Following that, the plans were revised according to the residents' suggestions, and then another meeting was held to discuss the results. Information about the project was disseminated through press articles in newspapers, social media (e.g., Facebook); notices with posters in residential areas of development sites, press conferences with local newspapers, distribution of flyers. Thanks to the involvement of citizens in the selection of the 4 pilot action sites and during all the elaboration phase it was possible to take into consideration local problems and suggestions. There are also plans to involve citizens in the implementation of individual measures. The exact form this will take has yet to be clarified. The individual proposed measures were strongly influenced by the ideas of the citizens. The residents of the respective development area can best determine how the area can be upgraded in an aesthetic and functional way.

Were set targets and measures met? The deadlines were largely met. However, the Corona pandemic caused delays. Some administrative staff had to go on short time working. As a result, the preparation of the data, which first had to be generated, especially for the new potential development areas, took longer than initially planned. In addition, not all citizens' meetings could be held because larger gatherings were prohibited in the lockdown. It was possible to meet the deadlines because a schedule with clearly defined goals and responsibilities had been drawn up during the preparatory phase of the action plan. However, it was not apparent when the schedule was drawn up that the Corona pandemic would have such a major impact on the work in the SALUTE4CE project.

2.3. Capacity Building in Liptovský Mikuláš, Slovakia



Figure 5: Pilot project rendering near a school in Liptovský Mikuláš (Source: Petran, M., 2021)

Information provided by: Jana Kormanikova, Head of Project Management Department, City of Liptovský Mikuláš

Role in SALUTE4CE Project: To coordinate and manage project activities and financing for the city of Liptovský Mikuláš

Action planning goals: The main thematic challenge addressed by Liptovský Mikuláš was abandoned spaces and beautification of public space. Initial focus of action planning was focused on gathering proposals from the public and other stakeholders to identify small abandoned localities in cities and villages that could benefit from application of urban environmental acupuncture.

Main internal and external supporters throughout planning process: The main internal supporters were the action plan team consisting of 7 persons in various functions. IURS Ostrava, the Mayors of the city and villages of the FUA, Members of City Parliament, Civil associations and the public. The elaborator of action plan was EKOJET Limited selected through the public procurement process. They were selected based on a bidding process considering three potential elaborated and according to the rules of public procurement the one with the cheapest offer was selected.

Satisfaction with the composition of actors in the planning process: Liptovský Mikuláš found the composition of actors quite suitable, however assert there is always room for improvement. Students from Universities and Secondary schools, landscape architects, professions, decision makers from business sector were invited to participate, but did not take part in the process of Action plan preparation. The main success factor was the precise and detailed preparation of public procurement, where detailed content and requirements for potential action plan (AP) elaborators were included. According to such a precise description and conditions, we have succeeded to find the elaborator that was able to fill our expectations and requirements in Action plan elaboration.



Public Involvement in the planning process: The public was informed concerning the opportunity to take part in collecting of suggestions for UEA in March 2021, in analysis phase, before the GIS map application was activated. GIS map application was made available to the public on the websites/social network accounts of the town of Liptovský Mikuláš and the commuter municipalities between 31.3.2021 and 30.4.2021. We have asked (via email) 37 mayors of surrounding villages (FUA) to participate on the “survey”. The mayors of the following 6 of the 37 municipalities that were approached confirmed their participation in the project: Prosiek, Ľubela, Smrečany, Liptovský Ondrej, Uhorská Ves, Závažná Poruba. A great effort was made to include the public via public meetings (mainly in online form due to the COVID pandemic), surveys via the Facebook voting, GIS application, emails, and in-person in the form of voting ballots, a survey in the field with mayors of FUA in April 2021 and living labs (Neighbourhood green space in Podbreziny area on November 11, 2019 and finally an online conference - webinar on May 5, 2021. The public was actively involved in the selection of the 4 pilot action sites and during the entire elaboration planning phase taking into consideration local problems and suggestions. Without this public feedback (suggestions of concrete abandoned spaces) the Action Plan will probably miss its “added value”.

Were set targets and measures met? Deadlines for action planning have been prepared completely as of the end of May 2021. In more detail, the contract with the elaborator of the action plan (EKOJET, Ltd., Bratislava) was signed on February 5, 2021 and public procurement was approved by FLC (First Level Control by EU) on March 1, 2021. The timetable for the action plan elaboration (stated and fulfilled): Analytical part: March 2021 Collection of suggestions for UEA from public (GIS campaign): March 31, 2021 - April 30, 2021 and the final document action plan on May 2021. The action planning team in Liptovský Mikuláš attributes their ability to meet deadlines to their efforts to strengthen and concentrate much effort to prepare the action plan in the timeframe from 03/2021 to 05/2021. In the realization phase they appreciated the perfect preparation phase because they knew exactly what and how to do to meet stated targets. The public procurement was a challenge time-wise as it was quite difficult to find potential elaborators of action plans, as well as to set the public procurement documentation (content of AP, requirements and goals). The preparation phase took all in all a half a year (09/20-02/21).

2.4. Capacity Building in Chorzów, Poland

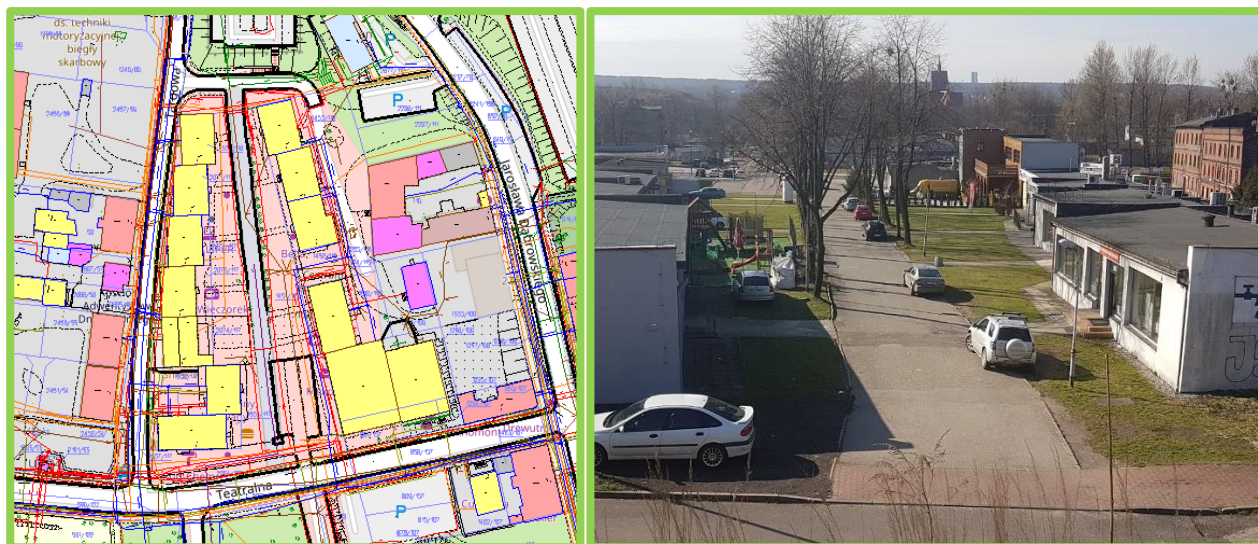


Figure 6: Pilot project in Ruda Śląska, Left: site map, Right: site photo (Source: Stangel, M., 2021)

Information provided by: Agata Beryt, Director of the department of development, responsible for obtaining external funds for municipal investments and contacts with investors, Chorzów, Poland

Role in SALUTE4CE Project: Member of Steering Committee on behalf of the city of Chorzów

Action planning goals: The areas included in the SALUTE4CE project include three autonomous administrative units: Chorzów, Ruda Śląska and Świętochłowice, which in total cover an area of 124.19 km², representing 10.19% of the area of the Upper Silesian agglomeration understood as a Functional Urban Area (FUA) with metropolitan characteristics. The main element that links Chorzów, Ruda Śląska and Świętochłowice is the industrial history of the origin of these cities, and their development based on heavy industry functions, mainly hard coal mining and metallurgy of iron, steel and non-ferrous metals. The second factor, no less important, is the central location within the metropolitan area as the analysed area borders with Katowice on its eastern border and, what is more, two main communication axes - A4 motorway and Drogowa Trasa Średnicowa (DTŚ) run parallel through it.

The main vulnerabilities experienced are negative climatic phenomena such as heat waves, urban heat island and heavy rainfall. The availability of green space varies considerably between neighbourhoods and parts of the city. In the context of considering the legitimacy of joint development of green acupuncture sites, the following provisions of the Integrated Development Strategy of the Functional Area of Chorzów, Ruda Śląska and Świętochłowice by 2030 are considered important: Strategic goal 1: High level of quality of life of the inhabitants of the Functional Urban Area. Specifically, priority 1.1 raising the standard of living in the Functional Urban Area. Strategic goal 4: High level of development of social, technical and transport infrastructure of the Functional Urban Area. Specifically, priority - 4.3. Revitalisation of degraded areas of the Functional Urban Area and finally, Strategic goal 6: Increasing the quality of the environment in the Functional Urban Area. Specifically, Priority 6.1. Improving the condition of the environment in the FUA.

Main internal and external supporters throughout planning process: The key supporters external to the action planning team in preparation of the action plan were NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) and residents of Chorzów. In addition, the team from IETU and Silesia Botanic Garden also partners in SALUTE4CE project were key supporters throughout the planning process as well as City Hall employees and additional external experts.



Satisfaction with the composition of actors in the planning process: The composition of actors in the planning process was suitable. One of the main challenges in the action planning development process was identifying sites owned by the city where green acupuncture investments could be implemented. This challenge was overcome thanks to excellent cooperation with the department responsible for the real estate within City Hall. The main success factor in Chorzów was the engagement of all actors in the planning process.

Public Involvement in the planning process: The public was involved in the preparation phase where they provided feedback and information. Workshops with the participation of residents of Chorzów city. Public feedback provided indications of the potential green city acupuncture spots. Which has been taken into account during creation of the action plan. For example, a preliminary selection of the UEA locations took place with employees of the City Offices of Ruda Śląska, Chorzów, and Świętochłowice. Further suggestions were collected during a „living laboratory” as well as during personal meetings, presentations, and online meetings. What is more, research walks were carried out within individual cities.

Were set targets and measures met? The set targets and measures could be met. The main success factor was engagement of all actors throughout the planning process.

3. Conclusion

The thinking behind urban acupuncture is that small-scale selective adjustments to cities can progressively transform the urban fabric resulting in significant positive impacts on a larger urban scale (Hemingway et al. 2020). In the SALUTE4CE project capacity building has taken place to ensure successful implementation of 16 pilot projects. Much of the feedback given in this report confirms suggestions provided in the action planning concept. Namely, the composition of actors in the action planning process is important. By bringing a variety of actors together in each pilot project resources found among these stakeholders could be used in the action planning process. Each project partner attributed their success to various factors which include the structural composition of the action planning team, political and local administrators’ support, scientific preparation of the external experts and direct knowledge of local issues for example. In addition, project requirements to include public feedback that was emphasized in the action planning process proved to be valuable. In this report we found public feedback to play a crucial role in the action planning process. It has influenced the selection of the UEA sites and the selection of specific projects. Public opinion has influenced the urban problems including how they are addressed (i.e. which nature based solutions). In some cases, suggestions from residents strongly influenced the selection of proposed measures. According to Liptovský Mikuláš, that is because residents can best determine how to improve local sites in relation to both aesthetics and function, without this public feedback (suggestions of concrete abandoned spaces) the action planning will probably miss its “added value”.

As we witnessed during the project planning unexpected challenges can be expected. The COVID 19 pandemic posed challenges that were overcome due to proper capacity building. There were some delays in action planning. For example, some stakeholder meetings had to be rescheduled or individuals working on the project had to reduce their hours resulting in delay in data creation. Much of the interactions had to be reverted to online meetings. Project partners attributed good planning to overcome these challenges, however, stress the point that they could not have predicted that pandemic would have such a major impact on the SALUTE4CE project. The work thus far to increase capacity building utilizing Urban Environmental Acupuncture (UEA) to increase the availability and prevalence of green space will be useful in the future. We close this report with some suggestions our project partners on how to improve capacity building in the future.



Suggestions for Future Capacity Building

Questionnaire responses, Bachmann, 2021 - Germany

- *“Capacity building within the SALUTE4CE project has been successful but should continue into the future in order to further transform the urban fabric and the quality and quantity of urban greenspace. To ensure a sustainable continuation of the SALUTE4CE concept beyond the funding period after 2022, a strategy is needed as to who will take on which task in the further process. Whether private individuals, companies or those responsible in the administration, everyone can make their contribution. The cities take on several roles in this process. It is planner, multiplier, and role model at the same time. The goal is to move the idea from the status of a model approach to a regular task and as a natural part of municipal activities.”*
- *“The competencies of all those involved must be further developed to keep up with the demands. To this end, the willingness must be awakened and kept alive. The city must succeed in strengthening communication between all stakeholders and work closely with private partners from business and civil society to stimulate cooperative ventures that tap previously unrealized savings and substitution potential. To implement projects and thus achieve goals, a widespread network of well-integrated stakeholders is needed to support and sustain the process. The establishment of support structures or the integration of existing approaches into the process is therefore an important task regarding long-term commitment of the actors.”*

Questionnaire responses, Kormanikova, 2021 - Slovakia

- *“It is highly appreciated that Action plan includes a maintenance plan, as is mentioned in the transnational Concept for Action Plans: It is important that the UEA sites are not only created but maintained for future use.”*
- *“The list of UEA sites should be a living document and should be also updated and supplemented regularly or every now and again.”*

Questionnaire responses, Ranzenigo, 2021 - Italy

- *“The planning process can be improved through private intervention/contribution, associations involvement and a multi-annual planning carried out by the Administration. Indeed, UEA has a great potential. The effects of the climate change will oblige us to rethinking the use destination of many small green spaces in the urban city centres (parking, small squares, etc).”*
- *“UEA forces the project and technical managers to adopt a planning mostly based on the use of native species and it requires to choose technical solution that reduces undergoing maintenance.”*

Questionnaire responses, Beryt, 2021 - Poland

- *“The main differences [between planning for large and small green spaces] are the budget, momentum, the number of entities involved in the realizations, the size of the place, which must be found for the investment. The first step in improving the planning process for UEA is to convince decision-makers that such investments are important and necessary. We hope that urban environmental acupuncture will have big potential in the future of planning in European cities.”*



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