



LED2 LEAP
Learning Empowerment Agency Partnership

Reflection in Action: A Community Learning Model

LED2LEAP

Leaping forward from

Landscape Education for Democracy to

Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership



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Acronyms

ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ELC	European Landscape Convention (2000 - 2022), now Council of Europe Landscape Convention
EtaBeta	NGO in Bologna that works with public and private entities to promote appropriate opportunities for socialisation and social inclusion.
HfWU	Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Umwelt Nürtingen-Geislingen
ISP	Intensive Study Programme : the term is used within the ERASMUS programme to describe a short-term mobility where staff and students come together for an intensive working period. Financed by the ERASMUS+ Programme
LADDER	The Hungarian Living Lab - 'LABoratórium Diákokkal a Emokratikus köRnyezetért', or LABoratory with kiDs for DEMocratic enviRonments
LED2LEAP	Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Landscape Education for Democracy (LED) to Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership (LEAP)
LTT	Learning Teaching and Training activities
MATE	Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PAR	Participatory Action Research
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLU	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
UNSDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Glossary

Agency	The exercise of capacity to act. In the LED2LEAP project this is interpreted as supporting the participants to have more power to influence the political context and actual situation of their landscape. Within the LED2LEAP seminar, agency was explored through the discussion of the power of the open space and participation designer, to reinforce such perspective in design and planning education, but also enabling the learners and participants to become agents in the Living Labs.
Body sculpture	A way of representing a concept, idea, goal by representing it in a non-verbal way in which one or more persons take make a statue, take a certain position, interact, move. In the LED2LEAP project we used this method to explore and evaluate our understanding of the main concepts learning, empowerment, agency and partnership. The body sculpture exercise can also be used to explore and evaluate challenges, aims and other elements of the Living Labs. The teams formed the statue, the spectators observed and guessed which word the team was presenting. Then all shared their observations, thus jointly interpreting the work of the sculpture-making group.
Empowerment	The LED2LEAP project aims to give power or authority to communities and community members, to give and to redistribute power to the powerless, to give voice to those who are generally not heard.
European Landscape Convention	A Convention of the Council of Europe is devoted to all aspects of European landscape which covers natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. The Convention is aimed at: the protection, management and planning of all landscapes and raising awareness of the value of a living landscape. It defines landscape as an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factor.
Impact	The observed changes produced by an intervention. These observed changes can be positive and negative, intended and unintended, direct and indirect. For evaluation the impact the cause of the observed changes needs to be identified in a systematic way. Impacts can be explained by storytelling by participants on how the intervention transformed themselves, the group, the landscape.
Intensive Study programme / ISP	A ten-day workshop to carry out at the end of the seminar where students were asked to actively take part and engage with the communities in their landscapes.
Landscape	An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factor.
Landscape Democracy	The exploration of the significance of landscape in fostering justice and human welfare.

Learning	The LED2LEAP project sees learning as a collaborative process, in which exchange of information between the partners in the Living Lab leads to altering the mental models or behaviour of the individuals and the group: behavioural rules and routines of the group members change, and the group members re-evaluate the set goals and their relationships with each other.
Living Lab	A collaboration between institute of higher education and other parties, such as communities, NGOs, public authorities and industry. In the LED2LEAP project the Living Labs are focused on collaborative problem definition and following an iterative process of jointly develop solutions to solve socio-spatial problems, testing the ideas in a real-setting, and evaluation of the testing results. After this they either decide to restart the process by reviewing the problem, or implement the intervention idea.
Participatory Action Research (PAR)	A qualitative research methodology that involves researchers and participants collaborating to understand social issues and take actions to bring about social change in an iterative way engaging all participants in the various steps of the research process.
Partnership	An agreement on rights, duties, and responsibilities can also be the foundation of the partnership which is less or more formally and strictly defined. In the context of landscape democracy, a partnership is organized around different values and goals. The shared values, activities, and benefits is the driving force for creating partnerships.
Right to landscape	The right to have access to landscapes that nurture individual well-being and to processes of transformations grounded in their perceptions.
Transformative action	A type of action that address the causative, inequitable elements and factors relating to an identified challenge in order to develop and implement sustainable solutions at one or more levels of a socio-ecosystem.

Introduction

There is an urgent need for transformative competence at all levels of society since the challenges for our communities are growing across Europe. Powerful driving forces such as the globalisation of work, climate change, digitalisation, demographic ageing, migration, individualization, biodiversity loss and unequal resource distribution are not resolvable within the framework of election periods and sector-specific policies.

Because of this, LED2LEAP aims to bring a new way of thinking and acting into relevant university curricula in order to prepare the future generation of landscape architects, planners, architects and designers for their role as democratic leaders for sustainability.

LED2LEAP stands for Landscape Education for Democracy (LED) to Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership (LEAP). It builds upon the principles developed during the Erasmus+ project Landscape Education for Democracy (2015 - 2018). It develops the methods for working with communities by the implementation of local Living Labs.

Our living labs are supported by an online course. Each living lab has organised an intensive study programme (ISP) that acts as a catalyst for the living lab process.

The project applies the methods of participatory action research (PAR) which includes a cycle of learning and knowledge development for students,

academics, community members and other participants. This framework allows knowledge to be co-created rather than simply transferred to communities in a top-down way. Linking expert and local knowledge is not only helpful to inform better decisions but also ensures policies which are both grounded in state of the art knowledge and communities' perceptions.

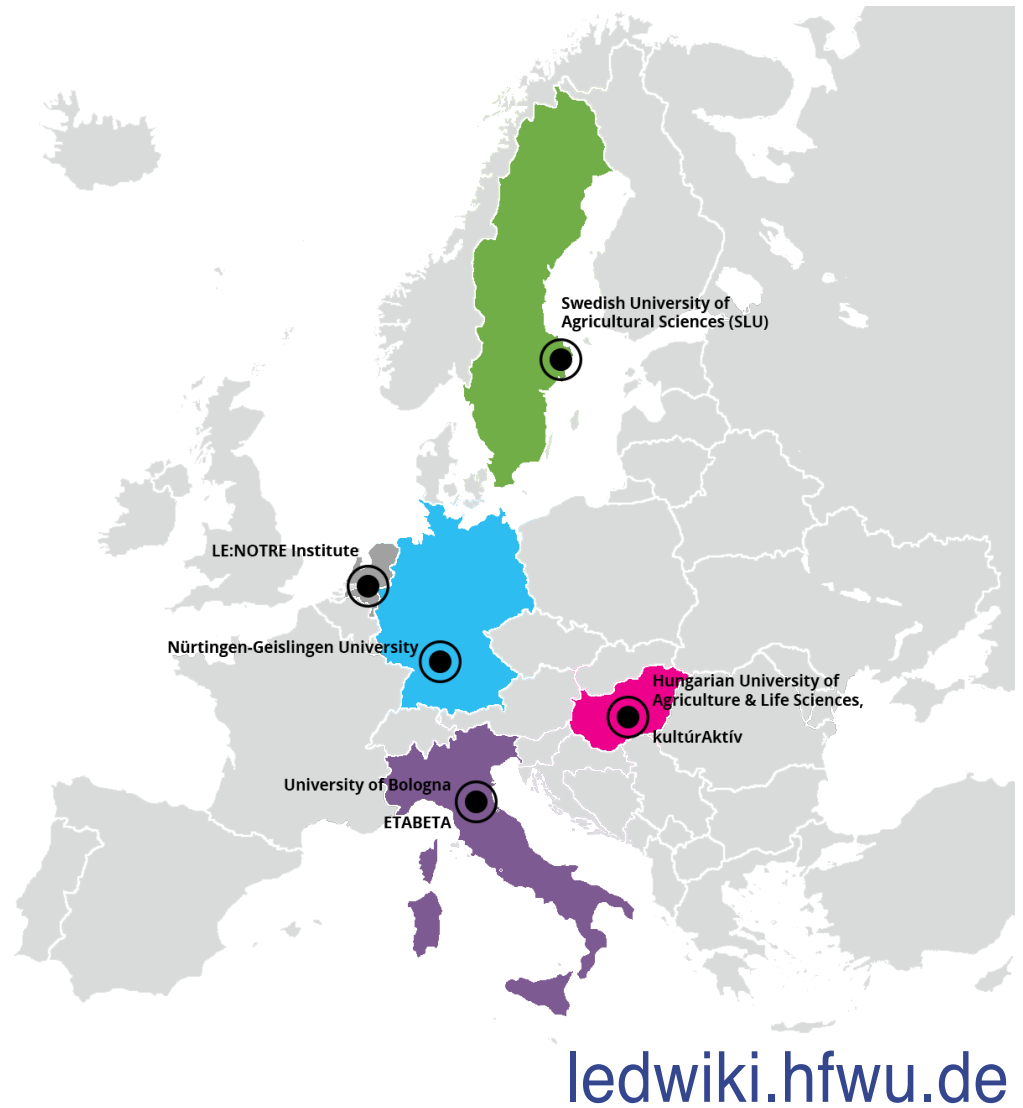
This publication consists of three parts. In the first three chapters we present the foundations of democratic landscape transformation: its approach, the concepts, the learning goals and the pedagogic approach. In chapter four we share our experience with our living labs: Firstly, by defining the specifics of LED2LEAP living labs and the values we share; and secondly, how the local living labs were organised and operated. These chapters can be inspiring for all actors who are thinking about conducting a participatory design process in local communities. In chapters five and six we look back and in to the future, to see what could strengthen further development of democratic and transformative landscape actions.

This publication aims to inspire other higher education institutions to start a similar innovative educational programme and for school communities to initiate participatory design processes.

It can provide methodological assistance to experts to start and plan a process.

The LED2LEAP project team international meeting in Bologna, October 2019





Our partnership

Coordinating institution

LE:NOTRE Institute (coordinator), an international foundation based in Wageningen, Netherlands.

Partner institutions

Nürtingen-Geislingen University, Nürtingen, Germany

Hungarian University of Agriculture & Life Sciences, Faculty of Landscape Architecture, Budapest, Hungary

kultúrAktív, NGO, Budapest, Hungary

Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, Department of Architecture, Italy

ETABETA, NGO, Bologna, Italy

SLU, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden



Co-funded by the European Union

Workshop in Nr.1.
Primary School in
Budaörs, Hungary:
Designing

Photo: Máté Lakatos



Who should read this report?

This report is meant for teachers, researchers, community workers and other parties who want to work on transformative changes to society. We, the LED2LEAP project partners want to share with you our approach, the principles, values, methods guiding our work, and the practices we engaged in to integrate a community approach with learning and research. The report includes a reflection of the lessons we learned by delivering an online seminar and organising intensive community participation-inspired workshops within the German, Italian, and Hungarian living labs. Transformative competencies are needed at all levels of society to help guide communities to address the grand challenges of our time.

To engage in democratic landscape transformations to address global challenges requires practice, and competence-building. has recently been reconfirmed when the European Union published [GreenComp](#), the European sustainability competence framework.

The LED2LEAP project contributes to the development of these competences by offering young professionals a framework for landscape democracy and co-creation. They learn how to involve local communities in the process of envisioning and designing local landscape transformation. This includes activating communities so that they become involved in the implementation

of ideas and the management of their new environment. The LED2LEAP project built upon the principles developed during the Erasmus+ project Landscape Education for Democracy and oversaw the implementation of local Living Labs across Sweden, Germany, Hungary, and Italy. These Living Labs offered participants in our educational programme the chance to test theories and methods for working with communities, and to do so by establishing partnerships with non-profit organisations and community groups that would ensure the integration of the perspective of all possible users of the landscape, beginning with the underserved and marginalised.

In chapter one we share the motivation and values underlying the LED2LEAP approach. Chapter two introduces core concepts related to landscape democracy and our mission. Chapter three focuses on pedagogies and practices, and could be useful to other teachers and learners who want to exercise their landscape democracy in their work within the classroom and in communities all over. The chapter illustrates the methods and activities we experienced during our course and in the living labs, which include experimentations with gaming and other critical pedagogies like the body sculpture exercise.

You can learn from our successes and our failures. Chapter four provides a rich and detailed description of the four labs in Nürtingen, Bologna, Budapest and Uppsala, including the visions they co-

created with the local communities. If you are an academic, learner or community member seeking to develop living labs, or are already working within one that framework, we share our story in the hope that you will benefit from our experience and our evaluation of the four living lab processes we carried out. Chapter five reflects on the work we have done, and draws a few conclusions on how academics and communities can address democratic landscape challenges by activating the agency of design education in change-oriented, socially-just participatory action research processes.



Testing the boardgame in a primary school in Veszprém

Photo: Péter Oszkai

Our motivation

1

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This section of the report describes the objectives and activities of the LED2LEAP programme. The project was conceived in 2019 as a follow up of the 'Landscape Education for Democracy' ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership project, which ran between 2015 and 2018, to establish an online seminar on the theories, principles and practices of Landscape Democracy. The programme involved the cooperation of the partnership of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Nürtingen-Geislingen University, Kassel University, Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, Szent István University in Budapest and the LE:NOTRE Institute. The course wanted to fill a gap in the education of landscape architects, landscape planners, and other fields involved in finding sustainable solutions to challenges related to social justice, citizen involvement in planning and design processes that would advance all of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals but was particularly aimed at addressing the needs to underserved and marginalised communities, who are often on the receiving end of designs and policies that often exacerbate, rather than improve, their lives.

The concept of landscape democracy has been the object of many publications and efforts. It is grounded in the belief, advanced by the European Landscape Convention (ELC),^[1] a policy document promulgated by the Council of Europe in 2000, that there exists a fundamental human 'right to landscape' (Makzhoumi, Pungetti and Egoz, 2016),^[2] i.e. the right to have access

to landscapes that nurture individual well-being and to processes of transformations grounded in their perceptions. As the ELC suggests, access to the landscape is both a right and a responsibility. This calls for people's direct involvement in the stewardship and management of their most meaningful, beloved, and vital community landscape assets, making participation a privileged tool for the advancement of landscape democracy (Egoz, Jørgensen and Ruggeri, 2018).^[3] Yet, as planning and design critics like Sherry Arnstein (1969)^[4] have pointed out, what constitutes good participation continues to be the subject of many discussions in the environmental design professions.

To many, participation simply involves gathering information from community members and rarely involves deeper and more extensive partnerships between people and communities. Thus, to advance landscape democracy, there is a dire need to give students and young professionals the opportunity to exercise their skills as partners and agents of change in the context of real communities, and this constitutes a major gap in current education and curricula. The LED2LEAP expanded the goals of the LED project by introducing four associated principles: Learning, Empowerment, Agency, and Partnership, which taken together, as we postulated, can serve as foundational elements in the development of landscape architects that are able and prepared to become agents of democratic, sustainable change.

Introductory presentation of the LED2LEAP Online Seminar

Landscape Democracy

What does Landscape Democracy mean, and what does it mean to you?

As a member of a neighborhood community, a professional group of designers and planners or a university of planning and design, all of us can affect and be affected by the following themes -

- SOCIAL and ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**
- OPEN and DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING**
- LANDSCAPE PLANNING and DESIGN**

The foundations of landscape democracy are familiar, but for students and professionals alike, its application needs practice, which is what the LED2LEAP project aims to provide.

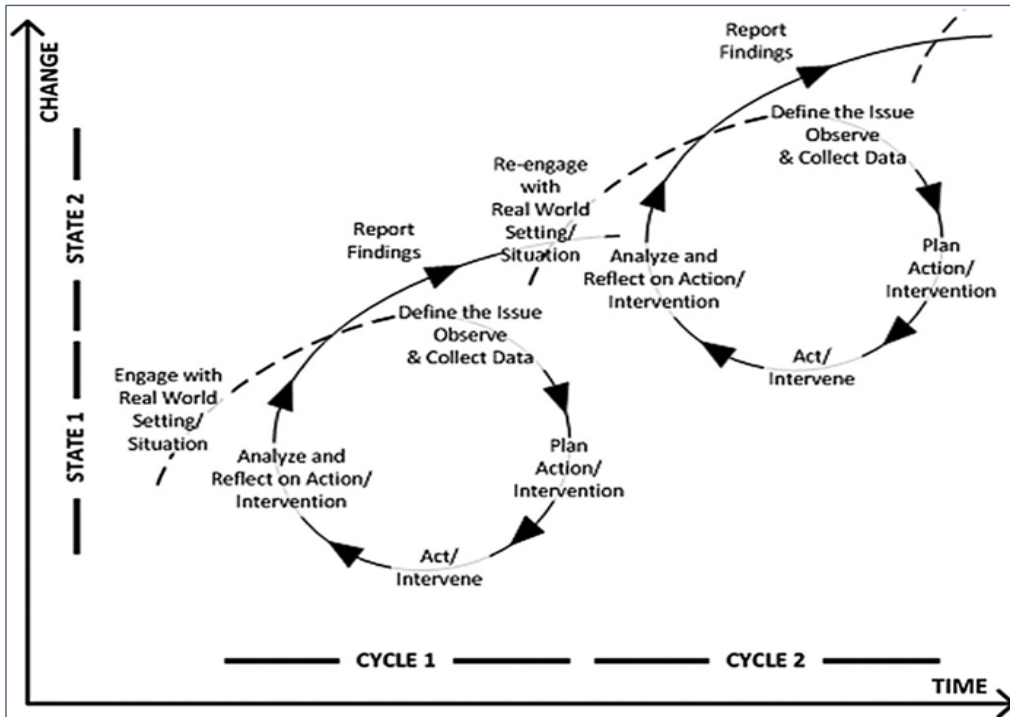
**KNOWLEDGE HERITAGE NEIGHBORHOODS STAKEHOLDER
SACREDNESS EQUALITY PLACE MAKING
NATURE ACCESS POWER DECISION LOCAL
RESOURCES COMMUNITY JUSTICE**

ledwiki.hfwu.de

SLU, Kassel University, Nürtingen-Geislingen University, Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, Szent István University, LE:NOTRE Institute, Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Introduction to Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Citation : berkeley.edu,
 image adapted by
 Iris Tommelein from
 image posted on
www.brighthub.com



Our project also sought to rethink the role of landscape architects and the nature of their work, inspired by the Participatory Action Research (PAR) paradigm.^[5] True to PAR, change is best understood and imagined from within the systems it seeks to renew. This requires partnership with citizens groups and individuals working within these systems to activate change, and participation of a diversity of people and knowledge types. It also requires integrating research (and design) as methods for integrating this knowledge and translating it into transformative actions. Leading processes of this kind takes preparation, and leadership skills that can and should be practised through design. Students in the LED2LEAP project collaborated across disciplines to envision and plant the seed for change in partnership with the communities, so they can be empowered to take ownership of these visions. They learned to act and make decisions in close partnership with communities. Through the course a new form of professionalism emerged that would transform landscape architecture and planning practice by embedding it into complex processes of redevelopment and regeneration where all are equal partners in shaping the pathway forward.

The Living Labs each of the LED2LEAP partners created within their communities and contexts served as the domains for the activation of landscape democracy and the associated learning, empowerment, agency, and partnership goals, giving the students a chance to gauge their preparation and

develop skills and experiences that would be further put to a test during the summer intensive programmes. These goals would also transform the communities we worked with, as their engagement in the process would give them a better understanding and experience of the nuances and complexities of engaging in a democratic, participatory dialogue around landscape change. By sharing the knowledge produced and researched by students in the context of their Living Labs, the project wanted to recognize the essential role that local knowledge and action play in making transformations both democratic and sustainable. The LED2LEAP Living Labs have strengthened communications between academics and civil society, and our emphasis on storytelling ensured that plans and designs were approachable and understandable to all, thus challenging students to become skilled at communicating complex change scenarios in ways that would be meaningful and impelling to community members to act upon them (Hester, 2006).^[6]

More specifically, the LED2LEAP ERASMUS project aimed to achieve the following objectives:

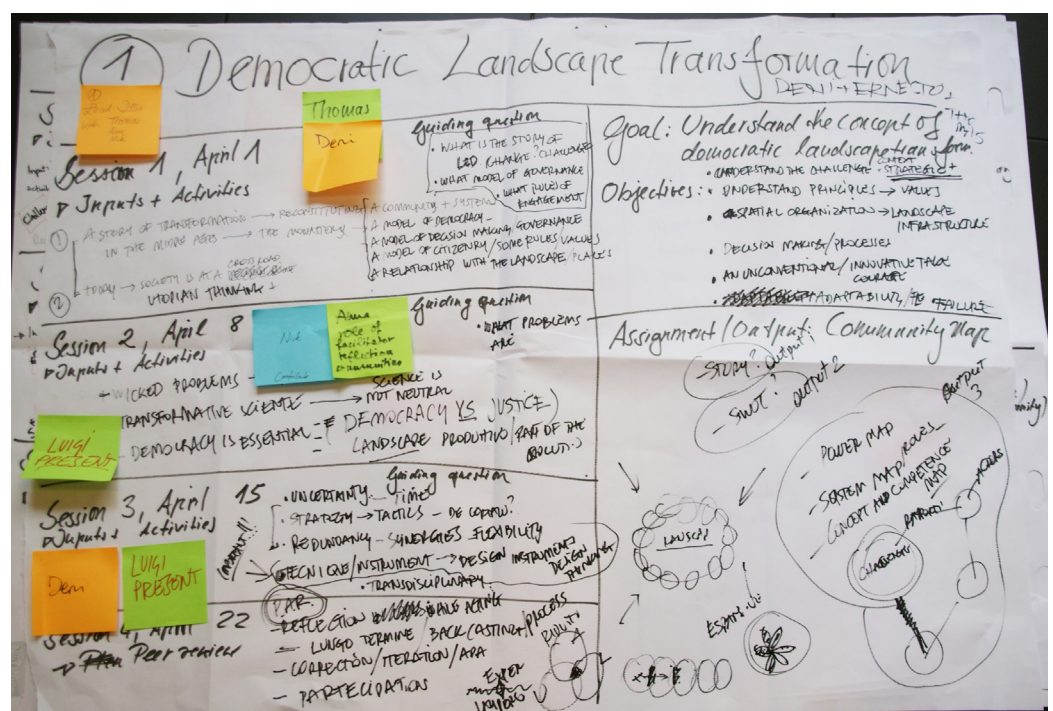
- To promote an ethic of civic and social responsibility among students, researchers and universities, and the recognition of service-learning activities
- To envision a more inclusive higher education, connected to civil society and communities, by promoting the civic and social responsibility of students, researchers and universities and recognising voluntary and community work in academic results
- To achieve a more meaningful and impactful use of open and online, blended, work-based, multi-disciplinary learning and new assessment models;
- To train academics in new and innovative pedagogical approaches, new curriculum design approaches and to share good practices through collaborative platforms;
- To promote internationalisation, recognition and mobility
- To encourage training and exchange between students and academics to enhance the quality of higher education, in particular, supporting the use of digital technologies and online delivery to improve pedagogies and assessment methods.
- To ensure active engagement of undergraduates and master-level students in developing strategies to tackle complex research problems in a rigorous, research-based context

Achieving these complex objectives required establishing a complex learning environment in which the local landscape with its people and the university learning processes would go hand in hand. In addition, it was necessary to link all the living lab locations together by means of a joint online seminar during which the main theories and methods were presented. In addition, the online seminar gave all participants the opportunity to exchange and interact. Teacher training activities in advance to this online seminar ensure that also the university teachers involved would be on the same methodical and conceptual level.

All of this resulted in a demanding, multi-level setting, which created additional workload for the local living lab coordinators. On the other hand, learning in and with the living lab has been an enriching experience for everyone, which balanced the additional effort. Furthermore, investing in the establishment of the living labs has been an investment into the future. Today, we can observe that these processes of community-based collaboration and co-creation are continuing and nurturing new learning activities.

Democratic Landscape Transformation

Collaborative ideation during the course design phase in winter 2019





Tiny Protest
Living Lab Nürtingen,
2022

Photo: Anna Szilágyi-Nagy

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Our core concepts

2

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Landscape Democracy into practice: The LEAP mission

This project builds on a previous process during which we have tried to define landscape democracy as a conceptual framework for our shared action. It is important to remember that we understand landscape according to the European Landscape Convention (ELC, Council of Europe, 2000). In that sense, landscape is defined as an area as perceived by people, thus the individual human factor regarding the definition of landscape values is really relevant. Furthermore, the ELC avoids a polarisation of the landscape concept between urban and rural. According to this document, landscape includes urban, peri-urban and rural areas, both outstanding and degraded ones.

The convention is a clear pledge for the everyday environment that starts in front of our doors and calls on everyone to take action and responsibility. The ELC builds on the idea that equal access to a healthy, safe and meaningful landscape is part of the human rights agenda that the Council of Europe aims to promote and protect. This leads clearly to the democratic dimension of this approach. Landscape is no longer a sectoral expertise. It is supposed to become both an integrated political objective and a contemporary cultural project. We believe that new methods are needed for achieving this important objective. The mission of this project is therefore to promote the development of competences for landscape democracy.

But: landscapes are complex and there is no ready-made approach that would work in any context. What we discuss

and offer with LED2LEAP is rather a set of values that guides us along a process. As mentioned earlier, LEAP stands for Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership. We will explain our understanding of these guiding principles in the following sections.

Given the variability of all the landscape contexts we worked with, having a guiding framework for the competences we want to promote has been very helpful. In January 2022, the European Commission published GreenComp, a new EU-wide synthesis of how we can understand competences for sustainable development. This document builds upon decades of research in this field and provides us now with a practical framework for operationalising competence development for sustainability in any learning situation. The graphic below visualises what GreenComp comprises.

For the LED2LEAP team, it was important to transfer this framework to the specific context of spatial planning and design education at universities in different European countries. This transfer resulted in the understanding that the local landscape, with its communities, becomes the foundation for a deep and integrative systems thinking, critical thinking and problem framing. As academics, we enter these environments with the sustainability values we have embodied so far. We usually have a normative stake: our goal is to protect nature and promote human health and well-being. The confrontation of our inherent sustainability values with the realities in the local communities has been an essential quality of the living lab approach. More explanation about this approach is given in much more detail later on in this report. The flowers on the graphic of the GreenComp The European

GreenComp:
The European sustainability competence framework (EC, 2022)



sustainability competence framework (EC, 2022) symbolise the ideas and visions planners and designers can help generate when engaging with local communities.

They require exploratory thinking, adaptability and future literacy. All of these are great assets a living lab can cultivate as a unique value proposition at the interface of universities and civil society. Last but not least, and this is where the democratic aspects become very evident: sustainability competence also needs individual initiative, collective action and political agency in order to generate real impact and change. This is where living labs have their challenging moments because it is not only about thinking and visioning. Concrete change, even if only small at the start, is necessary to set a transformation process for sustainability in motion.

Learning

Learning is the first of the four core concepts pursued by LED2LEAP. Learning can be identified at several points in our project. On the one hand, in the online course, we learn about the relationship between democracy and the landscape, from the perspective of the European Landscape Convention,^[1] thereby shaping the professional aspects of future landscape architects. On the other hand, during the Intensive Study Programmes and the Living Lab activities, we put into practice what we learned in the online course. (1) During the 'landscape identification and assessment phase', we learn together with the local communities about the physical characteristics of the landscape, the forces and pressures that affect the development of the landscape, as well as the values and the perception the local community attaches to the landscape. This learning process continues in (2) setting landscape development goals when the landscape is tuned from different viewpoints in order to create an environment that meets the expectations of the population with the right combination of landscape planning, maintenance and protection. But we cooperate with the population not only in defining development goals, but also in (3) implementation and (4) monitoring. We also assessed the students' learning process with a special method, the "body sculpture" exercise, which you can read more about in the next chapter.

Members of our German, Italian and Hungarian living laboratories – e.g. partner universities, local communities, associations, companies, government bodies, etc. representatives – acquire the skills mentioned by GreenComp (e.g. integrative systems thinking, critical thinking and problem definition, etc.)^[2] while solving the "wicked challenges" of their landscapes.^[3] In the three phases of problem-solving typical of living labs,^[4] learning is an 'integral element'.^[5] The participants first learn from each other in the 'exploration phase' and jointly formulate the research questions, their goals and the problem and its possible solutions. After that, in the 'experimentation phase', they learn whether the solutions they propose are suitable for solving the problem. Finally, these lessons are evaluated together in the 'evaluation phase' and based on the results, it is decided whether to return to the 'exploration phase' or to implement the intervention idea. Thus, the learning process in Living Labs can be

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Anna Szilágyi-Nagy

Learning sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

Photo :Tayana Passos Rosa



called 'iterative', in which living lab members create innovative solutions to landscape problems through reflective and evaluative moments. On the one hand, these moments provide an opportunity for continuous improvement of the solution through the alternating steps of 'learning by doing' and 'doing-by-learning'.^[6] On the other hand, based on the results of the built-in feedback moments, it is possible to change the focus, methods or rhythm of the problem-solving process so that it is adapted to the needs of the live lab members.^[7]

In addition, learning in Living Labs is also special because learning takes place primarily through the exchange of information between Living Lab members from different backgrounds (exploration and evaluation phase) and between Living Lab members and future users of the landscape (testing phase). During the exchange of information, the members exchange their differences arising from social interpretations, evaluations, norms, values and roles related to landscape management that they have learned throughout their lives.^[8]

Sharing these different views often led to 'individual learning' in our Living Labs, i.e. participants gained a better understanding of the given landscape problem, and we also discovered moments of 'collective learning', which gave our Living Lab members the opportunity to meet each other and realise that they see the same problem completely differently.^[9] After Living Lab members learned about the differences and similarities between each other's views, they were able to agree on the best possible solutions.^[10]

Based on the depth of the learning process, we can also talk about 'single-loop' and 'double-loop' learning^[11] in our Living Labs. An example of 'single-loop learning' can be when our Living Lab members realised during iterative problem-solving that they had to deviate from the originally planned solution if they wanted to achieve their goals. An example of 'double-loop learning' could be when the participants in the Live Lab questioned the correctness of the originally planned problem-solving process, or their own role in problem-solving, or when the relationship, behaviour or thinking of the Live Lab members changed.

Empowerment

Empowerment is the second of the four core concepts pursued by LED2LEAP. Together with the other three core concepts—Learning, Agency, and Partnership—the use of Empowerment during the programme made it possible to “leap” from the previous project Landscape Education for Democracy (LED). To achieve the “leap”, the four concepts worked together, overlapping, and intertwining one another, as if it was not possible to apply one concept without using the others as well. Of the four concepts, empowerment is the only one that makes explicit the exclusive quality we, as designers, work with every day: power. In the programme, this concept was often discussed as a verb, to empower, to give power or authority to.

Participation, as a form of community involvement in design processes, was the means to work with empowerment, to give and to redistribute power to the powerless. To use Sherry Arnstein’s words “Participation is a categorical term for citizen power ... Participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless.”^[12] During the programme, instructors introduced several cases where redistribution of power and citizen empowerment were achieved through forms of participation and community design. To name but a few recent examples, the work led by Jeffrey Hou in the project “Design as Activism.

Landscape Architecture Education for Social Change: A Framework for Actions and Other Propositions” showed how community design and forms of activism could lead toward political and social change through both more equal and just redistributions of power in communities.^[13] The work of Randolph Hester and the use of “power mapping”^[14] constituted another cornerstone to our work with power and empowerment in the communities engaged during the programme.

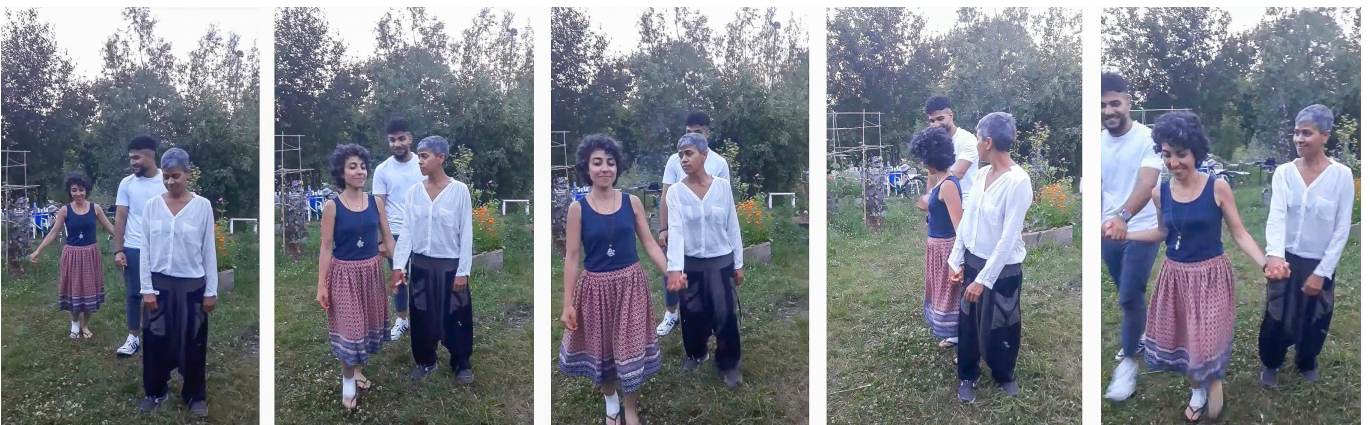
In the LED2LEAP, empowerment entered the project’s agenda as a motto with the expression “to give voice to the unheard.” This definition was often mentioned during the seminars to the students and used almost as a motto in the various Living Labs, but also during the Intensive Living Labs, but also during the Intensive programmes in Miskolc, Nürtingen, and Lucca. The use of the verb “to give voice” as a replacement for the verb “empowering” made it possible to render power visible through the use of speech and dialogues. Of primary relevance was the use of “stories” and “storytelling”, which constituted one of the main tools used by the students in their work within the Living Labs and during the intensive programmes. The use of stories and storytelling was an explicit reference to the work of Marshall Ganz.^[15] As “inhibitors,” stories and storytelling were often employed by the students as leverage to achieve change in redistributing power in the communities engaged by the Living Labs and during the intensive programmes.^[16]

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Empowerment sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

Photo :Tayana Passos Rosa



Agency sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

Photo :Tayana Passos Rosa



Author

Tayana Passos Rosa

Agency

The concept of agency, typically explored in the context of social sciences, refers to the exercise of the capacity to act.^[17] However, the extent of this capacity is a product of the political model people find themselves in. Hester summarises democracy as “government by the people” (p.4),^[18] with the ideal to achieve equality and listen to individual or communal needs. Most notably in the 1970s, the demand for citizen participation in social policy making began to grow [19]. Since then, citizens have ceased to be viewed as just consumers of their rights and have begun to exercise more agency in the political sphere in the knowledge that their participation will also offer satisfaction and understanding to those involved.^[19] Public representation in political systems has become a popular topic, initiating the movement of considering citizenship as civic engagement, and extending it beyond having access to human rights. Expecting to have citizens participating actively in politics and governance for the benefit of society as a whole.

A significant step for public representation and social justice came after WWII when the idea of broadening the context of citizenship was explored by the UDHR, to have human rights representing the diversity of the peoples of the world, and then entailing that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”.^[20] The declaration of human rights ideology laid the foundation of the landscape and democracy seminar, in its ideal of representativity, fairness, and, especially, involvement, aiming that all human beings should be agents of a brotherhood Spirit.

Within the LED2LEAP seminar, agency was explored in the Landscape framework through the discussion of the power of the open space and participation designer, to reinforce such perspective in design and planning education,^[21] but also offering the space for the learners to become agents through the LLs and student workshops. “By extending [the framework of landscape from] the spatial social arena to embrace political ethical ones, we explore ways in which landscape could become a positive tool for social justice” (p.4).^[17] This opens space for the discussion of the right to landscape, this doctrine can be described as a detailed exploration of the significance of landscape in fostering justice and human welfare ^[22]. The designers have then, a strong agency in supporting the right to landscape, offering a way in which people can embed identities in the landscape, use and own spaces, and feel represented. In the seminar, the thought of making voices heard is a strong component of the conversation, particularly explored during the LLs and ISPs, a notable example was the student workshop in Miskolc in Hungary, in which the goal to give voice to the oppressed opened the doors to meaningful work with the local Roma community. Still, the agency of the designer cannot be limited to so.

Having agency results in accountability, therefore designers also have a responsibility towards tackling Landscape and Democracy wicked problems, environmental and community anomie, and to work for ecological democracy,^[18] and environmental stewardship.^[23]

Partnership

The word partnership can originate from the Latin *partem* (nominative *pars*) with a meaning of “a part, piece, a share, a division; a party or faction; a part of the body; a fraction; a function, office,” related to *partio* “share, portion”. Already in the 13th century, the word *part* and also *partner* was associated with some kind of “a share of action or influence in activity or affairs, role, duty” and “one who shares power or authority with another”. The marital meaning was only added in the middle of the 18th century.

The word partnership can be used in almost any field but it mostly it is associated with the business world meaning a “formal arrangement by two or more parties to manage and operate a business and share its profits”. A business partnership has three main characteristics: partners have an agreement on rights, duties, and

responsibilities, unlimited liability, and they are making a decision together.

In the context of landscape democracy, a partnership is organized around different values and goals but with a similar functional mechanism. The agreement on rights, duties, and responsibilities can also be the foundation of the partnership, however, it can be less formal and strict than what is usual in the business world. The shared values, activities, and benefits are the driving force for creating partnerships. Partnerships should be always a win-win situation but the benefit is usually immaterial or social. It is also important that partnerships are usually formed in participatory processes for better advocacy and collective decision-making structures. Creating strong partnerships in participatory processes is essential and can help to make more democratic decisions and also increase the sense of ownership and liability for a project.

Author

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Partnership sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

Photo :Tayana Passos Rosa

It is important to mention that Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Participation also uses the word partnership in her concept: out of the 8 steps of the ladder, the 6th is defined as Partnership. This is the first step in the Citizen Power zone. She defines this stage as the "Power is in fact redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders. Planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared e.g. through joint committees". So in this context, the partnership agreement is specifically made between the citizens (community) and the power holders (leaders) in order to assure a higher level of citizen participation and as a result, a more democratic and fair system.

In the LED2LEAP project, creating and maintaining partnerships is an essential aspect. While the LED2LEAP project itself is an international partnership that can be derived back to the previous LED project, it was a new intention to create partnerships in the same theme on a local level. These local partnerships have been created under the so-called Living Labs that were funded by the partnering universities. However, landscape democracy is a common approach for all Living Labs, these local collaborations can vary in their partners, goals, missions, and meanings. Therefore, it was very important to define in each case what a partnership can be or should be.

Workshop in Nr.1.
Primary School in
Budaörs

Photo: Máté Lakatos



The LED2LEAP Code of Conduct

Based on our reflection of the learning objectives, the meaning of the LEAP and our goals for the living labs, we sat together at the beginning of the project to formulate a code of conduct for us as the educational team. We did this by using the nominal group technique. This method allows everyone to formulate his/her individual goals first. By means of deliberation, the individual goals are coming together as a shared set of goals.

For the LED2LEAP team, the following six goals turned out to be the most important ones:

**CODE OF CONDUCT
LED2LEAP TEACHERS TEAM**



LED2LEAP
LearningEmpowermentAgencyPartnership

WE RESPECT EACH OTHER	WE RESPECT OUR DIFFERENCES	WE GIVE CRITICAL FEEDBACK
WE LEARN FROM OUR MISTAKES	WE CO-CREATE AS EQUAL PARTERS	WE FOSTER DEMOCRACY

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Our Pedagogies

3

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Learning Outcomes and Competences

The following is a description of the teaching and learning approaches and the methods applied. Altogether, these formed the pedagogical framework of both the LED2LEAP online courses and workshops within the International Study Programmes (ISP). The objective of this strategic partnership was to further develop, implement, evaluate and improve the initial blended learning course titled Landscape Education for Democracy, LED, while extending efforts to empower local communities and promote sustainable design through the establishment of living labs practising Participatory Action Research, PAR.

As an extension of the initial LED project, LED2LEAP also endeavours to foster Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership, by deepening the level of engagement between citizens and design & planning practitioners. This learning opportunity is open to all disciplines engaged in city design, planning and redevelopment and encourages trans-disciplinary approaches to local landscape democracy challenges. The principle of PAR is that everybody learns: students, communities, institutions, teachers and everyone involved in the process.

Learning Outcomes and Competences for the student participants

According to relevant literature and the discussions held at the kick-off meeting, learning objectives can be classified as subject-specific, personal and methodical. During the seminar, we integrated the sustainable development competences (according to Wiek (2011): systems, anticipatory, values, interpersonal, strategic).^[1] Subject-specific competences were enhanced by online lectures, literature study, case study work and self-study of learning materials. Social/personal and methodical competences were primarily enhanced by group work, collaborative research, design thinking, workshops, presentations and other inquiry-based / interactive learning methods.

In this competence-oriented educational model, we aim to address the following learning goals: (1) democracy as a practised skill, (2) learning how to deal with diversity, (3) critical landscape thinking, (4) rethinking the role of planning, (5) rethinking the role of the community, (6) landscape democracy into action, (7) cultivating a landscape democracy discourse, (8) increasing the knowledge of common communication tools supporting participatory processes and (9) having the ability to recognize and highlight common goals.

Participants should be able to:

- Understand the concept of democracy based on a dialectical approach to this meta-topic. They know how public participation and democracy are related. They are aware of contemporary challenges to democracy in the context of landscape planning and urban design change in relation to a 'right to landscape' approach.
- Develop an understanding of the multiple concepts of landscape and can relate this to the contemporary context of a pluralistic society. Be sensitive to the different attitudes towards open space and also the disparities in access to landscape that exist among different ethnic or socioeconomic groups in a community.
- Conduct an informed and dialectical discourse on the relationship between landscape and democracy and be able to cite and analyse examples of this in a global context. This includes identifying and evaluating concrete situations in which decision making processes around landscape are lacking democratic elements, and propose possible solutions for overcoming this.
- Understand, reflect and practise participatory processes of landscape transformation, the terms related to this approach, and how these terms are perceived by stakeholders. Become knowledgeable about the relationship of goal-setting, visioning and strategy building.
- Be knowledgeable about the relationships between goal-setting, visioning and strategy building, in the context of the evolution of public participation and its

common perceptions, and relate this concept to contemporary planning theory. This includes critical perspective and awareness of the potentials and limits of various models of participation, e.g. the ladder (Arnstein) and wheel of participation (Davidson).

- Demonstrate knowledge of the evolution and contemporary understanding of concepts of community and identity. Students should be able to relate these concepts to planning practice. This includes a critical reflection on the role of the planner (as 'expert'). Through understanding these principles they can reflect on their own values as a planner ('expert').
- Relate context to personal community and space. Become able to select the most adequate methods and tools to be applied in specific challenges requiring participatory processes, understand a range of participatory planning activities, and the importance of matching techniques to community.
- Know common communication tools supporting participatory processes as well as different examples of participatory processes and how methods and tools are applied in practice. Have a gestalt of this and can practise participatory transformation.
- Know the relevance of goal setting and visioning in transformative practice. Have the ability to move from individual to collective goals, while identifying common goals. Understand, practice and reflect on participatory goal setting, along with collaborative evaluation and setting future agendas.

Social and Personal Competencies

Social and personal competencies are also known as the so-called 'soft skills'. They are not necessarily trained during a study programme but rather develop over time along with personal learning paths. Social and personal competencies are

however a core requirement for effectively implementing subject specific goals in practice and cannot be trained apart from a subject context. The LED2LEAP team has summarized its expectations with regard to this competence in the box below.

Participants should demonstrate a high level of understanding of the following:

- Critical reflection of structures, conditions and dependencies in respect to societal contexts and individual environments, motivation for active citizenship and identification of landscape democracy challenges and their potential for change.
- Critical reflection of the role of the planner in a diverse society (expert vs facilitator), and what leadership means in a participatory context.
- Identification of stakeholders and power structures in a new and unknown context, along with development of (reflected) leadership competences: empowering people to build common visions and mutual trust.
- Active listening and a high level of empathy for various perspectives and viewpoints in an intercultural context.
- Bold, adaptable and innovative approaches, with an understanding of the role failure plays in democratic processes.
- Self-organised, process-oriented and interdisciplinary team work, including the virtual realm.
- High skill level of communication and presentation, including in a lingua franca such as English.
- Self-reflection through confronting of 'the other' (disciplines, lay people, culture, local contexts) and increased self-awareness of value schemes and patterns of interpretation.

Methodical Competencies

Similar to the social and personal competencies, methodical competencies are developing throughout a lifetime and through exposure to tasks and challenges. In order to implement landscape democracy objectives, planners and designers should demonstrate a solid mastery of the abilities as listed in the box below:

Participants should demonstrate a solid mastery of the ability to:

- Acquire relevant knowledge and information collaboratively.
- Evaluate, analyse, synthesise and process this information, with an awareness of diversity.
- Independently design a creative working process in a target-oriented manner.
- Transfer knowledge and methods in the field of public participation to new and unfamiliar contexts.
- Apply project management and team building methods.
- Communicate results to different types of audiences (subject-specific and general public) using both analog and ICT-based means of communication.
- Reflect on and assess the impact of their work in creatively, using unconventional ways.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding
 - of the role of evaluating results and impact measurements.
 - of the methods applied to evaluation of democratic landscape processes.
 - of the difference between short-term results and long-term impacts.
- Design a peer-evaluation process at the start of an activity both from his/her personal perspective and the goals of the process/project/intervention.
- Select and justify a method for quantitative or qualitative evaluation, with a set of criteria that is tailored to the main goals of the activity.
- Draw up an action plan for the evaluation.
- Monitor a democratic process, reflect on it and adapt it when necessary.
- Organise feedback from observers (outsiders, peers) and activity participants (users, stakeholders, target groups) in a way that is suited to them and include this in the collaborative evaluation.

Fundamental pedagogical orientation of the LED2LEAP project.

Introduction and objectives

The fundamental pedagogical strategy this project adopted is action-oriented and ground-based. This means students have been invited to come in contact with real social landscape issues as opportunities to act, experiment, and contribute. They found an opportunity to put considerations, methods and theories discussed in the LED2LEAP online course into practice. Due to this approach, the real heart of the project's educational path were the Living Labs and the intensive workshops organised in this context. These experiences had an identical approach and therefore this brief description refers to both of them equally. Living Labs have been realised during the online course, in the second semester of each year when the LED2LEAP project took place. Each university chose one case of study, not too complicated and which was already explored by the team of tutors and teachers at each university. In such manner the communities were already prepared for the experimental and didactical character of this activity.

Despite the limited duration of this educational experience, the relationship with a community and a specific landscape has been a guarantee for a realistic educational path, that is almost a "reality

bath" for students so that they could immediately put the principles and techniques considered in the online seminar into practice.

In particular, the relationship with people almost immediately prevents mystification and becomes a guarantee of concreteness and reality. By means of the Living Labs, students were able to get a real-time experience of PAR- Participatory Action research.^[2]

In the same manner, intensive programmes held in different countries and addressing different democratic challenges were opportunities to meet and work with local communities. Therefore, despite their different organisation in timing, Living Labs and intensive programmes were bound on the same pedagogies.

General goals of Living Labs and student workshops

The outcome of an experience of participation should be an augural fresco, an operational and collective portrait of the community of tomorrow, depicting the development and the change that one member can truly wish for the other with joy and trust. In other words, it must be a positive, desirable but equally realistic future.

From the beginning, with this general objective, students were invited to

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Fresco:
[Ambasciatori della fame](#)

Ambassadors of Hunger by Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo is one of the studies made by the artist and later developed in the famous painting Quarto Stato (The Fourth Estate).

experience how, in all participatory paths, the maximum power should be given back to the community itself: this makes PAR a kind of synodality path, that is a group of people who want to share an experience and walk together.

At the end of the participatory path, this “operational and collective portrait of the community for tomorrow” must be delivered to the community itself. This way, it can become a tool through which they can measure actions and development. This “collective portrait for tomorrow” can be delivered in different forms: as a text, a “community chart”, or as a design project.

In any case, it should be characterised by the following elements:

First, it must outline a future that the one to the other sincerely and knowingly wishes. This implies that the prefiguration described by this “collective portrait” is not just content to which one simply agrees, but rather something that has been jointly weighed and chosen and that has become, at the end of the journey, the object of a common desire.

It is a portrait for tomorrow, but not generic or idealistic. It provides a portrait of a possible future, starting from a precise analysis of today’s situation. To get this goal, the final portrait can be detailed into different phases.

In any case, this “collective portrait for tomorrow” is a “fresco”, that is a painting not to be looked at too closely. It leaves

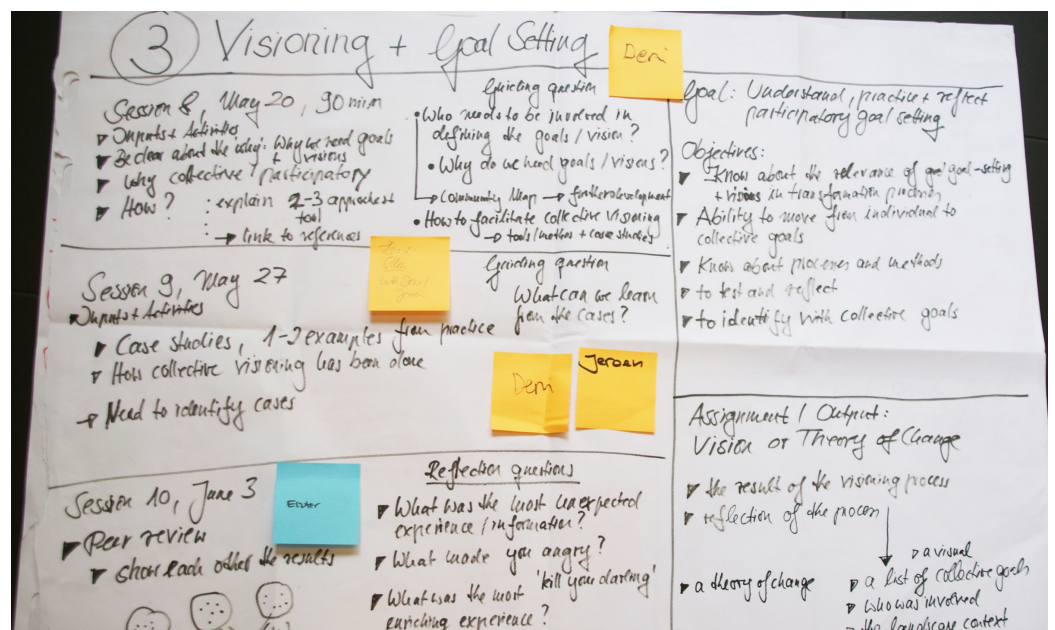
ample room for details, yet, at an overall glance, it can transfer an orderly design and an organic plan, intrinsic to its support and therefore long-term.

In this path, not only do students have the guarantee of reality in the community, but also vice-versa: the community also has a guarantee of reality in the students. This is an opportunity to narrate themselves. The best way to get an in-depth understanding of the life of a group of people is to become their travel companion and share a “tract of a road”. This is synodality, that is syn-odos: a common road, a path which is walked together. This synodality is a metaphor for every participatory path and also the inspiration for many methods and activities of territorial and social exploration: walking together stimulates confidence and self-narration. Who share the same path, in the moment of the journey are united by the road beyond any other substantial difference. Along the way, every exhibition of specific skills or professionalism seems inappropriate, while the sharing of a stretch of road, and therefore the exposure to the same effort and risk, is an opportunity for the growth of communication and confidence.

Students thus offer the community the opportunity for an act of knowledge, memory and rethinking. They are the occasion for a narrative reconstruction and therefore, ultimately, of a change. Students play the role of facilitators. This role can never be superimposed or confused with that of external experts and specialists. The persons involved in the processes of

Visioning and Goal Setting

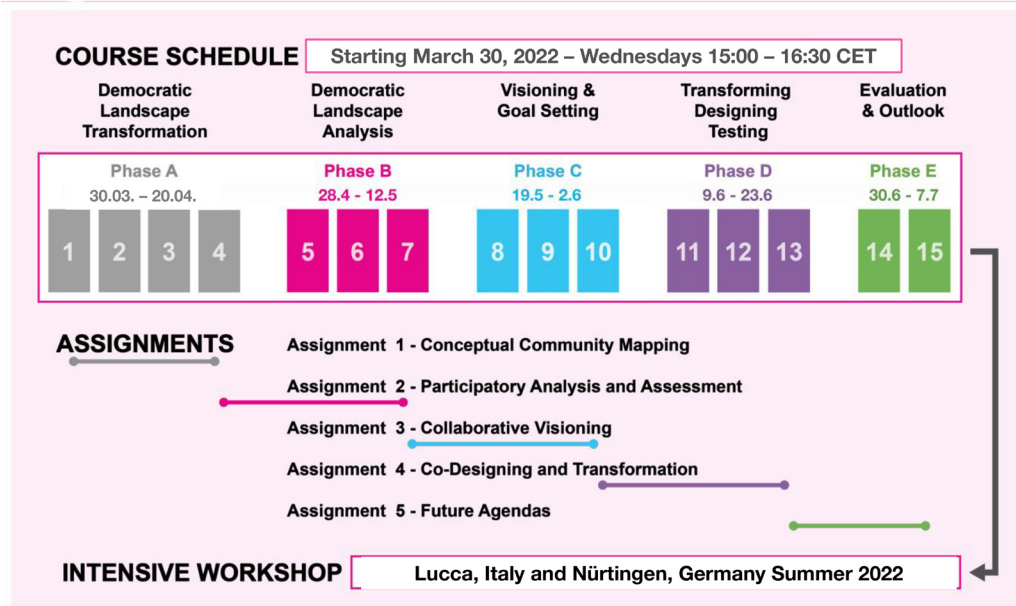
Collaborative ideation during the course design phase in winter 2019



Online Seminar



Structure and process of the LED2LEAP blended learning programme 2022



ledwiki.hfwu.de



participation by reason of their authority, be it a consequence of a role or a competence, cannot be permanent guests, but external collaborators, present only occasionally.

Main phases of the study process

The path that each group of students has carried out in their Living Lab has been divided into specific phases of which students were asked to report the final product. These assignments produced specific skills that we will analyse in the next chapter. In the parallel online course, this resulted in the process scheme, exemplified in the graphic above with the model used in the summer term of 2022.

First Phase: Community and Landscape Analysis: Who is your community?

Every path of participation must start with the sharing of a frank analysis of the environmental, social and political situation. The methods by which it is possible to shy away from the repetition of gossip and self-referential opinions have, in this field, a crucial role and involve operational strategies such as play, autobiographical narration and theatre. The ability of the students at this stage is not only to reconstruct the perception of the surrounding environment but also to return it through effective synthesis,

understandable to all participants so that it can be useful for the progress of the participatory process. The themes of this mapping must be the built context and its perception, but also the social and political context. This is to be treated with a particular and inter-scale attention, since each community is part of an administrative landscape that is divided into neighbourhoods and municipalities, civil and ecclesiastical regions. Not only on the specific territorial cell converge the attention of administrations with growing areas, but it can also happen that the single territorial cell is the seat of initiatives, events, productive activities and collective memories that give the specific place a much larger dimension of its physical limits, expanding its context and notoriety and influencing - for better or for worse - investments and future projects.

Students are then asked to organise this “geography of actors” on a map, that is a power map or a community map. A community map is a graphical representation of any human-centred system. Students were invited to produce a hand-drawn artefact or use digital tools to develop one. Hand-drawn maps are nice as they trigger fun and identification among community members. Digital maps have the advantage of being easy to change, supplement or develop further. The community map is a working document, which is constantly evolving.

Typical elements of a community map are the following:

- Traditional **social groups** such as the youth, kids, students, parents, the retired etc. Typically, these groups have specific needs, which you can make explicit through the map.
- There might be **individuals** who do not fall in any group you are aware of. Do you know any?
- All these people might not be organised, but might operate as **communities of practice**;
- **Local stakeholders:** these groups are organised. They only exist within the community context you are observing (for example: a local community centre, school, church, or interest groups such as landowners, small businesses, retailers etc.)
- **External stakeholder:** In most cases these people do not live in the community, but have stakes and interests in its future, for example the local authorities

Thereafter, all actors involved in the map should be advised and involved in the participatory process, not to accommodate their desires, but to take advantage of possible convergences of intent. The community map consents to articulate a new representation of the social-political and natural environment, which is an original representation of the community itself. This dismantles the prejudices and the knowledge that many inhabitants are supposed to have about their own life.

Second Phase: Democratic Landscape Analysis

In an ordinary and orderly process, the community precedes the participatory experience and constitutes its promoter and stable element. Nevertheless, only by means of the participatory process does it become authentically aware of itself. In this phase, the community becomes the object of an adequate “pedagogy” that transforms the investigation of itself into explicit attention, so that an adequate representation of itself and a first common desire emerge, aware of the possibilities and competences that the community holds within it as a constraint of its realisation.

The development of this phase inevitably leads to some questions: What are the boundaries of a community? How inclusive is this participatory path? The imposition of any kind of barrier is contradictory to the desire for participation, but this barrier, in practice, has no reason to be implemented: assiduity, presence and motivation distinguish those who participate from those who do not participate.

However, the community is not made up only of those who most faithfully attend meetings. On the contrary, the community is the set of all who have a role or who attend or have a cause of affection to a territory. Rather than strenuously requiring the participation of everyone, the inclusivity of the community is to be questioned as well as its future configuration. It is always appropriate to involve all those who might

The Roma community was ‘permitted’ after decades, to install a statue to for the commemoration of Roma prisoners of war from WWII.

ISP in Miskolc, Hungary 2021

Photo: Anita Reith



be affected in some way by social or building developments in the area in the participatory path.

Participatory design processes constitute opportunities for relational amplification for the communities and the people involved, and encourage strategies of communion between institutions, associations, and individuals. In order to involve as many people as possible, participatory processes can adopt complex organograms, articulated by thematic or neighbourhood groups, with plenary moments of discussion and synthesis.

A broad articulation of the project allows for an equally wide mapping of the needs and desires of the community and its members. Frank and not rhetorical answers are largely conditioned by the ways in which answers are solicited: the ability to go beyond obvious, banal or superficial answers depends on the quality of the interpersonal relationships that are established and the opportunities that are proposed along the path. Best strategies are the ones that do not isolate the subject from the group, but on the contrary, allow comparison and mutual deepening acting in restricted subgroups.

Thus emerges a first “map of desires” and, at the same time, a “map of resources” the community recognizes it can count on. This mapping is part of the process by which the community reveals itself and forms the basis for the construction of a united and united future.

Third Phase: Towards the construction of a common desire: Collaborative goal setting and visioning

Having reached a higher knowledge of the community, having also reached a better confidence with its members and having collected, therefore, the desires of individuals, it is now the time to confront them with a collective aspiration to ensure a common horizon. It is necessary that the experience of the entire participatory process and particularly of this phase becomes a reason for strengthening one's own belonging rather than a reason for separation and alienation. This makes this phase particularly critical and significant. At this stage in the process, it is important and unavoidable to include open formative moments. The presence of a teacher, in fact, introduces an element of disparity

in the structure of the participatory path, conditioning the spontaneity of the interventions. It is appropriate that the persons invited by reason of their competences are present for a limited time, thus leaving the community to its own path, without affecting it.

At this stage, we introduced the students to the nominal group technique. The method starts by externalising each individual goal or desire. A deliberative process follows during which all participants clarify which goals could be clustered. It is important to keep individual formulations and nuances. A voting process finally determines the most relevant goals. These goals are brought together as a shared vision.

Clarification of a common desire:

In light of the implementation of knowledge offered by this path of participation and these contributions, it is appropriate to return to the first and naive mapping of desires to monitor their transformation. Usually, we do register a process of synthesis, deepening and convergence. Certain desires and needs are extinguished, because they are absorbed by others, or because they are overwritten by the process itself and the knowledge it brought to the community itself. But at the same time, desires deepen. Often enrichment in knowledge and experience does not lead to requiring more things or more places, but rather specifying the character, meanings and values that they must bring.

This is also the phase when one should weigh the remaining desires, through an “index of realisability”. This does not necessarily have to be expressed with the rigour of a mathematical formulation, but even when it is literal, it must develop a precise analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks of each option (SWOT analysis). Through this exercise, the community can investigate not only the achievement of its goal, but also its maintenance, therefore evaluating every possible scenario on the future sustainability of the intervention, and thus placing itself in a long-term perspective. In light of these analyses, some hypotheses may prove disadvantageous. For those that remain, usually countable, you can open a phase of concrete experimentation, that is prototyping.

Fourth Phase: Prototyping: co-design and transformation

Then comes the time to test the feasibility of the proposed objectives. This can be done with a real test, with a prototyping phase, in which to measure a result proportional to what the community would like to achieve. This is done by a partial realisation in space or time.

The nature of the prototype changes depending on the design it is intended to represent. Maybe you want to know how people might react to the new information system you plan to install in your new ecopark. Build a small scale model that could be adjusted by your tester or print out a 1:1 sign to evaluate the style, size or friendliness of your font. Is your idea related to a process? Draw a diagram that shows the application procedure for a parcel in your new community garden! Would this work for those who want to apply? Do you want to develop a participatory budgeting app in which people can post, comment on and vote for georeferenced intervention ideas? Make a presentation about the interface and test how the community would interact with your app!

Working on the construction of a prototype is the first joint work also for the community - a place where its cohesion and perseverance can be tested.

Fifth Phase: Collective Evaluation and Monitoring

Evaluation and monitoring are crucial aspects of every project - especially fundamental for participatory projects. In order to know what has changed we have to measure the impact. But what is an impact and why is it different from the output or the outcome of the project? In a participatory process, a social mission can be a desired impact which is sometimes under an indirect influence and yet the ultimate goal of the process. It is essential to deal with evaluation and monitoring from the very beginning of the project, to set targets and indicators, and to harmonize the goals and visions with the impact we want to see in the community.

While monitoring is a method to keep track of the different parts of the process systematically and continuously, collective evaluation should happen at different times during the process to evaluate what has been monitored and to make feedbacks

that can improve the process in the next phase of the project. When we engage the community in monitoring and evaluation we have to select the tools and methods carefully to get meaningful and useful results that really serve the process and not only look good on paper. A clear guidance on collective evaluation and monitoring is presented at the better evaluation website: <https://www.betterevaluation.org>

Common elements of the Participatory Path

There are some elements that appear as recurrent in participatory paths and that constitute almost the “ingredients”. They are summarised in the following six points:

XENIA: The participation processes have to do with hosting and with the gift of the guest. Participatory processes and especially Living Labs are a community experience limited in time, activated thanks to the presence of students in the role of facilitators and strangers who demonstrate a particular interest in the community and its territory. The guest lives the condition and provides to the community the opportunity for a new act of knowledge, memory, and rethinking. Of a narrative reconstruction and therefore, ultimately, of a change. It is for these reasons that the role of facilitators can never be superimposed or confused with that of external experts and specialists. The persons involved in the processes of participation by reason of their authority, be it a consequence of a role or a competence, cannot be permanent guests, but external collaborators, present only occasionally.

LISTENING: The participation processes are spaces of mutual listening. The opportunity to listen to everyone must be guaranteed, and this must be addressed by the efforts and imagination of the facilitators. “Listening to everyone” is not an ideal or rhetorical issue, but an action which must find concrete methods to encourage communication with all age groups, including the elderly and children. “Games” can be, for this purpose, an inclusive category, comparable to the one of the “road”, considered above. A playful environment can be useful to get rid of rhetorical responses and to unmask the real perception of places, both for adults and children. It should also be considered that not all participants could have equal communication skills. However, it is not

true that those who are not familiar with the world of speech have nothing to say. On the contrary, the competences in the traditions and elements that structure the territories are often entrusted to people who find effective freedom of expression only in their local dialects. This condition is also a source of extraordinary enrichment for the community and the participatory path. A friendly and simple atmosphere can integrate different languages and expressive mediums, in order to facilitate all modes of communication and all met languages. We should be able to open up to dialects, on the one hand, and to personal media production devices, on the other, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be heard and to produce content. From dialects to cameras, from children's drawing to grandmothers' sewing: students need to learn to guarantee everyone a suitable environment for their full self-expression.

COMMUNICATING: The phase of listening corresponds to that of communication. In addition to the institutional communications, by speakers or invited experts, the communication also includes moments when students must describe the progress of the project, reporting on the outcomes or results of the partial phases. These periodic activities are very important to make the community the protagonist of the participatory process and its development. A tight schedule may suggest abandonment or disinterest, while dates too close are often a symptom of insecurity. Just as listening must tend to the involvement of all, communication must do the same, so it is useful to consider public relations as well as panels, movies and slide shows to communicate the partial results of the process even to those who could not participate.

EXPERIMENTING: The experimentation as an element of the participatory process does not coincide totally with the macro-phase of prototyping that has been previously described. The experimental nature of the participatory process concerns the courage with which each environment requires new and unprecedented approaches. Facilitators are required to have a propensity for experimentation, with which to adapt techniques and methods already described in the literature, or already tested, to new contexts and new conditions. Each process has an intrinsic experimental character because in no case is one situation equal to the other nor can one achieve a definitive or complete result.

Experimenting involves considering the appropriateness of a mistake and conceiving the possibility of failure, to prevent it by having an alternative resource deposit in advance. Experimenting also means that working with the community does not deviate from a scientific process, even if applied to the humanities. The playful character and joyful atmosphere that must characterise a path of participation must not distract from the consequentiality of each experience, so that each one can be framed in a logical and communicable path, organic and sequential, between its premises to its results.

SYNTHESISING: The ability to synthesise is the great task of participation path's facilitators with respect to communities and their territories.

Although the real competent "figures" with respect to the environments and the contexts of intervention are precisely the citizens and the inhabitants involved, often it occurs that they have a sectoral perception and a stratified attendance of their territory. That is, it occurs that each one acts and inhabits the territory in relation to his own interests, to his own economic and social extraction, to what he is and to what he does. The competence on the territory is a community skill in the sense that it occurs only by intersecting the perceptions of several subjects, considering a sample large enough to collect an adequate variety. With participants, one must evaluate the impact of the project on all the layers that make up the local landscape, also to build collaborations and enhance possible symbiotic interests. The participatory design process thus becomes a laboratory to analyse, dissect and reconstruct a particular landscape, to reconstruct it in a new balance and a new unity, resulting in a new balance between its components, and among its actors, that is, among all those who, for various reasons, inhabit it. The ability to synthesise is the guarantee of a synodal and inclusive process that should bring the participation process to have territorial value, maturing a better level of collaboration and co-responsibility.

DELIVERING: Each participatory process is a unique and finite moment in the life of a community: guests arrive and leave; sometimes they do not leave things as they found them, because the guest has an intrinsic transformative potential. As in ancient times, however, both the arrival and the departure of the guests must be celebrated, and not by reason of their

authority or their singular merits, but by the inscrutable destiny that, from afar, led them to be close and close, granting, through them, a contact with basins of knowledge and exotic skills, intervened to spray a specific local context.

A participatory process cannot leave the community as it found it, even if only for the exchange that has taken place between people. That exchange will have allowed some to know each other and some others to begin to greet each other. By giving each other projects and hopes regarding their own territory, participants give much of themselves to others and to the community. This act of mutual trust, in addition to being reflected in interpersonal relationships, deserves to be documented. For this reason, students were invited to keep and leave a trace of the path they took with the individual communities.

Workshop in Nr.1.
Primary School in
Budaörs

Mapping together

Photo: Ágnes Virt



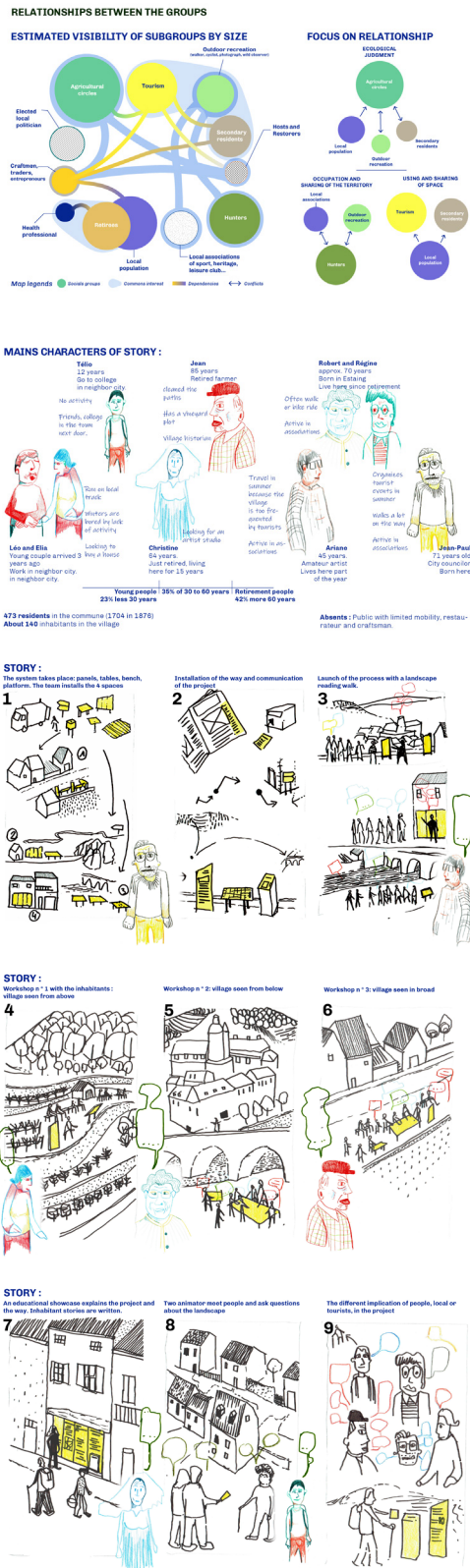
How the learning progress of the participants has been assessed

During the online seminar, all student teams received a blank content template on the seminar wiki on which the main seminar phases were presented as a general framework. As the teams went through the process they would complete the template step by step and in reference to the specific Living Lab context with which they were engaging. In parallel, the seminar live sessions introduced the main theory and methods, exemplified by good practices. Each seminar phase concluded with a shared and transnational presentation moment where the student teams presented both to the LED2LEAD team and to the other groups from the various Living Lab locations.

Some good practice examples of this seminar wiki process:

- [Nürtingen Living Lab 2020](#)
- [Parc Regional Aubrac 2020 \(good practice case\)](#)
- [Budapest Living Lab 2020](#)
- [Nürtingen Living Lab 2021](#)
- [Bologna Living Lab 2022](#)

During the intensive study programme, we used the evaluation sheet presented below as a framework for assessing how far the students were able to demonstrate LED2LEAP key competences. In addition, pre- and post self-assessment was done with pre-structured questionnaires. The findings of the evaluation activities are presented later on in this report.



Democratic Landscape Analysis by Rémy Teyssède

Story of democratic landscape analysis for the case of a village in the Aubrac Regional Park in France

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Playful Methods of the LED2LEAP Process

Introduction

Using playful methods was a key approach during the LED2LEAP programme. The team have applied several playful methods in the Living Labs and also during the Intensive Study programmes on site. These playful activities were not only engaging children but we also used them for youth and adults because during play the human brain is transformed into another state of mind which helps to build trust and active engagement.

The playful methods included board games, urban games, body sculpture exercises, prototyping, dancing and drama activities, and alternative ways of voting and expressing ideas (voting by feet or creating personas of LEGO figures), etc. These methods are introduced in detail in the Intensive Study programme booklets and other documentation materials related to the Living Labs.

As the Hungarian Living Lab is focused on school environments and the participation of children playful methods were developed mainly for children and youth. Besides applying many playful activities that are also introduced in different documents^{[3][4]} two board games were also developed by the university students, that serve for aiding the community design process of school environments.

In the German and Italian Living Lab, the playful methods were focusing more on how to engage adults differently. During the Intensive Study programme in Nürtingen the local community was asked to express their opinion by creating personas of LEGO figures from which an exhibition material and a strong statement came out. This method is introduced in the publication of the Nürtingen Intensive Study programme.^[5]

Some playful activities were repeated in all the Intensive programmes: the body sculpture exercise was used in order to define the LEAP mission. More details about the application can be read in the next section.

Elaboration of the LEAP mission through the “body sculpture” exercise

Purpose of the Body Sculpture exercise “LEAP” is a collection of words that summarises the driving values of the activities of the LED2LEAP project: Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership. We wanted to establish the meaning of these words in a good way during our Living Lab activities. One of the special moments when this was possible, was the Intensive Study programme, where landscape architecture students from international partners could temporarily, for 10 days, join the activities of the Hungarian, German and Italian Living Labs.

We came up with the idea of using the body sculpture exercise so that we can transfer the key values – Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership – to the activities of the Intensive Study programme. The exercise became particularly important, as the international students participating in the Intensive Study programme come from different cultural backgrounds, and therefore form their own interpretations of the values. The individual and cultural interpretations of the key values of the international students mingle with the interpretation of the local Living Lab members. Instead of using English as a mediating language to discover these differences and similarities, we wanted to introduce an exercise that can overcome language and communication barriers.

How to do the body sculpture

In the body sculpture exercise, each team was given one word of the LEAP core values, which they had to sculpt in 5 minutes without words, relying on their posture and body language. Each team then presented their sculpture to the other teams. Seeing the statue, the spectators tried to guess which word the team was presenting. The spectators shared their observations with each other, thus jointly interpreting the work of the sculpture-making group. The body sculpture exercise was used as part of the intensive study programme so that the participants of the programme could reflect on how these concepts appeared in their work during the intensive study programme.

Three ways of implementing it in the ISPs
 We tried the body sculpture exercise in all three Intensive Study programmes. The participants of the exercise were typically international students and their instructors. Depending on the structure and programme of the ISP, we used the exercise in three different ways:

- In Miskolc we used the exercise at the beginning of the ISP for establishing thematic working groups among the international students. [6] More detailed description in English available [here](#) and in Hungarian, [here](#)

- In Lucca, we used the exercise in the middle of the ISP to create a mid-term evaluation moment for the international students.
- In Nürtingen, we used the exercise at the end of the ISP to reflect about the key values of the ISP.^[5]

In the following tables, we present and explain the key words of the LEAP mission in the light of the sculpture groups of the three Intensive Study programmes.

Learning sculpture from Miskolc ISP

The Learning Group emphasised with their sculpture that “You can learn anything from anyone. Sometimes we don’t even know in advance what we will learn from one action, we only realise afterwards that we have become smarter. And it’s the other way around too. With our actions, we always set an example for someone else.”



Photo Anita Reith.

Learning sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

“The sculpture described different kinds of learning moments. The example through which we showed how diverse the meaning of learning can be was learning to use the hammer. While one tries to learn from the book what it means to hammer (individual learning), the other tries to implement and put it into practice (learning by doing). Here comes the moving part of the body sculpture: the moving person quickly studies the person learning hammering from a book, and the person who learns through using the hammer (peer learning), and turns towards the audience, selects someone from the observers and makes that person use the hammer by holding putting his hand on his hand and making him use the tool (teaching).”

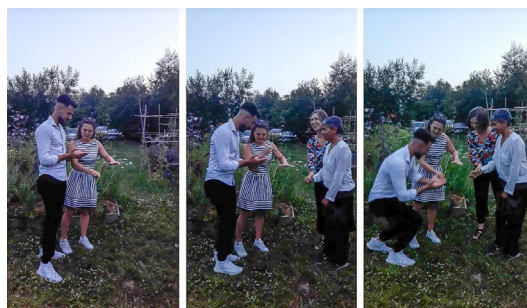


Photo : Tayana Passos Rosa.

Learning sculpture from Lucca ISP

“Our group chose the term “learning” from the LEAP acronym. We created our living statue by standing in a circle, seemingly holding hands, but not actually touching each other, just placing our palms above or below the palms on our left and right. For us, this was a symbol of receiving and giving. We also exchanged understanding glances without any conflict. This made us equal, not part of a hierarchy, and we could learn from each other. In addition, not touching each other’s hands symbolises such intangible values as knowledge and respect.”



Photo : Laura Kovács

Lucca videos [\[7\]](#)

Empowerment sculpture from Miskolc ISP

“Empowerment means a chain reaction: the King who raises the hands of the weak and thus starts a process by which the members of the community become confident and strong, and the community becomes a real winner together.”



Photo : Anita Reith

Empowerment sculpture from Nürtinge ISP

The body sculpture group shows with their sculpture in action, that the realisation of the power within, after being initiated, naturally strengthens the common goal, due to the upliftment of those who realise this inner power through this process. In the empowerment sculptural act, the person who initiates and empowers the other actors in the scene represents all factors in the landscape that can act as a tool of empowerment. The actors who are being empowered in this process represent at large the human inhabitants of the landscape, who then go on to use their empowerment as agents of change. On a broader note, the actors also represent all living inhabitants of the landscape who can empower and be empowered in a change process.



Photo : Tayana Passos Rosa

Empowerment sculpture from Lucca ISP

“Our main idea behind the body sculpture was that you can receive power from other people. In our sculpture, a powerless person lay on the ground. Then another person went to help the powerless, but he did not have the strength to pull him up alone. So another person intervened, and then another. In the end, they all got powers from each other and were able to jump up and get higher. Together you are stronger!”



Photo : Laura Kovács

Agency sculpture from Miskolc ISP

"Taking care of nature and our environment, to take responsibility for our environment, and to take care, to protect, to protect what is valuable to us".



Photo : Anita Reith.

Agency sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

In their sculpture, the Agency group told a story about paving a pathway. The moving sculpture begins with the path gate open, but once the agent arrives to walk through it, the gate closes, the agent then exercises their power to open the gate, walks through it, and chooses to close it behind them again. Knowing their power to act, made it possible for the agent to open the gate and access the pathway, however, choosing to close the gate behind them implies the importance of accountability. The sculpture represents agency as the power to pave the path for people but also to close it if necessary. Implying that the meaning of agency goes beyond social justice, where citizens can have their rights manifested with equality, but also that the power that comes with such rights symbolizes responsibility and accountability over actions. The agent in the sculpture represents all those with a high degree of power, such as the designers, who can promote transformation.



Photo : Tayana Passos Rosa

Agency sculpture from Lucca ISP

"Agency can be many different things. For us, a helping hand catalyses a movement or a process that can create a ripple effect. It is a process that passes the catalytic role to the next actor. We want to show this in our sculpture with the aim of restoring the monastery."



Photo : Laura Kovács

Partnership sculpture from Miskolc ISP

"We are connected to each other at as many points as possible. We hold on to each other, we can rely on each other. Moreover, by helping each other, we lift each other up."



Photo : Anita Reith.

Partnership sculpture from Nürtingen ISP

The partnership in the sculpture comes in the symbol of the three characters acting on the same task. Acting complementarily, they share the responsibility, the energy it takes to accomplish the task, the intelligence necessary, the tools required, and the results from such a task. This is represented in the sculpture by the simple task of writing or drawing. While the first holds the book, the second, who is incapable of seeing, handles the pen, and the third one can see and guides the hand of the second one. To be able to fulfil the task, the characters need to share their tools, need to be motivated by the same drivers, and aim for the same results. By sharing the task, everyone was involved in the process, represented in and by it, while by dividing the task, it became more easily achievable considering the complementary strengths of each individual.



Photo : Tayana Passos Rosa

First Partnership sculpture from Lucca ISP

The members of the partnership group described their sculpture as a team which is "happy together from the beginning", who "coordinate each other" but "stand individually" as well. There was a moving moment of the statue when the partners moved away from each other. This "stepping back" meant that after the initial agreement, it is important to give space to each other's new ideas. Partnership is "not a linear/straightforward process". In the partnership, "everyone learns from each other" because "not everyone is the same" which allows "different aspects to appear". This is why the members of the statue don't move at the same time, but they are creating a circular wave, kind of a flow together.

Second Partnership sculpture from Lucca ISP

They wanted to form a ship (literally a "partnerSHIP") that symbolises that they all row in the same boat to reach their common goal/destination. Every person had their own role in the group, but they needed to move very synchronised to be able to move forward



Photos : Laura Kovács

Interweaving meanings of the sculptures

It was often easy to guess which LEAP value the body sculpture represented. However, it also happened that some of the observers associated the body sculpture with a different core value than what the sculpture-makers wanted to depict. We found this out during the guessing phase when we discussed and described what we see on the body sculptures.

For example, the statue depicting partnership in the Nürtingen ISP was also guessed as one that represented Agency.

From the observations of the body sculpture exercises that were conducted in the three ISPs, we found that Learning, Empowerment, Agency and Partnership go hand in hand. Every process and activity that takes place in Living Labs carries the LEAP mission, and almost always two or more LEAP values can be identified that work in parallel and complement each other. This AHA-moment was important because it became obvious to us that with the Living Lab activities, processes and products, and also with everything we do in the intensive study program, we are not only influencing one value but developing two, three or even all four values at the same time.

Validating the values during and after the ISP

We were able to validate these values in three ways:

Immediately due to an ISP action.

Developing during the course ISP process.

Long term, after the ISP, due to the products we created (e.g. intervention ideas and strategies etc.).

For example, in the Miskolc ISP the core values were stated and divided among groups from the very beginning of the process with the Body Sculpture exercise, from that moment the participants were expected to act under the scope of their assigned value, and to validate it in every proposal or action. It was then clearly visible which action represents which value, although not being exclusive to it. In this way, the learning group, when proposing the raised beds as an immediate action for the ISP, aimed to create an immediate learning impact for the community, in learning how to build an edible garden. During the time frame of the living lab, the learning group worked closely with the school administration to alter their learning

spaces in such a way that they would be able to effectively use the spaces for more modalities of learning. The learning group created a working plan of the garden and the indoor learning spaces and redefined the rooms and sections of the outdoor areas for more integrated and resilient learning processes. Some of the redefined spaces were able to function with immediate effect, while some were demarcated for change over the next months or years, depending on the level of architectural changes required. Similarly, the intervention of the raised beds also had a planned long-term effect, where the act of gardening was to be followed as a regular activity of the school, not just as an outdoor activity, but as an integrated part of the academic curriculum that supports interdisciplinary learning with a focus on health and the environment.

Author

Arati uttur

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ledwiki.hfwu.de with the course content and learning objectives of LED2LEAP

Our Living Labs

4

Authors

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What is a Living Lab?

The Living Labs are part of a community learning model that brings the groups of actors in a community together, to form their landscape. Living Labs are exploratory collaboration spaces that allow continuous reflection and improvements of participatory methods through the combination of research and innovation processes. They are user-centred, open-innovation ecosystems, operating in a certain territorial context. Living labs operate with Participatory Action Research that repeats the following cycle for providing solutions for locally identified issues: co-creation, exploration, experimentation and prototyping, and evaluation. The participatory design process is not limited to codesign but it also focuses on collaborative mapping, assessment, goal setting, testing and collective evaluation.

Common features of our labs

The LED2LEAP Living Labs' main function is to develop the discussion within academia and the landscape and planning professions around the need for landscape democracy-building policies and processes related to landscape change. Linking expert and local knowledge not only helps to inform better decisions but also ensures policies which are grounded in the state of art knowledge and communities' realities, rather than abstraction. The partnership between academia and civil society is also integral to the Participatory Action Research (PAR) nature of the project. This framework allows knowledge to be co-created rather than simply transferred from 'experts' to communities in a top-down fashion.

The Living Labs are part of a community learning model that brings the groups of actors in a community together, to form/inform their landscape. In Living Labs, students and partners from the community explore, apply and test the methods and tools taught in the online seminar portion of our programme. Each partner university has created its Living Lab and a timeline for lab meetings. The Living Labs involve active community engagement in the lab and the landscape, codesign sessions in which university students work with and for the community, and integrating stakeholders' knowledge and ambitions at key points in the design process, to increase the functionality and sustainability of the design; and community feedback for gaining

insightful critique from stakeholders, to understand the effectiveness of the design prototypes and proposals.

LED2LEAP follows the methodical paradigm of a pedagogical and PAR-cycle, so the learning activities will be implemented during the process, and thus, evaluation and revision of the activities are closely interrelated. The project develops a 'Community Learning Model' that focuses on identifying relevant methods for working with the communities.

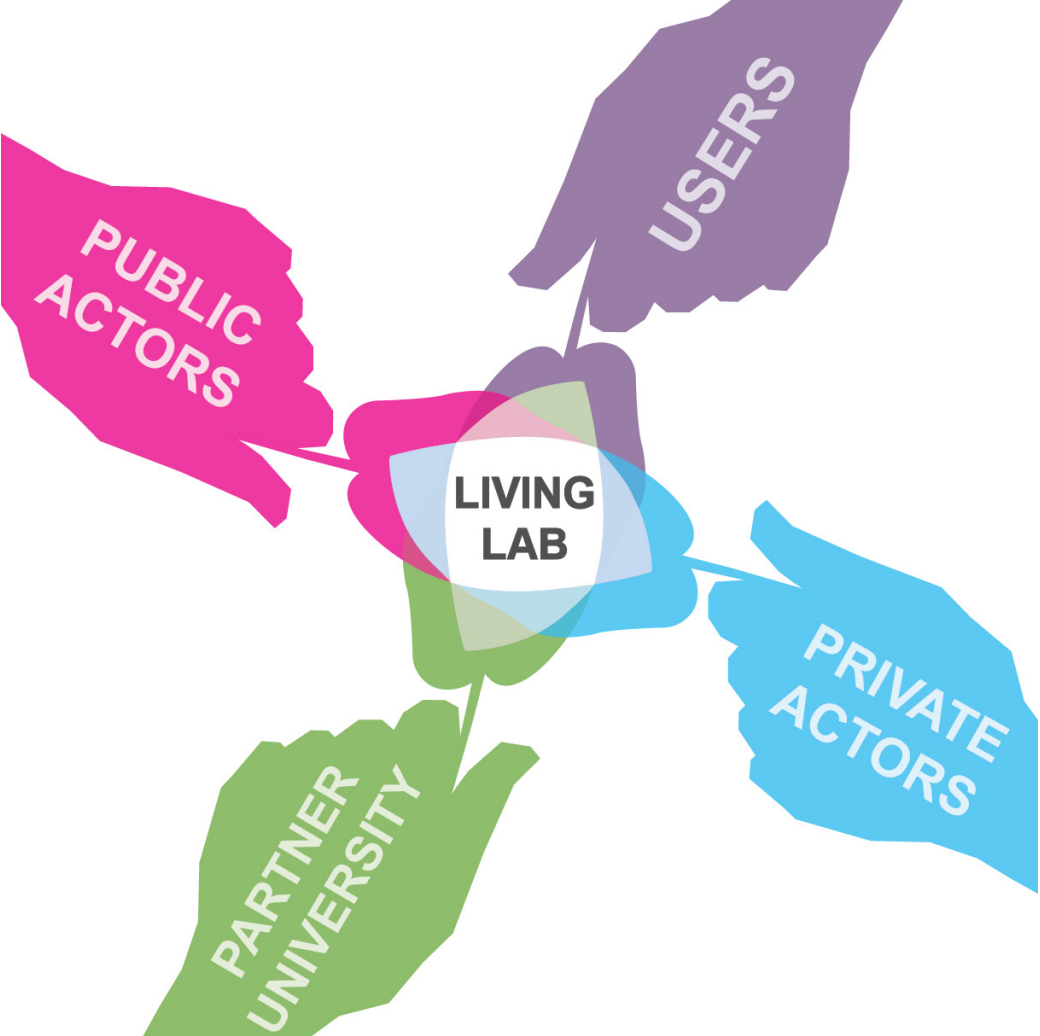
Specifics of our Labs

Our Living Labs were either place-based or theme-based Living Labs. Place-based Living Labs are focused on a certain physical territory and the community living there. In the case of the Nürtingen Living Lab, the lab works in, with and for two local districts of Nürtingen, in order to create a more liveable and sustainable city. The Bologna Living Lab also concentrated on the city of Bologna where they worked with different communities (co-housing community, social cooperative, etc.) that are all somehow linked to social inclusion.

Theme-based Living Labs are centred around a certain theme. The aim of a theme-based Living Lab, besides working with the given community, is also to create good practices and share knowledge and experience about the topic. In our case, the Hungarian LADDER Living Lab is a theme-based lab as it focuses on school communities and how they are able to shape their own environments. Throughout the three years of operation, several partner schools were involved from all over Hungary in this Living Lab.

Living Labs during the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic caused restrictions and lockdowns all over the world, including Europe, starting in spring 2020, at the same time when our first Online Seminar has started. Although the Online Seminar had suffered no changes as it was already planned to be an online course, personal staff meetings had to be carried out online instead, and the newly formed Living Labs had to adapt to the new situation quickly. Thanks to the online platforms and tools learnt and applied during the previous LED collaboration (such as Zoom, Mural, Padlet, etc.), our partners already had significant



Empty shop in the neighbourhood used as a Living Lab Hub

Photo: Ellen Fetzer

experience in online environments and remote work. This was a useful knowledge in the times of pandemic, when it was necessary to turn most of the Living Lab activities into online platforms or remote collaboration. However, Covid-19 did not make the project stop, it did influence the possibilities to work with the chosen communities.

From the landscape architectural point of view it has mostly affected the Collaborative Analysis and Mapping Phase of the process as site visits were not possible in some cases. An alternative solution turned out to be using Internet research and online platforms like Google Earth, Google Street View, etc. In addition to that, interviews, video chats, remote site introductions by the locals were applied. The fact that we had to entirely “rely on the information provided by the local community helped prevailing the community’s perspective over the designer’s” (Reith et al., 2021),^[1] and it turned out to be essential to the collaborative process.

The dissemination of the LED2LEAP project also has benefitted from the pandemic as several online webinars and multiplication activities were organised by the Living Labs where participants could learn about different participatory design methodology and tools, for both offline and online processes. The outcomes and findings of these webinars is published in a booklet titled “With children in all spaces” (Szilágyi-Nagy & Mihály, 2021).^[2]

The experiences of the LADDER Living Lab is summarised in the paper titled “Report of a Remote Participatory Design Process to Renew a Schoolyard During COVID-19” (Reith et al., 2021).^[3] The paper analyses the experiences of the online participatory process of the first collaboration of the LADDER Living Lab (collaboration with the Nr. 1. Primary school in Budaörs). It illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of the online and digital tools used in the Living Lab, in the topics of spatial understanding of the design site, communication in online workshops and the team experience in remote participation.

It also outlines future development directions for digital and online tools for remote participatory processes. The paper concludes that “remote solutions can actually give additional value to landscape architectural participatory processes, however, turning the whole engagement process into online platforms is not very realistic as personal and physical connections are basic values in such methods.” As the Hungarian Living Lab is dealing with school communities and their environments, their engagement process were focused on children and youth who, in general, felt comfortable in the online environment and were confident in using online platforms and therefore it was fruitful way of engaging these age groups.

Regarding the future development, the study states “that from an organiser perspective, remote and in person

Workshop in Nr.1.
Primary School in
Budaörs, Hungary.

Building a prototype

Photo Máté Lakatos





Dancing to local live music at the Braike Fest 2022

Nürtingen ISP 2022

Photo: Markus Frank

participation processes require the same mindset [...] but different skills and technical proficiency from the participants involved." Finally the paper suggests that "there is no one-size-fits-all method for participatory processes and the main challenge is to find the right tools and methods for the right purpose which needs education and a lot of testing."

In Nürtingen, the COVID restrictions created difficulties in reaching out to residents in the two neighbourhoods of our Living Lab. There was a core community that was already activated, but we wanted to reach out to those who are not involved yet. In both cases, one relevant objective was to use creative methods for community building as part of an overall process of reconnecting with and through the local landscape. We tried to use artistic approaches that would have this effect without requiring physical contact. Some examples from Klein-Tischardt during the summer term 2020 were: an open air photo exhibition, a postcard-based feedback and ideas collection and a 'social distancing' mini boat regatta on the local river Steinach. In the Braike neighbourhood, we repeated a variant of the postcard-based participatory approach in summer 2021 and created a digital neighbourhood exhibition this way. In both cases, the distancing rules triggered students' creativity and made them explore new ways of community outreach.

In Bologna the living lab had to adapt its process to the continuously changing regulations. When it was impossible to visit a site, the case analysis, the space and the landscape took place through Internet research and interviews with staff of the NGO Etabeta. While meetings inside were not allowed and it was still possible to visit a site in person, small group excursions were made together with representatives of the NGO and some members who were available at the time.

The detailed reports of every Living Lab can be read in our [Wiki](#) page.



The Tiny Protest Office
at the Nürtingen
Living Lab 2022

Photo: Anna Szilágyi-Nagy

Nürtingen Living Lab

Hölderlin-Lab as a local umbrella for the LED2LEAP Living Lab in Nürtingen

Hölderlin Lab is an open local innovation platform. Its name giver is the famous German poet Friedrich Hölderlin, who spent his youth in Nürtingen. This connects the lab with the city of Nürtingen in a symbolic way. The lab works in, with and for Nürtingen. Here, students and teachers from Nürtingen-Geislingen University come together with representatives from the public administration, business, the many local initiatives and active citizens.

What connects us is the joint work for a more liveable and sustainable city. We do this by means of long term and multilateral partnerships. In the cycle of the semesters, co-created ideas are constantly developed further and, if possible, accompanied until they are implemented. The teachers at HfWU are responsible for bringing local actors and students together in a process that is meaningful for all. This way, Nürtingen as a community can better benefit from the methodological expertise of its local university, the research activities of the students and the many ideas that keep emerging from the process.

In our lab, we constantly create new ideas, networks and cooperations. Concrete results are for example market analyses, future stories, spatial concepts, business models, business plans, interventions and events. The lab has no fixed location. It

can take place anywhere in and around Nürtingen, wherever its current topics and actors are.

For the LED2LEAP Living Lab, we focussed our activities on the sustainable development of landscapes at neighbourhood scale. Two local districts were involved: Klein-Tischardt and Braike.

Click [here](#) for more information on the Hölderin Lab

The neighbourhood focus of the Nürtingen Living Lab

For the LED2LEAP project the Hölderin Lab established a focus on sustainable neighbourhood development. We thus had a strong link to **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**, but we believe that our activities also contribute to SDGs: **8 : Decent work and economic growth, 13: Climate action, 15: Life on land, and 17: Partnership for the goals**

The activities were closely linked to existing community-building projects at the neighbourhood level, steered either by the town hall's social department or by local stakeholders. It is important to mention that the university has not initiated these community projects. We rather integrated our Living Lab activities into the emerging framework of the local neighbourhood development processes. This way, we could effectively respond to local themes and issues as they became apparent in the participatory processes.

Author

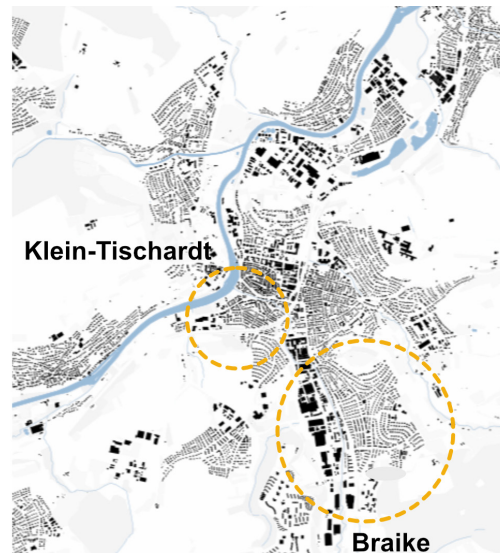
Ellen Fetzer



SDGs addressed by the Nürtingen Living Lab

Location of Klein-Tischardt and Braike on the map of Nürtingen

Image source: Ellen Fetzer



Nürtingen is a small town of 45 000 inhabitants and one of the 169 communes that together form the urban agglomeration of Greater Stuttgart. Within this densely populated urban area, Nürtingen is located at the southwestern edge of the region on the river Neckar. The Braike district can be found in the south of the town in the direction to Neuffen. Klein-Tischardt is very close to the centre. It sits right next to the old town district and the river Neckar.

In the summer of 2020, our activities focused on the neighbourhood of Klein-Tischardt. It is a very centrally located quarter with a diverse population and much unused open space potential. Engagement methods were very difficult to implement because of the pandemic, but the students involved came up with creative interventions which were well received by the residents. The activity has been followed up within the framework of a master thesis project analysing the neighbourhood's potential for self-governance and community management.

At the end of 2020, we transferred the concept to another neighbourhood, Braike, which the university campus building is part of. The Braike process has been described in detail in a separate documentation. In both lab locations, the neighbourhood as a whole was conceived as a community sharing the same territory and landscape resources. Both neighbourhood processes were concerned with the problem of decreasing social cohesion and sought for finding new ways of reconnecting the local community to itself. The LED2LEAP Living Lab added the landscape dimension to the theme of social

cohesion. The guiding question for both Living Lab locations was: How can the local landscape contribute to social cohesion? In that sense, our Living Lab was clearly place-based on the one hand, but it also included a thematic hypothesis. Most people involved also lived in the neighbourhood. Some people, for example the managers of the elderly people's home in Klein-Tischardt, did not live in the neighbourhood themselves. But their daily activities gave them a strong and visible role in the local community.

Our outreach to these communities greatly benefited from the existence of active neighbourhood development processes. Both had received funding from the state of Baden-Württemberg through its support programmes for local democracy and participation. The university entered these processes as a local actor. In the case of the Braike neighbourhood, this was even more effective, because the university is also located in the same district and conceived as a local stakeholder. Dr. Ellen Fetzer from the LED2LEAP project participated actively in most of the community meetings, partially together with other colleagues. This was an important initial step for building trust, identifying the communities' themes and local issues and designing a Living Lab process that would fit to the local process.

How the Living Lab activities evolved

In both neighbourhoods, the groups we collaborated with had a relatively similar composition. Typically, we engaged with three types of people. Firstly, there were always some engaged local residents without any institutional affiliation. Their motivation was simply to improve their direct living environment. Secondly, there were representatives from local institutions. In Klein-Tischardt, this was for example: the manager of the elderly peoples home or someone from the collective that is running a pup in the neighbourhood.

In Braike, we had representatives from the local church, kindergartens and schools. The third group refers to anyone who participated in the process as a representative from an institution but without being located in the neighbourhood itself. These were typically representatives from the city administration. In both cases, staff from the social department was involved. In the case of Klein-Tischardt we could say that the university also belonged

to this group because we are not physically located in that district.

While the local challenges were very similar in both districts, there were also quite significant differences regarding the character of the community process. Braike has twice as many residents as Klein-Tischartd and a lot of institutions such as a school, kindergartens and the university are located in the district itself. In addition, the community activation process was initiated by the local Protestant church, so it came from within. In Klein-Tischartd, the project was mainly initiated by the city administration, also because of the lack of public institutions in the neighbourhood itself. As a result, we currently observe that the processes in Braike are continuing and developing in a much more self-organised and sustainable way compared to Klein-Tischartd, where it actually stopped. Interestingly, another larger neighbourhood called Kirchheimer Vorstadt has started a community activation process just now and our Living Lab will get involved. These examples show that the sustainability of these processes can never be taken for granted.

A summary of the process in Klein-Tischartd

In Klein-Tischartd, we could already build on the findings of a community walk and a follow-up workshop, both were conducted in summer 2018 when the neighbourhood

development project was initiated. An important topic identified was the lack of public green spaces and meeting places. This process led to the implementation of a first neighbourhood festival in June 2019. In fall 2019, the university held a social innovation workshop with international students focussing on the local needs for public space, better services and social cohesion. In summer 2020, we entirely linked the process to the LED2LEAP project and offered a group of landscape architecture bachelor students to attend our online seminar and to apply the LED2LEAP approach to the Klein-Tischartd district. This was during the first digital semester of the pandemic and a challenging period for everyone involved.

The task of the landscape architecture students was to engage with all the knowledge and ideas that have already been developed and to dive deeper into possible solutions for a better use of the local landscape for the purpose of social cohesion, climate resilience and biodiversity. As part of this process, all student groups were asked to design an artistic local intervention that would support the shared knowledge and ideas creation with the community. The challenge was that all of these activities had to be conceived in a way that was compatible with the COVID-19 distancing rules in place at that time. The students came up with great ideas. We had an open air gallery, a postcard action for collecting ideas, small interventions supporting biodiversity, an exhibition in



Open air gallery showing local landscape scenes at unusual locations. Installation by landscape architecture students of the bachelor programme in summer 2020

Photo: Ellen Fetzer

Collective evaluation of students' ideas for enhancing the community landscape. Points were collected during an open air exhibition in July 2020

Photo: Ellen Fetzer



a local empty shop window, prototyping street redesign with chalk and parklets and the first tiny boat regatta on river Steinach. All ideas complemented each other well and achieved a lot of attention by local residents at various levels. Another supporting factor was the appearance of an urban gardening initiative at the edge of the neighbourhood which gradually evolved into a new gathering space for the community. This initiative was also supported by the university, which helped creating synergies.

The students' LED2LEAP project in the summer of 2020 ended in a nice open air exhibition of their ideas. This was done directly on a neighbourhood square called Gerberplatz, which was also a possible area for intervention and improvement. Up to present, most of the ideas from this process have not gone any further and unfortunately, the community building process in this neighbourhood has become very passive. The main problem was that it has not been possible to establish a local steering committee. In the moment when the city stepped out of this role, the process stopped as well. On the other hand, the urban gardening initiative is very successful, even though it has not been initiated by the neighbourhood itself. The project goes back to a general initiative in this field that has already been in place much earlier. But they managed to create something meaningful in the neighbourhood which is now conceived as a relevant open space for the community.

For further documentation, please have a

look at the story maps produced:

- [Gerberplatz Story](#)
- [Student ideas and interventions 2020](#)
- [Interventions on instagram](#)

A summary of the process in Braike

As for the Braike district, the community gathering process was initiated by the local church in cooperation with the social department of the city of Nürtingen. The university was invited to participate, together with many other local representatives from various social groups and institutions. Dr. Ellen Fetzer, who is also the LED2LEAP contact person, took this opportunity to link both the university and the ERASMUS project to the neighbourhood. The entire process started during the pandemic lockdown, so it was only possible to meet online. Despite this difficult situation, the group managed to achieve a lot. Together, they co-designed a logo for the initiative, a local graphic designer worked on various communication materials and a website was set up. In this process, it became clear that the main goal of the initiative is to work towards the improvement of the social cohesion in the Braike neighbourhood.

As a result of the online meetings, a digital placemaking initiative 'Our Braike in pictures and text' was launched in May 2021. In the call, the residents of the area were asked to share a picture or a short story about what makes Braike special

to them. This was done as a compromise because it was clear that the pandemic conditions would not allow for a larger community gathering in 2021. The postcard initiative, which was also supported by local post boxes, allowed for engagement without physical contact. In order to be as inclusive as possible, the postcards were also translated to English, French, Turkish and Arabic. Both the kindergartens and the primary school included the postcard topic in their education programme. The call also included that the submitted works would be exhibited in the context of a larger Braike exhibition. In addition, the mapping of Braike's favourite places, stories and experiences would provide a foundation for a community festival. The young and adult members of the group distributed the postcards, rang bells, and put up posters to involve the locals in the initiative. The idea of the community exhibition was further enhanced by a visit to the communal archive, which gave access to many historical images and maps. Furthermore, the local newspaper screened its archive and shared articles about the neighbourhood covering almost the entire 100 years of its history.

2022 finally allowed us to prepare for a Braike festival as the pandemic restrictions slowly reduced and in-person meetings finally became possible again. The festival preparatory meetings started in the beginning of 2022. At that time, we also started the preparations for our LED2LEAP Intensive Study programme, which we

timed so that the international students could not only help in the preparation of the festival but also fully participate when it was planned to happen at the end of June 2022. We also linked an entire module of the master programme to this process, so that a group of landscape architecture students could focus on the Braike neighbourhood in their work. Both the course and the LED2LEAP Intensive Study Programme contributed greatly to the success of the festival, which was attended by almost 400 people. After these intensive activities, the Living Lab coordinators started documenting the programme and continued testing and distributing the games that had been created in this period. Ideas such as the Braike greenhouse were further developed. Encouraged by the positive experiences, the community is already planning the 2023 festival, which will further deepen the local social cohesion and provide a framework for more interaction with the university. In the case of Braike, we are very optimistic that the Living Lab process will continue and evolve together with the local community building process.

The LEAP effect in Nürtingen

With regard to 'learning' we clearly understood that there is a lot of knowledge embedded at the interface of the landscape and its people. Our Living Lab approach has activated a process of knowledge creation about the past, present and future values and identities of these community



Participatory game development in June 2022 during the LED2LEAP workshop in Nürtingen

Photo: Ellen Fetzer

Braike community members indicate possible festival locations in their neighbourhood landscape, February 2022

Photo: Ellen Fetzter



Open air neighbourhood exhibition during the Braike Festival in June 2022

Photo: Ellen Fetzter



landscapes. We also understood that everyone involved in the process learns and that transformation happens through learning. In our neighbourhood projects, the aspect of 'empowerment' was mainly twofold: we empowered landscape values by articulating them, and we empowered the community by creating ideas and action. Certainly, we were also empowered ourselves and maybe, the term empowerment has lost its original meaning to us over this process. We have become much more humble. These local processes take time, and also, building trust takes time. Listening might be the foundation of any empowerment and should come first, in any process. We certainly had an idea of our own 'agency' when we stepped into

these processes. As landscape architects or urban planners, we have some normative assumptions of how spaces should look and work, we also have a strong ecological agenda. Through the local dialogues we had, it became clear to all of us, both teachers and students, that outside the academic ivory tower, we cannot take the agreement on these norms for granted. We were confronted with different arguments, which we might have thought are less 'sustainable', for example the preference of local parking lots to green spaces. This was an important lesson for everyone on how to introduce fair and open discussions on competing sustainability goals - while keeping our agency for the landscape. Regarding the 'partnership' we realised that it is essential



Pop-up gallery in an empty shop window in Klein-Tischardt, exhibiting the results of the participatory postcard action. June 2020

Photo: Ellen Fetzer

to stay and continue. Too often, service learning or project-based learning has an on-off character, starting and ending with the semester process. We understood that it is very relevant to constantly adjust the process of the learners and students to the development of the ideas for and with the local community. This comes together with additional skills required from the Living Lab coordinators. They need to make sure that knowledge from one semester to another is kept, validated and constantly built-upon. It is also important to constantly stay on eye-level with the community.

Impact of our LED2LEAP Living Lab in Nürtingen

We are definitely going to further develop what we have started. There is also a very constructive synergy between different faculties in our case. In many cases, we collaborate well with the business faculty that is running an interdisciplinary social innovation course also in form of a Living Lab. Together, this forms our umbrella structure 'Hölderlin-Lab', that has already been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. The social innovation course can build upon landscape-based opportunities and challenges that have been identified in the LED2LEAP process. Typical outcomes of that course are business models, cooperation ideas or organisational forms, all of which are highly relevant for long-term transformation and sustainability.

The university continues its engagement in the Braike neighbourhood process. Another festival is already planned for June 2023 and concrete steps are taken to expand the idea of an educational school garden as part of a local foodscape. This goes together with very recent plans to expand the university building at the Braike location, which will bring even more staff and students to this area and increase their potential impact on the neighbourhood.

Simultaneously, another neighbourhood in Nürtingen, the so-called Kirchheimer Vorstadt, has started its own bottom-up process and invited the university to be part of it. The landscape of this district will become the focus of the upcoming summer semester projects in 2023. The university will also host a Landscape Forum and use this opportunity to showcase and disseminate the LED2LEAP approach to a wider professional and academic community.



Braike history:
Community festival
1976

Photo Copyrights: Braike
Community

Braike Fest 2021

Photo: Markus Frank





Playing Braikour

Photo: Ellen Fetzer



Braike history:
Am Schopf

Photo: Gernot Beichle



Connection to and cure of Nature

Vegetable gardens, behind Salus Space

Image source: [Salus Space](#)

Bologna Living Lab

Lab characteristics

The Villaggio del Fanciullo is called this way because different social realities live there, a kind of smart village built in the 20s that from a convent has become a place where different social realities and other cooperatives meet. In this once-religious space, different legal entities share the location and have a common background. There was an initial division between the people that were sent to share a space and had nothing in common. But throughout time, a symbiotic mechanism is activated, allowing the actors to cooperate and live together in the shared space. Instead, Spazio Battirame initially was a colonic house from the nineteenth century, owned by one of the most important families in Bologna at the time. A strip of land is still connected to this space, revealing the Roman geometric scanning of the fields still present today.

This colonial house still has a stable and a barn; in the 70s it was abandoned and lost its historic value. In the 90s a social centre was moved into the area; moreover, a tensile structure, initially built for Italia 90 Worldcup was reused there and divided into two parts. The association that stayed there, Livello 57, usually was a source of public disorder, organizing concerts and various events. At the end of 2007, there was a gas explosion causing victims; and for this reason, everything was closed. The place, left to itself, became a place of abusive activities, until the arrival of Eta Beta In 2014; their presence led to the transformation of this land from the industrial area of Bologna into an agricultural area, with teaching rooms and a restaurant that opened soon after their presence began to be noticed.

Last but not least, Let's talk about Etabeta. It is an NGO that works with public and private entities to promote appropriate opportunities for socialization and social inclusion. The projects and programmes are aimed mainly at people in situations of fragility and social marginality. The community offers to listen to the needs of people and public bodies by finding together with their initiatives and solutions to identify socio-rehabilitation paths of start-up work.

The community of Salus space is located in the Savena district, near the highway, the railroad and close to a retirement home. The complex is not yet the final one, in fact, in addition to the 20 apartments and the vegetable garden, a theatre, a restaurant and some small shops will have to be completed. This newly born project of co-housing is funded by the European Union and the municipality of Bologna, with the goals of zero waste, energy and economic independence.

The themes on which the Salus Space project is focused are social inclusion of migrants and refugees, urban poverty, energy transition, and the development of new jobs. The general objective of the project, lasting 3 years, is the integration in the local context of a centre of hospitality, work, intercultural welfare and well-being in the broad sense.

Sites involved are the area and buildings of the former private clinic called "Villa Salus", which for many years has been in a state of neglect and decay. The project, in its entirety, is accompanied by a strong communication campaign aimed at the city, a participatory communication, which involves both the project partners and the community of inhabitants of the area. Salus Space wants to define an innovative model of hospitality and integration, which can be replicated in other European contexts.

In the second and third years, despite various pandemic impediments, it was possible to interact more with the community of the chosen location, making greater use of field visits. The Living Labs underwent this primary differentiation. The final output accuses and shows, to some extent, this aspect; a more distant and impersonal approach allows the essence of a place to be grasped less than a first-hand relationship with the workspace.

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SDGs addressed by the Bologna Living Lab



The UNSDG's goals that we considered most during the labs were **3: Good health and well-being**, **8: Decent work and economic growth**, **10: Reduced inequalities**, **11: Sustainable cities and communities**, **12: Responsible consumption and production**, **15: Life on land**, and **17: Partnership for the goals**.

The theme is that this community was in an embryonic state, not yet structured. They were people who had only started living together for a few months. The dynamics of cohabitation are mechanisms to a large extent to be managed, to be invented. our aim was not to give them autonomy and self-management, we provided them with rules of the game not to be slavishly followed; they must be adapted and modulated according to need and the internal dynamics that they, the inhabitants, know best.

The attempt was to get to know and interact with the community, to construct methods, and a prototype for intervention so that the community itself could choose which rules to adopt. It should also be considered that a community was chosen that was already partly autonomous and self-sufficient, with solid internal administrative, bureaucratic and social management. Our presence had more of a pedagogical focus, because of course the risk is that these exercises will activate the processes of dependency on the projects to various degrees of imbalance, which cannot be sustained within a university course.

Our interaction aimed to establish a detached but enthusiastic relationship from the outset, maintaining a professional participative and collaborative approach,

monitoring, for example, progress through periodic monthly or almost monthly reports. from year to year we reactivated the workshop without guaranteeing continuity also because the students varied and we could not guarantee operational continuity. at the end of the first year, we left a test, a tool developed by us and proposed to the community leaders, to monitor the community's well-being and the final comparison and discussion certainly had an appreciated result.

Lab in action

The people realities involved were in both cases a percentage of people with personal socio-economic difficulties such as refugees, people with physical or mental disabilities, foreigners, and immigrants in general. For the realities in which ETABETA collaborated directly (with "Spazio Battirame" and "Villaggio del Fanciullo"), it was possible to meet people with much more delicate life situations awaiting them e.g. virginal prisoners and abandoned or escaped minors, people with addictions of various kinds.

When it was impossible to visit a site, the case analysis, the space and the landscape took place through Internet research and interviews with Juan. While, when it was possible to go out and visit a site in person, small group excursions were made together with representatives of the comma community and some members who were available at the time. The common objectives that we thought up together with the people of that community were more or less the same as those that had already been set as guidelines for the initial

projects when they were implemented. Let us remember that we entered into already realised and formed realities that had undergone a prior filtering and structuring process, also and above all from a sociocultural impact point of view.

The groups divided up the work, the research areas, and the tasks in the elaboration in the execution of the various steps of the presentations, but the parts of the general design comma identification of the pivotal themes were carried out collectively. Hey what was done, can be summarised as a proposal for the improvement and strengthening of that community, mainly by its presence on the public scene of the city of Bologna. the direct effect was initially to move a certain type of awareness and feeling of not being so isolated and/or marginalised, an effect that can happen due to the type of associations and personalities that are involved and who live in these places daily.

Moreover, one of the objectives was to work together with the protagonists and coordinators of these projects, to understand together and give external, hence more objective and analytical, advice on what the emergencies were, the main aspects on which to focus, and we are convinced that the impact we had was also the desired one, i.e. to implant in the minds and habits of those who live these spaces comma who work in them and devote their time to them comma to realise the broad spectrum of incidence that they have within

a territory such as Bologna. We hope that what we have done, and the feedback we have brought back to the communities we have examined, will first of all be proactive and constructive, and that it will make those who work there think about the fact of keeping several realities together.

For example, to involve the actors of these places more closely and make them an integral part of the evolution of the site, various organisational tools can be used: using anonymous questionnaires and surveys, organising shared and community-based interactive workshops, and proposing participatory and collaborative planning. A decisive aspect that we raised and brought was the importance of the vision and opinion of young and enthusiastic people, from outside that world, with a more objective outlook, with obvious limitations: not fully aware of all the difficulties that an association or a collective, an independent community such as that of Salus Space, experiences daily. However, it is important to take a fresh.

A new approach to first of all identify the redundant themes that are most felt by those who live in the spaces, is also what is firstly perceived from the outside since it is often believed that certain characteristic features of a place, such as the back of the building, where there is a vegetable garden or a lake, are of main interest. Still, if you have to approach and come into contact with external reality, with users, the reception is also important and therefore



Outdoor dinner in the Battirame Garden Space

Photo Source: [Etabeta](https://www.etabeta.it)

the main point of arrival area in the case of Salus, they had and have many fine initiatives in place. Still, some collective meeting places were left a little more in the background.

Reflection on the LEAP

Spazio Battirame's themes: Child care, games, reuse of materials, and material library (materials to be found well on the groups' website).

Salus Space's themes: the theme was to monitor and improve cohabitation in the Salus village, i.e., different people cohabit in this community, ours was to monitor and provide tools for better communal living, strategies to improve relationships and daily dynamics. the community was convened in several official sessions and we also experienced it less continuously (the spaces, activities, taking pictures from the Living Lab) Declination of the four macro themes of the LED2LEAP project.

Learning: it is clear that the students understood well that their role is connected with their service; they are not absolute leaders but to the extent that they serve (a very Christian principle linking to the student workshop project). As leadership was transferred to the community, they were repeatedly asked to structure rules of its involvement and this is part of the practice of empowerment, through knowledge and personal development (where "personal", in this case, means both

a single member of a group or the whole). One positive aspect we left them with is the desire to write a community charter, altogether, and continue to learn together new ways to develop the space where the community lives and get more in touch, understand, and learn about each other.

Agency, from its etymological derivation from 'ago agis, actum, agere' meaning to act: what actions have we done to enable actors to be independent? Where does the community recognise the power to take matters into their own hands? They already do so many actions that there is no need for us to intervene and propose new ones, but we can organise activities (open market, community party), design spaces (social gardens), and good practices (the use of communal washing machines).

Education can also be interpreted in this initiative, i.e., giving them all the tools and useful notions that they do not already possess. From this point of view, organising these cornerstones of the community, and transcribing them on paper, are the properly regulated actions through which a norm of being together, a common life, is generated.

This explains how we worked on the **Partnership,** last but not least: we tried to make people understand the importance of lowering barriers to the outside world. Even though this community is isolated from the urban space in a peripheral rural context, which can generate a significant problem of interrelation with the city, as human

External view of the main entrance of Battirame main building

Photo Source: [Spazio Battirame](#)





Front facade of the Salus Space residential building, an event involving citizens

Image source: [Salus Space](#)

beings aggregated in social communities, the partnership must be generated first of all with the structure they have next to them. An RSA (Healthcare residence for the elderly) that constitutes their first need and possibility of collaboration. For example, the produce from the garden can go on their canteen. The need to open up to the city concerns not only extroversion and a connection to the daily life of a living metropolis like Bologna but also allows the city to open up and go towards them. From this point of view, the local landscape is involved. We have measured the impacts on the inhabitants of this community, and from one year to the next some components of that space have changed, both inhabitants and workers, as normally happens in an environment, there is always a fluidity and an interchange of realities and people. The impacts turned out to be low: on the inhabitants of Salus, because they saw that activities could be done to improve their lives together, but no other important traits emerged.

The LED2LEAP approach in this case showed its most delicate and characterising side, i.e. the capacity and potential to graft itself into a project already in place, which in itself contains a social aspect already taken into consideration. The question is how to be able to insert it and make it an effective and valuable implementation tool, for a community, an association, or a group of subjects already established and started up. at the level of recovery and regeneration, to recreate cohesion within the context of the democratic design of the landscape, ensures a great relevance and urgency in these contexts, since they involve people

who live in a situation of social and cultural emergency daily. However, fortunately, there are already relational mechanisms in place and operating on the part of coordinators who have been doing this job for a long time, internal project managers who manage to coordinate it chorally with the main association that is ETABETA. Probably, the aspect of dialogue and collaboration with the institutions are not of primary importance, for the autonomous and independent aspect that these realities want to acquire, a relationship with the municipality is certainly fundamental as regards aspects that create an instrumental dependence on goods and services offered by the municipality, in this case, that of Bologna. It finds fertile ground in this area since there are many associations and collaborative pacts with associations; for example, a very widespread and popular tool that distinguishes Bologna from other cities are urban gardens, open markets of local producers, and, indeed, the collaborative pacts that the city stipulates with local associations to be able to interact in a more constructive and co-participative manner.

The most interesting aspect of this experience is certainly how much and to what extent it affects the students taking part in this course and workshop. This is because you have the opportunity to introduce the new comma generations who are the ones who will have the burden and the honour of carrying on these ideals in the future, and so bringing them closer and putting them in contact with these realities can be very formative and proactive because it allows them to understand

Vegetable gardens at the rear of the Salus Space residential building

Photo source: [Salus Space](#)



Open Market of Salus Space to fundraising

Photo source: [Salus Space](#)

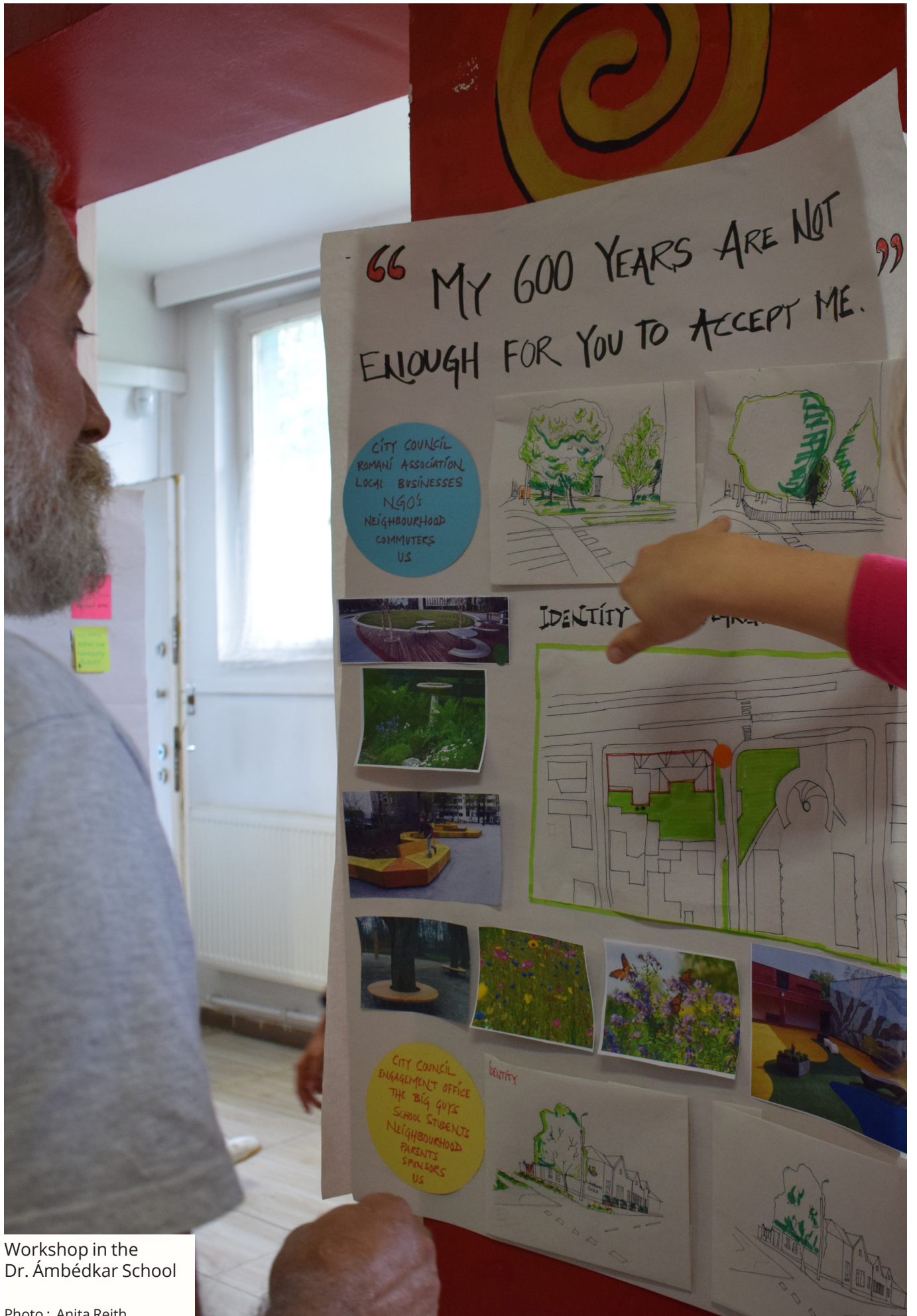


that certain comma situations are of daily relevance, and who it is important to take into account when talking about urban design or regeneration.

The students of all the Living Labs reported positive and forward-looking feelings towards the future of the case studies they analysed, their potential, and the ability to be able to have a relevant aspect in the area is important in the formation of communities that have cooperation, integration, personal and collective growth, independence and constant improvement as their common goal.

Impact of the Living Lab

We wanted to allow the community to help itself, and also to try to improve itself in the future, by providing tools that are methods of approach: the 'Community Charter'; exercises to break the silence in the assemblies, for example doing a round of introductions with a question taken out of context but simple and sympathetic to put the participants at ease; methods of conducting the assemblies to avoid a feeling of being forced, for example in our meetings with them, we have never forced anyone to participate, we have simply extended the invitation to anyone who wanted to participate, making the meetings at after-hours. An important aspect, however, is the construction of a common thought, a unitary organisational path, set up based on different needs. This is the impact we have had on the community, the willingness and possibility, with simple tools, to improve the management of common spaces, in receiving personal needs, and in making proposals to enrich the community.



Workshop in the Dr. Ámbédkar School

Photo : Anita Reith

LADDER Living Lab, Hungary

The Hungarian LADDER Living Lab - 'Laboratórium Diákokkal a DEMokratikus köRnyezetért', aka Laboratory with Students for Democratic Environment - is an exploratory collaboration between the Institute of Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning and Garden Art of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the kultúrAktív Association. The university's landscape planning and design expertise and the association's competencies in the built environmental education of young people led to a Living Lab aimed at democratically transforming the school environments. We form partnerships with various Hungarian schools, and in cooperation with the school community, we develop landscape architecture solutions tailored to school life: we map the school environment, analyse and evaluate the condition together, and jointly develop and implement ideas to improve the state of the school environment.

The LADDER Living Lab aims to popularise democratic school environment design and connect academia with school communities through children and youth-centred community design processes in which built environment educators, the school community. The landscape architecture profession can collaborate for the common good. As a Living Lab, we continuously reflect and improve the process and the working environment. We need to use innovative participatory methods suitable for the different stakeholders' needs. With a combination of research and innovation, we use user-centred, interactive, playful techniques to engage the community, especially the young people who are the most affected group while still having the least voice in the decision-making process. The LADDER project's goal is to change the way we deal with the school environments in Hungary, especially how we engage the youth in shaping these environments.

Lab characteristics

At LADDER Living Lab, we partner up with primary and secondary school communities with diverse social, financial, and geographical backgrounds. However, we focus on the engagement and empowerment of children and young people; we also involve teachers, staff, and parents in our collaboration. We also

address external stakeholders: neighbours, local actors, and the municipality. Essential drivers of cooperation are the local and international landscape architecture students who participate in Living Lab activities through the Landscape and Democracy elective course. In this collaboration, many work together with different knowledge and abilities to plan the future of the schoolyard, its surroundings and improve the overall quality of the school experience.

The main activities of the Living Lab are: Rethinking and renovating school environments with the involvement of the school community, especially young people Development and application of a board game for community design in schoolyards Methodological guidance for collective mapping, planning, implementation and maintenance

Lab in action

Collaboration with the No. 1 Primary School in Budaörs

The first collaboration with the Living Lab was established with a primary school in Budaörs, a town in the agglomeration in Budapest. Throughout the whole process, six different cycles of cooperation can be observed, distinguished according to which actors have worked intensively together, for how long and for what purpose they have cooperated, who they have sought to involve and by what means.

The first cycle was the preparatory phase where the framework of the project was discussed with the actors of the planned process: the development teacher, the school director, representatives of the association and the university, and the volunteer architect parents. The second cycle was a remote/online participatory process. The collaboration started within the framework of the Landscape and Democracy course at the university, during which we first defined in more detail the participants of the first phase of community planning with the landscape architecture students, then - due to the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic - the students used online and remote tools to explore the needs and views of these actors on the school environment, and formulated the main goals of the courtyard creation through a visioning online workshop. After the second cycle, the need emerged to complement the online and remote

Community building during the Intensive Study Program in Dr. Ámbédkar School

Photo Source: Lili Csuka



design process with face-to-face workshops. Together with the school and parents, we submitted an application to the National Cultural Fund to develop and test the workshop method.

In the “With Children in All Spaces” application, we brought together international and Hungarian practitioners of planning in children’s communities to learn about online and offline methods for different stages of community planning. After learning from good examples, we developed a series of complex and experiential sessions with parents, association staff and school teachers over eighteen online meetings. In the wake of the new wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the sessions were repeatedly rescheduled and re-planned, and finally implemented in June 2021 in the school over three days of action, with some of the university students involved in the implementation and documentation. We were able to personally involve third, fourth and fifth graders in the design of the schoolyard, to find out what the students thought about the yard’s features and possibilities, and to see what solutions they could imagine, which we modelled, built and tested together.

At the mid-term evaluation of the third cycle, it was suggested that it would be worthwhile to involve the wider school community in community planning in parallel with the action day series, and that this time it would be worth giving students the opportunity to take an active initiative. Thus, the driving

force behind the 4th cycle was the student council. We met with the student council children on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, initially online, then in hybrid and face-to-face meetings. The theme of the meetings was to develop an engagement strategy, for which the children brought ideas and tools, and the combination of many ideas led to the idea of the Dream Courtyard competition, where the school pupils could submit two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art to show what they imagined a Dream Courtyard to be like. The competition was a great success, with over 100 entries, and at the suggestion of the student council, we continued to work together to evaluate the entries.

After evaluating the entries, we held a yard walk to narrow down and assign action areas to the ideas formulated by the end of the fourth cycle. The ideas for the nine action areas were then ranked by the school community through an online voting session, and the landscape architecture students involved in the LED2LEAP course illustrated them by visualisations. After prioritising the nine areas at school level, we organised a Strategy Workshop aimed at bringing together student and teacher perspectives. In the strategy workshop, student representatives first discussed the feasibility of the ideas with teachers, and then, together with parents, university and association coordinators, formulated the steps needed to implement the ideas in the short and long term.

In the sixth cycle - covering the steps following the community planning, implementation, monitoring and redesign - roles are reversed and the school becomes the initiator. We have already implemented ideas during the community planning phase, which was aimed at testing a particular idea for a courtyard. We have put up shades in the courtyard to see where it makes sense to add more shade, made insect hotels and planted a bee-feeding flower mix at the base of the school fence to see if a greener and more animal-friendly courtyard would work for the school. And there are many ideas still to be implemented!

As an outcome, besides the implementation plan and the small interventions already carried out, a booklet is produced about the process, methods and evaluation to be published soon to be used by other Hungarian schools.

Collaboration with Dr. Ámbédkar School

Dr. Ámbédkar High School serves the Hungarian Roma community in the northern part of Hungary, in Miskolc. The school has mostly teen and young adult students from many small villages nearby. Following a Buddhist orientation and a human-centred form of pedagogy, with a horizontal structure and curricula that are focused on preparing the students for the life outside the school. Improving the very low rate of graduation from the surrounding Roma settlements, teaching the students skills

that can allow them to follow careers, and the aim of freeing them from the current imposed reality of informal jobs and financial difficulties are concepts among the school's mission.

The cooperation between the school and the LADDER project within the LED2LEAP scope happened through two workshops realised as Living Labs and one Intensive Study Program for the international participants of the course. Starting mostly with the aim to help tackle the segregation challenge the school community faces, during the implementation of the project, and especially during the local intensive work, the project followed a different path than what was originally planned. There was a big opening for learning from and empathising with the community, their culture, their challenges, and their landscape. From there, the Landscape Architecture students could propose and discuss with the community medium and long-term solutions to the local challenges, while acting together on the spot to create immediate changes.

Among the outputs and outcomes of the collaborative work done during the Intensive Study Program, there was the maintenance and organisation of the yard, with documentation made by the university students of ideas to be implemented in the future to strengthen the connection between the school community and the local community together with the ongoing maintenance of the yard. A full renovation of the building façade and fence took place, together with the planning of the placement



Community building during the Intensive Study Program in Dr. Ámbédkar School

Photo Source: Anita Reith

of a sculpture in the school's surroundings to aid in strengthening the identity of the school in the neighbourhood. Finally, there was also a booklet produced introducing the process, tools and methods, which also concludes findings and lessons learned during this process to be used by other Hungarian schools.

Collaboration with Polytechnic of Economics

The Polytechnic is an alternative bilingual high school. It is located in district 9 of Budapest, with students ranging from 12 to 18 years old. Having educational goals that are connected to alternative and horizontal pedagogical movements, and consistently incorporating modern instructional methods into everyday classroom interaction. It is a person-centred institution that also considers the challenges of the twenty-first century and the relevance of learning a foreign language in today's globalised world. The partnership with the school happened in the form of a workshop, led on four occasions throughout four weeks. It was mostly developed and led by Landscape Architecture Master students, and the work done with the school ran as a LADDER Living Lab.

The aim of the workshop series was to test a pedagogical program tailored for the Polytechnic school, adapted using the same concepts that rule the school's pedagogic orientation, with the purpose of strengthening the participants' relationship with the schoolyard as an instrument

for Environmental Education. The main methodologies adopted for the program development were design-based learning, or learning-by-doing, and the 4Cs future skills (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity).

After the implementation of the program with the students and the cooperative development of ideas, there was also a design workshop week at the university, aiming at creating conceptual plans based on the work and joint assessment of the schoolyard previously done.

The main achievements of this cooperation were a rich production of concepts, ideas, and prototypes for the yard done by the school students and the university students, which were displayed in an exhibition at the school. Nine conceptual plans for the schoolyard were made by the university students. Furthermore, it was clear that the students were more committed to transforming the yard and putting the concepts into practice collectively, in this way, besides this, another future aim is to include the process and the lessons learned in a booklet to serve as a foundation for other similar practices.

Boardgame development

Two board games were developed by landscape architecture students from MATE as a part of the LADDER Living Lab over the course of 3 semesters. The purpose of

Testing the board game in Polytechnic of Economics

Photo: Regina Mihály



Collaboration with the Polytechnic of Economics.

Photo Tayana Passos Rosa



the games are to introduce students to the idea of participatory planning of their own schoolyard. The aim is to get them to assess their schoolyard by stimulating ideas and thoughts that contribute to brainstorming. In one of the games, this is accomplished by having the children participate in a role-playing game in which they are given a persona and asked to describe how this character's ideal yard would be, while the other game builds on their own personality and own understanding of their environment. In both games, students must collaborate and combine the desires and knowledge of their characters since the games are cooperative rather than competitive.

The game was partly developed online, using online platforms such as Zoom and Mural. It was also tested in situ in 5 different schools. The result is a toolkit of 2 board games for two different age groups (from 7 to 11 and 12 to 18 years) and many different objects, characters, and mission cards for the gameplay. As a prospect for the future, there must be further graphic design, publication, and then the application of this board game in participatory projects.

Reflection on the LEAP

The LEAP core values were intrinsically present in every collaboration of the project in a multifaceted way. They also function as a network of ideals, and it is very hard to separate them for one leads to the others, and so on, in a continuous cycle. However,

as a highlight, we can say that learning has a special meaning in this context since the LADDER initiative focuses on the work within learning environments. Once working inside a learning environment and towards it, the pupils also become educators, and educators also become pupils, professionals put on the users' shoes, and everyone learns from this process. Learning different possibilities of a place through popular knowledge, different points of views and based on different cultural backgrounds, learning about the value of things under different perspectives, and understanding the values seen in things by others. Seeing the school environment through the eyes of a child, someone who lives it every day, or through the eyes of a marginalised person, who feels isolated and powerless in the structure they find themselves in. Beyond learning about the structure of the landscape, the challenges of the community and the place, the surroundings, the connections, the elements, the learning is also done with a lot of empathy. And this is the strong point of working with such focus groups. Furthermore, the transformation of the school's landscape also enhances the learning possibilities for such an environment.

Empowerment is a very much present value for the students of Landscape Architecture when discovering the reach of their agency while dealing with real-life situations proposed by those in situ transformative experiences. But it is made even more meaningful when tackling challenges from

marginalised communities, such as the work done with the Roma community during the Dr. Ámbédkar cooperation, as the share of knowledge and actions fostered the Roma community's power over their landscape and the acting towards a connection with the local community, which generated a chain reaction that is still in movement. And even for scenarios where segregation, prejudice, and low income aren't pressing issues, empowerment is also present. As the transference of knowledge empowers, and when students learn, explore and interact with their landscape they gain a lot of power to transform it, care for it, learn about it, and connect with it.

The landscape architect has the means to learn and share knowledge about the landscape, has the power and capacity to empower, and has the capacity to act alone, but also to act in collaboration with others. In this way, the concept of agency here is a catalyst. The program moved the landscape architecture students towards action, they were the main agents, when researching the neighbourhoods, evaluating the possibilities and collaboratively proposing improvements. Or made agency easier when offering tools to broaden this process to be accessible to kids in a fun way. Partnership is what moves us towards action, to be able to use our set of skills to make a better environment for the communities, and to help create improved school environments that can foster environmental education, community connection, landscape restoration, and protection. Partnership is expected to be extended among communities too, making the Roma and local community bond over collaborative projects in the school landscape or the public surrounding landscape, and by including the local community in school projects to broaden the reach of the education proposed in such initiatives.

Regarding our institutions, the university and the NGO, the students and our team, the LEAP values were also important and ever present concepts during the whole project. Learning was not only present thanks to the fact that our partners were educational institutions but also we as participants could actively learn about the process we were part of. It was empowering for both our team and students to be able to shape each community's reality as agents of change. Finally, partnership was always the base and starting point for our work - not only with our partner but between us:

between the NGO and the university, and between the team members and students alike. It was a growing experience to work with different environments, different social backgrounds, different phases of young age, and different project scopes, but still have the same main goal. Learning environments are great to explore under their many aspects as they are the transformation places of the citizens of tomorrow.

Impact of the Living Lab

For the future, our aim is to keep LADDER as a platform for experience sharing. Our intention is to maintain partnership with the partner schools, however our roles are in continuous change: from taking initiatives and coordinating the participatory process from the beginning of the partnerships, we gradually change our roles to become external consultants.

We would like to disseminate the developed tools and methods so that they can be known and used widely by different institutions: schools, universities and designers. In order to reach this aim, the outcomes of each school partnership are to be published, to introduce the processes, the developed methodology and tools, and to share the valuable lessons we have learnt as well. Our long term aim is to organise trainings for institutions (governments, schools, etc.) in the scope of participatory planning with children and youth.

The SDGs addressed in the LADDER living lab are:

3 Good Health and Well-being;
4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality;
10 Reduced Inequalities;
11 Sustainable Cities and Communities;
16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
and 17 Partnership for the Goals



As an outcome of the ISP in Miskolc in 2021, the Roma community is invited in 2022 for the first time in the history of Miskolc, into the local municipality meeting, to address issues faced by the community.

Photo: Anita Reith



Sustainable Development Goals addressed by the LADDER Living Lab

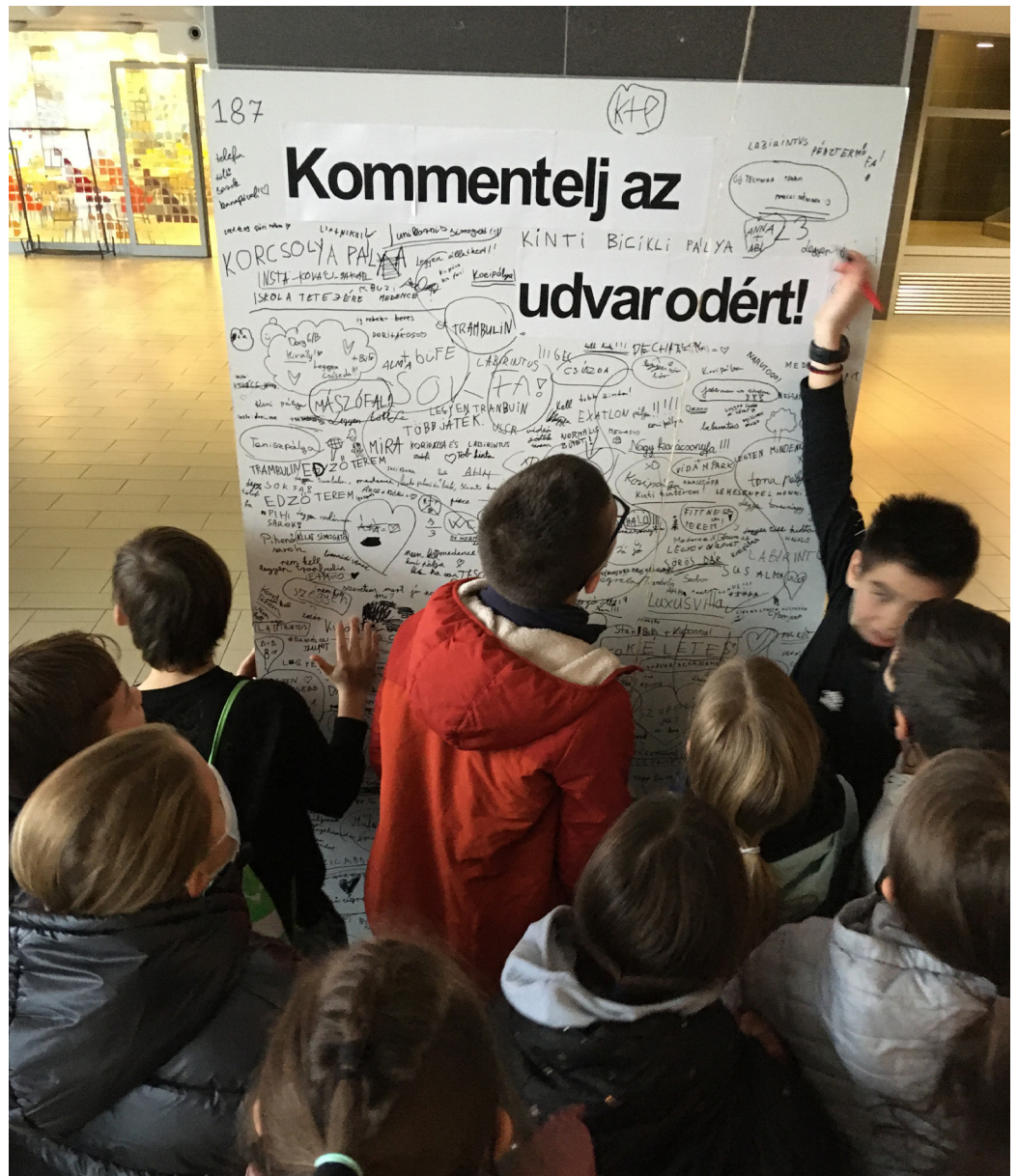
Participatory evaluation of design proposals for the Dr. Ámbédkar School

Photo: Anita Reith



Comment wall in Nr.1. Primary School in Budaörs

Photo: Beáta Csehné Berényi





Making Bee hotel in
Nr.1. Primary School in
Budaörs

Photo: Beáta Csehné Berényi



Workshop for greening
the schoolyard during
the Intensive Study
Program in
Dr. Ámbédkar School

Photo: Anita Reith

Reflection on the Living Lab development in Uppsala

SLU Uppsala – Living Lab

The institution of a permanent Living Lab in Uppsala (similar to those from the other partners in the LED2LEAP project) was hampered by a number of challenges at both institutional and cultural levels. Nonetheless, the inability to offer SLU students a Living Lab experience like those of their European colleagues has certainly offered a learning experience to all partners of LED2LEAP, as there are lessons to be learned also from stories of failure and unsuccess.

The main obstacle encountered during the LED2LEAP programme was the impossibility to build a Living Lab course into the curriculum which could grant credits (such as ECTS) to students enrolled in the programme of Landscape Architecture at SLU. The attempt to establish a LED2LEAP curricular course in Landscape Architecture programme had to face the reality of a system with a long-time process to get the course syllabus approved by the faculty. As a consequence of offering a course without credits recognition, students' retentions during the programme were only guaranteed by their attraction to the subject and its uniqueness in the existing Landscape Architecture programme. Moreover, the institutional cultural gap toward these topics also represented a

challenge. The innovative character of the Living Lab and the novelty of the topics treated in the LED2LEAP required extra-time seeking to sensitize colleagues and stakeholders toward landscape democracy themes. Nonetheless, the several attempts made during the programme favoured an awareness toward the need of a greater sensitivity when implementing such project to various institutional cultures.

During the LED2LEAP programme, the SLU Uppsala Living Lab offered to its students the possibility to pursue their thesis projects and research projects dealing with democratic design processes. The SLU Living Lab offered a platform for students to confront and support each other during their research processes with the supervision of their instructors. The SLU Living Lab was based on students' projects. It sought ways to establish a new framework for linking the work of SLU Landscape students to local communities. Its aim was to support and assist students in developing strategies to work in connection to their local communities. Together with the instructors and the communities that they worked with, the students constituted the main body of the Living Lab. The SLU Living Lab particularly focused on fostering and pursuing students' theses and individual research projects. It did not have a one single community or a single place to work with. Instead, it adapted to the needs and aspirations of the students. The Living Lab sought to offer students in Landscape Architecture a platform for developing

The campus at SLU

Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sveriges_lantbruksuniversitet_i_Uppsala.jpg



and concretizing their research projects. The Living Lab gathered together the communities that the students worked with. Following the modules of the online seminars, the Living Lab platform tutored the students in outreaching and developing their research processes. During meetings, the students experienced peer-to-peer learning through exposure to each other's projects. The main scope of the Living Lab was to get the participants to engage in critical reflection one-another towards democratic and participatory processes of designing.

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Our learnings

5

Authors

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Evaluation of student expectations, learning, experience, and impact was an integral part of this project. A total of six (6) surveys were undertaken to assess student expectations, learning, experience, and impact.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, the surveys conducted in both the online seminar and intensive program (ISP) workshops are presented in their entirety. The second section discusses salient findings from these surveys. In the third section we consider how these findings might inform the design of future online courses and intensive programs, as well as the lessons learned by project staff with respect to evaluation design and implementation.

Section one: Evaluation design

The primary evaluative instrument used in this project was the survey. Students were probed on a wide range of issues on course design, course implementation, and their experience during each of the three distinct learning platforms of the program. A total of six (6) surveys were conducted in total between 2020 and 2022. Three concerned the online seminar and living lab together (one for each year of the program), three the ISP workshops in Hungary, Germany, and Italy respectively. In this section all six surveys are presented in their entirety according to question type.

Online course/living lab surveys

These surveys were conducted at the end of each of the three online seminar courses/living labs over the three-year life of the project. They contained Likert scale ('agree/disagree') questions, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions.

Likert scale questions fell into three categories. The first category addressed students' experience and learning in the living lab portion of the course. The second category assessed students' experience and learning in the online weekly seminar. The third category was a 'barometer' designed to assess student values, perceptions, and feelings associated with democratic landscape design. Students were asked to assign a series of statements a value ranging from 1 to 6, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 6 indicating strong agreement. The Likert-scale questions for these three surveys are presented in Tables A, B, and C.

Multiple-choice questions addressed students' prior experience and background, expectations of the course, and assessment of the online learning environment. These questions are presented in Table D.

Open-ended questions focused on student expectations, reflections on learning, impact on the community, and recommendations for future iterations of the online course/living lab. These questions are presented in Table E.

ISP workshop surveys

These three surveys were conducted during the Intensive Program (ISP) workshops Hungary, Germany, and Italy. The surveys conducted in Germany and Italy consisted of a pre-workshop survey and post-workshop phase and contained open-ended questions only. The questions are presented in Tables F and G.

The survey conducted in Hungary was different. It was administered only at the end of the workshop, and contained Likert scale ('agree/disagree') questions, multiple choice questions, ranking questions, rating questions, and open-ended questions. These questions are presented in Tables H through M.

Table A. Likert scale ('agree/disagree') questions, category 1: experience and learning in living lab

1	I have learned how to partner with others to advance democratic landscape change
2	Working with real-world challenges made me better aware of my impact as a professional
3	I have gathered knowledge that I will be able to transfer to future professional endeavours
4	I have witnessed first hand the challenges in working with local communities
5	I have learned how to be strategic in promoting democratic landscape change
6	I have experienced how to bridge research, design and advocacy

Table B. Likert scale ('agree/disagree') questions, category 2: experience and learning in online seminar

1	The lectures were clear to follow
2	The lecturers engaged well with the audience
3	I could concentrate during the online lectures like in a real classroom
4	There was a logical sequence between the individual lectures
5	The seminar sequence and assignments were clearly presented
6	The interactive polls helped me to engage with the seminar topics
7	The overall session length was just right
8	My chat contributions were taken up by the moderator
9	I would have liked to engage more with the lecturers
10	I would have liked to engage more with the audience/classmates
11	The assignments were understandable and well described
12	The assignments fitted well into the overall structure of the seminar
13	I received sufficient feedback during online presentations of the assignments
14	Presenting assignments online is as interactive as in a real classroom
15	During our panel sessions I have learned a lot about the different cultures of the other groups
16	I am more confident about working in an intercultural context
17	It is now easier for me to express myself in English
18	Exchanging with teams from different cultures has deepened my understanding of landscape democracy
19	I think the cultural diversity improved my seminar results

Table C. Likert scale ('agree/disagree') questions, category 3: student barometer

1	Landscape is to be understood as 'an area as perceived by people'
2	I am aware of problems regarding democratic decision-making with respect to my everyday landscape
3	Designers and planners are experts whose role is to show users what good design is
4	Planners and designers should be concerned mainly with the aesthetics and quality of the landscapes they design
5	Good design and planning are reflected in a process that allows all those involved to have a say
6	Participation is a time consuming form of design and planning that should be limited to save time and make projects happen
7	Designers and planners have the social responsibility to promote democracy in public space use
8	Cities should not invest in the creation of green open spaces for all social groups and classes
9	A successful design/plan is one that addresses the needs of the majority of the users
10	Landscape change problems are complex and require multifaceted solutions
11	I do not have any interest in designing and planning in partnership with a community
12	Understanding the feelings and perceptions of users toward their neighborhood landscapes can benefit landscape management
13	Any process to design and plan a public space should be linear and simple to avoid additional costs and time spent on it
14	A successful participatory process must combine various modes of engagement
15	Design and planning should be concerned with access to all social groups, especially those who are at the margins of society
16	As a designer/planner my responsibility is to respond to the needs of whoever is paying for my services
17	I feel very prepared to lead a process that engages communities and users in shaping their own landscape designs and plans
18	The thoughts, dreams and ambitions of users of a new plan/design are fundamental data to be included in any design process
19	A successful participatory workshop is one that engages people's deeply held meanings and values
20	Participation can be a moment of fun and delight for those who become involved
21	The cooperation between people who have an interest in a project is the key to its success
22	My education as a designer/planner has given me the knowledge and confidence to make good decisions for my clients
23	Designers and planners should not educate people about good city planning and design, beauty, aesthetics, harmony in forms and materials
24	Collaboration complicates the work of designers/planners by adding too many 'cooks in one kitchen'
25	I think that my education as a designer/planner has given me all I need to lead design processes
26	In order to be lasting and resilient, landscape transformations should be systemic and integrated across many realms and communities of practice
27	When someone has a say in the planning or design of his/her neighborhood, he or she will become more attached to it
28	I am able to recognize relevant stakeholders in my community and to identify power structures
29	Participation in an online setting can help reach to a broader stakeholders' audience

Table D. Multiple choice questions (answer choices given in parentheses)

1	What is your current activity? (bachelor student, master student, PhD student, recent graduate, professional)
2	What is your disciplinary background? (landscape architecture, urban planning/urban design, architecture, other)
3	What are your long-term career goals? (academic, government/public service, private sector, international institution, self-employed, non-profit organisation, other)
4	Regarding the level of your previous knowledge of landscape democracy, democratic design and participation, which answer applies to you? (totally new topic, very little knowledge, basic knowledge, intermediate knowledge, advanced knowledge)
5	Have you ever been able to go abroad during your studies or professional practice? (yes, no)
6	What prevented you from studying or working abroad? (financial resources, no exchange options from university, no exchange options from employer, family commitments, study abroad not a priority, lacked language skills, other)
7	Will you receive academic credits for attending the seminar? (yes, no)
8	What was your participation mode in the seminar? (active/doing all assignments, passive/listening only)
9	How many times did you attend the live sessions in Zoom? (0, 1-3, 4-8, 9-12)
10	How many times did you listen to recordings of the live sessions? in order to catch up or repeat the contents? (0, 1-3, 4-8, 9-12)
11	If you missed any of the live sessions in Zoom, why was that? (lost interest in subject, work commitments, technical difficulties, other study commitments, holidays, not applicable, other)
12	Which seminar topics contributed best to developing your knowledge about democratic landscape design? ('Democratic landscape transformation,' 'Democratic landscape analysis,' 'Collaborative visioning,' 'Collaborative design,' 'Collaborative evaluation')
13	Which assignments contributed best to enhancing your knowledge about landscape democracy? ('Democratic landscape transformation,' 'Democratic landscape analysis,' 'Collaborative visioning,' 'Collaborative design,' 'Collaborative evaluation')

Table E. Open-ended questions

1	If you have lost your interest in the subject during the seminar, please explain why
2	Please let us know why the topics you selected (see Table D, question 11) were important for you
3	Which three readings contributed best to enhancing your knowledge about landscape democracy?
4	Please let us know why the assignments you selected (see Table D, question 12) were important for you:
5	Please give us your three most important recommendations for improving our seminar for the next year
6	Is there anything else you would like to let us know?

Table F. Open-ended questions (pre-workshop), Germany and Italy

1	Why is it important for you to attend this Intensive Program?
2	What do you expect to learn from this Intensive Program?
3	What would you value the most during this Intensive Program?
4	What will you seek to find out during the Intensive Program?
5	What do you imagine to bring home with you at the end of the Intensive Program?
6	How do you think you could contribute to the Intensive Program with?
7	What do you imagine you will leave to this community at the end of the Intensive Program?

Table G. Open-ended questions (post-workshop), Germany and Italy

1	What are the two main lessons learned in the Intensive Program?
2	What did you value the most during this Intensive Program?
3	What did you seek to find out during the IP?
4	What are you bringing home with you from the IP?
5	How has the intensive prepared you to lead new actions and processes against landscape democracy challenges in communities?
6	What agency has the work performed in the intensive to address global systemic challenges, beyond goal 11 of the UN SDGS?
7	How do you feel like the ideas and work generated during the intensive will/is helping the community take charge of their own future?
8	What collaboration and partnership-related skills or abilities has the intensive helped nurture?
9	How has your understanding of landscape democracy evolved as a result of your engagement with intensive activities?
10	What aspect of the participatory activities of the intensive holds the most potential in terms of advancing the landscape 'as perceived by people'?
11	What did you contribute to during the Intensive Program?
12	What did you leave to this community after the IP?
13	Three adjectives to describe the IP (in order of importance)
14	Three adjectives to describe the neighbourhood community (in order of importance)
15	Three adjectives to describe the Staff (in order of importance)

Table H. Likert scale ('agree/disagree') questions, Hungary

1	I am very satisfied with the duration of the IP
2	The dates of the IP met well with my individual study plan

Table J. Multiple choice questions (answer choices given in parentheses), Hungary

1	How would you evaluate the overall workload of the IP as measured by your whole workload during your study term? (too low, just right, too high)
2	To what extent did your capacity to learn about the community through its environment change since the beginning of the IP in Miskolc? (did not change, increased somewhat, increased significantly)
3	To what extent did your capacity to change the power structure to become more democratic change since the beginning of the IP in Miskolc? (did not change, increased somewhat, increased significantly)
4	To what extent did your capacity to make the school community care for their environment change since the beginning of the IP in Miskolc? (did not change, increased somewhat, increased significantly)
5	To what extent did your capacity to improve the relationship of the school with the neighbours and stakeholders change since the beginning of the IP in Miskolc? (did not change, increased somewhat, increased significantly)
6	Will you receive full academic recognition at your home institution for taking part in the IP? (yes, no)
7	Did you encounter any serious problems during the IP? (yes, no)
8	Did the IP open new perspectives concerning future areas of study? (yes, no)
9	Did the IP open new perspectives concerning future areas of work? (yes, no)
10	Do you think participating in the IP will help you in your future studies? (yes, no)

Table K . Ranking questions (answers given in parentheses), Hungary

1	Which factors motivated you to participate in the IP? (academic, social/environmental impact, practice of foreign language, friends living abroad, career plans, European experience, other)
2	Where did you hear about the intensive student programme? (home institution, host institution, other students, former participants, internet, other)

Table L . Rating questions, Hungary

1	How would you evaluate the support from your home institution and from the host institution (if applicable) <i>before</i> the intensive programme?
2	How would you evaluate the support from your home institution and from your host institution (if applicable) <i>during</i> the intensive programme?
3	How would you evaluate the working environment in Miskolc?
4	How would you evaluate the workload concerning the preparation of the IP?
5	How would you evaluate the workload during the IP?
6	How would you estimate the workload concerning the wrap-up of the IP?
7	How useful did you find the expert presentations?
8	How useful did you find the exploratory walks?
9	How useful did you find the stakeholder presentations?
10	How useful did you find the interventions and prototypes?
11	How useful did you find the interactions with schoolchildren?
12	How useful did you find the activities and methods we have used during the workshop overall?
13	To what extent were clear academic objectives defined for the IP?
14	To what extent were the academic objectives accomplished?
15	To what extent did the IP cover innovative aspects?
16	To what extent did the programme cover interdisciplinary elements?
17	How do you evaluate your knowledge about the project aims and work tasks?
18	How do you evaluate your influence on project aims and work tasks?
19	How would you evaluate the supervision by tutors and teachers?
20	How do you evaluate the feedback session in Zoom by teachers of from the partner universities?
21	How do you evaluate the chance to profit from an intercultural exchange of experiences concerning the subject?
22	How do you evaluate the improvement of your language skills?
23	How do you evaluate the improvement of your personal skills (i.e. tolerance, communication, flexibility, organisation)?
24	How do you evaluate your social contacts to students from the other partner universities outside the IP classroom?
25	How do you evaluate your social contacts to tutors from other partner universities outside the IP-Classroom?
26	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the pre-knowledge expected by the participants?
27	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the number of hours taught?
28	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the equipment used?
29	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the capabilities and expertise of tutors and teachers?
30	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the contributions of the external experts?
31	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the variety of teaching methods?
32	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the size of my working group?
33	How satisfied are you with the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP in terms of the overall quality of teaching?
34	Please give your overall evaluation of the IP

Table M. Open-ended questions, Hungary

1	Please write down which methods and activities you found most useful for yourself and why. Please also mention what you did not find so useful and why
2	Do you have any general remarks on the academic activities and pedagogical aspects of the IP?
3	What new perspectives did the IP open concerning future areas of study?
4	What new perspectives did the IP open concerning future areas of work?
5	How do you think participating in the IP will help you in your future studies?
6	Do you have any recommendations and ideas for the IP organisers?

Section two: Survey response

This section presents the most salient themes within the survey results over the three years of the program. Responses to the online course, living lab, and intensive program are covered separately for ease of reading, though many themes and issues tended to span across the different learning platforms. The anonymous quotes below, coded by program year, have been selected for their representative character and in no way exhaust the range of responses collected. For those interested in deeper exploration, the complete survey results are available on request.

Online seminar and living lab

Students were generally positive about the online seminar/living lab and their own learning in it. At the same time, there were many specific criticisms and recommendations for improvement. These were revealed primarily in responses to open-ended questions, which therefore are the focus of the present chapter. Their practical implications for future projects are discussed in Section 3.

Course organization

Despite their general enthusiasm, students had many recommendations for the topics and organization of the online seminar and living lab. These recommendations are far too numerous to list in their entirety here. The following is a representative sample of the kinds of general comments that repeated across all three years of the program:

2020. Stick with the interactional group exercises, they are fun and you could learn a lot from the other participants.

2020. A better introduction to the course in the first seminar about the subject and what the goal is. I found it very hard to follow the first session because of little information.

2021. Involve all participants during seminars by asking questions in form of a game.

2021. Invite more guests with different backgrounds.

2022. The overall structure of the course seems to be very disjointed, more like weekly lectures from visiting professors on different topics than one general course.

2022. A complete reorganization of the storytelling from the start to the end of the course. I've not seen a common goal between the organizers about what you really want to achieve with this course.

2022. Stress the relationship between the living lab and the seminar.

2022. It was a bit hard to follow the structure of the course, especially the websites with the included literature.

Lectures

One area that met with particular criticism were the many lectures delivered as part of the online seminar (indeed, lectures were the main component of the course). While some students enjoyed listening to the lectures, survey results indicate that many found them tedious, redundant, poorly sequenced, or overly theoretical. The following are a few examples:

2020. I realize there is a huge amount of information to be transferred to the viewers and from this point it should be kept as clean and untouched as possible. No pompous speeches or too much explanation.

2021. Sometimes the lessons were hectic and chaotic, I struggled to follow them, especially because they were completely new concepts for me.

2022. The subjects were often presented very dry, with little interaction in the group. The seminars were often too long and it felt they were dragged out. Shorter seminars with a start of the assignments in support with teachers would have resulted in more interest in the subject.

The type of lecture students tended to voice most enthusiasm for were those dedicated to the real-life stories of diverse practitioners. Many clearly valued—and wanted more—such content:

2020. I really enjoyed the guest lecturers sharing their real life experiences.

2021. Invite more guests with different backgrounds.

2021. I found the lesson on prototyping particularly stimulating. Probably because it involves interaction with the community, it was also very interesting how the issue was addressed.

The implications of these comments for future course design are discussed in Section 3.

Readings

Some survey questions dealt with the readings used in the online course. Students were asked in open-ended questions which readings they preferred and why. While there was a variety of responses to this question (see below for examples), the most notable result was the failure of most students (over 60 percent on average across the three surveys) to answer the question at all. This leads us to conclude that most students were either 1) not interested in any of the texts they were required to read, or 2) did not read anything. At the same time, there appears to have been quite a lot of confusion among students about the place of reading in the course, to wit:

2022. It was not clear you had to read anything at all, a lot of people didn't read a thing.

2021. For someone who didn't have much (or any) knowledge about landscape democracy in the way it was presented during this project (community mapping, visioning, prototyping etc.), all reading we were given before any phase were very helpful but it was challenging for me to read everything before lectures. That's why I think I wasn't fully prepared for every lecture at the beginning and some things seemed unclear. So my suggestion is to maybe shorten some readings, or send them much earlier.

2022. The readings were never really used and or mentioned besides one small assignment.

The implications of these comments for future course design are discussed in Section 3.

Theory/practice balance

The issues above are connected to many students' sense, over the three years of project, of a poor balance between 'theory' and 'practice.' While some students acknowledged the importance of the former, more viewed the online course as over-weighted toward abstract concepts at the expense of hands-on learning. Some examples:

2020. I really enjoyed the guest lecturers

sharing their real life experiences, I would not be disappointed with more guest appearances.

2020. It was boring when the sessions did not show any example of theories that were being explained.

2021. I always like real examples. It stays in the memory for me.

2021. Have someone telling a story as an actor or a poet.

2022. Make the course more practice oriented. It was so theoretical I have no idea how to apply it to my studies or work life.

2022. Practical on-site lessons should be the main core of this seminar which improves the understanding of the real challenges and the ways to overcome them.

The implications of these comments for the design of future courses are discussed in Section 3.

Student/student and student/teacher interaction

The balance between theory and practice would seem connected to a more general criticism of the online course. In every year of the project, a significant number of students complained of what they viewed as insufficient time allotted for unstructured and exploratory 'interaction,' both among students and between students and staff. A sample of student recommendations in this area are given below.

2020. Stick with the interactional group exercises, they are fun and you could learn a lot from the other participants.

2021. In phase B I like the interaction I had with my pen pal, and getting to know someone coming from a total different background and sharing our thoughts and knowledge with each other.

2020. Try to interact with everyone, make small groups introduce themselves to each other in the small groups.

2021. I propose a break after seminars for asking/answer questions, giving opinions to motivate them to interact with lectures.

2021. I would add more moments of intercultural discussion.

2021. More interaction during the lectures.

You can ask people their opinion or ask them anything just to improve the dynamics of the lecture and to keep your audience interested and awake.

2022. Maybe more interaction with the students. Try to avoid letting them sit there with their cameras turned off, at least when the lecture part is over.

2022. More interactive seminars.

The implications of these comments for the design of future courses are discussed in Section 3.

Time management

The above issue relates to the more general question of time management in the course. It is fair to say that there was widespread frustration on this topic. Indeed, virtually no respondents appeared satisfied with the way course contact time was allotted. Some representative quotes:

2022. The subjects were often presented very dry, with little interaction in the group. The seminars were often too long and it felt they were dragged out, shorter seminars with a start of the assignments in support with teachers would have resulted in more interest in the subject.

2020. The assignment were very extensive, this is why some groups couldn't be in time during the presentation panels. So the discussion phases were very short in the presentation panels.

2021. The discussions between students and moderators could have been a little longer, sometimes, as a group we weren't able to reach conclusions because of time restraints, especially if considering we had many groups, but I also recognize that online seminars tend to be more tiring than regular classes, so maybe additional 20/30 min. could already be enough face to face.

2021. Extra time after courses for discussion. (Could be teacher with student, or only students).

2021. Time management during zoom seminars – sometimes the seminar would last longer than 90 minutes.

The above criticisms represent one of the most salient lessons to be gleaned from the online course surveys. Their implications for the design of future courses are discussed in Section 3.

Language

An underlying issue revealed by the surveys was language. This was perhaps inevitable given the fact that many students and teachers were non-native English speakers with a variety of different proficiency levels. However, as the comments below suggest, both written and spoken language clearly represent ongoing challenges to course organizers:

2020. At beginning I was insecure in my English, so I had a problem with following the lectures of professor, so it could be a bit slower. That was the only problem that I had with this course.

2020. Make assignments clearer. Get understandable lecturers.

2021. All lecturers should speak clear and slow English.

2022. Sometimes it would have been easier to follow if the speech tempo would have been slower.

2022. I felt sometimes it was unnecessary to explain the assignment as much as it was. It became confusing and wordy.

2022. More precise wording of assignments.

The implications of these comments for the design of future courses are discussed in Section 3.

Technical issues

It is difficult to disentangle the problem of language from the limitations of any online course. Many students' comprehension of lectures and discussions was impaired by poor or intermittent sound, low video quality, erratic internet service, and cumbersome platforms. These are issues common to digital learning generally, and will continue to evolve over the coming years with technical advancements. At the same time, students offered many practical and easily-implemented ideas for improving the quality of the online learning environment. A few examples these follow.

2020. Wikipage submission has to be precise and specific as it takes too long to upload the files.

2020. If you are already in small groups, I would recommend that you always keep your cameras on so that you can get into a

dialogue and make the lesson much more personal. There may be different ways to reach that, but there could be much more exchange between the participants and more personal care. Although we come from so many different countries, there was (at least in the small groups I was in) never a personal exchange!

2020. More polls to involve students better.

2020. To use more exercise that involves speaking: mural is a good platform, but speaking still is the best way to communicate.

2020. I have only one thing to say: Better manage the murals because at the beginning they are not immediate even if they are a very interactive job.

2020. Make the format of the templates and wiki less strict, esp. for the wiki it was sometimes hard to fit the presentation as we made it (to have logical story for us to tell).

2020. Make the wiki faster available to edit.

2021. More of www.wonder.me meeting (platform used to meet students online outside class time).

2022. You cannot concentrate on these topics in a Zoom meeting.

2022. Simplify the registration formalities on wiki homepage and other online pages. Simplify the whole process is better.

2022. Move [the Wiki] to a different software or drop it entirely – it is really buggy and hard to use, wasted a lot of time getting basic images up there. But I say drop it because, it just seems like busy work and did not contribute to learning. We already have other deliverables for this work elsewhere.

2022. Please don't use the Wiki set up again. It is horrible to work with.

2022. Name tags on Zoom. For familiarity purposes it would have been nice to know more about the people one is interacting with, maybe having everyone changing their name on Zoom to include the name of their university/country would be something?

2022. The course is not suitable for an online setting, these highly theoretical topics need to be discussed in a smaller

setting and a live audience. This was only frustrating. You can't concentrate on these topics in a Zoom meeting.

The implications of these comments for the design of future courses are discussed in Section 3.

Intensive Study Programs (ISP)

The surveys administered during the three Intensive Program (ISP) workshops were different across the three years of the program. It is therefore somewhat difficult to compare them. The sets of results that are comparable are those obtained from the workshops in Italy and Germany in 2022. These were open-ended questions and, crucially, divided into a pre-workshop and post-workshop phase. Unlike the evaluations for the online course and living lab, then, these evaluations reflect both student expectations and aspirations before the workshop and student satisfaction and learning after it.

The general sense one is left with reading through the survey results in Italy and Germany is a generally higher level of student satisfaction and sense of transformative learning than in the online course. As noted above, many students were critical of the overly theoretical and time-constrained nature of the online course. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that those students who participated in the ISPs (it should be noted, a smaller number than participated in the online courses) were generally enthusiastic about the practical and collaborative nature of the ISPs. Examples of this enthusiasm, drawn from both the pre- and the post-phase of evaluation are listed below (original questions are given in parentheses).

(Pre-evaluation) This is an opportunity to use the knowledge that we have gained from this spring's seminar. I learn better when I get the chance to practice what I've learned in reality. It is important for me to get a wider perspective, and by meeting other students and teachers I think I will. ('Why is it important for you to attend this Intensive Program?')

(Pre-evaluation) How participation in practice can take form in a landscape-related task. ('What will you seek to find out during the Intensive Program?')

(Post-evaluation) Putting theory into practice shows the umbrella of possibilities

to be explored. New ideas can come from anywhere. Democracy in practice involves more factors than in theory. ('How has your understanding of landscape democracy evolved as a result of your engagement with intensive activities?')

(Post-evaluation) Mainly with making things, building constructions that were decided in the first days. But also stimulating thinking in the students. Sharing/making/working together. ('What did you contribute during the Intensive Program?')

In keeping with this preference for grounded forms of learning, the topic of practical methods and tools came up often in survey results. Some examples:

(Pre-evaluation) I expect to learn tools for holding community dialogues, how to map out a community and its stakeholders, how to create the foundation or to understand the foundation of a democratic place. ('What do you expect to learn from this Intensive Program?')

(Pre-evaluation) Learning different methods to achieve a more democratic way of landscape architecture as a practice. To get a broader view on how it works in other countries and get inspired by others. ('What do you expect to learn from this Intensive Program?')

(Post-evaluation) Different way of thinking according to problems and other possible ways to solve them. ('What are you bringing home with you from the ISP?')

(Post-evaluation) Hard to connect to possible participants. Stories can inspire processes to develop to a higher aim. ('What are the two main lessons learned in the Intensive Program?')

The most notable aspect of student responses however, was the value of exploration, dialogue, and collaboration, and friendship (not coincidentally, things many saw as lacking in the online course):

(Pre-evaluation) Throughout my 5 years of studying we have never engaged in community engagement projects or dialogues with the community. But after this it seems as an integral important part of landscape architecture. ('Why is it important for you to attend this Intensive Program?')

(Pre-evaluation) When gathering like minded people with similar interests but

different cultural backgrounds to discuss sustainability and democracy, it is easy to create a situation in which everyone gets transformed well. ('Why is it important for you to attend this Intensive Program?')

(Post-evaluation) Listening to others. How other groups articulated themselves, receiving knowledge from multiple voices in academia, and learning stories of the place and the lives of my classmates. ('What did you value most during this Intensive Program?')

(Post-evaluation) Connections to people, a strong will to engage more with my own community, importance of games and communication heart to heart. ('What are you bringing home with you from the ISP?')

As noted in Section 2, the results from the workshop in Hungary were primarily numerical and therefore not immediately comparable. However the themes and issues revealed in that workshop are generally consistent with those above. The original survey output reports for all three workshops are available on request.

Section three: Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Outlook

It is difficult to draw general conclusions about impact on students over the three years of the program, since we are dealing with three distinct cohorts and most evaluations were conducted only at the end of courses. Nevertheless, there is much that can be gleaned from these survey results.

It should be stressed first and foremost that many students had very positive responses to the online course, living labs, and intensive programs. Nevertheless, many issues remain with respect to the pedagogy of the program. We have necessarily focused on these issues in the present report, with a view toward improving the class in the future. In this regard, a number of practical recommendations can be made based on the survey results.

Despite students' general enthusiasm for the topic of landscape democracy, many remain unconvinced that the current organization of the course is the optimal way to master it. Seminar meetings cram too much content into too short a time, and the content that is delivered is overly theoretical, or at least not sufficiently

grounded in practical examples. Too many students remain uncertain about the 'core' of the course, and the kind of competences they are gaining from it. There is too much emphasis on top-down lecturing and too little time for exploration and informal interaction. Tasks like the pen-pal exercise, in which students interacted with each other outside of class and one-on-one, were warmly received. It is our view that these kinds of interactions should form the core of future courses. The IP workshops, generally better received by students, provide a model for doing this.

An issue that relates more or less directly to the above is the place of outside reading in the course. While some students acknowledged the importance of reading theoretical texts, too many either admitted to not doing readings or to being uncertain about their responsibilities with respect to reading in the course. The low response rate to survey questions about reading suggests the extent of this problem. The role of reading should therefore be clarified in future iterations of the online course (the IP workshops did not include a reading component). The organizers should strive to establish a direct link between the readings students do outside of class and seminar topics. 'Optional' readings should be minimized.

Many of the issues that students have with the organization of the course can be distilled to the basic problem of time. Generally speaking, it is safe to conclude from the survey results that students see the course as over-scheduled, and that many would wish to have more time for unstructured, exploratory activities in pairs or smaller groups. At the same time, many students acknowledge the importance of plenary lectures. Maintaining the proper balance among these different types of activities in the limited time available will remain a challenge to course organizers.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to disentangle the problem of time management from the technical constraints of operating a course entirely online (in the case of the online seminar). Every switch among platforms and tools involves lag and uptake time, time that necessarily is diverted from other activities. For this reason, it is our view that the simpler the platform, and the fewer platforms used, the better to deal with these challenges. Even if these platforms continue to improve, as they surely will do in the coming years, this

general principle should be adhered to. It is also particularly important to attend to the many practical suggestions offered by students in this area. They are the experts with respect to the actual experience of using certain platforms, and their criticisms should be taken seriously.

All of the above goes equally for the methods of evaluation used in the different components of the project. One of the most significant findings of these evaluation exercises concerns the design and implementation of the survey instruments themselves. Generally speaking, it is our view that the length and complexity of these instruments should be reduced, and that numerical measures (Likert-scale and rating questions, for example) should be used rarely if at all. As the present chapter attests, the richest feedback by far over the three years of this project were open-ended responses of students. These should be privileged in the future.

Finally, a note about survey administration. Collecting student feedback is vital to improving pedagogy in future projects. Yet many students—in some cases up to 50 percent—simply did not participate in the evaluation process at all. For this reason, we strongly recommend making the completion of evaluation surveys (albeit in reduced number and form) a mandatory component of course participation in the future.

Outlook

6

The LED2LEAP approach has good potential for further development and transfer to new projects. The LE:NOTRE Institute has transferred the concept and the methods of landscape democracy to the yearly landscape forums, and it will continue to do so. This will help to inspire a large number of students, researchers, and teachers in the field of spatial planning and promote further discussion.

The concept of landscape democracy will be an important foundation of the Open Landscape Academy. This Erasmus+ project started in December 2022. It will include many of the former LED2LEAP partners. In addition, we found new partners in Greece and the USA. The LE:NOTRE Institute aims to continue the Open Landscape Academy as a long term initiative building upon and further developing the methods and materials of landscape democracy pedagogy with local living labs.

The Landscape Democracy approach in connection to a series of Living Labs is a continuous model for fostering democratic landscape transformation. The Living Labs will not stop with the end of the Erasmus projects. University staff involved in landscape democracy are constantly working to identify interesting and timely local topics, new partners, and challenges for the upcoming semesters, while making sure that learning from previous courses is documented and built upon.

In order to keep the Living Labs alive, it is essential that university educators nurture connections and become engaged researchers. The living lab collaboration will therefore include a diverse set of combined activities: internships, studios, international and local workshops, hands-on activities, events, PhD research, and educational research. Linking the labs to research projects funded from different sources and the so-called Third Mission of the university will help to achieve this.

It is also important to present the living labs graphically and through storytelling to share the results with academic communities, local authorities, and community members. This shared knowledge and understanding is an important foundation for the sustainability of the living lab. At the same time, communities should be empowered to take over many activities. This will work only if the living lab matches a real local need. For the course development, we learned that we need to support learners much more. Giving feedback and sharing student view is an essential part of the course. This needs to be done not only in the online sessions, but also in the related on-site activities with communities. Giving feedback and responding to surveys must become a compulsory part of the course.

Games are a powerful tool for connecting to groups in the community and developing and strengthening common concepts. The same goes for storytelling and connecting through music. We therefore intend to integrate these more 'playful' methods, as well as storytelling, in future projects as a way to connect science and action and strengthen local investment in landscape democracy.

Partners of the LED2LEAP project will continue with a new Erasmus+ project aimed at further disseminating what we have learned so far. This 'Open Landscape Academy' will offer a digital platform bringing together democratic landscape educators from Europe and beyond for dialogue, exchange, and mutual learning. Digital access will allow participants from different regions and remote areas, as well as those with limited time and/or financial resources, to benefit from and contribute to this common good. OLA will also be linked to a number of continuing and new living labs.

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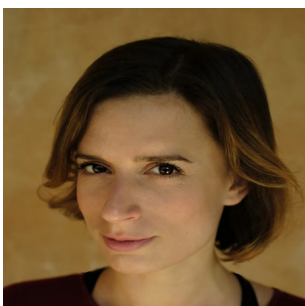
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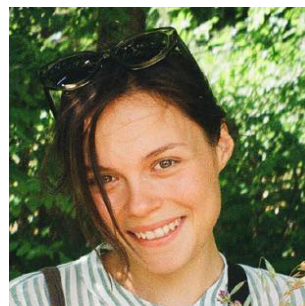
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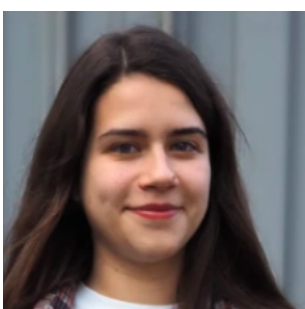
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Further project publications

Partnering for Landscape Democracy. An Intensive Study programme in Miskolc to renew the school environment of the Dr. Ámbédkar School, 2021

Partnering for Landscape Democracy. Strategic Partnership for the Reuse and Social Valorization of Dismissed Cultural Heritage of Religious Communities. Lucca 2022, Intensive programme

[Partnering for Landscape Democracy. Exploring games in community building processes.](#)

An intensive workshop in the Braike neighbourhood in Nürtingen, June 2022 (English: focus games, German focus: 'local process & sustainability')

