



Feminist Mappings

The experience from the Ioannina Bridges of Participation project

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The experience from the Ioannina – Bridges of Participation project

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TITLE:

Feminist mappings, The experience from the Ioannina – Bridges of participation project

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Thessaloniki, June 2024

ISBN: 978-618-5580-52-0

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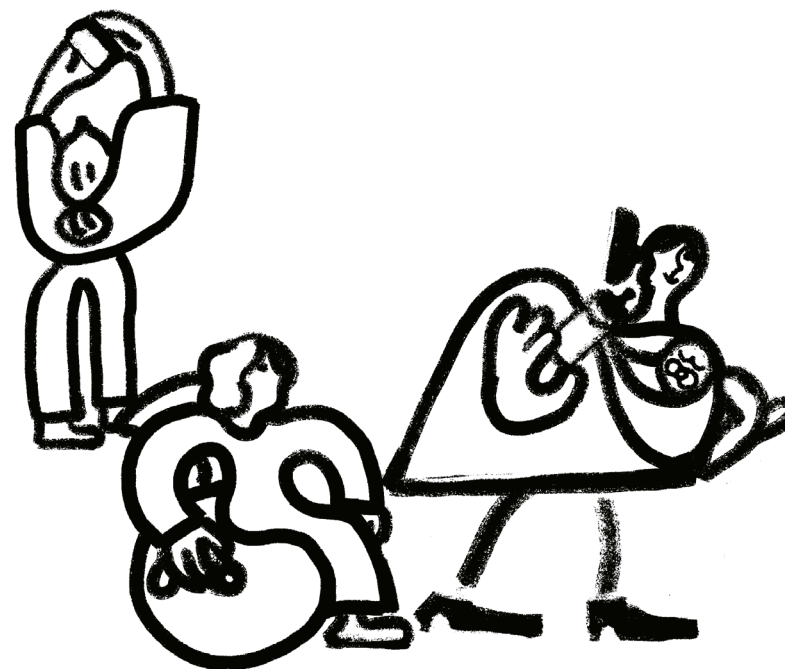


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Thessaloniki 2024

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ABBREVIATIONS - ACRONYMS

PWD

People with disabilities

SES

Society for Epirotic Studies

LGBTQI+

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex people, other genders and sexualities

UOI

University of Ioannina

SRAUI (*originally ΠαΣΠΙ*)

Student Radio Association of the University of Ioannina

TCG

Technical Chamber of Greece

TCG-ED

Technical Chamber of Greece – Epirus Department

SPAUI (*originally ΦωΣΠΙ*)

Student Photography Association of the University of Ioannina

EIGE

European Institute for Gender Equality



PROLOGUE



Rarely do we really observe the public space, as we mostly rush from one place to the next, simply passing through, often unwittingly repeating behaviours, whether it is something simple, like avoiding a pothole, or something more complex, like changing our route due to lack of accessibility or even due to the risk involved.

Spaces - and public spaces in particular – don't just happen, they are the outcome of decisions and planning procedures that often involve many authorities and departments. These decisions rarely, if ever, involve citizens, and probably never take into account a gender perspective. Therefore, the public space tends to reproduce stereotypes and behaviours that make it less accessible and friendly towards specific groups of the population. At the Heinrich Böll Foundation, we have a deep appreciation for Urbana's work, particularly because it aims to combat stereotypes that unknowingly surround us in our daily lives, by helping to develop inclusive public spaces. It is that same spirit that permeates the 'Ioannina: Bridges of participation' project, as well as the publication that you're holding in your hands or browsing through online. We hope that the Project's Guidebook, which attempts an experiential mapping of Ioannina with women that live in the city, will be a source of reflection, inspiration, and ultimately a tool for as many people that are somehow involved in the planning of public spaces as possible.

Michalis Goudis

Director of Heinrich Böll Foundation
Thessaloniki Office



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 'Ioannina: Bridges of participation' project was conducted with the support of the Heinrich Böll Foundation - Thessaloniki Office, which we feel the need to thank for the absolute trust that was placed on us and for supporting every stage of the project. Our collaboration with the Foundation was fruitful, caring, and feedback-driven all the way, and we feel grateful for its genuine interest in terms of implementing this initiative and the creative ideas that come with it. Furthermore, we'd like to extend warm thanks to the Technical Chamber of Greece (TCG) – Epirus Department for kindly granting permission to use its event venue for carrying out workshops. Lastly, it would be amiss not to mention the student associations that worked with us and supported our actions, particularly the University of Ioannina radio station and the University of Ioannina photographic association. We thank them for embracing this endeavour!

Disclaimer

In the original version of this guidebook in the Greek language, the feminine grammatical gender is used inclusively, both for activist and pragmatic reasons, since the workshop participants were predominantly women. Also, for reasons of inclusivity, a choice was made to use the Municipality's previous formal name 'Dimos Ioanninon' (Municipality of Ioannina city), rather than the newer 'Dimos Ioanniton' (Municipality Ioannina residents, referring to the male gender in Greek language), which features the masculine grammatical gender for the area's residents, excluding the women living there.



IOANNINA UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

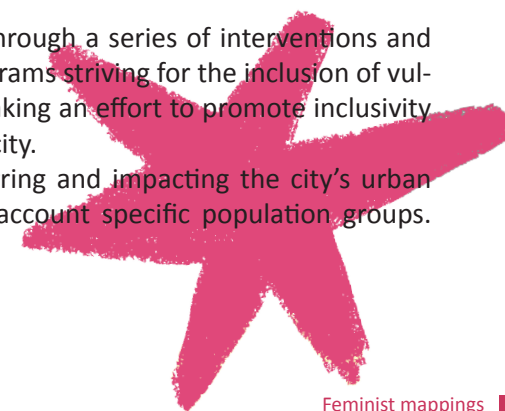
The 'Ioannina: Bridges of participation' project places the city of Ioannina at the centre of urban planning exploration. The question 'is Ioannina an inclusive and friendly city for all people and all ages?' served as a launchpad for putting together this project, which is funded and supported by the Heinrich Böll Foundation - Thessaloniki Office. But what led to choosing Ioannina?

Ioannina is a medium-sized city which combines urban and natural landscapes. It is one of the largest Greek cities, with a population of 64.896 (according to the 2021 census), and is situated in the northwestern part of mainland Greece. It is the capital of the Ioannina regional unit. Ioannina has a rich cultural tradition and history, while in terms of its geographical characteristics, Lake Pamvotida stands out, located between the city of Ioannina and the Mitsikeli mountains (Wikipedia, 2023). In the last decade, through a series of urban interventions in the city's commercial center and the lakeside road, the urban landscape and the mobility in the city have changed significantly. In addition, the reconstruction of Pyrros Square and the creation of a covered underground parking area has facilitated access to the centre of Ioannina for people with private vehicles, while the pedestrianisation of central streets of the commercial center has made pedestrian access easier.

These urban planning interventions didn't just modify the urban landscape, they also introduced a number of changes in people's daily lives and mobility. Firstly, they became an incentive to attract tourists. This led to the construction of more hotels, and to the reinforcement of local commercial and artisanal activities. This is in line with the objectives of the municipality's business plan (Municipality of Ioannina, 2020), which aims at further developing tourism, upgrading the tourist services provided, and taking advantage of the local cultural heritage for touristic purposes.

Then, the Municipality of Ioannina, through a series of interventions and activities in the context of European programs striving for the inclusion of vulnerable social groups¹, appears to be making an effort to promote inclusivity and participatory procedures within the city.

However, the changes that are occurring and impacting the city's urban fabric in recent years mostly take into account specific population groups.



The focus is on people who have private vehicles, do not have or experience any form of disability, nor are they the main caregivers of a dependent family member (e.g., child, older adult, etc.). In contrast, the perspective of individuals or social groups¹ that could have a greater diversity of needs and desires in the city, such as women, is often neglected.

According to the Policy for gender equality of the Municipality of Ioannina (2022), as signed by former mayor Moses Elisaf, the gender gap that exists in the daily and working lives of people in Ioannina has already been identified. More specifically, particular emphasis is given to the necessity to fight against gender discrimination in the workplace within the town hall, through providing managers with the proper training to deal with such phenomena. Furthermore, there is a focus in detecting and identifying unconscious biases and stereotypes which negatively impact the workplace. Lastly, there is a policy model dedicated to combatting gender inequality, since it is a major issue for the city of Ioannina. This should contribute both to compliance with Greek and European legislation against sexism and to sensibilisation about tackling gender issues and reinforcing a culture of equality. The aforementioned model is based on three main axes:

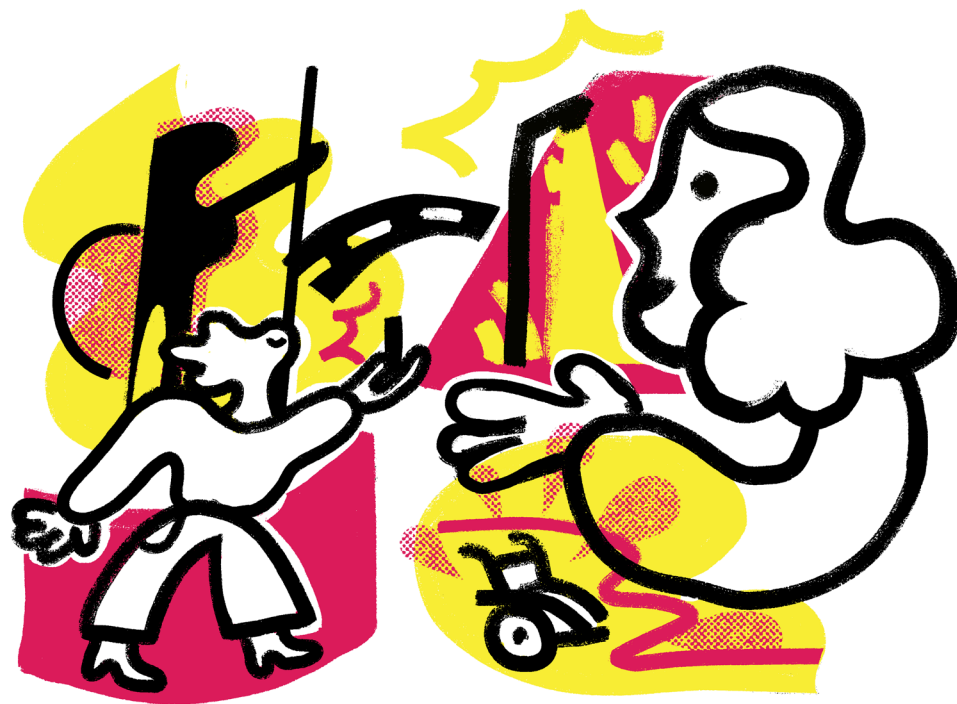
- a) fighting discrimination with preventive and punitive (in case of allegations) measures,
- b) applying the law,
- c) raising awareness of gender discrimination issues and changing the culture.

Greek cities are constantly morphing as they try to adapt to intensifying social imperatives. Both social changes and the needs that are expressed from women, as well as other vulnerable social groups, create a growing demand for inclusion in the city, participation in urban planning and (re)familiarisation with urban spaces as they become more hospitable and open to everyone. The values that we're defending - chief among them being the right to the city² for all people regardless of their gender, sexuality, origins, age, disabilities - are a useful tool for the exploration, mapping and development of Ioannina in the future.

¹ Some indicative European programs that the Municipality of Ioannina has participated in include the following: "MOTIVATE - Promoting citizens' active involvement in the development of sustainable Travel Plans in Med Cities with Seasonal Demand", URBACT, 'A Positive Energy City Transformation Framework' - 'POCITIF', Intercultural twinning: cultural diversity for inclusive growth, etc.



² The concept of the Right to the city originates from French Marxist sociologist Henri Lefebvre who spoke about freedom of access to the urban environment, recognising that cities and people interact with each other through a prism of mutual determination. Hence, people can and should be free to bring changes to the city, simultaneously reforming the urban landscape and themselves. URBANA, focusing on the identity of the person who could and should bring about these changes within the city, reinforces Lefebvre's definition from the perspective of intersectional feminism, with regards to the different social groups that face additional social pressure, as well as via a more methodological bottom-up approach, which reveals the needs, experiences, and voices of less privileged social groups. Thus, the 'homo universalis' concept that Lefebvre seems to be using is challenged, since not all people have the same desires and needs in public spaces, and the public space was not conceived in a way that responds to the desires and needs of all people.



WOMEN AND GENDER IN THE CITY

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2022: 18, chart), Greece in recent years is consistently ranked last in terms of gender equality in the European Union. In fact, it has the lowest rate of progress among all the other Member of European Union. However, according to other surveys (Special Eurobarometer, 2017), Greek citizens have the perception that gender equality has been achieved in the country to a very large extent, and, furthermore, they consider that Greece, in many areas, is among the top countries across Europe. This paradox reveals the urgent need to open up and broaden the dialogue on gender equality issues in Greece, and to begin taking a feminist approach to all the sectors that constitute and give meaning to the everyday life of people living in cities.

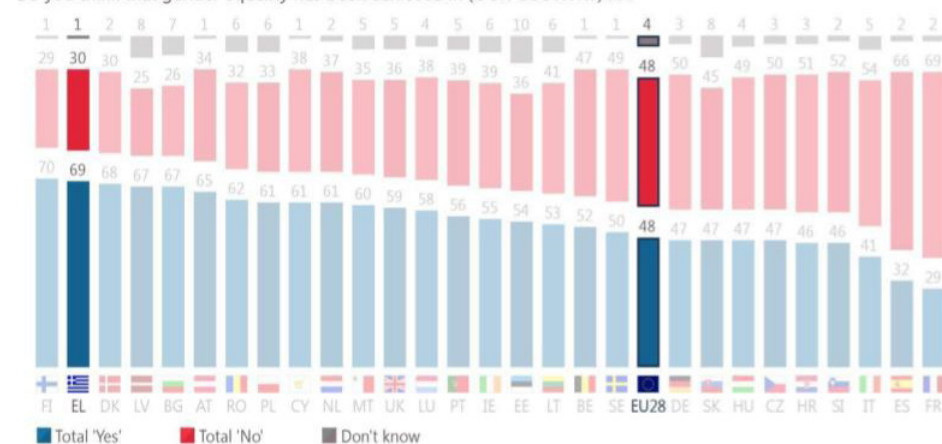
A feminist approach to urban planning

To understand cities, we must focus on the combination of mixed uses as their main component (Jacobs, 1961: 144). The city's public space, from the schoolyard (first contact with public spaces during childhood) to squares, streets, parks, and various facilities, is intertwined with people's daily lives. It is of primary importance in shaping people's experience of everyday life in the city, while also being an integral part of both their lives and the identities they are in the process of building. However, public space is not a neutral field, as one might initially think. It is a cultural product that (re)produces relationships, hierarchies and discrimination, including based on gender.

The neighbourhood scale as well as focusing the research on the perspective of everyday life presupposes perceiving the city as something organic, constantly shifting through active (re)configuration processes. Cities, as cultural products, are constructed through internal social and cultural procedures, in the osmosis of different individuals across the spectrum of their intersecting and overlapping identities, privileges and oppressions.

As noted by Butler, the public sphere is a construction based on exclusions and a series of mandatory forms of renunciation (2018). Focusing on 'daily life' stems from the fact that it is "a key-concept capable of revealing the gender di-

Do you think that gender equality has been achieved in (OUR COUNTRY) ... ?



Special Eurobarometer Chart 465 - Gender Equality - 2017

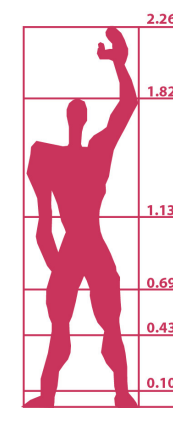
mention of the procedures that make up the city”, since “they can reveal much of what remains ‘hidden’ because of the established, male-centric approaches that seek to state a single truth with absolute certainty, one complete and universal interpretation for urban development” (Lykogianni, 2021: 25). In this context, “the neighborhood (...) becomes an important reference point for the daily lives of different people, while also acquiring a renewed significance as it is imbued with meanings that go beyond spatial definitions and its rapport with community and location” (Lykogianni, 2021: 26).

Modern cities were basically planned and shaped as we know them today by certain ‘specialists’ and experts, who proposed strategies based on their own experiences and visions for the city. Most of these ‘specialists’ (architects, urbanists, politicians), who proposed and implemented urban planning policies in previous decades, where men who embodied the dominant ‘citizen model’ - that of a healthy, white, bourgeois, cis³, heterosexual, middle or upper socioeconomic class man.

The urban development models that were proposed and implemented have inevitably resulted in serving the desires and needs of a particular social group (‘the citizen model’), overlooking and even downgrading or devaluing the needs and wishes of other social groups. According to the World Bank (2020), modern cities have been planned by men for men, significantly limiting women’s access to social and economic advancement.



Cities have been designed with a specific ‘citizen model’ in mind: male, able-bodied, middle-aged, middle socioeconomic class, disregarding the experiences and needs of other groups of citizens in the city.



Modulor is an anthropometric scale of proportions conceived by the architect Le Corbusier, which takes into account the dimensions of an ‘average man’. The dimensions of the female body weren’t taken into account. This model was used to determine the sizes of many buildings.

³ Reference to the term cis-gender, used for persons who feel that their assigned sex is not different to their gender. (For more information on terminology concerning gender and sexuality, please visit <https://www.colouryouth.gr/terms/>).

Women have different needs in the city

Historically, there's a dichotomy in terms of gender roles in society. On the one hand, men (in the sense of gender) have been identified with paid work outside the home, and public space. On the other hand, women (again, referring to gender) have been identified with private space and the neighbourhood level. In and around the home, there is unseen and unpaid care work being done (caring for children, older family members, the household), cleaning the neighbourhood and the street, caring for vulnerable people who live in the neighbourhood and aren't receiving any help for their needs, for stray animals, deprived persons etc. All these tasks remain to this day socially invisible and discredited, substituting the lack of an institutional and social care framework.

According to EU data, women in Greece spend around four times as much time as men doing care work (European Union, 2018). These tasks that women are burdened with result in different needs, both at home and outside in public. These needs, as well as the organisation of women's daily lives around care work, are not central to the development vision put forward for modern cities and neighbourhoods, nor to their (re)planning processes.

Care work also impacts women's urban mobility. Research shows that women, in order to meet the different needs for care, make more complex and polygonal daily commutes in the city, with lots of short trips (Day, 2011). A woman that's a mother, for example, can leave her house in the morning to take her kid to school, then go grocery shopping for the day, go to work (she could opt for a part-time job), pick up her child from school, take it to extra-curricular activities, and so on. According to research, women seem to prefer (whenever possible) to move around their neighbourhood, either on foot or using public transport.

In contrast, men (who are still considered the household's main financial providers) follow simpler and more linear routes. They leave their homes to go to work and vice versa. For this type of mobility (in conjunction with other social and economic factors), men are better suited using private vehicles.

Based on the above, it becomes clear that the design of modern cities, which facilitates - but more importantly prioritises - private car transportation, makes it much more difficult for women move around. Generally, while women choose more sustainable modes of transport (walking, public transport, etc.), they face quite unfavourable and dangerous conditions on a daily basis (poor condition and/or absence of pavements, dangerous crossings, inadequate public transport networks and infrastructure, etc.) (Day, 2011; Law,

1999).

Another parameter, which leads to differentiated experiences in the city on the basis of gender, is experiencing the city at night. Girls, women, and femininities, already from the first years when they begin to walk alone in public at night, develop various techniques to feel safer. Those include, among others, adapting their itineraries based on whether there is adequate lighting, avoiding certain parts of the city, and walking in the middle of the road instead of on the sidewalk (due to better lighting). Essentially, women are adapting to a public space that is, in their experience, threatening, by picking up their pace if they sense that someone's following them, or holding their keys in their hand

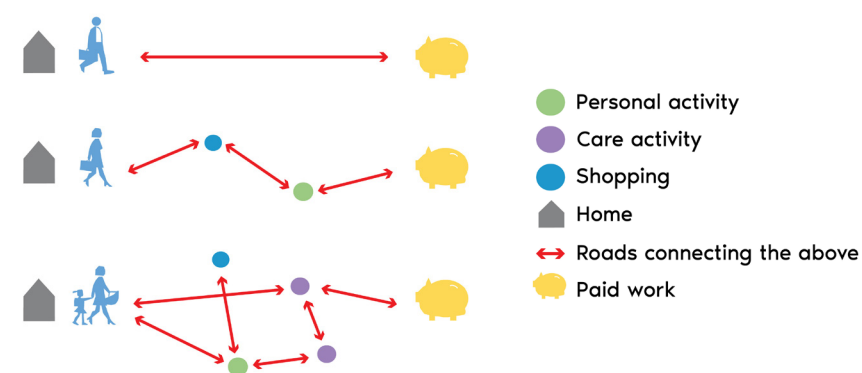


Chart depicting the daily movements of women in the city. Adriana Ciocchetto and Col·lectiu Punt 6. 2014. *Espacios para la Vida Cotidiana. Auditoría de Calidad Urbana con perspectiva de género. Ed. Col·lectiu Punt 6.*

as a sharp object in case they need to defend themselves. These techniques have been naturalised and normalised in women's daily lives, to the extent that they no longer surprise us. Femininities, girls, and women often feel that they do not have the right to be in certain areas of the city - especially at night - as their bodies can become targets for comments, harassment, or even assaults.

Care and the city

In the context of feminist urban planning, the key issue is to create cities that meet the needs of all people. Studying the city through a gendered approach means to prioritise women's perspective, to focus on their daily practices and meanings they attribute to the city, as well as to add visibility to queer identities, which is expressing a point of view and a methodological choice towards life (Kalantidis et al., 2023: 14). Feminist urban planning recognises the agency of women in the city and aims to provide them with the appropriate knowledge, tools and spaces so that they are further empowered, and thus their voices are heard in the decision-making centres of their city or neighbourhood (Col-lectiu Punt 6, 2018: 18-21). Care is placed at the forefront, with the aim of giving visibility to women's multiple daily roles, at the family, neighbourhood and community levels. Caregiving refers to 'social reproduction' work, which combines emotional and material – often unpaid – work, and it has been linked with women and the home (Fraser, 2017).

The caring city (or the city of care) creates, promotes and recycles caring procedures within itself. According to the Care Collective, "there are four fundamental characteristics for the creation of caring communities: mutual support, public spaces, shared resources and local democracy" (Chatzidakis et al., 2022: 73). For care to reach everywhere, it must be seen as part of a circular pattern that starts from the bottom (mainly from women at the small family and neighbourhood levels), and is strengthened by the care offered from above, i.e., the care the city provides to its residents. Furthermore, receivers of this care reciprocate and channel it towards others, themselves, the environment, and the city in itself. Therefore, the care that is institutionally offered from above (top-down) is multiplied within the community, the neighbourhood, and among the individuals themselves. It then goes back the other way, without it being limited to gendered characteristics, but striving to meet the multiple functional needs within the city, as well as the needs of everyday life.

Public spaces that provide care for women impart and reinforce the feeling of safety. More specifically, well-marked and well-lit public spaces that facilitate continuous pedestrian passage jointly create safe conditions for the unimpeded movement of women and other vulnerable social groups in public. This way, they can comfortably move around the city, without fear of possible harassment or assault.

When urban planning places care at its core, there is emphasis being given on factors that are undervalued in stereotypical designs: pedestrians, mobility

and public transport, rest areas, parks and recreational areas, services as well as facilities that facilitate all the basic care tasks of daily life. Thanks to this approach, all people can equally enjoy the city. Everyone can participate in the planning process together, so that, ultimately, the city can respond to the needs of all persons. (Col-lectiu Punt 6, 2019).



carework in the neighborhood/community

vulnerable social groups
public space (human-made environment)
public space (natural environment)

family care

domestic work
children
older family members
people with disabilities
(close or extended family)





PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 'Ioannina: Bridges of participation' project was conducted with the support of the Heinrich Böll Foundation - Thessaloniki Office in Greece. The gender perspective in the urban planning processes of the city of Ioannina was at the heart of the research. The project, using specific tools and participatory research and urban planning methodologies, complemented the projects already put into place by the municipality of Ioannina for the social integration of vulnerable social groups, as well as the actions stemming from the need to combat discrimination and reinforce a culture of equality.

"Participating in the workshops helped me understand how I have been trying to adapt to the city, instead of the other way around."

L., Workshop participant

The project had a multi-layered aim. It started with preparatory meetings with local government bodies (of the Municipality of Ioannina), as well as other stakeholders. During these meetings, there were discussions about the needs that are identified in Ioannina, and around possible bridges of cooperation and participation to find solutions through the project at hand. Then, between May 26 and 28, 2023, three workshops took place at the centre of Ioannina, with female residents of the city. The objectives of the workshops were to familiarise participants with the gender perspective in the city and the everyday experiences within it, highlighting things they deal with daily, and writing down their needs and desires for changes in specific city areas that we would walk through later (in the exploratory walks) and map collectively. The project was aimed, in particular, to participants who were mainly young women and members of the LGBTQI+ community, without excluding the participation of men or other interested groups.

The workshops started with a brief presentation of gender issues at a social and theoretical level, to properly inform the participants. After that, there was a dialogue and recording of personal experiences using URBANA's tools, with the objective of raising awareness among all the people who took part in

the workshops. By proposing tools for the better understanding of the urban landscape and providing a safe coexistence environment, the foundations of mutual empowerment between the participants and the URBANA team were established. This way, everyone had a chance to be heard and take part in a fruitful conversation regarding their active participation in the (re)planning of their city and neighbourhood.

A total of 42 people participated in the workshops, 36 of which identify themselves as women and 6 as men. The majority of them (32 out of 42) were young people aged 18-24. The individuals who participated in the URBANA workshops had an active role throughout the workshops, either through being involved in the consultation processes and suggesting itineraries for the exploratory walks, or via sharing their experiences and formulating proposals for changes in the urban landscape.

The action with women residents of Ioannina was carried out in three workshops.

1st Workshop:

At the 1st workshop, which took place at the TCG – Epirus Department, there was a presentation of basic concepts around gender, and URBANA's projects, methods, and research. This was followed by a discussion, in groups, on four central points of the city and the way the participants experience them daily. Finally, the starting (Alsos ton piiton – Poet's grove) and finishing (Kaloutsiani mosque) points of the next workshop – an exploratory walk during the night – were indicated.

2nd Workshop:

At the 2nd workshop, the participants met up at Alsos ton piiton, where they were divided into three groups, with the guidance of URBANA's members. For the night walk, small maps of the city and note pads were used to write down observations, based on URBANA's Urban Quality Indicators. The routes that were taken were indicated each time on the spot and took approximately 30 minutes.

The suggestion of the itineraries referenced collective experiences and was based on the need to study difficult and/or problematic parts of the city, until the completion of the exploratory walk upon arriving at the end point, the

Kaloutsiani mosque. At the end of the exploratory walk, there was a discussion between the groups and URBANA's coordinators about the findings, thoughts, and feelings of the participants.

Photo taken during URBANA's presentation



3rd Workshop:

At the 3rd Workshop, there was a morning exploratory walk, starting off from the Kaloutsiani mosque and heading towards the TCG – Epirus Department. There, once again with the use of the Urban Quality Indicators, the participants were divided into groups to examine public spaces and write their comparative observations from the previous night's walk. At the end, everyone gathered at the TCG where they discussed lived and collective experiences, including from the two walks, the role of gender in urban planning, and gender in the city. The workshop ended with the writing of their experiences on the large collective map of the city, as well as with a first development and discussion of proposals for improving the city's problematic areas.

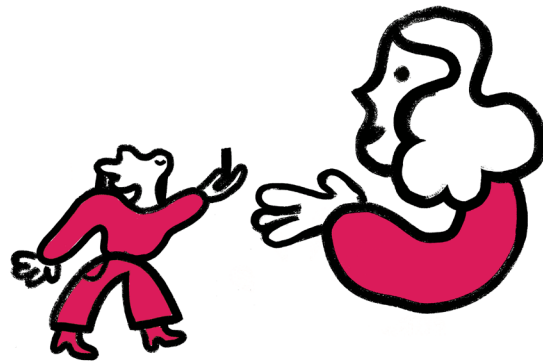
Photo taken during the exploratory walk during nighttime, near the Kaloutsiani mosque



In conclusion, it is worth noting that a significant number of participants in the workshops were female architecture students. They intensely expressed the need to delve into gender issues and there was strong interest in participating in URBANA's workshops in Ioannina. The situation as they presented it was that the gender perspective is absent from current architectural approaches, as well as from their curriculum. They insisted on the desire to correlate everyday experiences with architectural theory, in a more direct, practical, and meaningful way.

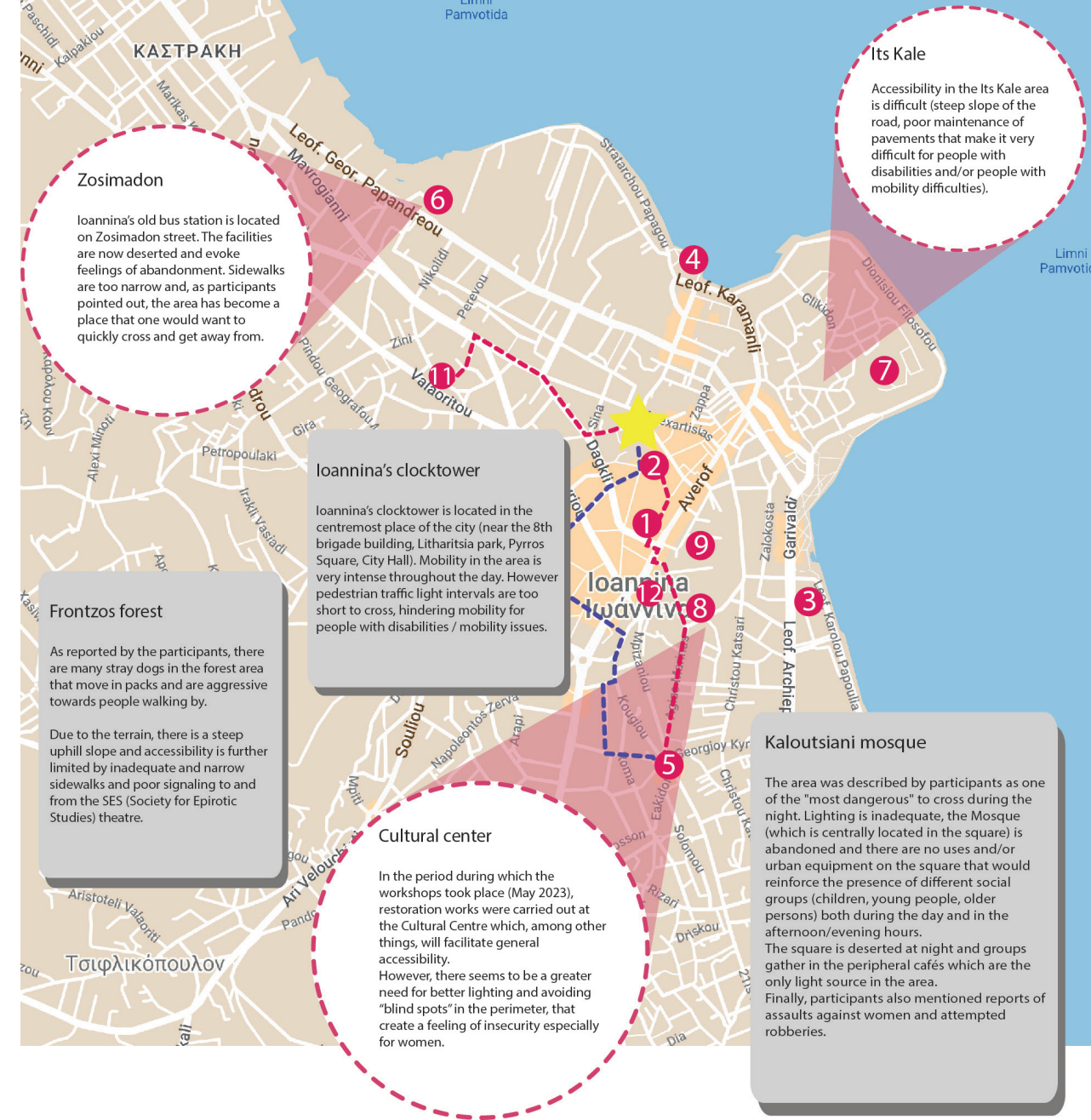
Photo taken during the second workshop, at the TCG - Epirus Department





'Collective actions collect the space itself, gather the pavement, and animate and organise the architecture.'

(Butler 2015: 71)



Experiential mapping

★ TCG Epirus Department (6-8 Aravantinou street) – meeting point

--- 1st itinerary

--- 2nd itinerary

1 Ioannina town hall

2 Ioannina Faculty of Architecture (Former Papazogleios – Weaving school)

3 Dim. Chatzis cultural space (Old slaughterhouses)

4 Mavili square

5 Kaloutsianis mosque

6 Interurban bus station

7 Its Kale

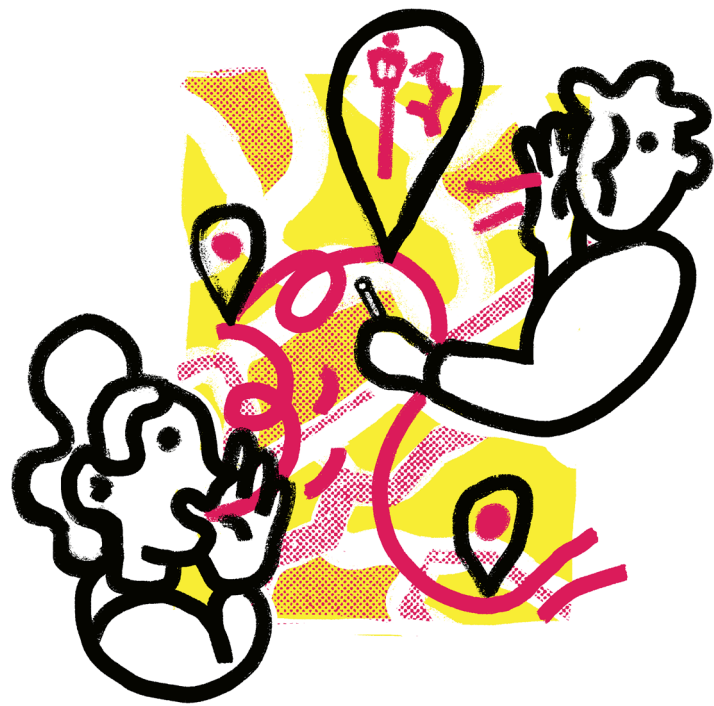
8 Cultural Center of Ioannina's Municipality

9 Litharitsia park

10 Frontzos forest

11 Alsos ton piiton – Poet's grove

12 Ioannina's clocktower

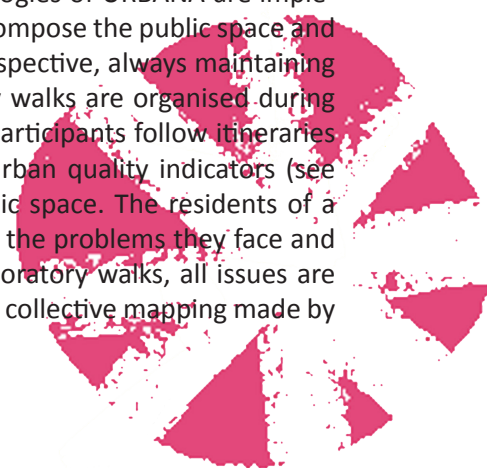


WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

The workshops with residents of the Municipality of Ioannina were intended to provide knowledge and tools, creating the proper conditions for participatory urban planning. URBANA's project focuses on the involvement of women and other vulnerable social groups in the design of their neighbourhood and city, using a bottom-up methodological approach. In this way, urban design maps are no longer made in offices, but rather in neighbourhoods, where residents actively participate in the design process, thanks to consultations between them, local authority representatives, urban planners, and architects, so that cities can meet everyone's desires and needs.

However, to enable residents in order to participate in urban planning decision-making procedures, it is essential to understand the complexity of the city and provide information on the tools that can be used, so that their desires can be considered in the (re)design of the city. In this context, URBANA's workshops aim to raise awareness among residents, especially on gender issues, as women and LGBTQI+ people have been systematically excluded from the city development procedures. Through a gender perspective, other excluded social groups become visible. After giving an overview of how the city is structured, by whom and for whom, we then have a general and reflective discussion about the way in which the city is experienced on a daily basis by the individuals in question.

Further to the above, the tools and methodologies of URBANA are implemented to familiarise us with key elements that compose the public space and shape our experiences in it through a gender perspective, always maintaining a bottom-up approach. In this stage, exploratory walks are organised during the night and in the morning, where workshop participants follow itineraries that they choose in the city, using the tool of urban quality indicators (see next chapter) for the collective mapping of public space. The residents of a neighbourhood are the most qualified to express the problems they face and propose appropriate solutions. Through the exploratory walks, all issues are identified and registered in detail, and, finally, the collective mapping made by



the entire group of participants creates a new, experiential city map. Thus, the workshop ends with a complete recording of the problems and a first elaboration of solutions proposed by the participants.⁴

⁴ The methodology and indicators used by URBANA were inspired by the “Femmes et Villes” programme. They have been adjusted according to the Greek data, and modified each time depending on the needs of the social and spatial context in which they will be applied.

Photo from a discussion after the exploratory walk



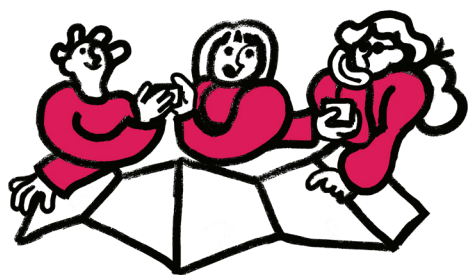
GIRLS, WOMEN, AND OTHERS IN URBANA'S WORKSHOPS

In the “Ioannina: Building bridges through participation” project, priority was given to the participation of young women (students, unemployed), mothers with young children and members of the LGBTQI+ community. Several open calls were launched through the local press.⁵ The invitation to participate was also posted on social media by local civil society groups and announced in student clubs and faculties of the University of Ioannina. The participants filled all the spots for the implementation of the workshops, while the overall attendance (42 participants) exceeded the initial expectations (30 participants).

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning the political and activist imperative of such activities with residents in a city. As Jane Jacobs highlights, streets and sidewalks are the most vital parts of the city and public space (1961: 29). Nevertheless, the condition of pavements regarding pedestrian mobility (especially for women) does not facilitate their movements, nor does it seem to be a central part of urban planning. The focus on the road network and the investment in such projects not only neglects the needs of women, but also reduces their mobility in the city. According to Butler's performative theory of assembly (2018), the gathering of women, LGBTQI+ and other people from vulnerable social groups in public space - applied in the context of URBANA's workshops - and the interweaving of their individual and collective experiences, constitutes a claim of the right to public space and to the ‘right to have rights’. The public appearance of women's and other vulnerable bodies reveals their unsafety and reclaims their inalienable right to continue to exist despite forces that attempt to suppress their experiences and eliminate them from the public sphere. As Butler observes, “politics is already in the home, or on the street, or in the neighbourhood, or indeed in those virtual spaces that are equally unbound by the architecture of the house and the square” (2015: 71).

⁵ Article entitled “Ioannina: Participation Bridges for three days”, 23/05/2023, <https://typos-i.gr/article/iwannina-gefyres-symmetoxhs-gia-treis-meres>

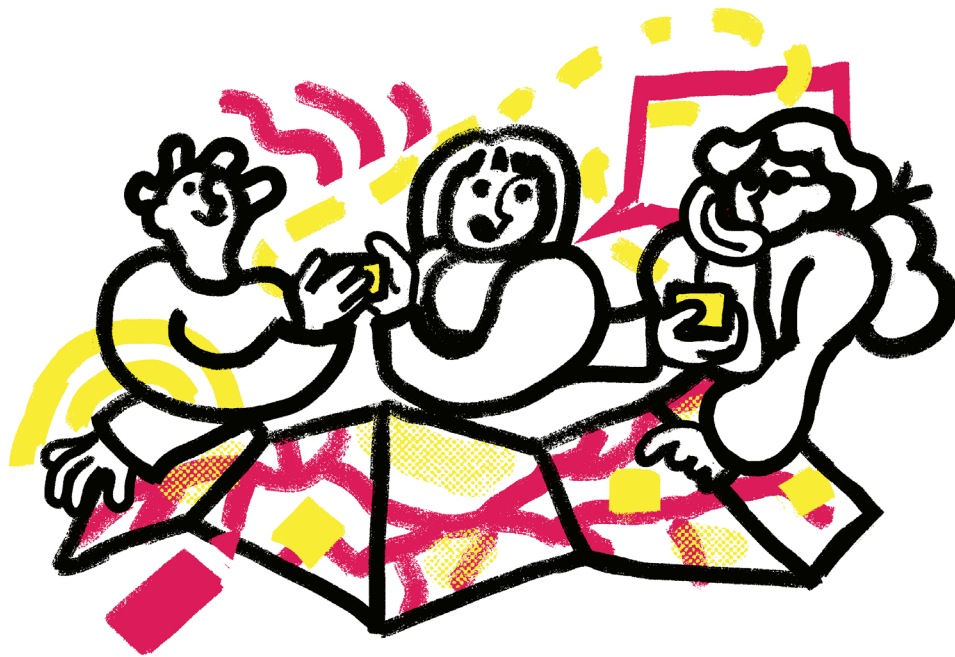
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'During the workshops, as participants we were given the space to become part of the organisation and discussion, and I think that in a very genuine way an open and inclusive atmosphere was created, respecting the experiences and rhythms of all'.

R., Workshop participant





URBAN QUALITY INDICATORS

The Urban Quality Indicators are a tool that URBANA uses for the evaluation of public space. The indicators are adjusted each time depending on the type of action and used in combination with the methodology followed by URBANA in its participatory urban design workshops with neighbourhood residents, young people, elderly people, children and/or other vulnerable social groups. In other words, they are a complementary tool during the collective mapping that takes place during exploratory walks. For the development of this method, URBANA has been inspired by previous actions, notably by the project “Femmes et ville” (Paquin, 2002), implemented in Montreal, Canada, from 1988 to 2004 under the leadership of Anne Michaud.

1. SAFETY



Safety, as an Urban Quality Indicator, refers to both the physical security and psychological safety that a person feels when in a public space. For instance, are there sidewalks and pedestrian crossings? Are they properly constructed and maintained?

Factors that enhance the sense of safety in public spaces are markings, visibility, and acoustics. More specifically:

- **Signage:** refers to the ability of having a sense of orientation through signs, so that people always know where they are and where they're going, even if visiting the area for the first time.
- **Visibility:** refers to the ability of a person to see and be seen in public space, having full visual control. In this case, it is important to ensure that there are no hidden corners in the space, dense and excessive vegetation, lack of lighting, walls and anything else making visibility difficult.
- **Acoustics:** it is related to the ability of a person to hear and be heard in a space (e.g. to be heard if she/he needs to call for help).

2. ACCESSIBILITY



Accessibility is divided into physical, social and economic. Physical accessibility refers to the absence of physical barriers for people with mobility problems (due to age, pregnancy, temporary injuries, etc.), people with disabilities, people with strollers, shopping trolleys, street vendors etc. The issue to be considered is the ease of movement in the public space (on foot, in a wheelchair or other types of mobility aids, with an attendant, etc.), the ease of escaping from different pathways in an emergency, and the ability to use the public space with autonomy. Social accessibility relates to the coexistence of different people in the same space, the provision of public services, facilities and other amenities to the whole range of the population living and/or moving around a city unhindered (regardless of gender, language, cultural background, sexuality, religion, etc.). Finally, economic accessibility is related to the possibility of equal participation and access to public space regardless of economic status. Examples of that include free entrance to museums and cultural events in the city, easy access with any mode of transport (especially public transport and not just with private vehicles), etc.

3. VITALITY



Vitality refers to the multiplicity of parallel uses in an area, which implies the constant presence of people in public throughout the day (and night).

It is directly related to the infrastructure and urban equipment (e.g. seating for people who need to rest, children's toys, water fountains and other infrastructures facilitating the stay of people in public spaces), but also to the uses of a space, which should be mixed and diverse (e.g. a combination of work spaces, offices, shops, green and play areas, spaces for education, entertainment, sports, housing, etc.), in order to "invite" different groups of people at

various times of the day and night, creating a vibrant and active environment.

Apart from the sense of well-being that we feel when we are together with other people in a space, the sense of security is also enhanced, as the individuals present (e.g., in a square) are also the ones who informally monitor it, since they (inevitably) pay attention to what is happening around them. The informal surveillance of the space by the persons who use it, as Jane Jacobs (1961) characteristically mentions with "eyes on the street", makes people (especially women and femininities) feel safer.

4. URBAN EQUIPMENT



This indicator refers to the existence, quality and adequacy of urban equipment in public space. Urban equipment includes benches, public fountains, public toilets, shade shelters, public transport stops, children's toys (inside or outside playgrounds) and, in general, any kind of equipment serving and facilitating people's comfort in public spaces.

There is therefore an examination of whether the necessary urban equipment exists based on the needs of the people that use a space or could do so potentially. In terms of quality, there is an inquiry about how well maintained and clean the urban equipment is (e.g. public toilets, well-maintained and clean seating areas, well-maintained toys, etc). The existence and good quality of urban equipment creates the impression of a city that takes care of its people, in turn helping them take care of those around them.

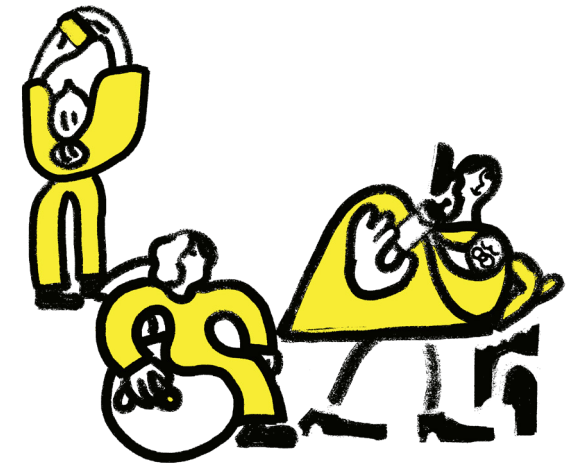
5. GENDER REPRESENTATIONS (signs, advertising, graffiti, statues, etc.)



Gender representations in public space are related to the ways in which women and femininities are represented and highlighted through art, monumentality, street names and other forms of visual or verbal gender-related expression. This includes statues, sculptures, busts and other works of art, signs, street names, graffiti, slogan banners, advertisements, posters, local shop names, representations of women or other vulnerable social groups at local festivals or celebrations, etc. In Greece, for example, it has been observed through URBANA's workshops that most women's street names refer to either a queen or a Saint.

Regarding gender representations, one should map:

- the existence or absence of monumentality and street names referring to women compared to the male gender or to issues related to nature (flora and/or fauna),
- the type of references made to women through images and texts (e.g. sexist graffiti and/or fan slogans, advertisements, the way mothers are portrayed, visual depictions of young women, advertisements for women's hygiene products, etc),
- the extent to which participants feel that public gender depictions represent them, as well as the emotions they experience when they come across gender representations in public spaces (safety, calm, fear, threat, etc).



"Walking within a group helped me realise that I share experiences with other women and better understand the changes that I would like to see in my city. We have many common experiences that we rarely discuss in depth."

I., Workshop participant

**"Cities can offer something to everyone, only because,
and only when, they are created by everone"**

Jane Jacobs



WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS

"The introduction and subsequent targeted observation during the walks helped me put into words my everyday experiences in the city, that I couldn't express or identify until now."

A., Workshop participant

Photo taken during the nighttime exploratory walk



Our sense of identity in the public space, according to Jane Jacobs (1961: 56), combines our yearning for respect, trust and time to take care of our personal needs and those of the neighbourhood. Is this how the residents of Ioannina feel? Below, you will find the key points of the observations and conclusions of the participants in URBANA's participatory urban design workshops.

A. Security (physical)

"Thanks to the workshop, I walked on streets that I've never walked down on my own, because I usually prefer avoiding certain parts until I reach a place where I feel safe."

M., Workshop participant

Sidewalks

One of the main points identified by the participants concerns the poorly maintained and narrow sidewalks in many parts of the city, as well as the lack of sidewalks on the uphill road leading to the SES (Society for Epirotic Studies) theatre, which undermines safe mobility, on a road that many people walk on in the summer when events (concerts, musicals and theatrical performances) are held. In particular, they identified broken pavements (in the alleys of Ioannina's old town), sidewalks that are too high for children, seniors, or people with mobility issues, as well as pavements that have been encroached upon by arbitrary, private, improvised concrete ramps leading to parking spaces, creating uneven surfaces. The participants also observed narrow sidewalks (on Zosimadon street) that are barely wide enough for one person, forcing pedestrians to walk on the street, at the risk of being hit by passing vehicles or being honked at and insulted. 'This is a street that you walk on fast to reach your destination, it isn't fit for a stroll' says K., who participated in the exploratory walk. Outside the church of Agia Marina (St. Marina), a significant part of the road has no sidewalk, and where it does exist it is in very bad condition, posing an immediate risk to pedestrian safety. Also, the old stone pavements around the Castle have been worn smooth by time, and the humidity of the atmosphere makes them slippery, causing people to fall. Tactile pavement for persons with visual impairment only exists in the most central parts of town.

It is important to highlight the importance of sidewalks for mobility, especially for women. Women undertake multiple roles on a daily basis and pedestrian mobility in the city for the purpose of fulfilling tasks is ensured by sidewalks (provided they exist). The caregiving role that women assume for older persons or people with disabilities is made more difficult when pavements are worn and in poor condition. Furthermore, the autonomy of these social groups in the city's public spaces is significantly reduced. When public infrastructures do not facilitate such mobility, these individuals are confined to their homes, or the presence of a caregiver becomes compulsory, if that's even a possibility (for family, social or other reasons). Additionally, moving across the city with a child that needs to be held, or a baby in a stroller, presupposes a large enough sidewalk (3,6 metres) and the absence of obstacles and/or height differences (Paricio and Estel, 2019), so that at least two people can walk side by side without any risk of tripping or getting injured.

Photo from a conversation during the workshops



Photo taken during the nighttime exploratory walk



Abandoned buildings

The facilities of the city's old bus station have been neglected. The place is deserted, with many dark corners, while it has also become a place of conflict due to various 'suspicious' activities, according to participants. "When a place is abandoned, you feel as though no one will look after you either" notes F., a workshop participant. The state of disrepair in the public space intensifies women's feelings of unsafety, when they walk by such facilities on foot. On the same street as the old bus station, there are abandoned closed stores, as well as collapsing buildings. Around the Castle, there are also old, abandoned, dilapidated houses, as well as iron sheets that could threaten pedestrian security.

Public transport

As the participants pointed out, one of the problems that they face, young college students in particular, is the lack of public transport night services, as well as the bad interconnection throughout the day. For example, public transport routes from the city centre to the University of Ioannina and vice versa aren't frequent enough, and many students depend on friends who own a car to move around the city. This was also pointed out by URBANA's team who tried to use public transport to commute to and from the University.

In addition, at various points, like for example on Dagli street, there are bus stops that are unmarked, and therefore known only to natives and those familiar with the city. The lack of electronic boards at the stops, indicating the waiting time for the next bus, poses a problem for women using public transport, as it keeps them from knowing how long they should expect to wait, and organising their schedule accordingly. They are therefore left with no knowledge of the choices at hand for transportation that would allow them to reach their destination with more comfort and safety. According to the testimony of one of the participants, it would be helpful to know "if there's a point in waiting for the bus or if I should rather take a taxi".

Safety (psychological)

Night lighting

One of the key issues that the participants raised, with regards to their psychological safety, concerned lighting during hours of darkness. The lack of lighting, combined with the lack of vitality in certain city areas, creates uncertainty and fear, as it hinders good visibility around the city at night. This was observed by the students at the Architecture Faculty of the University of Ioannina (UoI), who noted the lack of lights around the university at night, even though it is located at the city centre. In the same note, many blind spots and insufficiently lit areas were found at the lakeside area around the Castle, leading the participants to avoid crossing it at night. The areas around the Municipality's Cultural Center, the Iroon Park, and the Kaloutsiani mosque have few or no lights, making the participants insecure. In fact, incidents of assault have been observed and reported (attempted theft or sexual harassment directed at young women).

Finally, there is insufficient lighting around the perimeter of Alsos ton piton, creating many blind spots, as observed during the exploratory walks. However, better lighting is a need expressed mainly by women and vulnerable social groups who walk at night. A solution must be found in a participatory way, based on the suggestions of such women, to address both the sense of insecurity they experience and the hidden corners of the city, while also managing not to disturb the local ecosystem. The aim is not an overall intense illumination of the city, but a focus on enhancing safety through lighting in the areas that residents would indicate.

B. Accesibility

Physical

On the sidewalks of the city's old market, many physical obstacles that make it difficult for pedestrians to pass were observed (electricity poles on the middle of the pavement, decorative pots with plants that take up most of the sidewalk forcing pedestrians to walk on the street, lack or inadequacy of ramps for people with disabilities, broken slabs and potholes, old and poorly maintained paving). Add to that the lack of tactile paving for persons with visual impairment. These obstacles hinder the accessibility of vulnerable social groups in public spaces, since the lack of proper infrastructure and urban accessibility equipment leads to these people being confined at home (see more details above – Security indicator).

Narrow streets in the city lack sidewalks, resulting in pedestrians facing problems in their daily commute. The pavements outside the city centre are unsuitable for people with disabilities (especially on Agia Marina Street, where there is no sidewalk or parking space for persons with disabilities, making it inaccessible for them), while older women and young mothers who need to move around with their child in a stroll are excluded from urban planning. Also, the sidewalk around Ioannina's clocktower is very narrow, making it so that pedestrians wishing to cross the street via the crosswalk must wait for the traffic light while standing on the road.

Economic

Many self-organised and/or student groups organise various events (parties, screenings, theatre performances, music nights, etc.) which are open and free to the public. Usually, these events take place at the Theatraki theatre (on the lakeside road), at the Faculty of Architecture or in various independently run venues. In addition, in recent years, the municipality has been putting together free events in the city centre (mainly concerts), which attract large crowds. Economic accessibility for women helps to remove class barriers with regard to the enjoyment of public space and participating in public events that take place in it, within the context of equality. Women, who to this day continue not to be the main economic providers in their households due to the gender pay gap, need these opportunities or options for entertainment and outings in public spaces, to avoid experiencing any additional social exclusion.

C. Vitality

Many public spaces that are vibrant in the morning, due to the stores being open, become the exact opposite at night (examples include the area around the Kaloutsianis mosque, the Alsos ton piiton grove, Litharitsia). It is the consequence of the lack of vitality (not enough open stores around the area) combined with poor lighting, thus creating an intense feeling of fear for women and femininities that walk around these parts. Another problem that the participants pointed out is the new location of the Ioannina bus station; walking towards it at night can be dangerous, due to the lack of stores and lighting.

In order to enhance vitality in the areas in question, the existing uses of mainly ground floor stores should be reexamined, while, in parallel, old closed shops can be used in different ways (e.g. local community/youth/women centres, self-managed spaces provided by the Municipality) and/or have some round-the-clock shops (super-markets, kiosks, canteens, etc.) so that there's constant movement in the streets. Empty ground-floor stores do not attract people in the area, and when there are no storefronts there is no sense of 'informal surveillance' or 'eyes on the streets' as Jane Jacobs puts it. As a result, women, girls, and femininities feel like no one will see or hear them if they need anything or call for help.

D. Urban Equipment

Canopies / Sun shades

Participants in Ioannina noticed a paradox: despite the particular climate with frequent rainfall, there is a major shortfall of shelters in the public space to protect people from the rain. "When there's a bout of rain, I go to the steps of the building closest to me and wait until it abates a bit", says K., a workshop participant. "There are no canopies, which forces people to pile up in front of apartment buildings or stores". In the same vein, most bus stops don't have canopies or markings (signs that show the location of the bus stop), while, when they do exist, they are too small (for example at the square around the Kaloutsiani mosque, which is full of people during morning hours).

Public restrooms

The participants talked about the lack of public restrooms in the city. Those found in Skorda alley were in very bad condition, making it impossible to use, while the participants also mentioned that the Castle's gates have been turned into public toilets with many men urinating in plain view during the night. For women in particular, public restrooms are a much more crucial necessity in the public space, given their increased anatomical, biological, safety needs). Long queues are formed outside women's toilets (when they exist), whereas men do not face such access problems, despite the fact that restrooms should not be gendered. This phenomenon has been identified and documented as "potty parity" by the American Restroom Association. On the other hand, access to private store restrooms presupposes the purchase of a product, which creates accessibility inequalities, while highlighting the fact that private initiatives cannot substitute for the care that needs to be taken into account when designing public spaces.

Photo taken during the nighttime exploratory walk



Benches / Rest areas

On central roads and around the City Hall (on Kaplani street) there are enough benches and ledges that are used for seating, and are in good condition. However, none of them offer shade or shelter from the rain. Actually, in the park around the city's clocktower, there are small wooden houses for stray animals. In streets that aren't in proximity to the city's landmarks and commercial centres, there are no places to sit. This hinders mobility and prevents residents from staying in public for many hours, particularly older women, mothers with children, pregnant people or persons with health issues and/or disabilities. It is a general problem for all women in families, as they are the ones caring for the people that aren't taken care of by the city, often having to leave their place of work or abstain from paid labour, due to their presence being constantly needed to provide for their close and extended families.

Signalling

"At Trikoupi street there is an intersection that's a deathtrap due to poor signalling for cars", says D. who participated at the workshop. Bad and incomplete markings pose a problem not only for the road network, but also for making the city's bus stops visible. It is another factor that negatively impacts women's mobility and their feelings of unsafety. It is tough for participants and women at large to orient themselves in the city and move around safely in the absence of markings, particularly for those that are visiting the city for the first time – tourists, students, workers etc.

Waste bins

In the city centre, on Kaplani street, waste bins are overfilled. Participants seemed used to it, although not happy with the situation. "To enter the Faculty of Architecture, you have to kick away the rubbish at the entrance" says S., workshop participant and Architecture student. There are some streets with enough bins (e.g. Kaloutsiani mosque, Trikoupi street where there are recycling bins for clothes as well, or at Litharitsia, also with recycling bins), but in many parts of the city bins are too few and too small. The lack of bins and the image of overfilled cans create mobility problems for women, who (as mentioned above) move on foot more frequently than men. Furthermore, they

are hotbeds of pollution, dangerous for people with health issues or children, negatively impacting air quality as well. The main issue, however, is that it highlights a serious lack of care for public health.

E. Gender representations

Certain spaces in the city, due to the way they are used and appropriated by specific groups of people (mainly young or older men), become non inclusive, with participants stating that they do not feel comfortable nor safe there, especially at night. Such male-dominated spaces include the square near Alsos ton piiton, a place where “dozens of sports fans gather, dressed in black, listening to trap music and loudly yelling sexist lyrics. They also spray-paint slogans on the walls and destroy posters for feminist collectives or the pride”, according to L., a workshop participant. Similar places include Karaiskaki street (which is a hangout for hunters and features many barbershops for men) and the Kaloutsiani mosque (mostly men go there at night, and there are cafeterias and betting shops with almost exclusively male mobility).

Regarding the monumentality of the public space, every statue that was observed depicted men (politicians, leaders, priests) with the female gender completely absent. It is very telling that in the Alsos ton piiton square – which translates to poet’s grove in Greek, the masculine word ‘poet’ only including men - there are busts of men exclusively. The same is true in Ioannina’s central square, the Clocktower and Litharitsia. The female gender is absent not only from statues, but also street names, where once again the overwhelming majority are inspired by men. Even in the rare references to women, they were generic and vague, like in the example of “Women from Pindos Street”. Women from Pindos remain to this day a group of women without names, history, voices and testimonies. Their importance and the reason behind their recognition are solely based on the fact they provided organised care and support to men who were fighting. However, in contrast to the soldiers that fought and/or lost their lives during the war, their names aren’t celebrated in history as those of men. Women’s labour remains unseen and reaches the present day in the form of generalisations that are more reminiscent of urban myths than of historical facts of the official historical and political narrative.

Lastly, the non-inclusive language used in public discourse is also shown through the municipality’s choice to be renamed, in Greek, from ‘Dimos Ioanninon’ (Municipality of Ioannina), to ‘Dimos Ioanniton’, which uses the masculine grammatical gender for the area’s residents, excluding women (in this publication, we chose the former name for inclusivity reasons). The verbal exclusion of women constitutes an unconscious choice in public discourse, as it has become prevalent to use the male gender as inclusive, while the rep-



Photo taken during the morning exploratory walk

resentation of the female gender is considered irrelevant. It is, in short, a generalised practice that unconsciously promotes the superiority of the male gender (through its linguistic recognition and assertion), thus creating stereotypes about what and who can be valued, recognized and spoken about in public spaces and public discourse.

The female personality that is intertwined with Ioannina’s history and has been part of various popular beliefs over time is that of Lady Frosini. According to local history, this woman was Ali Pasha’s object of desire (during the Ottoman Empire era) and her resistance to his advances led to her dying from drowning in Lake Pamvotida. Her memory in the public space is preserved mainly through the names of shops (‘Lady Frosini’ cafeteria/bar on the lake-side road) and lullabies still remembered by older women of the region, like the grandmother of one of the participants who shared the following, freely translated from Greek: “Tons of sugar / we should throw into the lake / so the water becomes sweet / for Lady Frosini to drink”.

However, Lady Frosini’s place in the city’s collective memory is controversial. There are people today who question the motivation behind the femicide and the legend of Lady Frosini as the victim of such an act. According to the testimony of a workshop participant, while observing a couple walking by the namesake cafeteria, she heard the man say to his girlfriend, “OK, but how do we know what Lady Frosini did to Ali Pasha that made him kill her?” These

attitudes towards local historic female figures, and women in general, influence the narratives of women's lives in Ioannina to this day, while providing fertile ground that supports and feeds the perpetuation of gender stereotypes.

In conclusion, the implementation of such actions with women seems to be both informative and empowering, since the collective experience for the participants and the URBANA team became an opportunity to view the city of Ioannina through the lens of gender. Acquiring the tools to understand the urban environment, sharing common experiences in the public space as participants and URBANA members, as well as offering everyone the possibility to actively participate in the interventions in the urban planning of the city, are some of the benefits of the participation of women and LGBTQI+ people in the workshops conducted by URBANA and shaped by all participants. However, the most important achievement of this gathering is the recognition and emergence of women's shared experiences, which were not converted into words and conversations previously.

"I saw my city with different eyes after the workshops," said P., when she realised that the lack of a sense of security in many parts of the public space is a generalised, collective feeling. The mobilisation of women in Ioannina's public spaces, combined with the ongoing discussion around the experiences and feelings these evoke, defined the women's experience of the city as one that is defined by its construction through a - largely - male gaze.

Understanding that the construction of our urban environment was conceived from a gendered and, most importantly, non-inclusive point of view, was crucial for the participants, who were inspired by URBANA's work and expressed their readiness to put its tools and methods into practice to claim their rights in public and in academic researches for inclusive and participatory urban planning.

Recognizing the value of women's experiences and needs in cities through the urban quality indicators, which help process daily experiences in urban spaces, is the first step in (re)shaping public spaces. Collective sharing, discussion and understanding of the reasons why women and LGBTQI+ people feel uncomfortable and/or unsafe in public spaces, create the basis for the proposals for changes that need to be made towards friendlier and more inclusive cities. Thus, after the completion of the workshops and the collection of detailed records on the urban spaces that need changes, the opportunity arises to implement the residents' proposals through the architectural redesign of the indicated areas, in collaboration with the relevant competent bodies.

Photo taken during the nighttime exploratory walk



“I believe that it is very important that the observations that were made and will be made in the context of this seminar, be shared with the city’s municipality representatives, in order to take drastic planning measures, always aiming at the convenience and safety of all residents, regardless of gender.”

B., Workshop participant

Photo taken during the morning exploratory walk, Kaloutsiani area



RESIDENTS’ CONTRIBUTION: IDEAS FOR A FERTILE CON- NECTION BETWEEN PROPOS- ALS AND POLITICAL/URBAN PLANNING INTERVENTIONS

One of the main imperatives of such types of participation is the undertaking of political action, in addition to submitting proposals for architectural and urban planning interventions in cities. To create policies leading to changes at a social and institutional level, the competent local government bodies must be informed and aware of equality and inclusion issues. In other words, it is necessary for all to understand that these changes affect every one of us.

The initial concept of the “Ioannina: Bridges of Participation” project included in the implementation plan a series of workshops with employees of the Municipality of Ioannina (notably targeted at employees from the Municipality’s technical services), after the workshops with the residents of the city. Despite interactions and discussions with the Municipality for the organisation of these workshops, it wasn’t possible to conduct them during the implementation of the project. The following constitute a proposal for implementing workshops with the Municipality in the future.

First of all, a mapping of the local authorities’ awareness regarding gender issues is proposed. Familiarity with gender issues as well as the creation of a comprehensive perspective on the gender gap and inequality are necessary prerequisites for the development of an initial structured educational approach by the local authorities. Therefore, the level of awareness is the first component, on the basis of which an informative intervention can be designed.

The educational, workshop-driven process offered here, as a channel of communication between residents and the local authorities, approaches things in a mixed way. URBANA’s action in the context of the project “Ioannina:

Bridges of Participation” begins with a bottom-up approach aiming to highlight the needs and desires of women and vulnerable social groups who participate in the workshops. During the workshops, appropriate tools are provided for the understanding of the city’s structure and the way it affects our experiences, so that, upon completion, enough proposals for changing problematic and/or non-inclusive public spaces can be gathered.

Using the above material, and after mapping employee awareness on gender equality issues, the goal is to teach new ways to perceive gender discrimination at work and in public. The aim is to increase awareness, motivation, and vigilance through information. The briefing does not focus exclusively on the principles and basic theory of gender equality, but mainly on transferring the knowledge co-created by the residents in the workshops, highlighting the problematic areas of the city and offering suggestions for their improvement. As a result, through consultation with the Municipality’s departments - mainly the technical services employees - issues of gender discrimination identified in the city, in terms of accessibility, safety and gender equality in public spaces, can be heard and discussed, based on their experiences of those of the residents. The purpose is to inform, raise awareness and educate the employees of the Municipality on the above issues, so that they can integrate a gender perspective in performing their daily duties.

The expected outcome of the above consultation is to enhance the ability and capacity of municipal employees to integrate a gender perspective into the various tasks they perform. Therefore, it is possible to develop participatory and inclusive solutions, in the context of a holistic approach to a multidimensional phenomenon (i.e., of the modern city), which requires appropriate political and practical actions to satisfy everybody’s needs. Indicatively, approaching the Municipality’s bodies would correspond to the following chart.

Re-imagining and re-designing cities requires a focus on the neighbourhood level by actors who can carry out urban interventions. However, bringing people together and asserting their visibility, audibility and accessibility to

public space is crucial for the identification of collective experiences and for understanding the wide range of existing needs in the city. The cooperation between actors from the top (local government, urban planning, etc.) and the bottom (neighbourhood residents, small and medium-sized business owners, children, people with disabilities, etc.) is the key to (re)designing cities through participatory processes for an inclusive and caring society. Organisations like URBANA bring together authorities and residents, acting as intermediaries for communicating the needs of everyday life and translating them into practical and political actions with long-term impact. The vision of this guidebook is to provide a stepping stone for participatory urban planning, through open consultation processes with all stakeholders, and to train local actors on these practices with the aim of creating an inclusive, people-friendly city.



“It is important to adopt open practices that enhance and promote citizen participation in urban planning. Otherwise, cities will be designed by the few to serve the few.”

X., Workshop participant

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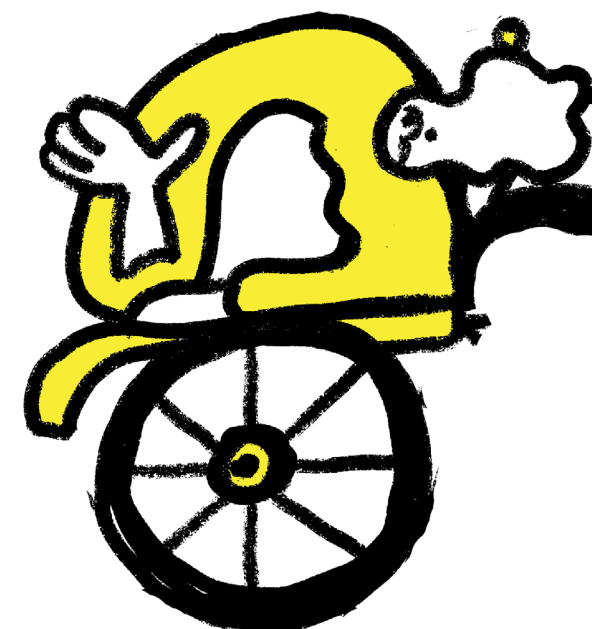
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ISBN: 978-618-5580-52-0
