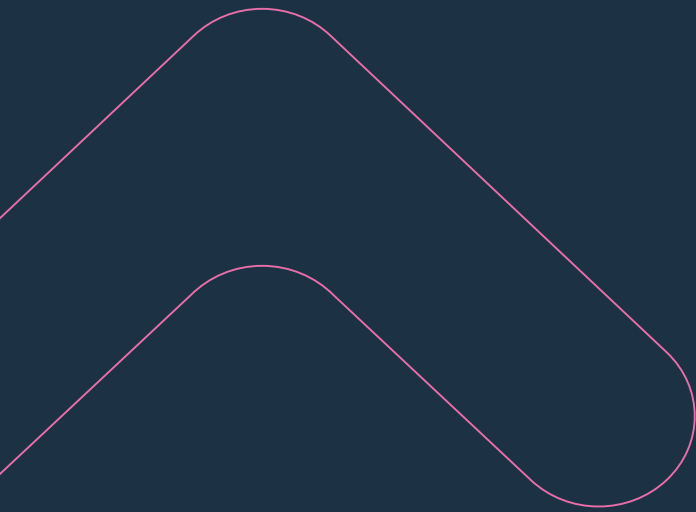
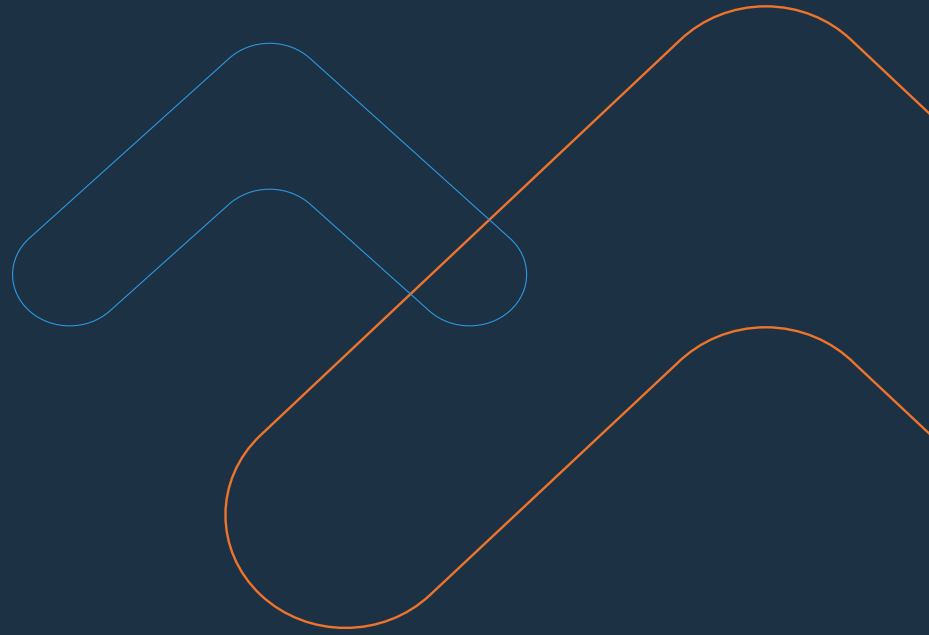




European Capital
of Democracy

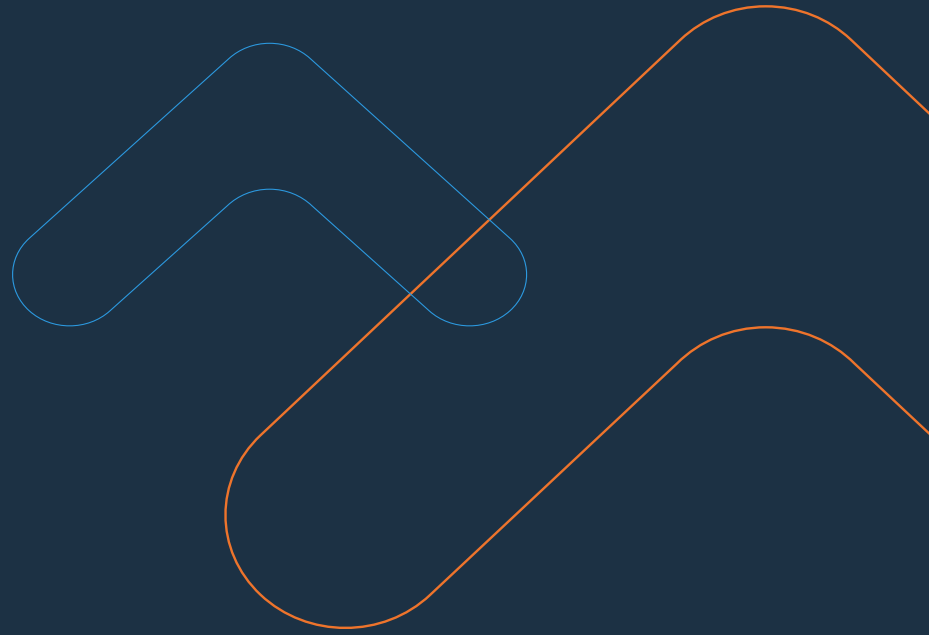


ECOD APPLICATION

GDAŃSK

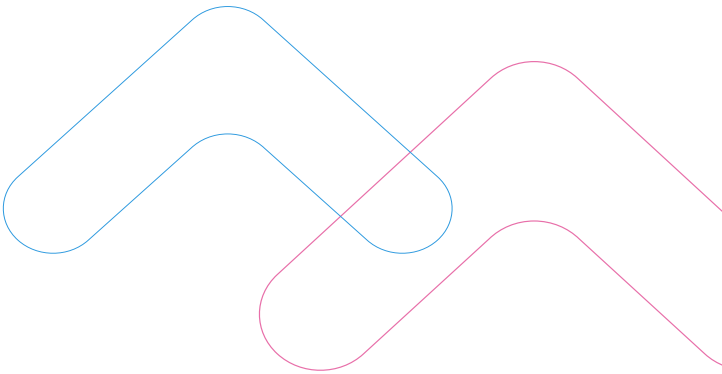
November 2023

Supporting Documents



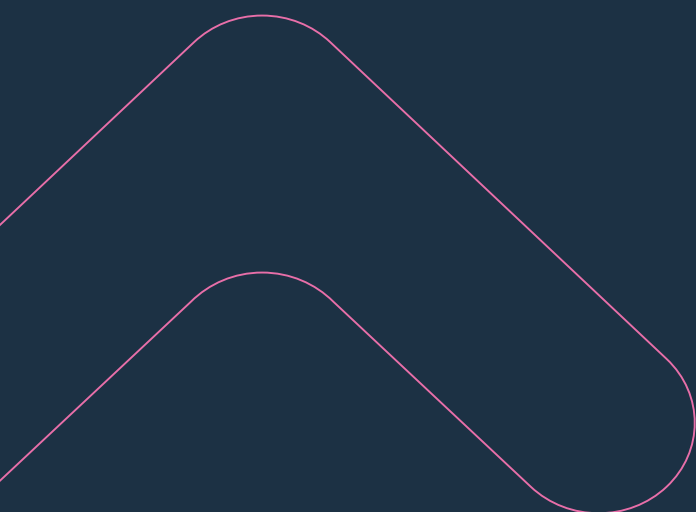
- [ECoD Compliance Guidelines](#)
- [ECoD Confidentiality Agreement](#)
- [ECoD Data Processing Agreement](#)
- [ECoD Data Security Guidelines](#)
- [Council resolution for participation](#)

Content



ECOD APPLICATION GDAŃSK

Mission Statement



Mission Statement

In Love With Democracy - All Together and Everyone Individually

Teaser

Democracy in Gdansk is not a slogan. It is an unceasing task of being a citizen. It is a way of participating in community life, building local and European identity. It is co-governance and co-responsibility for fellow residents, surroundings and the planet. It is thinking of our city as a common good and planning its future on human rights, social inclusion and equal treatment. It is openness to newcomers, co-creation of innovations strengthening democracy and empowering people

Summary

We call our city the City of Freedom and Solidarity, and its entire history, both old and recent, shows that Gdansk is an open, innovative and progressive city. Gdansk is also a learning city. We learn from the best in Europe by being a member of many pan-European city associations and networks and implementing joint projects with them. After all, Gdansk is the centre of recent events that changed the course of European history. It was here that the historic moments of August 1980 were born, the strike in the Gdansk Shipyard led by Lech Walesa and the rise of Solidarity, the great social movement that was the beginning of the democratic changes throughout Eastern Europe. After 33 years, the tradition of solidarity understood as practising democracy every day, continues. A special place dedicated to it is the European Solidarity Centre.

In Gdansk, we focus on respecting human rights, equal treatment and social inclusion, volunteering and civic activity as inseparable attributes of democracy. In 2022, Gdansk was the European Volunteering Capital. The title was held on the verge of a pandemic and in the year of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The reaction of the inhabitants and the city authorities to these crises has shown that the democratic tradition and openness of Gdansk translate into civic activity, cooperation and collaboration between public administration and civil society and that the civic sector in the city is the driver of its social development. We are convinced that the next step in maintaining these traditions would be to hold the title of the European Capital of Democracy because Gdansk not only loves democracy but is also able to practice it, debate it, celebrate it and rejoice at it.

We have developed and implemented many tools for practising participatory democracy. All urban policies: strategies and programmes are co-created with the residents. The system of consultations is legally regulated by City Council, and the tools of representative democracy have been enriched by the election of district councillors, community leaders who provide a social base for the city councillors.

Mission Statement

Summary

The city provides residents and non-governmental organisations with premises for activities for local communities. It subsidises run by NGOs Neighbourhood Houses, created locally but cooperating in a network of local centres for practising democracy. The participatory budget has been implemented in Gdansk for 12 years. We have also introduced citizens' assemblies for public debate and decision-making. We have mechanisms operating for many years to financially support residents' initiatives in the form of six funds for micro-grants for informal groups and civic organisations. These are youth, neighbourhood, senior, recreation and sports, equal treatment and innovation funds.

There are also many cross-sector collegial bodies - Social Councils, composed of representatives of all societal sectors and constituting advisory bodies to the Mayor and City Council.

Democratic Ambitions

Gdańsk's ambitions for obtaining the title of the European Capital of Democracy are related to two levels of practising democracy: supra-local and local. With our city policies and actions, we prove that cities today can act as vanguards and avant-gardes in democratic processes; they can also be a counterbalance to various types of nationalisms that are born in many European countries at the state level. Poland is an excellent example of this because here, the government's anti-democratic actions are in conflict with the pro-democratic aspirations of the cities. Today, large cities in Poland are the mainstay of democracy and the vanguard of implementing new forms of participatory and deliberative democracy. Gdansk is a leader among them.

At the local level, we want to strengthen social bonds and involve various groups in activities as broadly as possible to guarantee sustainable development and social cohesion in Gdansk. We are convinced, and the provisions of our strategies prove, that only universal participation involving all residents (including immigrants and refugees) in democratic processes, equal rights, equal treatment and the co-responsibility of the residents for the city can be an effective response to the challenges of the present, the most important of which are the climate crisis, deepening stratification and changes in the social structure, widespread digitisation, disintegration of social ties and the increasingly worse mental condition of individuals. Therefore, it becomes necessary to constantly search for new/other models for building public policies together with the inhabitants, maintaining the collegiality of their implementation, and strengthening the principle of subsidiarity in the performance of public tasks.

Mission Statement

Democratic Ambitions

This year, we are opening a new civic centre that is a hub for civic cooperation and an incubator of social innovation. It is our aspiration that this place created in the concept of the commons, in co-creation with civic groups, be managed by those who use it and at the same time become a lab of new ideas and tools of participatory democracy, a centre of knowledge serving citizens and citizens' participation in open, honest discourse about our city.

Achieved Successes

After the political transformation in 1989, practising democracy became not only a theoretical possibility but also a right that we could use in everyday life. In Gdansk, we were ready to use this right fully. From the beginning, we started to enforce it to build a civic society in our city. We were innovators in many projects on the scale of our country and the entire former Eastern Bloc. We have been able to, and still do, involve active citizens and social organisations in addressing and co-implementing the most significant challenges and undertakings in our city, particularly in the social sphere. From the very beginning, co-creating public policies was the most important thing for us. We knew that not only representative democracy was important but that we had to move on to other forms of involving residents in decision-making processes. We started with the Programme of Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations (we were the first in Poland to do this), and then we created many innovative public policies.

We were the first to have our own Immigrant Integration Model, Equal Treatment Model, Social Housing Program and Economic Security and Aid for Indebted People Programme, the only such legal regulations in our country. All these policies were co-created with the residents and are implemented in a participatory way. We also implement the principle of subsidiarity on a large scale by commissioning non-governmental organisations to carry out public tasks. Many of these tasks are 100% carried out by the citizen sector.

We were one of the first cities in Poland to introduce a participatory Civic Budget as a tool for city co-management and the first to introduce citizens' panels, whose recommendations voted in 80% are binding for the Mayor. We appreciate the importance of open data, which is why all city data has been available to residents for many years. We also observe the strong identification of residents with their immediate surroundings, district, and neighbourhood, which is why the Mayor regularly takes regular walks around the districts, listening directly to residents about their development priorities for their neighbourhood.

We are proud of Gdansk's democratic achievements and our contribution to the victory of democracy in Eastern Europe, which is why we have introduced two major holidays to the city's calendar of events: Democracy Week and the Celebration of Freedom and



Mission Statement



Achieved Successes

Solidarity on the anniversary of the first free elections in post-war Poland. We invite all residents to think together and reflect on the condition of modern democracy, more in an atmosphere of joyful celebration than grave solemnity, encouraging them to enjoy its gains.

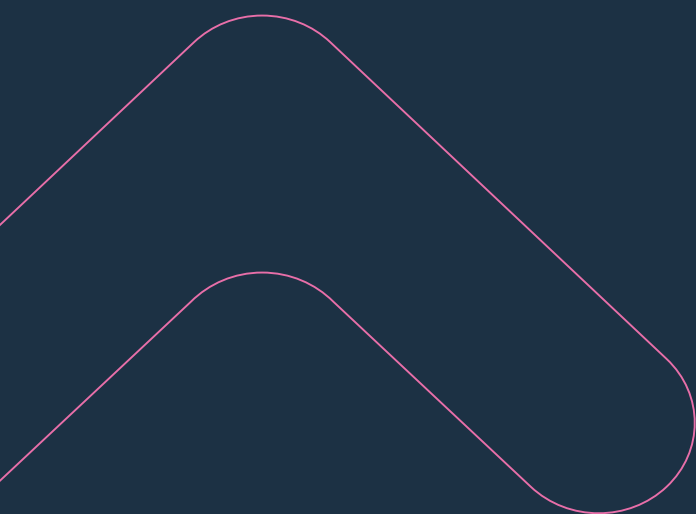
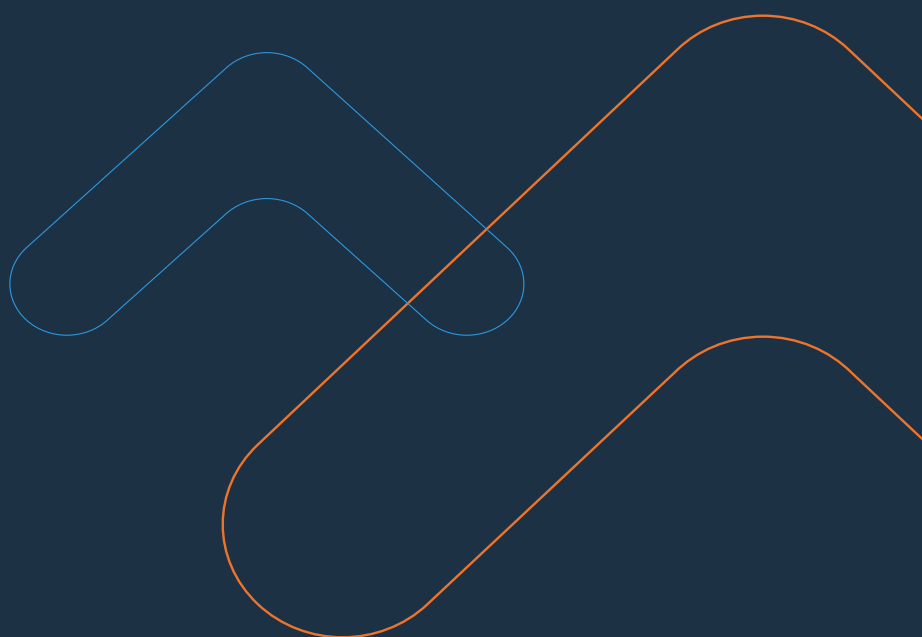
Future Challenges

Democracy is a value in itself, but to appreciate it, one must grow in it, learn it and practise it. In the face of a radically changing world, the city authorities and its inhabitants face many dilemmas and challenges that had no counterparts in the past. Existing forms of representative democracy are definitely not enough. How to improve working in a democracy and introduce new generations to be active and responsible both for their immediate environment in their local community and for global challenges. How to manage a city so that every resident has equal opportunities and a sense of influence on its present and future. How to guarantee the presence of ordinary residents, not just the same people constantly, the so-called „duty activists“ in democratic processes.

In today's world of increasingly atomized societies and more individual than collective aspirations of citizens, a world in which young people prefer to stay in virtual rather than actual reality is a real challenge, above all, for social participation and inclusion. That is why we face the challenge of improving the existing and searching for new ways of reaching residents, especially young residents, so their presence in the virtual space is also a conscious and pro-social choice. Therefore, it becomes a challenge to create new models of debate and discourse using digital technologies. Another challenge is how to speak about and celebrate democracy so that it does not become one of the boring topics for specialists and politicians that no one else cares about. To build understanding and a willingness to defend democracy as a common good that is, so far, the best tool for creating a sustainable and just city in the face of the instability and threats of our times.

ECOD APPLICATION GDAŃSK

Projects



Gdańsk – Project 1

BEST PRACTICE | REGULAR | 01.01.2023–31.07.2023 |

[URL1: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/BUDZET-OBYWATELSKI/ZIELONY-BUDZET](https://www.gdansk.pl/budzet-obywatelski/zielony-budzet)

[URL2: HTTPS://WWW.DRMG.GDANSK.PL/INDEX.PHP/BO-2021-REALIZOWANE/3947-OGOLNODOSTEPNY-TEREN-REKREACYJNY-PRZY-STAWIE-PIEKARNICZA-BO-2021](https://www.drmg.gdansk.pl/index.php/bo-2021-realizowane/3947-ogolnodostepny-teren-rekreacyjny-przy-stawie-piekarnicza-bo-2021)

[URL3: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/BUDZET-OBYWATELSKI](https://www.gdansk.pl/budzet-obywatelski)

[URL4: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/STRATEGIA-ROZWOJU-MIASTA-GDANSK-2030](https://www.gdansk.pl/strategia-rozwoju-miasta-gdansk-2030)

The Green Civic Budget

Brief Description

The Green Civic Budget is a response to the needs of residents. Introduced in Gdańsk in 2013, the civic budget grew and changed its regulations, adapting to the residents' expectations. The principles of the civic budget in Gdańsk are evaluated annually, and the regulations are changed as necessary and possible. One of the evaluation factors is an analysis of the submitted projects, which has shown that the residents' priorities changed after a few years: an increasing number of projects concerned planting trees and creating new green spaces in the city.

This is how the idea of allocating part of the funds as part of the annual civic budget pool was born, and in 2020 the Green Civic Budget was introduced. Only projects related to increasing the share of greenery in the city and protecting the natural environment can be submitted to this pool of funds.

Detailed Description

The Green Civic Budget assumes the development of public urban green areas through the development of new green spaces, renovation and modernization of existing parks and green areas, as well as educational, cultural and investment activities in the field of ecology and adaptation to climate change.

This is part of the annual sum of the Gdańsk Civic Budget: 20% of the amount allocated to districts and 30% of the amount allocated to citywide projects. These funds are allocated annually exclusively to green civic budget projects. For the first time, residents had the opportunity to submit green projects in 2020. In total, including the current edition, 492 projects were submitted, of which 144 were selected for implementation. This September, residents will choose new projects for the fourth time.

Gdańsk – Project 1

Detailed Description

As part of the green participatory budget, projects may be submitted that concern:

- planting vegetation in park areas, green areas, squares, municipal housing areas and as part of street greenery; establishing and care of flower meadows and flowerbeds with vegetation good for insects,
- creating new green spaces, which mainly include increasing the amount of greenery to counteract climate change,
- creating rain gardens and water retention greenery,
- renovating and modernising the management of existing green spaces:
- educational, cultural and information activities, as well as investment activities in ecology and adaptation to climate change.

Planting new trees, especially along the streets, is by far the most popular among the projects submitted by residents. Projects concerning the planning of new green areas, flower meadows or rain gardens are also very eagerly proposed. The popularity of such proposals shows that the environmental awareness of the inhabitants has increased significantly in recent years. This applies not only to the number of green projects but also to how they are implemented. This is a new, interesting theme that appeared recently. Although municipal units implement the projects, the residents themselves want to have an impact on how and when construction works are carried out. Of course, green inventories and environmental or natural opinions are the norm with every investment. Still, City Hall received many letters in which residents pointed out the time of commencement of works or, in their opinion, excessive tree felling. Sometimes the authors of the projects themselves request changes, e.g., changing the location of a dog run because it is too close to the trees. There are also protests against the implementation of projects because, in the opinion of the residents, they threaten animals or birds. Such high involvement of residents in the implementation of projects confirms that they expect very prudent investment in the city. They welcome all new trees and green areas but do not agree to cutting down trees or new building development.

Water protection and flood risk prevention are equally important elements in Gdańsk as greenery. These are also popular issues in the Green Civic Budget. Residents are eager to submit projects for new rain gardens, and there are even proposals for small hydro-electric power plants. Last but not least, the protection of animals is a very popular category of projects in Gdańsk. From the very beginning, projects for the care of homeless animals and nesting boxes or flower meadows for insects have been submitted.

Considering that care for greenery in the city and adaptation to climate change are strategic goals for Gdańsk until 2030, you can be sure that the Green Civic Budget will continue to be an essential component of Gdańsk's urban policy.

Gdańsk – Project 1

Contribution

The primary and most important effect of the Green Civic Budget is the successive increase in the number of green areas in the city and a much higher awareness among the inhabitants of the environmental policy than a few years ago. The emergence of a new category of civic budget projects and a general change in the approach to adaptation to climate change also resulted in changes in City Hall and municipal agencies. The number of people who deal with environmental protection, greenery care or the implementation of Green Civic Budget projects has increased. It has become commonplace to take environmental surveys before starting an investment, to protect greenery or animals in the investment area, e.g. fencing trees on dog runs or carrying out construction works outside the breeding seasons of animals or birds. The residents also carefully observe the activities in the city and pay attention to all investment projects that, in their opinion, interfere too much with the urban environment.

Target Group

The Green Civic Budget is addressed to all inhabitants of Gdansk. Residents of all ages can submit projects and vote. The Green Civic Budget is a simple participation tool that can be implemented almost everywhere. The ordinary participatory budgets are common, but green component of it needs political decision to assign separate allocation.

Collaboration

The Green Civic Budget, first and foremost, assumes the cooperation of residents and local authorities in environmental protection and ecological activities in the city, as well as the collaboration of many agencies and institutions with whom the terms of project implementation should be agreed. It often seems to residents that, for example, planting a tree is a simple activity, and they become impatient when the procedures take too long. However, planting trees in the city is much more complicated than in a garden. Before a tree is planted, e.g. along a street, it is necessary to check the underground infrastructure, whether the roots will not damage the network, etc. The tree species and its size at the time of planting are also important. All these factors are among the knowledge of many people at City Hall and the municipal agencies, which is why each implementation of the Green Civic Budget project requires many arrangements and substantive knowledge.

Communication

Since 2020, when the Green Civic Budget was first announced, it has been enthusiastically received by residents and city councillors who approve changes to the regulations. An analysis that showed that green projects are more and more often submitted convinced the councillors that the rules should be changed. Every year, two dates are vital in communicating the participatory budget: the start of submitting projects and the start of the voting. Press conferences, media announcements, and social media campaigns are organised. The appearance of the Green Civic Budget also means a new visual line of green posters.

Gdańsk – Project 1

To encourage residents to submit projects in this category, training sessions were also organised on how to best prepare projects related to greenery in the city. One of the ideas to promote green projects was an award for voter turnout: a flower meadow planted in the district with the highest turnout.

Project Setup

The principles of the Green Civic Budget were part of a resolution of the Gdańsk City Council. They were introduced in 2020, and from the beginning, it was assumed that green projects could be submitted in five categories: planting vegetation, creating new green spaces, setting up rain gardens and retention greenery, renovating existing green areas and educational activities in the field of ecology and adaptation to climate change. Since 2022, municipal investments have also been added, assuming actions increasing climate change adaptation. The implementation of projects lies with the mayor, i.e. City Hall and municipal agencies. Green projects submitted by residents have a fixed maximum sum, and during voting, everyone has two additional points at their disposal, which can only be given to green projects. The Green Civic Budget is also subject to annual evaluation. So far, there have been no requests to change the rules.

Budget

Planning Costs	Coordination carried by the Office for District Councils and Cooperation with Residents related to the preparation of the entire civic budget, including green, which is inseparable from the rest and costs come together.	66,000€
Operating Costs	Cost of the system for handling the civic budget and the preparation of voting points	33,000€
Communication Costs	Promotion, promotional materials, producing and uploading content	26,000€
Extra Budget	Since the project, during the Programme Year, will be realised in its regular shape no extra budget is needed.	0€
Total Budget		125,000€

Gdańsk – Project 1

Funding

The civic budget is part of the entire city budget. The amount allocated to the Green Civic Budget is approximately PLN 5 million annually (EUR 1.1 million). This is part of the total civic budget, which on average amounts to about PLN 21 million. (EUR 4.6 million). The sum of the civic budget is specified in national regulations and must amount to no less than 0.5% of the city's expenditure each year. Every year, the mayor of Gdańsk and the city treasurer determine the amount allocated to civic budget projects according to this principle. The maintenance of completed projects is also financed from municipal funds, i.e., the city budget. There are cases when, at the implementation stage, a project costs more than the amount allocated for it, commercial companies add funds for implementation. However, these are very rare cases.

Programme Year Integration

The number of implemented green projects is systematically increasing. The city has more and more green spaces, which were created with Green Civic Budget. A visit to the places that were created thanks to the involvement of the inhabitants will make it possible to show that direct democracy works. At any time, it is also possible to check what projects are implemented or planned on the participatory budget website or social media. Many city documents have also been developed, e.g. the Gdańsk Strategy 2030+ or other documents in which a green policy is indicated, whose actual representation is, among others, the Green Civic Budget.

Democracy Dimension

Participation

Gdańsk – Project 2

TOOL | 01.01.2016–31.03.2018 |

[URL1: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/PANEL-OBYWATELSKI/RAPORT-PODSUMOWUJACY-PANEL,A,68284](https://www.gdansk.pl/panel-obywatelski/raport-podsumowujacy-panel,a,68284)

[URL2: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/PANEL-OBYWATELSKI/RAPORT-PODSUMOWUJACY-PANEL,A,76456](https://www.gdansk.pl/panel-obywatelski/raport-podsumowujacy-panel,a,76456)

[URL3: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/PANEL-OBYWATELSKI/RAPORT-PODSUMOWUJACY-PANELU,A,100397](https://www.gdansk.pl/panel-obywatelski/raport-podsumowujacy-panelu,a,100397)

[URL4: HTTPS://ANTYMATRIX.BLOG.POLITYKA.PL/2017/09/18/MIESZKANIEC-OBYWATELEM-PANEL-OBYWATELSKI-W-GDANSK](https://antymatrix.blog.polityka.pl/2017/09/18/mieszkaniec-obywatelem-panel-obywatelski-w-gdansk)

[URL5: HTTPS://OBSERWATORIUM.MIASTA.PL/4379-2/](https://obserwatorium.miasta.pl/4379-2/)

[URL6: HTTPS://KRYTYKAPOLITYCZNA.PL/KRAJ/MIASTO/GDANSK-W-PIGULCE/](https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/miasto/gdansk-w-pigulce/)

[URL7: HTTPS://PFRDLAMIAST.PL/BAZA-MIEJSKICH-INNOWACJI/GDANSK-PANELE-OBYWATELSKIE-NOWA-JAKOSC-DEMOKRACJI](https://pfrdlamiast.pl/baza-miejskich-innowacji/gdansk-panele-obywatelskie-nowa-jakosc-demokracji)

[URL8: HTTPS://STOCZNIA.ORG.PL/PUBLIKACJE/PANEL-OBYWATELSKI-CZY-I-JAK-GO-ORGANIZOWAC/](https://stocznia.org.pl/publikacje/panel-obywatelski-czy-i-jak-go-organizowac/)

[URL9: HTTPS://OTWARTYPLAN.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2018/10/CITIZENS-AS-SEMBLIES_EN_WEB.PDF](https://otwartyplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/citizens-as-semblies_en_web.pdf)

Citizens' Assembly – an innovative tool for deliberative democracy

Brief Description

The Citizens' Assembly is a way to democratically make decisions on issues important to the local community, region or country. A randomly selected, representative group of residents is invited to deal with a given topic. The key element of the Citizens' Assembly is a debate and the recommendations developed in its course. The panel's recommendations are binding, distinguishing this tool from other consulting activities. The citizens' Assembly is accompanied by open public consultations, under which all interested residents can present their opinions on a given issue to the panel, the mayor and the councillors. Gdansk was the first city in Poland to conduct the Citizens Assembly in 2016. In total, three panels were held, the first in 2016 on „How to better prepare Gdansk for heavy rainfall as part of adapting the city to climate change,” the second and third in 2017 on „How to improve air quality in Gdansk” and „How to support civic activity in Gdansk.”

Gdańsk – Project 2

Detailed Description

The panel must not be a goal in itself. The most important thing is deliberation and an answer to a question vital to residents; the panel is one of the ways to find this answer. The design of the Citizens Assembly assumes three key elements:

1. Preparation for the assembly - agenda of meetings, selection of residents, i.e. panellists, and selection of experts

In Gdansk, the assemblies were run by a coordinating team, whose role is to conduct a draw, arrange the meeting agenda and invite experts or facilitators. It can also be an external non-governmental organisation or an institution not substantively involved in the assembly's topic. According to the programme, experts are selected to discuss particular issues with the panellists. The duration of the panel is pre-determined. In Gdansk's case, on average, it was three days for deliberation and two for developing recommendations. The meetings were held on Saturdays, and panellists received a small fee for participating in the panel. The basic criterion for selecting Citizens Assembly participants among the residents is their representativeness. A randomly selected, representative group of hybrids is invited to the Citizens Assembly, taking into account four criteria: district, gender, age, and education. The draw has two stages: the first consists of sending invitations to a randomly selected pool of citizens of Gdansk, and the second stage is drawing the final group of panellists. In Gdansk, a rule was adopted that the number of panellists is a group of about 65 people

2. Deliberation and development of recommendations

The assembly participants get acquainted with the positions of experts and representatives of offices, institutions, non-governmental organizations, district councils, residents and other people interested in a given topic. They can also appoint experts themselves. The panellists are given an opportunity to thoroughly understand the topic and the implications of the proposed solutions. Thanks to the participation of various expert communities, they have the chance to get acquainted with different points of view, and the debate allows for developing well-thought-out solutions. The result of the panel's work is recommendations on a given topic, which answer the question of what is the most beneficial for the local community. The Citizens Assembly determines the common good from the residents' perspective. In Gdansk, it was assumed that the required level of support for a binding recommendation is 80% of the panellists' agreement. A total of 63 recommendations were developed during the three assemblies

3. Implementation of the recommendations

While preparation of panel and its implementation take several months (on average, five months), implementing the residents' recommendations may take several years, depending on their type.

Gdańsk – Project 2

Detailed Description

In the first assembly devoted to flood prevention, the panellists selected 16 recommendations, with the last one not gaining the required 80% support. However, it was taken into account due to the development of retention reservoirs, which is important for the inhabitants—other recommendations concerned minor actions, such as educating residents on what to do in flood-risk situations. There were also proposals to expand the number of reservoirs or increase green areas.

In the next panel, one of the most expensive recommendations was the proposal to replace all heating stoves in municipal apartments within five years – the city authorities successively undertake such actions, but they depend on the funds available and the condition of the municipal budget. Most of the recommendations were made by the panellists in the third panel, which was also very extensive thematically, as it concerned education issues in schools and participation or equality. 39 recommendations were made, many of which concerned minor activities: collecting opinions of district councils for participatory budget projects and activities beyond the competence of the municipality.

Contribution

The most recent Citizens Assembly took place in Gdansk in 2017. The popularity of this tool in Poland quickly grew, and more cities organised panels, including Lublin, Wrocław or Poznan. The residents and local authorities value a high level of deliberation, but everyone who organised the panel found out it was not an easy process. And also very costly. It enjoys the recognition of city councillors, the media and the residents themselves. However, it is essential to remember that the panel is not an end in itself. The most important thing is deliberation, education of residents on a given topic and searching for solutions together with experts. The recommendations developed in this way have a very strong social legitimacy and practically give local authorities ready-made solutions for implementation. This tool is so powerful that, to this day, the media or other entities ask about the status of implementing the recommendations.

Target Group

Citizens Assemblies are aimed at the inhabitants of a city, region or country, and they can also be a small local panel for one district. There are no legal regulations in Poland regarding Citizens Assemblies, which is why they are most often organised in the form of public consultations, and other residents can also comment on the subject of the Assembly. An additional target group are experts and specialists in the panel's topic and various organisations/people with knowledge of a given topic.

Collaboration

Organising an assembly requires cooperation of many people and institutions.

Gdańsk – Project 2

Collaboration

Most of the work is done by:

- Persons from City Hall or municipal agencies who prepare educational materials for the residents and give preliminary opinions on recommendations,
- The team organising the whole process, it can be a non-governmental organisation or a group of people appointed by the initiators of the panel,
- Experts, assembly speakers,
- Facilitators, i.e. persons leading the panel meeting - their role and skills are crucial for the proper running of the panel,
- People cooperating in the organisation of the panel, providing meeting rooms, catering, and care for panellists.

The list of the people mentioned above shows that the Citizens' Assembly organisation is very demanding in terms of content and logistics. Another group of people cooperating on the panel are people/institutions implementing recommendations. Here, the scope of cooperation depends on the type of recommendation.

Communication

Communication activities in organising Citizens' Assemblies are very similar to those in other public consultations, especially those in the part open to residents. Yet, communication with residents invited to participate in the panel is special. The first step is to select the initial number of residents to whom personal invitations are sent. In Gdansk, it was a group of c.10,000 inhabitants. The letter sent to these people was an invitation by the Mayor of Gdansk to participate in the panel. So the communication with these people focused on presenting the process to which they were invited.

Internal communication is essential in the process of organising panels. We found out about it during the first panel, where most of the officials did not know what a panel was and whether it concerned them at all. Thus, professional employees responsible for substantive matters, i.e. those who are related to the panel's topic, must feel from the very beginning that it is a process that concerns them.

Project Setup

The Citizens' Assembly is a form of public consultation and is accepted as such in most cases in Poland. In Gdansk, there is a resolution of the Gdansk City Council describing the principles of conducting consultations. It is this legal act under which Citizens' Assemblies were carried out. The Mayor's Office was in charge of coordination and organisation of the assemblies. However, the other city departments were involved accordingly to the scope of their competences and expertise. In Gdansk, the recommendations of the assemblies are subject to implementation if they receive 80% of the panellists' votes. Therefore, many municipal institutions are involved in implementation of recommendations, by their competence, after the deliberation is finished.

Gdańsk – Project 2

Description

Civil society organisations were involved in co-creating the contents of the assemblies, their representatives were the part of the coordination team. Many civic expert organisations are the part of the deliberations presenting their points of view on the topics discussed. Their expertise is used to provide panellists with the variety of possible solutions of the challenges they are deliberating on.

Planning Costs	Single assembly cost covers draw preparation, invitations, and materials. Coordination costs by the Office for District Councils are not included in this budget.	9,000€
Operating Costs	Single assembly costs include panellist, expert, and team remuneration for assembly organization and conduct	19,000€
Communication Costs	City Hall staff managed routine communication. Additional communication costs were in the planning category. The coordinating team led internal and external communication. Remuneration for the team in Gdansk's last panel was around EUR 2,000.	0€
Extra Budget	No extra funds required for panel organization. Funds needed for implementing recommendations vary based on content.	0€
Total Budget		28,000€

Gdańsk – Project 2

Funding

Organising the Citizens Assembly is funded by the city budget. This is a road-side consultation tool, as it assumes remuneration for all the participants in the process - organisers, residents and experts. Further funds, also from the city budget, are money for implementing recommendations. Small-scale activities were often financed from the budgets of individual City Hall departments or municipal agencies. However, such costly recommendations as the replacement of heating stoves require support from external funds, e.g. from the EU. Generally, however, most of the recommendations are covered by the city budget.

Programme Year Integration

The effects of activities carried out, thanks to the panels' recommendations, can be seen both in the urban space and during the presentation. Often these are activities carried out by various institutions, e.g. schools or municipal units, they are a change in the organization of cooperation with district councils, or they were carried out as social campaigns. You can still read about all the panels and recommendations at <https://www.gdansk.pl/panel-obywatelski>

Democracy Dimension

Sustainability

Gdańsk – Project 3

BEST PRACTICE | PERMANENT

[URL1: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/WIADOMOSCI/GDANSKIE-LEKCJE-OBYWATELSKIE-TRZEBA-BYC-SWIADOMYMI-OBYWATELAMI-KTORZY-WLADZE-PUNKTUJA-DULKIE-WICZ-V-LO,A,233250](https://www.gdansk.pl/wiadomosci/gdanskie-lekcje-obywatelskie-trzeba-byc-swiadomymi-obywatelami-ktorzy-wladze-punktuja-dulkie-wicz-v-lo,a,233250)

[URL2: HTTPS://WWW.EDU.GDANSK.PL/6-GDANSKI-TYDZIEN-DEMOKRACJI.54522.HTML](https://www.edu.gdansk.pl/6-gdanski-tydzien-demokracji.54522.html)

[URL3: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/GDANSKI-TYDZIEN-DEMOKRACJI/GDANSKI-TYDZIEN-DEMOKRACJI-2021,A,205688](https://www.gdansk.pl/gdanski-tydzien-demokracji/gdanski-tydzien-demokracji-2021,a,205688)

[URL4: HTTPS://ECS.GDA.PL/WYDARZENIA/FORUM-MLODYCH-2023/](https://ecs.gda.pl/wydarzenia/forum-mlodych-2023/)

[URL5: HTTPS://BIP.GDANSK.PL/RADA-MIASTA/MLODZIEZOWA-RMG](https://bip.gdansk.pl/rada-miasta/mlodziezowa-rmg)

[URL6: WWW.GDANSK.PL/WYDARZENIA/II-UCZNIOWSKA-KONFERENCJA-PRAW-CZLOWIEKA,W,27842](http://www.gdansk.pl/wydarzenia/ii-uczniowska-konferencja-praw-czlowieka,w,27842)

[URL7: WWW.GDANSK.PL/WYDARZENIA/III-UCZNIOWSKA-KONFERENCJA-PRAW-CZLOWIEKA-MLODZI-BEZ-TABU,W,29590](http://www.gdansk.pl/wydarzenia/iii-uczniowska-konferencja-praw-czlowieka-mlodzi-bez-tabu,w,29590)

Youth for Democracy – Gdańsk Ecosystem for Civic Education and practicing co-governance by school students

Brief Description

Civic education is one of the most critical challenges for today's schools since practicing democracy has to be started at school. There is a need for modern and enlightened thinking about what the „future republics“ are to be like and what to do to build an open and responsible society, That's why the Ecosystem for Civic Education has been developed and now consists of Democracy Week, Civic Lesson and supporting self-governance of students.

The Lessons based on unique scenarios, co-created by Gdansk teachers networking for new ideas in education is not a part of regular school curriculums.

The leading role in ecosystem is taken by students' governments – democratically elected bodies at schools. Gdansk Democracy Week is co-organised by them in schools and in European Solidarity Centre, where additionally Youth Forum – an annual conference organized by youth for youth takes place. Every two years Gdansk Youth Council is elected and has a status of advisory body to the City Council.

Gdańsk – Project 3

Detailed Description

Late Mayor Paweł Adamowicz, introduced and current Mayor Aleksandra Dul-kiewicz pushes the project on. In 2020, she presented the Gdansk Civic Lessons at the European Parliament and met with great interest.

For many years, we have had in Gdansk a lot of dispersed initiatives in the field of civic education for children and youth, as well as obligatory elections to school self-governments. Since 2017, we have made efforts to make these initiatives a coordinated ecosystem, successively expanded and increasing its impact. In recent years we also included kindergartens and non-public schools to the system.

The Ecosystem of Civic Education consists of activities such as series of civic lessons, workshops and lectures for students & for teachers. These are combined with elections for school students' governments and for Gdansk Youth Council. The elections are compulsory for public schools but the participation in Civic Lessons is not. Support system for students voluntarism and engagement in local community activities belong to this ecosystem too.

The permanent elements of the ecosystem are:

1. Democracy Week –event run in October, organized at European Solidarity Centre, consisting of the train of events including: inauguration of Gdansk Civic Lessons with newly elected student governments' officials, many smaller awareness building events like workshops, debates, celebrations of democracy achievements. There is also Democracy Week at schools, students create & run civic program for their school community
2. Civic Lessons –run during the school year (Sept.–June), with the goal to educate children & youth to active civic life. 24 innovative lesson scenarios at 4 educational levels (from preschool to secondary school) were created by teachers from Creative Pedagogy network for new ideas in education. In 2021/22 48 schools and preschools took part, over 80 teachers conducted lessons, over seven thousand students and preschoolers took part. Scenarios are collected in Teacher's Manual and in digital version online, teachers have access to them to use in the class any moment. Student visits to City Council, municipal institutions, meetings with local government officials, city councillors and activists supplement Civic Lessons in the classroom
3. Mayor's Civic Lessons –meetings with secondary school students. Every month an open session of Q&As takes place in one of secondary schools.
4. Electoral campaigns & elections to School Students Governments(SSG) are run in public schools. Students elect their representatives, conduct campaigns, and in

Gdańsk – Project 3

Detailed Description

October, on the same day in all schools, vote for their peer representatives in SSG. Every student has right to vote and to be elected.

5. Gdansk Youth Council, consisting of representatives of primary and secondary schools students and constituting youth representation for the Mayor and City Council. This advisory body is constructed identically to the City Council and is elected in general elections subject to electoral law. Councillors of the Youth Council are elected by electors from among them. Every student has a voting right to elect and to be elected.
6. School Students' Governments (SSG) take the active role in school's life. Consultations concerning school life issues are carried out with students. Internal school evaluation system and evaluation rules accepted by the community of students and teachers are developed. Student Rights Ombudsman is elected by students in each school. SSG leaders initiate a lot of actions involving their colleagues in the action in & outside their school, e.g. developing a system of supporting first-grade students, applying for funds in Youth Fund and Civic Budget, co-organising school celebrations, taking action for neighbourhood kids and children from Ukraine, holding conferences under the slogan „Our matters“ with topics chosen by students and discussed during the workshops run by them
7. School Volunteer Circles taking actions for common good in local communities

Contribution

The project fully fits in with the overall mission, it prepares young people to active citizenship, gives them knowledge about civil society, representative and participatory democracy in a way which is attractive and understandable for them. It's opportunity for youth to use democracy tools and experience how they work.

Target Group

Entire Gdansk school community: students, teachers, principals – population of about 100 000 people.

The project has a great multiplication potential due to the universality of the content and easy to copy formula. Students' governments are in every school but the point is how to enable them to be a genuine players in school reality in the spirit of “nothing about us without us”.

Collaboration

The project is inclusive as the whole school community has equal access to participate. The value of Gdansk Civic Lessons and Democracy Week lies in a fact that they are organised with a broader group of stakeholders: local government officials, municipal institutions, city councillors, European Solidarity Centre civic organisations and experts. The project has a robust participatory aspect due to general election for school students' governments and Youth Council, beyond school mechanism.

Gdańsk – Project 3

Collaboration

Students' governments' officials collaborate with Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESU) in Brussels. Together with OBESU, they prepared classes on self-governance for primary school students, the older students run workshops for other students in the Pomorskie Region. This cooperation resulted also with co-creation of the COOLMIX urban games aimed on intercultural inclusion of students of diverse nationalities.

Communication

The project is communicated on the school and on the city levels. Besides ordinary official city communication tools: website Gdansk.pl, Gdansk's, Mayor's and Vice Mayor's Facebook profiles, Gdansk Educational Platform students have their own ideas to communicate like: creating and shooting promotional videos and virtual walks. Students use digital platforms which reach their peers more likely than the traditional ones, links to current initiatives implemented by student governments are provided there. The peer to peer communication is very effective in spreading information. The student self-governments organise regular in-person or online meetings to discuss issues concerning the current needs and plans of students. These meetings have their role in communication of the project as the important announcements are done there. The project is subject to ongoing monitoring done by Education Department and at the end of the school year it is subject to internal evaluation in the City Hall.

Project Setup

The Department of Education is the coordinator of the project on the city level. There are employees and financial resources. The school management (principals mainly) are in charge of implementation and coordination on a school level. Mayor's Office organizes Mayor's meeting with students. City Promotion Unit, Press Office, Social Development Department are involved in different roles adequate to their internal competence. European Solidarity Centre has significant role in project placement as many of project activities are taking place in their premises and their employees take part in programming the run of the project. City Council's Office is in charge of cooperation with Youth Council and supervision of elections. City councillors, civic organisations, grass-root teachers' movement 'Creative Pedagogy' and individual experts are the stakeholders in co-creation of the content of the Civic Lessons and Democracy Week and then in implementation the subsequent editions of it.

Description

Civil society organisations are involved as expert bodies in Democracy Week programme. Their representatives are invited to run Civic Lessons and be the speakers in forums and conferences organised by youth, mainly those organised in European Solidarity Centre. The neighbourhood organisations are helping youth in implementing their projects in their schools' surroundings. Scouts organizations are present at schools and involve young people in the community actions.

Gdańsk – Project 3

Description

Regional Voluntary Centre is organizing and promoting voluntarism at schools, It supports schools in implementing their own voluntary programs and trains students and teachers in voluntarism principles and coordination. They support establishing School Volunteer Circles.

Budget

Planning Costs	Costs are part of the Education Department's overall budget, covering coordination, tasks, and project-related employment.	9,000€
Operating Costs	Allocated amount for organizing Democracy Week, Civic Education Model events, Civic Lessons, and student self-governance activities.	19,000€
Communication Costs	Communication is managed by City Hall resources, covering daily operations, Facebook profiles, content production for www.gdansk.pl , Public Information Bulletin, and promotional material printing.	0€
Extra Budget	The project's regular implementation in the Programme Year requires no additional budget. A small amount may be allocated for extra special guests.	0€
Total Budget		28,000€

Funding

As a rule, the project is financed from the City's current budget, European Solidarity Centre has a small amount assigned for Democracy Week and cooperation with schools. Some components of students' activities connected with self-governance and international cooperation were co-financed by EU funds.

Programme Year Integration

The project will be carried out in the ECoD Programme Year in its regular shape enriched with the activities dedicated specially to ECoD. These activities will be in details co-created with students and other stakeholders after the application is successfully accepted.

Democracy Dimension

Empowerment

Gdańsk – Project 4

BEST PRACTICE | PERMANENT

[URL1: HTTPS://ECS.GDA.PL/CODZIENNIE/](https://ecs.gda.pl/codziennie/)

[URL2: HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/545726579147460/?REF=SHARE](https://www.facebook.com/groups/545726579147460/?ref=share)

[URL3: HTTPS://FACEBOOK.COM/EVENTS/S/CZESC-TU-TWOJE-MIASTO-POZNAJ-MY/912321090021390/](https://facebook.com/events/s/czesc-tu-twoje-miasto-poznaj-my/912321090021390/)

Open Democracy and the civic solidarity at the European Solidarity Centre (ESC)

Brief Description

ESC was funded in 2007 as a cultural institution with the mission to ensuring that the ideals of the Solidarity movement – democracy, open and solidary society, culture of dialogue – retain their attractiveness and timeliness and to keep the experience of Solidarity in the memory of Poles and Europeans. It is a museum commemorating the Solidarity revolution and the fall of communism in Europe, but also an educational centre and a public space for those who care for the development of democracy, a zone for practicing solidarity and citizenship. It's also a place of inspiration and hope for those who do not live in open and democratic societies.

There are two innovative flag schemes best contributing to overall mission of ECoD: 'Solidarity Every Day' and 'HI!', both aimed on creating a safe space for active citizens and their initiatives and welcoming and support for newcomers, building the resilience of citizens and communities, strengthening the ability to cope in the modern world.

Gdańsk – Project 4

Detailed Description

Solidarity Every Day is a programme and space located on the 3rd floor of ESC, launched in 2017, open to everyone who works in human rights, equal treatment, ecology, social animation and social inclusion. Its goal is to build an open, non-exclusive society by offering a place to co-work & implement civic initiatives, including 'HI!', which, launched in 2014 is a social project for new residents of Gdansk (mainly migrants and refugees). 'HI!' takes a form of series of meetings, workshops, discussions, walks and study visits to familiarise new residents of Gdansk with the city's history, culture and life, organisations, institutions and people who create it. The project is also an opportunity to practice the Polish language, meet new people and implement initiatives. Social groups and individuals exposed to exclusion and discrimination find space and support in Solidarity Every Day. This space, made available free of charge, is addressed to civic organisations, informal groups, and social activists. The space is a tool for 'new' organisations, partnership activities, networking, stimulating action, and fostering the development of initiatives, groups, and NGOs that want to act in accordance with the mission of social solidarity.

Infrastructure of Solidarity Every Day space consists of:

- five workshop rooms to organise meetings, workshops, and activities
- infrastructure for support for everyday activities of NGOs and informal groups (letter boxes, lockers, social bulletin board, meeting organisation equipment);
- common space with kitchen and resting area,
- exhibition space;
- several permanent offices for civic organisations selected in an open call for seats in ESC.

Booking rooms is open via the website. There is an online calendar and a form to fill out. The rooms are free of charge for community activities. Reservation is based on room availability. People with special needs can get support in the booking.

There are two ESC employees working in the 'Solidarity Every Day' space animating and supporting people and initiatives. Their role of the hosts cannot be overestimated and decides about the uniqueness of the place and attractiveness of the programme. During the years of implementation of the projects the place developed into the social incubator which embraces initiatives and organisations on the very early stage of development and into the networking place. The range of the initiatives and interests is very broad and includes: citizenship, ecology, senior activity, engaged art, urban space and common good, organisation of projects, internal discussions on organisational matters of groups/organisations, networking and exchange of project experience, activities and activation of immigrants, youth, human rights, women's rights, establishing and running civic organisations, international cooperation, volunteering.

Gdańsk – Project 4

Detailed Description

Under the 'HI!' flag two rounds of activities take place in the ESC 'Solidarity Every Day' space every year, each of which is attended by an average of 25 people. Every edition is an average of 8 meetings in the form of workshops, discussions, and study visits, held every week or two. For those who do not speak Polish, translation into English, Ukrainian and Russian is provided. Participation is free after prior e-mail notification. The project's main objectives are to provide information on the city's functioning, to facilitate adaptation process and to encourage independent activity. The specific objectives are to raise awareness of psychological adaptation processes and strengthen communication competence. Soft skills acquired during the classes, such as the ability to build relationships, strengthening self-esteem and subjectivity through participation in thematic workshops, and positive experience in communication, significantly affect the active functioning of new residents in Gdansk. Another effect is the participation of HI! graduates in other projects organised by the European Solidarity Centre.

Contribution

The project fully fits in with the overall mission statement due to the mission of the place where it is run and activities which are undertaken. ESC is the institution totally dedicated to heritage, development and practicing of democracy. It is important stakeholder in Gdansk's, Poland's and Europe's landscape of democratic institutions. The two presented above schemes are the excellent examples of creating conditions for participatory democracy and empowering people in active citizenship.

Target Group

In 2022, 11,566 people used the space for 1,238 meetings or events. These were persons of every age active in civic organisations, informal groups, social and city movements activists, migrants, people working in public institutions including 'HI!'. Since 2017 'HI!' had over 500 participants - migrants who have settled in Gdansk and need support in adapting to a new city.

The project has potential for dissemination in other locations although the unique features of being set in ESC will vanish.

Collaboration

Both schemes 'Solidarity Every Day' and 'HI' are based on partnership cooperation and open access, which guarantees inclusiveness and justice. Sharing space and building a cooperation with users from formal and informal groups, implementing their own projects, networking activities make this space a place for all. During the few years of the 'Solidarity Every Day' programme's operation, over 100 groups, mainly from the Tri-City region, have passed through. In addition, Solidarity Every Day also implements its own projects, e.g. the 5th birthday of Solidarity Every Day or the Flying University of Human Rights, during which cooperation is established with entities from Poland. The 'HI!' project is implemented in a close cooperation with the Immigrant Support Centre – a civic organisation providing assistance to newcomers.

Gdańsk – Project 4

Communication

Information about what is going on at the space is provided via the ecs.gda.pl website with a dedicated subpage at www.ecs.gda.pl/codziennie, and a dedicated Facebook page: www.facebook.pl/solidarnosccodziennieecs

The people managing the space host study visits and conduct information meetings and workshops on the functioning of the space in Polish and English. They also wrote „Solidarity Every Day. Handbook“ – a manual for creating an open space similar to this one. It was published in hardcopy (500 copies) and online. In addition five issues of the „Solidarity Every Day Notebook“ were published. They described important elements of the functioning of the space, co-creating groups and organisations, and the ideas behind the functioning of the space. Each invitation to the 'HI!' project is issued in Polish, Ukrainian, English and Russian. An important element of communication addressed to migrants is to post it on social media strictly dedicated to migrant communities.

Project Setup

The 'Solidarity Every Day' space and "HI!" are programmes implemented by the European Solidarity Centre, a local government cultural institution. Two people employed at the ESC Civic Projects Department are responsible for the implementation of the projects and coordination of the activities. Book keeping and administrative tasks related to the programmes are performed by the Accounting and Administration Departments, respectively.

In the programme's initial phase, City Hall's Social Development Department was the supporting unit. In addition, formal or informal partnerships are established on an ad hoc basis for individual activities. Many civic organisations, public institutions collaborate in running the projects accordingly to the scope of their interests and competences.

Description

European Solidarity Centre as an open cultural institution works with NGOs on the daily basis in all ranges of ESC interests. Civil society organisations, especially those not experienced ones, are one of the main beneficiaries of the 'Solidarity Every Day' but they are also an important stakeholder involved in implementation of the programs. Their expertise and competencies are in use in 'Solidarity Every Day' and 'HI!' schemes' networking, partnership projects, coaching or just integration activities and events. Regional Voluntary Centre is seated in the office located in 'Solidarity Every Day' and is significantly involved in activities there. HI!' project is implemented in a close cooperation with the Immigrant Support Centre.

Gdańsk – Project 4

Budget

Planning Costs	Costs of coordination, programme preparation and its reporting 2 employees	40,000€
Operating Costs	An ongoing carrying out tasks and maintenance of the premises.	10,000€
Communication Costs	Costs of running Facebook profiles, producing and uploading content referring to The 'Solidarity Every Day' space and "HL on the ESC website, documentation.	3,000€
Extra Budget	This additional budget might come from the City of Gdansk but it's not decided yet about the amount.	0€
Total Budget		53,000€

Funding

'Solidarity Every Day' and 'Hi!' are the permanent schemes of the European Solidarity Centre so every year, their budgets are calculated and planned in the internal current budget of the European Solidarity Centre. The ESC budget comes from City of Gdansk, Ministry of Culture and Pomerania Region subsidies. In the first stage of its activity, City Hall's Social Development Department provided extra financial support to Solidarity Every Day.

Programme Year Integration

The European Solidary Centre as a place of keeping and consolidating of the heritage of Solidarity Movement is a perfect location for celebrations of democracy achievements and running the debate on the current democracy condition. Taking into account that most of the issues related to the development, practicing and strengthening democracy are the statutory tasks of this institution, ESC is supposed to be the centre of ECoD in Gdansk. The European Solidary Centre already has its fame and is a recognizable, recognized and broadly identified place in Europe. That's why we intend to give it a leading role in the Programme Year Integration.

Democracy Dimension

Empowerment

Gdańsk – Project 5

TOOL | REGULAR | 01.01.2023–31.12.2023 |

[URL1: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/URZAD-MIEJSKI/WYDZIAL-ROZWOJU-SPOLECZNEGO/PROGRAM-WSPOLPRACY-MIASTA-GDANSKA-Z-NGO-ZAANGAZUJ-SIE-W-PRZYGOTOWANIA-NA-ROK-2024,A,245294](https://www.gdansk.pl/urzad-miejski/wydzial-rozwoju-spoecznego/program-wspolpracy-miasta-gdanska-z-ngo-zaangazuj-sie-w-przygotowanie-na-rok-2024,A,245294)

[URL2: HTTPS://WWW.GDANSK.PL/URZAD-MIEJSKI/WYDZIAL-ROZWOJU-SPOLECZNEGO/PROGRAMME-WSPOLPRACY-MIASTA-GDANSKA-Z-ORGANISACJAMI-POZARZADOWYMI-NA-ROK-2023,A,23131](https://www.gdansk.pl/urzad-miejski/wydzial-rozwoju-spoecznego/programme-wspolpracy-miasta-gdanska-z-organizacjami-pozarzadowymi-na-rok-2023,A,23131)

Programme of Cooperation of the City of Gdansk with the Civil Society Organisations

Brief Description

23 years ago, the City of Gdansk introduced its annual Programme of Cooperation of the City with Non-Governmental Organisations into democratic practice as the first public policy in Gdansk fully co-created with stakeholders. Since then, this programme has been developed annually with the participation of representatives of the civic and public sectors. It is a document that defines the principles and forms of cooperation, priority tasks and the funds to be allocated for their implementation. On its basis, calls for proposals are announced via the www.witkac.pl digital platform.

The programme defines principles of partnerships between the city and NGOs and joint initiatives for local communities, as well as procedures for co-creating legal acts with organisations. The programme is subject to annual self-evaluation carried out jointly by organisations and City Hall. The allocation for the cooperation programme is about 1% of the city's current expenses, in 2022 it was ca. €25,000,000.

Gdańsk – Project 5

Detailed Description

The main objective of the City's cooperation with NGOS is to support the development of civil society and build partnership relations between the local government and organised groups of residents and executing subsidiarity principle in urban policies. The specific goals are: strengthening institutional power of organisations in realisation of public tasks, developing the competences of their leaders, employees and volunteers, and strengthening existing and shaping new cooperation mechanisms in response to crisis situations.

The program is developed each year and approved by the City Council. It defines the priority areas of cooperation for a given year (26 in 2023) and the allocation for particular areas. The practical dimension of the collaboration is closed in four areas of joint action: co-creation of public policies, execution of public tasks, support for organisations and residents activity, mutual communication and promotion. Based on this program advisory bodies of the Mayor and the City Council are created with representatives of civic organisations and the Gdansk Council of NGOs, the organisation's representative body is elected. There are now 16 such bodies in Gdansk.

Gdansk, as a public partner, initiates project partnerships with organisations to execute specific tasks or joins in the co-implementation of their ideas and projects. In 2022, the City of Gdansk implemented 12 social projects co-financed from EU funds in partnership with civic organisations.

For 15 years, one of the priority program areas has been development of Neighbourhood Houses(NH) as a tool for advancing local development with residents. As the pandemic and refugee crisis have shown, they have become a significant component of the crisis intervention system and the democratisation of the system of providing social services in local communities. In 2011, the partnership: NGOs, Gdansk City, local entrepreneurs worked out the „Neighbourhood House Model“ To this day, new NH are created based on this model in the districts of Gdansk, focusing on the activity of residents and increasing their ability to cause positive social changes based on their own strengths and resources.

NH are a field of activity and self-help for residents. They are established and run by civil organisations with the City's financial support. Organisations may apply for funds for running houses as part of grant system announced annually. Each of them is unique according to the needs of the district in which it is seated. The allocation for NH in 2023 is nearly €500,000. Today Gdansk has 23 Neighbourhood Houses in 16 districts. One of the tools of participatory democracy established under the Cooperation Program is the Gdansk Funds. It is a mechanism whose task is to stimulate residents' social activity and increase local communities' involvement in activities for the common good.

Gdańsk – Project 5

Detailed Description

In 2023, Gdansk ensures the functioning of six funds: neighbourhood, youth, senior, sports and recreation, equality and innovation. Under these funds, informal groups of residents can apply for co-financing their ideas in the amount of up to €180, and non-governmental organisations up to €1,800. The funds come from the city budget, but the operators selected to manage them are independent civic organisations. In 2021, the innovation fund adopted the formula of the „INNaczej” [„Different”] Incubator of Social Innovation. Here, residents can obtain funding of up to €2,500 to implement an innovative social project. They also receive comprehensive support through consultations, training and mentoring activities. In 2022, the Capital of Volunteering Fund, dedicated exclusively to informal groups, since Gdansk held the title of 2022 European Capital of Volunteering. Under these funds, in 2022, a total of 265 projects were implemented: 175 by informal groups and 90 by organisations. The amount transferred in 2022 for implementing initiatives under the Gdansk Funds is approximately €150,000.

Contribution

The project fully fits in with the mission, constituting a tool for the real impact of civil society organisations in realisation of the City tasks. Under this program, an ecosystem of municipal initiatives is created in the priority areas for Gdansk in practising and strengthening democracy. There are 26 areas of cooperation, all important for social inclusion and involvement of residents, but supporting local initiatives and volunteering, equal treatment and integration of immigrants are crucial.

The annual practice of joint evaluation of the old program and co-creation of the new one distinguishes it from many other urban policies where these processes are not as stable. The integrated approach to the program is unique. It is cross-sectoral, and most city departments are involved in its creation and implementation. The full digitization of calls for proposals is an innovative element that increases accessibility.

Joint evaluation and program co-creation can be a part of ECoD Program.

Target group

There are about 2,500 civic organisations active in Gdansk, as well as many informal groups and urban movements working for the benefit of the residents. They are all direct beneficiaries. The statistics compiled based on the reports show that the number of recipients of these activities significantly exceeds the population of Gdansk. The project is already scaled up, has become part of national legislation and has been included in the Act on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteerism.

Gdańsk – Project 5

Collaboration

The project is inclusive and just, as it affects all spheres of life of residents and all areas of involvement of civic organisations in the realm of public benefit. Organisations and residents have open and fair access to the funds allocated to the program, as the grant procedure is carried out through calls for proposals, and the selecting committees consist of representatives of the Mayor and the organisations in equal number. The project has a robust participatory aspect due to the process of its creation and evaluation with the stakeholders. It is also inclusive and fair in communication and promoting, as the City supports organisations in communicating about their activities.

The program is created for the benefit of the inhabitants of Gdansk, but its implementers may come from other places. What is essential is their operation in Gdansk with its inhabitants. Currently, all of Gdansk's neighbouring municipalities have their own cooperation programs for their residents.

Communication

The project has general and thematic communication paths using different tools. The dedicated Newsletter sent to several hundred NGOs from the municipal database, is used to provide mutual information about the activities of the city and NGOs. There are two Facebook groups addressed to people from Gdansk civil sector. These are „Miasto Gdansk_forum NGOs“ and „Gdansk Neighbourhood Houses and Clubs.“ It is a space where organisations inform each other about current activities and needs, share knowledge and resources. The NGO tab at the www.gdansk.pl website is the primary source of official information.

The Program is subject to ongoing monitoring and annual self-evaluation. A report on the program implementation is prepared and submitted to the City Council annually. Every year, the organisations' level of satisfaction with the cooperation with the City is surveyed, and every few years, a broad study of the condition of the civic sector in Gdansk is conducted measuring program's impact.

Project Setup

The Department of Social Development is the programme's coordinator in the City. The part of this department is the Unit for Local Cooperation and Social Innovation, which is responsible for this coordination. It consists of 10 employees. The Department of Culture, the Sports Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Environment as well as the Municipal Family Support Centre, Gdansk Development Office, Gdansk Centre for Health Promotion and Prevention – municipal institutions are also involved in developing, implementing and evaluating the Programme. Each entity has dedicated employees to perform tasks resulting from the Cooperation Programme. The Municipal Family Support Centre coordinates the implementation of social welfare and family support tasks, as well as activities for people with disabilities, and the Gdansk Development Office in regeneration.

Gdańsk – Project 5

Description

The whole project is dedicated to civil society organisations. It is co-created with them in an open process. Every organisation is invited to participate in every stage of construction of the programme and then its implementation. At the stage of implementation, the organisations apply to the calls for proposals and carry out their own projects in the scope of the programme priorities. The representative body – Gdansk Council of the Civil Society Organisation is the City partner in non-financial cooperation with NGOs, especially in policy making, common working groups and advisory bodies as well as the self-evaluation of the programme.

Budget

Planning Costs	Costs of coordination and ongoing carrying out tasks allocated in the Social Development Department specified in the Cooperation Programme; costs of programme preparation and its reporting.	150,000€
Operating Costs	The amount allocated to grants for non-governmental organisations carrying out tasks commissioned by the City.	25,000,000€
Communication Costs	Costs of running Facebook profiles, producing a newsletter and uploading content regarding the Cooperation Programme to the www.gdansk.pl website and the Public Information Bulletin	20,000€
Extra Budget	The cost of conducting an experimental/innovative participatory process with NGOs during the Programme Year.	25,000€
Total Budget		25,248,000€

Gdańsk – Project 5

Funding

As a rule, the Programme is financed from the City's current budget, and only the financing of additional tasks within project partnerships comes from other sources, mainly European and regional funds. This constitutes about 10% of additional funds to the basic allocation. In crisis situations, such as helping refugees from Ukraine, the City adds additional funds from the state budget or international organisations, such as UNICEF, to the programme.

Programme Year Integration

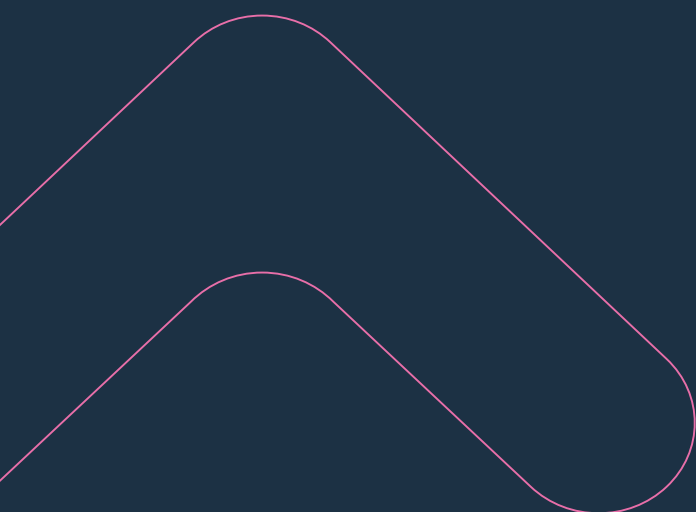
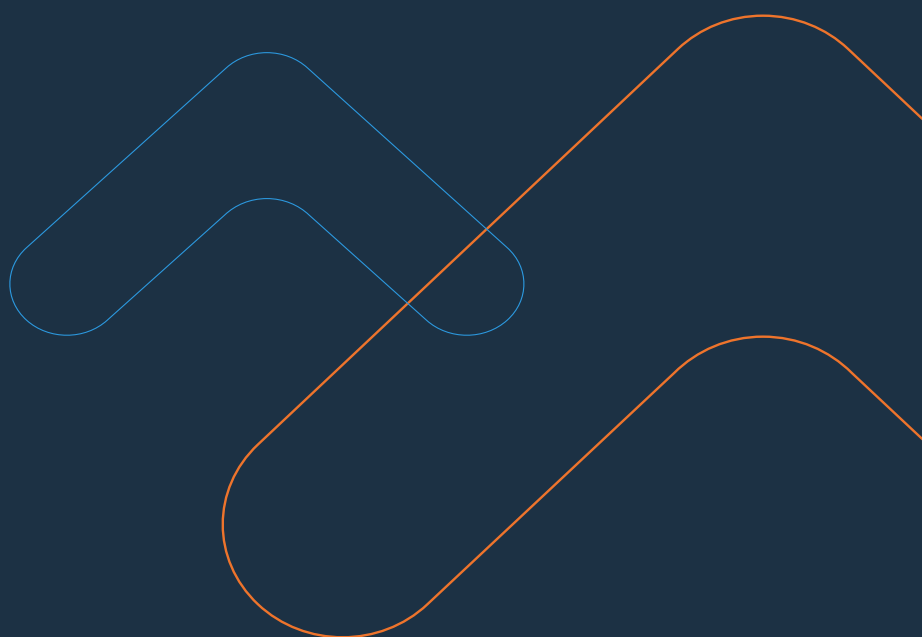
The Cooperation Program is well known to organisations. Still, since it has been operating for many years, we have noticed a decrease in interest in participating in the process of its co-creation. Meetings and workshops are usually attended by the same people from the same organisations. We plan to „revitalise“ it, and the celebrations as part of the Capital of Democracy would be an excellent opportunity to do so. It is our oldest participatory document; the process proceeds in a habitual way, and it is worth discussing its modernisation and partial digitisation (inclusion in the Gdansk Dialogue Platform). We would also like to introduce a new form of its evaluation as a democratic experiment, which we will plan and carry out together with organisations. Civic organisations are the most important partner of the City in implementing the constitutional principle of subsidiarity, and we will base a significant part of the celebration of the European Capital of Democracy in Gdansk on them.

Democracy Dimension

Sustainability

ECOD APPLICATION GDAŃSK

Project Ideas



Gdańsk - Project Idea 1

DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: COMMUNITY

Municipal Real Estate Residents' Council and Pact of Collaboration

Challenge

The challenge addressed in this project idea is raising quality of living in municipal social housing by empowering tenants and developing their responsibility for the place they live and that way diminish problems appearing in social housing.

City of Gdansk is an owner of the building located at Ubocze 24 St, the largest municipal building, of 163 flats occupied by households in municipal and social tenancy, or without legal title to the premises. Almost 6% of the households living there are subject to eviction. There is also the huge debt of unpaid rents. The evictions are not executed on an ongoing basis as there are over 2,000 orders in the queue for eviction with a right to social housing and the city hasn't enough flats to do so.

The survey on building community held in 2022 showed that people living there feel lack of influence on their lives and in parallel strong relation between having or not having a legal title to the flat and unsocial behaviours, lack of care for own and common parts of the building, not paying rent.

Other residents of this building point precisely to the nuisance from these residents as the most acute element of living in this location. As a consequence a big part of the residents of the building wants to move out by exchanging their flat for another municipal one and the building's bad reputation means that other residents waiting for a municipal flat do not accept offers of apartments at Ubocze 24. This situation generates risk of ghetto-ing the building.

Solution

The residents surveyed in the building at Ubocze 24 St drew attention to the need for thorough changes in the building and housing policy.

The residents emphasised that:

- They would like to have influence over the introduction of the necessary changes applied by the building administration
- They notice the difficulty in finding ideas for solving problems both on the side of the City's administrator and the residents themselves and lack of cooperation
- They hold hope for „disenchantment of the place“

Gdańsk - Project Idea 1

Solution

In response to the residents' needs, the idea of creating a Residents' Council for the building and then creating the Pact of Collaboration between residents and public administration arose. Elections to the Residents' Council were organised by the Gdansk Social Innovation Foundation, civic organisation working with the local community in the neighbourhood, empowering and supporting active attitudes of residents. The election rules were co-created with the residents. Three candidates could run from each stairwell, nine people in total (3 stairwells x 3 people). Over 70 people took part in the elections. Nine people (8 women & 1 man) were elected to the Council. The Residents' Council works on a voluntary basis.

Pact of Collaboration is in course of development. Principles, range and culture of collaboration will be constituted by the pact City treats this process as a prospective tool/methodology to enable solving similar problems in other locations of municipal social housing.

Impact

The Residents' Council supports creating a strong and self-governing community in the building at Ubocze 24St. Empowering the residents and conducting a transparent inclusion process resulted in co-creating the assumptions for the „Collaboration Pact for Ubocze 24 community.“ The signing of the Pact is planned for July 2023.

The signatories of the Pact will be representatives of the Residents' Council, the Deputy Mayor of the City of Gdansk for Social Development and Equal Treatment, and the Deputy Mayor of the City of Gdansk for Municipal Services.

There is a lot of hard data confirming the urgent need for a change in this place. Data come from the Social Welfare Agency since almost 100% of the population of the building is subject to social services and from the Real Estate Administration Office concerning debts on rents, devastations and police intervention. The community organisation work has been done in the neighbourhood by civic organisations for more than 10 years and they can provide extra data.

Since the Council functions similarly to a homeowners association board, is a link between the residents and administrator, fosters flow of information, initiates small actions for residents, responds to any emerging problems of residents, monitors the implementation of plans, initiates the participation of the residents in social projects, its positive influence on the quality of living there has already made a visible impact.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 1

Implementation

The idea to introduce the Residents' Councils in Municipal Properties is currently in the pilot phase. In July 2023, the Collaboration Pact is to be signed. The effects of the cooperation will be known in two years at the earliest, which is why we are not discussing the implementation of the idea for other municipal properties at the moment but we see the potential to do so. We will be monitoring how the Residents' Council and the Collaboration Pact work & develop and how they can be applied in the other municipal building communities experiencing similar problems. In the meantime community work in the neighbourhood of Ubocze24 will be carried out on the ongoing basis. The evaluation of this work will show us what activities and services should accompany the introduction of the Councils and Pacts of Collaboration. This can be implemented in the current budget of the involved City units and institutions. The implementation of the idea in the other locations will need the survey on the needs of the community there, an integrated master plan and an extra budget to make it.

Support

A multi stakeholders' group of people, coordinated by Social Innovation Foundation and Social Development Department of the City Hall is working on co-creation and getting the Collaboration Pact signed. These are representatives of the Gdansk Foundation for Social Innovation, Gdansk Real Estate Office - a local government budgetary unit and the Residents' Council. Substantive support is provided by the Department of Municipal Management, Municipal Family Support Centre and Social Development Department. Making the success of implementing the idea is supported by neighbourhood club, which is run by Gdansk Foundation for Social Innovation and operates in a container located in front of the building and is an open place for residents of the Ubocze 24 building.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 2

DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: SUSTAINABILITY

Gdansk Human Rights City – applying Rights Framework: Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Social Audit tools into the City’s human rights policies.

Challenge

Democracy and human rights are closely related. Across Europe, human rights are becoming an essential element of good governance at the local level. Research by the Fundamental Rights Agency has shown that human rights are often attributed to ‘others’: excluded people, political prisoners and victims of war. Meanwhile, each of us holds social, economic and cultural rights.

Besides institutions at the national and international level, an important role in the implementation of human rights is played by local governments, including cities. At the local level, many tasks are carried out related to social inclusion, ensuring the best possible quality of life for all, and combating discrimination. At the same time, the issues of social cohesion, equality and inclusion are often understood in isolation from the main areas of local government activity. At the same time, we are witnessing new crises which are destructive to our local communities: disinformation in the public media, the migration crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border, the politicisation of the rights of immigrants and LGBT+ people and the climate crisis.

When there is a retreat from human rights at the national level, it is cities that should firmly and loudly take their side and make a clear commitment to securing and implementing them at the local level. It is the great challenge to make it in a way bringing people together and combating stereotypes.

Solution

The diversity of the Gdansk community is a fact. Noticing and wanting to manage it, we adopted two pioneering urban policies in Poland, developed in cooperation with the local community and adopted by the City Council. Both of them aimed to create a friendly Gdansk for everyone, regardless of differences in identity: In 2016, the City Council adopted the Immigrant Integration Model. The model produced a migration management system in Gdansk public institutions and non-governmental organizations in various areas of the city’s activities: from education, culture, sport, and public spaces to the labour market. In 2018, the City Council adopted a second resolution: the Model for Equal Treatment. Its purpose is to increase the possibility of exercising rights, equal opportunities for development and participation in social life, and to increase protection against discrimination for every inhabitant of Gdansk, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 2

Impact

The evaluation of both Models clearly indicates the need for a systemic approach to inclusion and securing residents' rights. That is why we have started work on implementing the tools proposed by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, included in the Framework for Reinforcing Human Rights Locally, with the strong involvement of civic society and drawing on the experience of European cities: social impact assessments and social audits.

After five years of implementing the migration and equality policy, we have created a network of non-governmental organisations and institutions in Gdansk that can effectively help people experiencing discrimination. We have successfully implemented educational equality and human rights projects for over 10,000 residents.

As a result of evaluating both policies, we can see our successes, but we also see areas where we failed to act effectively. We also see that many resources for implementing both Models were used in a dispersed manner, with no clear success rates. Using social impact assessments will systematically consider equal opportunity when making decisions, planning or changing policies or services that may disproportionately affect individuals or groups protected by equality laws.

Although both local policies were developed by a wide range of stakeholders: city officials, NGOs working with minority communities and experts working with excluded groups, this group was not sufficiently involved in their implementation and monitoring of their effects. The use of social audit, i.e. community involvement in measuring, reporting and planning modifications to equality activities, will make it possible to build a stronger sense of co-ownership and co-responsibility for this democratic process.

Implementation

We plan to implement the Rights Framework tools into the newly created human rights policies, mentioned above; the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) tool and the Social Audit tool. The implementation will have three stages:

1. Declaration of the city authorities on the adoption of a new human rights policy based on equal treatment policies.
2. Adaptation of tools to Polish law and local conditions, together with non-governmental organisations and communities working for excluded people, with the support of European Human Rights Cities.
3. The process of educating the local community: non-governmental organisations performing public tasks for the city, officials and residents, and other partners, e.g. business or universities.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 2

Implementation

4. Pilot implementation of tools in several areas of the city's activity: social investments, social campaigns and cooperation with non-governmental organisations.
5. Evaluation of the pilot and extending the scope of tools implementation.

This process will be carried out together with other local governments in Poland that have progressive local policies and with European cities that have experience in implementing human rights.

Support

So far, the annual budget for equality policy activities is approximately €700,000.

Many tasks of the new human rights policy do not require a fresh budget because it is possible to use existing human, time and material resources. The only thing that needs to change is how they are used by introducing the need to include in this tools and secure the participation of the local community and the analysis of the social impact of using each resource. Some tasks are carried out in cooperation with non-governmental organisations as part of the tasks commissioned to the local government.

We will be implementing these tools in firm cooperation with other Polish cities that have progressive local policies. We will also be supported by European cities that have experience in implementing human rights tools and which we work together in international networks e.g Eurocities. We monitor external sources for financing human rights projects and apply if possible. Currently no such money is involved.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 3

DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: EMPOWERMENT

Gdansk Dialogue Platform

Challenge

All participatory processes must meet five challenges to fully involve residents in democratisation processes:

Accessibility—understood as the opportunity to take part in the process, but also competence: set of skills, knowledge and experience needed to express one's opinion on a given topic;

- Time—understood as the stage of the case at which the participatory process is organised and time in the sense of the date and time that are conducive or not conducive to participatory events
- Representation—broad participation of residents representing different interests and demographic features
- Influence—the possibilities and scale of implementing the effects of participatory processes
- Cost—the cost of organising the process and the effort the participant must incur

The digitisation of participatory processes seems to be the answer to most of these challenges. Practising participatory democracy in the modern world requires not only social competences and efficient administration but also digital infrastructure that increases access to it, reduces its cost, enables wide representation and reduces the time needed for decision-making.

Understanding these challenges, City of Gdansk digitizes the tools of participatory processes. The challenge, however, is their multitude and dispersion. It is, therefore, necessary to integrate digital tools used to organise participatory processes such as participatory budget, urban and architecture consultations, design workshops, civic assemblies, etc.

Solution

The solution is to create the Gdansk Dialogue Platform, which combines participatory and consultative processes implemented in our city. We want to build a tool by taking advantage of the digital infrastructure available elsewhere (decdim, decide madrid, citizenlab, civicrm, etc.) and the Gdansk Resident Card, which is a physical card and a digital app combining various municipal services.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 3

Solution

Target groups: representatives of Gdansk NGOs (3,159 entities, including 332 performing commissioned public tasks); district councillors (567 people); active residents, social innovators, social entrepreneurs, animators and organisers of the local community (23 neighbourhood houses and clubs); entrepreneurs interested in implementing CSR activities, city activists, residents who already have the Gdansk Resident Card (about 250,000 people)

The platform will provide:

1. Accessible digital space – the basic assumption is to create and provide a digital participatory platform for all
2. Information and promotion of participation and involvement in democracy processes – Information and promotion and substantive support increasing citizens engagement and influence
3. Strengthening democratic and community attitudes – enhancing attitudes and mechanisms of engagement of residents in the spirit of the common good
4. Infrastructural and technical facilities for the activity of residents – digital HUB for participatory, consultative and research processes and involvement in the community.

Impact

The project has great potential to increase the participation of residents in decision-making, participatory and consultation processes. The consolidation of digital participatory tools will result in simple access, clarity and transparency of information. Using the potential of the Gdansk Resident Card gives access to half of the population of the city's residents, to whom information can be profiled based on previous declarations about topics they are interested in. Two planned functionalities will bring a huge impact: the first one - social participatory initiative gives the possibility to join open participatory processes and to submit own case for consultation and gain support for it, second one - rewarding system to prize residents for participation in participatory processes with points redeemable for services and products integrated into the Resident Card. It is a response to the challenge of effort democracy, in which the participant bears an increasing cost of participation in deciding about the city. Such a tool will permanently strengthen pro-participation and pro-democratic attitudes.

Implementation

It is worth emphasising that creating the platform is one of the goals of the "Common City" Development Programme, which is the part of implementation plan of the 2030 Plus Development Strategy for the City of Gdansk.

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Gdańsk - Project Idea 3

Implementation

The implementation of the project is planned to have several stages:

- The first stage – inventory of participation processes and the creation of a „Participation Toolbox“;
- The second – analysis of the functionality of the available digital platforms and the possibility of integration with the Gdansk Resident Card;
- The third – co-creation of the functionality and modalities of the platform with stakeholders using user experience tools.
- Next – preparation of the IT system.
- Then – testing and putting into use. This step will include the promotion and information campaign to make the Platform visible, accepted and absorbed by residents. Citizens have to understand the interrelation between the usage of the platform and their influence on city governance. It is necessary to build a trust that the use of the platform makes sense and that they are listened and their initiatives are wanted by the city authorities.

Support

The key resource is the digital infrastructure and competences of GOT – city institution in charge of servicing the Gdansk Resident Card (available for every inhabitant). It will be a basis for integration with the selected participatory platform.

Political support from the Mayor and city councillors counts for the success of this project.

The Mayor's Office for District Councils and Cooperation with Residents has competences to carry out the project. The office consists of 13 employees and has financial resources for the preparation stage.

To support participatory projects and improve skills and capabilities of city staff in order to boost civic participation and create a more solid basis of democracy Gdansk joined the Urbact network “Agents of co-existence and open government” with budget €76,338.50

Gdansk is also a public partner of the “We Decide” project implemented by the local civic organisation “RC Foundation” to develop a participatory toolkit with the financial support from EEA.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 4

DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: EMPOWERMENT

“Dolna Brama” Civic Hub – a common space for practising participatory democracy and social innovation incubating

Challenge

Practising participatory democracy requires space dedicated to it.

The Gdansk ecosystem of supporting the development of civil society and social innovations lacks such a space. We have been implementing the „INNaczej” programme to support social innovations for several years, but we do not have an incubator. Generally, in Poland, we have one of the lowest levels of social trust in Europe. In order to be included in democratic processes and take responsibility for the community, actions should be taken to raise this level of trust. Therefore, it becomes important to organise a place where joint ventures of public administration, non-governmental organisations, community leaders, and representatives of various entities and institutions open to strengthening the existing mechanisms of democracy and innovations in this area could be undertaken.

Integrating and developing bottom-up initiatives in the Urban Commons paradigm to search for new practical solutions that will allow people to function better in the new conditions of the changing world is becoming one of the most critical challenges. As part of the „Civic eState” project co-financed from the Urbact III programme, the concept of such a place, its organisational structure and mechanisms for co-managing the space by its future users were created. A municipal building was also designated for this purpose at 8 Dolna Brama St.

Solution

With the launch of the Dolna Brama Civic Hub, a meeting place, a place to carry out social and research projects for the civic sector and active residents, a social innovation incubator and the City Lab-a place for experimental new practices and social debate will all be created.

Target groups: Gdansk NGOs (3,159 entities, including 332 carrying out commissioned public tasks); district councillors (567people); active residents, social innovators (people covered by the INNaczej programme); social entrepreneurs, local community animators and organisers (23 neighbourhood houses); entrepreneurs interested in implementing CSR activities, academics.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 4

Solution

Project assumptions:

- Availability of activity space—social innovation incubator and infrastructure for social activists, NGOs, and local community to conduct their activities and for joint ventures and to conduct social debate on local development (civic think tank)
- Support for social activity and innovation—building a cross-sectorial community and network and provide support for residents who want to implement their ideas for activity in the city, including an information point on available financing and participation tools
- Animation of local communities – collaboration with local communities in districts (District Councils, Neighbourhood Houses, Community Culture Centres)
- Competence and technical assistance for NGO—cooperation with NGOs that will carry out tasks commissioned by the City in the field of supporting other organisations.

Impact

The project has a robust participatory aspect; the participation of civic organisations and residents will be essential for the functioning of the Hub and its impact on the culture of cooperation in the city, as the main task of the Hub, in the ethical dimension, will be to improve the quality of collaboration, commitment and joint responsibility for the common good. From the moment of opening, the Hub will be responsible for strengthening and developing the culture of participation, social innovation and innovation in democracy, and thus, it can become a leader of change. It will also be a place where social debates with representatives of all sectors will take place, and over time, it may also become a trendsetter of new social trends.

That the users of this place participate in its management is an entirely innovative idea. This will have a broader impact on understanding the role of citizens and their right to the city and consequently strengthen and expand the participation of residents in co-governance of public spaces in Gdansk.

Implementation

In 2022, the first stage of the renovation of the building at Dolna Brama 8 St. was completed. Due to the outbreak of war in Ukraine, the Dolna Brama Hub was temporarily adapted into the „Gdansk Helps Ukraine“ Centre and served as the first reception point for refugees. During the first month of operation, the point supported nearly 10,000 people, providing information, medical, legal and residence assistance, food and shelter. It was the first test of this place as a multi-purpose social space, and although the nature of the activities of the Civic Hub will be different its functionality has proven itself. The renovation was completed now, and the project implementation phase began.

Gdańsk - Project Idea 4

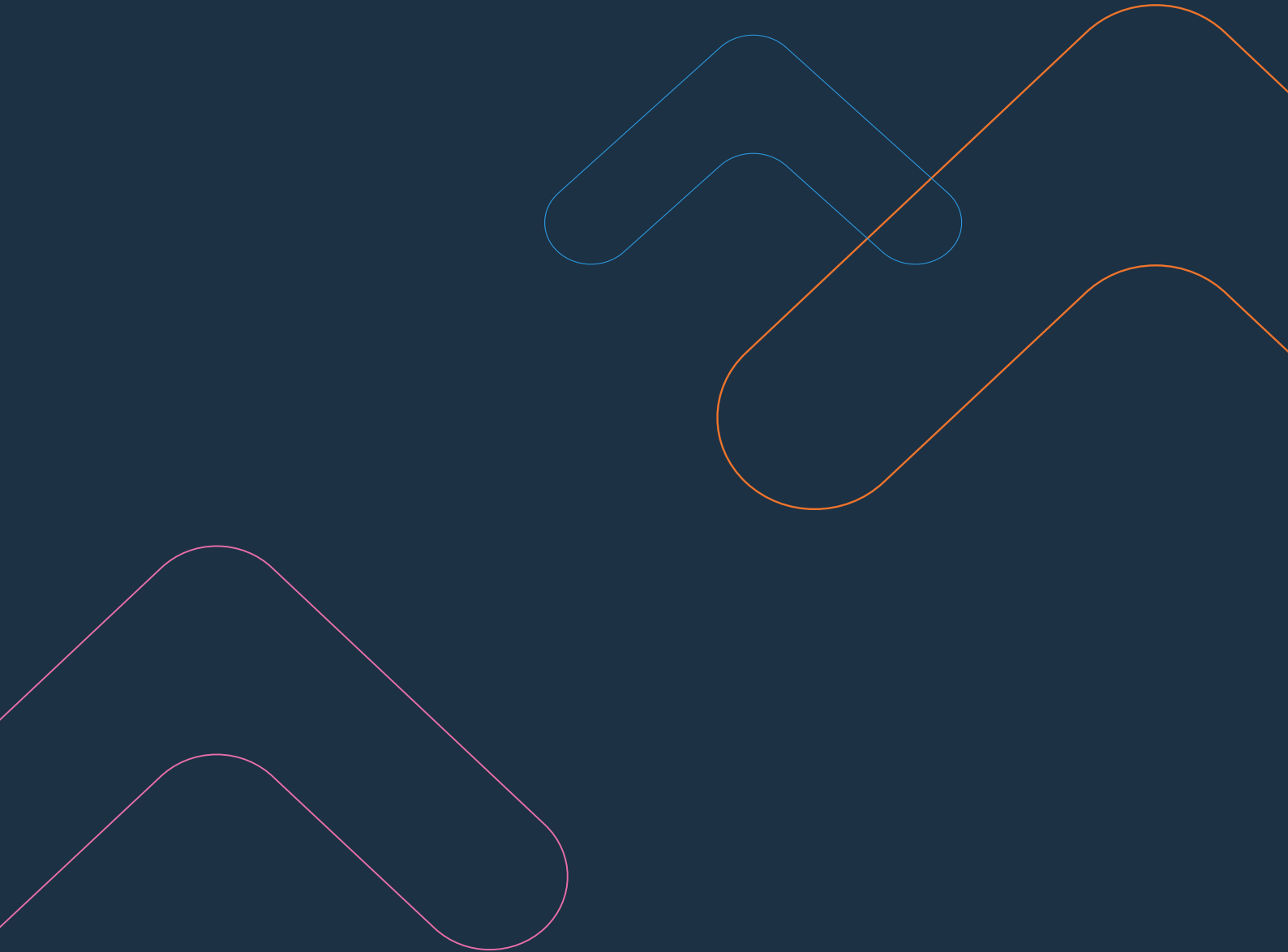
Implementation

Dolna Brama Hub is located in a district that is being regenerated, and the vicinity of the Hub will soon become a very attractive place. The centre has an area of over 2,000 m² and, in addition to many multifunctional rooms for shared use, it will be a new seat for two key organisational units of City Hall responsible for cooperation with residents and civic organisations: the Office for District Councils and Cooperation with Residents and the Unit for Local Cooperation and Social Innovation. About 20 employees will work there. There will also be spaces for integration, co-working, an outdoor courtyard for organising events, etc.

When the Hub opens, and part of the work of City Hall will move there, the space will be filled very quickly with stakeholders.

Support

The Hub has funds in the City's budget for equipment, current operations and employment for circa €900,000 a year. The project has political support from the Mayor and city councillors. The involvement of other stakeholders in creating Hub's community will support development and identity of the place. Hub is a well-known building and interest in using its space is big. FabLab Gdansk is already operating on its premises, and its community is being created. To support shared understanding of participatory processes and raise competences of civil servants working in the Hub, Gdansk joined Urbact Network named Agents of co-existence and open government, whose goal is to "embrace social innovation and inclusion in all fields of local governance by improving skills and capabilities of municipal staff in order to further boost civic participation and create a more solid basis of democracy." Joint work with other European cities will be a significant support for the project's implementation.



**European Capital
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