

Ch.3

Seedbed intervention

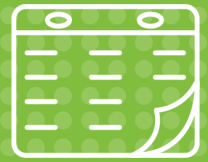


Burgas



Fig. 25 People filling out the survey/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Burgas



5th to 6th of July, 2022
9 am – 6 pm
Gurko parking lot



140 people visited the info point



90 people filled out the survey



Fig. 26 People filling out the survey/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Burgas organised its seedbed intervention in close proximity to one of the two pilot areas. The green area between “Gurko” parking lot and Oborishte street is the pilot site for the GoGreenRoutes project in Burgas. It is located in an area of the city centre which is heavily built with large and medium sized multifamily buildings, several hospitals and a big parking lot. There are very few green areas in this part of the city, which is the main reason for the selection and ultimately sustainable development of the pilot area to incorporate more green.

An information point was set up closely to the pilot area to answer any questions and concerns of people living and/or working nearby. They will also be the main users of the NBS, so their opinion of the area is highly relevant. The information point locations were different on the two days to inform more people about the GoGreenRoutes project as well as receive feedback about the general and preliminary concept for the renovation of the green space. The city team ensured that the survey was filled out. This was also facilitated by the canvas method where people would note down and also use drawings to indicate any major wishes and ideas for the development of the NBS.



Fig. 27 Family at the info point/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 28 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov



The two days of informing citizens were a good way to get feedback or to start discussions about the renovation of the green space. New ideas and aspects were gathered. The Canvas board helped to ensure locals to share their wishes and ideas for the NBS also visually.



An information point was set up within the seedbed site to provide background knowledge to the participants at two very frequented spots nearby. More than 95% of the respondents approved the concept of renovating the pilot area.



The results of the survey show that people generally want more green areas and playgrounds in the targeted area. All results were sent to the deputy mayors of Environmental Protection and Urban Development, which could aid the political decision making in favor of the NBS intervention in line with the demands of the residents of the area.

The organization and implementation of Seedbed Interventions is a new approach for communication and discussion of the intentions of the local administration and future users of the area. The development of a preliminary concept which is presented early to the public is useful to integrate participants wishes and opinions.

I like the concept of green space for play and leisure in the city centre!

It's good to get a place for relaxation!

We need a safe space for our children to play!



Pictures of the day



Fig. 29 The provided plans with visualisations helped discussing the future of the pilot area/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

The city officials prepared large posters with visualisations of the pilot area under development. The passersby gathered around and took part in presenting their views about the areas greening plans and the social as well as environmental improvement such actions would bring about in the area.



Fig. 30 Discussions about the future appearance/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Under a bright clear blue sky on a sunny day, the seedbed intervention gave the residents of the area and passersby a chance to come together and discuss what would be beneficial in the area in terms of nature based solutions.



Fig. 31 Also children visited the info tent/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

The info tent set up as part of the seedbed intervention was frequented by children and adults of all ages. They shared their opinion by either directly discussing their opinions about the nature based solutions to be implemented to help resolve some challenges of the city, with the city staff or by filling the survey.

Preparation by the city

The Burgas seedbed intervention was prepared majorly by the city partner in charge of the GoGreenRoutes project in Burgas along with 5 other city staff who took different roles in supporting the intervention on site, including encouraging passersby to fill in the survey and providing information about the project as well as guiding them to the canvas to record their wishes for the area where NBS is being implemented.

The city partner indicated that the preparation of the event was done by representatives of:

- Directorates “Strategic development” and “Public relations” in Burgas Municipality
- Regional Info Centre
- Architectural bureau “Think Forward”

The city officials also included some preliminary design posters and other informational banners for drawing attention of the passersby and for engaging with them on the topic of NBS. Unfortunately, since none of the project partners (ICLEI, RWTH or CtD) could be on-site due to the summer month vacations and flight cancellations, the onus of preparations and organisation of activities on the days of the intervention fell on the city partner. However, a partner from ICLEI was always on stand-by in online mode and had several calls and meetings with the city partner to ensure smooth delivery of the intervention. The survey was printed out and handed out to passersby who showed interest in the city’s activity in the area towards NBS. It was also available online for about a month. Before the event days, a press release was published on the official web site and facebook profile of Burgas Municipality, as well as distributed to local and national media. The press release presented information about the dates of the seedbed intervention workshop, general concept for renovation of the green area, as well as link and barcode to the on-line survey.

2 large roll-up banners were prepared with the information about the potential renovation plans for the NBS intervention site. Some tents were acquired to be placed at two different sites in close proximity to the potential NBS site on the 2-day seedbed intervention to gather as much public opinion and relay the information about the project with a wide outreach. One tent was planned to be occupied by those filling out the surveys, where chairs and tables were placed to provide a conducive environment for the passersby to take a moment to engage with the city staff and fill in the survey.

The city partner have already planned the preliminary design of the area for the NBS intervention, sparking some imagination and new ideas for the passersby and especially residents of how the area could look like with implementation of NBS in 2023.



Fig. 32 Presentation of the ‘Nature Island’ plans/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Day of intervention

Owing to the unfortunate absence of any other project partners except the city partner, the various methods to be implemented on site did not take place. Meaning the photovoice, the Burano method nor the walking interviews could be done since these were seen to be done by the project partners to not overburden the city staff with many asks for public engagement processes. However, the canvas was installed and many did leave some wishes on it. One passerby went on to draw a bird on a tree on the canvas and this was also video recorded where one can hear actual birds chirping in the area, giving a feeling of peace and nature connectedness in the selected area for the seedbed intervention.



Fig. 33 Women filling out the survey/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Another drawback due to limited and (merely) online support from the project partners was that the documentation of the entire seedbed intervention was single handedly dealt with by the city partner, which also then only depicts the city perspective which of course was valuable but might miss out on some details the project partners could have spotted. In general, on the two days of the event about 90 people engaged with the city staff, assuring and reconfirming to the city staff that such engagements are welcomed by the public and that they acknowledge and appreciate the efforts the city is taking to place value on bringing nature closer to the residents of the potential NBS intervention site.

The days of the seedbed intervention saw mostly residents of the area pass by and voice their opinions. About 90 people filled in the survey but about 50 of them did enter the tents and talked with the city staff and still did not wish to fill in the survey, which could indicate lack of time, opinions or even interest in the topic.

Timeline

- 9:00am
Start of the event
- 9:00am - 6:00pm
Survey
- 6:00pm
Logistics to wrap-up

Scan to find more photos of the set-up!



“There was a lot of engagement by the residents and most people would like to see more green in the area.”

(City Partner)



Fig. 34 Revising the survey results/ photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

To the city partner this exercise was very fruitful since the city seldom does such activities of engaging with the public and especially asking for public opinion. Good and constructive feedback was observed by the people mostly living in the area which goes to say the intervention would be welcomed and might foster the nature connectedness which the project aims to support with in all cities.

“Even though we could not be on site, the feedback that the city partner got by the residents instills trust in this process of public participation and co-creation of NBS intervention in the area.”
(Project Partner, ICLEI)

As a result of the visits made to the info point and after analysing the results of the on- site survey it can be said that more than 95 % of the respondents approve the concept for renovation. The results from the more general questions in the survey show that people want more green areas in the city and more playgrounds. Results from the survey were sent to the deputy mayors of Environmental Protection and Urban Development. In addition, they were translated in English and sent to relevant project partners for further analysis.

Canvas

The canvas method deployed the use of a white board with specific questions such as adding to the sentence 'I like...' and 'I have an idea...' and the passersby who stopped and were interested were in fact encouraged to draw what is special about the area and write their individual wishes. Apart from that, there were a couple of large posters detailing the preliminary plans that the city had in terms of improving the area with more green and healthy outcomes over the course of time. The city officials introduced the primary concept of the NBS to the community members who stopped to inquire or showed interest. There was a small booth, in the form of a tent with a table and chairs for people to sit down and fill the survey in, and/or ask any questions to the city officials. This interaction was one of a kind, as explained by the city partners of GoGreenRoutes which brought interesting perspectives and a lot of positive remarks for the work the city was doing towards the implementation of NBS, with the starting idea of seedbed interventions.

The results from the more general questions in the survey or specifically through the canvas method show that people want more green areas in the city and more playgrounds. The most preferred place for outdoor activities in Burgas is the sea garden. Results from the survey were then sent to the deputy mayors of Environmental Protection and Urban Development, which could aid the political decision making in favour of the NBS intervention in line with the demands of the residents of the area.

Since none of the other project partners, except the city partner, could be part of the event, it was difficult to direct discussions in a particular direction. However, ICLEI and the city partner Ivalyo had multiple calls before and after the event to ensure that the preparation was good and that the results would then also be translated into English for the use of the project.

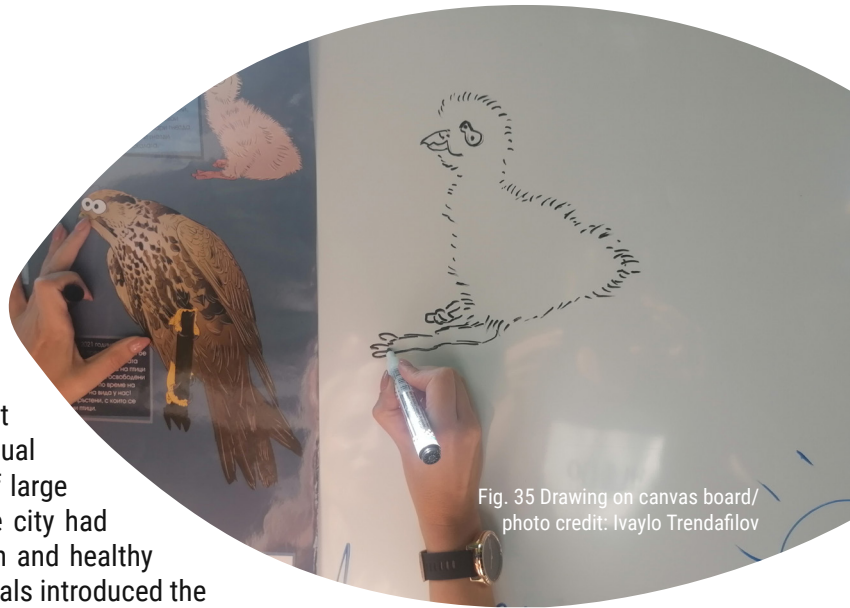


Fig. 35 Drawing on canvas board/
photo credit: Ivalyo Trendafilov

“This was a unique experience for us and also for the community members since it was a good place to come together to discuss the development of the area.”
(Burgas City Partner)



Fig. 36 Discussions at the info tent/ photo credit: Ivalyo Trendafilov

Photovoice

This method could not be deployed since no project partner from ICLEI, RWTH or CtD could be present on site due to problems in air traffic. Another reason for not having the photovoice method is that the seedbed intervention in Burgas was conceptualised and done as the first of all 6 cities leaving no time to procure all relevant material or support the city staff in doing so.



Fig. 37 Visitors discussing the future plans regarding the pilot area / photo credit: Ivaylo Trendafilov

Survey results

Main findings in Burgas

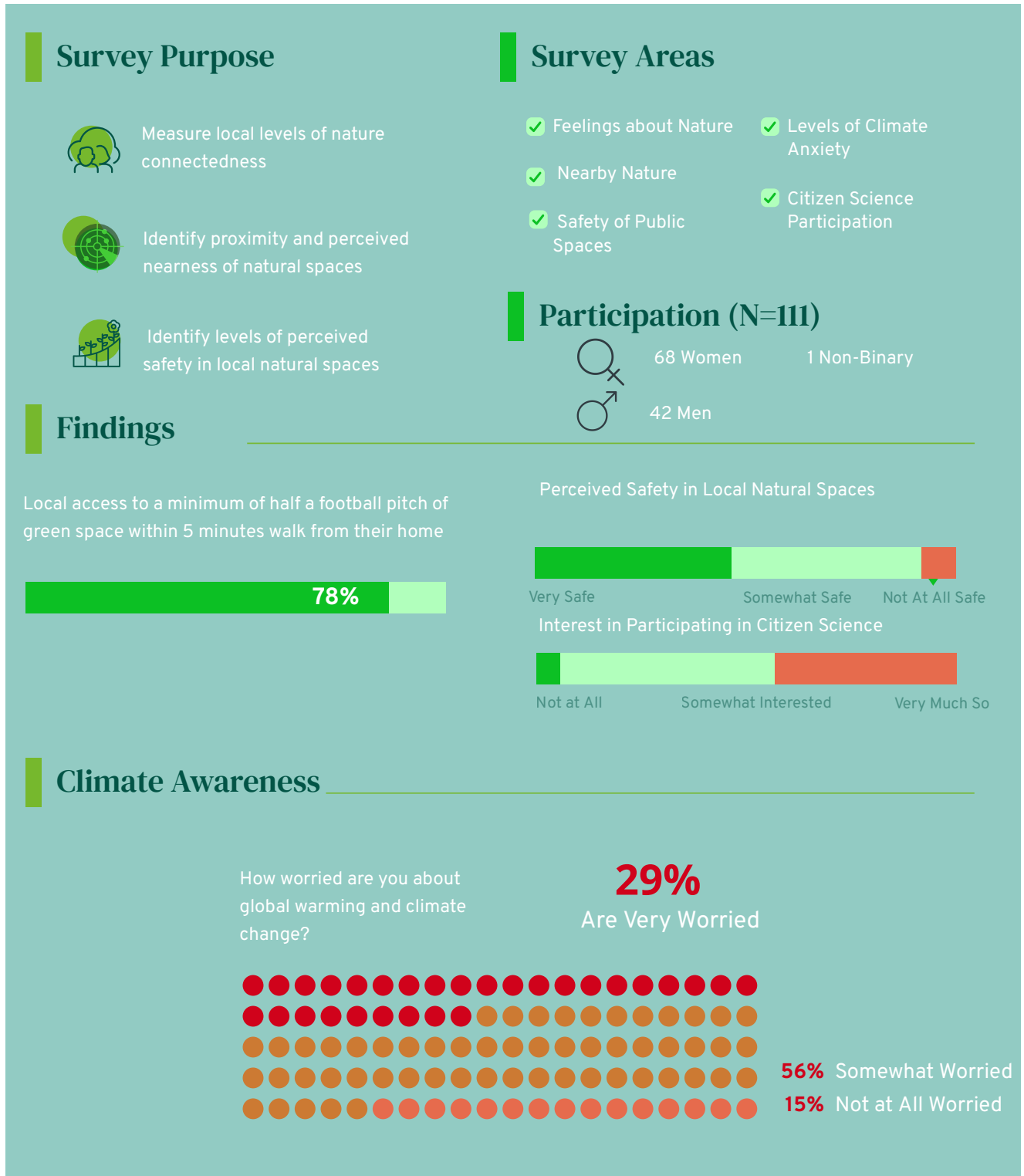


Fig. 38 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Burgas

The total number of responses received for the first set of questions was 93. 90 responses were collected for the second set of questions, which were location specific. Of those who surveyed, 61% identified as female, 38% male and 1% non-binary.

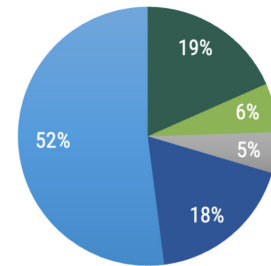
Experiencing a close contact with nature, reducing stress levels and recreational activities linked to staying fit are the “main benefits of introducing more natural features in a neighbourhood or city” for more than half of respondents. The largest percentage (84%) very much so agreed that “these nature-based solutions promote health”. Similarly, 77% very much so agreed that “these nature-based solutions promote nature and biodiversity” and 76% very much so agreed they “promote sustainable action”. The majority also felt that these nature-based solutions “promote coping with climate change” as only 4% did not at all feel this way. Interestingly, when asked “How worried are you about global warming and climate change” 29% were very worried but only 4% were not worried at all.

Of the 93 responders 30% did not have “access to a minimum of 0.5 hectares green or blue natural space within 5 minutes’ walk “of their home. Regarding respondents’ cities’ natural spaces, the majority perceived these spaces as safe. Also, public gardens or parks and seaside or coastal areas were depicted as participants’ favorite local natural areas to visit.

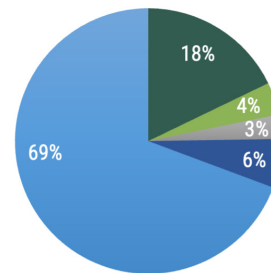
Second Set of Questions (Local)

Of the 90 responses collected 66% were from those who live in the area with an additional 21% working locally. The majority of respondents pass through the area every day (66%) or several times a week (26%). 54% of those surveyed spend more than 6 hours in the local area. Nevertheless, only 11% think “there are enough spaces in the area for spending more time outside”. Some reasons being “Not enough spaces, too many cars,” “There are only buildings and parkings.,” and “Overbuilt.” The bulk of responses were in favour of spending more time outside if there was more green and benches. Most responses suggest the need for more parks and green space NBS in respondents’ neighbourhoods. Concerning the concept for renovation of the green area, most liked everything and would not change anything. Also, the sea garden is the green/blue space visited most often, with most people walking there; on average most participants spend 8-12 hours in this space with friends or spending time with family.

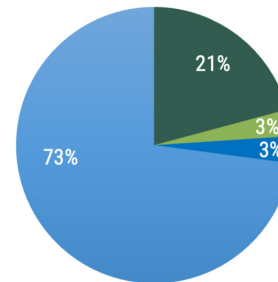
„Experiencing a close contact with nature”



„Recreational activities linked to staying fit”



„Reducing stress levels”



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 39 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul