WP4 – Reversible Multifunctional Open-source Urban Landscape in Nitra

WP Objectives	• Improve healthy lifestyles, social inclusion of migrants, social cohesion and relational wellbeing among local inhabitants of Dražovce neighbourhood and with the rest of the city. • Increase healthy habits, reducing sedentary lifestyles, social isolation and increasing intergenerational and intercultural relations, cultural and socialization activities. • Encourage safe and sustainable mobility (walking and cycling) along the corridor among local inhabitants and vulnerable groups. • Improve the quality of the urban public space in terms of safety, accessibility, inclusiveness, liveability. • Enhance skills and competences, networking and organizational capacity of local changemakers, especially NGOs active in the socio-cultural field. • Create multifunctional, reversible furniture that can be used for multiple purposes.
Problems addressed	Limited access to inclusive, safe and liveable green space and reinforcing social isolation of vulnerable groups. Nexus of art and environment to boost IHW and activate undervalued public spaces.
Main innovations	• Reversible, multifunctional VIS in flood- and vandalism-prone areas designed to be moved, repaired, or reconfigured (flood-compatible earthworks, countersunk grills, adaptive seating). • A slow-impact, reuse-first design and iterative co-deployment that turn undervalued land (incl. a regulated floodway) into everyday inclusive places. • Material innovation & circularity; testing vandalism/tolerant, low-cost builds.
Why it matters?	• Converts hard-to-use spaces into open and welcoming places that support daily walking/cycling, social mixing, outdoor learning and low-cost programming, improving well-being while keeping maintenance realistic • Offers a replicable toolkit other cities can adopt quickly
Who benefited?	• +100 Ukrainian refugees frequenting Hidepark. • +90 Roma children in Dražovce and their families. • City-wide residents using the river/cycling corridor. • Local SMEs and NGOs engaged in co-deployment and programming.
Key VIS	• Experimental therapeutic picnic meadows and community garden. • „Adaptive Garden“ outdoor classroom with raingarden. • Community kitchen in a refurbished yurt and DIY Café with a modular stage as flexible workshop/event venue. • Small architecture and innovative urban furniture: adaptive bench add-ons, countersunk public grills, felled-wood/concrete terrazzo furnishings, outdoor gallery, interactive lighting and eco-stabilising land-art.

What changed?

- +16.000 m2 of new/renewed green space delivered across the pilot area
- >500 people engaged through volunteer activities
- +37 festivals and large scale events, +107 creative initiatives and +33 sport and bikesharing activities
- +1125 visitors to outreach activities and events
- +12,000 attendance to all events
- Measured IHW gains: visitors to IN-HABIT green spaces report higher WHO-5 and lower K6 that users of paired city greens

How we measured impact?

Mixed methods: focus groups, interviews, questionnaires, event monitoring, SROI, comparison of visitors and non-visitors, comparison to alternative "traditional" green spaces.

Governance & sustainability

Co-deployment that pairs specialist subcontracting with student training and volunteer days
Institutional uptake via new university programme and city participation structures that support continuity.
IN-HUB links city services, school, NGOs/SMEs and the university.

Main lessons learnt

1. High-quality public spaces can be delivered in flood-prone and highly regulated areas by prioritising reversible, modular and low-impact design.
2. Pairing robust physical interventions with continuous cultural and nature-based programming is critical to activate and maintain use over time.
3. Co-deployment models that combine specialist subcontracting with volunteer training build skills, reduce costs and strengthen local ownership.
4. Community hubs such as Hidepark function as effective anchors for engaging vulnerable groups and extending benefits beyond the immediate site.
5. Universities can play a long-term bridging role between communities, municipalities and practitioners.

Replication & legacy

Methodology replicated in 8 cities/municipalities including a psychiatric hospital, several NBS VIS replicated.
Co-design/co-deployment guidelines and the catalogue of VIS published.

Resources

Replication resources: Community-Led Inclusive Green Spaces: IN-HABIT Methodology for Participatory Urban Interventions; Nitra IN-HABIT Pilot: Tested Solutions for Replication and Upscaling
Publications:

- Perception of green spaces' role in enhancing mental health and mental well-being in small and medium-sized cities;
- Co-Designing Urban Interventions Through the Lens of SDGs: Insights From the IN-HABIT Project in Nitra, Slovakia;
- Stakeholder Evaluation of Health and Wellbeing Outcomes of Inclusive Public Space Interventions Delivered by the IN-HABIT Project;
- Urban Green Spaces, Health, and Wellbeing: Social Value Estimation of a Community Garden in Slovakia