

*Case Study*

**ZAGREB FOR ME (ZAGREB ZA MENE)**

Zagreb For Me is an urban revitalization project in Zagreb that will implement 17 interventions in public spaces in the city. An urban architectural competition will be held for each location. The project was initiated by the Zagreb Society of Architects (DAZ) in collaboration with the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Zagreb. The goal of the project is to improve the overall image of the city and increase the quality of urban life of citizens in areas such as housing, recreation, free time and social cohesion. In addition to improving the quality of public spaces, these interventions will contribute to the creation of a positive relationship between citizens and public spaces, a welcoming atmosphere and a sense of optimism in the city.



**1. KEY FACTS AND FIGURES**

- Location: Zagreb, Croatia
- Project area: 17 locations across the city
- Time period: ongoing since 2015

- Budget: 87 435 €
- Project website:  
<http://www.d-a-z.hr/hr/ciklusi-programa/zagreb-za-mene,47.html>

## 2. KEY ACTORS AND ROLES

### Project team & suppliers

- Zagreb Society of Architects
- Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb
- City Office for Physical Planning and Construction of the City

### Project partners & stakeholders

- City Acupuncture team
- Think Space team
- Neighborhood councils
- Multiple civil society groups

## 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### **Participatory process goals**

The project strives to revitalize already existing locations in the city in an innovative way, revive them and bring them back into the lives of citizens. The aim is to create places where people can meet and organize various events.

The project aims to initiate collaboration between the city, its citizens, institutions and associations, stimulate dialogue and exchange of ideas, develop urban planning processes and create spaces for social gatherings.

### **Methodology**

- **Selection of locations and defining the intervention range**
  - The public participated actively in selecting locations and defining intervention range to ensure acceptance and broad comprehension of the project by the citizens. The aim of this strategy was to involve the largest possible number of citizens, professional institutions, organizations and administrative bodies in the process.
  - After the official announcement of the project, neighborhood councils, civil society groups and experts were invited to express their opinion on

problems of urban space and solutions to them. The Zagreb For Me team conducted field surveys in several locations and asked citizens which places they wish to see revitalized. A web platform has been created to share information about the project and allow citizens to propose places online. A total of 211 sites were identified, of which 51 were proposed by many participants.

- A scientific team assembled by the Faculty of Architecture examined potential sites in terms of their importance to the city and their legacy in local urban planning documents. Both of these surveys were compared and 33 locations were presented to the citizens for further selection. The selection of locations and defining the intervention range were carried out with active public participation thus ensuring the acceptance and feasibility of this complex project.

- **Preparation study of selected locations**

- The second phase of the project consisted of a preparation study of the selected locations and their revitalization. After a site has been selected and the intervention range and budget determined, a framework programme of interventions has been drawn up, and urban plans and materials for urban architectural competitions were finalized for each site. The design solutions for each location derive from urban architectural competitions to ensure top quality and a transparent implementation process.
- **The process of the study consists of four steps:**
  - Step 1: Collecting and systematizing information about the city that are important for urban planning, which includes an analysis of spatial planning documents (the city's local plan and urban development plan) and an analysis of those urban development projects that explored possibilities of spatial organization of the city and a system of public spaces in Zagreb.
  - Step 2: Thematic analysis of public space, which defined and analyzed urban planning topics important for understanding the characteristics of the city and its future development. Thematic analyses were carried out in areas of developed urban structures - residential areas, green areas, commercial areas, development areas, urban centers and urban public transport.
  - Step 3: Identification of thematically significant public spaces, the importance of which has been defined based on research criteria. Locations that contain key elements of the observed public space

themes are of greater thematic significance. As a result, the analysis identified 84 thematically significant public spaces.

- Step 4: Identification of urbanistically significant public spaces, the importance of which has been defined based on research criteria. Locations that contain multiple elements identified in thematic analyses of the city's public spaces are of greater urban significance. The analysis resulted in the identification of three groups of public spaces. Group A consists of sites that combine three or more themes important to the city (18 locations), Group B consists of sites that combine two important themes (35 locations), and Group C consists of sites that contain one important theme (31 locations).

- **Revitalisation proposals**

- After the completion of the City Acupuncture research and the urban planning study, proposals for the revitalisation of individual locations followed. All research groups were merged into one joint multidisciplinary working group with the aim of combining the results of the research and the study.
- The purpose of this synthesis was to identify and revitalize those locations that are important both in terms of the needs of citizens and the potential of the space within the framework of urban planning.
- The applied method was based on the detection of overlapping data, which led to the identification of places that were proposed for revitalisation. For each of the proposed locations, the potential of the urban public space for fulfilling the needs of citizens was emphasized.

### **Tools used to involve the public and stakeholders**

- web platform (for sharing information and collecting proposals)

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

### **Outputs, results and impact of the participatory process**

- For most of the selected localities, revitalization programs will be drawn up and consulted with the public, thereby ensuring citizen participation in decision-making and ascertaining the real needs of users of urban space. This bottom-up method led to a better understanding of user needs in Zagreb's public spaces from the perspective of citizens and local associations. The result of a

comprehensive preparation study is a high-quality analysis of the city's public space.

- The outcome is a series of interventions at 17 carefully selected locations in public space across the city that provide a design model for planning and improving public spaces on a reasonable budget.
- The emergence of many interesting and innovative design solutions for modernization of public space is also expected, that will change both the identity of the neighborhood and the overall image of the city. Interventions will range from small to medium scale and will cost between 1.5 and 2.5 million euros.

### **Limitations**

- The main challenge for the Zagreb For Me project is to continue to increase the participation of stakeholder groups and citizens and ensure ongoing budget allocation from the city government.

### **Sustainability and repeatability**

- Zagreb For Me shows an innovative alternative methodology in contrast to the already established planning procedures that fundamentally rely on the role of institutions. It provides space for the seamless integration of opinions and data from the public and experts into the process. In this way, a fair, impartial and collaborative solution to the challenges of modern urban development can be achieved.
- However, as mentioned above, securing an ongoing budget is a challenge for the city of Zagreb that poses risks for the sustainability and continuation of the project.

### **Additional materials**

- <https://urbact.eu/revitalisation-public-spaces>
- <https://use.metropolis.org/case-studies/zagreb-for-me---revitalisation-of-public-spaces-in-zagreb>
- <https://energy-cities.eu/best-practice/zagreb-for-me/>
- [https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/482\\_Zagreb\\_Gpsummary.pdf](https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/482_Zagreb_Gpsummary.pdf)
- <https://prizes.new-european-bauhaus.eu/node/268331>
- [https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/482\\_Zagreb\\_Gpsummary.pdf](https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/482_Zagreb_Gpsummary.pdf)

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