Educators guidebook

Intergenerational Dialogue for the Future of My City

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Intergenerational Dialogue for the Future of My City

Introduction

This guidebook, **Intergenerational Dialogue for the Future of My City**, is a product of the "Future for All" project, created to inspire educators in Warsaw (and across Poland) to **engage both youth and elderly participants** in meaningful discussions about the future of their cities.

Although the guidebook is based on Warsaw's specific context, it can be adapted for use in other cities, addressing local challenges that resonate with urban communities nationwide.

WHY THIS GUIDEBOOK?

Our cities are changing rapidly, and with those changes come new challenges and opportunities. From the ageing population to increasing migration, from the impact of climate change to the digital revolution, the issues we face today will shape our cities for decades to come. This guidebook offers educators a practical resource to help young and older generations understand and respond to these shifts.

The guidebook is structured in a way that allows educators to work with intergenerational groups, fostering dialogue and mutual understanding. However, it can just as easily be used with each age group independently. Whether you are focusing on the younger generation's perspective or helping older adults explore their role in the future of the city, the materials are designed to adapt to your needs.

It focuses on Warsaw as a case study, but the lessons and methods presented here are relevant to cities across Poland and beyond. Whether you work in a school, a community centre, or a local organisation, this guidebook provides you with a framework to foster dialogue, helping your participants think critically about the future of their city.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook is designed to be used flexibly across various educational settings. You can integrate its content into workshops, classroom discussions, or community events. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of urban life—demography, migration, climate change, and digitalisation—providing clear explanations of the issues, followed by ideas for group discussions and activities.

The guidebook is structured to encourage collaboration between generations, but it can be used just as effectively within a single age group. The issues discussed affect both the young and the elderly, but in different ways. By facilitating dialogue between these two groups, educators can help bridge the generational gap and foster mutual understanding.

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSIONS

At the heart of the guidebook are practical activities that educators can tailor to their group's needs. These might include scenario-based planning, where participants imagine different futures for their city and debate the best ways to adapt to those changes. Or they might involve problem-solving exercises, where participants brainstorm solutions to specific urban challenges, such as making their city more inclusive or environmentally friendly.

Each chapter offers prompts and questions to stimulate discussion, encouraging participants to think about how they can actively shape the future of their community. These activities are designed to be engaging and interactive, ensuring that both younger and older participants feel heard and involved—whether in separate groups or together in an intergenerational setting.

A RESOURCE FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Whether you are planning a one-off workshop or an ongoing series of lessons, this guidebook is a resource you can return to again and again. The issues facing our cities are complex, but by working together—across generations or within them—we can find solutions that benefit everyone.

With this guidebook in hand, you have the tools to inspire conversation, foster collaboration, and empower participants to take an active role in shaping the future of their cities. Let this be the starting point for deeper dialogue in your community, where the insights of both youth and elderly come together to build a better tomorrow.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Demography

Why is this topic important for youth and the elderly?

> Understanding demography **is crucial for young people**, as they are the ones who will inherit and shape the future of their city.

As Warsaw's population changes, with fewer births and an ageing community, young people will face new challenges and opportunities. By being aware of these trends, **youth can better prepare for shifts in the job market, urban development, and social services**. Engaging with demographic information **helps young people to actively participate in planning for a future** that is inclusive and sustainable. This knowledge also **empowers them to influence policies and decisions** that will directly impact their (adult) lives and communities. **Educators** have the responsibility to equip young people with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate a future shaped by demographic changes. By understanding the trends, educators can help youth develop a deeper awareness of issues such as ageing populations, shifting job markets and urban development, empowering them to become active participants in shaping their own future but also that of their communities.

For older adults, understanding demography is about recognising their growing role in a changing society. As Warsaw's population ages, the needs of the elderly become increasingly important. By staying informed about these trends, **older adults can advocate for the services and infrastructure** that will support their wellbeing and independence. This knowledge also **helps them stay engaged in their communities**, contributing their experience and wisdom to address new challenges. Understanding demographic changes **allows the elderly to remain active participants in shaping a city** that values and supports people of all ages, ensuring that they are not just cared for but also empowered to continue making meaningful contributions to society. **Educators working with older adults** play a great role in helping them understand the broader demographic shifts that affect their lives. By doing so, they can empower the elderly to advocate for the services and infrastructure they need, and to remain active, engaged members of their communities.

2. 1. Current demographic overview

What have been the trends until now?

Over the past few decades, Warsaw has undergone significant demographic shifts that have shaped its current landscape. Some of these key trends are:

Post-1989 population growth:
- The population increased from 1.6 million to around 2 million residents.
- Although significant, this growth was slower than the expansion seen after World War II, when the city grew by tens of thousands each year in the 1950s and 60s.

Warsaw's attraction for migrants:
- For many years now, Warsaw has been Poland's most attractive city for migrants, especially those aged 18 to 44.
- The city has a higher influx of women than men, leading to a gender imbalance.

- This imbalance is creating a unique social dynamic, with statistics showing that one in seven women faces a reduced likelihood of starting a family.

Internal migration patterns:
- Significant movement of residents from central districts to outer areas and suburbs.
- Between 1989 and 2017, around 213,000 registered residents moved from Warsaw to the suburbs, while only 110,000 moved back into the city.

Ageing population:
- By the end of 2017, 27.2% of Warsaw's registered population was aged 60 or older, with 13.5% over 70.
- This marks a notable increase from 2002, where 21.5% were over 60, and 11.5% were over 70.

Where are we?

> Understanding the true population of Warsaw requires a variety of estimates that reflect the city's dynamic nature to be taken into account. As of 2023, Warsaw's population was estimated at 1.86 million residents. However, only 1.68 million of those are officially registered within the city's boundaries.

Population within the city is more complex than official statistics.

The population of Warsaw can be viewed through a number of lenses, resulting in varying estimates. For example, the official count in 2020 had it at around 1.79 million, while broader estimates based on tracking the activity of mobile phones within Warsaw's administrative limits suggested that the total number – which included unregistered residents – was closer to 1.97 million. That is nearly 200,000 more than the number of registered residents. These numbers can be referred to as resident or nighttime population, so the people who are present during the nighttime hours.

Daytime population refers to the number of people present in a city or specific area during the day, typically from morning to evening.

What counts as the daytime population of Warsaw (in 2023)?
- Registered residents (1.79 million)
- Unregistered residents (approximately 180,000)
- Commuters and Visitors (e.g. from the metropolitan area) (378,000)
- Tourists and Business Travelers (78,000)

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Raport z projektowania Warszawy: Ilu nas jest, a ilu nas będzie?

> In 2023 there were 859,624 male and 1,001,975 female residents living in Warsaw, which means that the feminisation rate in Warsaw is at 117. This is a big advantage compared to other cities in Poland, for which the feminization rate is 111.

The feminisation rate is a coefficient to determine the relationship between number of women and men, i.e. the number of women per 100 men. More male babies are born in Warsaw each year, but women tend to live longer and have a higher likelihood of living in Warsaw. Compared to other major cities in Poland, Warsaw in 2023 had the second highest feminisation rate (after Łódź).
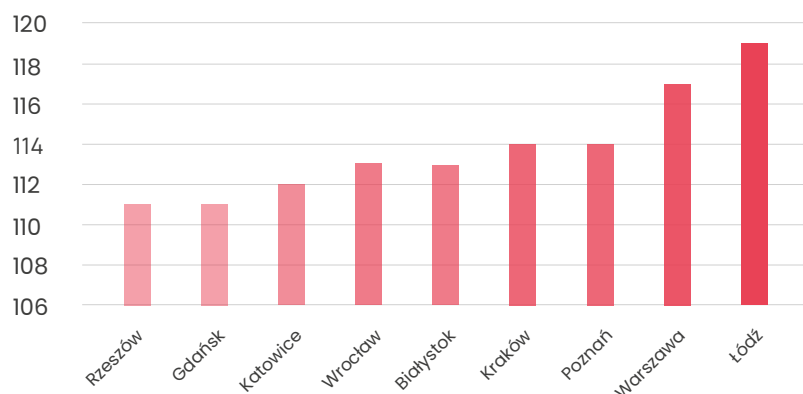
In more developed countries, the feminisation rate tends to be higher, due to longer life expectancy among women. In less developed countries the opposite is true; there, the ma-sculinisation ratio is higher.

Source: Statistics Poland, (n.d.)

Statistics Poland (GUS) uses specific age categories to describe the population's functional age structure. Each group has different and distinct characteristics and needs that affect their way of living in a city, or might affect their decisions about moving within or outside the city.

Pre-Working Age (0-17 years)
Includes infants, children and adolescents

Key needs:
- **Education:** Quality primary and secondary schools, early childhood education centers.
- **Healthcare:** Access to pediatricians, vaccination programs, specialized care.
- **Services:** Childcare facilities, support for developmental needs.
- **Recreation:** Safe parks, paygrounds, extracurricular activities, sports programs.

Mobile Working Age (18-44 years)
Young adults establishing careers, pursuing higher education, and starting families.

Key needs:
- **Employment:** Job opportunities in diverse sectors, professional development programs.
- **Housing:** Affordable and accessible urban housing, proximity to workplaces, or family homes suitable for raising children.
- **Family support:** Childcare services, parental leave, family healthcare.
- **Healthcare:** General healthcare, mental health services, reproductive health services.
- **Transportation:** Efficient public transport, bike lanes, and pedestrain-firendly infrastructure.
- **Social life:** Entertainment option such as restaurants, bars, theaters, and cultural events.

Older Working Age: Men (45-64 years), Women (45-59 years)
Young adults establishing careers, pursuing higher education, and starting families.

Key needs:
- **Job Stability:** Continued carrer opportunities, retaining programs, and job security.
- **Healthcare:** Preventive care, management of cgronic illnesses, wellness programs.
- **Recreation:** Recreational activities suited to their age group, including fitness centers, walking trails, and cultural activities.
- **Community:** Opportunities for social engagement and community involvement.

Source: Statistics Poland, (n.d.)

Post-Working Age: Men (65 years and older), Women (60 years and older)
Retired individuals focusing on health, leisure, and community involvement.

Key needs:
· **Healthcare:** Comprehersive geriatric care, long-term care options, regular healt check-ups.
· **Social Security:** Adequate pension, social security benefits.
· **Recreational Activities:** Social clubs, community centers, cultural events, senior fitness programs.
· **Mobility:** Public transportation sevices adapted for seniors, pedestrian-fiendly infrastructure.

Source: Statistics Poland, (n.d.)

> Warsaw's population dynamics over the past two decades reveal significant shifts with crucial implications for the city's future. While the working-age population remains robust, two critical trends stand out: the relatively small but gradually increasing youth population, and the rapidly growing senior demographic.

Figure 1. Warsaw population's functional age structure in 2003, 2013, and 2023.
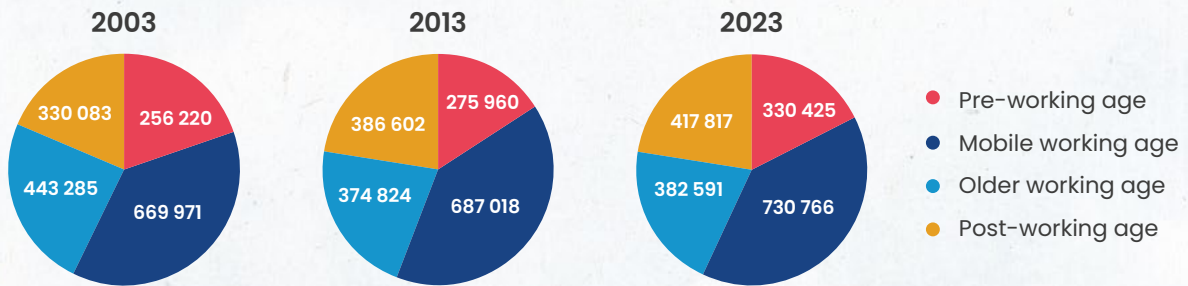
Source: Statistics Poland, (n.d.)

Despite being the smallest segment, the number of children and teenagers has seen a slight upward trend. This increase indicates a need for expanded educational resources, childcare facilities, and recreational areas to support young families and foster a supportive environment for future generations.

The most notable trend is the significant rise in the post-working age group. As the senior population grows, there is escalating demand for healthcare services, retirement planning, and senior-friendly infrastructure. This trend is reflective of broader European patterns of ageing populations, where improvements in healthcare and living standards have led to longer life expectancies.

The mobile working-age group continues to be the largest demographic, driving the city's economic vitality. However, this group's stable numbers mask underlying pressures from an ageing workforce transitioning to retirement, requiring strategic workforce planning and continuous professional development opportunities.

Warsaw's future demographic trends and their implications for the city

Demographic forecasts are a crucial tool for planning and policymaking, but they come with inherent challenges. One of the primary issues is the unpredictability of human behaviour and external factors. Demographic models often rely on assumptions that may not hold true over time, leading to potential inaccuracies. Censuses and surveys also have limitations that can impact the reliability of the projections. As a result, while demographic forecasts are valuable for guiding decisions, they should be used with caution, and there should always be flexibility in planning to adapt to changing circumstances. Demographic forecasts can be shaped by a variety of factors, including:

- Geopolitical situation
- Competition between cities (e.g. to attract migrants)
- Birth rates
- Pace of new housing developments

- Country's development
- City's expansin (e.g. suburban growth)
- Family sizes
- Changes in job market and wages

- Changes in city's population
- Environmental issues (e.g. air pollution)
- Road networks
- Urban and suburban transportation

Sources: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Polityka senioralna m.st. Warszawy; Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Raport o stanie miasta 2023; Śleszyński, P. (2020). Przegląd Geograficzny: Prognoza demograficzna dla Warszawy

The most recent demographic analysis for Warsaw, conducted in 2020 at the request of the Warsaw City Hall, serves as a crucial foundation for understanding the city's future by developing six potential scenarios for its demographics. This forecast, compiled by the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization at the Polish Academy of Sciences, is the latest and most comprehensive study available, making it an essential resource for predicting the city's population trends.

The analysis takes into account a variety of influential factors, such as migration patterns, birth and death rates, and economic conditions, which shape the city's population dynamics. Each scenario presents unique challenges and opportunities, offering insights into how Warsaw's population might evolve and what this could mean for its infrastructure, services, and community life.

Continuation Scenario: A Steady Pace

Warsaw stays the course with moderate population growth, reaching around 1.95 million people by 2050. The city ages naturally, with the proportion of people over 60 rising significantly – by then, one in four residents could be a senior citizen. Younger cohorts shrink slightly, but the working-age group remains relatively stable.

Across the city's boroughs, the inner districts like Śródmieście and Praga Północ might see some population decline as families move to quieter, outer neighbourhoods. Places like Wilanów and Białołęka continue to grow, with new housing developments drawing younger families and professionals. Warsaw's challenge will be to maintain the vibrancy of its core while supporting its ageing population with services and infrastructure tailored to their needs. Public services, particularly healthcare and elder care, become more crucial, while schools may see a slight dip in enrolment.

The Suburbanisation Scenario: The Lure of the Suburbs

Warsaw's population drifts outward to the suburbs, leaving the city (and especially the centre) less populated. By 2050, the city's overall population could dip to under 1.8 million, especially in the central districts.

Boroughs like Białołęka, Ursus, and Wilanów still experience some growth as new residential areas expand to meet demand. However, areas outside the city, with their new housing and family-friendly environments, draw the younger population, leading to bustling suburban communities. Meanwhile, central areas such as Śródmieście and Praga Północ could face a more noticeable population drop, potentially leaving them quieter and more oriented toward older residents who choose to stay.

The age structure in the city shifts as well, with the smallest share of the pre-working age population of around 13%. The challenge for Warsaw lies in managing this suburban sprawl, ensuring that the city's infrastructure can handle the increased demand in the outskirts while preventing the city centre from becoming underutilised or unsuitable for the prevailing older demographic.

The Concentration Scenario: A Return to Urban Living

Here the trend reverses, and Warsaw experiences a renaissance of urban living. By 2050, more people are choosing to live in the city's core, driving population growth in districts like Żoliborz, Mokotów and Ochota, which in the first two scenarios experienced a decline. In 2050, the population of Warsaw is over 2.2 million, giving the second largest projection.

This scenario envisions Warsaw's quality of life steadily improving, supported by reduced air pollution and the continued expansion of transportation networks, including the subway system.

The age structure does not reflect such a substantial drop of pre-working and working age groups as working-age adults and families seek the benefits of living close to work, schools, and cultural attractions. Nonetheless, this is the scenario in which the highest share of older residents live in the city, making up approximately 28% of Warsaw's population.

The Polarisation Scenario: A Bubble City

In this scenario, Warsaw becomes a city marked by deepening socio-economic divides, with the capital benefiting at the expense of the rest of the country. By 2050, the city's population could reach the upper end of projections, potentially hitting 2.2 million residents. This growth is driven largely by internal migration, as people from economically struggling regions across Poland flock to Warsaw in search of better opportunities.

However, while this scenario brings economic advantages to Warsaw, it comes with significant downsides for the rest of Poland. The influx of people into the capital exacerbates disparities, leading to a stark polarisation between affluent and less wealthy areas within the city.

In terms of age structure, this scenario would see a mix, with a relatively stable number of younger pre--working age people, a slight decline of the working-age population, alongside an ageing population that remains in less dynamic areas. The challenge for Warsaw will be to manage these socio-economic disparities, ensuring that growth does not come at the cost of social cohesion.

The Low Immigration Scenario: A Slow, Steady Drift

Warsaw experiences a high level of international immigration, with the city's population projected to reach around 2.175 million by 2050. While this scenario anticipates a somewhat greater influx of immigrants than the Continuation Scenario, it remains limited to individuals from culturally similar regions, such as Ukraine, other former Soviet states, and Western Europe. These immigrants tend to have fertility rates comparable to those in Poland, which means they do not significantly alter the city's broader demographic trends.

Some districts, such as Praga Południe and Targówek, are likely to maintain their current population levels by 2050, as the balance between natural ageing and incoming migrants from within Poland helps stabilize these areas. Outer areas, such as Białołęka and Wilanów, will continue to experience growth. These districts attract families seeking more space, which helps them retain a younger demographic compared to more central areas.

The city's age structure aligns to a large extent with the Polarisation scenario.

The High Immigration Scenario: A Global Warsaw

In this scenario,

Warsaw experiences a significant influx of international immigrants, leading to robust population growth that could see the city's population reach between 2.1 million and 2.25 million by 2050. This growth is primarily fuelled by an increase in immigration from abroad, particularly from regions with higher fertility rates, which helps to counterbalance the city's ageing trend.

The age structure in this scenario is more balanced than in the low immigration scenario. The influx of younger immigrants and families helps to rejuvenate the city's demographic profile. This is the only scenario which foresees the share of the pre-working age group exceeding 20% of the city's population.

However, the city faces the challenge of ensuring that its infrastructure can keep pace with this rapid growth and can accommodate the needs of each working group. Additionally, social integration becomes a crucial focus, as Warsaw works to create a cohesive community that embraces its new multicultural identity.

Based on the scenarios and overall trends, we can expect the following:

Undercounting and migration appeal:
The true population of Warsaw is likely higher than official statistics suggest. Research estimates that nearly 2 million people actually live in the city, including those who are not officially registered.

Migration as a key driver:
The future population of Warsaw will be heavily influenced by migration, both from within Poland and from abroad. These migration patterns are closely linked to the country's socio-economic conditions, particularly changes in the job market (for more information related to migration, please see page 17).

Fertility trends and population stability:
Warsaw may not experience a significant decline in family size, a trend often associated with advanced demographic transitions. This stability in fertility rates offers some reassurance that the city's population will not decline as sharply as might be expected.

Population projections:
The most likely scenario suggests a peak population of around 2.044 million in 2028, followed by a gradual decline. This decline will be accompanied by a significant ageing of the population, with those over 60 years old likely to make up more than 25% of the population by 2050.

Varying demographic trends across districts:
The city's districts are likely to experience different demographic shifts. Central areas like Śródmieście and Praga Północ may see a decrease in population, while districts such as Białołęka, Wilanów and Ursus are expected to keep growing. Meanwhile, some outer districts, such as Ursynów, could face a period of stagnation.

Growth challenges and opportunities:
A stagnant or even slightly declining population is not necessarily a threat to the city. Warsaw's future success will depend more on the quality of its human capital than sheer numbers. This focus on human capital could mitigate traditional concerns about the demographic burden, such as the ratio of non-working to working-age residents.

Social inequality as a greater concern:
The potential decline in population is not as significant a challenge as the growing social inequalities within the city. Addressing these disparities will be crucial to ensuring that Warsaw remains not only a vibrant and economically viable capital, but also a socially cohesive one.

2.2. Ageing population and the challenges and opportunities it presents for the city's future

Regardless of which demographic forecast for Warsaw ultimately comes to pass, one thing is certain: the city's population is ageing.

As the number of elderly residents steadily increases, this demographic shift will bring both challenges and opportunities that will affect all of us – whether as individual residents, family members, or part of smaller communities.

Statistics Poland forecasts that during the third decade of the 21st century, the growth rate of people aged 60 and above in Warsaw will slow down, with an estimated population of 490,000 by 2030.

However, there will be a notable increase in the number of residents aged 80 and over, expected to reach 127,000. This phenomenon, known as **"double ageing"**, refers to the simultaneous increase in the overall elderly population and the particularly rapid growth of the oldest age groups.

Old age is a phase of life that varies significantly within itself

Old age is a phase of life that varies significantly within itself. Demographers typically divide it into at least two stages: early old age (often referred to as the third age) and late old age (also known as the fourth age or advanced old age).

If we consider 80 years as the beginning of the fourth age, then in 2023, nearly 96,000 people in Warsaw were in this age group – 65,700 women and 30,000 men. Individuals in the late old age stage are statistically more likely to experience frequent or serious health issues.

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Polityka senioralna m.st. Warszawy

Challenges posed by an ageing population

From Statistics Poland's survey of the health status of the country's population (2021) several key issues and characteristics can be concluded.

As individuals reach late old age, particularly those over 80, they often experience more serious and frequent health issues. This stage of life is also marked by increased limitations in independence, and a higher likelihood of disability. Loneliness and social isolation become more prevalent, and there is a significant rise in depressive symptoms within this age group.

These challenges highlight the growing necessity for enhanced health and care services tailored specifically to the needs of the elderly. While not every person over 80 experiences these difficulties, these frequent issues highlight the increasing demand for specialised support and resources.

People who are in their late old age stage statistically get sick more often or more seriously	They are also more often affected by limitations in independence and disability
The greates increase in depressive symptoms is also observed among the elderly	They are more often lonely

While not every individual over the age of 80 faces these challenges and limitations, the number of peopl in this age group serves as a clear indicator of the growing demand for health and care services.

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Polityka senioralna m.st. Warszawy

Glossary

Geriatric care
Medical care focusing on the health and wellbeing of elderly individuals, addressing the complex needs of this age group.

Informal caregivers
Family members or friends who provide care to elderly individuals without formal training or compensation.

Fourth-floor prisoners
Elderly individuals who live in upper floors of buildings without elevators, making it difficult for them to leave their homes.

As Warsaw's population continues to age, there are several key challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that older residents receive the support and care they need. Here's a breakdown of the major areas of concern:

Healthcare Challenges

Rising demand for geriatric care:
With the increase in the elderly population, there is a growing need for specialised geriatric care. This is particularly important given that older adults are more likely to experience serious health issues.Warsaw faces a significant rise in health conditions related to ageing, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and respiratory issues. The prevalence of these conditions increases with age, and the percentage of seniors experiencing multiple health issues simultaneously (multimorbidity) is also on the rise. Cognitive decline, including conditions such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease, is another significant challenge that comes with an ageing population. These conditions not only affect the individuals who suffer from them, but also place a heavy burden on families, caregivers, and the healthcare system.

Challenge?
The healthcare system must adapt to provide long-term care and management for these health conditions, which will likely increase demand for both hospital services and home--based care.

Social Challenges

Expansion of social support systems:
The primary source of support for older adults with disabilities or those who need help with daily activities is the family. This care is often provided by spouses, who may themselves be elderly and in need of support.

Challenge?
As the population ages, the strain on informal caregivers is increasing. There is a growing need to provide comprehensive support for these caregivers, who play a critical role in the wellbeing of the elderly. Additionally, new methods must be developed to reach families in need of support who may not know how to seek help.

Addressing social isolation:
Many elderly individuals live alone, which can be crucial for their sense of independence. However, living alone can also lead to social isolation and difficulties in daily functioning, particularly if they live in inaccessible housing.

Challenge?
Social isolation is a significant issue, especially for those who live in buildings without elevators and have limited mobility. These individuals, often referred to as "fourth-floor prisoners", are effectively trapped in their homes, leading to increased feelings of loneliness and helplessness.

Housing and Infrastructure Challenges

Need for senior-friendly housing:
Many seniors live in housing that is not suited to their needs, such as buildings without elevators or homes that lack accessibility features such as ramps, walk-in showers, and grab bars.

Challenge?
There is a growing need for developing and adapting housing to be more senior-friendly, ensuring that older adults can live independently for as long as possible. This includes both retrofitting existing homes and designing new housing that meets the needs of an ageing population.

Adaptations in public spaces and transport:
Public spaces and transport systems must be adapted to cater for the mobility challenges faced by many older adults. This includes making public transport more accessible, creating pedestrian-friendly environments, and ensuring that public spaces are safe and comfortable for seniors.

Challenge?
Adapting the city's infrastructure to the needs of an ageing population will require significant investments and thoughtful urban planning. Ensuring that public spaces are accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability, is crucial for creating an inclusive city.

Economic Challenges

Strain on pension systems:
As the elderly population grows, the financial burden on pension systems increases. As more individuals retire and live longer, the ratio of working-age individuals to retirees decreases, leading to a higher dependency ratio. This means fewer workers are contributing to the pension system while more people are drawing benefits.

Challenge?
Ensuring the viability of the pension system will require reform or adaptation, such as increasing contributions, raising the retirement age, or adjusting benefits.

Adaptations in public spaces and transport:
Public spaces and transport systems must be adapted to cater for the mobility challenges faced by many older adults. This includes making public transport more accessible, creating pedestrian-friendly environments, and ensuring that public spaces are safe and comfortable for seniors.

Challenge?
Adapting the city's infrastructure to the needs of an ageing population will require significant investments and thoughtful urban planning. Ensuring that public spaces are accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability, is crucial for creating an inclusive city.

Sources: European Commission. (2021). Green Paper on Ageing: Fostering solidarity and responsibility between generations.;
Götmark, F., Cafaro, P., & O'Sullivan, J. (2018). Aging Human Populations: Good for Us, Good for the Earth. Trends in Ecology & Evolution, 33(11), 851-862.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2018.08.015; Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Polityka senioralna m.st. Warszawy

> **Warsaw's ageing population faces a range of significant health challenges, as outlined in the Senior Citizen Policy of the City of Warsaw (Urząd m.st. Warszawy, 2023).**
>
> The most common illnesses among elderly residents include cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory issues, and hypertension, among others. Conditions such as osteoarthritis, diabetes, and cognitive disorders are also prevalent, significantly impacting the quality of life for many seniors.

Main major illnesses among elderly Warsaw residents

Cardiovascular diseases

Cancer diseases

Respiratiry diseases

Hypertension

Back pains
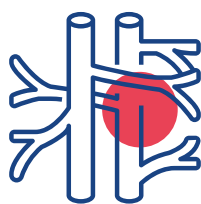
Coronary artery disease

Osteoarthritis

Diabetes
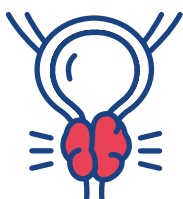
Prostatic hyperplasia in men

Urinary incontinence

Cognitive disorders
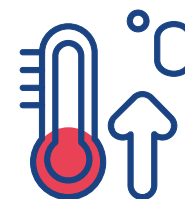
Climate change sensitivity ailments

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Polityka senioralna m.st. Warszawy

> As the city's population continues to age, it is **crucial that the healthcare system adapt to meet these growing needs**. This will require not only increased capacity for treating these conditions, but also a strong focus on preventive care. Educating both the elderly and younger generations on healthy habits, such as regular physical activity, a balanced diet and mental exercises, can help reduce the prevalence of these conditions. Additionally, awareness programmes on the importance of early detection and management of chronic diseases can empower residents to take control of their health.

Good Practice Box: Co-housing initiatives for the elderly in Denmark

Co-housing for the elderly in Denmark is a growing trend, with several hundred communities across the country. Each community typically houses between 20 to 40 residents, offering a blend of private and communal living. These communities are increasingly popular, especially as Denmark's population ages and more seniors seek to live independently while enjoying social support.

Balancen (The Balance) is a senior co-living estate in Ry, near Aarhus, designed for residents aged 50+ without children at home. The community, set in a nature-rich environment, offers 33 wooden units arranged like a small village, each with individual access and visibility of shared facilities from all homes. The estate encourages active participation in community life and is built to meet sustainable standards.

Source: Sustainable Senior Coliving Built in Wood and Reused materials. Vandkunsten Architects. (n.d.). https://vandkunsten.com/en/projects/balancen–ry–seniorcoliving

Points for Discussion:

- Engage in discussion on how can we encourage and support older adults who wish to remain in the workforce, and what policies could facilitate this?

- Discuss with your group what kind of public spaces and transport systems in Warsaw should be redesigned or retrofitted to better meet the needs of its future population?

- Ask the group how we, as part of the community, can address the issue of social isolation, particularly among those living alone in inaccessible housing?

- What kinds of support systems could be developed to assist informal caregivers? Could technology and innovative solutions help in any way? Brainstorm your own technological solutions.

- Encourage your group to engage in an activity that helps them experience and understand the challenges faced by older adults. Use tools like ageing simulators or VR applications that simulate conditions such as reduced mobility, impaired vision, or dementia. After the simulation, discuss the insights gained. How did these experiences change their perspective on the daily struggles of the elderly? How can this understanding influence their actions and attitudes towards older adults in their community?

Opportunities arising from an ageing population

Glossary

Silver economy:
a system of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services aimed at tapping the purchasing potential of the elderly and ageing, and meeting their consumption, living, and health needs. (The National Institute for the Senior Economy)

Preventive care:
involves healthcare services aimed at preventing illnesses or health problems before they arise. It includes regular check-ups, screenings, immunisations and lifestyle advice to detect and address risk factors early on. The goal is to maintain health, catch issues early, and reduce the chances of serious conditions, ultimately improving health outcomes and lowering healthcare costs.

As cities like Warsaw experience an ageing population, it's important to recognise that this demographic shift brings not only challenges but also benefits to the entire community.

Everyone can benefit from the strengths, experiences, and wisdom of older adults, cities can create more inclusive, vibrant, and resilient communities.

To fully grasp the opportunities that an ageing population presents, it's helpful to break down these benefits into specific areas where older adults can significantly contribute to the community's well-being. The table below highlights key economic, social, healthcare and infrastructural opportunities that can arise as Warsaw's population ages.

Healthcare and Well-being Opportunities

Focus on preventive care:
An ageing population often leads to increased attention on healthcare, particularly preventive care. This shift can improve overall public health outcomes as societies invest more in health maintenance, chronic disease management and wellness programmes, benefiting people of all ages.

Community involvement:
Older adults in Warsaw often have the time, skills, and motivation to contribute to their communities through volunteer work. Whether it's tutoring children, organising cultural events or assisting in community gardens, senior volunteers could enrich Warsaw's community life with their dedication and expertise. Their contributions could help strengthen social services, support vulnerable populations, and enhance the overall wellbeing of the city.

Social Opportunities

Mentorship and guidance:
Older adults possess a wealth of knowledge and experience that can be invaluable to younger generations. Through mentorship programmes in schools, universities and workplaces, seniors can share their expertise and provide guidance.

Cultural and educational exchanges:
Programmes that bring together seniors and younger people for cultural and educational exchanges can break down generational barriers in an ageing city. These interactions can enrich the community by promoting mutual respect, empathy, and a deeper understanding of different life experiences.

Civic leadership:
Many older adults in Warsaw (and Poland) are eager to stay engaged in civic life and bring a lifetime of experience to the table. They can play a crucial role in local government, advisory boards, and community planning committees.

Housing and Infrastructure Opportunities

Intergenerational housing and living arrangements:
Innovative housing solutions that bring together different generations, such as intergenerational living projects, can foster mutual support and understanding. Warsaw could explore such models where nursing homes are co-located with childcare services (see example below).

Rethinking urban development:
Ageing populations prompt cities to rethink how they are designed and developed. There is an opportunity to create more age-friendly environments with accessible public spaces, transport systems and housing.

Intergenerational housing and living arrangements:
Rather than pursuing endless population growth, ageing societies can focus on achieving balanced growth that prioritises sustainability, equity and quality of life.

Economic Opportunities

Tighter labour markets:
As the working-age population shrinks, labour markets can become tighter, leading to increased wages and better working conditions. This can particularly benefit underrepresented groups such as women, young people and older adults themselves, who may find new opportunities in the workforce.

Silver economy: innovation in age-related industries:
With Warsaw's ageing population, there is (and will be) a growing demand for innovative healthcare solutions such as telemedicine, wearable health monitors and home-based care technologies.

Leisure and tourism:
Older adults are increasingly seeking active and fulfilling lifestyles. Warsaw can capitalise on this by expanding its cultural and leisure amenities, promoting the city as a senior-friendly destination, and boosting the local economy through increased tourism and service industry activities.

Source: Götmark, F., Cafaro, P., & O'Sullivan, J. (2018). Aging Human Populations: Good for Us, Good for the Earth. Trends in Ecology & Evolution, 33(11), 851–862. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2018.08.015; Griva, A., Mitroulia, M., & Armakolas, S. (2024). Strategic management of the silver economy: A European perspective. European Journal of Management and Marketing Studies.; Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Polityka senioralna m.st. Warszawy

Good Practice Box: Co-locating childcare and eldercare

A growing trend around the world involves the co-location of childcare and eldercare programmes under one roof (or within one site), known as intergenerational shared sites. These programmes bring together the youngest and oldest members of society, fostering relationships across generations in a shared environment.

Apples and Honey Nightingale is the United Kingdom's pioneering intergenerational pre-school and daycare, catering to children from 3 months to five years old. Located within the grounds of Nightingale House, a care home for older adults, this nursery offers a unique setting where children and elderly residents engage in daily intergenerational activities.

The intergenerational programme at Apples and Honey Nightingale involves multiple daily interactions between the nursery children and the care home residents. These activities, which were carefully piloted on-site, are designed to be mutually beneficial, offering therapeutic, educational and meaningful engagements that enhance the lives of both the young and the elderly.
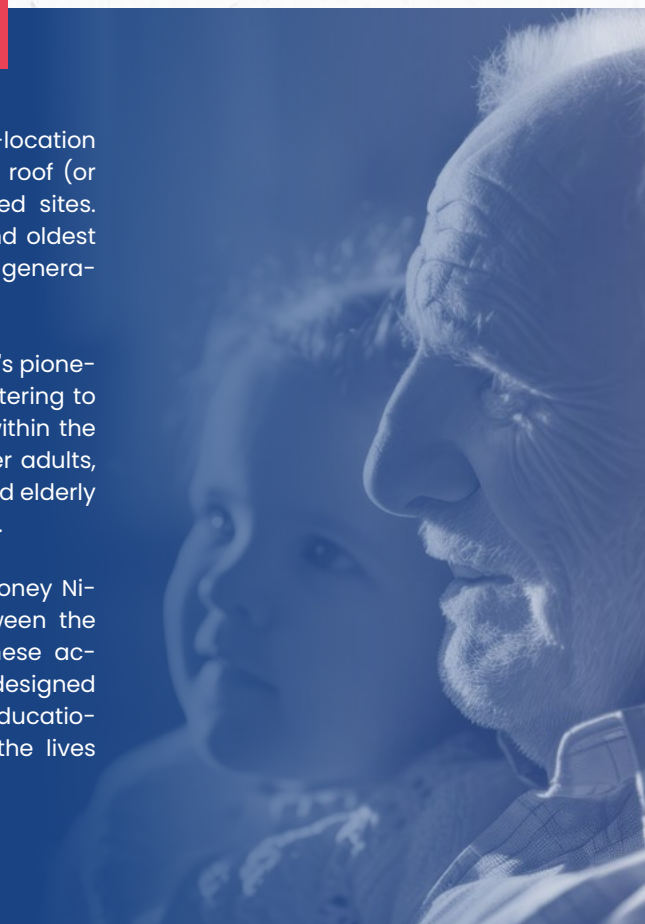
The documented benefits of the programme include:

For the elderly residents

Relief from being the object of care: The elderly participants experience a break from focusing on their aches and pains.

Befriending and socialising: Regular interactions with the children help prevent social isolation and depression among the elderly.

Cognitive stimulation: The residents benefit from both active cognitive stimulation through direct learning and participation in activities, as well as passive cognitive stimulation through observing the children's play and interactions.

Reminiscing: The programme allows the elderly to remember and process earlier experiences of childhood, which can be deeply therapeutic.

Sense of purpose: The residents gain a renewed sense of purpose by leading activities, sharing experiences, and helping to guide the children.

Increased physical mobility: Participation in activities with the children helps improve the residents' physical coordination, balance and strength.

For nursery children

Enhanced social skills: Children involved in the intergenerational programme develop stronger social skills as they regularly interact with elderly residents. These interactions teach children the value of empathy, patience and respect for others.

Exposure to positive role models: The elderly residents serve as positive role models for the children, demonstrating kindness, wisdom and resilience.

Development of patience and emotional regulation: Interacting with older adults, who may move or speak at a slower pace, teaches children patience and the ability to regulate their emotions. These interactions require the children to slow down and adapt to the needs of the residents.

Understanding and acceptance of diversity: Through regular contact with elderly residents who have different physical abilities, cognitive capabilities and life experiences, children learn to appreciate and accept diversity.

Source: Apples and Honey Nightingale. (n.d.).
https://www.applesandhoneynightingale.com/

2.3. The impact of the declining birth rate and the implications for future generations

As entire countries and cities within them (like Warsaw) confront the realities of declining birth rates, it is essential to understand the implications this trend has for future generations. The falling birth rate not only reshapes the demographic landscape, but also brings about significant social, economic and psychological consequences that will affect all aspects of life in the city. Below is an overview of what some of these changes are, and what they might mean:

1. Shift in age structure and dependency ratio: As elaborated in the previous section of the guidebook, an ageing population poses various potential challenges for future society, i.e. leads to a higher dependency ratio, meaning there are fewer working-age people to support the growing number of elderly individuals.

2. Changes in family dynamics and support systems: Smaller families mean fewer siblings, cousins and extended family members, potentially leading to less social support and a greater sense of isolation for individuals. Declining birth rates can lead to further changes in perception of gender roles, and to more diverse family structures, including single-parent households and childless couples.

3. Psychological and emotional impacts: The prospect of an ageing population and shrinking workforce can create a sense of anxiety and uncertainty about the future, particularly among young people. This could impact mental health and wellbeing, potentially leading to higher rates of depression and anxiety.

Sources: Goldscheider, Frances & Bernhardt, Eva & Lappegård, Trude. (2015). The Gender Revolution: A Framework for Understanding Changing Family and Demographic Behavior. Population and Development Review. 41. 207-239. 10.1111/j.1728-4457.2015.00045.x; Platt, M.L., Sterling, P. Declining human fertility and the epidemic of despair. Nat. Mental Health 2, 463–465 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1038/s44220-024-00241-1

> **Low fertility rates have been recorded in Poland since the late 1990s. The consequence of this state of affairs is depopulation. Several factors contribute to this trend:**

1. Demographic changes: there is a declining number of women of childbearing age in each successive generation;

2. Ineffective and unstable family policies;

3. Social factors: many young couples experience a sense of insecurity, and the various "costs" of motherhood can influence women's decisions about having more children. This includes the situation of mothers in the labour market, the "triple burden" they face, and the societal expectation of "self-sacrificing" mothers, which brings with it considerable social pressure.

Institute for Structural Research. (2022). Czy zwiększenie dzietności w Polsce jest możliwe? Institute for Structural Research. Retrieved from: https://ibs.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Czy-zwiekszenie-dziet-nosci-w-Polsce-jest-mozliwe.pdf.

Current fertility rates in Warsaw and Poland

> **1.16 was the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Poland in 2023.** Poland is among the European Union countries with the lowest fertility rates in the 21st century. The TFR for the Mazowieckie Voivodship was slightly higher (at 1.22). For Warsaw, the most recent TFR available is from 2021, which was 1.21 – lower than the then national average of 1.33 and the Mazowieckie Voivodship's rate of 1.39.

Source: Statistics Poland (n.d);

1.16

was the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Poland in 2023.

Preferences for Family Size

A study by the Centrum Badań Opinii Publicznej (CBOS) in 2019, which has been conducted every four years since 1996, revealed several key insights into the family size Poles wish to have:

Stable preference for two children: The most common preference among Poles has consistently been to have two children. This indicates that the ideal family size has remained relatively stable, even as the actual TFR has declined.

Declining interest in having one child: The preference for having only one child has decreased from a peak of 13% in 2000 to just 6% in 2019. Despite this, the overall low TFR suggests that economic, social, or personal factors may be leading families to stop at one child, or to have none at all, despite a stated preference for more children.

Rising preference for three or more children: There has been a noticeable increase in the percentage of people who prefer to have three or more children, rising from 23% in 1996 to 28% in 2019. This growing interest in larger families is at odds with the country's declining fertility rates, indicating a significant gap between desired and actual family size.

There is a noticeable gap between the small number of people who choose not to have children (voluntary childlessness) and the growing number of people who remain childless. This often happens due to various reasons, such as not finding the right partner, unstable finances or jobs, and worries about becoming a parent. Fertility problems also play a significant role, affecting around 20% of couples in Poland (World Health Organisation, 2023).

According to public opinion, the main reasons for low fertility rates in Poland are:
· Financial instability and concerns about the future (cited by 59% of respondents)
· Challenges related to housing (44%)
· Women's concerns about job security (42%)
· A growing trend of women prioritising their careers and embracing financial independence (27%)
· Struggles to balance family life with work commitments (26%)
· A perceived lack of state support, particularly in areas like education and child healthcare (23%)

Source: CBOS (2019). Preferowane i realizowane modele życia rodzinnego. Warszawa: CBOS https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2019/K_046_19.PDF

The Effects and Consequences of Delayed Parenthood

- When couples delay having children until they are older, the overall number of children had tends to decline.

- Delaying having children can be detrimental to the total number of children a person has, and can lead to more people being unable to have children due to age-related infertility.

- Delaying parenthood can impact how parents and their children connect, communicate, and relate to each other, while also affecting their relationships with grandparents. However, the quality of the parent-child relationship is ultimately more important than parental age.

- However, delaying parenthood is linked to a more stable family life, higher socio-economic status, better living conditions, and improved parenting practices.

Sources: Balbo, N., Billari, F. C., & Mills, M. (2013). Fertility in Advanced Societies: A Review of Research. European Journal of Population, 29(1), 1-38. doi:10.1007/s10680-012-9277-y; Barclay, K., & Myrskylä, M. (2016). Advanced Maternal Age and Offspring Outcomes: Reproductive Aging and Counterbalancing Period Trends. Population and Development Review, 42(1), 69–94. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44015615; Schmidt, L., Sobotka, T., Bentzen, J. G., & Nyboe Andersen, A. (2012). Demographic and medical consequences of the postponement of parenthood. Human Reproduction Update, 18(1), 29-43. doi:10.1093/humupd/dmr040

Points for Discussion:

- As families become smaller and more diverse, what role do grandparents play in supporting younger generations? How can older adults contribute to the wellbeing of their grandchildren, even in the context of modern family dynamics?

- How do societal expectations and pressures shape our views on family size and gender roles? What can young people do to challenge traditional stereotypes and create a more inclusive society that values diverse family structures? How do media affect these stereotypes?

- How can young and older generations work together to address the challenges posed by an ageing population and declining birth rates? What opportunities exist for intergenerational collaboration in your community?

- How can we balance the desire to preserve traditional family values with the need to adapt to modern societal changes? What lessons can be learned from older generations, and how can these be applied to contemporary life?

2.4. Key takeaways for trainers and educators

When addressing demographic trends and challenges, it is important to strike a balance between acknowledging the potential difficulties and emphasising the positive role each individual can play in shaping a better future.

1. Encourage critical thinking about the role of policy and community planning in adapting to these demographic changes, and how individuals can be proactive in shaping their future.

2. Engage in discussions about how to (or whether it is necessary to) preserve important family and community values while adapting to modern realities. Consider how both traditional and new approaches can coexist and complement each other.

3. Facilitate discussions that highlight the strengths and contributions of both young and older generations.

4. Highlight the role of civic engagement in shaping the future of cities. Discuss how everyone, regardless of age, can contribute to making their city a place where people want to live, work, and create friendships and families.

Migration

Migration is one of the key areas undergoing dynamic evolution over recent years. At the current pace, it seems like migration will only be increasing in the years to come.

Cities such as Warsaw are particularly important as hubs of migration flows.

Why is this topic important for youth and the elderly?

Migration is an important topic to discuss when considering the future of a city such as Warsaw. Understanding the types, drivers and consequences of migration is necessary for **young people** who will experience migration flows for years to come. The future Warsaw will most likely be a multi-cultural, multi-lingual place with many migrants from outside and within Poland. **Younger generations have a lot to offer to migrants** – they are inclusive, have good language skills, are used to travelling, and want to learn about other cultures. **Young people's willingness to accommodate and welcome the newcomers** to the city will be key to creating vibrant and thriving communities. Migrants will bring diversity to the city, benefiting **young people's inclusivity, social skills and resilience**. **Educators working with youth** can support young people in understanding the migration phenomenon as something that will inherently be a part of their lives. Educators can equip young people with the knowledge and empathy necessary to develop positive relationships with migrants and, in consequence, create equitable and supportive communities.

The elderly will witness migration trends that can change their long-term perception of their city. While changes can be difficult, well-organised integration between the elderly and migrants can create great opportunities for dialogue among these groups. Older adults can engage in community actions or volunteering to connect with migrant individuals. Older adults can offer migrants the wisdom and experience of being long-term residents, as well as support during the transition. At the same time, older adults can benefit from the increase of care and support workers, contributions to the pension system, and opportunities for diverse cultural interaction. Educators working with older adults can help them prepare for the cultural and social change in their immediate environment, break stereotypes and foster positive attitudes toward migrants, which will be a foundation for future interactions between these groups. Educators can create opportunities to connect the elderly with migrants in the community setting, contributing to greater diversity and integration.

3.1 Understanding migration

What is migration?

Migration is a complex topic that carries many stereotypes. As an educator, your job is to show how bias can affect our perceptions of migration. Positive and negative associations come from personal experiences, others' stories, media, urban legends, and so on. Understanding migration and explaining it to the groups you're working with at the beginning of every project is crucial.

Almost a million foreigners lived in Poland in July 2024. Currently, in major European cities, between 20-35% of their population are foreigners. In Warsaw, in July 2023, there were over 100,000 foreigners with active residence cards. An additional 110,000 registered Ukrainian refugees lived in Warsaw.

Migracje.gov.pl. (2024). Statystyki: Zakres Polska. https://migracje.gov.pl/statystyki/za-kres/polska/ (Accessed July 5, 2024). Mayors of Europe. (2024). EU cities with most immigrants. https://mayorsofeurope.eu/reports-analyses/eu-cities-with-most-immigrants/ (Accessed August 14, 2024). Urząd Miasta st. Warszawa. (2024). Statystyki: Cudzoziemcy. https://europa-swiat.um.warszawa.pl/-/statystyki-cudzoziemcy (Accessed August 14, 2024). Urząd Miasta st. Warszawa. (2024). Dane na temat kryzysu uchodźczego. https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/warszawa-w-liczbach/-/dane-na-temat-kryzysu-uchodzczego (Accessed August 14, 2024)

Migrations can be:

Where?	Internal: within country		International: to another country	
For how long?	Temporal: for a limited time period, e.g. seasonal, for an educational course, for a contract		Permanent: with no plans to return to their original home	
Why?	Voluntary: a person migrates to another place by choice		Forced: an involuntary or coerced movement of a person away from their home	

Voluntary migration

Voluntary migration might be the first thing that comes to mind for your participants when discussing migration. Voluntary migration is the result of choice, when people want to move to another country or city and choose where they want to go. There are a number of reasons why Poland and Warsaw are attractive to migrants.

What are the drivers of voluntary migration?

Better work opportunities	Migrants often choose destinations in which they have better work opportunities than in their country or city of origin. Some sectors can be more developed, and some regions may offer more jobs or better business opportunities. Where cities are concerned, the larger job market and greater variety of occupations available may be appealing to voluntary migrants.
Better living conditions	Bettering one's living conditions can be a reason to move from the migrant's country or city of origin. Factors that can contribute to such decisions are better social security, access to healthcare, better property market, access to services, etc. Big cities in general have a more developed social infrastructure, which is often more adapted to migrants' needs.
Family integration	Some migrants choose to travel to places in which they already have family and friends. Some migrants initially move to another place on their own, and their families follow later. In larger cities, migrants have better opportunities for arranging jobs or living conditions for arriving friends and family.
Better educational opportunities	Many migrants travel to obtain a better education. Sometimes education is a pathway to long-term migration. Others only travel for the study period, returning to their home country or city afterwards. Major cities offer a broader range of educational opportunities, with many public and private institutions as well as international programmes.
International community	Some migrants want to live in vibrant, multicultural communities to connect with people from all around the world. With a larger international community, the risk of discrimination can be lower. Megacities (especially in multicultural countries) that are home to people of many different origins are especially attractive to many migrants.
Cultural exchange	Some people migrate to get to know a chosen culture. Some follow their prior interest in certain cultures, or want to learn a foreign language. Cities boast a wealth of historical and cultural institutions, and offer numerous opportunities for engaging in hobbies.

Forced migration/involuntary displacement

Forced migration is a growing issue in the contemporary world. Living conditions in some places are becoming so rough that people need to migrate elsewhere to survive. Some people are moved to other locations against their will.

Forced migration is a migratory movement which involves force, compulsion or coercion. Involuntary displacement is the movement of people who have been forced or obliged to flee their homes to avoid armed conflict, violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.

Cities are often more prepared for supporting victims of forced migration, and as such they welcome more forced migrants than, for example, rural areas. Involuntary migration may be an upsetting topic to your participants, so it's important to conduct discussions about it with care and sensitivity.

Glossary

What do you need to know about forced migration/involuntary displacement?

Refugees:
people who flee their country due to fear of persecution due to their identity, and who are outside of their country of nationality and unable to return.

Asylum seekers:
individuals who have sought international protection and whose claims for refugee status have not yet been determined.

Internally displaced persons:
people who have been forced or obliged to flee their homes but remain within the borders of their home country.

People in a refugee-like situation:
people who go outside their country of origin and face risks similar to refugees, but their refugee status has not yet been ascertained.

Other people in need of international protection:
people who have been displaced across international borders, but have not been reported under other categories

International Organization for Migration. (2024) Forced migration or displacement. Migration Data Portal.
https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/forced-migration--or-displacement

Why are people forced to migrate?

Military conflicts	The growing number of military conflicts around the world is forcing people to flee their homes to avoid immediate danger to their health or lives.
Political reasons	Some countries, especially those under dictatorships, are also dangerous to political opponents, who seek political asylum abroad.
Ethnic and religious reasons	A large number of people globally face ethnic and religious persecutions, especially when they are a minority where they live. Some persecutions can lead to ethnic cleansing
Climate crisis	Extreme weather conditions around the world are resulting in climate change-related migration. Some people need to move after natural disasters. Some places become inhabitable due to extreme heat. Environmental degradation can be natural or human--made.
Criminal activity	There are people around the world who are affected by criminal activities in their region, for example growing gang violence, and they are at risk of being harmed. Some victims also migrate to escape domestic violence.
Human trafficking	Some people are displaced through coercion or deception, with the purpose of exploitation, to perform forced labour against their will. People can also be "sold" on the black market, for forced labour.

International protection in Poland

In 2023, 9,500 people sought international protection in Poland. Most applicants came from:

Belarus

Ukraine

Russia

Turkey

Egypt

4,600 international protection statuses were granted, 1,900 had their applications rejected, and 2,300 applications were cancelled (for example due to application withdrawal). From the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine until January 2024, 18.8 million people arrived in Poland, and of these 1.792 million were registered for temporary protection.

Urząd do spraw cudzoziemców. (2023). Ochrona międzynarodowa w 2023. https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/ochrona-miedzynarodowa-w-2023-r
Urząd do spraw cudzoziemców. (2024). Raport na temat obywateli Ukrainy. https://www.gov.pl/attachment/831fe2c9-ecbc-4c06-a9d5-7380e82457ea

Immigration to Warsaw

Megacities are often the main destination for migrants. Year after year, Warsaw is seeing a steady increase in the number of domestic and foreign newcomers. When living in the city, your participants may reflect on their direct contact with foreign and domestic migrants. Migration balance is a metric that shows the difference between the numbers of people coming into and leaving the city. **Warsaw calculates this balance yearly.**

2023 migration balance in Warsaw

Both internal and international migration:

+1341 people

International migration:

+571 people

Urząd Miasta st. Warszawy (2023), Raport o stanie miasta Warszawa 2023.
https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/56602/53230519/ROSM_2023_dostepny_8lipca.pdf/038235a7-df1d-77d1-30e0-9cf8619e4552?t=1720507686120

Poland and Warsaw's situation has changed profoundly since February 2022 and the start of Russian's current war in Ukraine. Statistics below show the dynamics before and after this event. Before the Russian aggression on Ukraine, Warsaw took in the following migrants:

51,000
Ukraine

5,900
Vietnam

1,500
China

16,000
Belarus

3,700
India

34,000
other

Urząd Miasta st. Warszawy. (2023, June 30). Foreigners in Warsaw in numbers. https://en.um.warszawa.pl/-/statistics

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, almost **800,000 refugees** passed through the city.

Two and a half years later, in July 2024, there are 108,000 registered Ukrainians in Warsaw.

Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu. (2022). Warsaw in the refugee crisis: Report for the first three months. – https://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Warsaw-in-the-refugee-crisis-report-for-the-first-three-months.pdf

Biuro Strategii I Analiz (2024.). Warszawa w kryzysie uchodźczym. – https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiZmZiOGVhZWQtMDM5ZS00YmQwLWEyMzct-MGMyMjAyZDc5ZjQ2IiwidCI6IjEwZTRkN2E3LTQ1MmYtNDk3YS04NjlmLWMzOTlkZjhkNDU0MCIsImMiOjl9

One of the migrant groups growing in size in Warsaw is that of migrant children and youth. The new reality of multicultural schools will become a standard over the coming years. Educators such as yourself will have more and more contact with young migrants in your work.

International students in Warsaw

9% of the total student population in Warsaw's public primary and secondary schools are international students, totalling approximately 26,000 students from 109 countries. Of these, around 20,000 are from Ukraine.

Urząd Miasta st. Warszawy (2023), Raport o stanie miasta Warszawa 2023. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/56602/53230519/ROSM_2023_dostepny_8lipca.pdf/038235a7-df1d-77d1-30e-0-9cf8619e4552?t=1720507686120

It is important to remember that migration to cities is not only one-sided.

Contemporary Warsaw is subject to both influx and outflow of migrants. The city's 2023 migration balance shows there to be more incomers, but the difference is not large.

Migrants to Warsaw come from:

- Other towns/villages from the Mazowieckie voivodeship
- Other voivodships
- Other countries

Migrants from Warsaw go to:

- Other voivodships
- Smaller cities/towns near Warsaw
- Abroad

How do migrants feel about Warsaw?

The different reasons that people have for migrating lead them to take various migration pathways. The outcomes of migration also differ between people. A recent study regarding migrants in Warsaw asked them about the motivations to move to the city, and their opinions and experiences about living there.

Why do people choose Warsaw as a place to live?
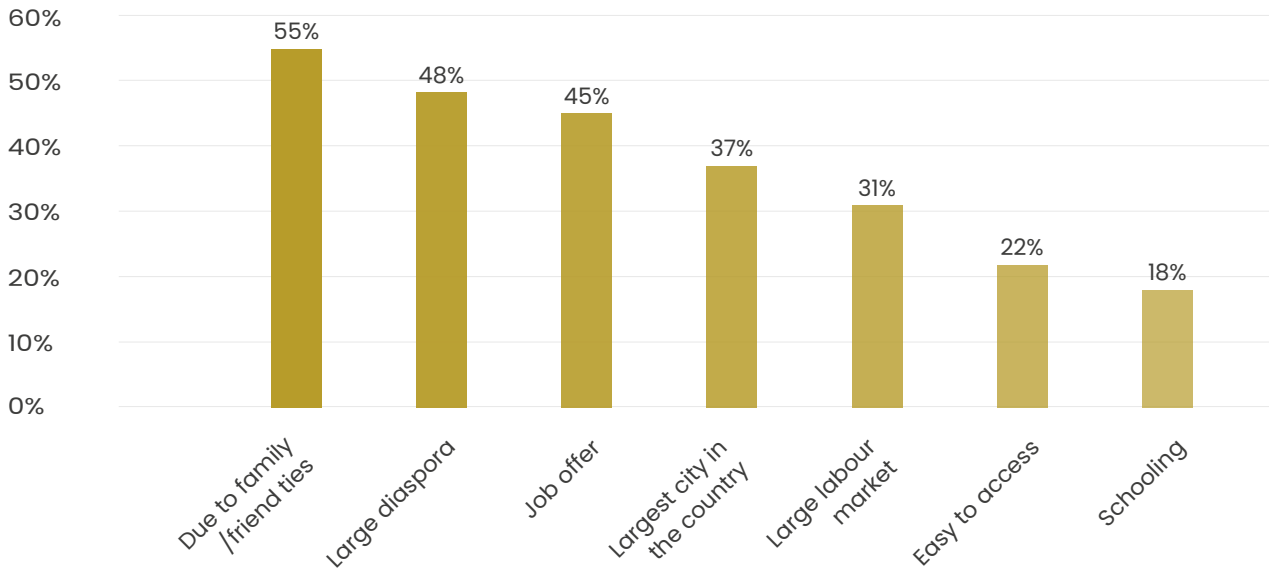
Minds & Roses. (2024). Cudzoziemcy mieszkający w Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/55043703/0/Raport_Badanie+Cudzoziemcy+w+Warszawie_CAPI_ marzec2024.pdf/00cfb1b6-0685-03dc-a048-a08a850811dc?t=1719313649336

Most migrants living in Warsaw are generally happy about living there. Many also plan to stay there for good.

How do migrants feel about living in Warsaw?
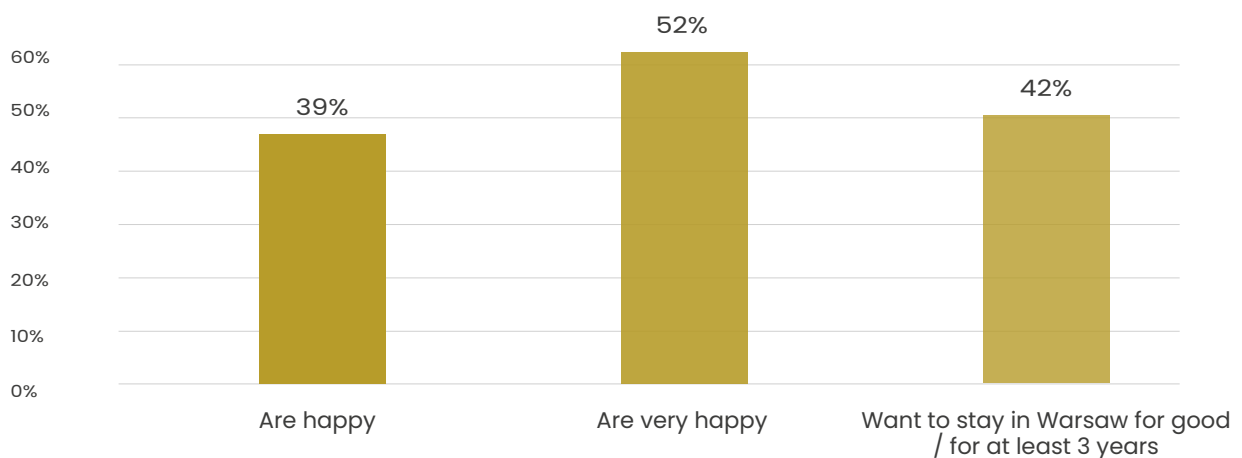
Minds & Roses. (2024). Cudzoziemcy mieszkający w Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/55043703/0/Raport_Badanie+Cudzoziemcy+w+Warszawie_CAPI_ marzec2024.pdf/00cfb1b6-0685-03dc-a048-a08a850811dc?t=1719313649336

Life in Warsaw has a lot to offer. While many migrants lead successful careers and manage well in the city, 25% of them still experience discrimination. Migrants in Warsaw were asked about their experiences of the city, and how they are getting on in Poland.

How's life in Warsaw for migrants?

Studying	17%
Working / Own business	89%
Learning Polish	53%
Knows Polish quite well	43%
Fluent in Polish	22%
Uses public transport	92%
Experience discrimination in the last 12 months	25%

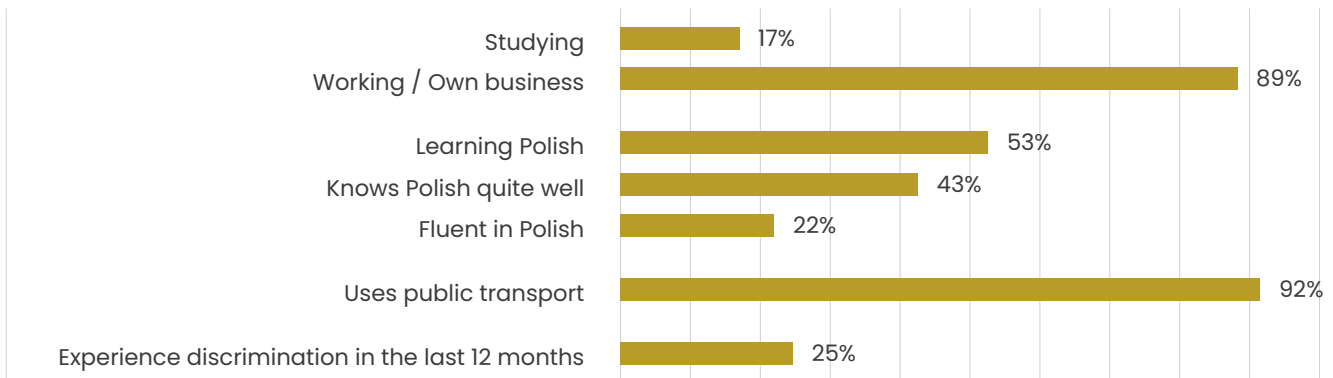Minds & Roses. (2024). Cudzoziemcy mieszkający w Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/55043703/0/Raport_Badanie+Cudzoziemcy+w+Warszawie_CAPI_marzec2024.pdf/00cfb1b6-0685-03dc-a048-a08a850811dc?t=1719313649336

Emigration from Warsaw

Poles abroad

Many Poles also emigrate abroad, for a shorter or longer period. They often choose European destinations, but some also migrate outside of Europe. **In 2022, 1.5 million Polish immigrants were living abroad for over 12 months.**

Most common countries of residence: UK, Germany, Netherlands, Ireland, Norway

Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS). (2023). Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach emigracji długookresowych w latach 2017-2022. https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/migracje-zagraniczne-ludnosci/informacja-o-rozmiarach-i-kierunkach-emigracji-dlugookresowych-w-latach-2017-2022,18,1.html

Warsaw's migration balance (+1341 people) shows that many people also leave the city. Emigration can take place within the country or can mean going abroad.

Why do Poles emigrate from Warsaw?

Abroad:
- Better career opportunities and professional development
- Better wages
- More educational opportunities
- Family integration

Within Poland:
- Small-town atmosphere
- Slower life
- Returning to places of origin after education
- Family integration

Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy, Mazowieckie Obserwatorium Rynku Pracy (2015). Uwarunkowania I rodzaje wewnętrznych migracji zarobkowych mieszkańców Mazowsza. https://obserwatorium.mazowsze.pl/pliki/files/Raporty/Raport_Migracje%20w%20województwie%20mazowieckim_okładka.pdf

Points for discussion:

- Engage participants into thinking about the reasons they could personally have to migrate.

- Explain differences between voluntary and forced migration.

- Foster empathy for different circumstances that can lead to migration.

- Discuss your city's migration statistics with participants and ask about the forces that can affect them.

3.2. Migration trends

> **Migration is a worldwide phenomenon. There are no definite trends, as certain contradictory migration flows coexist in one space.**

It is therefore crucial to better understand what drives certain migration flows. This section will first discuss global migration trends, for example between different countries, and then zoom in on the migration between megacities and rural areas. You may notice that some of the factors overlap between global and local migration.

This is because the trends influence one another. To unpack the different migration schemes with your participants, you can use the terminology of push and pull factors. **Push factors** are the reasons why people leave a certain place. **Pull factors** are the reasons why people choose a certain place to move to.

International migration

Push factors

Population growth in many developing countries is outpacing job creation and putting a strain on basic services.
Overpopulation leads to worsening living conditions and services becoming overburdened. In some developing countries there are limited job prospects, and securing a liveable income becomes hard, especially in low-income occupations.

Many countries are dealing with conditions of poor security and military conflict.
The number of armed conflicts is growing. This includes major wars, civil wars, gang wars and insurgencies. More and more countries are becoming dangerous to live in. Civilians are fleeing their home in search of safety, and for the protection of their human rights.

Climate change and environmental disasters are destroying people's homes.
The growing numbers of sudden environmental disasters (such as floods, hurricanes, and storms) as well as slow-onset processes (such as sea level rise, temperature rise, and land degradation) are resulting in damage to people's homes and lands.

Availability of jobs in neighbouring countries.
Migration abroad is a privilege. Many people seek work in neighbouring countries, especially if only one person in the family migrates and the others stay behind. Many migrants also choose countries nearby to avoid culture shock.

Choosing countries with high quality living conditions (healthcare, social security benefits, civil rights).
Uncertainty drives many migrants to seek a place to live within a more protective state. Access to healthcare, social security benefits and respected human rights are now a privilege that people strive for.

The ageing population and shrinking workforce in the developed world requires more migrant workers.
Migrants from developing countries to high-income countries fill the demographic gap. With an ageing population and low birthrates, the number of people able to work is shrinking. Migrants offer a relatively cheap workforce.

Trends of migration from wealthier to developing countries

Push factors

Costs of living in high-income countries are high.
Wealthier countries are facing housing crises, high inflation and price rises. Even people with medium income may struggle to secure good living conditions.

People are critical of the limited leisure time.
The value of one's free time has been growing, and many workers want to maintain a good work-life balance. People want to spend more time with their families and doing things for pleasure.

Strict working arrangements are a subject of frustration.
Corporate 9-5 jobs are often traded for remote work, with more flexible arrangements. Many people are tired of commuting, long working hours, and a strict work schedule.

Pull factors

People are seeking a better work-life balance.
Many seek better work-life balance, want to engage in their hobbies, have more leisure and time to spend with their family. The former notion of work as the highest priority is often being questioned.

The growing number of digital nomad professions.
With many companies offering remote work and flexible working conditions, workers can work from different parts of the world. Flexible arrangements also allow the possibility of frequent relocation.

Travelling has become a trend.
People are engaging in travel more than ever. The opportunity of remote work allows connecting work with travelling, without compromising one's career.

Internal migration

Trends of migration from rural areas to large and megacities

Push factors

There are limited opportunities for development in rural areas.
People in rural areas have limited opportunities for career and education. To pursue certain goals, sometimes they need to move to urban areas.

Climate change is driving the agricultural crisis.
Living in rural areas has often meant engaging in farming. Nowadays, agriculture is less profitable, requires hard work, and fewer workers are inclined to work in this sector.

People are undergoing lifestyle changes.
Societies have been undergoing urbanisation since the industrial revolution. What follows is that people want to live different lives than their forbearers.

Industrial jobs in smaller towns are disappearing.
Many small and medium towns have most of their residents employed in factories or industrial businesses, which are often now facing crises. This is generating a post-industrial society, in which the service sector generates more profit than the manufacturing sector. People from these occupations now need to seek work elsewhere.

Pull factors

Cities offer better job and education prospects.
Most people move to the city to accelerate their careers or to get a better education. Many jobs are only available in urban areas. Colleges and universities are also located in the cities.

City area is increasing through the inclusion of satellite towns.
The area of land covered by major cities is often increasing due to satellite towns and villages being absorbed into the municipal area. Urbanisation can be both beneficial and harmful to people from such towns.

Environmental conditions are damaging agriculture.
With the environmental crisis, land is also deteriorating and farming is becoming tougher and less profitable. In some regions the damage is so great that the land can no longer serve its agricultural purpose.

People are fighting socio-economic exclusion.
Rural areas struggle with poor access to services and healthcare. Cities also have better cultural and leisure amenities. Despite cohesion efforts, the urban-rural divide remains visible.

Trends of migration from larger cities to rural areas

Cities have a high cost of living.
Major cities always have a high cost of living, which is often so high that people with regular income cannot afford to live in the same place they work in.

Property prices are skyrocketing.
The housing crisis is global. Cities are facing property shortages, as many are sold for investment or for short-term tourist rental. Many countries don't have state-based housing systems. What ensues is high property prices.

People are facing mental health issues and stress.
Moving out of the city is often a remedy to deteriorating mental health and stress. Some people return to their family homes or areas where they feel safe and can recuperate better.

Pull factors

People are moving from the major cities to satellite towns and villages.
Many people choose to move to the suburbs and satellite towns or villages from the city. City centres now have more businesses and services than housing.

The trend for a slower and environmentally friendly lifestyle.
In recent years, a slower lifestyle has generated interest in many people tired of the stress and overwhelmed by the rush of the city. This is coupled with interest in a more environmentally friendly, greener lifestyle.

Many high-skilled workers choose remote work.
The pandemic showed that many occupations can be performed remotely. Afterwards, some people moved to rural areas. Before, working in a high-skilled job necessitated living in the big city; nowadays, some work can be done from anywhere.

An increase in R&D and technology developments in rural areas to support cohesion.
Countries like Poland receive high R&D and technology development support from the European Union. The purpose of the cohesion funds is to flatten discrepancies between urban and rural areas, and to offer new skills, technologies and opportunities for people living in rural areas.

National Intelligence Council. (2021). The future of migration. https://www.dni.gov/files/images/globalTrends/GT2040/NIC-2021-02486--Future-of-Migration--Unsourced--14May21.pdf
Boutenko V., Harnoss J., Lang N. (2022). 5 key predictions for the future of talent migration. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/11/5-key-predictions--for-the-future-of-talent-migration/
OECF Development Centre (2016). Four possible scenarios for international migration in 2030. Perspectives on Global Development 2017. International Migration in a Shifting World. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/persp_glob_dev-2017-13-en.pdf?expires=1726739139&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=C767EB7D28044C5B5DD320700F70F581

3.3. How to integrate migrants into the local community?

Local communities can be the first step in integrating migrants. Migrants come into close interaction with local citizens, authorities and services.

It is important to consider the roles that different stakeholders have in migrant integration in the city. Talking about city migration with your participants is a great opportunity to prompt discussion about their involvement in welcoming migrants into the local community. People integrate into new environments to various degrees. For some, the transition may go easier than for others. How willing one is to adapt while nurturing one's identity can be called **acculturation**.

Strategies of acculturation

Maintaining own identity

Participating in host culture	
Assimilation: Engaging in the host culture, while abandoning own heritage: - limiting contact with people from own culture - criticism and devaluation of own country - idealising host country	**Integration:** Positive attitude and willingness to maintain own heritage, while engaging in society of the host country: - collaboration between both cultures - mutual understanding between members of both cultures - feeling secure while staying true to yourself
Marginalisation: Not participating in either host culture or diaspora: - negative associations with both cultures - loneliness and seclusion - feelings of displacement	**Separation:** No participation in host culture, functioning only in diaspora: - minimising contacts with host country locals - observing the host culture rather than participating in it - creating enclaves with only own culture representatives

Parfieniuk I. (2009). Między marginalizacją a integracją. Wybór jednostkowych strategii akulturacyjnych i ich uwarunkowania. (Eds. J. Nikitorowicz, D. Misiejuk) Procesy migracji w społeczeństwie otwartym. Perspektywa edukacji narodowej. Trans Humana Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie.
https://repozytorium.uwb.edu.pl/jspui/bitstream/11320/2809/1/Irena%20Parfieniuk_Między%20marginalizacją%20a%20integracją.%20Wybór%20jednostko-wych%20strategii%20akulturacyjnych%20i%20ich%20uwarunkowania.pdf

Benefits from migration to cities

While migration today often has bad press and can be associated with negative effects, it is imperative to remember what sort of benefits the hosting cities can gain by welcoming incomers.

Showing your participants the direct benefits of migrant integration into local society, the economy and culture is a first step towards changing negative connotations.

Supplementing the local labour market

Societies that face demographic crises are also seeing shortages of workers. While high-skilled jobs are sought after, major cities in particular have a problem with finding people willing to do essential jobs.

More contributions to the pension system, healthcare system and taxes

New taxes from additional workers can enrich the pension and healthcare system on a central level. Greater local tax revenue also means a direct contribution to the development of the city, for example its infrastructure, healthcare and services.

Skills transfer

People can bring new skillsets to the labour market, as well as learn new skills from the host city. There are more skills development opportunities in major cities, and knowledge transfer is available due to there being more centres of education.

Innovation and entrepreneurship

Foreigners can bring investments and open new businesses in the local community. This means that they become a part of the community, contributing to its diversity and economy. Cities are chosen more often for opening new businesses.

Cultural diversity and enrichment

Multicultural societies are rich in a variety of traditions, viewpoints and beliefs. Local communities can benefit from the direct participation of foreigners in the city's life. Initiatives that engage foreigners in sharing their cultures are prominent in major cities.

Economic growth

Migrant influx can boost the host city's economy, and impact productivity. Larger cities also offer higher wages, and therefore better spending power. Job markets also become more diverse and foster market development.

Challenges in integrating migrants into the local community

Migration is never easy, neither for the migrants nor for the citizens of the host country or city. Teaching young people and the elderly about the issues that migrants face on a daily basis can foster better empathy. Moreover, identifying challenges can help find successful solutions.

Delayed access to the labour market
Migrants face many challenges at the beginning of their migrant journey: many countries impose workload limitations, limit occupation eligibility, or hinder skills transferability. In cities like Warsaw, the large influx of foreigners may cause the bureaucracy related to starting a job in the new country to drag out over time.

Challenge?
Central-level decision-makers and organisations need better governance to support migrants in entering the job market. Major cities can be an accelerator for change, where central and local institutions can work together to develop new solutions.

Administrative challenges
Migrants have to go through necessary administrative procedures, which don't always work perfectly. For example, obtaining residence permits, work permits, licenses, and qualification transfers can be unnecessarily bureaucratic.

Challenge?
Major cities can put more resources and professionals into public services for migrants. With better infrastructure to set up life in the new country/city, migrants may feel more welcomed and taken care of.

Poor policies for refugees/asylum seekers
Poland does not have a strong central policy for refugees/asylum seekers, and as a result refugee intake is a complicated process. On a local level, efforts are often more dispersed between various stakeholders and actual help differs across different regions.

Challenge?
Local actors (public bodies, NGOs, citizen initiatives) can influence how refugees/asylum seekers are welcomed into the community. Collaboration across different stakeholders can also strengthen their voice on a central level.

Access to services (healthcare, education, social services)
Migrants may face difficulties in accessing basic services, for example, due to language barriers or complicated procedures. At the same time, poor local management of migration services can also strain local citizens' access to services.

Challenge?
Strong governance is needed for the design and delivery of local services to migrants. Creating evidence-based policies and consulting with target groups can strengthen the impact on achieving realistic effects and building sustainable local decision-making and implementation procedures.

Language barriers and social norms

Some languages are not easy to learn, and migrants face challenges without knowing the local language. Some social norms and customs may also be hard to understand for foreigners. Although cities, in general, can be more tolerant of cultural differences, culture shock or language barriers can happen anywhere.

Challenge?

Cities host more cultural events and provide more opportunities for no-cost or low-cost integration programmes, for example language classes. Such initiatives are mainly delivered by public institutions and NGOs, which have a higher concentration in cities.

Stereotypes and social prejudice

People base their assumptions about racial and ethnic groups based on stereotypes, which can be positive and negative. Sometimes, strong negative stereotypes turn into prejudice. While blending into the crowd is possible in the cities, and cities seem to foster greater tolerance, migrants are still vulnerable to potential harm.

Challenge?

Anti-discrimination efforts are a combination of actions that can prevent discrimination and support victims of hate. Concentrated efforts of education, the police, local governments, citizen initiatives, and organisations furthering diversity and inclusion can foster a better, safer environment for migrants.

Trauma and mental health

The experience of migration is not an easy thing. This is especially true for forced migrants, who often experience trauma. However, many voluntary migrants also face mental health issues. Major cities have better healthcare access and opportunities for support, but help to migrants is often delivered from the bottom-up.
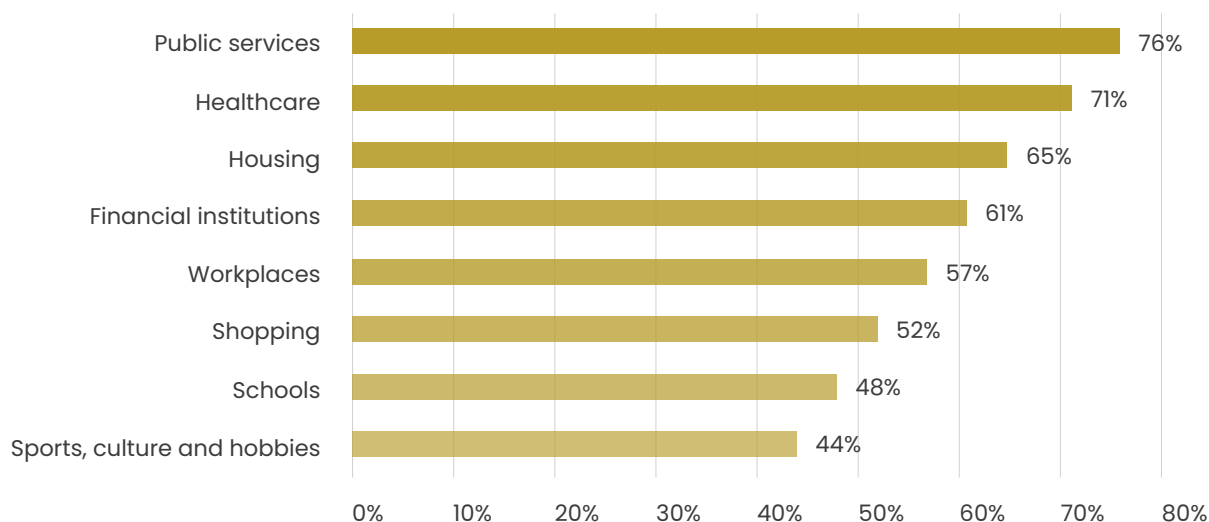
Challenge?

Mental health support to migrants should be easily available regardless of location. However, major cities have better infrastructure to provide health services. Creating dedicated public support services for migrants, instead of relying on volunteer work and NGOs, can support migrants in this tough journey.

Challenges of living in Warsaw

Foreign migrants in Warsaw experience many challenges. In a 2024 study they were asked about the aspects they struggle with the most.

Minds & Roses. (2024). Cudzoziemcy mieszkający w Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/55043703/0/Raport_Badanie+Cudzoziemcy+w+Warszawie_CAPI_marzec2024.pdf/00cfb1b6-0685-03dc-a048-a08a850811d-c?t=1719313649336

Public services	76%
Healthcare	71%
Housing	65%
Financial institutions	61%
Workplaces	57%
Shopping	52%
Schools	48%
Sports, culture and hobbies	44%

How do we get migrants involved on a local level?

Local governance plays a crucial role in accommodating migrants. While central-level strategies are important, local policies can be more tailored and city-specific. Policies are created and implemented by various stakeholders, such as local governments, policymakers, advisors, researchers, and other local organisations. Discussing how your participants envision engaging different stakeholders in a dialogue about the future of migration in the city can give important insights to pass on to decision-makers and contribute to real change.

Participation and cooperation
Involving migrants in designing and implementing inclusion initiatives with different stakeholders.

Equal opportunities programmes
Support programmes directed at specific target audiences.

Mainstreaming public services
Mainstreaming access to society inclusion through equal treatment

Policies for including migrants in the city life

Designing evidence-based policies
Creating evidence-based initiatives in cooperation with statistical bureaus and research institutes

Coordination and planning
Coordination of informationexchange and long-term collaboration with local administration

Stable financial support
Stable financial support for administration and long-term NGO initiatives

Homel, K., Krzyworzeka-Jelinowska, A., Łukasiewicz, K., Nowosielski, M., Pachocka, M., Podgórska, K., Popławska, Z., Wach, D., , Winiarska, A., (2023). Model lokalnej polityki włączania migrantów i migrantek w życie miast. Założenia i rekomendacje, Laboratorium Polityk Migracyjnych Miast I Regionów OBM UW. https://www.migracje.uw.edu.pl/publikacje/model-lokalnej-polityki-wlaczania-migrantow-i-migrantek-w-zycie-miast-zalozenia-i-rekomendacje/

Key stakeholders supporting migrant integration

A multi-stakeholder collective effort is key to successful migrant integration into the local community. Major cities often have more actors who can collaborate together, but they struggle with the challenge of fragmented and uncoordinated efforts.
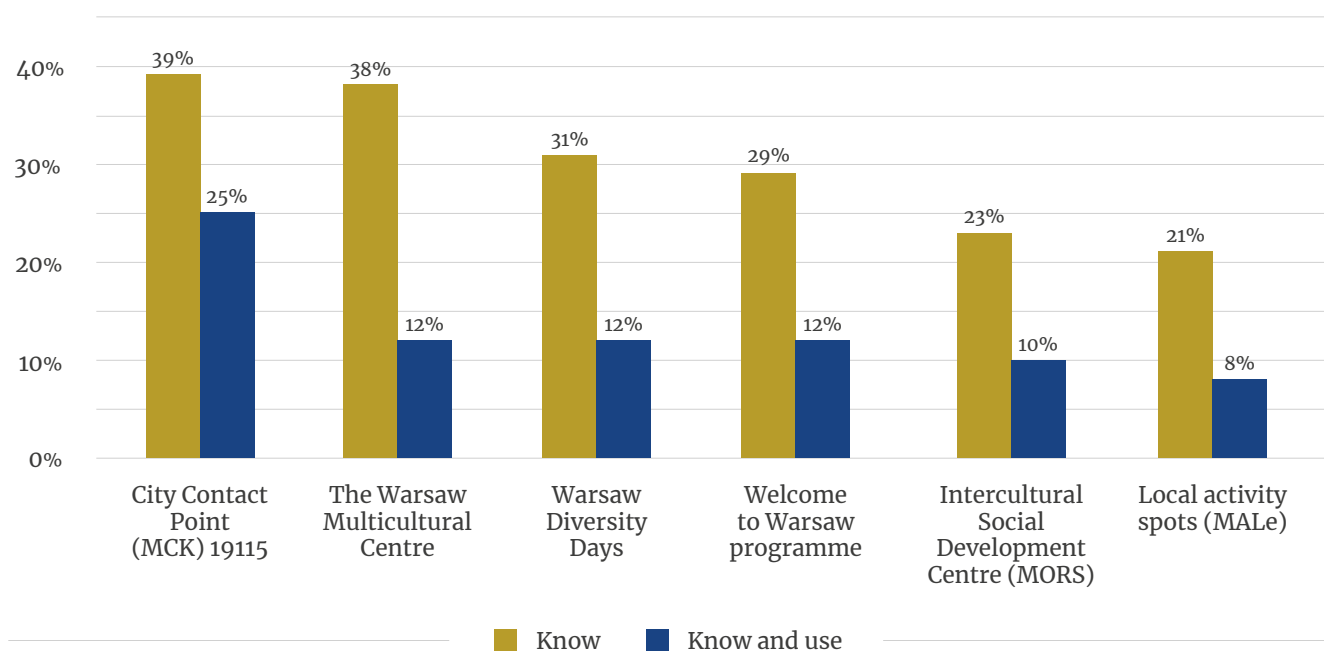
Local civil society organisations: NGOs, foundations, community-based organisations	**International civil society organisations:** Migrant associations, civil rights organisations	**Religious organisations:** Religious communities, religious leaders	**Research organisations:** Universities, research institutes, think tanks
Central administration units: Ministries, parliamentary commissions, central bodies	**Media:** Media organisations, civil society media, influencers	**Local community leaders:** diaspora leaders, senior migrants	**Business partners:** language schools, private businesses

Warsaw city and its support for migrants

Migrants have a lot of support available in major cities like Warsaw. However, finding out what is available to them can be overwhelming. It is important to remember that migrants already have a lot on their plate, so seeking support and integration initiatives may be a burden.

Only 10% of Warsaw's foreign residents engage in integration efforts available to migrants in Warsaw. The City of Warsaw offers a range of institutions and programmes to support migrant integration. However, awareness of these efforts is limited.

Awareness of Warsaw's migrant initiatives (% of respondents)

	City Contact Point (MCK) 19115	The Warsaw Multicultural Centre	Warsaw Diversity Days	Welcome to Warsaw programme	Intercultural Social Development Centre (MORS)	Local activity spots (MALe)
Know	39%	38%	31%	29%	23%	21%
Know and use	25%	12%	12%	12%	10%	8%

Minds & Roses. (2024). Cudzoziemcy mieszkający w Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/55043703/0/Raport_Badanie+Cudzoziemcy+w+Warszawie_CAPI_marzec2024.pdf/00cfb1b6-0685-03dc-a048-a08a850811dc?t=1719313649336

If they use the services, most rate them as good or very good
Migrants experience with City's integration initatives (% of respondents)

Chart data:
- City Contact Point (MCK) 19115: 87%
- The Warsaw Multicultural Centre: 75%
- Warsaw Diversity Days: 63%
- Welcome to Warsaw programme: 81%
- Intercultural Social Development Centre (MORS): 66%
- Local activity spots (MALe): 88%

Legend: Good/very good experience

Minds & Roses. (2024). Cudzoziemcy mieszkający w Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/documents/55043703/0/Raport_Badanie+Cudzoziemcy+w+Warszawie_CAPI_marzec2024.pdf/00cfb1b6-0685-03dc-a048-a08a850811dc?t=1719313649336

Organisations providing migrant support in Warsaw

Listed below are some of the services and initiatives available from the City of Warsaw and other non-governmental organisations, along with the scope of their services.

Organisations providing migrant support in Warsaw

Organisation name	Scope
Miejskie Centrum Kontakt/City Contact Point (MCK) https://warszawa19115.pl	public hotline, information hub
Centrum Wielokulturowe w Warszawie/The Warsaw Multicultural Centre (CWW) https://centrumwielokulturowe.waw.pl	free language courses, human library lessons, legal advice, career counselling, relaxed care, migrant events
Staromiejski Dom Kultury Old Town Culture Centre (SDK) https://sdk.pl	open calls for support for events organised by migrants living in Warsaw, free language courses, legal advice, art residency programmes
Cultural assistants in schools and kindergartens (Warsaw City Hall) https://edukacja.um.warszawa.pl/-/asystentki-i-asystenci	support for migrant children and youth in the classroom
Warszawskie Centrum Innowacji Edukacyjno-Społecznych I Szkoleń/Warsaw Centre of Educational and Social Innovation and Training (WCIES) https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/wcies	educational initiatives for educators, training for teachers and school principals, counselling
Dom Spotkań z Historią (wystawa Warszawa to My)/History Meeting House (Warsaw is Us exhibition) https://dsh.waw.pl	migrants' oral history exhibition
Punkt Informacji Zawodowej dla Cudzoziemców/Career Information Point for Foreigners (FISE)	career information point for foreigners
Centrum Pomocy Cudzoziemcom (Fundacja Ocalenie)/Help Centre for Foreigners (Ocalenie Foundation) https://ocalenie.org.pl/nasze-dzialania/pomagamy/centrum--pomocy-cudzoziemcom	legal advice, psychological support, counselling on services, crisis support, translation support, career counselling, free language courses
Warszawskie Centrum Pomocy Rodzinie, Międzykulturowy Ośrodek Rozwoju Społecznego/Warsaw Family Support Centre, Intercultural Social Development Centre (MORS) https://wcpr.pl	crisis support, integration programmes, counselling on services, career counselling
Labour Office of the Capital City of Warsaw https://warszawa.praca.gov.pl/zatrudnianie-cudzoziemcow1	career counselling, job offers information, vocational training

Why is intergenerational intercultural dialogue important?

Intercultural dialogue between different generations benefits both young people and the elderly. Intergenerational connections and mutual support among migrants have a positive impact on the local community and personal development.

Discussing with your participants how migration impacts their group can bring a better understanding of the issue and personal challenges.

For young people

- **Preserving heritage** – older generations can transmit values, traditions and language to younger generations.

- **Emotional support** – older migrants can offer better emotional support to young people during the first stages of transition.

- **Community building** – older generations can introduce young migrants to the diaspora.

- **Identity development** – staying connected with other members of the diaspora can help mitigate challenges in defining one's identity.

For elderly

- **Adapting traditions** – younger generations can support the elderly in adapting their traditions to living in a new environment.

- **Mentorship** – experienced older migrants can experience positive feelings from being a mentor to a young person.

- **Oral history** – older people can share knowledge about their country of origin through oral histories.

- **Knowledge transfer** – older generations can get better information from younger generations about the customs and history of the country they migrate to.

Points for discussion:

- **Include your participants' migration stories in your activities.**

- Ask participants about what support they would want if they were to migrate.

- **Create an activity that collects action ideas for different local stakeholders.**

- Discuss with participants their experiences with formal or informal migrant integration into the community.

3.4. Key takeaways for trainers and educators

Encouraging both youth and the elderly to think about migration is challenging. Educators must be mindful of their emotional responses to this issue, especially given recent years' rapid changes, and foster positive attitudes towards migrants.

1. Remember to balance positive and negative opinions. It is inevitable that there will be a certain amount of criticism concerning immigrants and certain nationalities. Explain how prejudice is formed and that stereotypes are natural.

2. Explain the concept of migration in detail: why people migrate, where, and what the types of migration are. Seeing diverse pathways to migration can inspire more empathy towards migrants.

3. Use personal stories. Most people have experience with either emigrants or immigrants among their closest family or friends. Personal narratives work better than statistics.

4. Show the consequences of migration for the country, the city and the individuals. Don't forget to portray both benefits and disadvantages. Migrations are a complex topic and cannot be reduced to simple answers.

Climate change

Why is the topic important?

> **Understanding climate change** is crucial for both young people and older adults, **as it directly affects the future of our cities and the quality of life for all residents.**

As the impacts of climate change become more evident, young people, who will live with these changes the longest, must be informed and proactive. By gaining knowledge about climate change, youth can better prepare for the challenges that lie ahead, such as adapting to more extreme weather conditions, managing resources more efficiently, and shaping sustainable urban environments.

This awareness might empower and motivate them to engage in creating solutions and influencing policies that will secure a more resilient future. Educators have a major role in providing young people with the tools and understanding necessary to become active participants in climate action. Moreover, educators can inspire and guide young people to participate in climate initiatives they might otherwise ignore or not know how to join, helping them to take meaningful action in their communities.

> **For older adults,** understanding climate change is equally important, **particularly in recognising the risks it poses to their health and wellbeing.**

With the exacerbation of heatwaves, air pollution and extreme weather events, older adults are more vulnerable to these changes. Staying informed about climate change enables them to take precautions and advocate for services and infrastructure that will support their safety and comfort in a changing climate. It also allows them to remain engaged in their communities, where their experiences and wisdom can contribute to the development of strategies that protect and enhance the wellbeing of all age groups.

Educators play a crucial role in showing older adults even the smallest ways they can contribute to or benefit from climate initiatives. Whether it's participating in community projects, taking advantage of resources like public cooling centres during heatwaves, or simply being aware of local support services, educators can inspire older adults to engage with these opportunities. By guiding and encouraging them to participate, even as beneficiaries, educators can ensure that older adults remain active and valued members of their communities who are equipped to navigate the challenges of a changing climate.

4.1. Potential effects of climate change in Warsaw

Climate

Refers to the long-term average conditions of the atmosphere, typically observed over several decades. Climatologists commonly describe climate by collecting data over approximately thirty years. During this period, they can identify the usual seasons, monthly temperature ranges, precipitation trends, periods of snowfall, and the patterns of wind and cloud cover in a specific area. This information assists in determining, for example, the optimal times and types of crops to plant to ensure a plentiful harvest. However, in recent decades, the Earth's climate has been changing more rapidly due to the increased emission of greenhouse gases by humans.

Prolonged periods of intense heat, often seen during summer and sometimes even in spring, are becoming more frequent.

These heat waves occur when air temperatures reach above 30°C for three or more consecutive days, and they are most common in areas affected by Urban and Local Heat Islands. During these events, the nights can also remain unusually warm, with temperatures not dropping below 20°C (known as tropical nights), making it difficult for the body to cool down and recover. As the climate continues to shift, experts predict that heat waves will not only occur more often, but will also last longer and become more severe. Such extreme heat poses significant risks, particularly for older adults and children, especially in cities where cool, shaded areas are scarce.

These conditions lead to a heightened need for cooling during the summer months, which can strain energy resources and potentially result in shortages. They also contribute to a decline in air quality, with the formation of photochemical smog becoming more likely in the summer. Additionally, these factors can intensify the urban heat island effect and increase the demand for water.

The Urban Heat Island effect causes higher temperatures in urban areas, especially in densely built city centres few green spaces or bodies of water.

This effect varies throughout the day and across seasons, being more pronounced in summer and most noticeable on clear, calm nights when the day's heat is released. Warsaw's average annual temperature now exceeds 8°C, with some central areas reaching over 10°C, driven by both the Urban Heat Island effect and global climate change.

Drought adversely affects urban vegetation, disrupting plant growth, particularly during mild and snowless winters.

Drought also presents a significant risk to energy supplies, as power stations may be forced to shut down due to insufficient water for cooling purposes. Prolonged drought conditions can cause a decline in groundwater levels, which frequently serve as a vital source of drinking water for urban populations. Moreover, the absence of rainfall can result in interruptions to the supply of running water.

Floods are typically triggered by heavy rainfall and severe thunderstorms, often accompanied by strong winds.

Intense rain, whether lasting just a few minutes or several hours, can lead to significant localised flooding. This type of flood can develop rapidly, sometimes within minutes of the rainfall that caused it. Such flooding can occur in virtually any part of Poland, and is not necessarily linked to rivers overflowing their banks. In urban areas, this type of flood poses a serious threat, leading to the inundation of tunnels, underground passages, and basements.

Torrential rain is frequently accompanied by hurricane-force winds exceeding 100 km/h, which can cause extensive damage in urban areas.

These winds can uproot trees, tear off roofs, and damage power cables, posing significant risks to residents' safety. When combined with severe thunderstorms, these high winds often lead to power outages, disruptions in traffic and transport, and even fatalities.

It is worth noting that climate change might bring some positive changes, such as fewer snowy days leading to shorter periods of snow cover, an extended growing season for plants, and a reduced need for heating. However, these potential benefits are unfortunately overshadowed by the significant challenges and risks that climate change presents.

The most significant risks are found in densely built areas close to the Vistula River, particularly in the southern parts of Praga-Północ, the western parts of Praga-Południe, Żoliborz, and the eastern part of Mokotów. Here, heat- and water-related risks, mainly

flooding, combine to create a particularly vulnerable situation.

Another area facing notable climate hazards is Zielony Ursynów, where the threat of flooding from heavy rainfall and spring melt poses a significant risk. The Vistula Valley, while having a high risk of flooding, experiences less heat-related risks due to the moderating effects of surface water on local temperatures.
In the western districts of Bemowo, Wola, Bielany, and Włochy, small pockets of high heat-related risks exist, driven by the conversion of solar energy into heat on active surfaces. However, these areas face minimal water-related threats.

Districts with lower building density and more green spaces, such as parts of Wawer, Wesoła, and Białołęka, experience moderate climate risks. These risks are related to the lower reflectivity (or albedo) of their surfaces, and they do not face significant water-related dangers.

Sources: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2019). Strategia adaptacji do zmian klimatu dla miasta stołecznego Warszawy do roku 2030 z perspektywą do roku 2050.; Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Warszawski Poradnik Adaptacji Do Zmiany Klimatu.

Sources: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2019). Strategia adaptacji do zmian klimatu dla miasta stołecznego Warszawy do roku 2030 z perspektywą do roku 2050.

4.2. Ways in which individuals and society as a whole can mitigate its impact

Sustainable consumption is all about using resources wisely to meet current needs without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It's about making mindful choices in what is bought, how things are used and how they are disposed of, all with the aim of reducing environmental impact. While much has already been said in ongoing discussions, public campaigns, and other resources about individual actions like saving water or cutting down on waste, this chapter takes the discussion a step further. It explores how communities, working together, can make a significant difference in addressing the effects of climate change on cities. The main focus is on how collective efforts, especially through intergenerational and community cooperation, can lead to more impactful and lasting change.

As climate change is mostly induced by humans, we can all, individually and collectively, introduce sustainable practices on a local level in our closest surroundings or the entire city. Below are everyday sustainable choices an individual can make:

Communicating the principles of the sustainable concept to others

- Limiting meat consumptions
- Using reusable bags
- Eating local nad seasonal products and implementin 'no waste' concepts
- Choosing public transport or eco-friendly options (bicycle, walking)

- Careful segregation of rubbish
- Water conservation and small-scale retention
- Choosing green technologies (e.g. LED bulbs, energy-efficient appliances)
- Avoiding plastic packaging

Glossary

Small-scale retention

is the process of collecting and storing rainwater locally, both through natural methods such as ponds and rain gardens, and artificial methods such as tanks or cisterns. This practice helps slow water flow, reduce flooding, and recharge groundwater, all contributing to better and sustainable water management.

Source: Mioduszewski W. 2014. Small (natural) water retention in rural areas. Journal of Water and Land Development. No. 20 p. 19–29

While everyone can make sustainable choices in their daily lives – such as reducing meat consumption, using reusable bags, or conserving water – the true impact of these efforts is amplified when shared and practiced within a community. It's not just about the individual actions we take, but also about communicating these principles to others, exchanging techniques, and learning from one another. By engaging in communal activities and group initiatives, we can support each other in adopting sustainable habits and tackle larger environmental challenges that are more effectively managed together. Here is an overview of examples in which as a community we can engage more meaningfully to reduce the impact of climate change on Warsaw.

WARSAW CIVIC BUDGET

The civic budget is a way of deciding on the allocation of a portion of public expenditure. It takes place annually, on a predetermined date. The city implements the projects submitted by city residents that receive the highest number of votes. Utilising the civic budget for climate change mitigation projects is an effective approach because it actively engages the entire community, regardless of age, in addressing environmental challenges. Individuals and groups, young and old, can submit their proposals and collaborate on initiatives such as new plantings, rain gardens, or redesigning urban spaces.

Good Practice Box

Public drinking water fountains for a healthier Warsaw. Project: Water Fountains for Warsaw – Because it Matters!

As part of Warsaw's civic budget initiative (2023), the project "Water Fountains for Warsaw - Because it Matters!" aimed to install 32 public drinking water fountains across the city. Strategically placed in high-traffic areas, these fountains provide an essential service, particularly in the context of climate change and increasing temperatures.

This initiative is designed to benefit all residents, making it easier for people to stay hydrated while on the go. The project not only supports public health but also fosters a culture of sustainability and environmental responsibility in Warsaw. By offering a simple yet effective solution, the project demonstrates how small changes can have a significant impact on the quality of life in the city. Discussing what's already known, consider researching together to discover additional initiatives available in your communities.

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2022). Poidełka dla Warszawy - BO warto!. Budżet Obywatelski w Warszawie. https://bo.um.warszawa.pl/processes/na-rok-2023/f/9/projects/20127

Sustainable Water Management in Sady Żoliborskie Park

Another example of an impact made by Warsaw's residents through a budget initiative (2023) is the project "No Water Wasted in Sady Żoliborskie Park". It aims to repurpose rainwater collected in retention tanks for the irrigation of green spaces during the hot summer months. The initiative removes the need for expensive and environmentally harmful practices, such as pumping and transporting rainwater out of the park. This not only cuts costs but also protects the park's lawns and infrastructure from damage caused by heavy machinery.

The project directly benefits the local community by improving the sustainability and safety of Sady Żoliborskie Park. The concerns of residents about water wastage and park safety have been integral to shaping this initiative, ensuring it meets the needs of regular park users.

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2024). Nie marnujemy wody w parku Sady Żoliborskie - wykorzystanie deszczówki zgromadzonej w zbiornikach retencyjnych do podlewania zieleni na Sadach. Budżet Obywatelski w Warszawie. https://bo.um.warszawa.pl/processes/na-rok-2024/f/11/projects/26479

Urban Gardening and Green Spaces:
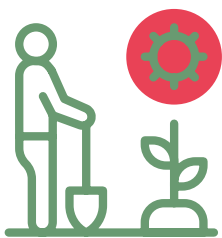
Community gardens are green spaces cultivated and maintained by local residents, typically on land managed by informal groups, NGOs, public institutions or private entities. These gardens are open to all, with access guided by rules set by the community.

Key benefits of community gardens include:
- Community engagement: They foster integration and collaboration among local residents of all ages.
- Environmental impact:
- Reduce the urban heat island effect.
- Support biodiversity by providing habitats for wildlife.
- Local food production: Promote sustainable cultivation of vegetables, fruits and herbs, reducing the carbon footprint associated with food transport.
- Public space improvement: Enhance the quality and appeal of public spaces, making them more welcoming.
- Educational and cultural amenities:
- Serve as venues for educational and cultural events.
- Encourage learning and participation in sustainable practices.

The "Bujna Warszawa" programme, launched by the Warsaw Department of Green Management (Zarząd Zieleni m.st. Warszwawy) in 2017, has supported the creation and maintenance of these gardens, leading to 29 registered community gardens within the programme today. These gardens are designed to be inclusive, welcoming spaces where residents collaborate to plan, build, and maintain vibrant, sustainable green spaces.

Source: Bujna Warszawa. (n.d.). https://bujnawarszawa.pl

Urban vegetable gardening: The practice of growing your own vegetables at home, whether on a balcony or windowsill, has seen a significant rise in popularity in recent years. This trend reflects a broader shift towards sustainable living and self-sufficiency, as individuals increasingly recognise the numerous advantages of cultivating fresh produce at home.

Provides an opportunity for individuals of all ages to:
- Engage with nature.
- Develop new skills.
- Enjoy the fruits of their labour.

Important considerations before starting a home vegetable garden:
- Assessment of the space available.
- Selection of vegetables well-suited to indoor or balcony environments.
- Choosing vegetables with a short growing season and compact size, ideal for small spaces.
- Encourage learning and participation in sustainable practices.

The city of Warsaw offers subsidies for eco-friendly initiatives like rain gardens and green roofs, giving residents the opportunity to make a meaningful impact on their environment.

Rain gardens are a simple yet effective way to manage rainwater. These gardens collect and absorb water from rainfall, reducing the strain on the city's drainage systems. Beyond just managing water, rain gardens help purify it, attract beneficial wildlife, and require little maintenance since they make use of natural rainfall instead of relying on tap water.

Green roofs are another excellent way to contribute to a greener city. They provide numerous benefits, such as capturing rainwater, improving air quality, lowering temperatures in urban areas, and supporting local biodiversity. Green roofs also make buildings more energy-efficient and create a more pleasant environment.

- These initiatives often require additional steps such as obtaining permits, consulting with experts, and coordinating with local authorities.
- Projects like rain gardens and green roofs greatly benefit from collective effort, making the process smoother and more inclusive.
- Working together as a community ensures that everyone's needs and concerns are addressed.
- By pooling resources and sharing responsibilities, residents can overcome the challenges associated with these more technical projects.

Source: Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Skorzystaj z Miejskiej Dotacji na ekologiczne inwestycje. https://um.warszawa.pl/-/skorzystaj-z-miejskiej-dotacji-na-ekologiczne-inwestycje

Waste Reduction and Sharing Programmes:

Community food pantries (Jadłodzielnie) are specially marked fridges and lockers where you can leave unwanted food or use what others have left. The 50 food pantries scattered throughout Warsaw are for everyone to use, share and take whatever they want.

WawaShare is a city-wide platform in Warsaw that promotes the sharing economy, enabling residents to exchange and share various resources without transferring ownership rights. Whether it's tools, skills, or other assets, WawaShare encourages collaboration and community involvement.

Cemetery candle exchange points have been set up at the four entrances of the North Cemetery in Bielany. These points are for everyone to take whatever they need from them, free of charge.

It also happens that people leave new refills or classic full candles. In this way, someone for whom buying a candle for a loved one's grave is a significant expense can benefit from a lamp left by someone else.

- **Waste reduction:** These initiatives reduce waste by promoting the sharing of items such as tools, furniture, and food. This decreases the need for new purchases and prevents unnecessary consumption.

- **Supporting sustainability:** These programmes support sustainability by promoting a circular economy, where resources are reused and shared rather than discarded.

- **Saving money:** By providing platforms where residents can access goods, services, and food without the need to purchase them, these initiatives help people save money while still meeting their needs.

- **Supporting those in need:** The initiatives might offer support to individuals and families facing financial challenges by providing easy access to surplus food and other resources.

- **Building and enhancing community spirit:** These programmes encourage collaboration, sharing, and mutual support among residents. The establishment of shared spaces, such as Dzielnia Saska Kępa and Współdzielnik Wola Park, allows residents to exchange goods, share surplus food and organise community events, enhancing community engagement and interaction.

Sources: Warszawa 19115. (n.d.). https://warszawa19115.pl/

Good Practice Box: Intergenerational zero-waste workshops: Edinburgh

Through the Zero Waste Leith project, Changeworks partnered with the Pilmeny Development Project to connect different generations in Leith, Edinburgh, to share knowledge and ideas on waste reduction. This initiative brought together young pupils from St Mary's Primary School and older residents from Bield Housing to learn from one another through workshops and activities focused on reuse, repair, and reducing food waste.

The project featured storytelling sessions where older generations discussed wartime efforts to reduce waste, while younger participants shared modern tips on reuse and repair. This exchange not only provided practical skills but also fostered friendships across generations.

Activities included:
- Storytelling and reminiscence: sharing experiences from different eras on waste reduction.
- Crafting workshops: collaborative sessions focused on repurposing materials and learning repair skills.
- Budget-friendly cooking: promoting nutrition while minimising food waste.
- Recycling education: emphasising proper waste disposal and the importance of recycling.

Source: Zero Waste Leith. (2020). Zero Waste Leith Intergenerational Learning Guide. https://generationsworkingtogether.org/downloads/5e458455506c8-Zero Waste Leith Intergenerational Learning Guide.pdf

Intergenerational collaboration in cities can lead to meaningful actions that both older and younger generations can undertake together to mitigate climate change. It brings together the diverse strengths, experiences, and perspectives of different age groups. By working together, younger and older generations can develop a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to this global issue. Such collaboration not only fosters mutual understanding and learning but also empowers communities to implement lasting and impactful solutions. When different generations unite in the fight against climate change, they can pool their resources, share knowledge, and inspire one another to take meaningful actions that benefit both the present and future generations.

Points for discussion:

- How can younger and older generations work together to address climate change? What can each group learn from the other in terms of sustainable practices?

- How can intergenerational activities, such as joint workshops or community gardening, strengthen the community's ability to respond to climate change? What are the benefits of these collaborations for both the environment and community ties?

- Encourage your group to share any sustainable or community-building initiatives they know about in their local areas. This could include things like community gardens, recycling programmes, or food-sharing stations. After discussing what's already known, consider researching together to discover additional initiatives available in your communities.

5.3. Key takeaways for trainers and educators

Addressing climate change requires both individual actions and collective community efforts, with a special emphasis on intergenerational collaboration and the role of community initiatives.

1. Encourage exploration of local climate impact: Engage in discussions about how climate change is affecting your group's local environment. This helps make the issue more tangible and relevant to their lives. If the group allows it, you can encourage the usage of a carbon footprint calculator available online to check the individual impact one is making, and how this impact can be reduced.

2. Promote and encourage community-based climate initiatives: Stress the power of collective action through community projects. These initiatives not only help mitigate climate change but also strengthen community bonds and foster a sense of shared responsibility.

3. Use concrete examples to demonstrate impact: Showing the real-world effects of sustainable actions can make a lasting impression. For example, calculate and present how much food waste can be saved in kilograms or tons by reducing food waste, or how much water and energy can be conserved through rain gardens or green roofs. These examples make the potential impact of individual and collective actions more tangible and inspiring.

4. Highlight the power of small changes: Reinforce the idea that everyone can make a significant difference through small, consistent actions. Whether it's reducing plastic use, composting, or participating in a local clean-up, these actions add up. Educators should emphasise that even modest efforts, when multiplied across a community, can lead to substantial environmental benefits.

Digitalisation of society

Why is this topic important for youth and the elderly?

Contemporary society needs connectivity and digital literacy skills to navigate complex technologies for its benefit.

Young people may have a greater affinity for digital technology, as many of them were born into the internet era, which is an important aspect of their growing up. At the same time, they are subjected to numerous digital inequalities and **youth as a whole is not homogenous when it comes to digital technology access and use**. Young people embed many aspects of their daily lives in technologies: communication, education, entertainment, socialisation, civic engagement and many more. Digital technologies may support their livelihood in cities, making them **more available, sustainable and connected. Educators working with youth** have the opportunity to guide young people in the safe and mindful use of technologies, especially when harnessing opportunities that come from the knowledge and capabilities that young people already have. Supporting youth in being mindful of technology and its role in their local communities can spark real change in the development of smart, sustainable cities.

Older people have witnessed many examples of rapid digital transformation unprecedented in the world's history.

Although **many older people have the motivation to learn new technologies**, some may have more trouble understanding and keeping up with their novelty. At the same time, **seniors' needs can be addressed by digital solutions** such as digital healthcare, assistive technologies, remote service access, digitally mediated social connections and many more. The **elderly will be able to continue to enjoy their city due to digitalisation, which will provide more accessible digital solutions, automated infrastructure**, and digital resources. **Educators working with seniors** hold the role of advocates for digital technologies. While technologies may seem scary for the elderly, offering comprehensive learning about technologies by educators is the first step to supporting older adults in enjoying technologies as much as other generations.

5.1 Understanding digitalisation

Digital technologies are constantly evolving and impacting more and more domains of our lives. The public sector, business, and private communication are rapidly shifting from analogue to digital forms. Cities are often the first to experience technological development and set trends for wider implementation.

Living in the city means being constantly targeted by new digital infrastructure and services, such as smart city solutions, automated transport, digital public services, digital public payment systems and many more. Navigating these technologies can enhance residents' lives. Today, we talk about digitalisation in terms of the infrastructure and competencies needed to use technologies.

Digital infrastructure and internet coverage in Poland are important parts of digitalisation. While most households in Poland have good infrastructure and cove-

rage, some parts of the country remain white. In 2023, 93.3% of Polish households had access to the Internet. In large cities, it was 94.8%.

Poland is below the EU average for digital skills. 44.3% of citizens have at least basic digital skills, 20% have above-basic digital skills, and 60% have at least basic digital content creation skills. 4.3% of citizens work in the ICT sector, and 4.3% have a degree in ICT.

European Commission. (2024). DESI dashboard for the Digital Decade 2024. https://digital-decade-desi.digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/datasets/desi/indicators

Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS). (2023). Społeczeństwo informacyjne w Polsce w 2023 r. https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/nauka-i-technika--spoleczenstwo-informacyjne/spoleczenstwo-informacyjne/spoleczenstwo--informacyjne-w-polsce-w-2023-roku,2,13.html. r.https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/nauka-i-technika-spoleczenstwo--informacyjne/spoleczenstwo-informacyjne/spoleczenstwo-informacyjne--w-polsce-w-2023-roku,2,13.html

Digital infrastructure in cities

Digital access in cities is something we take for granted. Multiple forms of connectivity and digital infrastructure mean that technologies are used to the benefit of residents today. Discussing with youth and the elderly how the internet may be accessed in their city is critical to understanding the role of digital infrastructure.

The key components of cities' digital infrastructure include:

Broadband internet (fiber optic, satellite, cable)	5G and wireless networks (radio)	Public WiFi Networks	Data centres

As of mid-2024, 82.7% of address points in Poland have internet access, with coverage in Warsaw City at 98.13%. Warsaw City provides digital connectivity to its residents and visitors, offering free WiFi hotspots at many city landmarks and on public transport.

Public transport vehicles are also equipped with USB ports for charging devices. In addition, Warsaw City offers mobile apps for buying public transport tickets, paying for parking, planning routes, and tracking the real-time location of public transport vehicles.

Minister Cyfryzacji & Instytut Łączności. (2024). Polska w zasięgu stacjonarnego dostępu do internetu. https://www.gov.pl/web/cyfryzacja/polska-w-zasiegu--pierwszy-raport-z-danymi-z-internetgovpl
Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (n.d.). Fakty o Warszawie. https://um.warszawa.pl/-/fakty-o-warszawie

Digital infrastructure in cities

Although connectivity is key to successful digitalisation, how people use technologies is equally important. Therefore, in addition to connectivity, we talk more about digital competencies today. Digital competencies embrace knowledge, skills, and attitudes that help people use digital technologies confidently, critically, and safely.

Digital skills can be developed in domains such as:

Information and data literacy	communication and collaboration	digital content creation	safety	problem solving

Vuorikari, R., Kluzer, S., Punie, Y. (2022) DigComp 2.2: The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens - With new examples of knowledge, skills and attitudes. JRC Research Reports JRC128415. Joint Research Centre. DOI:10.2760/115376

Cities are providing a growing number of opportunities for their residents to work on digital competencies. Courses range from basic internet usage skills to more sophisticated software use, programming, and content creation. In cities like Warsaw, internet courses are delivered by the city's local organisations, NGOs, private companies, and tutors. Courses are available for people of all ages.

Priorities of digitalisation

Governments plan the future through strategic plans and policies. In the EU, the Digital Decade 2030 policy programme is a vision for a digital society across the Union, aiming to improve digitalisation in the Member States. Poland has adopted a programme called "From paper to digitalised Poland", run by the Ministry of Digitalisation. The programme streams show the domains in which the future of technology is to be developed. Discussing those domains with your participants may help them imagine how this digitalisation strategy will be visible in their city and local community.

Digital Public Servivces	e-Reporting	Distributed Registers (blockchain)	e-Transport and e-Flows of Goods	Increase in Cashless Flow
e-Invoice and e-Receipt	e-Education	Artificial Intelligence	The Internet of Things	Digital Identity
IT Architecture	National Payment	e-Taxes and e-Benefits	e-Health	Cybersecurity

Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji (n.d.). Od papierowej do cyfrowej Polski (https://www.gov.pl/web/cyfryzacja/od-papierowej-do-cyfrowej-polski)

Digitalisation of public services in Poland

The digitalisation of public services is an important step towards a digital society. The number of public offices that offer e-government services is growing. Knowing what kind of digital public services are available for your participants may strengthen their digital skills and raise their interest in using technology in everyday life.

Digital public services for citizens in Poland scored 60 points out of 100 (the EU average is 77).

Digital services uptake for businesses scored 73 points out of 100 (the EU average is 84).

European Commission. (2023). 2023 Report on the state of the digital decade. https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/2023-report-state-digital-decade

What are the most important central digital public services in Poland?

|	
Profil Zaufany (PZ) (Trusted profile)	Profil Zaufany (PZ) is an electronic signature which allows identity verification on the Internet. PZ can be established in public offices or through electronic banking.
ePUAP (Elektroniczna Platforma Usług Administracji Publicznej) (Electronic Platform of Public Administration Services)	ePUAP enables online access to public services as well as the submission of requests, declarations, or the downloading of documents. ePUAP can be accessed with Profil Zaufany, the mObywatel app, electronic banking, and electronic ID.
mObywatel (mCitizen)	mObywatel is a mobile app with digital versions of documents such as national ID, driver's license, student card, etc. Some of the e-services can also be accessed through the app.
e-Deklaracje (podatki.gov.pl) e-Declarations	e-Deklaracje enables tax declarations to be sent online. Digital tax declarations are pre-calculated by the system, and can be accepted or updated by the taxpayer.
Internetowe Konto Pacjenta (IKP) Online Patient Account	IKP is an e-health platform that allows access to medical data, e-prescriptions, e-referrals, and medical records. Patients can also sign up for visits and monitor prescriptions.

Points for discussion:

- Discuss the impact of different factors on internet connectivity, access and skills.
- Discuss the benefits and issues of the digitalisation of public services.
- Discuss why people need digital skills.
- Brainstorm ideas on how to improve Poland's digitalisation.

5.2 Digitalisation and cities

Digitalisation is progressing faster in urban settings. Local governments are also keeping pace with this progress by making technological adjustments to improve residents' lives. Nowadays, a smart city is a key concept in urban digitalisation. Therefore, it is important to introduce this concept to your participants and discuss how their city is adapting to the smart city status.
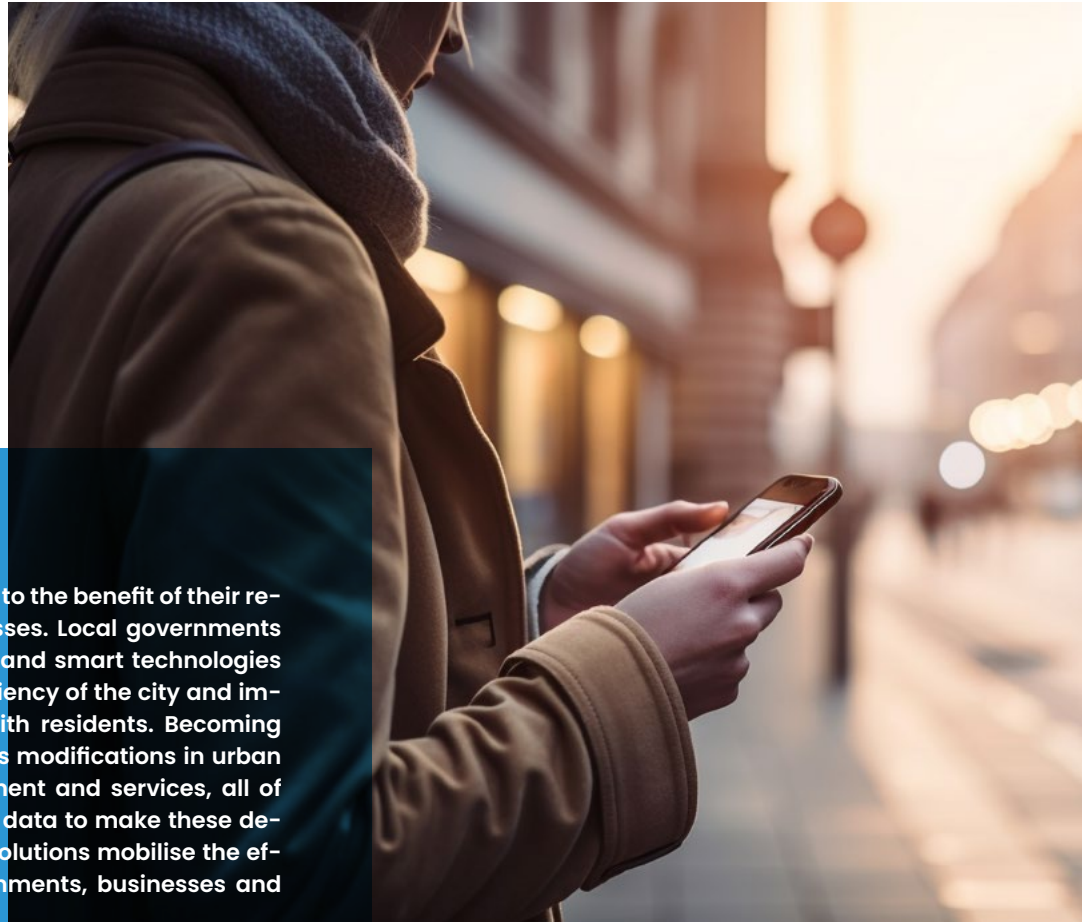
Smart cities

use digital solutions to the benefit of their residents and businesses. Local governments harness interactive and smart technologies to optimise the efficiency of the city and improve interaction with residents. Becoming a smart city requires modifications in urban planning, management and services, all of which require using data to make these decisions. Smart city solutions mobilise the efforts of local governments, businesses and residents alike.

The key priorities of smart cities are:

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT)	Building automation and control	Urban mobility and sustainable public transport	Efficient urban planning
Smart solid waste management	Improving environmental sustainability	Concern for the social environment	Technologies applied to education
Technologies applied to health	E-commerce system	Transparency between governments and citizens	Shared data open data

European Commission (n.d.), Smart cities. https://commission.europa.eu/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/city-initiatives/smart-cities_en Iberdrola (n.d.), Smart cities: the technological revolution reaches the cities https://www.iberdrola.com/innovation/smart-cities
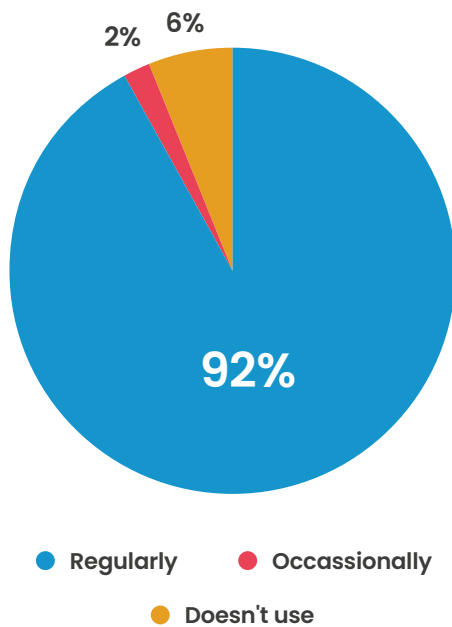
Priorities of digitalisation

Warsaw is making many efforts to become a smart city. City inhabitants have a higher technology uptake, and more smart city solutions are being developed and implemented. Youth and the elderly are subjected to the same changes, but often perceive them differently. Supporting these groups in understanding digitalisation and its impact on the city is an important element for the better adoption of digital technologies in the city.

Warsaw residents and digitalisation

A 2022 study asked people living in Warsaw about their digital habits. There are some significant differences in technology uptake between the different age groups. As expected, the biggest discrepancies in digital practices are between youngsters and Warsaw's elderly residents.

Do Warsaw citizens use the Internet?

2% 6%

92%

- Regularly
- Occassionally
- Doesn't use

Urząd Miasta s. Warszawy (2022), Diagnoza cyfrowa m. st. Warszawy. https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/warszawa-w-liczbach/diagnoza-cyfrowa

How often do Warsaw citizens use the Internet?
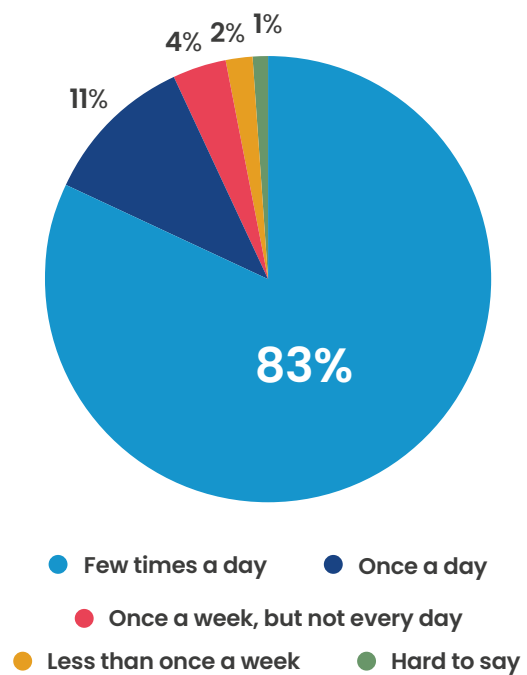
4% 2% 1%

11%

83%

- Few times a day
- Once a day
- Once a week, but not every day
- Less than once a week
- Hard to say

Urząd Miasta s. Warszawy (2022), Diagnoza cyfrowa m. st. Warszawy. https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/warszawa-w-liczbach/diagnoza-cyfrowa
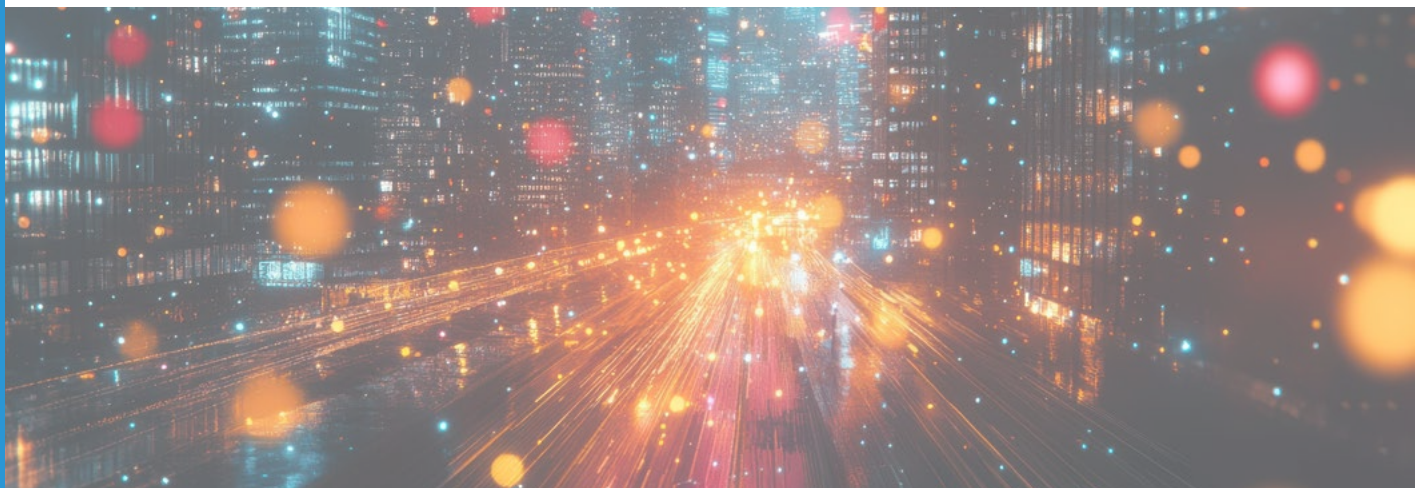
What do Warsaw residents do online?

Activity	Average	18–44	65+
Seek information	99%	100%	95%
E-mails	92%	98%	78%
Online banking	90%	97%	74%
News and newspapers	88%	90%	82%
Messaging	86%	96%	65%
Online shopping	85%	95%	59%
Music	80%	94%	49%
Public services	79%	84%	62%
Video	79%	90%	57%
Social media	76%	89%	52%

Urząd Miasta s. Warszawy (2022), Diagnoza cyfrowa m. st. Warszawy. https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/warszawa-w-liczbach/diagnoza-cyfrowa
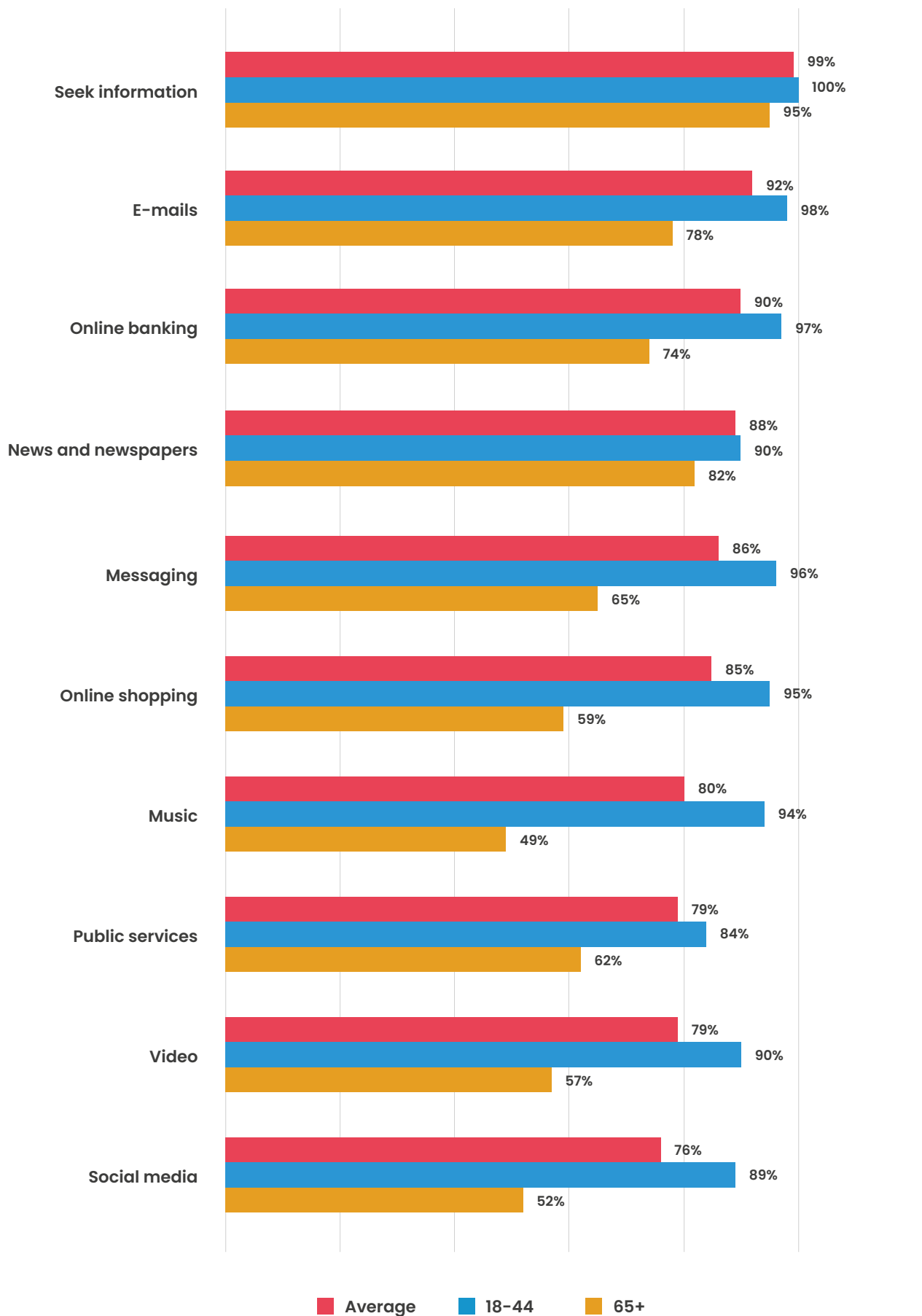
Smart city solutions in Warsaw

The City of Warsaw is implementing various smart city solutions to improve its residents' livelihoods. Smart cities aim to create a well-organised and efficiently functioning digitally-enhanced system for their residents to thrive. Warsaw is investing in smart city solutions for infrastructure, services, and administration.
Examples of smart city solutions in Warsaw include:

Transport
· Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)
· Public transport (sustainable fleet, infrastructure, mobile apps, bike system)

Energy efficiency
· smart lighting system
· energy-efficient building

Waste management
· air quality monitoring
· smart waste management

Digital public administration
· e-services
· city mobile app

Safety
· city monitoring
· alarm systems
· parking system

Transparency
· open data portal
· big data portal

In recent years, the City of Warsaw has made significant efforts to digitalise its services and deliver information to residents online. New digital platforms and apps have been developed and implemented by the city to improve communication with residents and offer digital solutions for an improved experience of the city.

Platforms and apps available to people in Warsaw:

· **Portal UM** (https://um.warszawa.pl) – the portal of the Warsaw City Hall
· **Warszawa 19115** (https://warszawa19115.pl) – official information hub for citizens
· **MobiWAWA** – public transportation app
· **Veturilo** – city bikes app
· **MojaWARSZAWA** (https://moja.warszawa19115.pl) – e-services portal
· **Serwis mapowy Miasta Stołecznego Warszawy** (https://mapa.um.warszawa.pl) – map service for the city of Warsaw
· **Dane po warszawsku** (http://Api.um.warszawa.pl) – city's big data portal

## Good Practice Box:

A simulator of self-service machines for digitally excluded residents.

Merkury simulator is an online tool that helps people learn how to use self-service machines, such as parcel lockers, ATM, parking meters or self-checkout tills. This tool helps develop digital competencies in a safe environment online before using the tool in real life.

http://www.wyplacesam.pl/
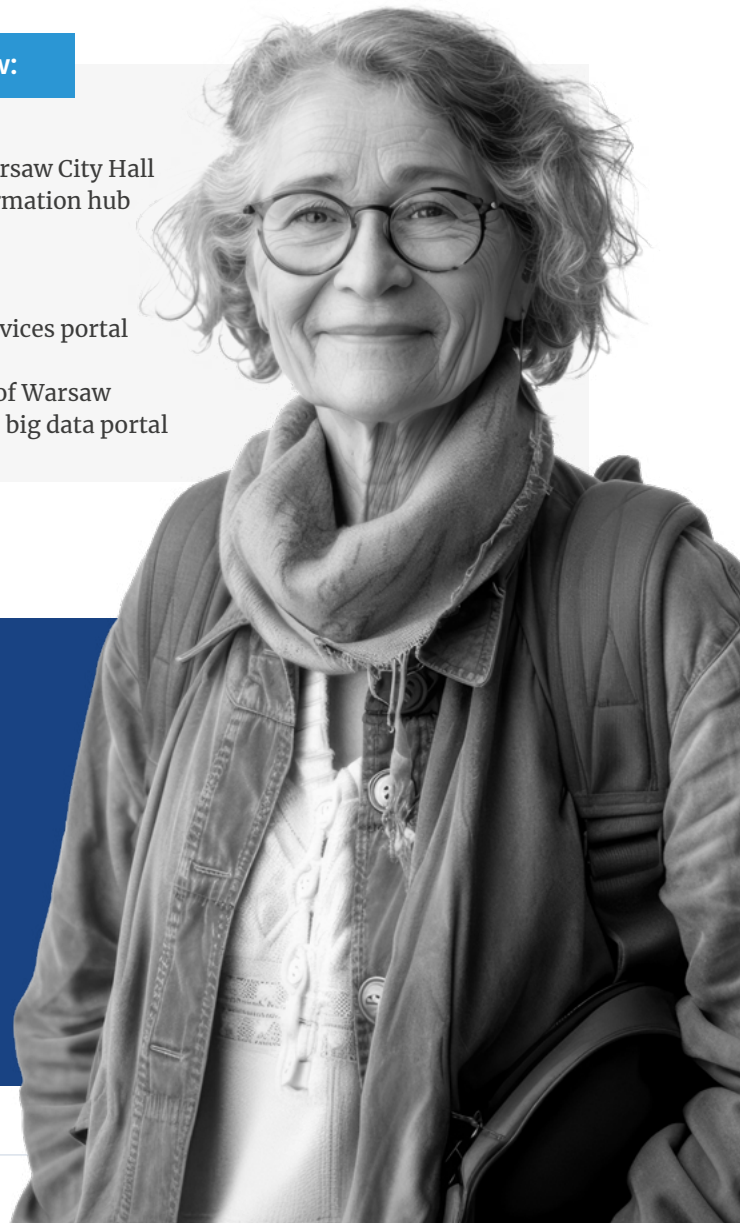
Points for discussion:

- **Discuss why cities should develop into smart cities.**

- Discuss with participants where there is still room for improvement in their city.

- **Ask participants how they spend their time online.**

- Ask them what kind of digital solutions they see in their everyday lives and how their immediate surroundings are changing.

5.3. The future of the digital Warsaw

> **Although the digitalisation of cities ultimately brings change, it also involves opportunities and challenges for various actors: individuals, the government, businesses, and society.**
>
> Understanding the various stakeholders and the benefits and challenges of digitalisation can help your participants envision the future of their city.

Opportunities for the digitalisation of cities
The digitalisation of cities has multiple benefits for residents, governments, businesses, and society as a whole. Technology can improve a city's efficiency and people's experiences of living and working there. A promissory vision of the role of technology in the city's lives shows that there are significant opportunities that cities like Warsaw can harness for their development.

For individuals

New opportunities for civic engagement.
Digital technologies offer more opportunities for civic engagement, such as digital activism, solutions for community organisations, civic content, civic education and open data. Local communities can benefit from better outreach and human-centred solutions.

Access to information and infrastructures.
Without the internet, many of the information sources were dispersed, and access to information was limited. Cities were full of archives, libraries and offices. Today, open access to data, digital infrastructures and information aggregators promotes more active behaviour in sharing and seeking knowledge.

New digital-specific skills.
Digital technologies opened an array of new skills that enable the use of digital solutions. People have to adapt to new concepts, especially when they are implemented on a wider scale and for everyday use, for example by city administration.

Improved public services.
The digitalisation of public services can improve process flow and management. The efficiency of the local digital public services may be better monitored and improved and adhere to central-level standards.

Decreased bureaucracy and paperwork.
Bureaucracy has been one of the core issues of public administration. With digital solutions, bureaucratic procedures are less prone to abuse. With less paper waste, local authorities can use more space and resources for other purposes than archiving and printing.

Transparency and accountability.
Cities have kept their records closed to the public or enabled limited access to public information. Contemporary citizens demand information regarding their taxes, and the city's investments, developments and strategies.

For business

Cost efficiency and productivity.
Digital solutions in business reduce costs and improve productivity. Some level of automation can help in reducing the employees' burden and help smaller entrepreneurs grow their businesses. As such, they can improve the city's tax revenue and business scene.

Enhanced security and information preservation.
Digital technologies offer sophisticated means for safe and secure data management and storage. Businesses have more control over their data and can archive and repurpose it for years ahead.

New digital-related business models.
New business models arise from technological development. Cities offer more investment potential for newer sectors, and local job markets adapt to employers' needs.

For society

Social connectivity.
Digital technologies can improve interpersonal relationships. Keeping in touch with friends and family is easier using modern technology. Geographic distance or other obstacles become less of an issue if we can use these technologies.

Innovation, creativity and empowerment.
Digital skills allow for creating new solutions. Cities can benefit from the boost of entrepreneurship and residents being keen on improvement and innovation. Residents also feel more empowered when they see their achievements.

Environmental sustainability.
With smart city solutions, cities become more sustainable, and living conditions for the citizens improve. More sustainability also means lasting communities and efficient management of the environmental impact.

Challenges of the digitalisation of cities

While there are many positive outcomes of the digitalisation of cities, such processes do not come without challenges. For cities like Warsaw, becoming "smarter" can result in numerous dilemmas and problems that city officials must address. It is essential that the various stakeholders sharing a common vision of a more digitalised city respond to these challenges.

Challenges of the digitalisation of cities

Data privacy and cybersecurity challenges.
Cities collect a volume of data on their residents, including personal information. Digital systems in smart cities are also more prone to cyberattacks, which could potentially result in data theft, breach of privacy, or the disruption of services.

Challenge?
Cities must put significant resources into privacy protection and cybersecurity, and develop cybersecurity strategies and frameworks. Cybersecurity measures include safe and efficient data storage and processing, having the latest updates of software and systems, incident response teams, and education and awareness.

Infrastructure needs
Smart cities require the newest technologies, as the old ones can quickly become obsolete. Using outdated infrastructure or systems may complicate the integration of smart city solutions. However, updating infrastructure on a larger scale can be costly for the city budget.

Challenge?
Systematic and strategic investment in smart technologies allows for gradual adaptation of existing infrastructure and systems. Policy frameworks and action plans can be a good form of careful planning of resource allocation.

Oversaturation of data and misinformation
Society today can struggle with the volume of data and information that people are exposed to. This rapid influx also enables the circulation of misinformation, which poses a threat to society and democracy, including the disruption of city governance.

Challenge?
The city's cooperation with various local, national and international actors, as well as cross-sectoral collaboration of policymakers and governments with academics, civil society, police and businesses can support the mitigation of challenges related to disinformation. Cities can implement efforts such as research, intervention teams, dedicated city officials, education and community engagement.

Digital skills gaps
Digital skills are now key to the process of digitalisation and boost greater competitiveness and innovation. Although people living in the city generally exhibit more sophisticated digital skills, the digital skills gaps still exist.

Challenge?
The city can put effort into working with its residents and local businesses to develop and strengthen digital skills. Educational programmes, grants, incentives, stipends, digital skills events, and infrastructure can support the citizens in developing digital skills.

Exacerbating existing and new social inequalities

Digitalisation is not equal to everyone. Digital inequalities can be related to economic, geographic, ethnic, racial, age, gender, sexual orientation, and health backgrounds. Although cities provide better access to technologies and digital skills, other inequalities may intersect and exacerbate gaps.

Challenge?

Cities can invest in developing more affordable digital infrastructure for their residents, promote digital literacy and organise low- or no-cost digital skills trainings, subsidise or discount devices, equip public spaces and schools with technologies, and raise awareness about digital inclusion.

AI technologies in the city

Although the use of AI technologies in the city is crucial to its development, it does not come without challenges. AI data may potentially lead to security breaches or dependence on technology, automation may reduce jobs in some sectors, and there are ethical considerations of using AI data.

Challenge?

An evidence-based approach to AI technology, and careful monitoring and management of the use of AI in the city, can reduce the potential adverse effects. Ensuring AI implementation is transparent and fair to residents strengthens the city's credibility.

Growing e-waste

The environmental impact of technology is two-fold: while it reduces paper waste and improves the circular economy and scalability, mounting e-waste can be a concern.

Challenge?

Some of the solutions that the city can implement to reduce e-waste include special disposal sites, local recycling programmes and facilities, engaging the private sector in the circular economy, smart waste management systems, and high penalties for littering.
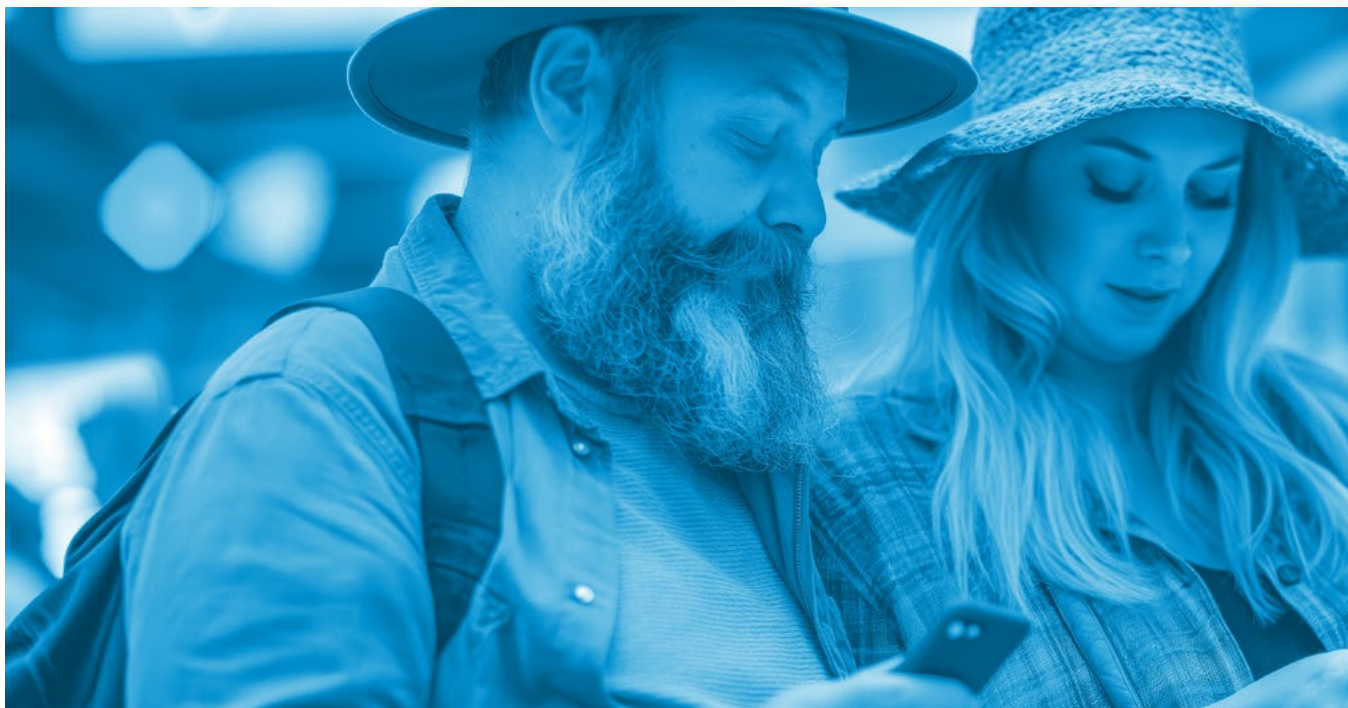
Priorities for the digital transformation of Warsaw

There is no blueprint strategy for the digitalisation of every city. The degree of realisation of digital transformation priorities depends on the local requirements, residents' needs, and accessible infrastructure. Your participants may have their own ideas for the digital transformation of the city, which can produce valuable insights to share with policymakers and local authorities.

In Warsaw, the Warsaw City Hall has established six priorities for digital transformation in the city.

Proactive measures	Shaping the process of the digital transformation together	Processing data in a distributed model
The administration proactively creates initiatives to invite citizens and institutions to work together. Digitalisation processes are based on research and critical assessment.	**IT organisations** should operate within the priorities, values and principles of the policy. The public administration facilitates good collaboration and information flow.	**Data** is ensured to be safe, secure, and ready for multiple use. This means processing data in accordance with legal and technological standards, ensuring adaptability, scalability and accessibility.
Building trust in the digital public services	**Constant improvement**	**City's information architecture**
Users can trust the digital services provided by the city. Technologies are intuitive and tailored to users' preferences and needs.	**Digital transformation** is a continuous process. We use constant learning, development, evaluation and improvement.	**Public offices** in the city have a well-developed information architecture that is constantly evaluated and improved.

Prezydent m. st. Warszawy, (2020). Polityka cyfrowa transformacji miasta stołecznego Warszawy
https://bip.warszawa.pl/NR/exeres/AADAC0E2-C65F-4040-8E3F-2BD52F071842,frameless.htm

Points for discussion:

- **Discuss with participants how they personally benefit from the digitalisation in their city.**

- Ask participants about potential solutions to some of the challenges in the digitalisation of their city.

- **Ask the group what kind of digital solutions they would like to see in the next 20 years.**

- Explain the different targets and strategies for the future and ask participants to assess how they perform.

5.4. Digital inclusion in the city

Inequality means that some people have better opportunities than others. With digital technology, digital inequalities mean people being disadvantaged due to not having or having less technology.

The term digital divide has been used for years to describe unequal access to digital technology, such as connectivity, devices and networks. However, in recent years, the idea of **digital inclusion** has emerged to better describe the inequalities arising from the lack of internet access and the lack of digital skills needed to navigate the digital world.

Explaining the drivers and consequences of digital inequalities to your participants can prompt discussion about the benefits of a more inclusive approach to technologies.

Digital inequalities

> **Digital inequalities** often accompany social and economic inequalities. Inequalities can be on the individual level, defined by a person's circumstances, or macro-scale social issues pertaining to groups of people.

Types of digital inequalities	Examples
Access inequality	**Access to:** · Technical devices · Software · Networks · Electricity
Skills inequality	· Digital literacy · Digital competencies
Economic inequality	· Digital skills in the workplace · Using technologies for managing business · Employment in ICT sector
Education inequality	· Access to information resources · Hardware at schools · Teachers' competencies
Social inequality	**Ability to:** · Use social media for connections · Civic engagement
Cultural inequality	· Language proficiency · Level of media consumption · Belonging to marginalised groups
Health inequality	· Disabilities · Access to telehealth

Different cities face unique challenges shaped by demographics, socioeconomic factors, and infrastructure.

Local governments can identify disparities within cities and inspire change on the local level. Local problems should inspire local solutions that can promote digital inclusion.

Urban geography can be an additional factor in digital inequalities in the city. Certain city areas can exaggerate inequalities, being impacted by:
· access to high-speed internet and high costs in the area
· socially marginalised communities
· language barriers
· ageing population
· income disparities
· less smart city solutions

Tackling digital inequalities in smart cities

Digital inclusion is a part of creating a smart community. Creating smart cities is not only about technological infrastructure. Accommodating diversity and incorporating accessibility for all is essential to smart city planning and management.

Local solutions for digital inequalities

Connecting with existing stakeholders who serve disadvantaged residents (e.g. libraries, education providers, non-profit organisations, local community centres, job centres).

Including the topic of digital inequalities in any strategic planning, and **setting a digital inclusion agenda**.

Consulting with communities on how they would like to be supported by the city to create evidence--based interventions.

Creating **accessibility standards and frameworks** as a part of your city's strategic plan.

Involving the business community in developing and strengthening digital skills among all residents to ensure more digital services uptake.

Creating **accessibility standards and frameworks** as a part of your city's strategic plan.

Training city officials and service deliverers in digital skills to create awareness and provide the knowledge that needs to be passed on to others.

Proposing **systemic solutions to your residents** (infrastructure investments, subsidised services and access to devices, training programmes and resources).

Generation gap

Another factor that can exaggerate digital inequalities is age. This can be seen as a generation gap, especially between young people and seniors. When you're working with these groups, it is useful to show how they have various perspectives on digitalisation and how each can positively contribute to technology development. Cities can also support intergenerational dialogue organisations and initiatives.

In Poland...

99.23%
of those aged 16 to 29 used the Internet

43.22%
of those aged 65+ used the Internet

In Warsaw...

100%
of people aged 18-24 are frequent Internet users

72%
of people aged 65+ are frequent Internet users

Eurostat. (2024). Information society: ICT usage in households and by individuals. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ISOC_CI_IFP_IU___custom_915519/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=1a84d7ea-0d93-40ff-a7c0-b3b3cfcd62e3
Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Diagnoza cyfrowa m. st. Warszawy. https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/warszawa-w-liczbach/diagnoza-cyfrowa

The myths of digital natives and boomers

The generational gap in digital skills is exaggerated by the stereotypes associated with internet use among young people and older people.

Young people are regarded as digital natives who are fluent in technology due to their age. Some of the stereotypes about digital natives include the idea of universal youth digital capabilities, affinity skills, over-reliance on technology, and technology abuse or addiction. In contrast, young people's internet use varies (depending on many individual factors, digital inequalities, and skills shortages). Many young people can navigate the internet to their benefit, and not all are addicted to or abuse the technologies.

Older people are ironically termed boomers. Boomer is a term for an older person who doesn't understand young people, has outdated knowledge, and doesn't follow contemporary trends. Boomers on the internet are associated with criticism of young people and their internet usage, using technologies in embarrassing ways, and not understanding youth culture. Yet many older people strive to follow the internet trends within their capabilities; however, the content they are exposed to from their family and friends differs from the content that young people share with peers. Many older generations are genuinely interested in young people, and want to know more about them.

Digital inequalities

Young and older people may benefit from cross-generational support and learning to approach technologies in a conscious, beneficial, and successful way. Many intergenerational initiatives can help bridge the generational gap. Such initiatives are generally more available to the residents of larger Polish cities, such as Warsaw.

Digital storytelling: intergenerational digital story creation	**Community centres:** tech classes and courses for seniors	**Tech assistants:** pairing people for tutoring and mutual learning	**Inclusive design:** tech design that takes into account user preferences and capabilities
Digital literacy campaigns: spreading awareness about digital literacy among seniors	**Tech advocates:** using testimonials and support from more experienced users	**Family support:** seeking help and support among the closed ones	**Digital art creation:** collaborative content creation

Good Practice Box:

Digital volunteering in Centrum Aktywności Międzypokoleniowej "Nowolipie"/Centre of Intergenerational Activity "Nowolipie" in Warsaw.

CAM "Nowolipie" is an organisation in Warsaw that supports elderly residents of Warsaw in their mobilisation. CAM bridges the generational gap by linking young people with seniors for intergenerational dialogue. A variety of extracurricular activities and support services are available to senior citizens, including cultural events, field trips, sports, activity clubs, library and community garden.

One of the activities proposed by CAM "Nowolipie" is digital volunteering. Several times a week younger volunteers support seniors in learning computer skills and using tablets or smartphones.

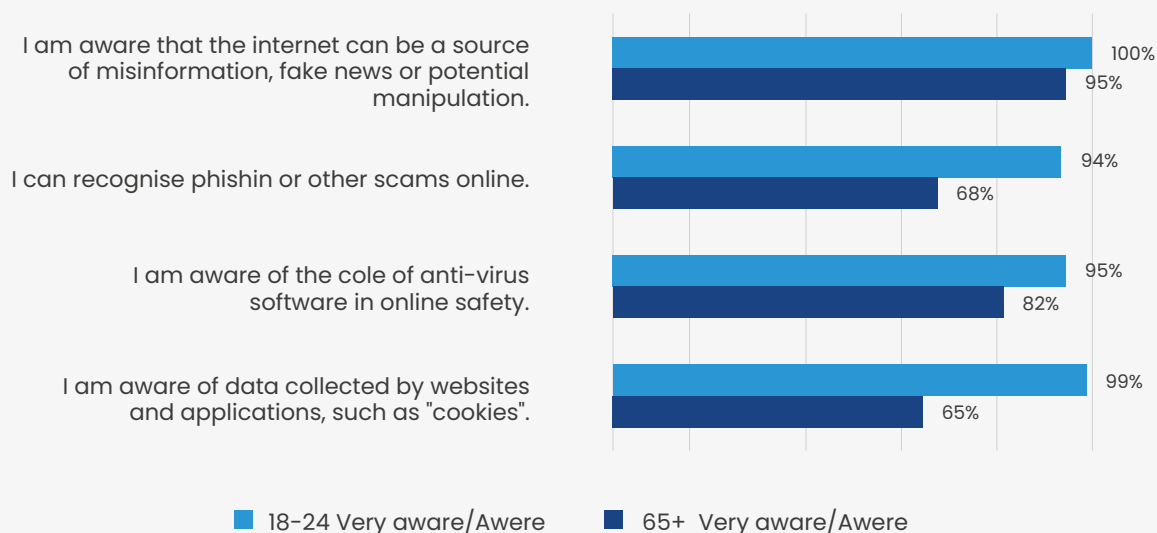https://cam.waw.pl/centrum-aktywnosci-miedzypokoleniowej/

Internet security

Although the internet provides numerous benefits to individuals and society, users are also exposed to a few risks. The same phenomenon can apply differently to different generations. Discussing online security with participants may show similarities and differences in the risks they are exposed to online.

| Online risks	Young people	Older people
Hate speech and bullying	Young peers can produce and face hate speech and bullying in offline and on-line spaces. It can be done by real-life friends or anonymous peers.	Older people can share and receive racist, xenophobic, homophobic and other hate speech messages from others and via social media posts.
Cyberviolence	Young people may be a target of online predators or violent and sexual content on the Internet. They may also be the victims of online blackmail or doxing.	Older people are more prone to scammers, extortion, phishing and fraud crimes. There are various sources of crime: suspicious links, impersonation, malware, and scam marketing.
Fake news and misinformation	Young people may be prone to receiving fake news and extremist content in their social media content. Some may lack fact-checking skills and spread the misinformation.	Older people are also prone to fake news and misinformation, but often from their friends and family circle. Some of them trust the internet as a source that is always reliable.
AI	Young people may overuse AI, which can limit their capacity to search, synthesise, and write information. They may lack the capabilities to fact-check and use AI as support rather than a substitute for work.	Older people may have problems familiarising themselves with AI technologies. Some may also have a doom-based perspective and fear AI solutions.

Online safety awareness among Warsaw residents

	18-24 Very aware/Awere	65+ Very aware/Awere
I am aware that the internet can be a source of misinformation, fake news or potential manipulation.	100%	95%
I can recognise phishin or other scams online.	94%	68%
I am aware of the cole of anti-virus software in online safety.	95%	82%
I am aware of data collected by websites and applications, such as "cookies".	99%	65%

Urząd m.st. Warszawy. (2023). Diagnoza cyfrowa m. st. Warszawy. https://um.warszawa.pl/waw/warszawa-w-liczbach/diagnoza-cyfrowa

Larger cities have the resources and the capacity to develop solutions to better protect the community from online risks. Some examples of city-driven support include:

Digital literacy programmes	**Cybersecurity courses**	**Safe public WiFi**
Local online safety response teams	**Online platforms/city partnerships**	**Cybersecurity policies, protocol and governance**
Critical infrastructure protection	**Hate speech victim support**	**Data transparency initiatives**

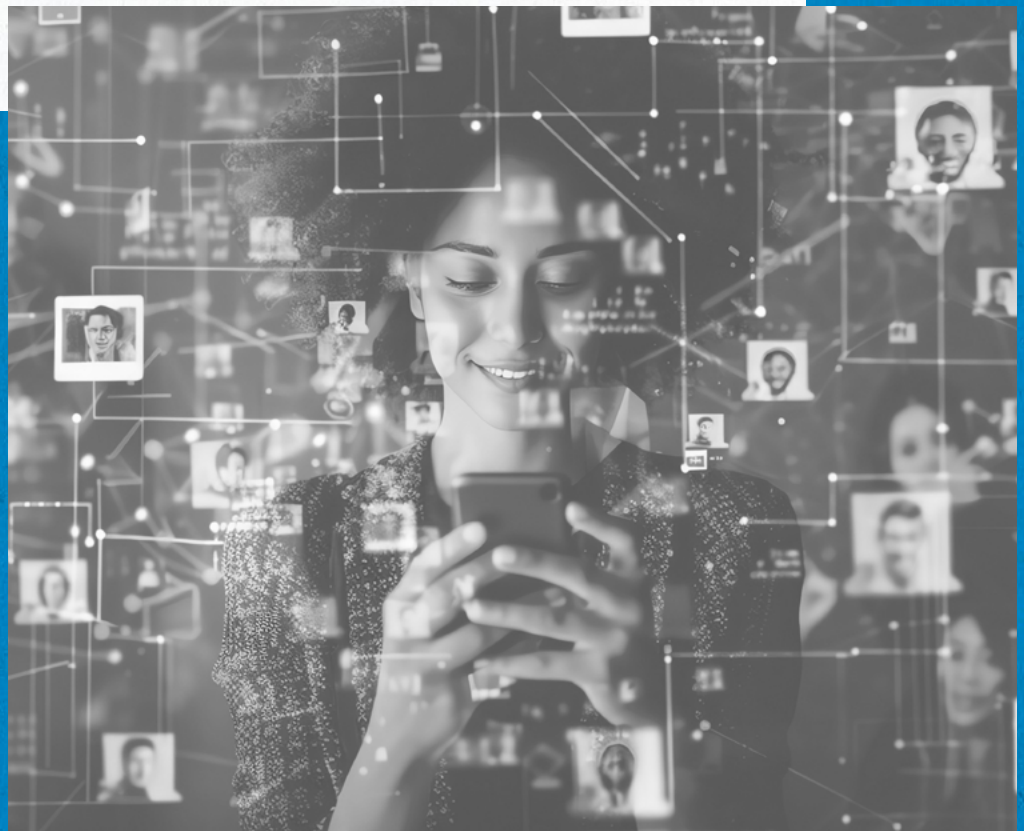## Points for discussion:

- **Discuss the digital inequalities that participants face or know in their immediate surroundings.**

- Ask about the stereotypes they have about different generations on the internet.

- **Ask participants about their fact-checking mechanisms.**

- Collect ideas for intergenerational dialogue initiatives.

- **Discuss how intergenerational initiatives can protect citizens from online risks.**
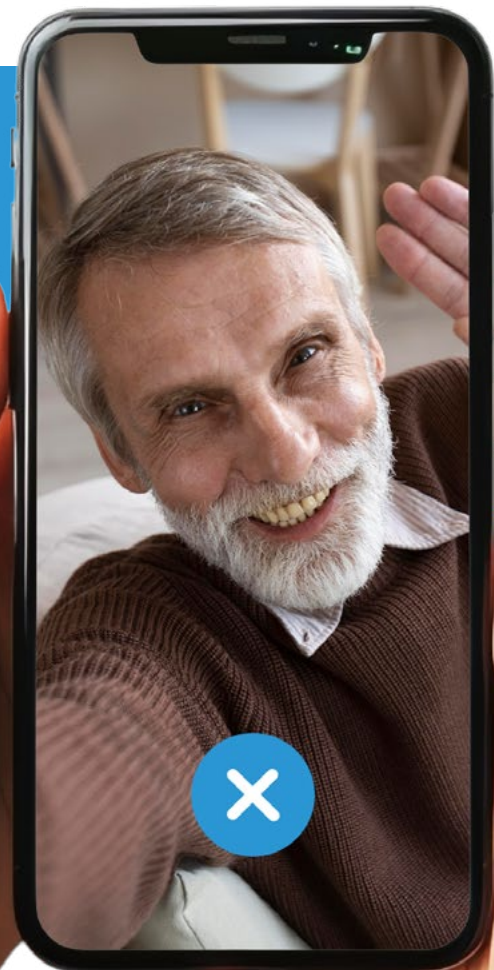
5.5. Key takeaways for trainers and educators

Digitalisation is a complex topic for various age groups. Educators working with young people and older people must take into account the various pathways and attitudes to technology among their students and participants. The key to a productive discussion about digitalisation is to share knowledge about technologies and debug certain myths that both young people and the elderly might have been exposed to.

1. Factor in different circumstances your participants may face online. Spark discussions and reflexivity among them, and critically approach their own positions, stereotypes, and knowledge they may lack.

2. Explain digitalisation in the simplest way possible. Technology can be hard to understand and confusing, so take extra time for thorough explanations and questions. Make sure to educate yourself, too.

3. Remember the individual and societal implications of technology. Sometimes, personal consequences may be easier to understand, whereas social factors and impact can be harder to imagine.

4. Remember not to take sides: the internet can affect its users and society in positive and negative ways. Try to maintain a balance between risks and benefits, and avoid spreading panic. Discuss how risks and benefits differ across different demographics.

Educators guidebook

Intergenerational Dialogue for the Future of My City