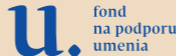


Vivid square

The objective of our project is unification and regeneration of **SNP Square (Slovak National Uprising Square) and Kamenné Square, which, once improved, could be an example of functional and accessible city spaces.**



Shared Cities: Creative Momentum (SCCM) is a European cultural platform addressing the contemporary urban challenges of European cities. SCCM is a joint project of Goethe-Institut (DE), Czech Centres (CZ), reSITE (CZ), Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava (SK), Association of Belgrade Architects (RS), Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre – KÉK (HU), Katowice City of Gardens (PL), KUNSTrePUBLIK (DE), Mindspace (HU), Old Market Hall Alliance (SK), Res Publica – Cities Magazine (PL). Co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

What is our project about?

In the SNP and Kamenné Squares in Bratislava our goal is to create unified public space through easy changes based on long-term analyzes and surveys. Our proposal materials can also be used as the starting point for public tender.

“Vivid Square” is a joint project of the Old Market Hall Alliance (AST) and Slovak Governance Institute, in cooperation with the architectural studio 2021 and the Landscape architecture laboratory. The municipality of the Capital City of Bratislava also participated. Consultations were also provided by other stakeholders, experts, residents and visitors of the city.

Covered area

Most of the area covered by the project belongs to the City of Bratislava. Only minor areas are privately owned.

Proposals will cover the following streets and squares: SNP Square, Kamenné Square, parts of Dunajská Street, Špitálska Street, Rajska Street, Klobučnicka Street, Treskoňova Street, Hurbanovo Square and Župné Square.



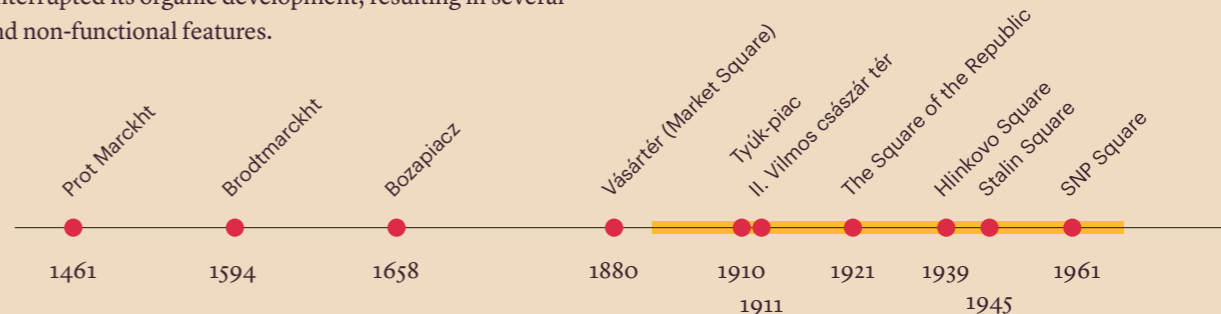
History of the area

In the past, the shape of the squares was mainly defined by the medieval and city walls. From the Middle Ages until modern times parts of today's SNP Square and Kamenné Square have experienced many name changes.



In 1461 it was *Prot Marckht*, in 1594 *Brodmarckht*, in 1658 *Bozapiacz*, in 1759 *Forum Frumentarium*, in 1872 *Zöldpiacz*, in 1910 *Tyúk-piac* and one year later it became *II. Vilmos császár tér* (Square of Emperor William II.). Shortly after the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, the square changed its name in 1921 to *The Square of the Republic*. During World War II. and era of the Slovak State, it became *Hlinkovo Square*, and after 1945 *Stalin's Square*. Since 1961 the name has remained in its present form: *SNP Square* (Slovak National Uprising Square).

The names show how history and the functionality of SNP Square have changed. The more than 500-year old tradition of SNP Square as the market and gathering space was only interrupted in the 20th century, when it became a political symbol. This very change interrupted its organic development, resulting in several mixed and non-functional features.



**3 distinctive
moments
in the 20th century**

1. Modernism



In the 30's the city was blooming and in the vicinity of the SNP Square four new buildings were built: *Mestská Sporiteľňa* – City Savings Bank (the building of today's Slovenská Sporiteľňa on the corner of Štúrova and Dunajská Street), *Družstevné domy* – Co-operative Homes (opposite the Old Market Building), *Brouk and Babka* (the building of the “old” shopping mall Dunaj) and *Manderlov dom* – Manderlov House (so called “Manderlák”). Although they are high-rise buildings, their construction did not fundamentally alter the functioning of the square. The Old Market Hall kept functioning, as well as sales in kiosks: not only in front of the Market Hall, but also at The Fountain of Karolína Augusta and in front of the church building of the Reformed Church.



2. Totality



*In 1949 an important step happened – the installment of Stalin’s Monument. This meant the end of The Fountain of Karolína Augusta, which had been in place since 1828, and also the end of the public and gathering space. Another major hit in the area was the creation of a memorial for Slovak National Uprising Heroes (1974). Among other intentions, the very shape of the memorial was meant to prevent the gathering of people in the square (a similar thing happened also in case of today’s *Námestie slobody* – The Freedom Square).*



3. Construction of Prior



The shopping mall *Prior* was being built in 1964-1968. This object finitely changed the shape of Kamenné Square and also its surroundings. Kamenné Square itself used to be a small space across from the ending of Kolárská Street, but the construction of Prior, however, significantly widened it.



The SNP Square had been changing its function again since 1989. It has been gradually filling with cars ever since. This has resulted in a chaotic and non-unified public space with over 4000 m² being occupied by cars.

What were our sources?

The first step of our project was the collection and analysis of proposals from the past.

Subsequently, the current state of the square was mapped

static transport

traffic signs

trees and shrubs

advertising space

waste bins

cycle stands

public lighting

flower pots

barrier pillars

Then we created

data map

3D model of square

sensorial map

legal analysis

dendrological survey of 172 trees

At the same time we began the process of collecting opinions and suggestions from experts and the general public, but mainly residents. Within that we:

138

We have completed 138 personal meetings within the implementation team with stakeholders as well as experts.

1087

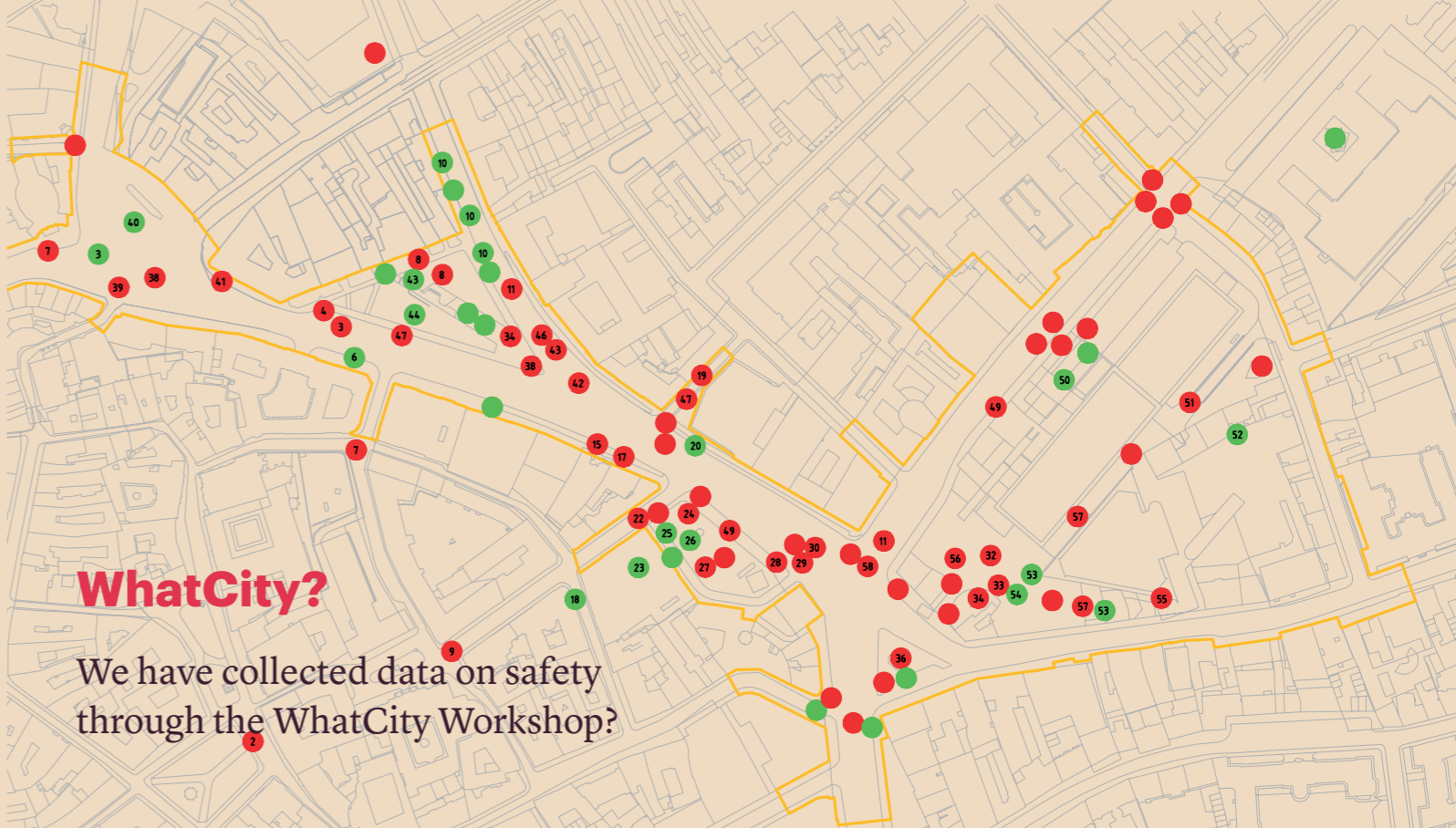
We created a questionnaire for the public that was filled in by 1087 respondents.

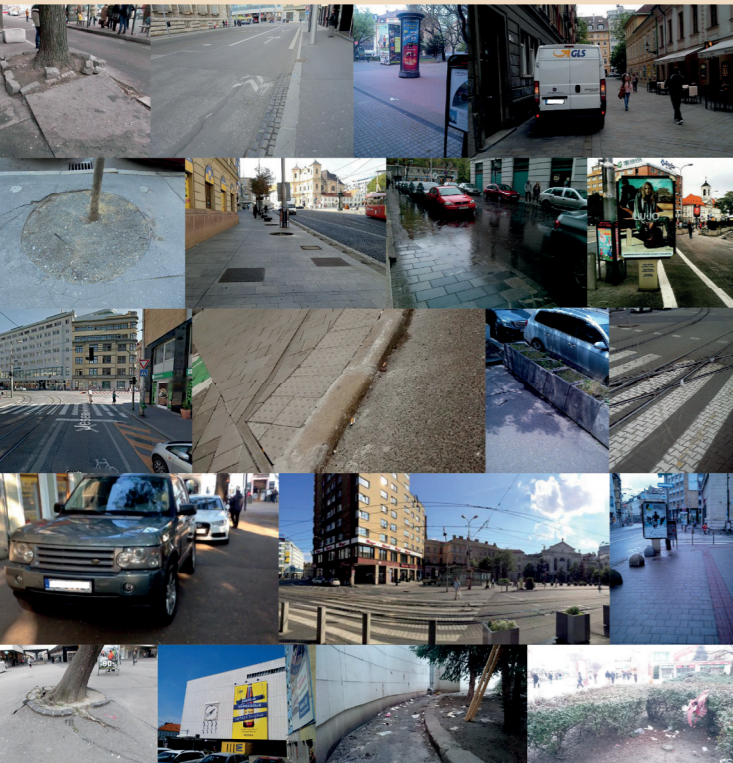
Focus groups

We organized educational trips and focus groups in the Old Town's Senior centre, in Prešporovo Family Center and with groups of visually and mobility impaired.

WhatCity?

We have collected data on safety through the WhatCity Workshop?





407 inputs

We mapped 407 inputs that were submitted via portal *Odkaz pre starostu* – Message for the Mayor in the last 7 years (www.odkazprestarostu.sk).

Do you know what you see?

Through the portal viescovidis.sk (their very title meaning “Do you know what you see”) we have documented local memories that are linked to specific locations within the squares.

Sensorial map

We gathered 269 suggestions about the pleasant and unpleasant places around the area that people have marked by cards.

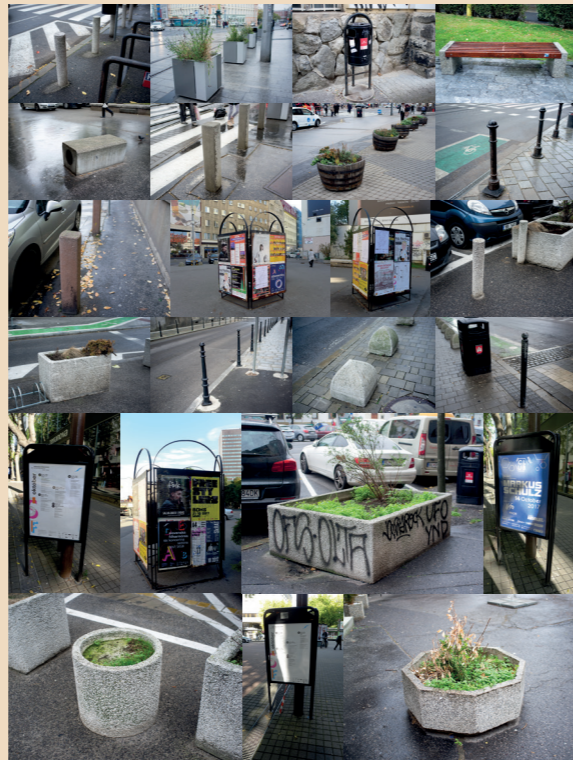
The outcome of all these activities has resulted in hundreds of pages of documentation, freely available via website: zivenamestie.sk

What we propose

Examples of
“quick wins”

Let's unify the square

The analysis shows that there are 61 different types of objects and furniture, including: 16 kinds of flower pots, 7 kinds of waste bins, 5 types of cycle stands, 7 seating types, 13 types of barriers, 8 types of information boards and 5 kiosk types. Part of it would be good to remove altogether and another part would be good to replace or move elsewhere, which would reduce the number of types of furniture from 61 to 12 standard types. This would create a more harmonious space in the squares.



Let's restrict car parking

Cancelling even 9.5% of parking places in this area in the first phase would bring a significant change. Among those could be:

- city parking on Kamenné Square in front of the building of Slovenská sporiteľňa
- one quarter of parking spaces in the upper part of SNP Square (that would be achieved by installing barriers along the tram line, thus solving the illegal parking issue on the square)
- parking on Treskoňová Street (between buildings of Národné osvetové centrum and the building of The Hospital of Brothers of Mercy)



-9,5%

Let's move free parking and regulate traffic

Free parking spaces could be moved to the upper part of SNP Square. As a result, the drivers would immediately see whether there is a free parking space on the square, which would at the same time limit the amount of cars, especially in the lower end of SNP Square. Approximately 80% of cars that pass through SNP Square each day either search for a parking space or simply just pass through. Car traffic regulation in the squares is important as empirical research confirms long term that streets and squares with lower traffic intensity encourage the emergence of social and economic interactions, which is certainly desirable in terms of revitalizing the square.

Give priority to pedestrians

More than 40,000 people pass through the square each day – arriving mainly by foot or public transport. Approximately 5% of people reach this area by car. In the narrower part of SNP Square, the pedestrian sidewalk should be widened to the detriment of parking space, while raising pedestrian crossings at the Main Post Office and at the corners of the streets of Špitálska, Kolárska, Dunajská and Štúrova.



Let's create year-round and seasonal seating

We do not want to create additional barriers, so it would be advisable to create a year-round seating in places where barriers are already present or where such barriers are desirable (e.g. at the proposed playground). In addition, from April to October, there will also be the so-called seasonal seating that is moveable (for example in summer from sun to shadow).

Social control

New playground

In order to breathe life and activity into the square, a playground should be placed in the unused space at Kamenné Square. Additional value is that playgrounds are spaces for establishing relationships, both among children and adults. The playground should be surrounded by a natural barrier, such as year-round seating that serves for relaxation as well as separation of the playground.

Sufficient visibility

To achieve greater visibility, it is necessary to cut the shrubs under the trees, trim the trees, place lighting in dark places, and install new information boards on the squares.

New kiosks

The goal of diverse local business is to attract multiple target groups throughout the day and all seasons.

Sellers and operators should be selected according to whether they add value to the squares and are of interest to different target groups.



Let's have local administration

The squares should be efficiently managed, ideally by a combination of the city's association and the major stakeholders operating in the squares. The association should promote the interests of the public space, including the operational maintenance and preparation of the basic design of the square program. Cleaning and repair of the furniture should be provided based on daily feedback.

An analysis of inputs from the portal Prepoststarostu.sk shows that day-to-day care of the public space is an aim that is still difficult to achieve. Out of the 407 complaints reported through the portal in 2010-2017 (June), the respective local government organization solved only 36%, with up to 38% of the complaints still unresolved. Based on sociological research it is however known that the signs of disorderly behavior and minor criminality only lead to higher disorder and an increase of minor criminality.

Competition

In order to improve the area after the so-called “Quick wins” stage there is a need for an architectural and urban design contest calling for proposals to address fundamental and complex tasks.

Among those will be Slovak National Uprising Memorial, The Chapel of St. Jacob, surfaces, new features, static and dynamic transport and more. The desired outcome of the competition is a clear definition of new functions of the squares, and their implementation. The main result of our project up to the competition stage is the material evidence that points to the real image of the squares on the basis of which the status of the square can now be changed.

Funding

Vivid Square project is a joint initiative of the Shared Cities project: Creative Momentum, co-funded by Creative Europe Programme of the European Union, and National Project of ÚSV ROS (Office of Slovak Government Representative for Civil Society Development) Supporting Partnership and Dialogue in the Field of Participatory Public Policy Making, within operation program Efficient Public Administration supported by the European Social Fund.

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More about the project and the results of our work can be found at www.zivenamestie.sk.

