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## PSKOV: Master class for kids – mobility planning with the youngest

A child friendly city is a city in which children and teenagers can freely develop, actively participate in the public life of the city and take part in decision making affecting their interests. In a child-friendly city local executive bodies, institutions, children's and youth associations and residents make efforts to realize the rights of children contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In such a city, they listen to the opinion of children and take it into account when developing local development programs.

The main goal of a child friendly city is to improve the lives of children and adolescents through the realization of i.e. the rights to:

- Freely express their opinions and suggestions about their city
- Influence decision making concerning their city
- Access flora and fauna
- Move safely and independently in the city environment
- Participate in the cultural and social life of the city
- Be treated as an equal citizen

To assess the current needs of children in the city of Pskov a masterclass for children and adolescents was organized by the Pskov city Administration and the ICSE Leontief Centre. In accordance with the goals set within the framework of the master class, the following objectives were set:

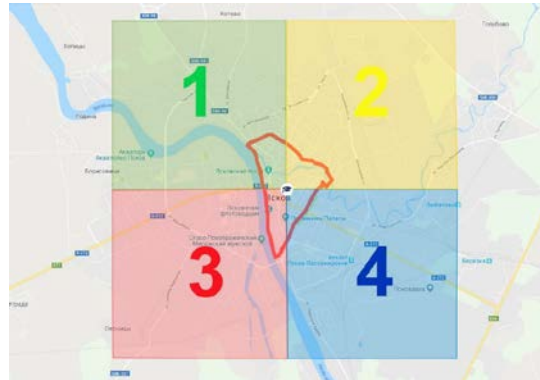
1. Analysis of the state of the infrastructure for children
2. Identification of the main hazards (overt and latent) and opportunities
3. Identification the most pressing problems of parents and children in the city of Pskov

#### 4. Analysis of the basic needs of adolescents

The target group of the master class was schoolchildren in the ages 8-12 years old and adolescents from 13-17 years old. The size of the group is around 40-48 participants.

### The master class

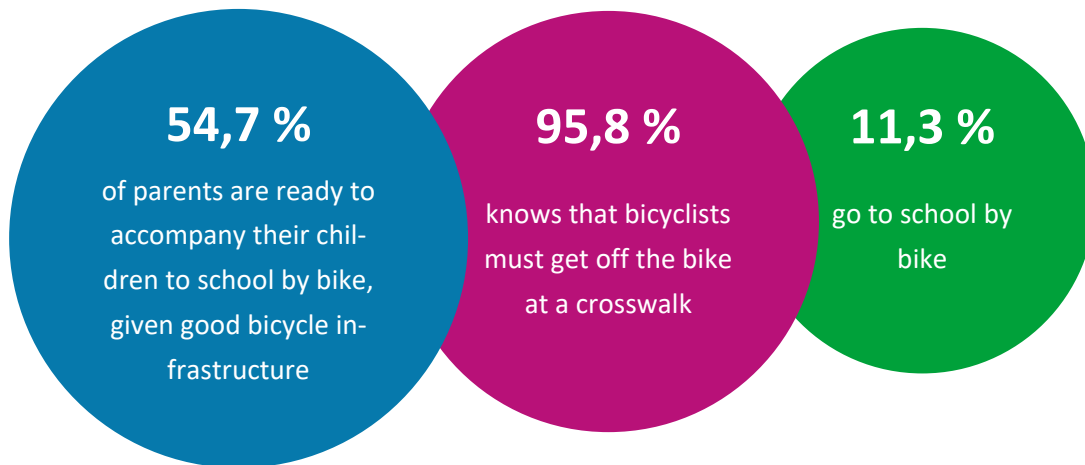
The research area of the master class was the historical area of Pskov, highlighted in the figure.



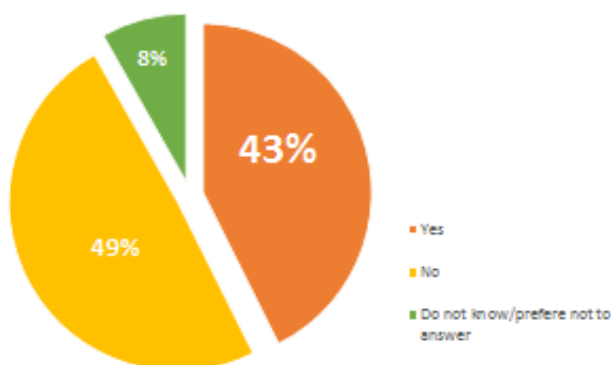
### Part 1: Preparation

A survey (questionnaires for schoolchildren aged 8-12 years old and 13-17 years old) was completed for giving a general portrait of the participants (age, gender, etc.) and focal points for children and adolescents in the studied area.

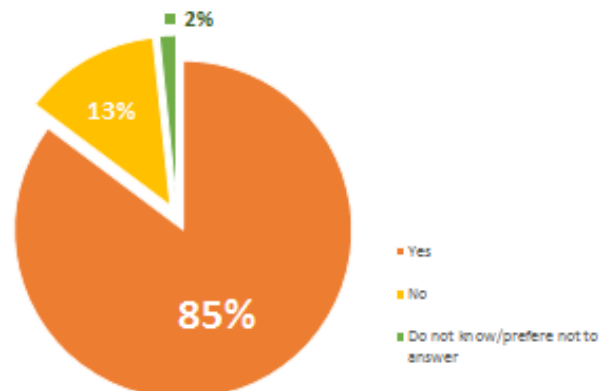
Below are some examples of the results the survey generated.



I feel safe when I use public transport



In my yard, I can safely walk and ride a bike



## Part 2: Area mapping

Participants were asked to map specific places in the historic center:

- Favorite places to walk
- Barriers for walking
- The most popular routes

Drawing up a mental map of the historical center of the city will allow to understand how schoolchildren represent and understand barriers and how they affect them, divisions between favorite places and dangerous spots as well as how do they create their own routes for moving in the city.



## Part 3: Investigation

After drawing up a mental map, the teams of participants accompanied by experts went to the local area for a detailed study of the urban environment. The participants identified problem areas and attractive areas: where the sidewalks are unsmooth, where poles, cars and advertising make it difficult to walk or ride comfortably, where there is no sidewalk at all and you must move along the roadway, where there is lighting and ramps and where children can cut the road to get to school.



Discussions were chosen as a tool to study the places where children play. The aim of the discussions was to find out how school children assess the space in which they live and play, and how they would like to have it.

## Part 4: Results

The urban spaces and infrastructure designed without considering opinion of children, could eventually lead to a city in which children have no place. Participation, or involving children in urban- and mobility planning, and building partnerships between different communities and organizations will help make more informed and effective decisions.

Children and those who look after them (parents, relatives, babysitters, caregivers and teachers) have a



unique knowledge of their area, dangerous and safe places, as well as where changes and improvements are needed first. Projects created jointly have an indisputable advantage - the participants have a feeling of belonging and responsibility, vandalism is reduced, and new social ties are emerging. A master class facilitates finding solutions based on existing user experience. Of course, the architect and the master planner know how to competently design urban space, but they may not consider spontaneous parking, fast or slow traffic, a shortcut through the yard. User experience is exactly what is necessary to create a comfortable urban environment also for younger citizens. The results of the master class are transmitted to the architect in the form of technical specifications and wishes from the participants.

## Contact details

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