Public Space, Public Life, and COVID 19

In the first phases of the reopening in Denmark
0 Introduction  p 04
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Introduction
Q.

1. How have public spaces been used in Denmark during the COVID-19 “lockdown” and during the re-opening?
2. What can we learn from public spaces during the crisis that will make a better urban future for all?
A Vibrant City Center

What is contributing to a vibrant city centre, even in these times?

Local Neighbourhoods

What is the importance of local meeting places during Covid-19 and how can these qualities live on, even after Covid-19?

Urban Programmes

What has been the impact, relevance, and value of public urban programmes and campaigns on the public life of cities?

Urban Mobility

How has Covid-19 changed the way we move and how has it changed our mobility habits?

After identifying snapshots and thematic questions from Phase 1, we selected, alongside Realdania and the City of Copenhagen, where to develop a further understanding on how public life and public space are being affected by COVID-19.
Where did we study Public Life?

**Horsens**
- Size: 524 sq.km
- Population: 90,370
- Density: 172.3 sq km
- Locations Surveyed: Havnefront, Søndergade, Vitus Berings Pl., Torvet, Lunden
- Gehl public life data collected in 2014

**Svendborg**
- Size: 418 sq.km
- Population: 59,040
- Density: 141.2 sq km
- Locations Surveyed: Havnefronten, Torvet Svendborg, Krøyershave, Gerritsgade, Naturlegepladsen

**Helsingør**
- Size: 122 sq.km
- Population: 62,686
- Density: 513.8 sq km
- Locations Surveyed: Havnefronten, Fødgængergader, Axeltorvet

**Copenhagen**
- Size: 86.4 sq.km
- Population: 633,449
- Density: 7,331 sq km
- Locations Surveyed: Gammel Torv, Strøget, Amagerbrogade, Sundbyåsø Plads, Islands Brygge

**Svendborg**
- Size: 524 sq.km
- Population: 90,370
- Density: 172.3 sq km
- Locations Surveyed: Havnefronten, Søndergade, Vitus Berings Pl., Torvet, Lunden
- Gehl public life data collected in 2019

Gehl — Making Cities for People
What types of Public Spaces did we survey?

**City Center Public Spaces**
We observed people staying in urban squares located in city centers on weekdays and weekend.

- Gammel Torv (Copenhagen)
- Vitus Berings Plads (Horsens)
- Svendborg Torvet (Svendborg)
- Axeltorvet (Helsingør)

**Local Neighbourhood Meeting Places**
We observed people staying in meeting spaces in local neighbourhoods on weekdays and weekend.

- Sundbyvesterplads (Copenhagen)
- Lunden (Horsens)
- Naturlegepladsen (Svendborg)

**Commercial Streets**
We observed people moving in urban squares located in city centers on weekdays and weekend.

- Stræget (Copenhagen)
- Søndergade (Horsens)
- Gerritsgade (Svendborg)
- Stengade (Helsingør)

**Local Streets**
We observed people moving around meeting places in local neighbourhoods on weekdays and weekend.

- Amagerbrogade (Copenhagen)
- Amaliegade (Horsens)
- Møllergade (Svendborg)
- Mølleregade (Svendborg)
What has happened?
What has happened to public spaces and public life in the reopening phase of Covid-19?

1. The city center is almost back to normal activity (but in a different way).
2. There has been a redistribution of users in public spaces – more kids and elderly.
3. Local neighbourhoods gained popularity during lockdown, and continue to do so.
4. Redistribution of activities, more play and exercise.
5. The neighbourhoods that offered a mix and diversity of amenities seemed to be more popular.
6. People talking in public spaces have increased and people seem to be more likely to reach out to strangers.
7. Physical distancing seems hard when the perception of safety is high and there are few crowds.
8. Willingness to use a car has increased, but walking and biking even more.
The city center is almost back to normal activity (but in a different way).
For example, Horsens lost most of its pedestrian activity during lockdown. It now has 1500% more people than before.

Counts on a weekday of the flow throughout the day and the total number of pedestrians before/after. The city center is not back to what it was before the pandemic, but it rebounded quickly from close to no pedestrians during Covid-19.
While Copenhagen on the other hand, managed to spread out the activity level over the day.

You don’t see the hoards of people in Copenhagen’s city centre during the lunchtime peak anymore. The city centre seems like it is back to normal, and has managed to flatten its own curve. The flattening of pedestrian activity means there has been a distribution and consistent amount of activity throughout the day.
In the reopening, people seem to be moving more through the City Centres

During the lockdown, people tended to spend more time at one spot. With the shops open, people are moving more and staying less.

“Stickiness” is the ratio of people spending time divided by the number of people passing through at any given hour. This stickiness ratio gives us an idea of how inviting a place is to spend time. The smaller the number, the stickier the place.
Compared to lockdown there is a general increase in people moving through the city center, whereas people spending time has changed more irregularly.

During Covid-19 lockdown, more people were spending time in selected spaces in the city center. In the reopening, the people is more spread out, and more people are moving around. This is particularly true in Copenhagen and Svendborg.
During the reopening, all city centers have seen an increase in pedestrian activity.

Percentage Change in Pedestrian Activity from lockdown to reopening:

- Copenhagen: +798%
- Horsens: +1564%
- Svendborg: +142%
- Helsingor: +217%

+66%  +101%  -34%  +39%
But, pedestrian activity in Copenhagen is still not as high as the lowest point in winter.
Quotes and statements from the cities.

“During Covid, we have had an extra focus on using our already popular SoMe channels, to offer Citizens different activities. We called the initiative “Mærk Byen derhjemme” and many people followed it and used the offers”.  - City of Horsens

“We started a renovation project around Søndergade. This was unfortunately not finalised before COVID, and made the commercial street even more unattractive to visit. Luckily, it has now been finalised and we see even more people than before!”  - City of Horsens

“During the lockdown, the harbor has been more important than ever before - inviting to new activities”  - City of Svendborg
Helsingør collaborated with public and private sectors to create “one” destination

Covid-19 has been hard on a lot of stakeholders, going from hotels to restaurants and shops. But, the crisis has strengthened the motivation to work together across private and public stakeholders and to look at ourselves as one destination attractive for Danish tourists - also from e.g. Copenhagen.
“When Covid started, we focused on how we could make sure to not have empty shops in the commercial streets. We decided to bend the rules and allow more diverse types of shops than before.”

- City of Helsingør

“We support stakeholders to use the old industrial buildings in the harbour. Instead of paying rent, they are obliged to give something back to the Citizens”

- City of Svendborg

“Tourists alone were contributing to around 80% of the turn over. Since Swedes are not allowed to Denmark yet, it’s interesting to see that retail are going up again - which to us indicates that local citizens are using the city center””

- City of Helsingør
What is the connection between how the streets are designed and what activity we see during lockdown and in the reopening?

The physical surroundings seem to have been crucial when coming to inviting people back in the reopening.

Commercial streets have different aesthetics, and the design of the buildings varies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Pedestrian Increase</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Population Increase</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>780%</td>
<td>12:00-14:00</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Lockdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Reopening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svendborg</td>
<td>580%</td>
<td>15:00-17:00</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Lockdown</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Reopening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horsens</td>
<td>4900%</td>
<td>14:00-16:00</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Lockdown</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Reopening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helsingor</td>
<td>460%</td>
<td>12:00-14:00</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Lockdown</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>Reopening</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Q.

What combination of spatial and programmatic conditions is most conducive to inviting people to spend time during the lockdown and re-opening?

Nature - Vegetation and Street Trees

Shared Surface - Multiple widths

Urban Furniture - Benches, lighting, monuments

Groundfloor - Active, continuous, diverse.

Urban Furniture - Benches, lighting, culture

Building Scale - 2 to 4 stories high.
There has been a redistribution of users in public spaces - more kids and elderly.
When doing a cross-city center comparison, the distribution of vulnerable populations in public spaces has changed.

Adults continue to dominate the public space in city centers. But in every city, except Copenhagen, both elderly and children are more visible than ever before.

Graph to the right:
Total percentage of children and elderly people, per city, during and after lockdown.
New and sustained user group: 3x as many kids and 17x as many infants in the public space.
Local neighbourhoods gained popularity during lockdown, and continue to do so.
During lockdown, people were exposed to new local sites and now continue to use them.

60% spent more time in local meeting places than other places in the city.

64% value differently the offerings of their local neighbourhoods.

Q. Did Covid-19 change your view on your local area has to offer?

Q. Did you spend more time in your local meeting places or other neighbourhoods?
A higher ratio of people spending time in local Meeting Places

Most local meeting places had a higher ‘stickiness’ factor than public spaces in city centers. These places have increased or sustained their activity the most throughout and after lockdown.

Stickiness is the ratio of people spending time in a place divided by the number of people passing through at any given hour. This stickiness ratio gives us an idea of how inviting a place is to spend time. The smaller the number, the stickier the place.

- Copenhagen - Sundbyøsterplads
  - During Lockdown: 0.54
  - Reopening: 1.89
    - Less people spending time
- Horsens - Lunden
  - During Lockdown: 3.43
  - Reopening: 1.65
    - More people spending time
- Svendborg - Krøyers Have
  - During Lockdown: 19.06
  - Reopening: 6.06
    - More people spending time
People are spending more time in local meeting places than in the central public spaces: Sundbyøsterplads is 12x more “sticky” than Gammel Torv during the lockdown, and 4x in the reopening.

Stickiness is the ratio of people spending time divided by the number of people passing through at any given hour. This stickiness ratio gives us an idea of how inviting a place is to spend time. The smaller the number, the stickier the place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Meeting Place</th>
<th></th>
<th>Urban Square</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sundbyøsterplads</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>Gammel Torv</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reopening</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>Reopening</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

During Lockdown
And in these local places close to nature, creative playful activities are sprouting!

Copenhagen:
Kids Playing in Sundbyøster Plads in unprogrammed places.

Horsens:
Neighbourhood Park used by kids as an everyday playground during school breaks.
There has been a redistribution of activities in public spaces:
more play and exercise
Outdoor Socialization, Recreation, and Exercise have been the drivers for spending time outside.

People are still spending time outside for the same reasons as they did during the lockdown, but with different intensities.

-10% on Essential Errands
+9% on Recreation
+12% on Social Interaction
During lockdown and in the reopening phase, play has increased throughout all local meeting places.

- **2x** more play in Svendborg
- **2.5x** more play in Copenhagen
- **36%** more play in Horsens

Graphs showing the percentage of redistribution of stationary activities in local meeting places.
Places that invite for playful activities are more likely to be experienced as vibrant

Since reopening, 50% of people say they go outside to take their children out, exercise, or for recreational purposes.
The neighbourhoods that offered a **mix and diversity of amenities** seemed to be more popular.
Local neighbourhoods as social clusters

The "15-minute" idea developed by Carlos Moreno is based on research into how city dwellers’ use of time could be reorganised to improve both living conditions and the environment. The concept is one in which daily urban necessities are within a 15-minute reach on foot or by bike. Using this as a starting point, we have analyzed how local neighbourhoods are performing as clusters of social life during covid-19 and in the reopening.
Amenities for complete neighborhoods

While looking at local neighbourhoods and their activity, it was paramount to identify and compare based on a 500-meter radius, the split and diversity of amenities for the completeness of local meeting places.
Copenhagen and Svendborg local meeting places have a higher % of Civic Amenities within a 10 min walk

**Copenhagen** - Sundbyøsterplads

**Helsingor** - Turbåd Hjalmars plads

**Svendborg** - Krøyers Have

**Horsens** - Lunden

![Map images showing Civic Amenities within a 10 min walk](image-url)
Comparison between a local meeting place and a city center square

Sundbyøsterplads has higher percentage of Civic & Community services than Amagertorv.

Within this radius, Sundbyøsterplads has a higher number of green areas than Amagertorv.
Local neighbourhoods in Svendborg and Horsens with a better access to a diversity of amenities had a more sustained activity.

Graph comparison between the distribution of amenities and the percentage change of stationary activities in the city center public space.

Right:
1. Comparison of percentage of amenities
2. Stationary Activities - During and After
An example of a local neighbourhood with a diverse range of amenities

Sundbyøsterplads
Copenhagen

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- Food And Beverage: 71
- Civic + Community Facilities: 52
- Neighbourhood Serving Retail: 14
- Arts + Cultural Facilities: 7
- Grocery: 5
People talking in public spaces have increased and people seem to be more likely to reach out to strangers.
Emotions changing over time (seen through social media data)
From all 4 cities before, during and in the reopening phase

#COPENHAGEN
335,765 posts

#HELSEINGØR
8,054 posts

#HORSENS
8,882 posts

#SVENDBORG
8,054 posts
**Emotions over time across the four cities**

By analysing Social Media data, we could find patterns showing a shift in emotions over time.

- **Citizens in Svendborg** seemed to experience more sadness than the other cities.
- **Citizens in Helsingør** seemed to have felt more lonely than in the other cities.
- **Citizens in Horsens** seem to have had more hope.
- **Citizens in Copenhagen** seemed to have been more frightened than others.

In the reopening phase, citizens in Svendborg seem to have been feeling more bored.
COVID-19 REOPENING

I miss my friends.
I miss my family.
I miss my colleagues.
I miss art, live music, restaurants and cafés, movie theatres.
But most of all I miss love, I miss hugs, kisses and a human touch.

#hudsuit #mitNørrebrog #togetheralone
#quarantinelife

I’m back – i øde, stille
Københavns

Hvad får man tiden til at gå med i København i den her tid? Jeg aner ikke, hvad jeg skal finde på...?????

#københavn #kedsomhed #coronatider #minby #deltinby #sharingcoh #karantæne

Ensomheden på Amagerbrogade

Ensomheden er så Universel at den er sit eget dementi - Dan Turell

#ensomheden #gade #langfredag #dementie #påke #natteliv #street
#alene #amagerbro #amager #sunday
People were twice as likely to talk to each other during the lockdown and even **more after** the reopening.

There are proportionally more people in conversation across all 4 cities. Copenhagen has a highest increase with twice as many people talking to each other during the lockdown and 3 times more after.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<td>40%</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helsingor</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Svendborg</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>53.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horsens</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.2%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:**

- Before
- During
- After
35% of users found their interactions with strangers to be friendlier.

Q. Are your interactions with strangers...

- Friendly: 35%
- More Hostile: 22.5%
- Same as before: 42.5%

Across our online interview and surveys, people have stated that their interactions with people in public spaces are primarily the same or friendlier than before.

Right: Image of Gammel Torv, July 10th
“To have a cultural strategy means a lot, no matter if there’s a pandemic or not! This makes the difference in matter of being perceived as a provincial city or a minicity.”

- City of Svendborg

“One of the strategies from our side, has been to invite people to use more parts of Copenhagen, spreading people out, as much as possible. By doing this, we can maybe make it easier for people to come out and use the public space.”

- City of Copenhagen

“In Svendborg, there’s a lot of grassroots (both rebels that moved from Copenhagen in the 60’s and younger families that has moved here during the last 5 years), having a strong relationship already before Covid. In the crisis, this has for sure affected the wish to get through it together and to keep a vibrant city life!”

- City of Svendborg
The lowest change in pedestrian activity in commercial streets is in Svendborg.

Total Pedestrian Activity
Weekday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horsens</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svendborg</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsingør</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Pedestrian Activity
Weekend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horsens</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svendborg</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsingør</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Smaller cities were less affected by the lockdown and were able to keep a similar level of activity throughout.
Physical distancing seem hard when the perception of safety is high and there are few crowds.
Kulturværftet, Helsingør
April 4th, 2020

Kulturværftet, Helsingør
June 12th, 2020
Sitting outside is now an essential health measure

80% feel comfortable attending cafe’s and restaurants

73% feel that sitting outside is safest.

Before and after comparison of edge zone activity on a cafe in Copenhagen City Center. Several businesses are expanding their services to the streets.
Different perceptions of overcrowding

Horsens

“I haven’t experienced any over crowded places at all”
- intercept interview

Copenhagen

“I don’t go to the city center because I feel its too crowded”
- online survey
Even though there are still fewer people now than before lockdown, the perception of crowdedness seems to be higher, and therefore unsafer.
And we can see this in what places are people visiting after the lockdown - people are spreading and escaping the boundaries of Copenhagen.
Public spaces in urban centers are being appropriated and programmed - especially in the smaller cities.

Axeltorv, Helsingør
Shops and restaurants are spreading into the square to provide appropriate physical distancing between tables.

Torvet, Svendborg
Rotating farmers market on Saturdays keeping commercial activity at safe distances. Markets and temporary can promote fluctuating commercial activity.
Willingness to use a car has increased, but walking and biking even more.
In Copenhagen, walking is perceived as the safest mode of transport, while using the bus, the least.

Do you feel safe in these modes of transportation?
But walking is still perceived the safest mode of transport - more than ever before.

+2% Bike
+5% Car
+13% Walking

Graph showing the percentage distribution of records answering “Safe” or “Unsafe” on the question Do you feel safe in these modes of transport?”

Perception of Safety:
During: After:
Safe
Unsafe
Safe
Unsafe

Bike 95% 97%
Bus 36% 60%
Metro 43% 55.5%
Car 95% 100%
Taxi 29% 62%
Walking 87% 100%
Scooter 33% 100%
Train 40% 58%

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The use of cars increased during the lockdown, but walking and biking have had a constant and higher increase.

People are now 93% more likely to walk, 83% more likely to bike and 69% more likely to use personal vehicle.

**Frequency of Use:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>During:</th>
<th>After:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less</td>
<td>Less</td>
<td>Less</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Do you use these modes of transport more or less frequently?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After Lockdown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scooter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taxi or shared ride</td>
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<tr>
<td>Train</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Walking</td>
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<td>Bus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>During Lockdown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bike</td>
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<td>Metro</td>
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<td>Taxi or shared ride</td>
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<td>Train</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
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</table>
People are feeling public transport is now safer than during lockdown.

Graph showing Maptionnaire digital survey data on answering the question “Do you feel safe in these modes of transport?”

Do you feel safe or unsafe in these modes of transport?

Perception of Safety:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Safe</th>
<th>Unsafe</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Train</td>
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<td>Metro</td>
<td>Safe</td>
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+24% Bus
+12.5% Metro
+18% Train

Graph showing Maptionnaire digital survey data on answering the question “Do you feel safe in these modes of transport?”

Perception of Safety:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Safe</th>
<th>Unsafe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>Safe</td>
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COVID-19 REOPENING

Gehl — Making Cities for People
City Overview & Interviews
Activities across the four cities

COVID-19 REOPENING

Gehl — Making Cities for People
Interview with the municipalities of Copenhagen, Svendborg, Horsens and Helsingør

We have conducted 6 different interviews, all with a duration of one hour.

Q

1. How do you prioritise the different areas in the City? And have Covid19 changed this?

2. What central local stakeholders have you collaborated with during Covid19?

3. Have you experienced new activities during Covid19? Who initiated them and how have the City supported them?

4. How have you communicated with the Citizens during Covid19?
Interviews with 4 cities.

Questions

On the city center versus local meeting places.

Copenhagen
To avoid overcrowding in City center, Cph have tried to use SoMe to point to “lovely places outside of the City” and to encourage citizens to “share their favourite places”.

Svendborg
During the lockdown, the harbor has been more important than ever before. The City has supported temporary initiatives here, in order to encourage people to use the open space.

Horsens
The initiative “Mærk byen” focuses mainly on the City center, and this is where the main focus has been for a long time. During Covid, Citizens have turned to nature areas outside the City.

Helsingør
The main focus for the City is the City centre and to keep this vibrant. In the reopening, cultural institutions in and around the centre, has been used for engaging Citizen activities.

Collaboration in regards to programs.

Områdefornyelserne is a very important initiative when coming to strengthening local neighbourhoods; connecting Citizens, small businesses and the City.

To Svendborg, it is important to facilitate and support Citizen initiatives and small businesses. During Covid, the program “Genstart Svendborg” was started, supporting stakeholders

Normally, Horsens arranges many cultural events during the year. To make sure these survived, the City has offered financial support to the associations and have initiated smaller events.

Around 80% of the revenue normally comes from tourists. The prospect for this year makes private and public stakeholders come together as one destination in a “Genstart Helsingør”.

Especially related to Covid19.

An increased amount of people has used green areas, parks and playgrounds, at the same time as urban (commercial) spaces have been empty. Corona has shown a need to rethink the city centre!

There is a lot of active grassroots in Svendborg. During Covid, the ownership of the Citizens has strongly affected a collective effort in regards to helping each other to get through it.

During Covid, the City had an extra focus on using the already popular SoMe channel, to offer activities. It’s called “Mærk Byen derhjemme” and was very popular for especially families.

To avoid empty shops (and preserve the vibrant centre) in the reopening phase, the City has bent the rules for which kind of small businesses and shops that are allowed in the main street.

The future of Urban Development.

It has become clearer that Cph needs to make more use of “the gaps” in public spaces to create more open recreational areas and to develop "safe routes" - accessibility across the City.

Covid has strengthened the need for a cultural strategy - no matter if there’s a pandemic or not! This makes the difference in the matter of being perceived and used as a provincial city or a minicity.

Covid has shown the quality of the surrounding natural areas and paths and beach resorts. It could be interesting to make these areas more accessible to everyone.

Covid has inspired the City to rethink the use of it. How do we arrange events in this new reality? How do we use backyards? How can we bring people together in new ways?
Key Takeaways from the interviews with the cities.

1. Communication between the City and Citizens is of extra importance in a time of Crisis
   - Horsens used the Facebook site “Mærk byen at home” to offer alternative activities
   - Copenhagen put up signs in urban space to inform Citizens about the path around the lakes being one-way

2. It’s important to balance a City as an Authority versus a City as a facilitator
   - Svendborg see themselves as a facilitator and supporter of “grassroot”-initiatives

3. Especially challenged places in a Covid time needed support
   - In Copenhagen, there was extra need for space in front of the Schools and in parking lots

4. Spreading people around the Cities
   - Copenhagen used Facebook to share “lovely places outside of the City” and “Favourite places”

5. Temporary activities to make sure people didn’t feel lonely
   - In Helsingør and Horsens, the Citizens were offered balcony concerts and they could even order music Telegrams

6. Handling local tourism
   - Helsingør is a City that is developed to host a large amount of tourism. In these times, there’s a need to rethink!
   - In Copenhagen, there is a lot of focus on making sure to have a more resilient building process, where we might need to tune down the number of hotels being built in the City center - spreading tourists out more.
Examples of initiatives across the 4 cities.

- Urban nature experiences in Nordhavn, Cph
- Learn how to play the guitar online, Horsens
- Order a Telegram for friends, Horsens
- 45 balconies are turned into a venue, Cph NV
- Live streaming; join an online disco, Helsingør
- “Hyg og byg” – an adventure playground in Toldkammeret, Helsingør
- Terrasse concerts, Helsingør
- Drive in Concerts, Fængslet, Horsens
Summary & Lessons Learned
What has happened to public spaces and public life in the reopening phase of COVID19?

1. The city center is back to normal activity (but in a different way).

2. There has been a redistribution of users in public spaces - more kids and elderly.

3. Local neighbourhoods gained popularity during lockdown, and continue to do so.

4. Redistribution of activities, more play and exercise.

5. The neighbourhoods that offered a mix and diversity of amenities seemed to be more popular.

6. People talking in public spaces have increased and people seem to be more likely to reach out to strangers.

7. Physical distancing seems hard when the perception of safety is high and there are few crowds.

8. Willingness to use a car has increased, but walking and biking even more.
What have we learned from how public spaces and neighbourhoods were used during the reopening phase?

1. It’s not only the number of amenities but the diversity of them that is vital for sustained activities over time.

2. Feeling safe is especially dependent on the ability to be outdoors and easily control one’s distance from others.

3. The pandemic provides an opportunity for more constructive cooperation between public sector, private business, cultural institutions and citizens to achieve common goals.

4. The pandemic has emphasized the importance of basic health and safety investments like the ability to walk comfortably and have easy access to nature and green spaces.

5. People continue to feel unsafe and uncomfortable taking public transit, even after several other forms of public life are as vibrant or more used than before the pandemic.

6. Rather than closing public space, well-designed and reasonable restrictions (one-way routes etc) make it easy for citizens to comply and contribute to the shared sense of responsibility.

7. Temporary urban solutions seem to have helped many cities deal with crisis, and these can lead to positive radical shifts in city space.

8. Urban Parks, Nature, and open space have been the public life lifeline for neighbourhoods during the crisis.

9. The perception of crowdedness determined how restrictions and regulations were followed.
Takeaways and Reflections Overview

**Themes**

**City Centers**

A. The city centers are bouncing back to normal activity in a different way.
   - A1. Activities in the city centers are back but in a different way.
   - A2. Total pedestrian levels aren’t what they were before.
   - A3. Public spaces in city centers are essential for commercial resiliency.

B. Mix of functions, programmes, green spaces and accessibility are key for resilient city centres.
   - B1. The relationship between the city, citizens and initiatives has made some city centres more resilient to shocks
   - B2. In Copenhagen, the perception of crowdedness seems to have changed.

**Local**

C. A diverse offering of amenities is paramount for neighbourhood life.
   - C1. Civic and Community facilities have been key for sustained public life activity
   - C2. Local neighbourhoods were thriving more than ever. In the reopening phase, they do even more.

D. Many positive tendencies which started during lockdown are now part of everyday life.
   - D1. Social dynamics between neighbours and local meeting places seem to have strengthened.
   - D2. Outdoor socialization, recreation, and exercise are the drivers for spending time outside.

**Mobility Dynamics**

E. There is more need for infrastructure that supports pedestrians.
   - E1. In Copenhagen, citizens perceive walking and biking safer than as using a private vehicle.
   - E2. The willingness to use a car has increased, but not as much as biking or walking.

F. Public transport is still essential for making city centers and local meeting places accessible.
   - F1. People have changed their perception and use of public transport after COVID

**Reflections**

R. A vibrant City center needs to offer access to green open spaces that allows various types of activities (and not only commercial activities)
   - R. By collaborating across stakeholders and identifying as one unified destination, cities can become more attractive for tourists.

R. Larger cities could learn from smaller cities when offering temporary local activities for their citizens.
   - R. The public sector can help catalyze a vibrant City center (in collaboration with private stakeholders) and invite people back.

R. A well-programmed neighbourhood meeting place should have a proportionate balance between food & beverages, civic and community services and access to a diversity of green spaces.
   - R. Local neighbourhoods need to be programatically, economically and physically easily accessible.

R. There’s a momentum for public transportation to rethink their services and expand their network (especially in the smaller cities) in order to contribute to more inclusive cities - where everyone has access to nature.

R. Smaller cities have social and spatial qualities that could inform larger cities on how to stay vibrant and agile in moments of shock.
   - R. A diverse local neighbourhood will be inviting for a diverse group of people - both looking at gender and age groups.

R. Investing in sidewalks and bicycles should be a priority. Walking and biking have been the most used modes of transport.
   - R. Investing in better connection between and access to nature areas and City Center should be priority in especially the smaller Cities.