

Public Space, Public Life, and COVID 19

In the first phases of the
reopening in Denmark

Gehl

Realdania



0 Introduction p 04

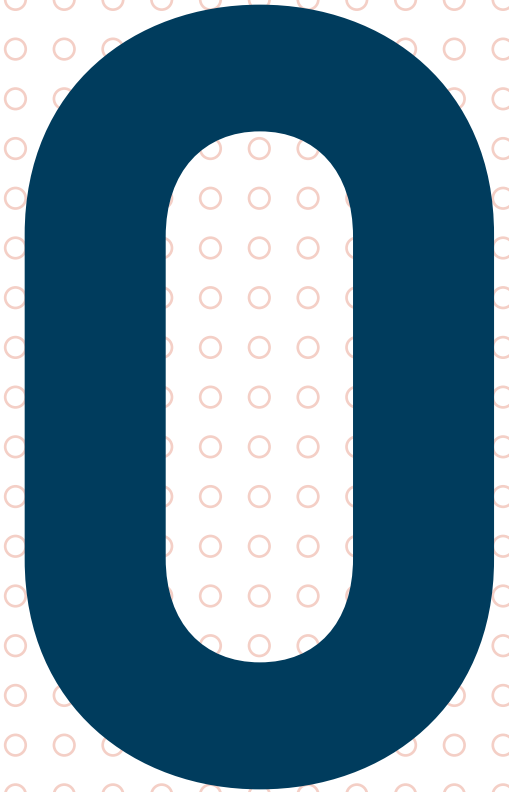
1 Findings p 10

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**3 Summary &
Lessons Learned** p 71



Introduction



Q.

1. How have public spaces been used in Denmark during the COVID-19 “lockdown” and during the re-opening?

Q.

2. What can we learn from public spaces during the crisis that will make a better urban future for all?

Q

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 COVID19.

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?

Where did we study Public Life?

Horsens

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 2014

Helsingør

Size: **122 sq.km** Population: **62 686** Density: **513.8 sq km**

Locations Surveyed: Havnefronten Fødgængergader Axeltorvet

Gehl public life data collected in 2013

Copenhagen

Size: **86.4 sq.km** Population: **633,449** Density: **7 331 sq km**

Locations Surveyed: Gammel Torv Strøget Amagerbrogade Sundbyøster Plads Islands Brygge

Gehl public life data collected in 2019

Svendborg

Size: **418 sq.km** Population: **59 040** Density: **141.2 sq km**

Locations Surveyed: Havnefronten Torvet Svendborg Krøyershave Gerritsgade Naturlegepladsen

Gehl public life data collected in 2008

What types of Public Spaces did we survey?

Stationary Activity

City Center Public Spaces

We observed people staying in urban squares located in city centers on weekdays and weekend.

Local Neighbourhood Meeting Places

We observed people staying in meeting spaces in local neighbourhoods on weekdays and weekend.

Pedestrian Movement

Commercial Streets

We observed people moving in urban squares located in city centers and weekend.

Local Streets

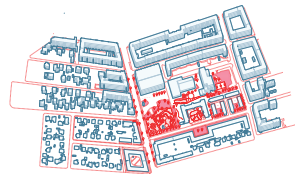
We observed people moving around meeting places in local neighbourhoods on weekdays and weekend.

Copenhagen

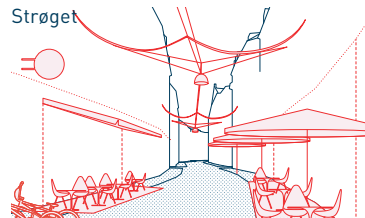
Gammel Torv



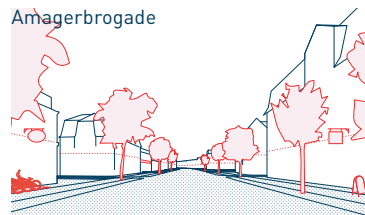
Sundbyøsterplads



Strøget



Amagerbrogade

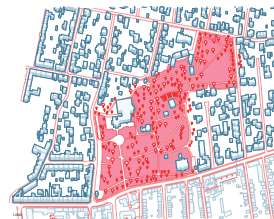


Horsens

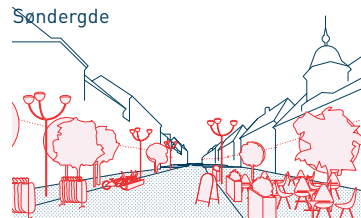
Vitus Berings Plads



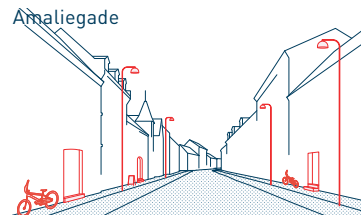
Lunden



Søndergade

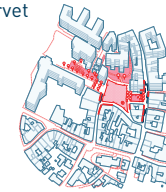


Amaliegade



Svendborg

Svendborg Torvet



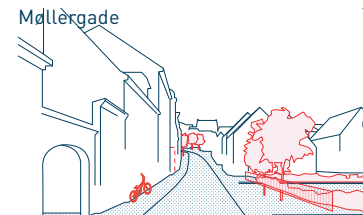
Naturlegepladsen



Gærritsgade



Møllergade



Helsingør

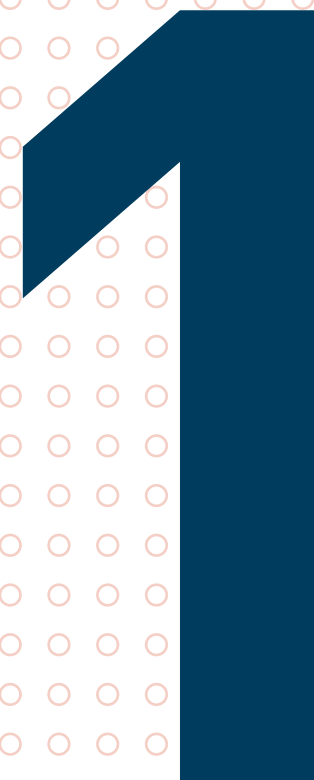
Axeltorvet



Stengade



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.

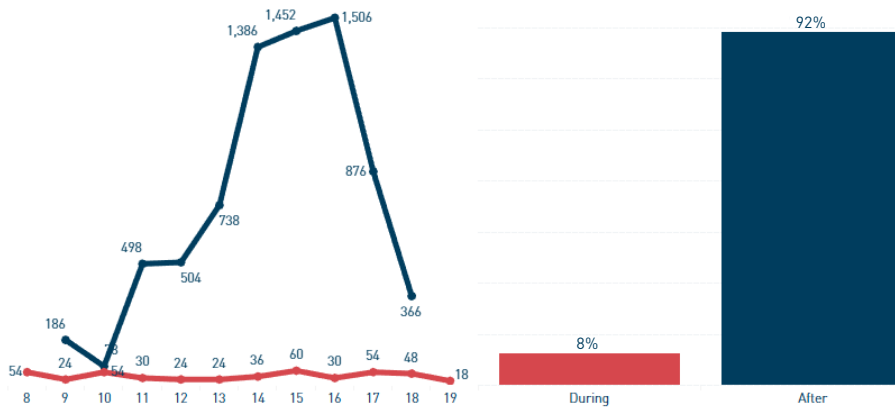
8

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.



Pedestrian amounts during the day Søndergade, Horsens

Total Pedestrians per Day Søndergade, Horsens



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.

■ During
■ After

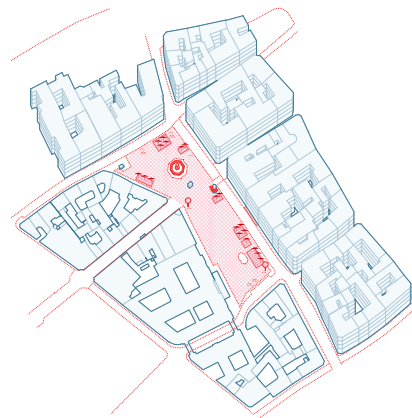


While Copenhagen on the other hand, managed to spread out the activity level over the day.

Pedestrian Activity
Data from Gammel Torv of before, during and after the COVID restrictions



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.



Pedestrian Activity during a Weekday



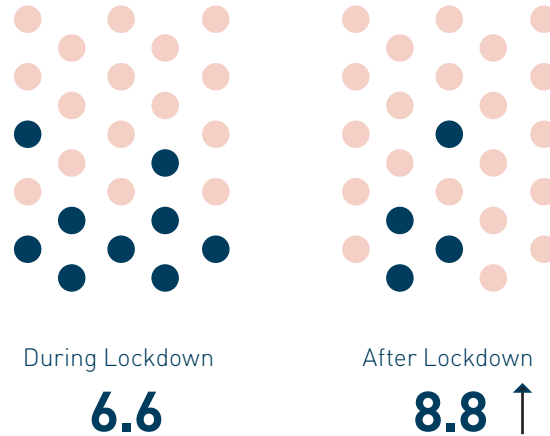
In the reopening, people seem to be moving more through the City Centres

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

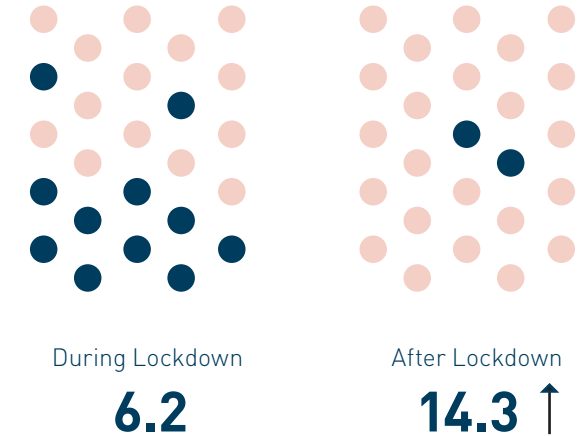


“Stickiness” is the ratio of people spending time divided by the number of people passing through at any given hour. This stickiness ratio gives us an idea of how inviting a place is to spend time. **The smaller the number, the stickier the place**

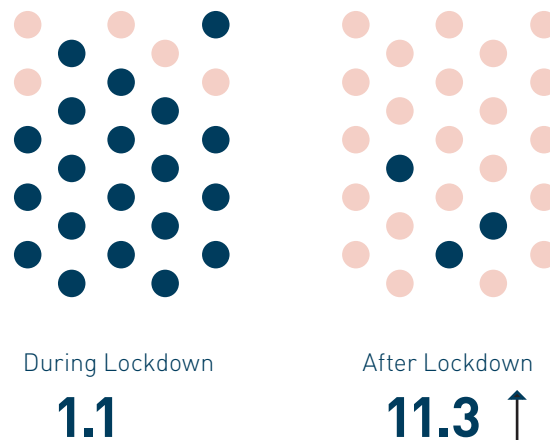
Copenhagen - Gammel Torv



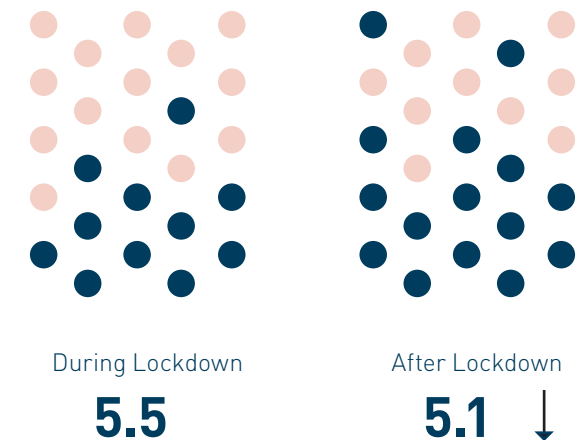
Svendborg - Torvet



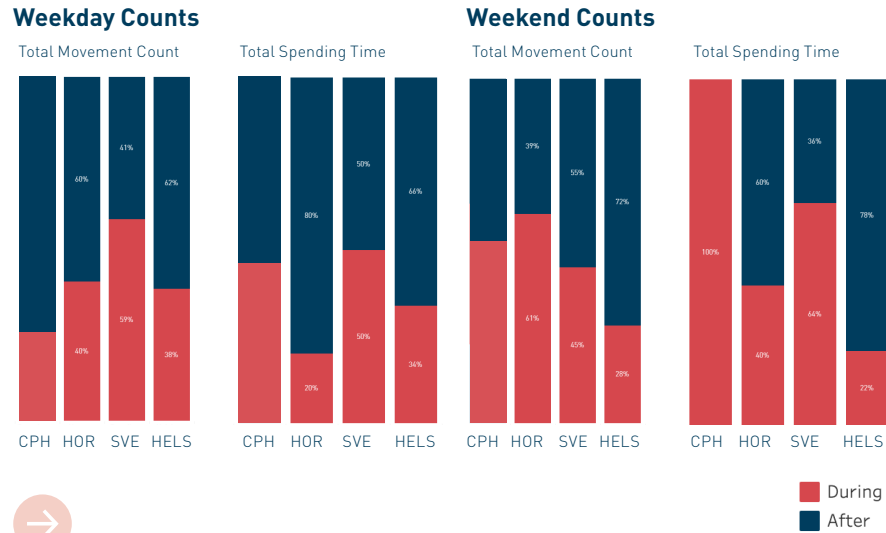
Horsens - Søndegade



Helsingør - Axeltorvet



Compared to lockdown there is a general increase in people moving through the city center, whereas people spending time has changed more irregularly.



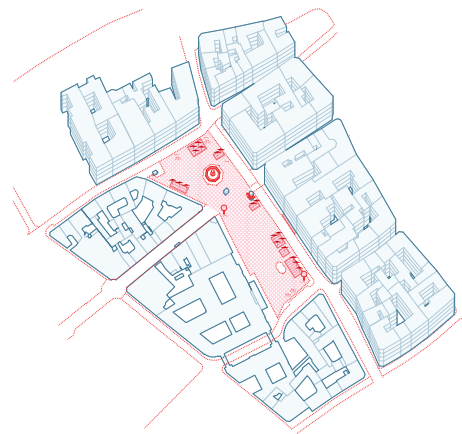
During Covid-19 lockdown, more people were spending time in selected spaces in the city center. In the reopening, the people is more spread out, and more people are moving around. This is particularly true in Copenhagen and Svendborg.



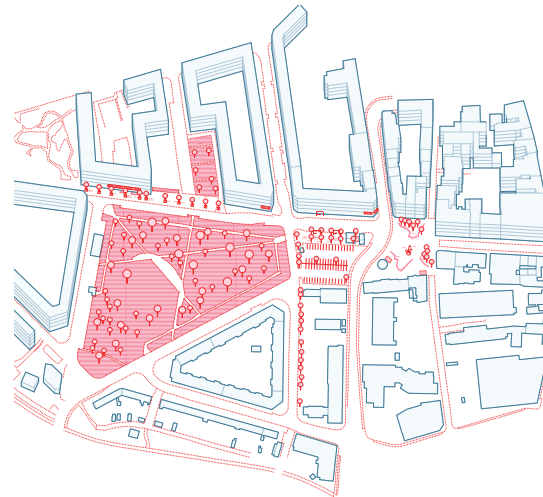
Strøget, Copenhagen, June 13th, 2020
Credit: Pedro Borges

During the reopening, all city centers have seen and **increase** in pedestrian activity

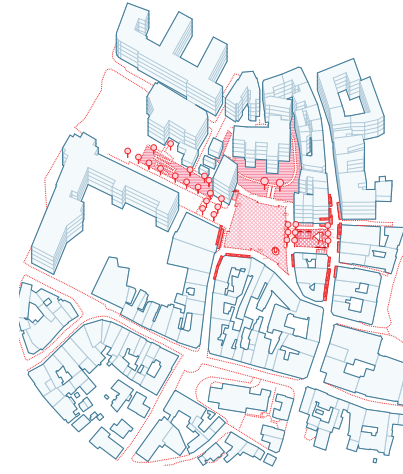
Copenhagen



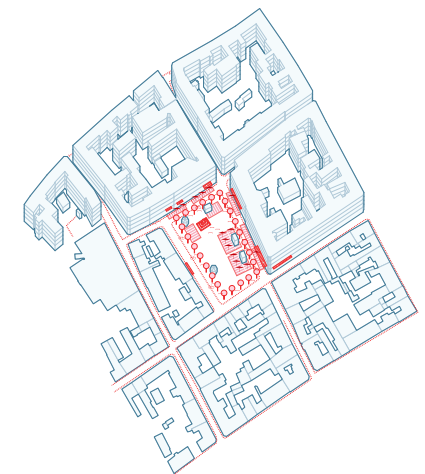
Horsens



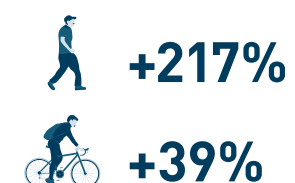
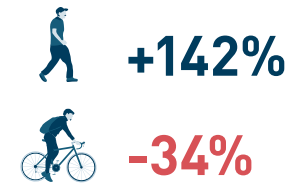
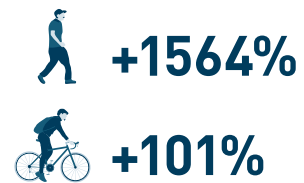
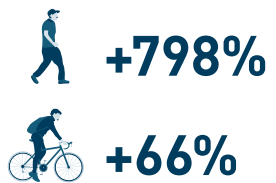
Svendborg



Helsingor



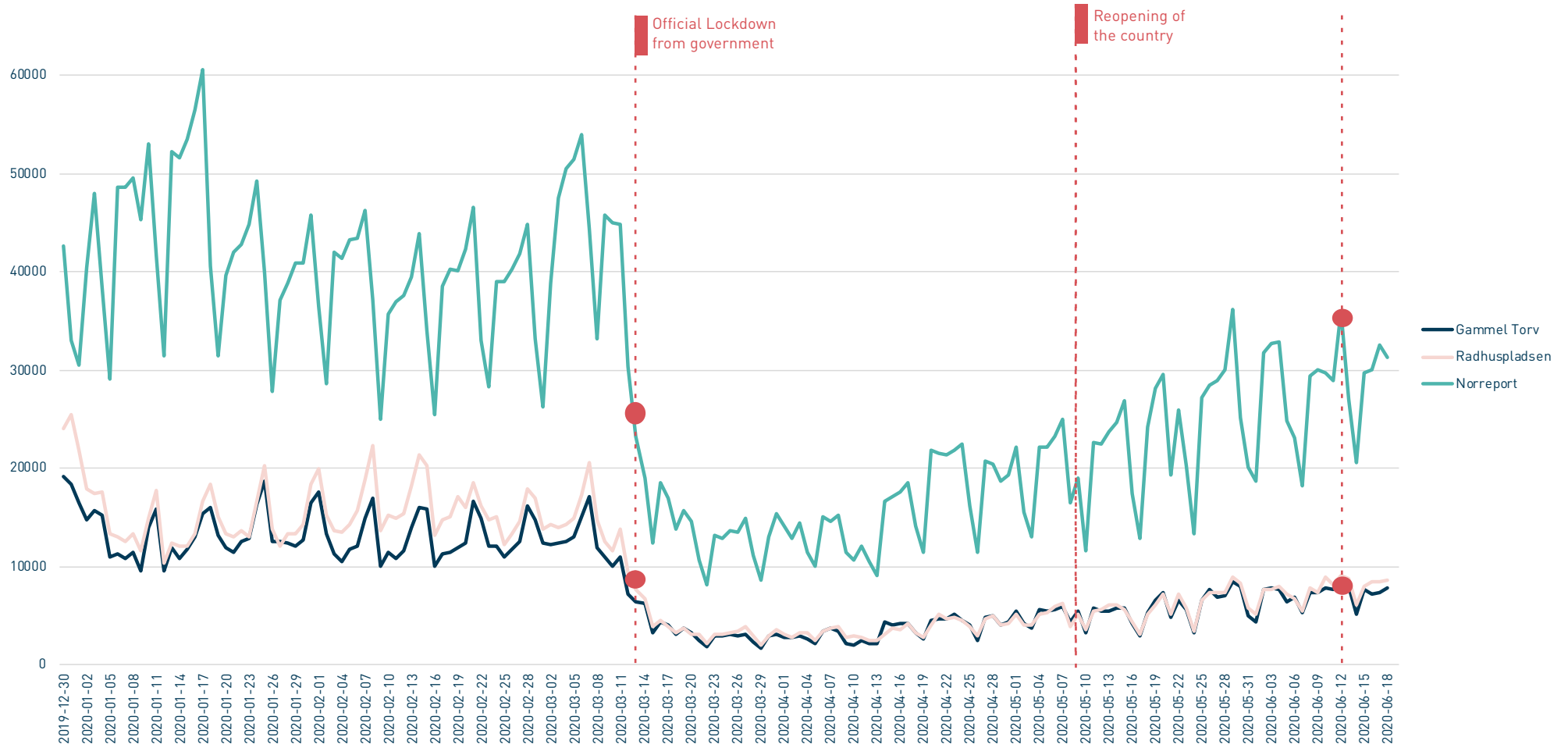
Percentage Change in Pedestrian Activity from lockdown to reopening:



But, pedestrian activity in Copenhagen is still not as high as the lowest point in winter.



Source
JC Decaux Data for pedestrian activity in Gammel Torv, Norreport, and Radhuspladsen



Q.

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

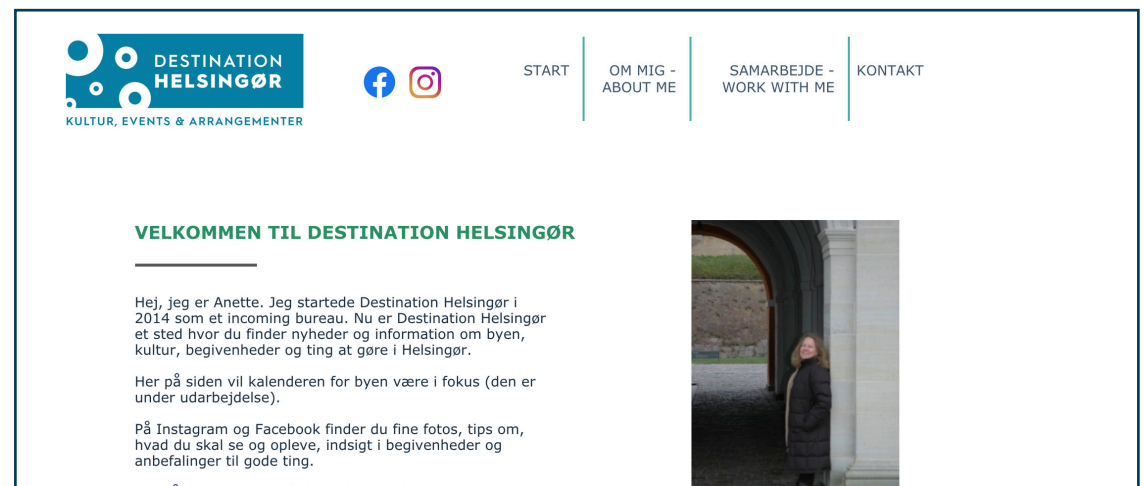
“During the lockdown, the harbor has been more important than ever before - inviting to new activities”
- City of Svendborg

“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

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



Q.

Quotes and statements
from the cities.

“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

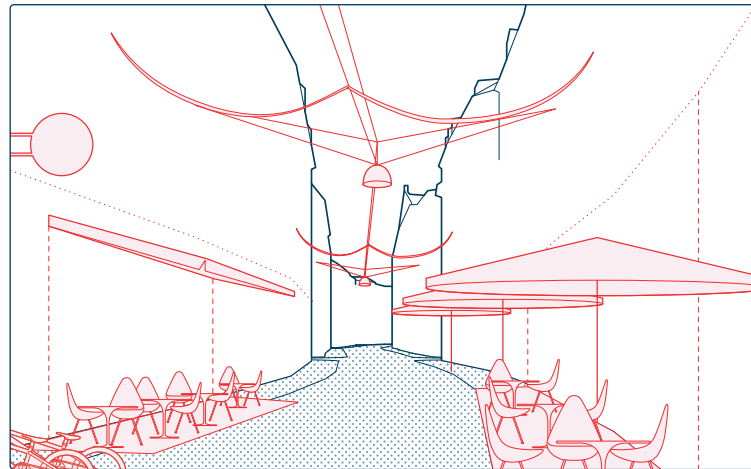
“We support stakeholders to use the old industrial buildings in the harbour. Instead of paying rent, they are obliged to give something back to the Citizens”

- 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

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

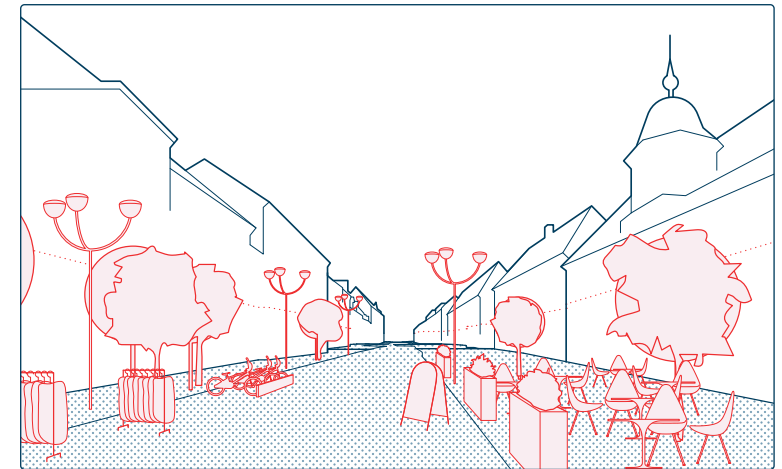


Copenhagen

There is a 780% increase in pedestrians compared to during lockdown, with peak time from 12:00 to 14:00.

% of city's population moving

1% → 3%
Lockdown Reopening



Horsens

There is a 4900% increase in pedestrians compared to during lockdown, with peak time from 14:00 to 16:00.

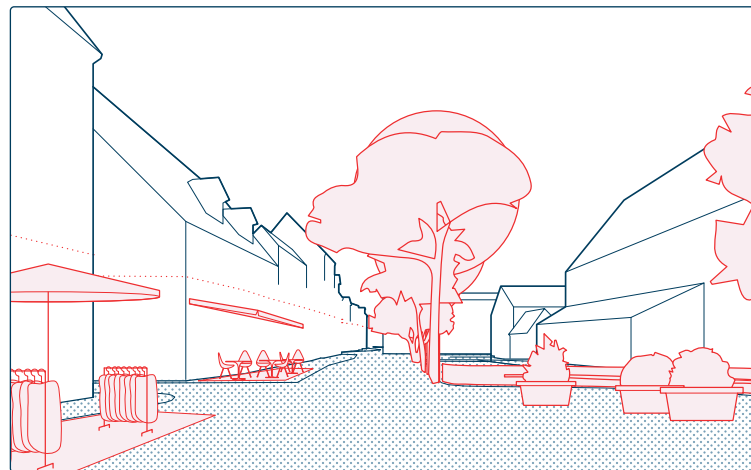
% of city's population moving

1% → 13%
Lockdown Reopening

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



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

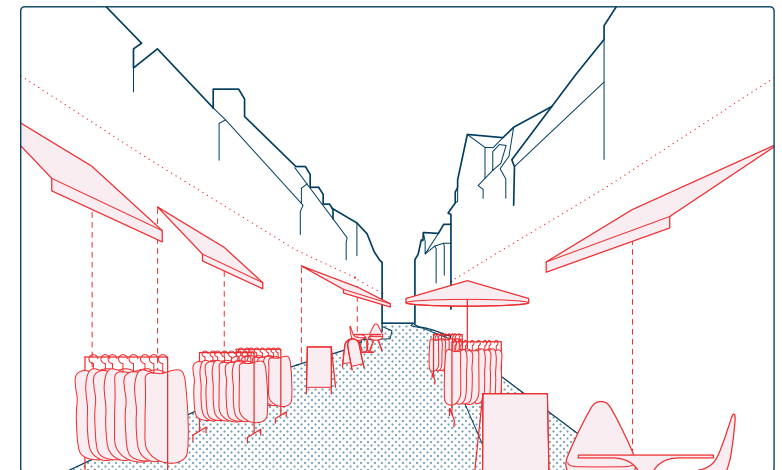


Svendborg

There is a 580% increase in pedestrians compared to during lockdown, with peak time from 15:00 to 17:00.

% of city's population moving

10% → 15%
Lockdown Reopening



Helsingør

There is a 460% increase in pedestrians compared to during lockdown, with peak time from 12:00 to 14:00.

% of city's population moving

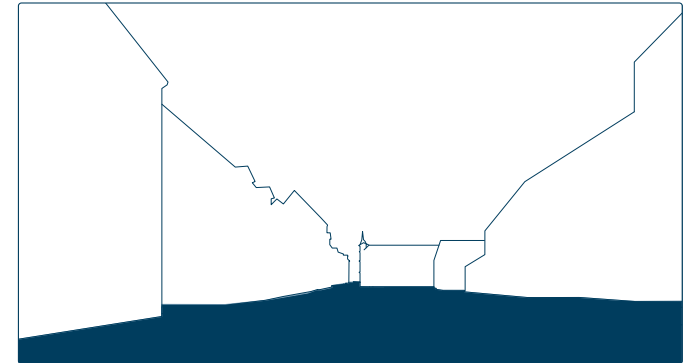
5% → 15%
Lockdown Reopening

Q.

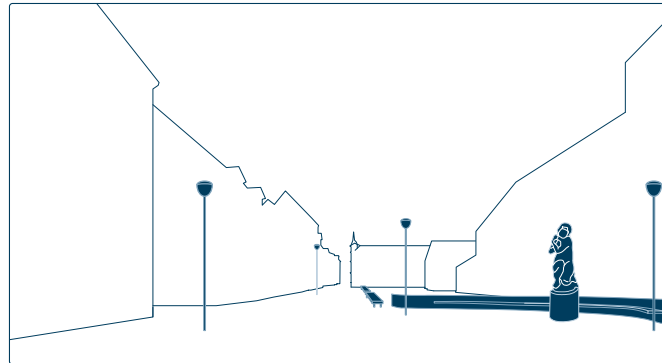
What combination of spatial and programmatic conditions is most conducive to inviting people to spend time during the lockdown and re-opening?



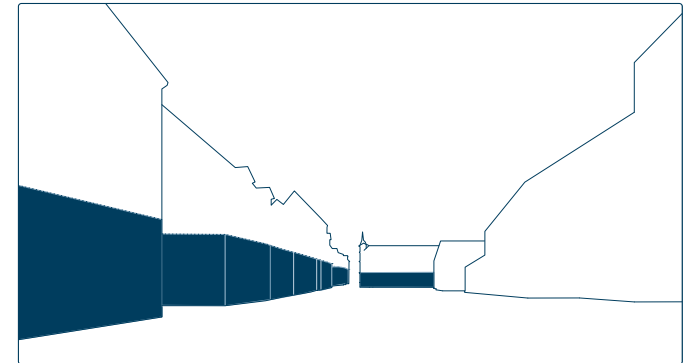
Nature - Vegetation and Street Trees



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.



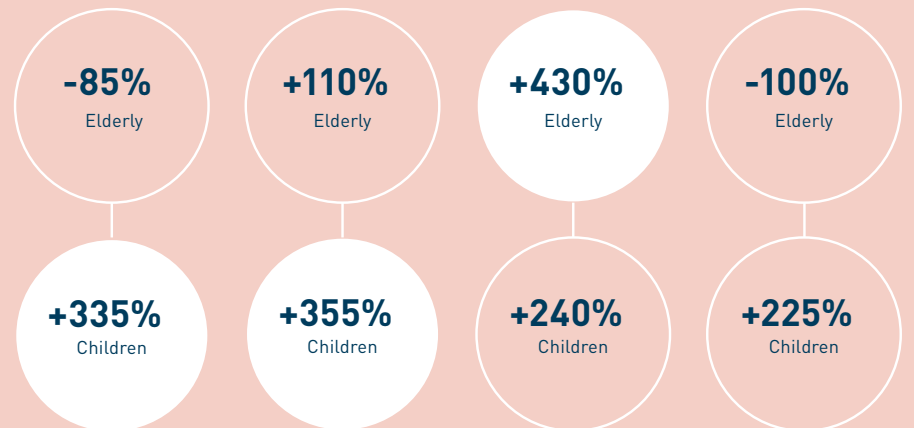
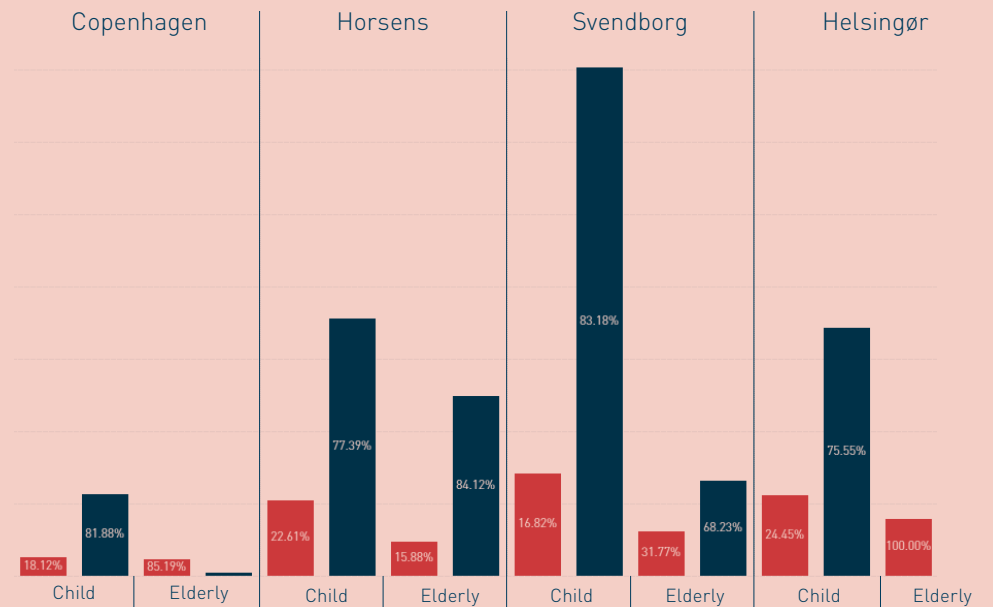
There has been a redistribution of users in public spaces - more kids and elderly.

When doing a cross-city center comparison, the distribution of vulnerable populations in public spaces has changed

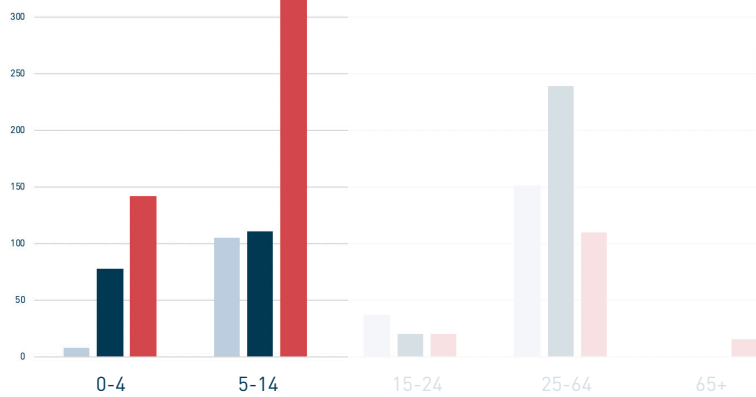
Adults continue to dominate the public space in city centers. But in every city, except Copenhagen, both elderly and children are more visible than ever before.



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.



Key:

- Before
- Lockdown
- Reopening



Stationary Activity recorded in Sundbyoster Plads. June 12th, 2020





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.

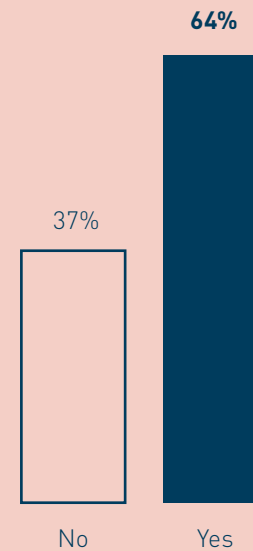


60% spent more time in local meeting places than other places in the city.

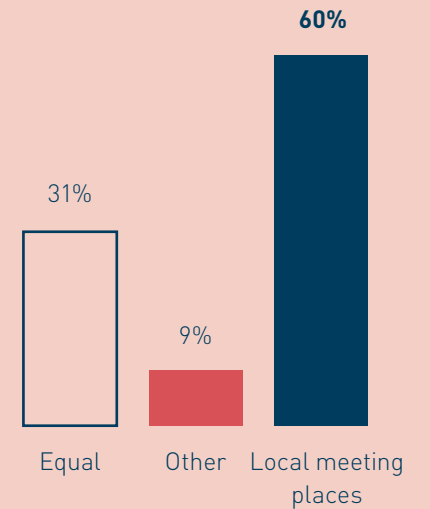


64% value differently the offerings of their local neighbourhoods.

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?



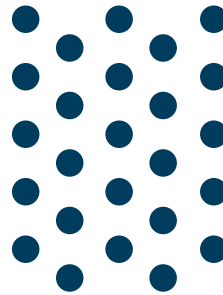
A higher ratio of people spending time in local Meeting Places

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.



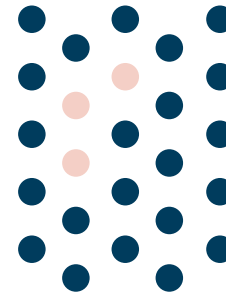
Stickiness is the ratio of people spending time in a place divided by the number of people passing through at any given hour. This stickiness ratio gives us an idea of how inviting a place is to spend time. **The smaller the number, the stickier the place**

Copenhagen - Sundbyøsterplads



During Lockdown

0.54

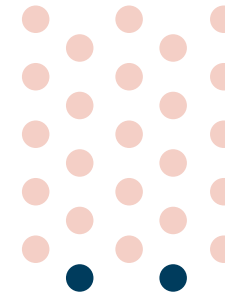


Reopening

1.89

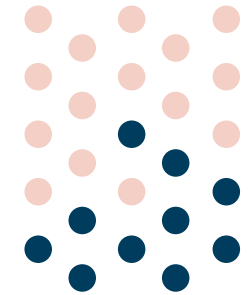
less people spending time

Svendborg - Krøyers Have



During Lockdown

19.06

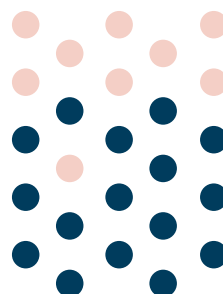


Reopening

6.06

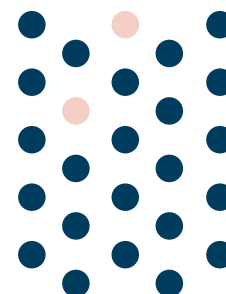
More people spending time

Horsens - Lunden



During Lockdown

3.43



Reopening

1.65

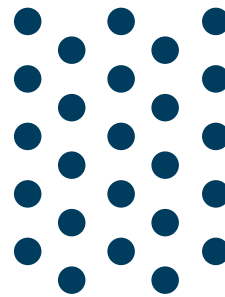
More people spending time

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.

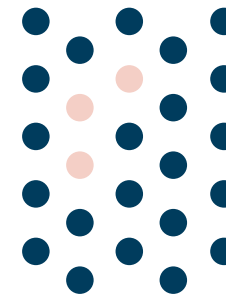


Stickiness is the ratio of people spending time divided by the number of people passing through at any given hour. This stickiness ratio gives us an idea of how inviting a place is to spend time. **The smaller the number, the stickier the place**

Local Meeting Place
Sundbyøsterplads

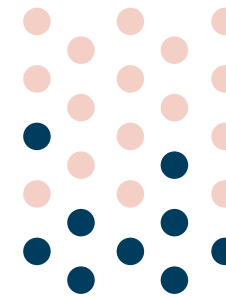


During Lockdown
0.54

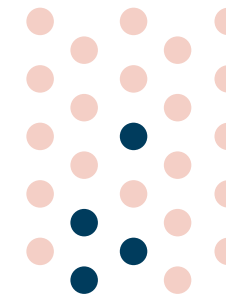


Reopening
1.89

Urban Square
Gammel Torv



During Lockdown
6.6



Reopening
8.8

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



Copenhagen:
Kids Playing in Sundbyøster Plads in unprogrammed places.



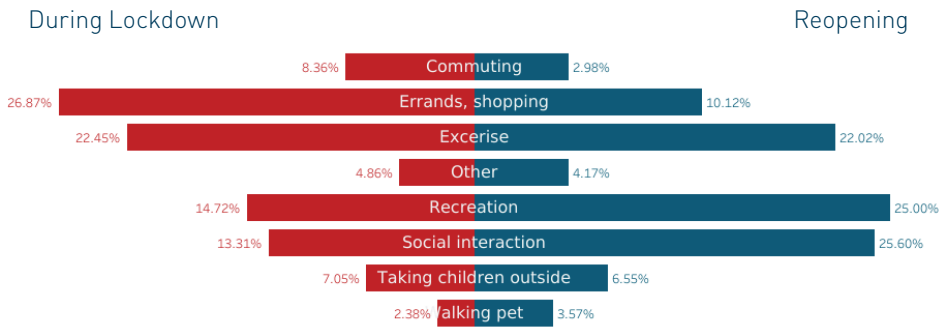
Horsens:
Neighbourhood Park used by kids as an everyday playground during school breaks.





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

DRAFT



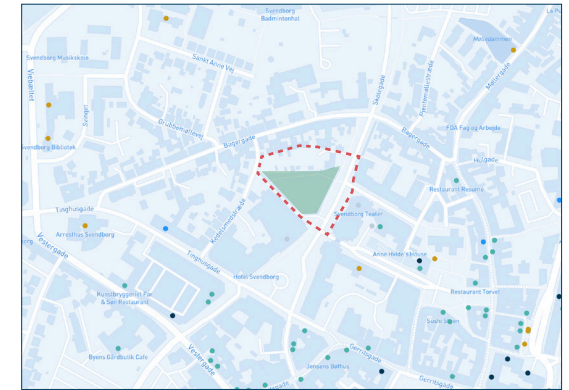
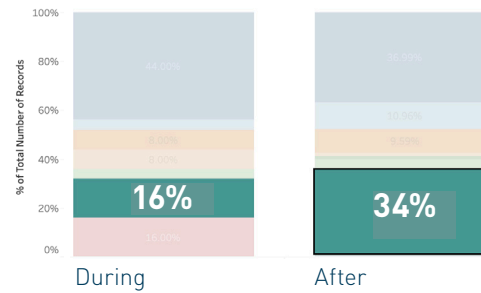
During lockdown and in the reopening phase, play has increased throughout all local meeting places



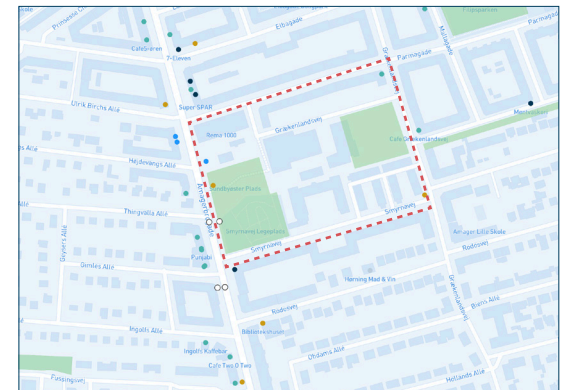
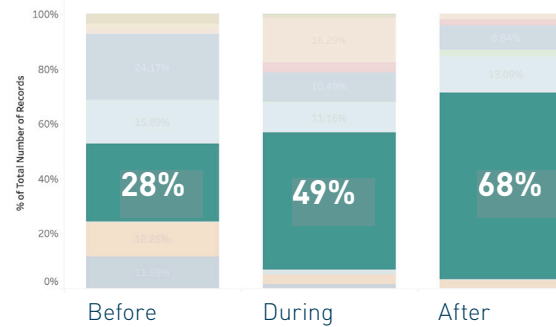
2x more play in Svendborg
2.5x more play in Copenhagen
36% more play in Horsens

Graphs showing the percentage of redistribution of stationary activities in local meeting places.

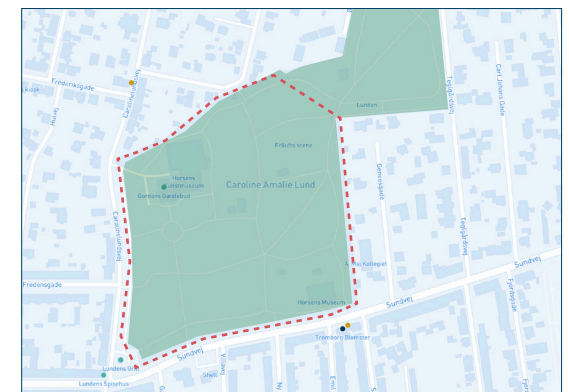
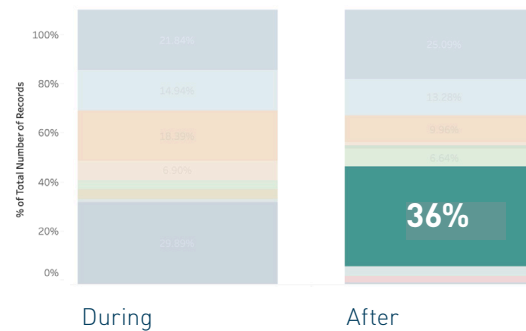
Svendborg - Krøyers Have



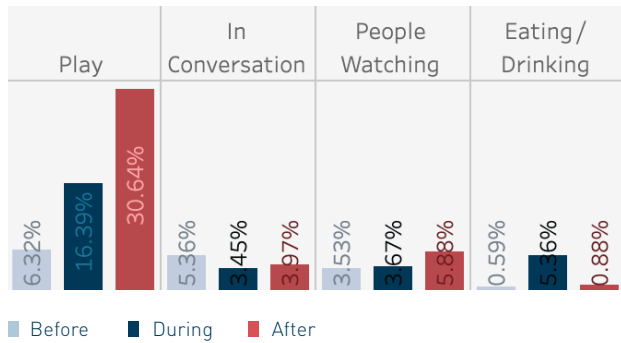
Copenhagen - Sundbyøsterplads



Horsens - Lunden



Places that invite for playful activities are more likely to be experienced as vibrant

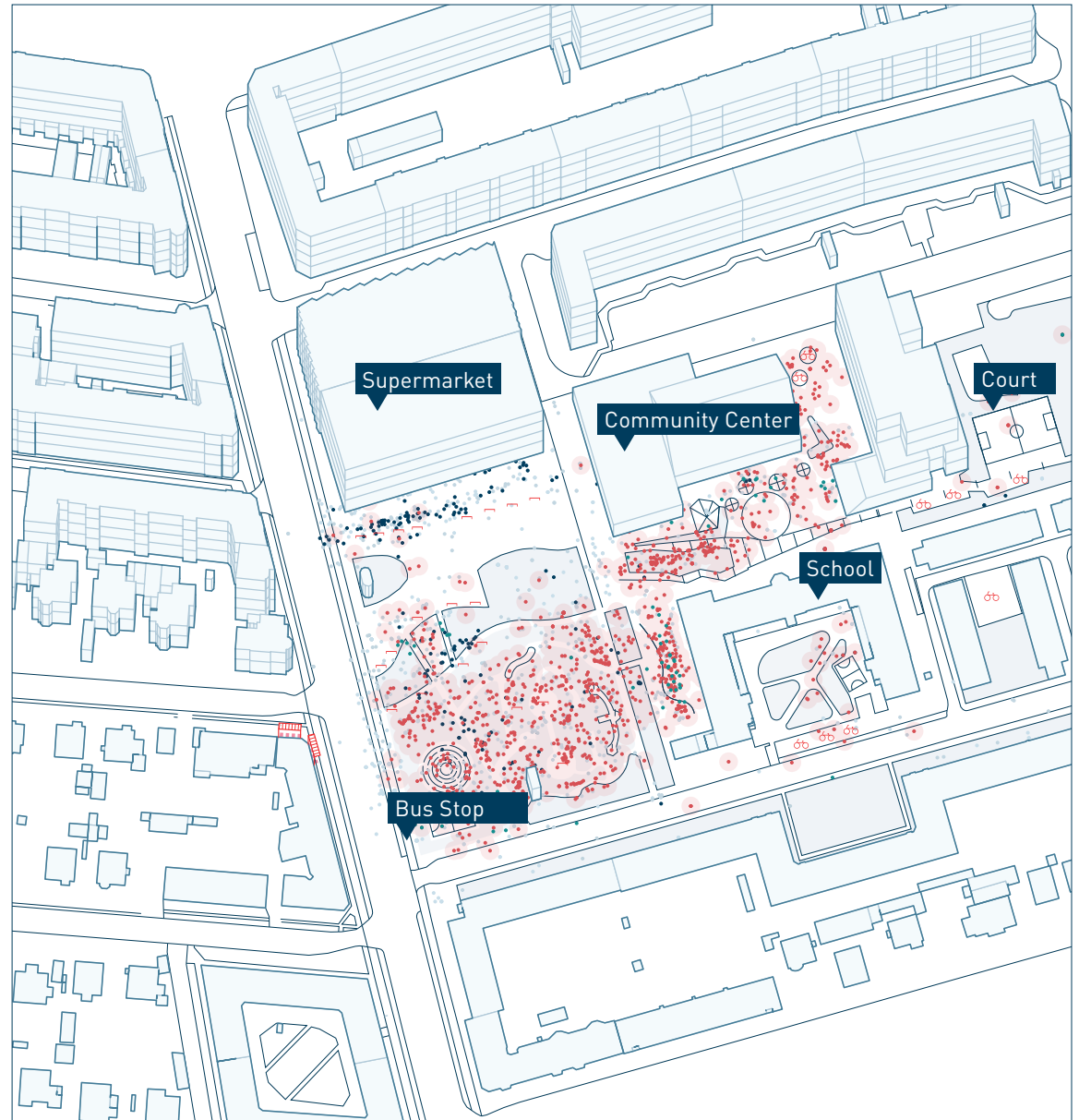


Since reopening, 50% of people say they go outside to take their children out, exercise, or for recreational purposes.



Stationary Activity recorded in Sundbyster Plads. June 12th, 2020

- Key:**
- People watching
 - Other
 - Playing



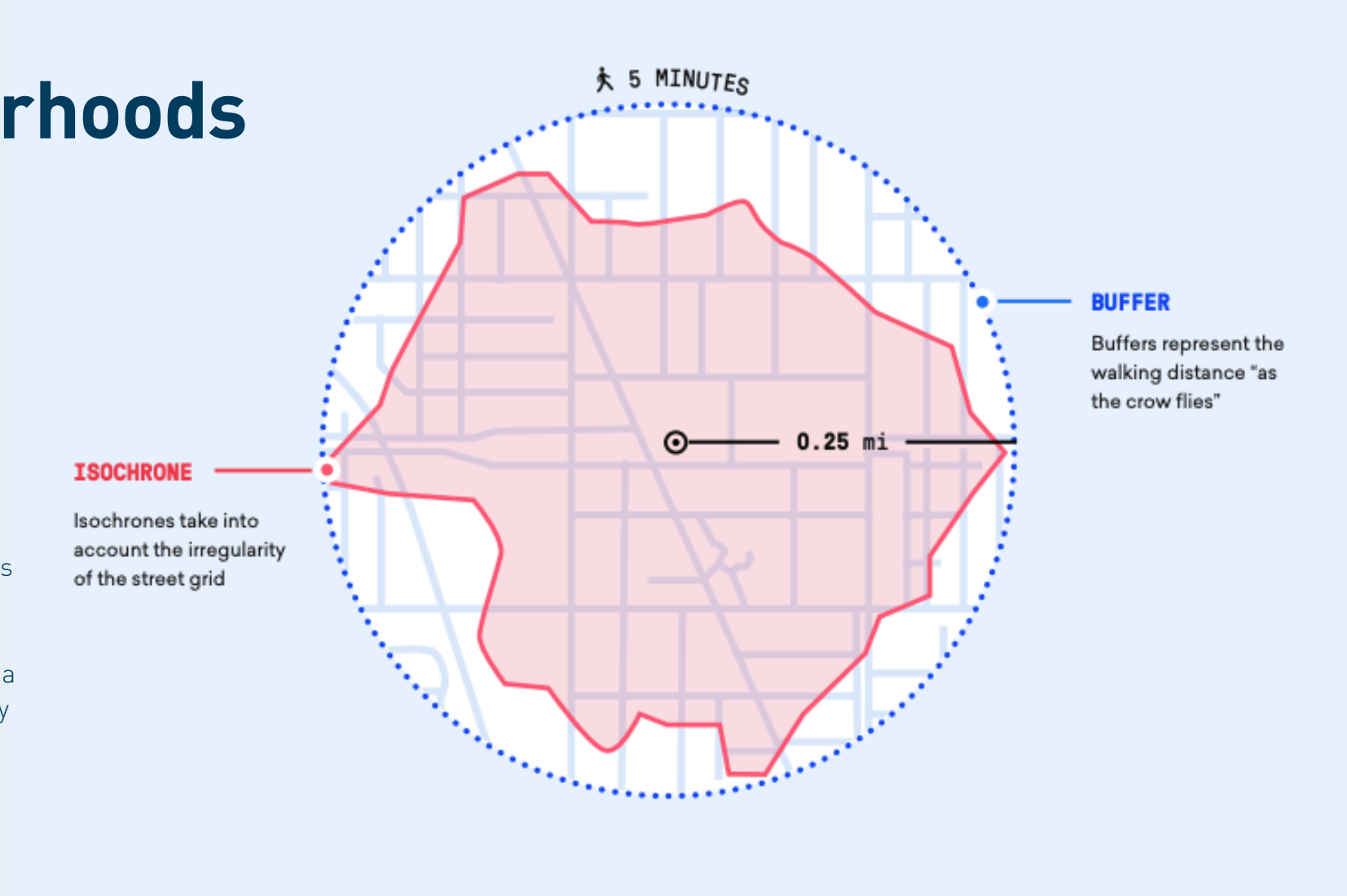
5

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

Local neighbourhoods as social clusters

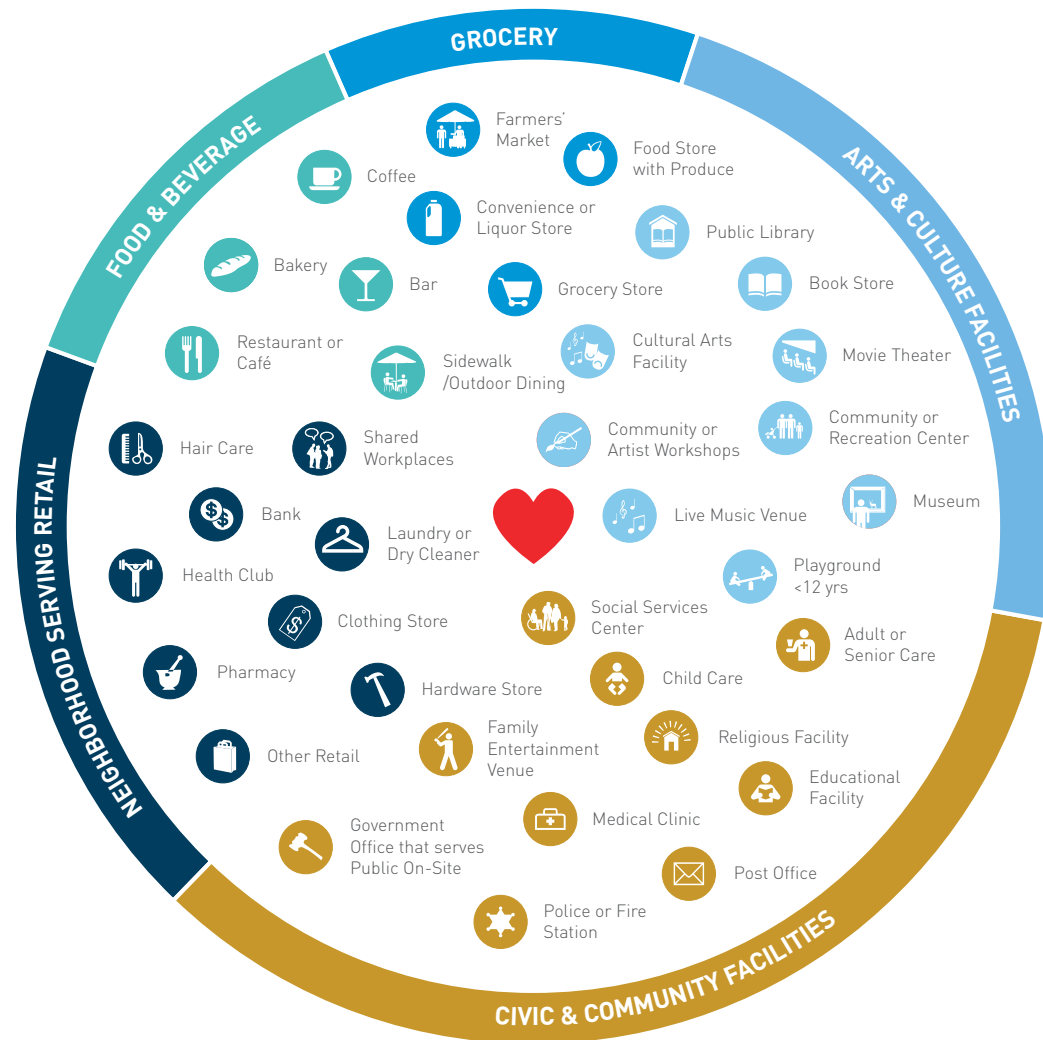
The “15-minute” idea developed by Carlos Moreno is based on research into how city dwellers’ use of time could be reorganised to improve both living conditions and the environment. The concept is one in which daily urban necessities are within a 15-minute reach on foot or by bike.

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.



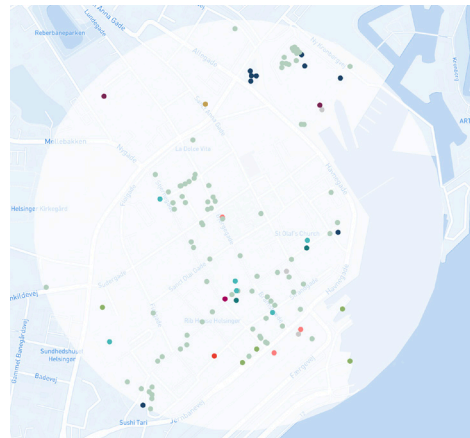
Copenhagen and Svendborg local meeting places have a higher % of Civic Amenities within a 10 min walk

- Food + Beverage
- Grocery
- Arts + Cultural Facilities
- Civic + Community Facilities
- Neighbourhood Serving Retail

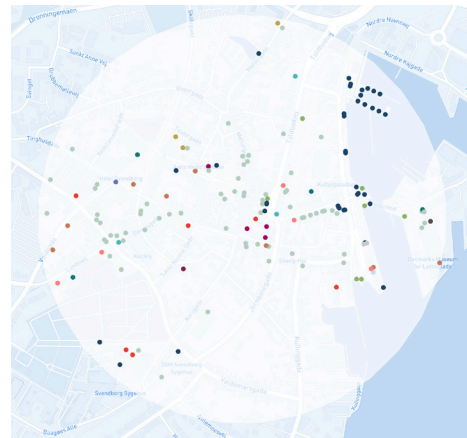
Copenhagen - Sundbyøsterplads



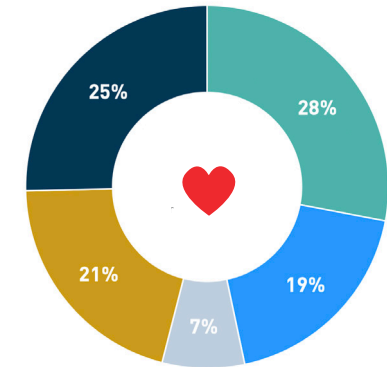
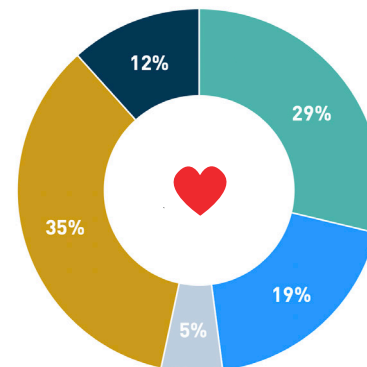
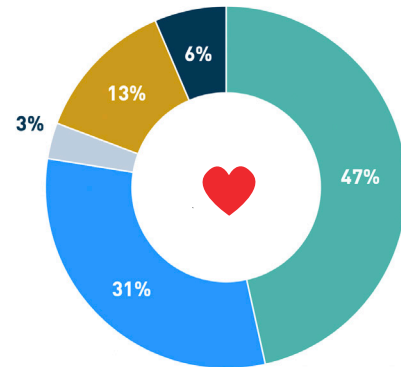
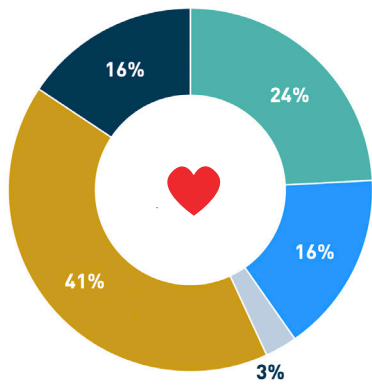
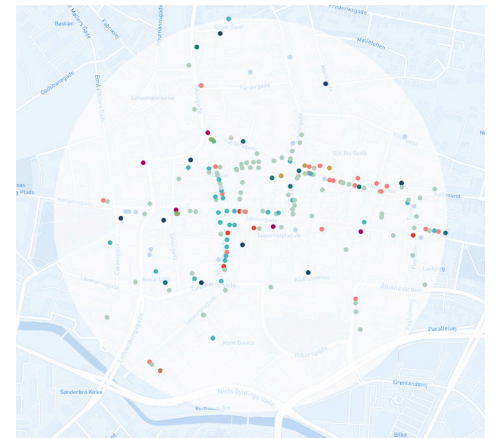
Helsingør - Turbåd Hjalmar's plads



Svendborg - Krøyers Have



Horsens - Lunden



Comparison between a local meeting place and a city center square

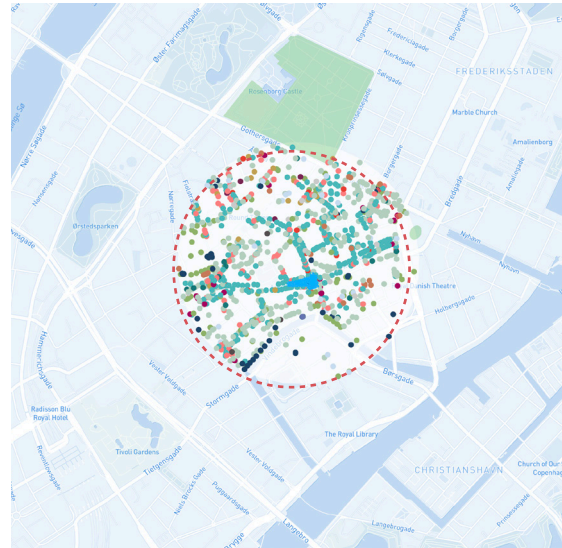


Sundbyøsterplads has higher percentage of Civic & Community services than Amagertorv

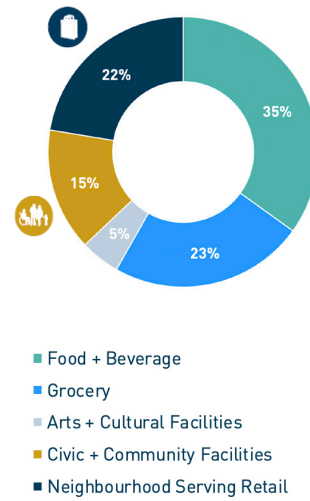


Within this radius, Sundbyøsterplads has a higher number of green areas than Amagertorv.

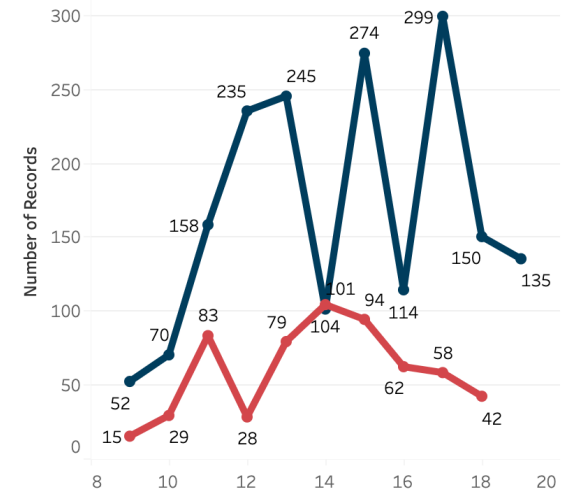
Urban Square - Amagertorv



Neighbourhood Amenity Split



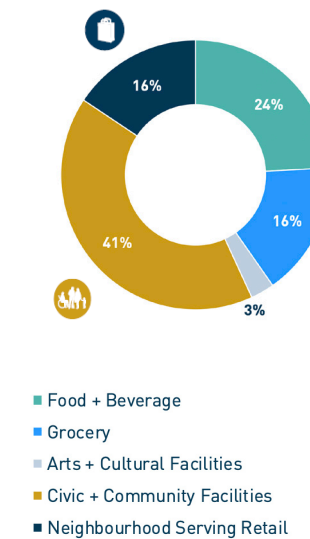
of People Spending Time - During and after



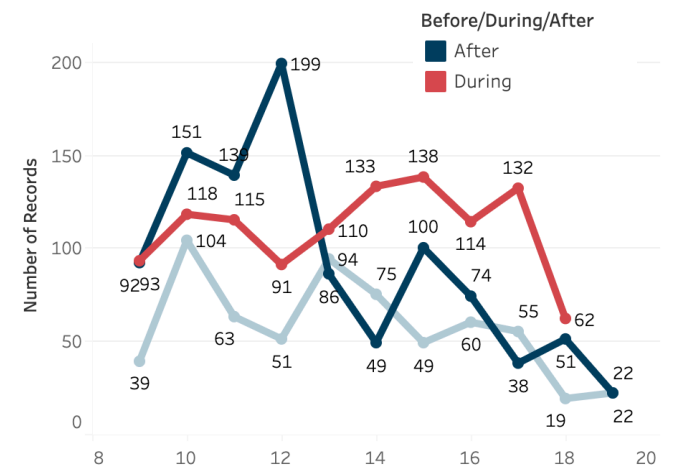
Local Meeting Place - Sundbyøsterplads



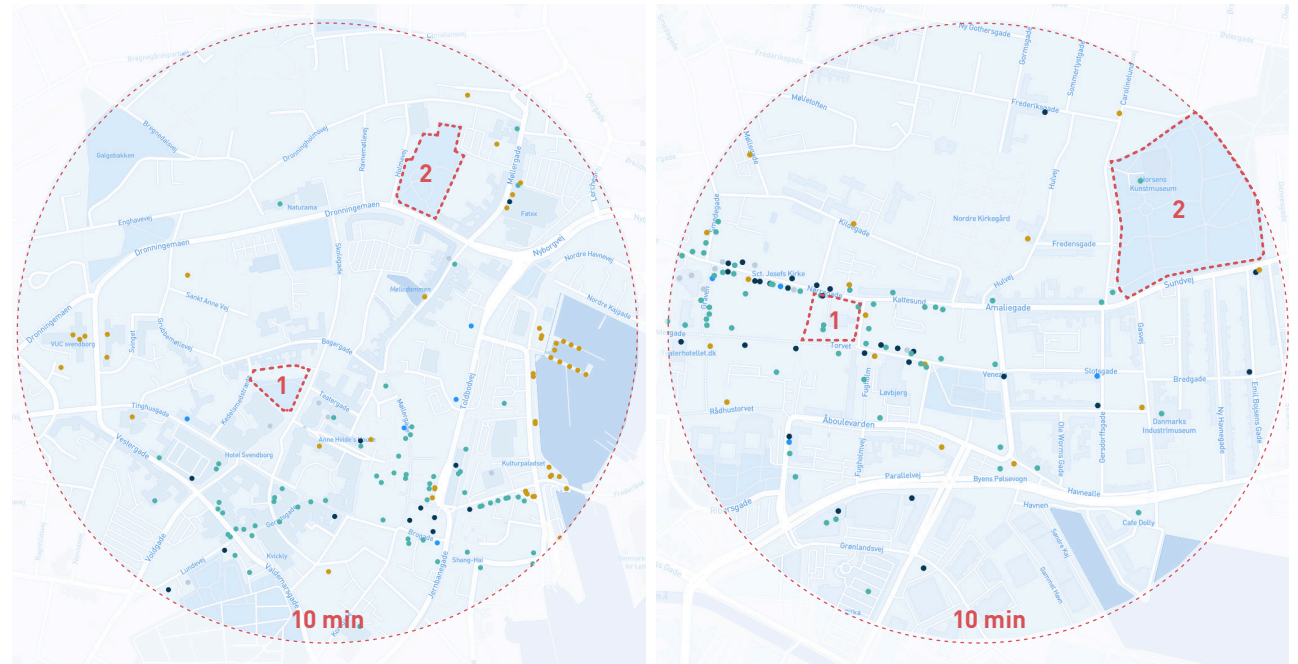
Neighbourhood Amenity Split



of People Spending Time - During and after

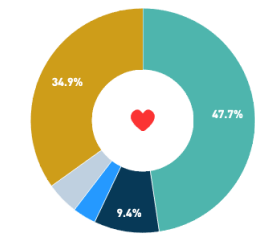


Local neighbourhoods in Svendborg and Horsens with a better access to a diversity of amenities had a more sustained activity.

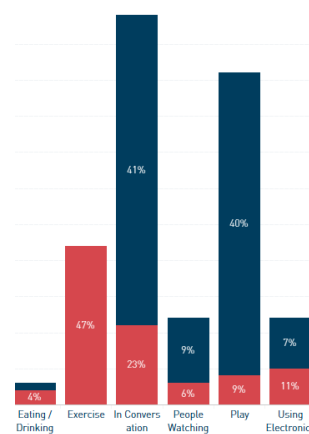


Svendborg

Distribution of Amenities

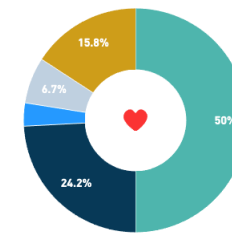


Stationary Activity

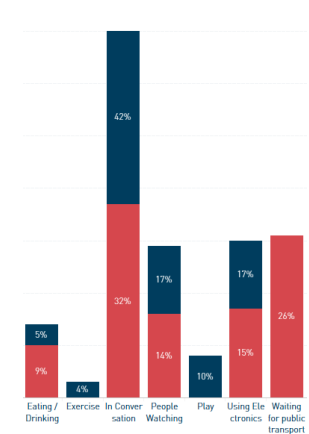


Horsens

Distribution of Amenities



Stationary Activity

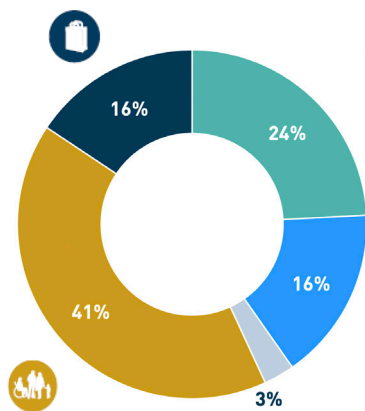


Graph comparison between the distribution of amenities and the percentage change of stationary activities in the city center public space.

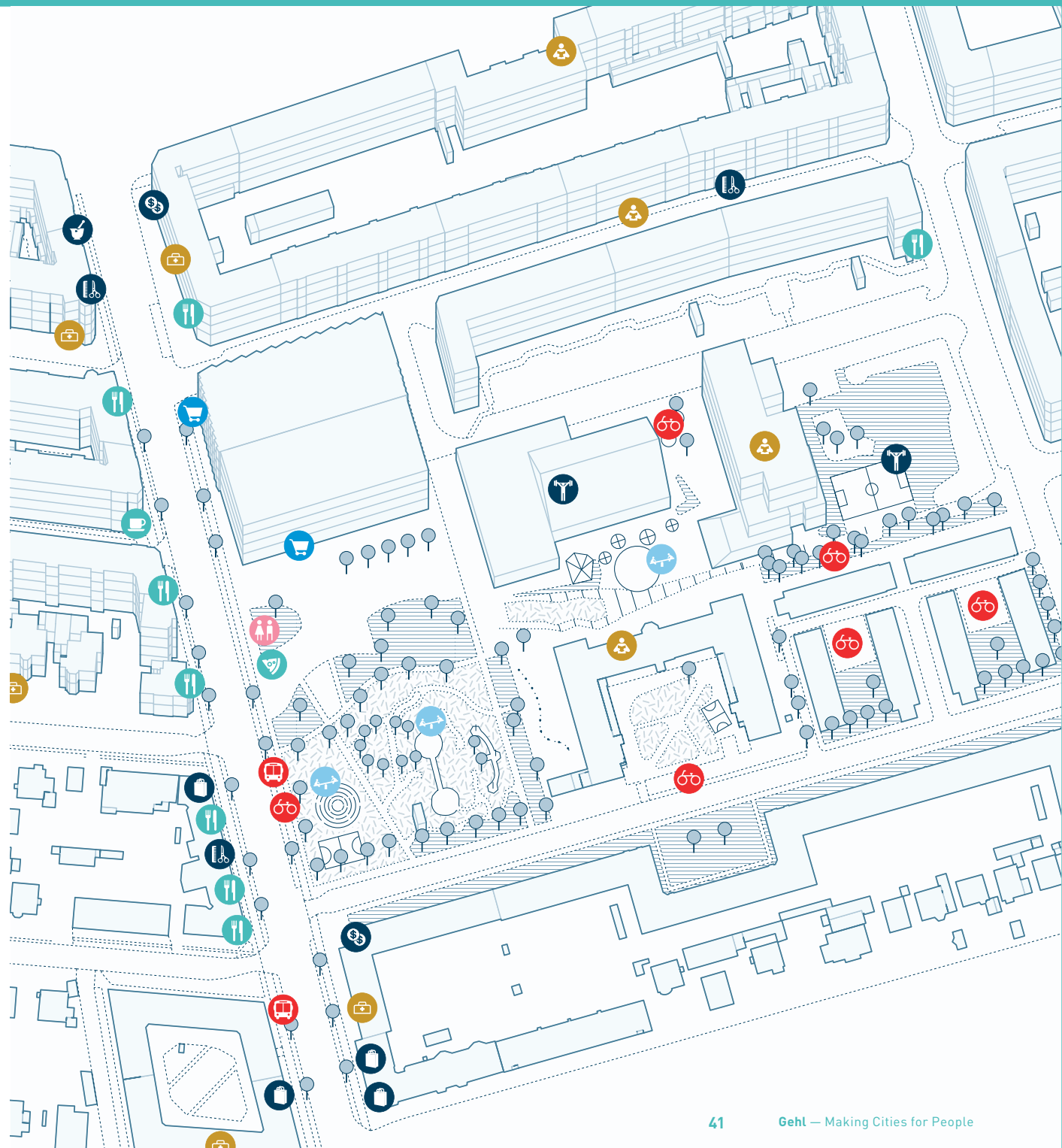
Right:
 1. Comparison of percentage of amenities
 2. Stationary Activities - During and After

An example of a local neighbourhood with a diverse range of amenities

Sundbyøsterplads
Copenhagen



	Food And Beverage	71
	Civic + Community Facilities	52
	Neighbourhood Serving Retail	14
	Arts + Cultural Facilities	7
	Grocery	5

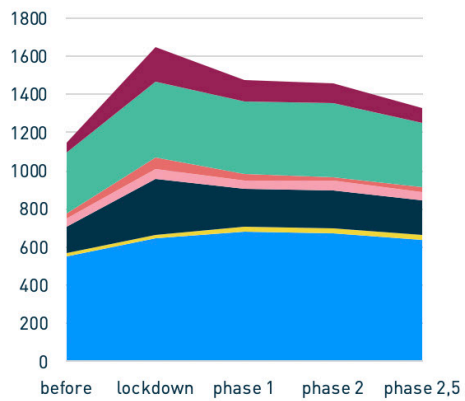




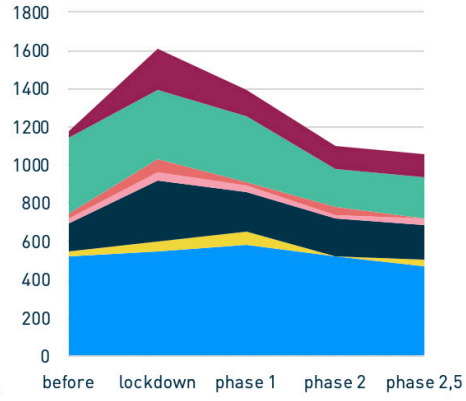
People talking in public spaces have increased and people seem to be more likely to reach out to strangers

Emotions changing over time (seen through social media data)

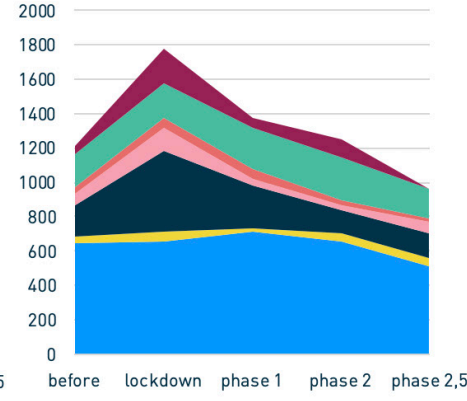
From all 4 cities before, during and in the reopening phase



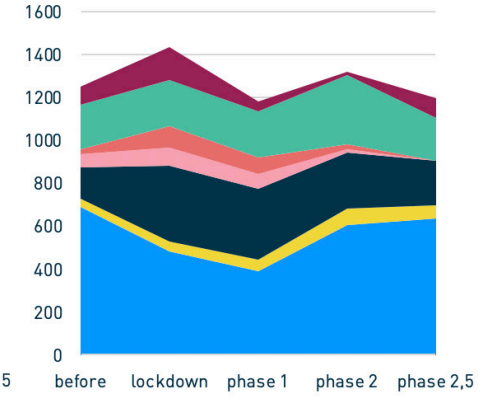
#COPENHAGEN



#HELSINGØR



#HORSENS



#SVENDBORG



#COPENHAGEN
335.765 posts



#HELSINGØR
8.054 posts



#HORSENS
8.882 posts

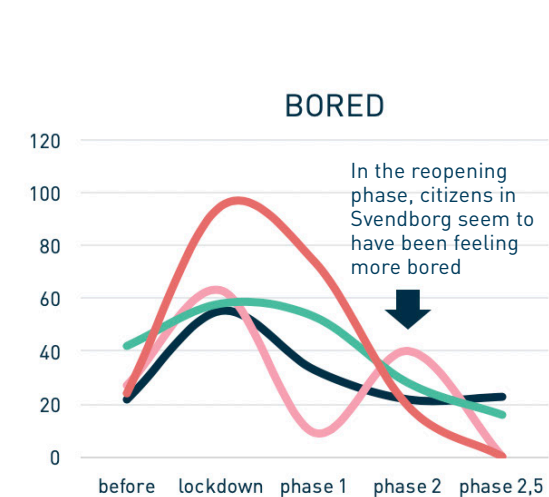
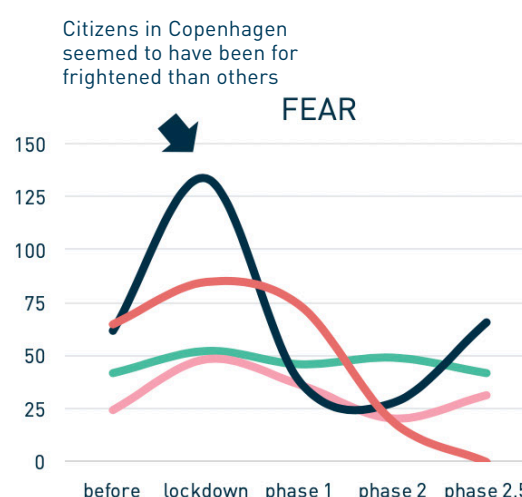
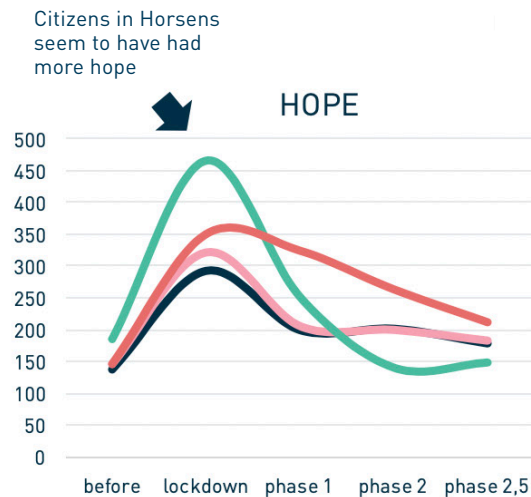
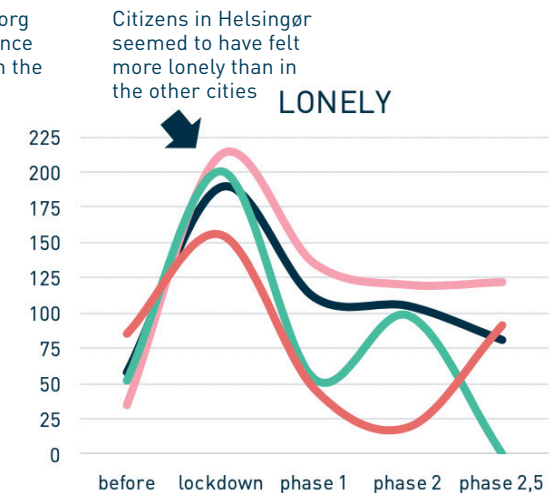
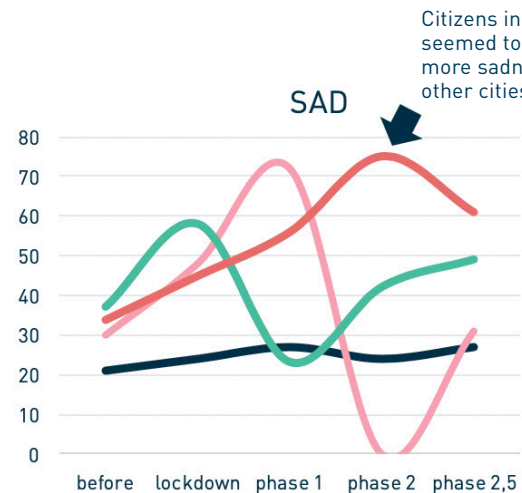


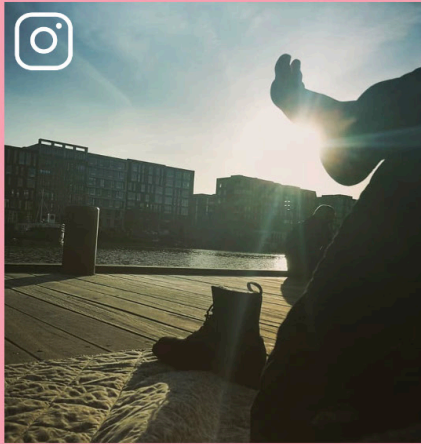
#HELSINGØR
8.054 posts

Emotions over time across the four cities

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

- Copenhagen ■
- Horsens ■
- Svendborg ■
- Helsingør ■

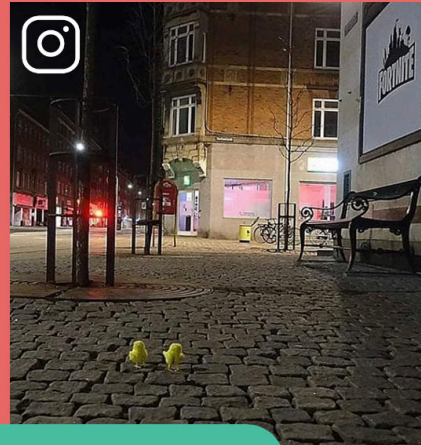




I miss my friends,
I miss my family,
I miss my colleagues.

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.

#hudsult #mitNørrebro
#togetheralone
#quarantinelif



Ensomheden på
Amagerbrogade

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

#ensomheden #gade
#langfredag #dementie
#påske #natteliv #street
#alene #amagerbro #amager
#sundby



I'm back - i øde, stille
København 🌞

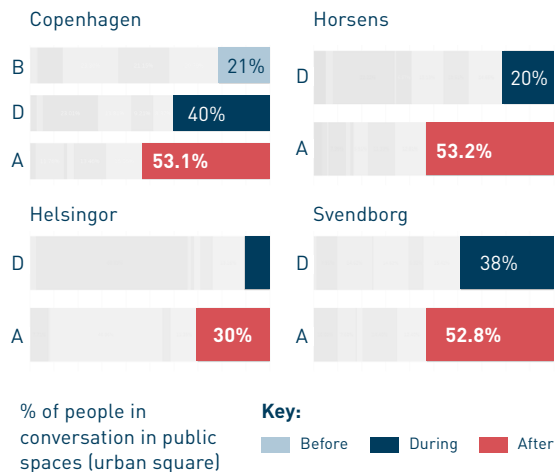
Hvad får man tiden til at gå
med i København i den her
tid? Jeg aner ikke, hvad jeg
skal finde på..????

#københavn #kedsomhed
#coronatider #minby
#deldinby #sharingcph
#karantæne

People were twice as likely to talk to each other during the lockdown and even **more after the reopening**



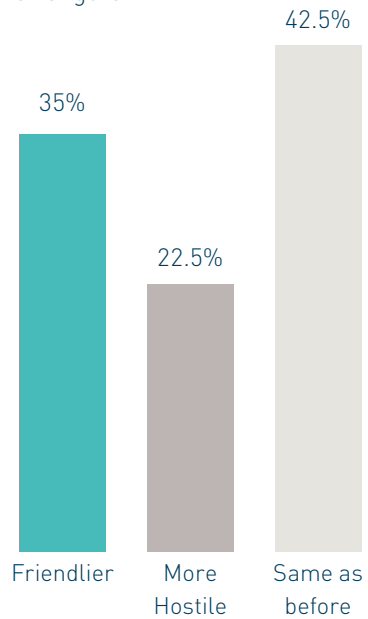
There are proportionally more people in conversation across all 4 cities. Copenhagen has a highest increase with twice as many people talking to each other during the lockdown and 3 times more after.



35% of users found their interactions with strangers to be friendlier.

Q.

Are your interactions with strangers...



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

DRAFT



Q.

“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

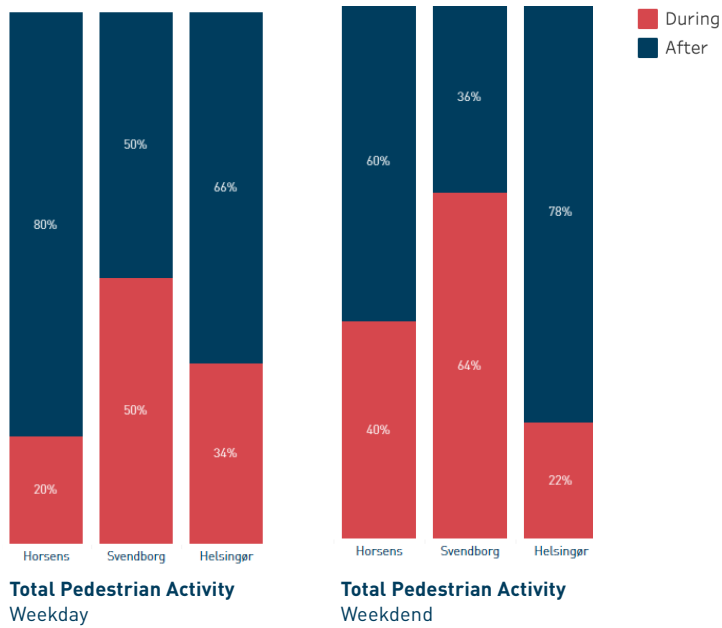
“One of the strategies from our side, has been to invite people to use more parts of Copenhagen, spreading people out, as much as possible. By doing this, we can maybe make it easier for people to come out and use the public space.”

- 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.



Smaller cities were less affected by the lockdown and were able to keep a similar level of activity throughout.



Caption, June 13th, 2020



Caption, June 13th, 2020



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



Islands Brygge, Copenhagen
April 4th, 2020



Strandgade, Copenhagen
June 12th, 2020



Kulturværftet, Helsingør
April 4th, 2020



Kulturværftet, Helsingør
June 12th, 2020

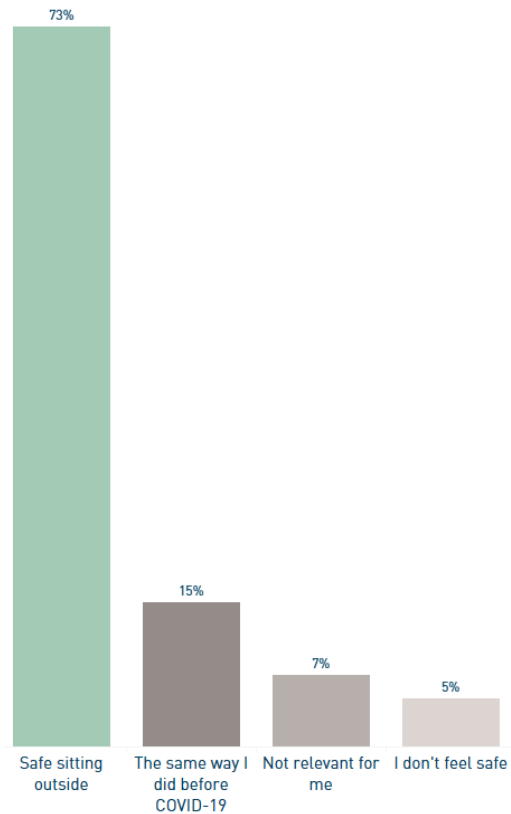
Sitting outside is now an essential health measure

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.



During COVID, February 4th, 2020



Post-COVID, June 13th, 2020

Different perceptions of overcrowding

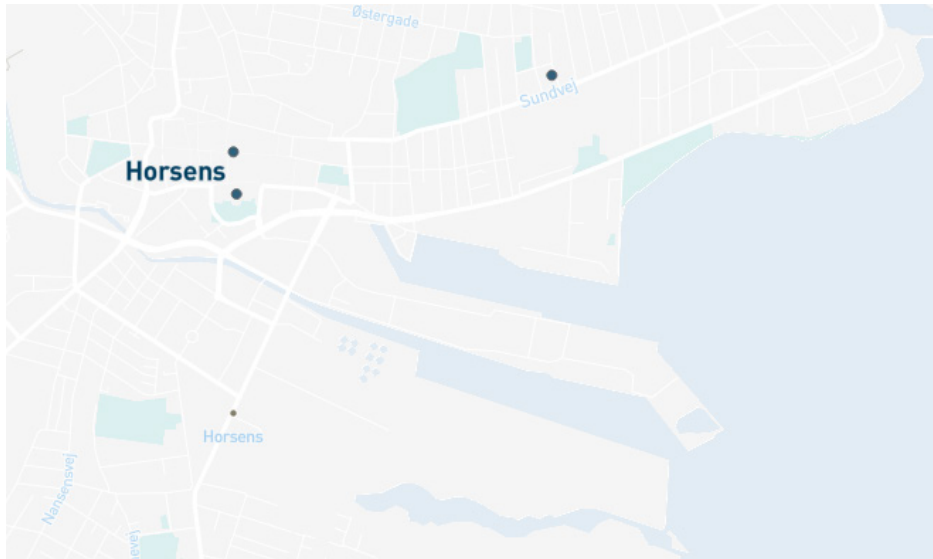
Horsens

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

- intercept interview



Crowdedness
Map showing survey points where people felt places where crowded



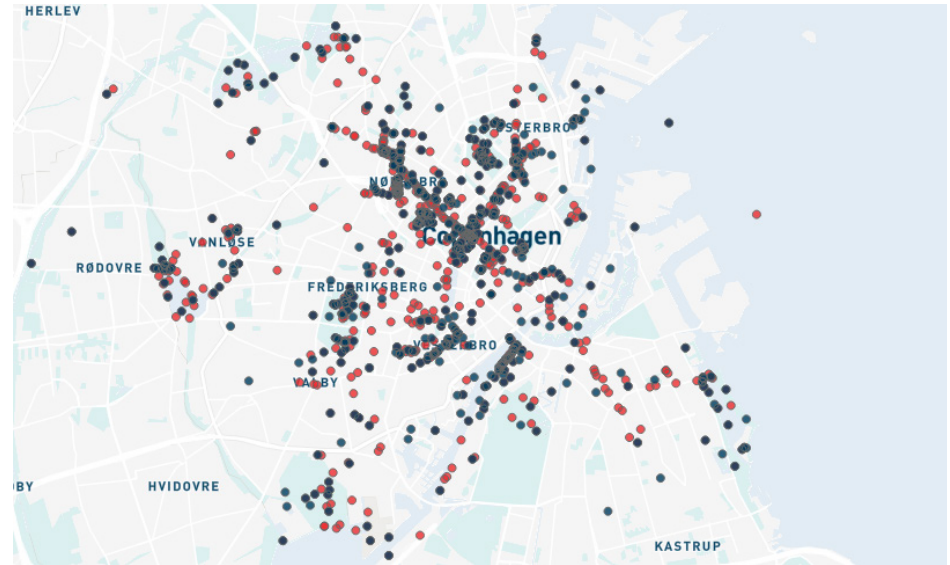
■ During
■ After

Copenhagen

“I don’t go to the city center because I feel its too crowded” - online survey



Crowdedness
Map showing survey points where people felt places where crowded



■ During
■ After

Even though there are still fewer people now than before lockdown, the perception of crowdedness seems to be higher, and therefore unsafer

Street View
People recorded in Strøget before lockdown.

4230 px



Street View
People recorded in Strøget after lockdown.

2275 px

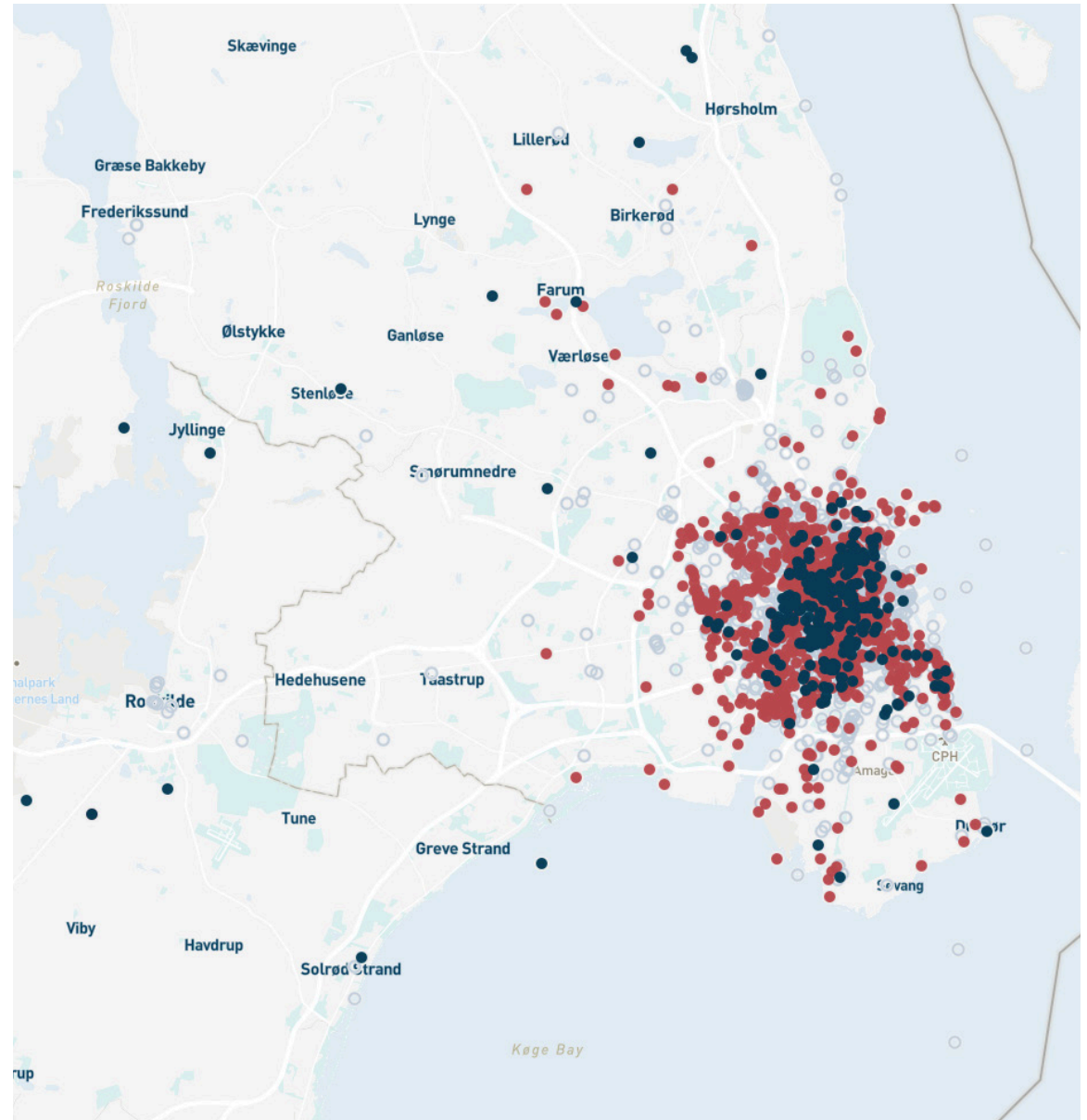


And we can see this in what places are people visiting after the lockdown - people are spreading and escaping the boundaries of Copenhagen

Map

Online Survey entries of visited places before, during and after lockdown.

- Before
- During
- After

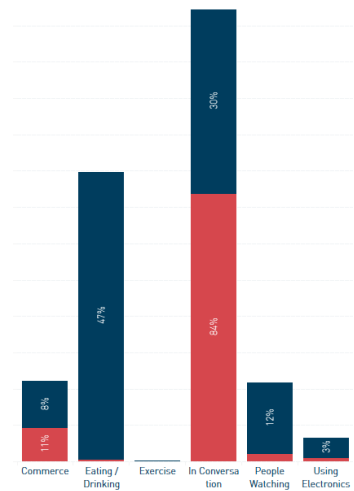


Public spaces in urban centers are being appropriated and programmed - especially in the smaller cities



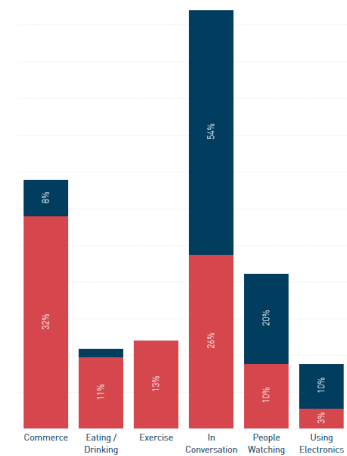
Axeltorv, Helsingor

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.



Axeltorv in Helsingor

Cafes occupying the square



Activity on weekday

■ During
■ After





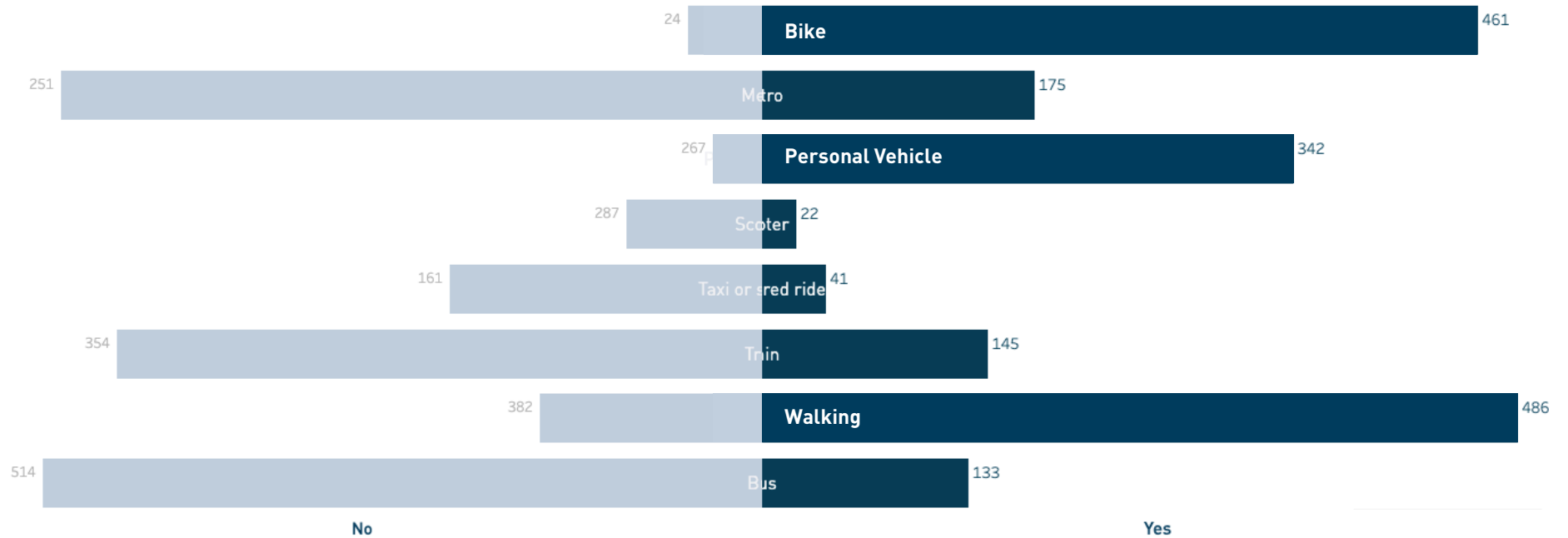
Willingness to use a car has increased, but walking and biking even more.

In Copenhagen, walking is perceived as the safest mode of transport, while using the bus, the least.



Graph showing Maptionnaire digital survey data on answering the question "Do you feel safe in these modes of transport?" during the reopening phase.

Do you feel safe in these modes of transportation?



But walking is still perceived the safest mode of transport - more than ever before.

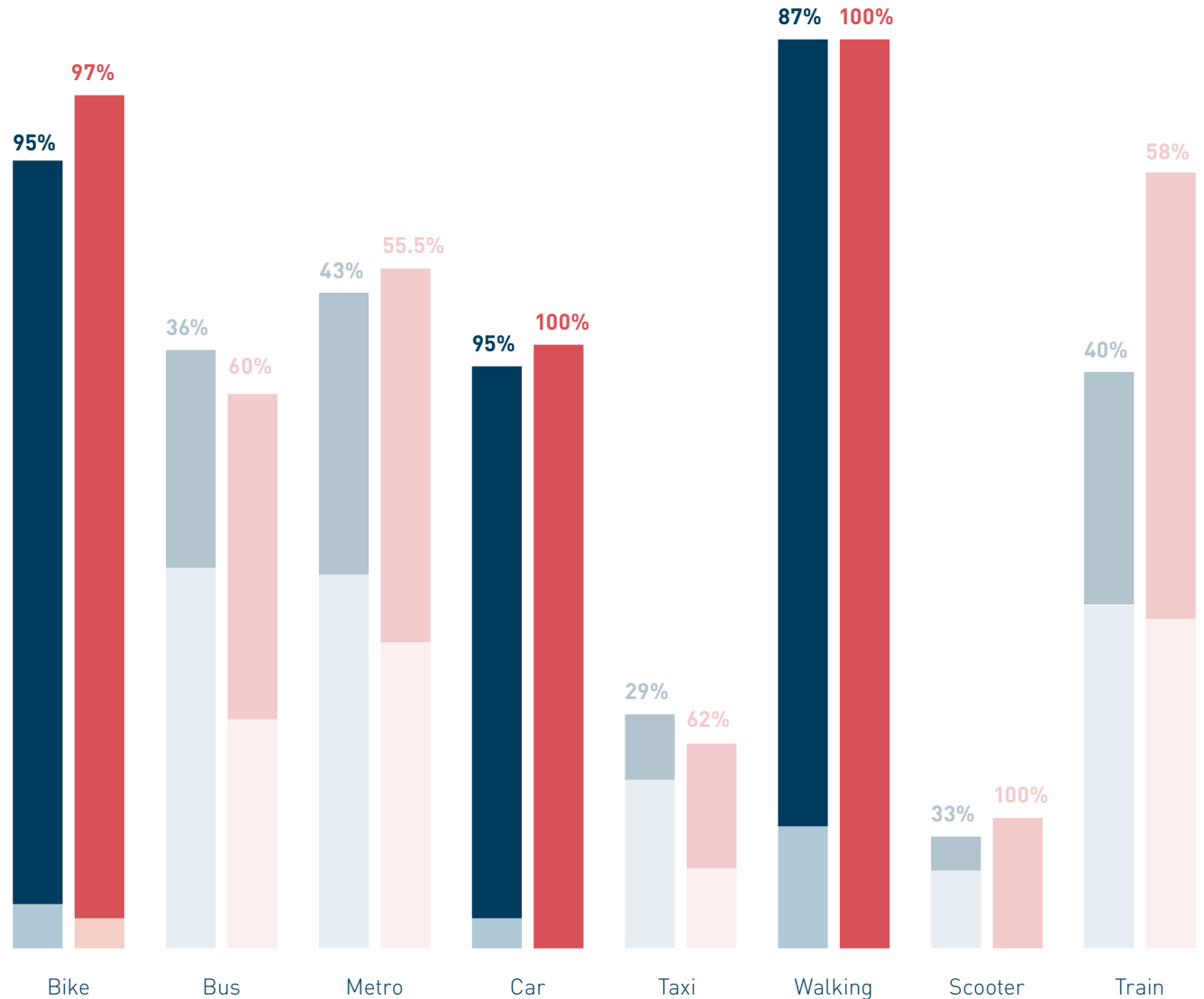
- +2% Bike
- +5% Car
- +13% Walking



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 Safe
 Unsafe Unsafe



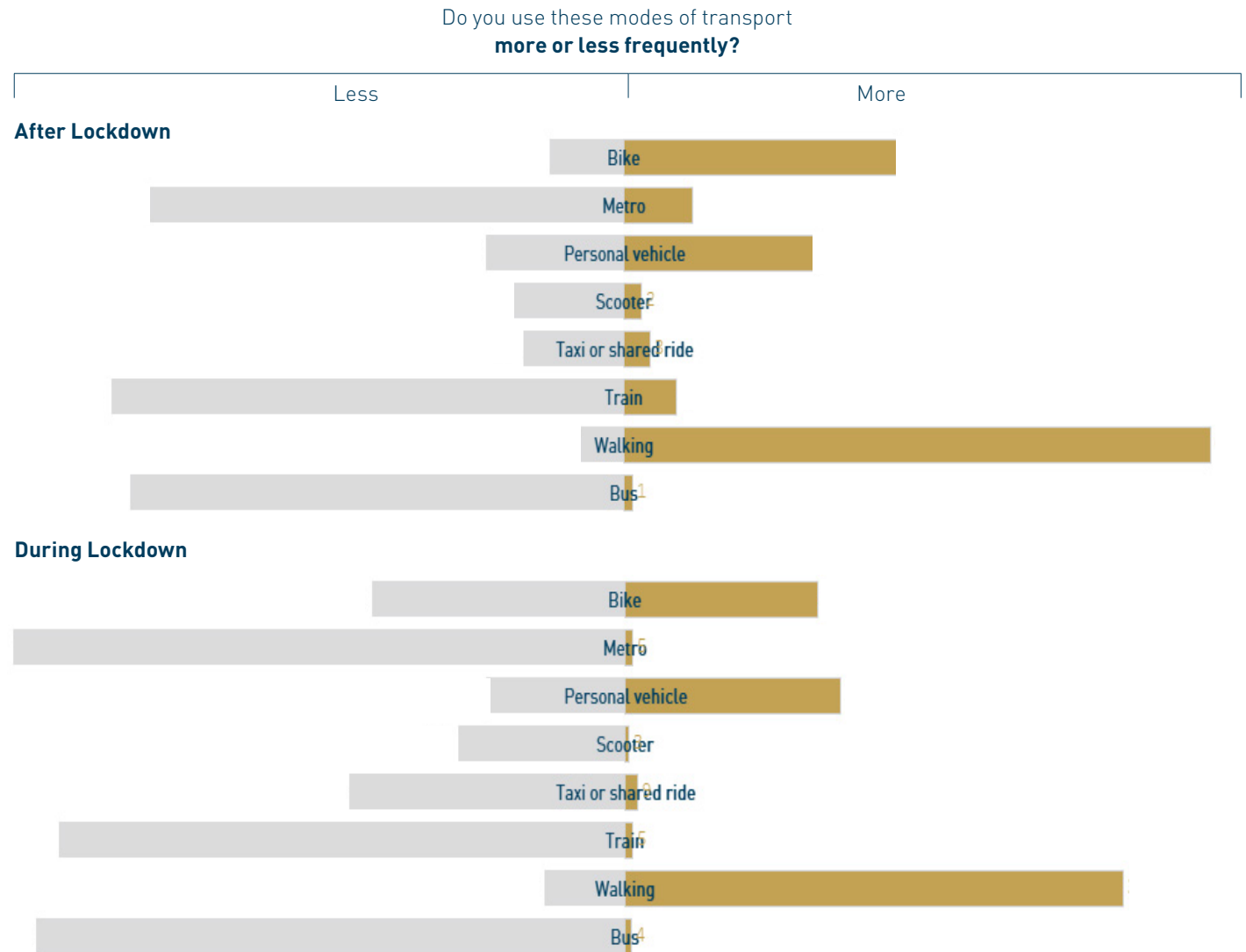
The use of cars increased during the lockdown, but walking and biking have had a constant and higher increase.



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

Frequency of Use:

During: After:
 More More
 Less Less



People are feeling public transport is now safer than during lockdown.

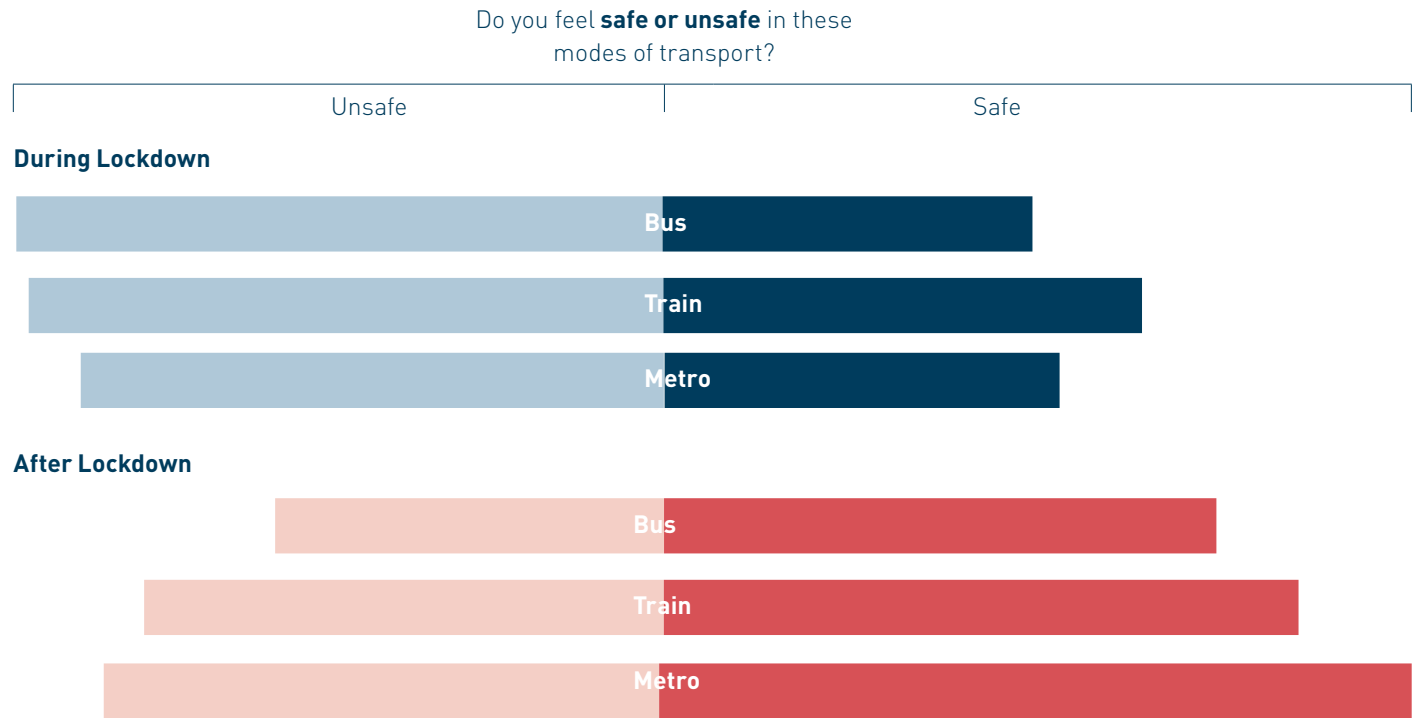
+24% Bus
+12.5% Metro
+18% Train



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

Perception of Safety:

During: After:
 Safe Safe
 Unsafe Unsafe



City Overview & Interviews



Activities across the four cities

Before
During
After



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.

Collaboration in regards to programs.

Especially related to Covid19.

The future of Urban Development.

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",

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

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!

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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".

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.

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 a 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 time, 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.



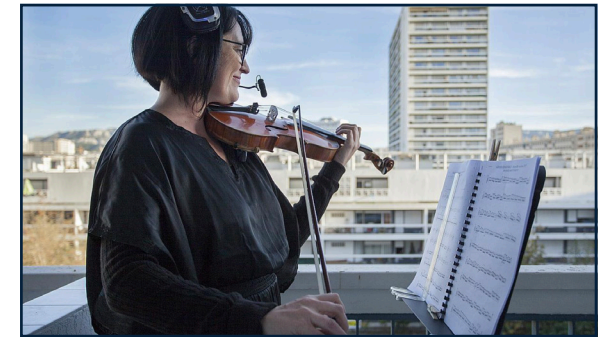
Urban nature experiences in Nordhavn, Cph



Learn how to play the guitar online, Horsens



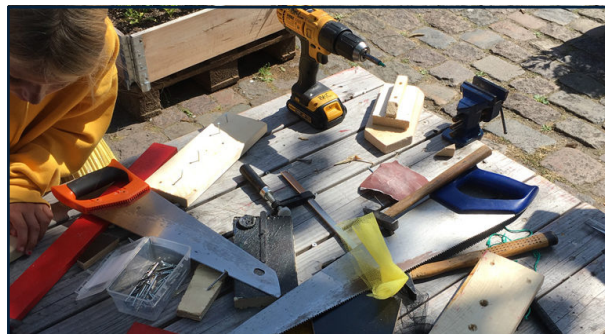
Order a Telegram for friends, Horsens



45 balconies are turned into a venue, Cph NV



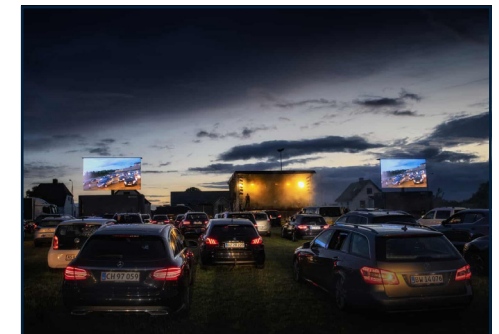
Live streaming; join an online disco, Helsingør



"Hyg og byg" - an adventure playground in Toldkammeret, Helsingør

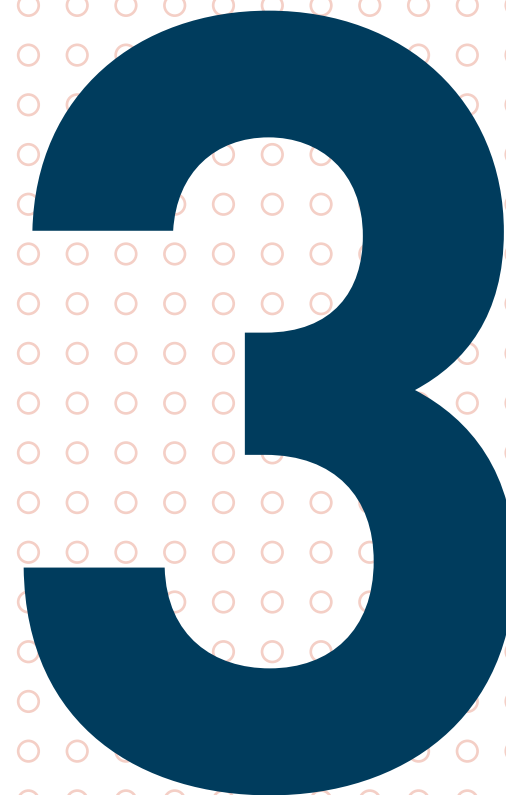


Terrasse concerts, Helsingør



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

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

Take-aways

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 centres 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.

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.

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.

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. A diverse local neighbourhood will be inviting for a diverse group of people - both looking at gender and age groups

R. Smaller cities have social and spatial qualities that could inform larger cities on how to stay vibrant and agile in moments of shock.

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

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. 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

