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ADAPTING PUBLIC SPACE: THE CASE OF PERIPHERAL URBAN COMMUNITY WELLNESS

¹Biruta Svagzdiene

*Lithuanian Sports University
Sporto str. 6, Kaunas
Lithuania
Tel: +370 699 45556
E-mail: biruta.svagzdiene@lsu.lt*

²Dalia Perkumiene

*Vytautas Magnus University
Jonavos str. 66, LT-44191
Kaunas
Lithuania
Tel: +370 69834822
E-mail: dalia.perkumiene@vdu.lt*

³Urte Petraskaite

*Lithuanian Sports University
Sporto str. 6, Kaunas
Lithuania
Tel: +370 684 87805
E-mail:
urte.petraskaite1999@gmail.com*

⁴Arturas Simanavicius

*Department of Sports Management,
Economics and Sociology,
Lithuanian Sports University, Kaunas,
Lithuania
E-mail: arturas.simanavicius@lsu.lt,*

¹Biruta Svagzdiene, PhD, Professor at the Department of Sports and Tourism Management at Lithuanian Sports University (Lithuania). Her research interests include management problems formed by the leisure market of understandable and positive views and research on business development. She holds a BBA in Bachelor of Economics (Vilnius University, Lithuania), MSc in Tourism and Sports Management (Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education, Lithuania), and PhD degree in Social Sciences (Siauliai University, Lithuania).

²Dalia Perkumiene, PhD, Assoc. Professor at the Department of Business and Rural Development Research and chief research officer at the Department of Law at Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania). Her research interests include legal regulation problems formed by environment protection and business law for sustainable development. She holds a BBA in Bachelor of Law (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania), MSc in Law (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania), and PhD degree in Law (Ghent University, Belgium).

³Urte Petraskaite, Student of Tourism and Sports Management, Department of Sports and Tourism Management, Lithuanian Sports University. Her research interests include leisure management and marketing, communication, and public relations. Opportunities to discover new markets in the world of leisure.

⁴**Artūras Simanavičius** is PhD, Assoc. Professor at the Department of Sports and Tourism Management at Lithuanian Sports University (Lithuania). His research interests include sustainable tourism development management, leisure tourism management, etc.

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SUMMARY. *The main idea developed in the article is that instead of trying to prove that a public space exists in Europe or, on the contrary, that a public space or public spaces have not yet been formed, we should look at Europe as a whole of multifaceted networks. These networks have many unique public spaces. The topic of regional differences in the adaptation of public spaces to health needs is indeed found in scientific works, but so far it has not been presented in the context of a peripheral region. This scientific article stands out from the others in that it aims to look at the adaptation of public spaces to the needs of wellness in the periphery in a broader way - in a complex way, by understanding and studying the influence zones of factors located in the city territory from the point of view of the residents themselves. The goal is to evaluate the adaptation of public space to the health of the peripheral city community. Maintaining physical activity is important for every person. One of the most important factors in maintaining a positive state of well-being is public space. Health and public space are inseparable. Green natural areas provide many psychological and physical benefits: they provide an opportunity to promote physical activity, actively spend your free time, and help improve your emotional state. From the point of view of residents, public spaces provide economic and social benefits to the city and its residents: active promotion of tourism in the city, which is very important for the economic and social growth of the city, health benefits, benefits for children's development, promotes physical activity, all these factors are very important for every community and city psychological and physical well-being of the population.*

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: public space, the right to welcome and a safe environment.

JEL classification: H3, I15, I31.

Introduction

Relevance and novelty of the topic. One of the most important aspects of the urban structure is the public space, intended for rest, recreation, and communication, improving the city's ecological conditions and increasing its aesthetic appeal (Žuravliovaitė, 2015). In the latest scientific studies, the perception of urban spaces is developed. Scholars studying public spaces Mullenbach (2022), Bild *et al.* (2022), Van Oostrum, (2022), Honey-Rosés *et al.* (2021), Grigoriadou (2021), Struch (2022), Popovski, Young (2022), Lee (2022), Panjaitan *et al.* (2022); Grabalov, Nordh (2022), Vanka, (2022), Turan, True. (2022), Carmona, (2022) claim that the residential area is an element of the spatial structure of the urbanised area, intended for the general interests of society.

Juknevičiūtė (2022). The historical development of cities and the processes of urbanisation inevitably lead to negative consequences – the formation of abandoned territories and buildings.

The definition of adaptation of public spaces for community wellness and recreation is ambiguous. The research helps reveal the construction of the infrastructure of the city's public spaces and the affected areas of green spaces for wellness and recreation purposes. According to Popescu (2022), conflicts between cars and pedestrians in congested public spaces and commercial premises have been described in various places, including post-socialist cities that were not built to be dominated by cars. Over the past few decades, these cities have been the subject of traffic intensity research.

The city is constantly being shaped or reshaped – according to plan or spontaneously. Perhaps the most obvious way to experience the city and its democracy is through public spaces (Grunskis, 2013). Periphery – the edge of something, the outer part, as opposed to the centre, a place further from the centre. It is also defined as an area far from the capital or other important city. Every self-respecting citizen must protect and nurture public spaces because it is like a mirror of our mentality that shows how educated a person is. Space is considered public to the extent that collective life is experienced in it. These spaces are characterised by openness and accessibility for everyone without any restrictions. In the public space, people should enjoy their free time, spend time meaningfully, rest from everyday work, and find peace. Although there are many scientific and journalistic articles about public spaces and their problems, opinions are presented on this topic – public spaces are viewed as individual objects, but not as a unified elastically connected system (Bokmota, Šabanovas, 2018). The authors claim that the absence of this systematic approach, which would allow to avoid, for example, the uneven distribution of public spaces in the city, leads to the fact that the quality of life and environment is better in some territorial complexes and worse in others. However, no matter how important public space is in people's lives, everything changes, architecture flourishes. When the intensive construction period begins, only areas unsuitable for construction are often left for the natural environment and green areas of cities, and recreational green areas often become the zone of new construction objects (Švagždiene, Vaseris, 2020). It must be recognised that public spaces are an asset of the city, not all cities have well-developed public areas that would allow people to enjoy great views and the pleasures of nature in public spaces. It is important to note that the concepts of city and periphery will not be given much attention in this article.

Movement is a biological need of the body, without which normal human activity is hardly possible (Valintėlienė *et al.*, 2012). The authors state that physical activity is understood quite broadly – it includes exercise, exercises, participation in competitions, household chores, leisure activities that require physical effort, as well as physical work. The best place to do physical activity is a public space. The advantage of public spaces is universality (Leitanaitė, 2020). The author of the article states that public space is where people are: walking, playing, reading, communicating, or even protesting. We can also mention that we can develop and strengthen wellness in public spaces. So we can say that public space is a perfect place for physical activity. As stated by Klimaitė, Čiburaitė (2013), wellness in a broad sense is understood as physical, spiritual and social well-being, and not only the absence of disease or disability, i. e. both economic and social value that determines the wealth and values of future. Therefore, every person must take care and nurture a wellness lifestyle that ensures everyone's physical and spiritual well-being, and a place perfectly

designed for this is a public space that provides not only external beauty but also benefits and encourages the maintenance of good physical and spiritual well-being of a person.

The topic of regional disparities in the adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs is indeed found in scientific works, but so far it has not been presented in the context of a peripheral region (Okunola, Fakunle, 2021; Aleksejeva *et al.*, 2021; Gavurova, Kubak, 2021; Dvorsky *et al.*, 2023). This scientific article stands out from others in that it aims to look at the adaptation of public spaces to the needs of wellness in the periphery in a broader way – in a complex way, by understanding and studying the zones of influence of the factors located in the city territory from the point of view of the residents themselves.

The purpose of the article is to assess the adaptation of public space to the wellness of the peripheral city community.

Research tasks:

1. reveal the theoretical concept of adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs;
2. review the legal aspect of public space, adapting it to the wellness needs of the community;
3. to analyse the adaptation of public space for wellness in the peripheral city from the point of view of the residents themselves.

Research object: adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs.

Research methods: systematic and logical analysis of scientific literature, its empirical qualitative analysis; analysis of statistical data; questionnaire.

1. Theoretical Contextualisation of Adaptation of Public Spaces to Wellness Needs

The everyday quality of public space can obscure very different approaches to its use. Scholars posit a civic humanist approach to public space where strangers share public space, creating a “productive encounter” that reveals and challenges each other’s religious, political, and cultural practices. Civic humanism has its roots in anthropology and views public space as a political arena that shapes civic culture and codes of conduct (Amin, 2008). It focuses on how the appropriation of public space is linked to social or political struggle. From this perspective, the appropriation of public space is. The everyday quality of public space can obscure very different approaches to its use. Scholars posit a civic humanist approach to public space where strangers share public space, creating a “productive encounter” that reveals and challenges each other’s religious, political, and cultural practices. Civic humanism has its roots in anthropology and views public space as a political arena that shapes civic culture and codes of conduct (Amin, 2008). It focuses on how the appropriation of public space is linked to social or political struggle. From this perspective, the appropriation of public space is a right to the city that is particularly important for the urban poor to earn a living (Kim, 2015).

Public space has always been at the top of every city’s urban planning agenda, and given today’s global context, these urban spaces have become key elements of cities and districts. Squares, squares and parks, undoubtedly the essential fabric of the city, have become more vital today than ever.

These spaces not only have a positive effect on wellness but also create a leisure space for exercising, playing, meeting, and interacting with others. In addition, high-quality public and open spaces are very important for creating connections between people in urban areas. An open space that can be enjoyed certainly promotes a sense of community and belonging to

one's immediate surroundings while creating a positive psychological effect by building bonds between community members.

According to Balcytienė, Juraitė (2022). Therefore, when considering the quality of the public space, it is important to analyse not only what (what facts and opinions, what distortions and misinformation narratives) circulate in the public space, but also to pay attention to citizens' "self-perceptions" and intentions to act. The latter are influenced by such "valuable" things that support mutual interaction in society, such as the general degree of social and interpersonal trust, the feeling of solidarity, the level of social empathy, etc. (cit. Strömbäck *et al.*, 2020; Balčytienė, 2021; Kreiss, 2021). It is already the case that, in the environment of mediated communication, precisely such subjective "activities" ensuring the communicative action should be paid more attention than until now (Balčytienė, 2021).

To provide people with accessible, human-centred, high-quality spaces, cities turned to architects for help. In fact, the high demand for this type of place demanded great design and architectural value.

Public spaces have undergone a renaissance since the 1980s and are increasingly becoming a key component of regeneration and development schemes (both residential and commercial) around the world (Carmona, 2019). The scientist claims that it is very important to design public spaces well, although experience shows that often our ambitions do not reach reality but when we fix everything, high-quality public spaces offer huge economic and social benefits to society. This shows that properly developed public spaces provide enormous benefits to humanity. Many realise that public spaces are a very important aspect of urban planning. In the last 20 years, public spaces have gained new visibility (Tonnelat, 2010). The source author's opinion is this – public spaces are essential for cities' political, social, economic, public wellness, and biodiversity reasons but the dominant trend that many notice is the shrinking of society. According to Tonnelat (2010), the processes of privatisation are diverse, in the last half century, many urban forms have appeared that are less and less adapted to everyday life, suburbanisation, highways, new technologies, shopping centres, the separation of different categories is growing all over the world. In this situation, public space plays a very important role, it becomes like the only means to solve these problems. It is important to understand the importance of public space in a city or town, it should be an integral part of the face of the city. High-quality public spaces offer enormous economic and social environmental benefits to their localities and communities (Krankalis, Anzelytė, 2013). a right to the city that is particularly important for the urban poor to earn a living (Kim, 2015).

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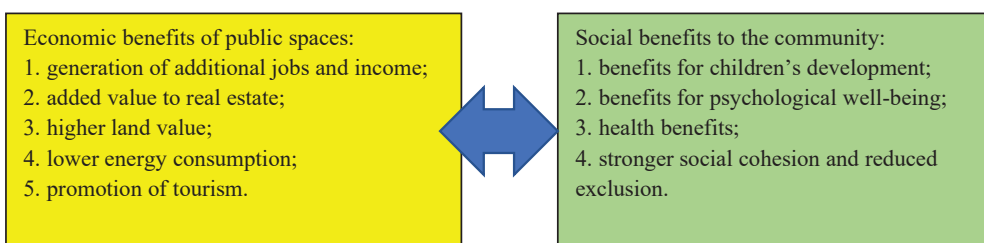
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The theoretical framework of the study, as emanating from the above questions, is presented on *Figure 1*.



Source: Kapočiūtė, Kazlauskas, Znutaitė, 2020.

Figure 1. Benefits Provided by Public Spaces

From *Figure 1* one can see the economic and social benefits of public spaces to the community. Regarding the economic benefits, we understand that in an economically well-developed city, the number of jobs is higher, unemployment is less likely, and in this way, people have the opportunity to earn enough and invest their earnings in real estate, for example: they can buy apartments, start a new business, and in such an economically strong city, one can confidently invest. The promotion of tourism is also one of the benefits. A city

with well-developed public spaces allows you to spend your free time on educational, recreational, wellness, or sports purposes, all of these things bring benefits to human well-being or wellness. When discussing social benefits, we can also see many pluses. First of all, public space is useful for our little ones, they can develop, learn, and get to know the world in nature. Benefits for psychological well-being are also an important aspect for every person, it is very important to take care of it, and public spaces are a great place where people can experience inner harmony, get new thoughts or ideas, and improve their inner state.

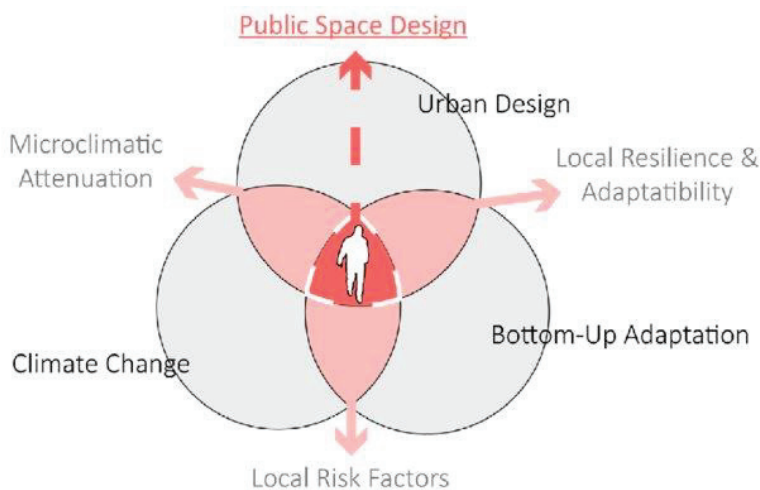
Summary. Public space is a mirror of city residents. First of all, these spaces give us a sense of freedom, allow us to escape from everyday work, and calm the soul. Based on the authors' insights, we can say that the priority of every city is to have properly organised public areas. It is important to know that public spaces provide many multifunctional benefits that are important for every city or town. The social and economic benefits provided help support the proper infrastructure of the city, which gives the city its unique beauty.

2. The Legal Aspect of Adapting Public Space to the Wellness Needs of the Community

The management of public space and the legal regulation of this process, adapting public space for the wellness of the community, is a big and important blind spot in the planning and design of cities and regions (Duivenvoorden *et. al.*, 2021; Makole *et al.*, 2022). When discussing the legal aspects of adapting public spaces for the wellness of urban communities, we must first talk about ensuring the right of individuals to a wellness and safe environment. A safe wellness environment is one of the essential factors in ensuring the quality of human life. Each person depends on the environment around them and the services it provides, such as food, clean water, air, climate change, and also wellness. In order to ensure a safe wellness environment, it is also important to adapt the city's public spaces for the wellness of the community (Perkumienė *et.al.*, 2020; Maharjan *et al.*,2023). The right to a safe wellness environment is enshrined in both national and international legal documents. The main legal document establishing this right is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 13, 1948). This declaration emphasises the rights of individuals to a safe, wellness, and clean environment. Another important document, the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment (Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment, 1972), also declares the human right to a safe wellness environment. This declaration singles out a wellness environment as a prerequisite for the enjoyment of internationally recognised human rights such as the right to wellness or life. Also, the Declaration of Rio de Janeiro (Rio Declaration on Environment and Development..., 1992) should be mentioned, which emphasises the human right to "wellness and a fulfilling life in harmony with the environment". It should be noted that the Declaration of Rio de Janeiro is closely related to the Declaration of Stockholm and is considered the main environmental law. The right to a safe and secure person is enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty, which partially amended the treaties establishing individual communities in order to create the European Union (Treaty on European Union (TEU)/Maastricht Treaty, 1992). The right of people to a safe wellness environment is also declared in the Treaty of Amsterdam (Treaty of Amsterdam Amending the Treaty on European Union..., 1997), the preamble of which enshrines the principle of endless development and stronger environmental protection. The European Court of Justice also emphasises the importance of international treaties in protecting the right of individuals to a safe wellness environment (Case Ashgar Leghari v. Federation of Pakistan, No. 25501/2015). As for the legal aspects of adapting public spaces for the wellness of the

urban community, the national level is guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992), the Law on Local Self-Government of the Republic of Lithuania (Law on Local Self-Government of the Republic of Lithuania..., 2008, No. 113-4290) and other laws of the Republic of Lithuania and government resolutions, as well as decisions of the municipal council, orders of the director of the municipal administration, etc.

Adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs. A good sense of well-being always ensures a good mood for us and helps to achieve our goals or results. It is very important to start promoting a wellness lifestyle from an early age when children's bodies are still learning to fight viruses. Spending time in public spaces is very important for both a child and an elderly person, it helps to maintain a good sense of well-being. In developing countries, with the rapid growth of cities and the scale of industry, physical inactivity becomes an even bigger problem than in economically developed countries (Zumeras, 2014). The author of the article states that the decrease in physical activity in developing countries is partly due to the rapidly increasing population, growing economic poverty, high crime rate, increasing air pollution, lack of parks, sidewalks, sports, recreational facilities, and other reasons, therefore, effective comprehensive public wellness is needed improvement measures that change the physical activity habits of the population (see *Figure 2*)



Source: Santos Nouri, Costa, 2017.

Figure 2. Public Space Design in the Scope of urban design, climate Change, and that of User-based Adaptation

From *Figure 2* we see that the public space is considered the meeting place of collective community socialisation and “shared” experience, which is recognised as an urban space located between buildings (Santos Nouri, Costa, 2017). Thus, the importance of public space is manifested in the creation of recreational areas for the wellness of the community and combating climate change. For this reason, it poses new challenges for the design of public spaces, as they must ensure the residents’ quality of life and contribute to wellness.

Human wellness, in the broadest sense, is one of the most relevant and popular problems of community life (Šeškutė, 2017). The author claims that each part of the

community understands this problem differently: children, the working part of the community, and people of retirement age have their own attitudes and assessments of maintaining a wellness lifestyle and improving wellness. It is important to mention that this problem is relevant in the lives of many people. Nowadays, it is very important to take care of your wellness, it is one of the main values in human life. Šeškutė (2017) states that all wellness care organisation activities both in the community and in the work sphere are supported by programs, laws, by-laws, orders, and resolutions in which priority areas of wellness care are distinguished.

It is very important to mention the current events of recent years, which affected both public spaces and people's wellness (Khan *et al.*, 2023). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many streets and squares have been emptied due to the closure of cities. These changes have affected the ability of public spaces to attract people and offer mental wellness benefits (Zandieh *et al.*, 2020). Public space is precisely one of the most important places that helps every person to improve their wellness and inner, emotional state. The authors argue that changes in the way people have used public spaces so far during the pandemic have highlighted the importance of adapting and the resiliency of public spaces to pressures such as a pandemic. The world situation has encouraged people to follow recommendations to leave public spaces empty.

During the pandemic, it was necessary to improve people's mental condition (Zandieh *et al.*, 2020):

- Unequal access to green spaces (people living in areas of high poverty or compact urban areas, and those living in high-rise buildings, these urban residents have a higher risk of mental problems, including due to pandemics and city closures);
- People of low socio-economic status are also less likely to have good access to green spaces, as they are less likely to have access to private cars and are generally reluctant to use public transport during a pandemic, leaving many urban residents with limited access mental wellness benefits of green spaces.

We understand that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected not only public spaces but also the psyche and physical activity of people. People became more passive, and more time was spent at home, but we realise that in order to maintain a proper lifestyle, one of the main conditions is being in the fresh air.

3. Research Methodology and Organisation

To achieve the result, the scientific literature and meta-analysis of previous studies are studied. A complex analysis study of the adaptation of public space to the wellness of the peripheral city community was carried out. The applied research method is quantitative – a questionnaire survey was carried out. During the research, information was collected by analysing the statistical data of the peripheral area (Elektrėnai) and reports that provide an opportunity to get acquainted with the current situation, various ideas, and viewpoints. This survey provides an opportunity to interview a large number of people, allows comparison of respondents' answers, provides anonymity to respondents, and ensures confidentiality. An online survey also provides an opportunity to collect the necessary information and data.

The purpose of the study is to assess the adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs in the case of the city of Elektrėnai.

Research organisation. The survey was compiled based on the literature analysed in the theoretical part and created using the www.apklausa.lt tool, hosted on social networks and

intended only for members of closed groups in the city. The questions and statements were prepared to reflect the adaptation of the public spaces of the city of Elektrėnai to wellness needs. Structure of the instrument: the main part of the survey consists of 8 research questions. At the end of the survey, questions about the characteristics of the respondents: gender, age, education, and work experience. The created survey was distributed in the social space “Facebook” in groups intended for electricians, persons < 16 could answer the survey questions. Before answering the questions, each respondent had the opportunity to get acquainted with the purpose of the research, which was presented at the beginning of the survey. A total of 203 responses were received to the submitted survey. The research uses convenience sampling, which includes those units of the general set that are easily available (Rupšienė, 2007). Anonymity is ensured for all respondents, the data is presented in aggregate form. Participation in the study is based on the principle of benevolence and volunteering.

Characteristics of the subjects. 203 respondents participated in the study, including 129 women and 74 men. The vast majority of the interviewed persons were > 30 years old (n = 53) or belonged to the age groups of 21-23 years (n = 49) and 24-26 years (n = 48), while 18-20 (n = 25) and 27 - There were significantly fewer respondents aged 30 (n = 28). More than two-thirds of the research participants claimed to have 5-10 years (n = 73) or < 5 years (n = 66) of work experience, a slightly smaller proportion of respondents stated that they had accumulated > 15 years of work experience (n = 40), and the smallest part of the respondents (n = 24) answered that their length of service is 11-15 years. The vast majority of the survey participants stated that they had a higher (n = 57), professional (n = 49), higher (n = 47) or secondary (n = 40) education, while 9 and 1 persons answered that they had obtained master's and doctorate degrees, respectively.

The research results are transferred to MS Excel 2010 and most of the words are converted into numbers: “Definitely yes – 5”, “Likely yes – 4”, “I doubt – 3”, “Likely and no – 2”, “Really not – 1”. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 24.0 is used for statistical analysis.

4. Research Results

The research results are presented following the steps: Socio-economic benefit analysis aspect. An aspect of the analysis of the adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs. *Results of the analysis of socio-economic benefits of the city of Elektrėnai.* Characteristics of economic benefit assessment. During the research, it was found that in the list of economic benefits provided in the city of Elektrėnai, the active promotion of tourism in the city (4.3 ± 1.0 points), investment attraction (3.3 ± 1.0 points) and additional jobs and income generation (3.3 ± 1.0 points), while lower energy costs (2.9 ± 1.1 points) and added value for real estate (3.1 ± 1.1 points) were less significant factors. The results of the comparison of economic benefits depending on gender, age group, and level of education are presented in *Table 1*.

Table 1. Evaluation of economic benefits in terms of gender, age, and education

The city provides economic benefits	Gender		Age		Education	
	z value	p value	H value	p value	H value	p value
1. There is an active promotion of tourism in the city	-1,68	0,09	11,27	0,02	10,73	0,03
2. Lower energy consumption	-0,36	0,72	1,14	0,89	1,24	0,87
3. Investment attraction	-0,57	0,57	7,01	0,14	0,79	0,94
4. Additional jobs and income generation	-0,5	0,55	2,48	0,65	2,89	0,58
5. Added value to real estate	-1,14	0,26	2,66	0,62	1,58	0,81

Notes: a Dependent Variable: Economic interests.

Source: own calculations.

Table 1 shows that people of different gender (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.09$), age (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.02$) and education (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.03$) provide active tourism promotion evaluated reliably differently, while the estimates of the remaining, provided economic benefits did not differ statistically significantly from each other (in all cases Mann–Whitney U and Kruskal–Wallis; $p > 0.05$).

Evaluation of the provided social benefits. Among the social benefits, the research participants gave the highest estimates of the benefits provided to children’s development (4.5 ± 0.8 points) and wellness (4.2 ± 1.0 points), while cleaner water and fresh air, faster recovery of the sick ($3, 4 \pm 1.1$ points), increased worker productivity (3.2 ± 1.0 points) and reduced social exclusion (3.0 ± 1.2 points) were less important factors of social benefits.

Table 2. Provided social benefits in terms of gender, age, education

The city provides social benefits	Gender		Age		Education	
	z value	p value	H value	p value	H value	p value
1. Increased employee productivity	-0,70	0,48	0,70	0,95	3,42	0,49
2. Benefits for children’s development	-3,28	0,001	13,65	0,008	15,31	0,004
3. Cleaner water and fresh air, faster recovery of the sick	-1,62	0,10	2,56	0,63	5,22	0,27
4. Wellness benefits	-2,70	0,007	6,37	0,17	11,85	0,02
5. Reduced social exclusion	-0,81	0,42	10,23	0,04	5,56	0,23

Source: own calculations.

Table 2 shows that male and female estimates of benefits for child development (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.001$) and wellness (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.007$) were significantly different from each other. When assessing the effect of the age of the respondents on the evaluation scores of the social benefits provided in the city of Elektrėnai, it became clear that the estimates of the factors of benefits for children’s development (Kruskal – Wallis; $p = 0.008$) and reduced social exclusion (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.04$) varied significantly depending on the age of the study participants. It was also found that interviewed persons with different degrees of education reliably evaluated the benefits provided in Elektrėnai for children’s development (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.004$) and human wellness (Kruskal– Wallis; $p = 0.02$). It should be noted that cleaner water and fresh air, which promote faster recovery of patients and increased productivity of workers, were evaluated with reliably similar scores among research

participants of different genders (in both cases Mann–Whitney U; $p > 0.05$), age and education (in all cases Kruskal–Wallis; $p > 0.05$).

5. Results of Socio-economic Benefits Provided

It can be seen from *Table 3* that the respondents of socio-economic benefits provided to the community assigned the highest evaluation points to increased physical activity (4.3 ± 0.9 points), better emotional and psychological state (3.5 ± 1.0 points), wellness bones and for maintaining joints, strengthening muscles (3.4 ± 1.0 points) and weight control (3.3 ± 1.0 points), while the decrease in the number of patients was assessed by relatively lower scores (3.1 ± 1.0 points). The comparison of the socio-economic benefits provided by the respondents in the city of Elektrėnai depending on gender, age group, and education results shows that the Elektrėnai community has improved emotional and psychological condition (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.04$) and increased physical activity (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.03$) respondents of different genders scored reliably differently. It also turned out that the scores of the increased physical activity assessment of the community of Elektrėnai varied significantly depending on the age of the survey participants (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.03$) and the level of education obtained (Kruskal–Wallis; $p < 0.001$), and for the smaller number of patients, for weight control and maintenance of wellness bones and joints, muscle strengthening scores of respondents of different genders (in all cases Mann–Whitney U; $p > 0.05$), age and education (in all cases Kruskal–Wallis; $p > 0.05$) were not statistically significantly different from each other.

Table 3. Evaluation of the socio-economic benefits provided to the community

Socio-economic benefits are provided to the urban community	Average value	Standard deviation	The smallest value	The greatest value
1. Better emotional and psychological state	3,5	1,0	1,0	5,0
2. Increased physical activity	4,3	0,9	1,0	5,0
3. Fewer sick people	3,1	1,0	1,0	5,0
4. Weight control	3,3	1,0	1,0	5,0
5. Maintaining wellness bones and joints, strengthening muscles	3,4	1,0	1,0	5,0

Source: own calculations.

Summary of the Urban Socio-economic Benefit Analysis Study

During the research, the adaptation of public spaces to the wellness needs of the residents of Elektrėnai was discussed. Thus, summarising the research results, it can be said that public spaces provide enormous economic and social benefits to the city of Elektrėnai. The survey respondents fully agree that public space and wellness are inseparable, and such research results lead to the conclusion that the city of Elektrėnai has an active promotion of tourism, which is very important for the city’s economic growth. The study also highlighted the social benefits of public spaces, and the results of the study showed that according to the residents of the city of Elektrėnai, wellness, and benefits for children’s development were the main factors identified by the respondents. It is also important to emphasise that the city residents in the study distinguished between increased physical activity, which is very

important for every community, and better emotional and physical condition, which is also very important for a wellness and physically active person.

Analysis of Adaptation of Public Spaces To Wellness Needs

Table 4. The result of trying to spend free time in public spaces

Criteria for trying to spend free time in public spaces	Average value	Standard deviation	The smallest value	The greatest value
1. I like to spend my free time in public spaces	4,7	0,8	1,0	5,0
2. I do not like it, I have other interests	1,7	1,0	1,0	5,0
3. I do not have time for that	1,5	1,0	1,0	5,0

Source: own calculations.

It was established that the absolute majority of residents of the city of Elektrėnai like to spend their free time in public spaces (4.7 ± 0.8 points), while those who do not like it and have other interests (1.7 ± 1.0 points) do not for this type of activity (1.5 ± 1.0 points), the evaluation scores were significantly lower. The results of spending free time depending on gender, age, and education are presented in *Table 5*.

Table 5. The results of liking to spend free time in public spaces depend on gender, age, and education

Criteria for trying to spend free time in public spaces	Gender		Age		Education	
	z value	p value	H value	p value	H value	p value
1. I like to spend my free time in public spaces	-2,44	0,02	13,42	0,009	15,75	0,003
2. I do not like it, I have other interests	-2,33	0,02	8,70	0,07	11,42	0,02
3. I do not have time for that	-4,42	< 0,001	10,41	0,03	6,87	0,14

Source: own calculations.

Table 5 shows that the estimates given by men and women for the criterion of liking to spend free time in public spaces of all three analysed respondents differed significantly from each other (in all cases Mann–Whitney U; $p < 0.05$). It was also found that the evaluation scores of the study participants’ interest in spending their free time in public spaces and not having time for such activities varied statistically reliably depending on the age group (in both cases Kruskal–Wallis; $p < 0.05$), while the interest in spending their free time in public spaces and such estimates of disliking activities (having other interests) varied reliably depending on the level of education of the interviewed residents of the city of Elektrėnai (in both cases, Kruskal–Wallis; $p < 0.05$).

The majority of the population spends 1-2 (4.3 ± 1.2 points) or 2-4 (4.1 ± 1.3 points) hours in public spaces every day, while the number of survey participants who do not visit public spaces was significantly lower (1.4 ± 0.9 points). When analysing from the aspect of gender, the statement that they do not visit public spaces and that this type of activity is not interesting was evaluated with reliably different scores (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.001$). It was also found that respondents of different ages (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.06$) and education (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.19$) had reliably similar evaluation scores of 1-2 hours spent daily in public spaces, while the rest of the estimates of the time spent in the spaces each day were statistically significantly different from each other (in all cases Kruskal–Wallis; $p < 0.05$).

Development of public spaces (see *Table 6*).

Table 6. Evaluation of the public space developed in the city

Evaluation criteria for public space development	Average value	Standard deviation	The smallest value	The greatest value
1. Improving infrastructure makes the city more attractive to tourists	4,7	0,8	1,0	5,0
2. Our city has room for improvement	4,7	0,8	1,0	5,0

Source: own calculations.

From *Table 6*, it can be seen that the respondents evaluated the criteria characterising the development of public space in the city of Elektrėnai with identical scores: the infrastructure is improving, the city is becoming more attractive to tourists and our city has room for improvement (in both cases 4.7 ± 0.8 points), which suggests that the tourist situation in Elektrėnai has improved significantly but it needs to be improved in the future. The results differed from gender (in both cases Mann–Whitney U; $p < 0.05$), and the statement that the infrastructure is currently improving and the city is becoming more attractive to tourists – from the level of education obtained (Kruskal–Wallis; $p < 0.001$). It should be noted that the effect of age on the evaluation scores of none of the mentioned criteria was statistically significant (in all cases Kruskal–Wallis; $p > 0.05$).

Evaluation of favourite activities in public spaces (see *Table 7*).

Table 7. Evaluation of favourite activities in public spaces

Favourite activities in public spaces	Average value	Standard deviation	The smallest value	The greatest value
1. Walking	4,6	1,1	1,0	5,0
2. Running	3,6	1,7	1,0	5,0
3. A game of games	3,7	1,6	1,0	5,0
4. Riding bicycles, scooters, etc.	3,8	1,6	1,0	5,0

Source: own calculations.

The results of the analysis showed that the favourite activity of the research participants in public spaces is walking (4.6 ± 1.1 points), while the remaining activities: jogging (3.6 ± 1.7 points), playing various games (3.7 ± 1.6 points) and riding bicycles or scooters (3.8 ± 1.6 points) were promoted less often. Depending on gender (in both cases Mann–Whitney U; $p < 0.05$), while the intensity of running, playing, and riding bikes/scooters – depending on age group and level of education (in all cases Kruskal–Wallis; $p < 0.05$). It should be noted that respondents of different genders, ages, and educations walked in public city spaces with reliably similar efficiency (in all cases $p > 0.05$).

After analysing the results, it became clear that the residents of Elektrėnai rated all the selected criteria for adapting the public space of the city to wellness needs with very good and relatively similar scores: equipped sports equipment (4.8 ± 0.6 points), bicycle paths (4.9 ± 0.4 points) and parks (4.8 ± 0.8 points).

Table 8. Assessment of adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs in terms of gender, age, and education

Criteria for adaptation of public space to wellness needs	Gender		Age		Education	
	z value	p value	H value	p value	H value	p value
1. The city has sports equipment	-1,79	0,07	15,53	0,02	9,49	0,051
2. There are bicycle paths	-0,46	0,64	2,00	0,74	4,55	0,34
3. Parks	-2,38	0,02	8,65	0,07	19,92	0,008

Source: own calculations.

Adaptation of city parks to wellness needs was assessed by respondents of different genders (Mann–Whitney U; $p = 0.02$) and education (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.008$) with reliably different scores, while estimates of the adaptation of sports equipment installed in public spaces of the city to wellness needs varied depending on from the age of the interviewed persons (Kruskal–Wallis; $p = 0.02$).

Generalisation of adaptation of public spaces to wellness needs. The research found that residents like to be in public spaces, but the time spent in public spaces is spread out differently, many respondents answered that 1-2 hours a day is the time they spend in public spaces most often. It turned out that the favourite activity in the spaces was walking, which helps to keep people physically active. Regarding the development of public spaces, the majority believe that the city has an improving infrastructure but the city must improve in the future, this approach allows us to assume that, regardless of the fact that it is understood as a periphery, Elektrėnai is a promising city. The research found that public spaces (parks, sports equipment, bike paths, etc.) provide an opportunity to live actively and have the opportunity to spend quality leisure time.

Conclusions

1. The priority of every city is to have well-organised public areas that provide benefits both to society and to each person who visits them. Public space is one of the places of social interaction where people communicate, do sports, play, etc. Public areas not only improve people's well-being, provide a sense of peace, and allow them to get away from worries or even everyday troubles, but also improve psychological and physical well-being. Every well-developed public space provides many multi-functional benefits – social and economic benefits are the most important to support the proper urban infrastructure that shapes the image of the city.

2. To summarise, the aspects of legal regulation of the process of adaptation of public spaces for the wellness of urban society, it is important that should be ensured the rights of individuals to a wellness and safe environment at national and international levels. The legal aspects of the adaptation of public spaces to the wellness of the urban community are mainly guided at the national level by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania and the Law on Local Self-Government, as well as by Government resolutions and other legal documents.

3. Wellness, quality of life, and physical activity are closely related factors. Human wellness is one of the main and most popular problems of life, which every person must protect and constantly nurture. Maintaining physical activity is important for every person. One of the most important factors that help maintain a positive state of wellness is public space. Wellness and public space are inseparable. Green natural areas provide many psychological and physical benefits: they provide an opportunity to promote physical activity, actively spend free time, and help improve emotional state.

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VIEŠOSIOS ERDVĖS PRITAIKYMAS: PERIFERINĖS MIESTO BENDRUOMENĖS SVEIKATINGUMO ATVEJIS

Biruta Švagzdiene, Dalia Perkumiene, Urtė Petraškaite, Artūras Simanavičius

SANTRAUKA

Pagrindinė straipsnyje išplėtotą mintis yra tokia, kad užuot bandę įrodyti, kad viešoji erdvė Europoje egzistuoja arba, priešingai, kad viešoji erdvė ar viešosios erdvės dar nesuformuotos, turėtume žvelgti į Europą kaip į daugialypių tinklų visumą. Regioninių skirtumų tema pritaikant viešąsias erdves sveikatingumo poreikiams išties aptinkama mokslo darbuose, tačiau iki šiol ji nebuvo pristatyta periferinio regiono kontekste. Šis mokslinis straipsnis išsiskiria iš kitų tuo, kad juo siekiama į viešųjų erdvių pritaikymą sveikatingumo poreikiams periferijoje pažvelgti plačiau – kompleksiskai, suvokiant ir tiriant išsidėsčiusių veiksmų įtakos zonas miesto teritorijoje pačių gyventojų požiūriu. Tikslas – įvertinti viešosios erdvės pritaikymą periferinės miesto bendruomenės gerovei. Uždaviniai: atskleisti viešųjų erdvių pritaikymo sveikatingumo poreikiams teorinę koncepciją; apžvelgti teisės aktus; išanalizuoti viešosios erdvės pritaikymą sveikatinimui periferiniame mieste pačių gyventojų požiūriu. Objektas – viešųjų erdvių pritaikymas sveikatingumo poreikiams. Metodai: literatūros ir statistinių duomenų analizė, apklausa (anketa). Išvados: kiekvieno miesto prioritetas – turėti gerai sutvarkytas viešąsias erdves, kurios teikia naudą ir visuomenei, ir kiekvienam jose apsilankančiam žmogui. Viešoji erdvė yra viena iš socialinio bendravimo vietų, kur žmonės bendrauja, sportuoja, žaidžia ir pan. Viešosios erdvės gerina psichologinę ir fizinę savijautą, suteikia ramybės jausmą, leidžia pabėgti nuo rūpesčių. Kiekviena gerai išvystyta viešoji erdvė suteikia įvairios naudos – socialinę ir ekonominę naudą yra esminė norint išlaikyti tinkamą miesto infrastruktūrą, formuojančią miesto įvaizdį. Sveikata, gyvenimo kokybė ir fizinis aktyvumas yra glaudžiai susiję veiksniai. Žmogaus sveikata – viena pagrindinių ir populiariausių gyvenimo problemų, ir kiekvienas turi ją saugoti bei nuolat puoselėti. Fizinio aktyvumo palaikymas yra svarbus visiems. Elektronuose viešosios erdvės suteikia ekonominę ir socialinę naudą miestui ir jo gyventojams – skatina aktyvų turizmą mieste. Tai labai svarbu ekonominiams ir socialiniams miesto augimui, skatinant sveikatingumą, fizinį aktyvumą, vaikų raidą. Šie veiksniai yra itin reikšmingi kiekvienos bendruomenės psichologinei ir fizinei gerovei.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: viešoji erdvė; teisė į sveikinimą ir saugią aplinką.