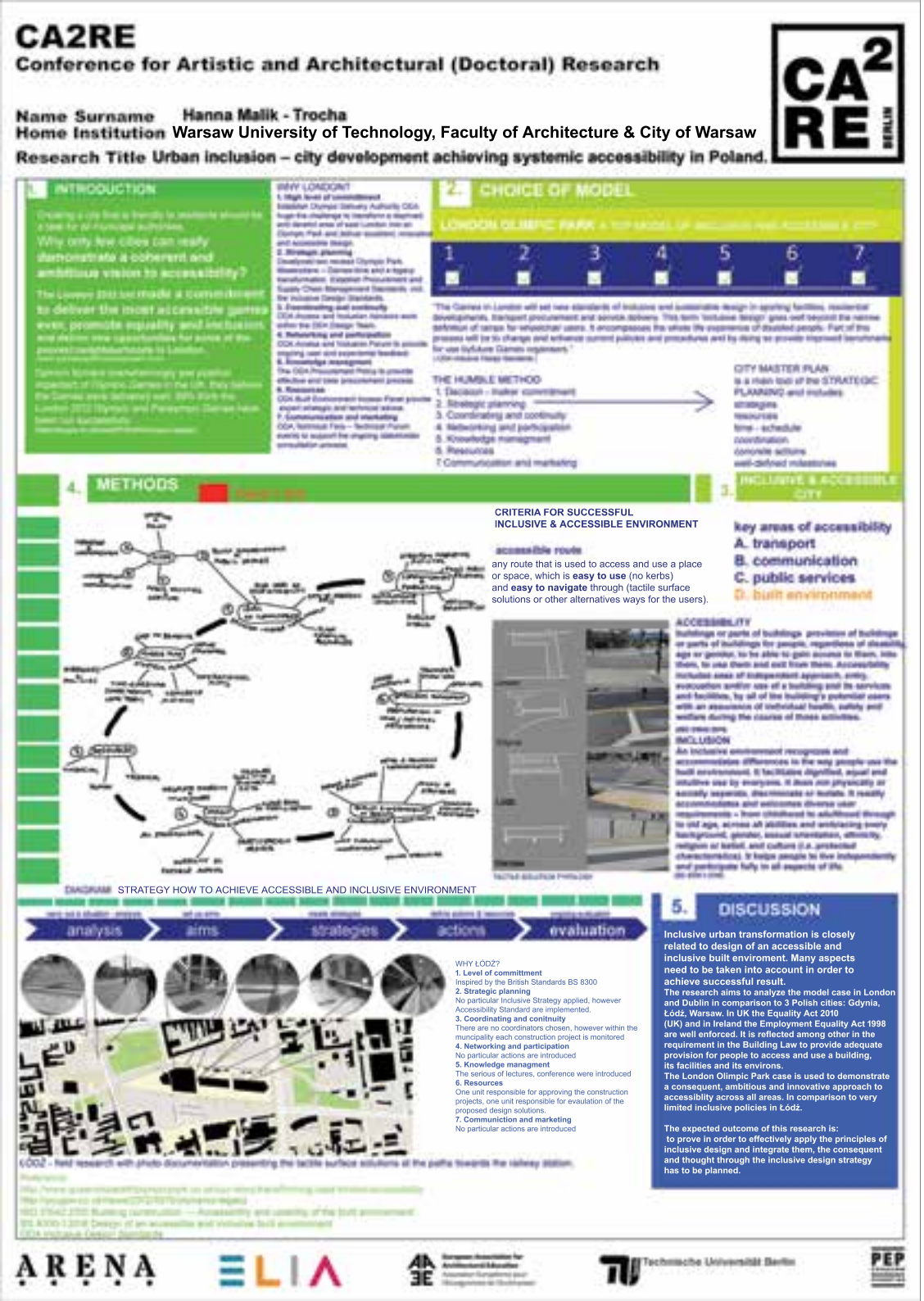

Hanna Malik-Trocha

Urban Inclusion – City Development Achieving Systemic Accessibility in Poland.

Europe is now essentially an urban community, four out of five EU citizens live in cities. Our cities are becoming more and more congested but at the same time, we strive for more inclusive cities. How to achieve systematic accessible urban intervention that leads to a high quality of environments, spaces, objects, buildings? Could a possible impact of socio–spatial interventions address a new challenge, especially to satisfy needs of users? Inclusion is one of the general objectives for urban policies as it promotes creating inclusive spaces that everyone is able to engage with, regardless of their abilities. The aim of this research is to examine the concept of inclusive urban design and formulate a set of conditions towards systemic, strategic and effective accessibility of urban space in Poland. Hospitality, inclusiveness, accessibility, “open to all”, can contribute to urban interventions and indeed play a crucial role in urban public spaces. “Design for All” cannot be achieved overnight, it is a continuous process, and the different stakeholders must work together.

For a better understanding of the processes of creating, implementing the universal principles I monitored three Polish cities: Gdynia, Warsaw, and Łódź. In order to improve the accessibility and due to the inconsistent and insufficient national regulations, these cities had to implement own accessibility standards. My analysis suggests that not only the legal policies are necessary but also complex approach, consistent systemic way of implementing the principles of universal design. While carrying the research I used the following research methods: correlation research, field research, photographs; case studies; interviews. The interviews are structured within the Humble method, authors Francesco Aragall and Jordi Montany based on seven interdependent success factors. The concept of “open for all” can be seen as the ability to open up to the users and hear their issues. The important research questions is: What are the urban policies that are more open to the voices of citizens and the end users? In the next research phase the case studies from municipalities such as London, Dublin will be taken into the research.