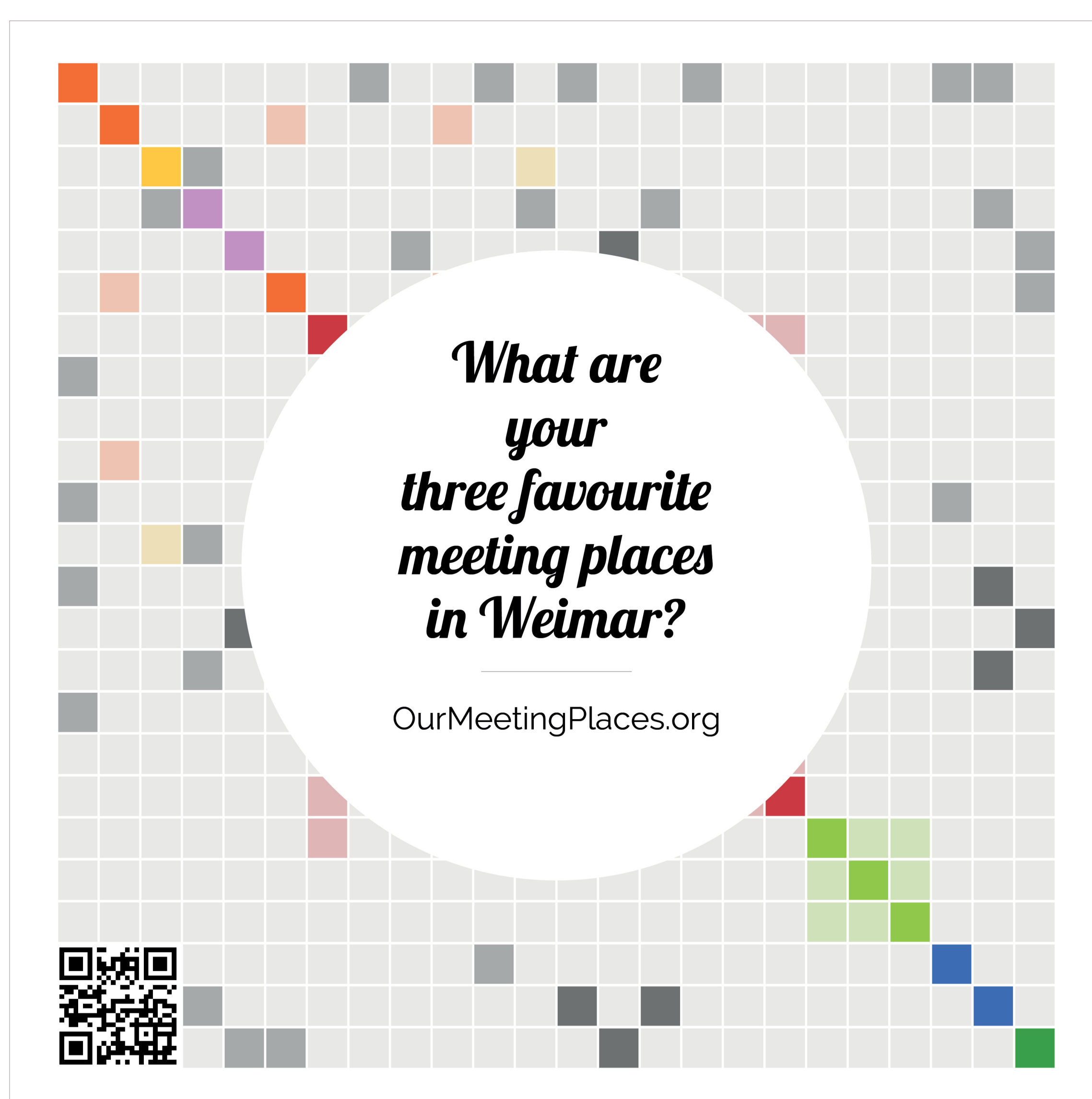


The Architecture of Meeting Places



Informative poster for public space

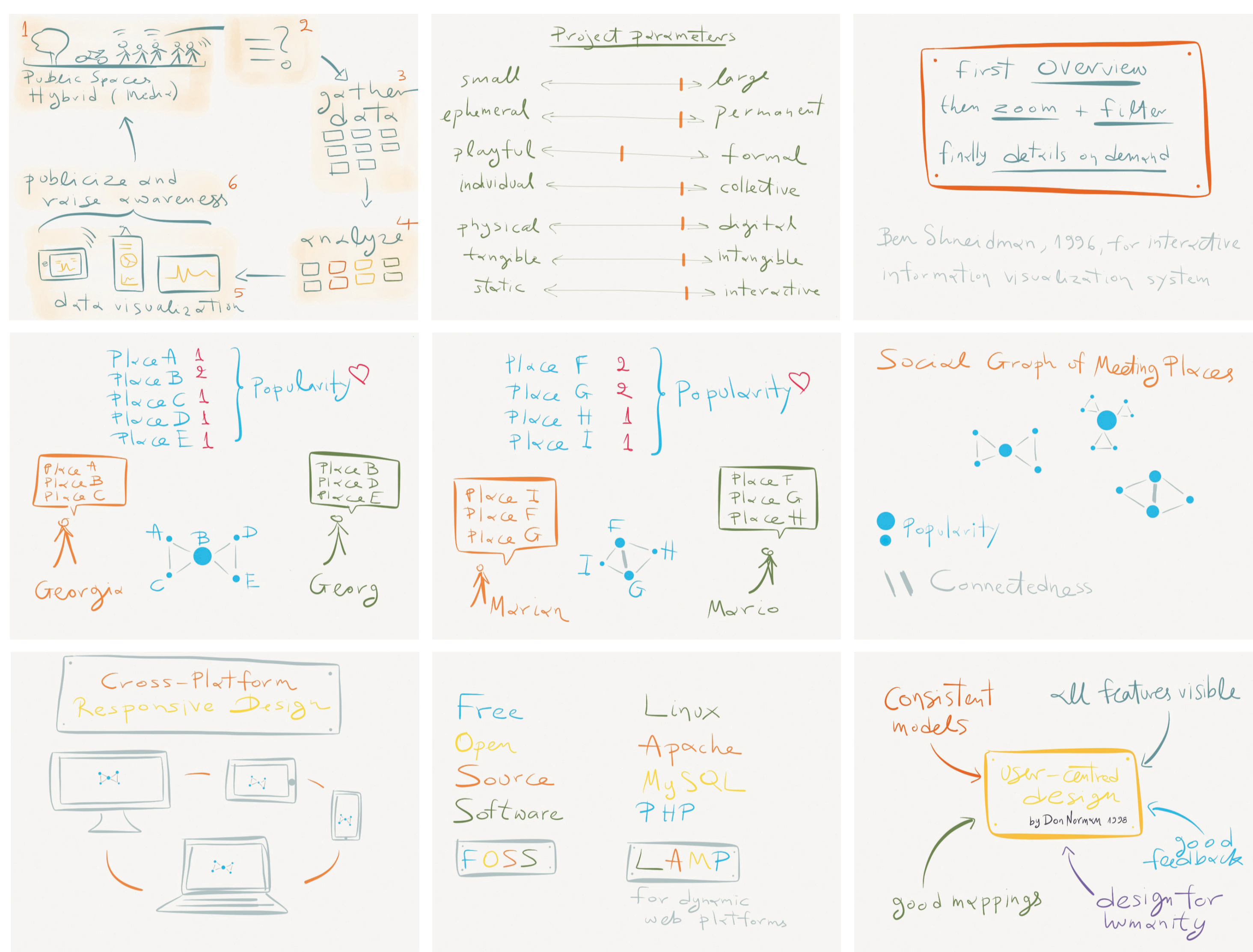
Interactive visual representations of social and spatial relations

This master thesis is inspired by the works of Lynch, Milgram, Jodelet, Whyte on social and spatial representations and approaches meeting places and urban space through the concepts of Lefebvre, Joseph, Simmel, Oldenburg, McQuire and Wood. The scope of this master thesis is to enable both qualitative and quantitative exploration of meeting places. The expectation is that statistical analysis would support a cognitive understanding of socio-spatial relations, while interactive visual representations would enhance a participatory narrative of individual stories and create a collective image of the city. Interactive visualization as research practice provides the opportunity to share interdisciplinary research in other forms beyond the written word.

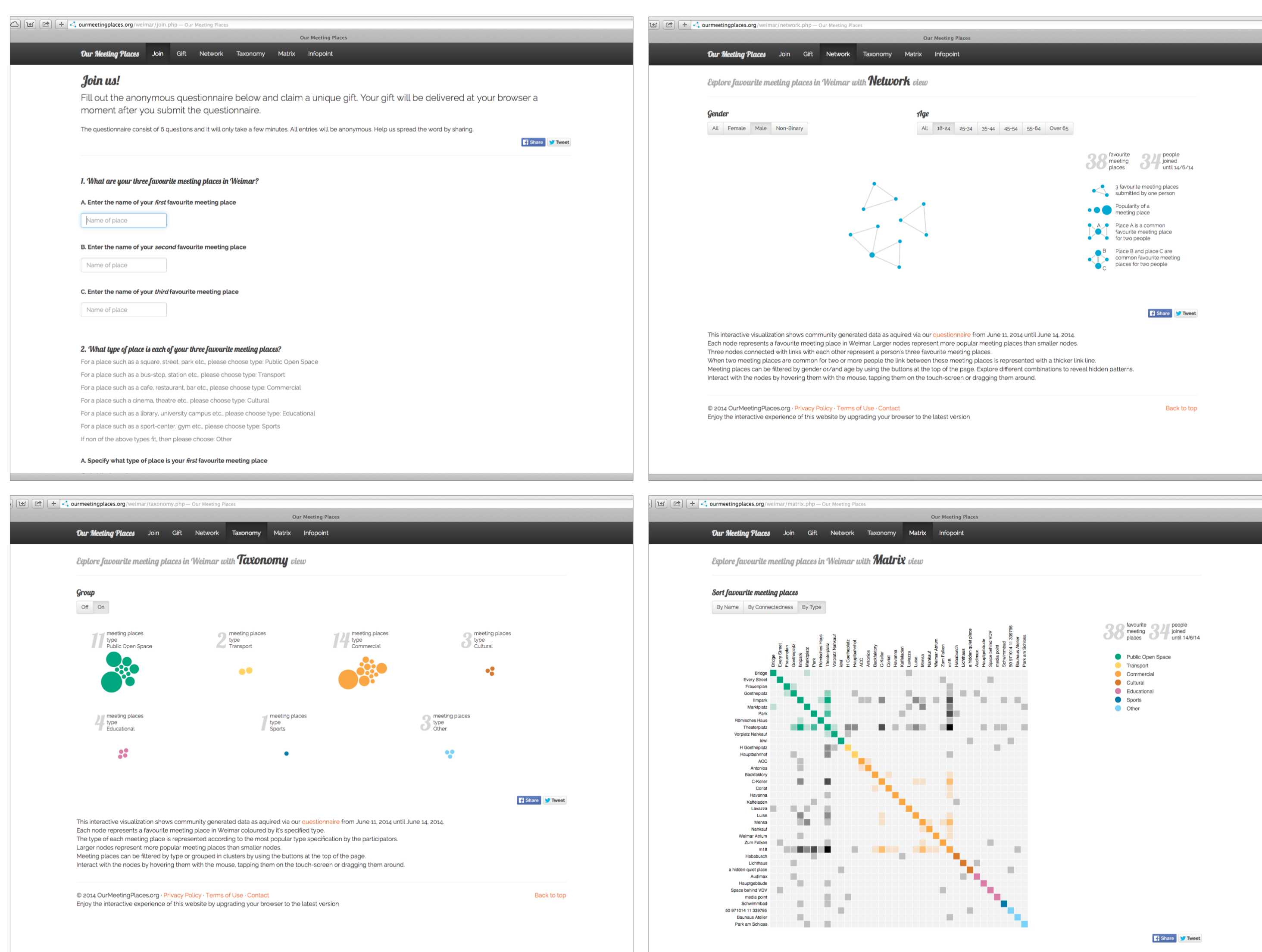
To fulfill this scope, Our Meeting Places web platform was developed as prototype and the city of Weimar was chosen as case study. OurMeetingPlaces.org is a web platform with integrated data collection, which mission is to acquire and visually represent favourite meeting places. The platform was launched on June 11, 2014 and is available at www.ourmeetingplaces.org.

The concept of Our Meeting Places is based on six distinct elements that combined create an endless circle of events and outcomes. First element is the audience, the community in urban context; second element is the questions addressed to the community via a questionnaire; third element is the collection of all the individual answers, or data; fourth element is the mining (structuring) of the acquired data; fifth element is the interactive visual representations of the data; and sixth element is the publication of the visualizations to the audience. The concept of Our Meeting Places is inspired by the concept of the architecture machine by Nicholas Negroponte, where the intuitive man-machine dialogue could achieve a common goal.

For the realisation of Our Meeting Places and for the platform to be accessible to a broader audience, a number of design principles were considered and followed, such as: graphical excellence and graphical integrity, use of free and open-source software for creating dynamic web platforms, W3C content accessibility standards, cross-platform accessibility, responsive design, colour palette for people with and without colour vision deficiency, user-centred design.



Sketches on concept and design



Screenshot images of prototype platform: www.ourmeetingplaces.org

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