

SURVEYS AS AWARENESS TOOL IN GDANSK, POLAND



Foto: Wojciech Lemonski

Surveys as Awareness Tools in Gdansk

Problem description

The city of Gdansk is one of the biggest and fastest developing cities in Poland. It is an area, where the rapid increase in the number of cars within the last 10 years is becoming more and more tangible. Most cities in Poland cannot deal with these arising problems, even though their citizens expect it and complain about the incompetent municipal authorities or bad public transport system. Campaigns promoting public transportation are organised sporadically. In Gdansk the transportation problems have only just become annoying. Therefore, it is high time to start some actions which would help solve these problems, not only from the infrastructural point of view, but also with regard to the attitudes and behaviour of the population, which affect the municipal transport system considerably.

There is a document: **Strategy of City of Gdańsk 2010** where transportation issues are emphasized. It has been forecasted that the number of means of transport in Gdansk will increase (35% cars) as well as the traffic in general. Therefore the main aim of Gdansk transportation policy is to constantly create conditions for efficient, environment friendly and safe transport. It is also very important to increase the quality of traveling within the city and outside the city. It has been written that the transportation policy of Gdańsk will be made under sustainable development priority (eco-development).

Description of the campaign / measure

The objective is to **raise basic awareness of the traffic problem and the role the citizens play themselves by using a survey as instrument for awareness raising**. Additional to that the interviewer had the possibility to get in contact with the citizens and provide some information. The selection of interviewees/campaign addressees focuses on families, as families with school-age children are an important target group – they see their car or cars as a medium inevitable for their mobility – and this behaviour also influences the attitude of their children.

First Step

The first step of the Gdańsk campaign after making contacts in a city council and setting up the frames for the activities was cooperation with a local school located in Orunia Górna (Zespół Kształcenia nr 6). ASM contacted ecology teacher Mrs. Wiesława Roszak who organised a competition among school children for the best work dealing with transportation problems in Gdańsk. As a result, a variety of drawings, rhymes and slogans was gathered. On the basis of this work the campaign materials were printed: leaflet, stickers and mug pad.

Second Step

The second step of the project was conducting a survey. The interviewers and the questionnaire were focused on transport-related behaviour, motives and questions concerning the general traffic situation. The housing estate selected for the research project is relatively new: Orunia Górna, in which

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transportation infrastructure has not been completely formed yet. This housing estate is inhabited by a large number of families with school-age children; it is an important group, as they regard a car as an unavoidable means of transportation and their behaviour influences the attitudes of their children. In order to reach this group promotional materials were prepared, concerning patterns of transport-related behaviour of adolescent and school-age children as well as threats to the children's health.

The research project was conducted in the area of Orunia Górna district. 772 questionnaires were filled out, including:

- 505 were collected during a field survey involving interviewers between the 28th of May 2004 and the 3rd of June 2004.
- 267 were collected with the help of a teacher and the students of Primary and Secondary Education School no. 6 between the 28th of May and the 24th of June 2004, mainly among parents of school-age children.

In exchange for a completed questionnaire the respondents received a leaflet, two adhesive labels and a plate (a pad) to put a mug on. These materials were designed on the basis of the projects of children from the Primary and Secondary Education School no. 6. Those small gifts allowed the respondents to remember the completing of questionnaires in a nice way, while their nature reminded of positive aspects of using the city's public transportation and the dangers caused by congestion of streets with cars.

Third Step

The City Council found the survey results very interesting, so they decided to enter and continue the campaign. They printed another part of questionnaires and conducted the survey on their own among people living in another district of Gdańsk: Chełm. There were 502 full questionnaires filled and even more people were contacted. Interviews took place on the bus stops as well as on the streets of the district. As in the previous survey interviewees received materials promoting public transport means. ASM helped to analyse the data using professional software and prepared additional report which included also comparison of the results.

Forth Step

The results of the survey were presented both to citizens and local government. The main results were printed in big format and hung in and outside Orunia Górna school. The report was also sent to local website administrator. The website deals with problems of Orunia Górna and Chełm inhabitants.

Another activity was a workshop for City Council. Two presentations took place in a city hall. One accompanied a session concerning public transport and the other a session concerning municipal economy. Both presentations took place the 23rd of November 2004 and along with the results of the survey and survey description a proposal concerning future plans for public transport policy was presented.

City Council was very satisfied and the demonstration also convinced them that such actions are fruitful and well evaluated by citizens.



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Who is the driving force behind it? Who is the beneficiary?

The campaign initiator is ASM company who asked the **Gdansk City Council** for cooperation. They agreed with enthusiasm and presented work done so far also under the TAPESTRY project. City Council officers helped to create the questionnaire and indicated the districts where young families with young children lived. One of the indicated districts was Orunia Górna where ASM decided to operate. Moreover, the City Council repeated the surveying action by themselves in another district: Chełm. A **local school** was contacted and asked for help as well. The ecology teacher cooperated with ASM very closely, working with children, who undertook to reach their parents with the questionnaire and campaign slogans.

The beneficiaries are mostly the inhabitants of two big Gdansk districts: Orunia Górna and Chełm, but also the City Council can be considered as a beneficiary party.

Main slogan / statement

There wasn't just one main slogan. The materials given to respondents contained various texts worked out by local children (the text followed the drawings).

Results

The conducted questionnaire research project showed that in general the public transportation in Gdansk is evaluated rather positively by the residents of Orunia Górna as well as Chełm. However, it is less popular among young people who have children and own a car. This indicates that in future, when the local community grows wealthier, use of public transport will probably become less frequent. This situation is certainly going to occur if use of private means of transport turns out to be more advantageous than travelling by bus or tram.

Talks with the representatives of agencies responsible for the city's public transportation also indicate that at present the transport-related problem in Gdansk is not connected with lack of customers, but with insufficient funds of the transportation establishment. The shortage of financial means does not allow the city to expand, modernise, or even renovate the rolling stock adequately, and thereby increase the frequency of connections, the number of routes, and improve the comfort of ride. Public transport in the city is an unprofitable business, and despite a large number of customers the city has to provide additional funds to cover the loss.

At the same time, both parties have noticed the heavy congestion of streets in Gdansk, caused both by the increasing number of vehicles and the hardly adequate development of road infrastructure, which cannot cope with the problem. It is highly possible that in several years the authorities of Gdansk will be forced to make the drastic decision of restricting the traffic in the city centre (e.g. park&ride system) in order to make any traffic possible at all, and at the same time develop public transportation in this area.

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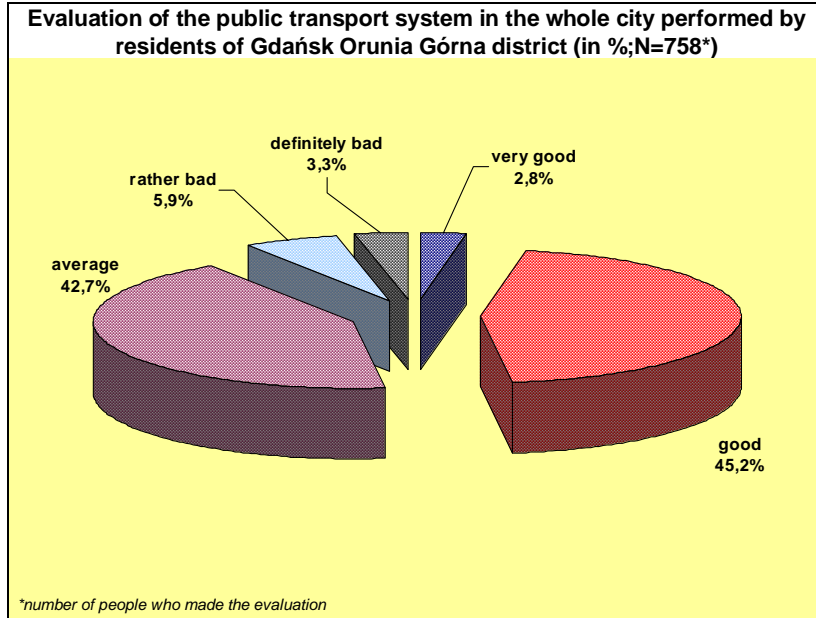


Figure 1: Evaluation of the Public Transport System. (Source: Step-by-Step research, ASM)

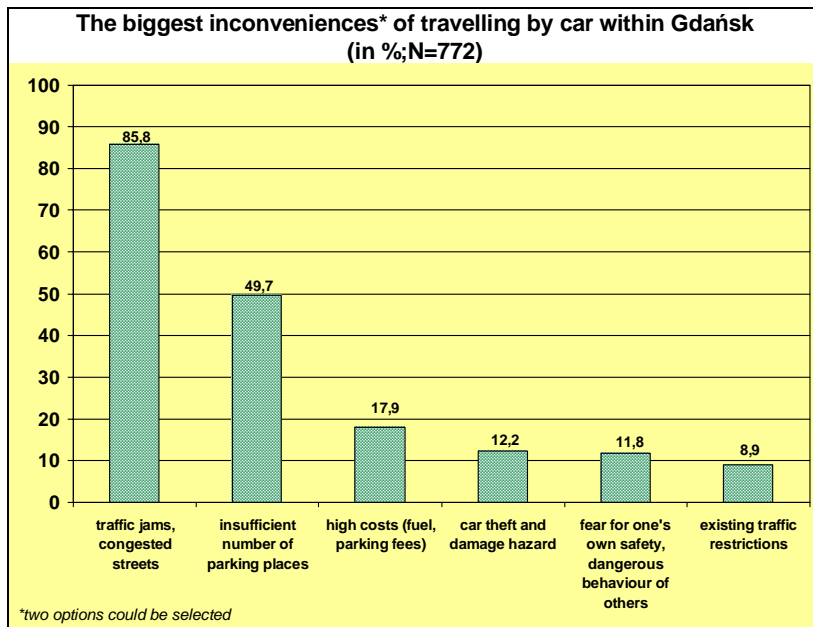


Figure 2: The biggest inconveniences of travelling by car. (Source: Step-by-Step research, ASM)

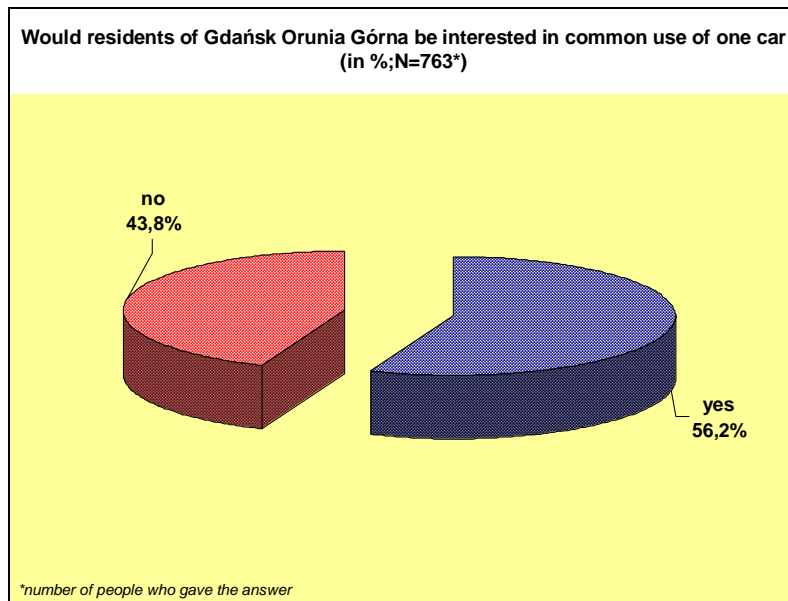


Figure 3: People interested in common use of car. (Source: Step-by-Step research, ASM)

Opportunities / barriers

Factors of influence and criteria of success

- Strategic partners in project should know exactly what the idea of the project is (tapestry approach) and they should be convinced about its possible results. It is important to define from the beginning what kind of support we expect.
- It is necessary to contact them very often to monitor progress of work.
- To make campaign more effective we should focus on restricted area chosen on the basis of clear criteria
- It is crucial for campaign aims to build the questionnaire in a way which allows transferring the idea of public transport and encourages positive thinking about this area
- Possibilities to convey personal feedback not only to the coordinator but also to other parties involved in the project should be provided
- Important part of receiving long term results is to make it possible to “take the idea home” by means of different kind of gadgets
- In order to create an atmosphere of something important for everyone it is recommended to involve a part of the target group (in this case: children) in the process of information/ promotional materials development
- It appeared that the second campaign was a good idea to make the effect stronger and it seems to be a beginning of a long term cooperation in this area
- In order to encourage people to get involved in the competition you should provide a prize

Possible barriers

- Cooperation with local authorities means that you must work according to very strict rules and this process may turn out to be time consuming
- Sometimes the project can be treated as a tool for another interest of local authorities so you have to be very careful about any declarations
- Working with schools means that you are obliged to have a permission, so again you are involved in a long decision-making process
- Using the internet as a communication platform is rather limited because of problems with access. Therefore an important part is working on a personal basis.
- Working in a limited area means that only local media will be interested in publications of results

Steps for implementation – Frequently asked questions

Working steps for introduction

1. *Analysis/Planning phase*
2. *Implementing*
3. *Evaluation/control*

Main steps

- Identification of need for public transport promotion
- Problem definition – fast development of private transport
- Establishing campaign objectives
- Finding strategic partners (city council, local media, local school)
- Determining campaign design (concerning survey and information/promotional materials – school competition)
- Identifying information types and sources (target group, localisation etc.)
- Determining methods of accessing data and information transfer
- Designing data collection and information transfer forms
- Determining sample plan and size
- Data collection and information/promotional material distribution
- Quality control
- Data analysis
- Preparation and presentation of the final report
- Feedback gathering
- Second demonstration in Gdańsk-Chełm district at the request of City Council
- Dissemination/publication of results (workshop with local authorities)
- Recommendations/tips for future campaigns



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Time of implementation

Optimal time for implementation is at least 12 weeks.

Questions concerning the project

- What are the objectives of the Step by Step project?
- How and when did the project begin?
- What is the target group of this project?
- How will aims of Step by Step be put into practice?
- What is the theoretical basis of Step by Step project?
- What kind of results will it give?
- Where does the project's funding come from?
- What are the partners of the project?

Questions concerning the demonstration in Gdańsk

- Why did we choose Gdańsk?
- Why did we decide to make a campaign in Gdańsk-Orunia district?
- Who will be involved in this demonstration?
- What kind of activity will be the main point of the demonstration?
- Is this a part of City Council's project?
- Who will receive the results of the survey?
- Will the results of the survey be a basis for changes?

Information

You can get more information in Polish and English from ASM Centrum Badań i Analiz Rynku Sp. z o.o.

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On the part of the City Council the contact persons are:

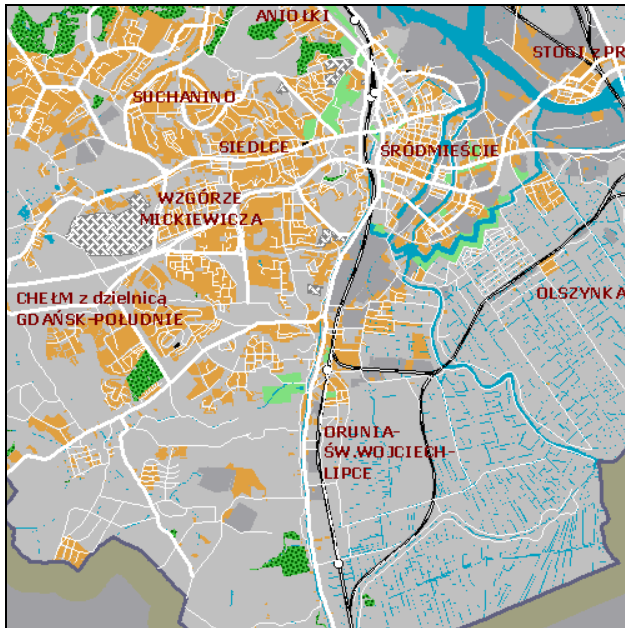
Marcin Dymarski (tel. 058 323 62 02, e-mail: m.dymarski@gdansk.gda.pl) and

Antoni Szczyt, Head of Public Transport Division.

Cost / Benefits

Costs of the campaign mostly cover the interview execution as well as materials printing. These are not very high amounts. The cost of printing 1000 sets of materials (leaflet, mug pads and stickers) is about 1000 euro. Cost of interview conducting depends on the method. Short face to face interview on the street in Poland is about 1 - 2 euro, including the cost of printing the questionnaire. More money

has to be spent for further data management and analyses. Anyway the contact with people is not very expensive and it seems that it's worth to be done. If we count that contact with one person costs 3 euro (including only materials and interview execution) it is equivalent to six public transport tickets, which means three days of going to work and back by public transport units. The benefits for environment and quality of life are incalculable.



Location of Orunia and Chełm districts in the city of Gdansk. (Source: Interactive Map of Gdansk www.gdansk.gda.pl)



Meeting at the City Council 23.11.2004 – presenting Step-by-Step results (photo: K.Świeżawska)

Link and or article for more information

More information can be obtained from the final report of the STEP BY STEP project which can be downloaded from the projects website: www.eu-stepbystep.org and www.asm-poland.com.pl.