

**TRANSPORT-RELATED
BEHAVIOUR OF
CITIZENS OF GDANSK
RESEARCH REPORT
(ORUNIA GÓRNA
DISTRICT)**

STEP-BY-STEP PROJECT

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Introduction

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.

The city is interested in the attitudes of its residents. The main way of expressing this interest is using a questionnaire survey, which the city will apply both as a promotional tool and as a part of a whole promotional campaign with the goal to increase the basic awareness with regard to the problems of traffic and the part which the residents play in it.

This report is the result of works connected with the Step-by-Step project. It is conducted within the Sixth Framework Programme financed by the European Commission. The purpose of this project is to carry out a demonstrational action aimed at developing the awareness of transportation problems and encouraging to use public transportation means as well as collective transportation. The action has been supported by the City Hall of Gdansk, Primary and Secondary Education School No. 6 as well as administrator of the internet service www.MojeOsiedle.pl

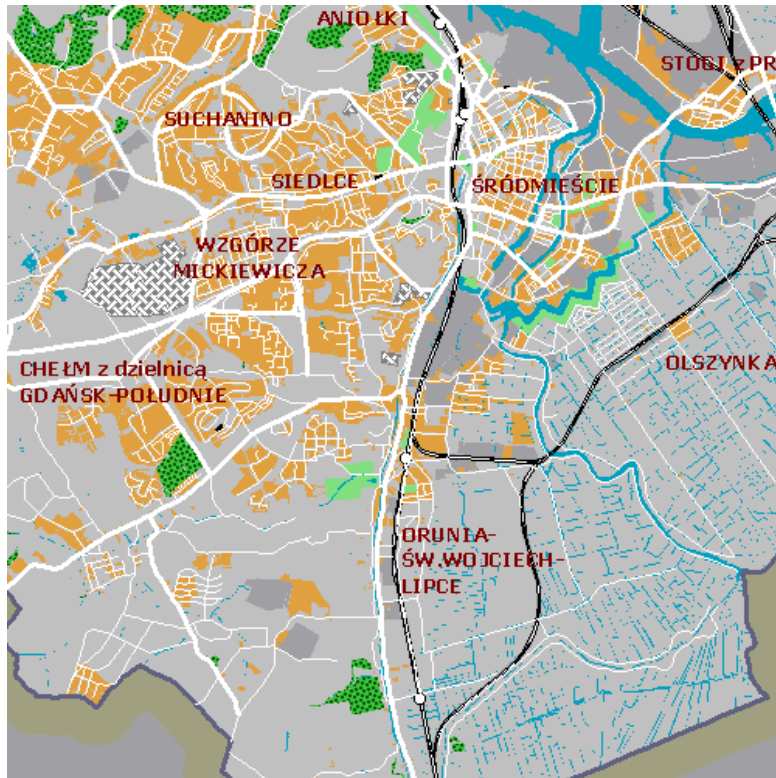
As such actions require some limitations in order to be effective, we chose one district: Gdansk Orunia. Beside promoting the use of collective transport system and ecological forms of transport (bicycle), the project including execution of a questionnaire survey.

This report presents the results of a survey concerning transport-related behaviour and attitudes of the citizens of Gdansk. 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, which transportation infrastructure has not been finally 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.

Interviews and feedback information from the respondents provides data and enables analyses, which can be used in future actions and campaigns promoting public transportation. Parents will understand more clearly how traffic causes pollution and results in lack of physical activity and how this in turn affects the health of their children and themselves. Some additional promotional actions and events will be conducted as well:

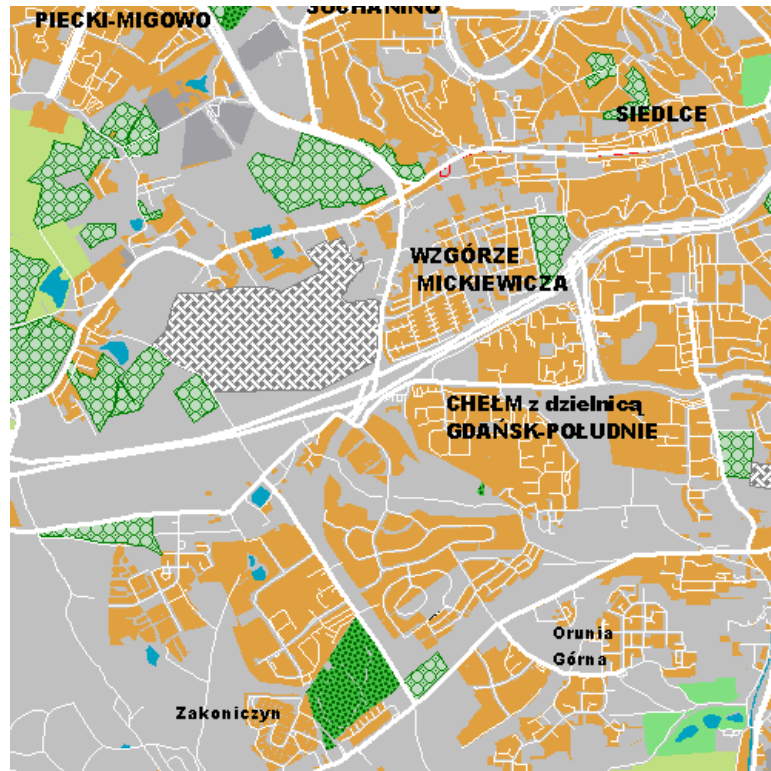
- Promotional events in big seats of local administration (e.g. the City Hall), in order to present the problem on a larger scale to the residents, families and employees in the centre of the city;
- Advertisement of public transportation means by way of local radio and TV network;
- Leaflets and other materials used during the research project and later.

Map 1. Location of Orunia district in the city of Gdansk



Source: Interactive Map of Gdansk www.gdansk.gda.pl

Map 2. Location of Orunia Górna in Gdansk.



Source: Interactive Map of Gdansk www.gdansk.gda.pl

General research results

This chapter contains the most general research results without differentiating between the answers according to the respondents' qualities. More detailed information is presented in the following chapter.

The interviewees were asked 18 specific questions (see the questionnaire in the appendix to the report). The questionnaire was divided into three blocks of questions:

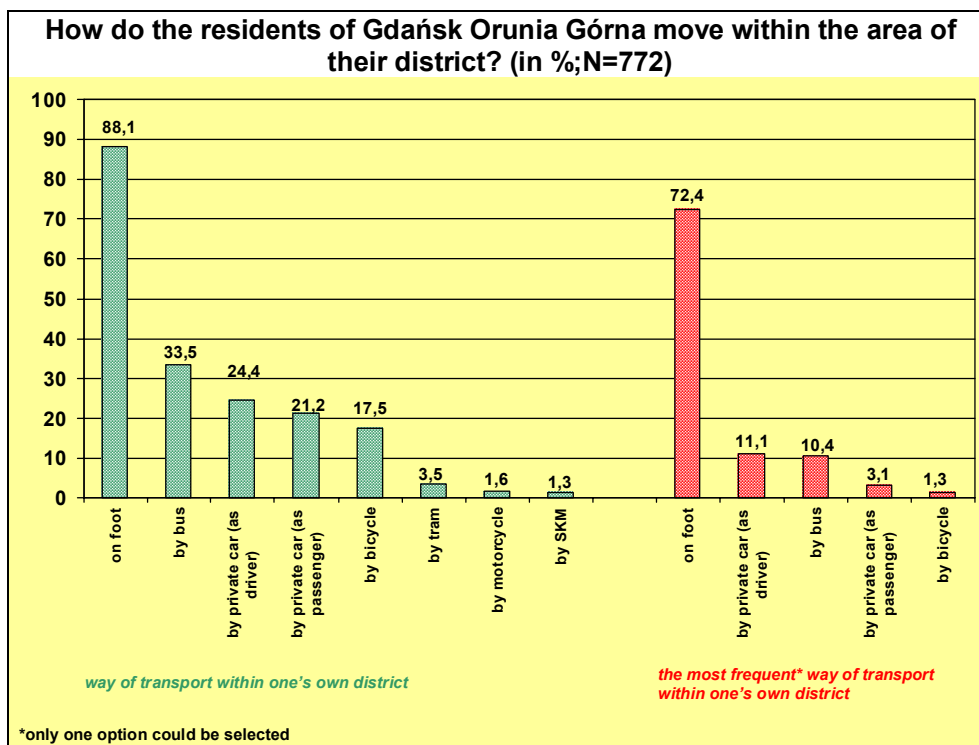
- Transport-related behaviour (5 questions)
- Attitudes towards public transportation (8 questions)
- Awareness of transport-related problems (5 questions)

Transport-related behaviour

At the very beginning information was collected on how the residents of the surveyed district move within the area closest to their place of residence and how within the entire city area (e.g. while going to work).

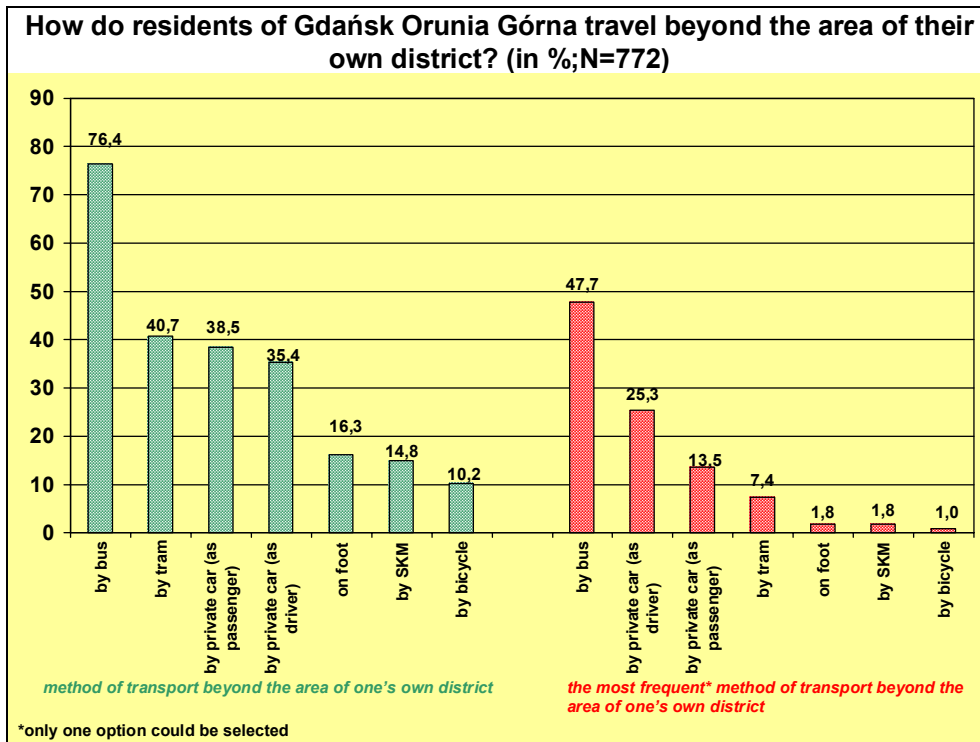
Almost 90% of the interviewed move within their district on foot, and for over 72% it is the most frequent method of travelling due to the fact that every place is within a short distance and that it is the fastest and healthiest method. One third of the respondents use a bus as a means of transportation within their own district, a considerable part use the car (24.4% as the driver, 21.2% as a passenger), stating comfort as the motive. Another popular means of transportation is bicycle (17.5%), although it is rarely treated as the main means of transportation. An interesting thing is that 3.5% of the respondents declared that they move within their district by tram, while none of the Gdansk tram routes runs through the district. Sporadically there were such answers as: by motorcycle, SKM (Fast City Railway - !), scooter, skateboard, moped, roller skates.

Chart 1



The question concerning methods of transport within the entire city area resulted in a slightly different structure of answers. Public transportation means turned out to be the most popular. Three quarters of the interviewed use buses (frequently motivating it with lack of possibility to travel by another means of transportation, convenient connections and lack of car), while over 40% use tramways. A considerable number moves within the city also by car: 38.5% as the driver, 35.4% and/or as a passenger, the cause being comfort and time of travelling. Bus was indicated as the most frequently used means of transportation by 47.7% of the respondents, distinctly outdistancing a private car: 38.8% (25.3% as the driver, 13.5% as a passenger). While indicating the most frequently used means of transport only three people gave arguments related to health and environment protection.

Chart 2



Respondents were also asked what percentage of those of their travels, which require some means of transport, are travels beyond the area of their own district. It appeared that this rate reaches over three quarters (76%) on the average.

Moreover, they were asked what percentage of their travels requiring the use of some means of transport are travels by public transportation means. The averaged answer was 50%.

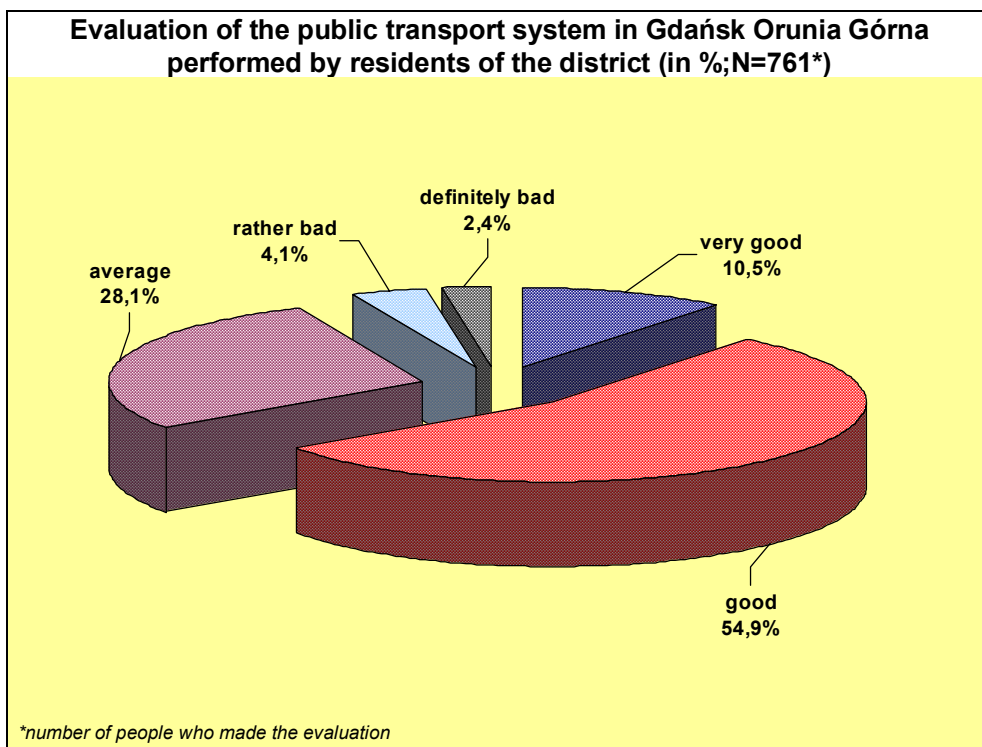
Attitudes towards public transportation and its evaluation

The results of the evaluation of public transportation in the district are not bad. Over 65% of the respondents claim that public transportation in the district functions well or very well. They supported their claim with its punctuality, frequency of runs, good connections, lack of other complaints.

28% of the interviewed were convinced that the level of transportation services is average. These people most often pointed out that the vehicles are crowded, but also that there are delays and the runs are not frequent enough.

Only 6.5% made a negative evaluation. It was based on the overcrowding of the vehicles, too low frequency of the runs, too small number of routes, dirtiness, neglect, bad technical condition of the vehicles, high prices, as well as bad smell and lack of air conditioning.

Chart 3



The evaluation of the public transportation in the whole city however was not so good, though still positive. 48% of the respondents evaluated it as good or very good, 42.7% stated that the level of the transportation service is average, whereas 9.2% assessed it negatively. Reasons given for the evaluation were similar to those specified in the case of transportation within the district.

The two evaluations are compared in one of the charts below.

Chart 4

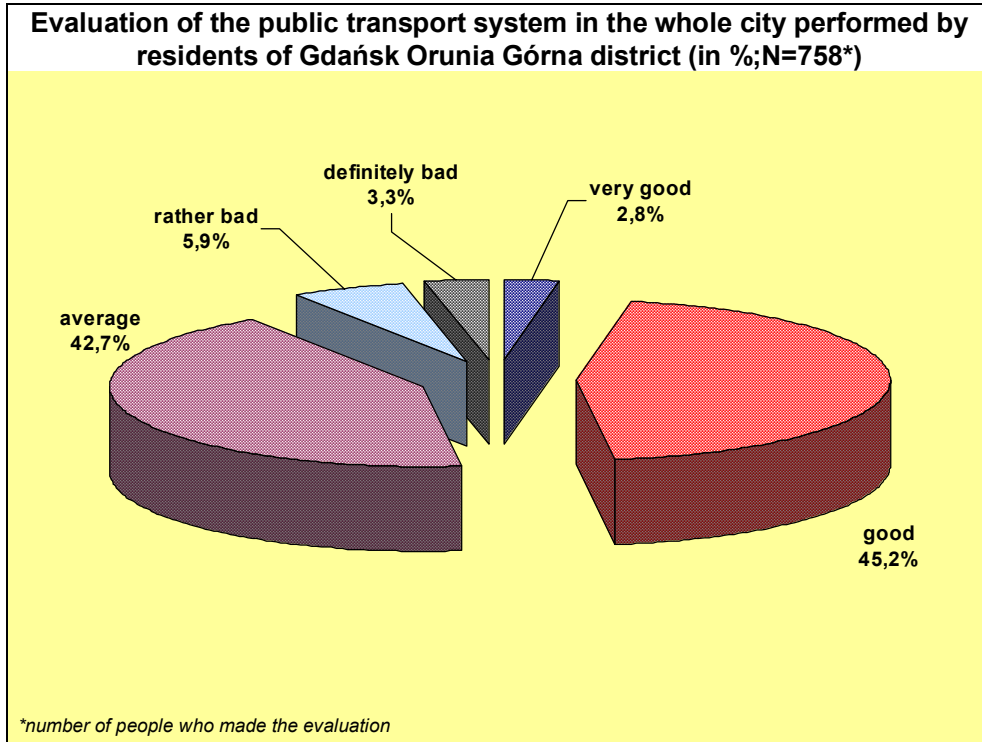
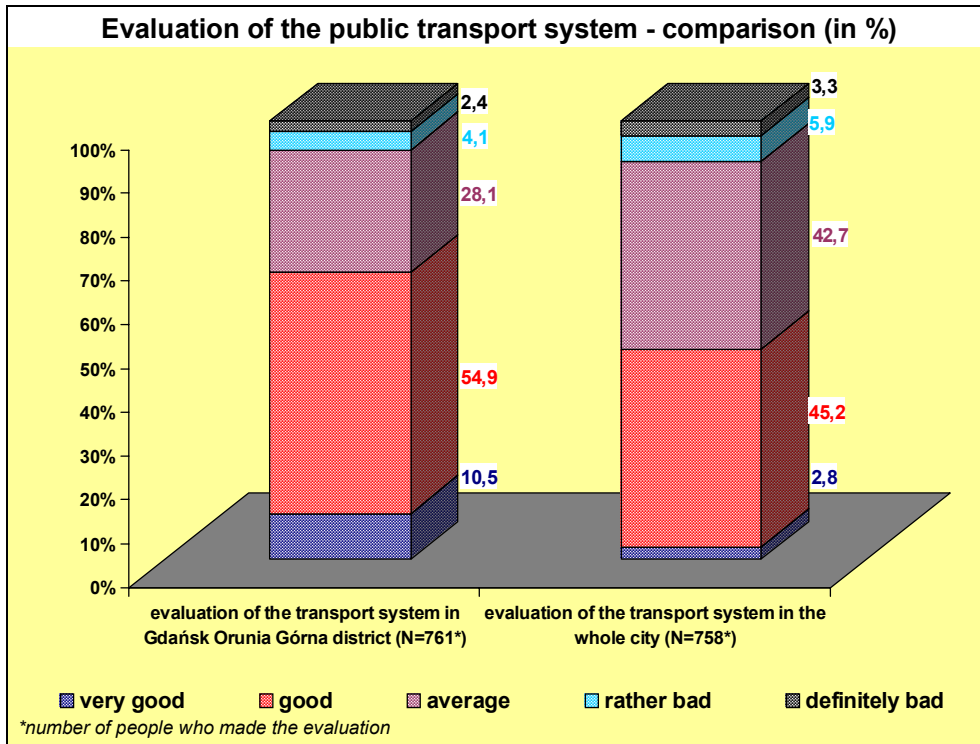
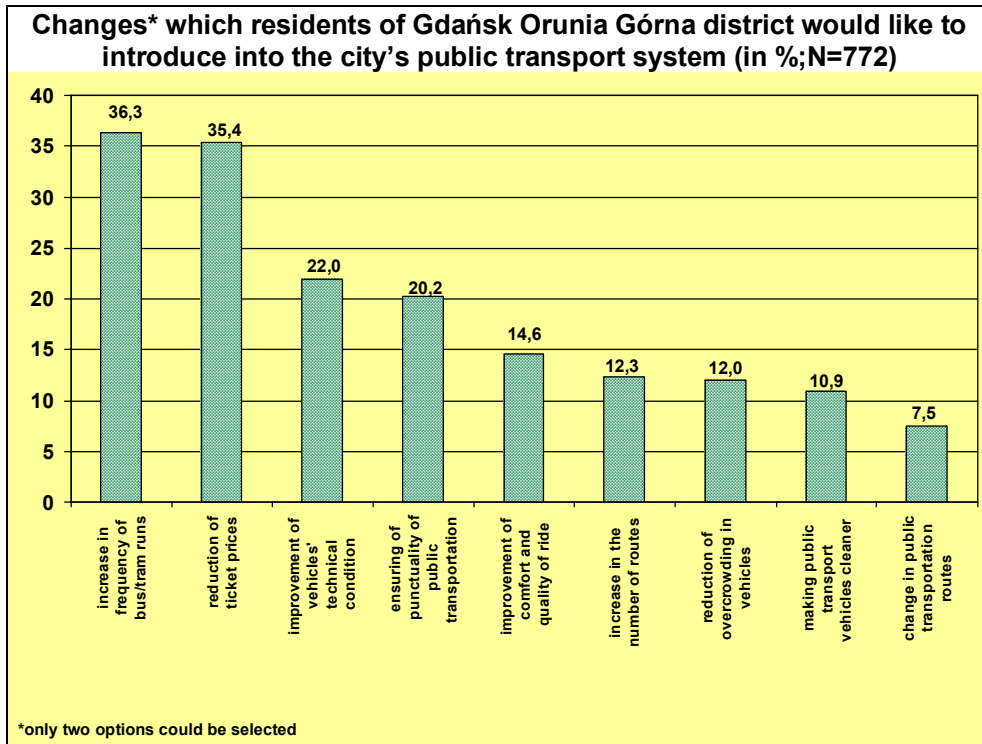


Chart 5



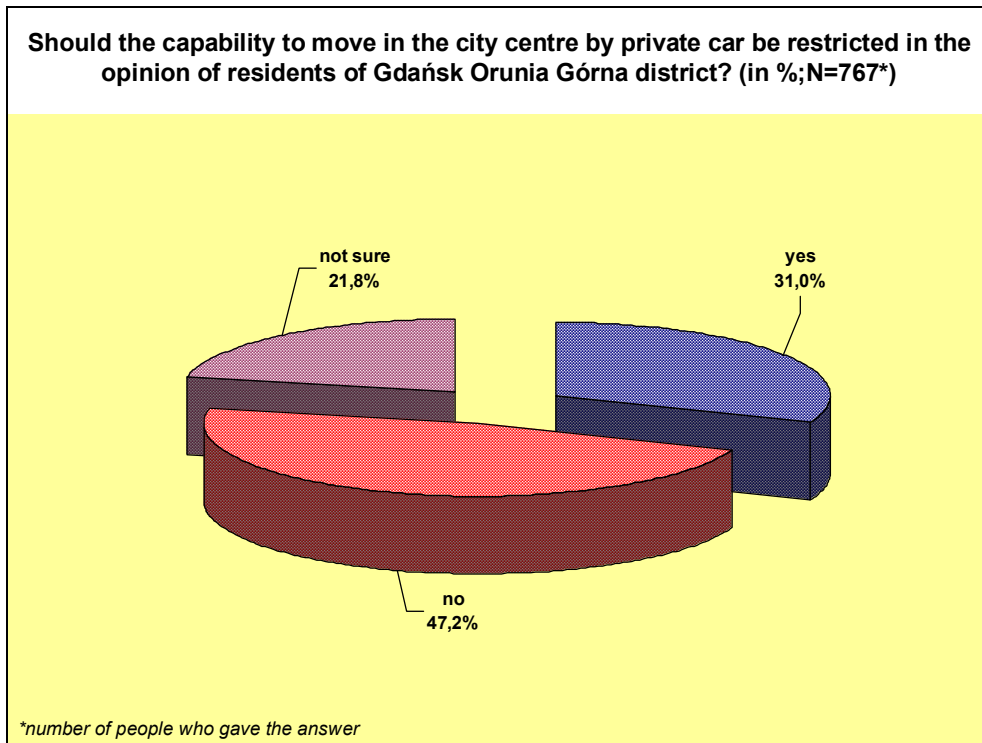
The questionnaire included suggestions of changes, which could be introduced into the public transport system. The most popular suggestion turned out to be reduction of ticket prices (35.4%), and following it: improvement of the vehicles' technical condition (22%), ensuring of punctuality (20.2%), improvement of comfort and quality of the ride (14.6%). Respondents also thought it necessary to increase the number of routes (12.3%), reduce overcrowding in the vehicles (12%), make the vehicles cleaner (10.9%). 7.5% of the interviewed suggested the need to change the routes; the most frequently mentioned proposal was to increase the number of connections in the direction of Chełm. The respondents also had a possibility to make their own suggestions with regard to changes in the transport system. As it turned out, six people spontaneously declared that the drivers' manners and appearance need improvement.

Chart 6



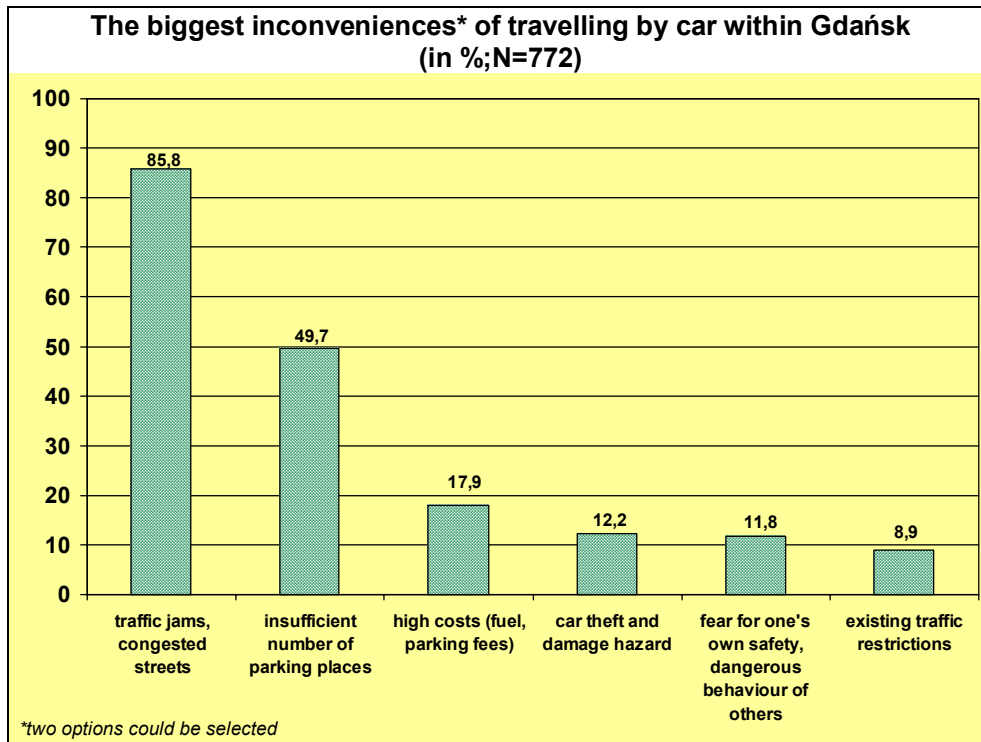
There was also a separate question if the respondents think that the capability to move in the city centre by means of private car should be restricted. Opinions in this respect differed: the biggest fraction (47.2%) stated that there is no such necessity, whereas 31% believed otherwise.

Chart 7



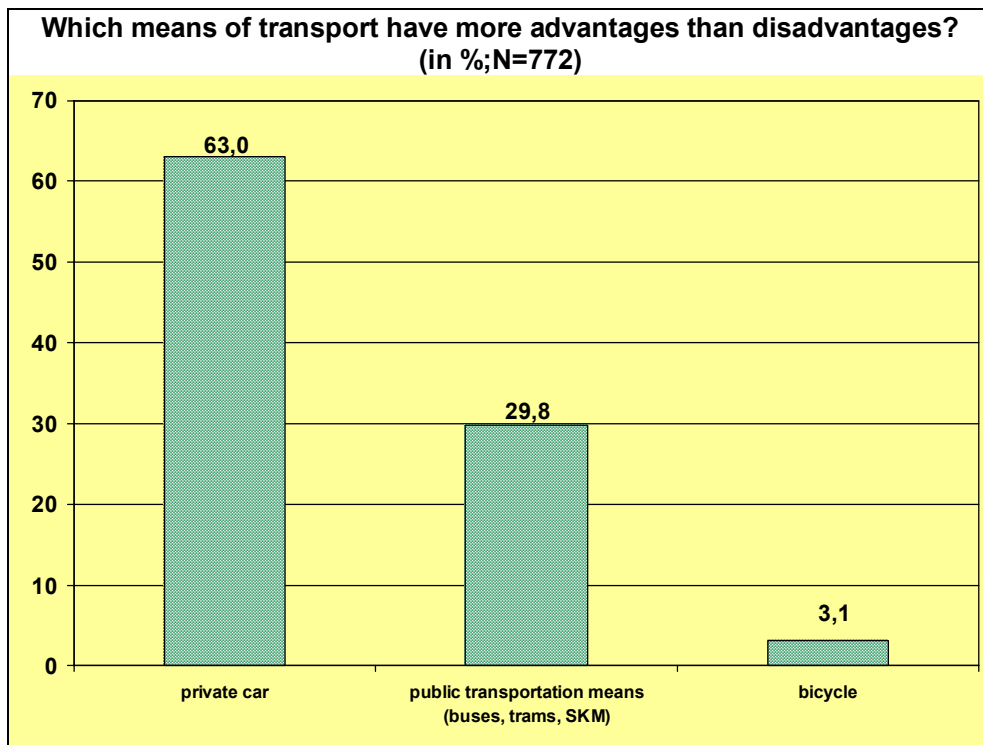
The citizens of Gdansk were asked what are the biggest inconveniences of travelling within Gdansk by private car. They were requested to choose no more than two from a list of six disadvantages. A definite majority (85.8%) indicated traffic jams and congested streets. Related to this is also insufficient number of parking places (49.7%). High costs (fuel, parking fees) come only third with a much lower rate of indications (17.9%). The car theft and damage hazard, fear for one's own safety, dangerous behaviour of others or existing traffic restrictions are regarded as the biggest inconveniences by no more than 13% of the respondents.

Chart 8



The most oppressive inconvenience for the respondents (congested streets) pertains as much to private cars as to buses, which run to Orunia Górna district. This certainly contributed to the belief of 63% of the respondents that a private car has more advantages than disadvantages in comparison with other means of transport. Only less than 30% indicated public transportation means (bus, tram, SKM - Fast City Railway). Over three per cent of respondents spontaneously mentioned bicycle as the best means of transport within the city. There were also some indications concerning moped, motorcycle, taxi, scooter, and even horse or private buses.

Chart 9



In some European countries it has become increasingly more popular to commonly use one car by several persons. There are information centres created for this purpose, where one can get in touch with people e.g. travelling to work in the same direction. The respondents were asked if they think that such idea could be successfully implemented in Poland and if they would be interested in such form of transport themselves.

It appeared that in the opinion of 60.4% of the interviewed residents of Gdansk such project could be successful and almost just as many of them (55.6%) would be interested in such form of travelling. Those who replied negatively to the first question, in most cases pointed out to the inappropriate character / mentality of Poles, who (in their opinion) are distrustful, egoistic, not able to communicate, etc. A lot less frequent were indications of technical reasons.

Chart 10

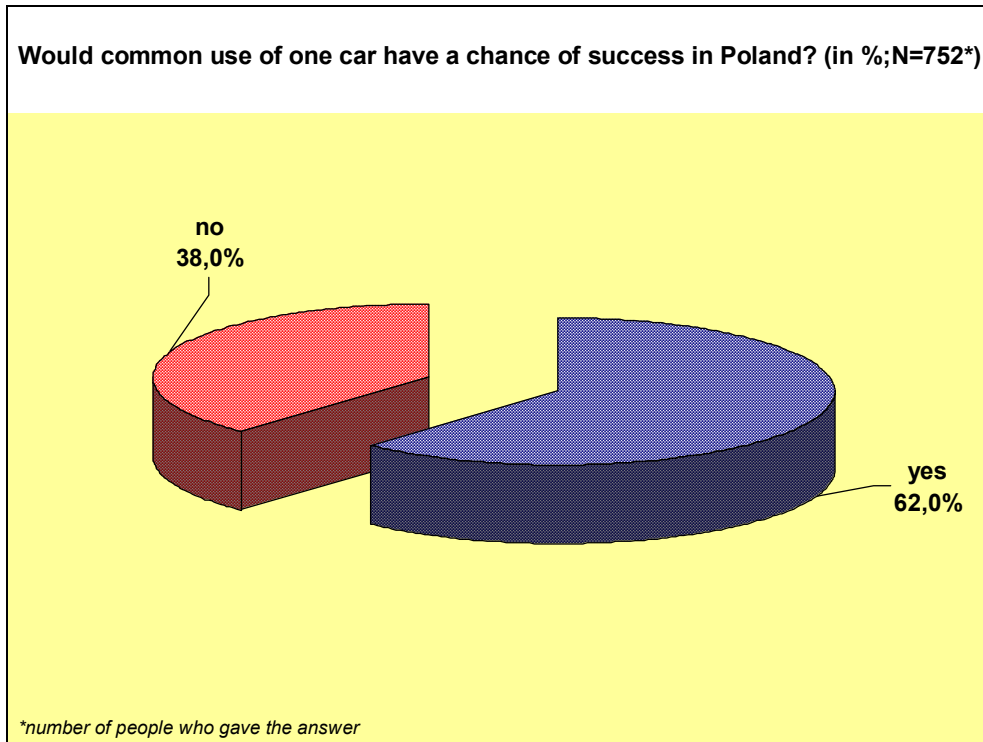
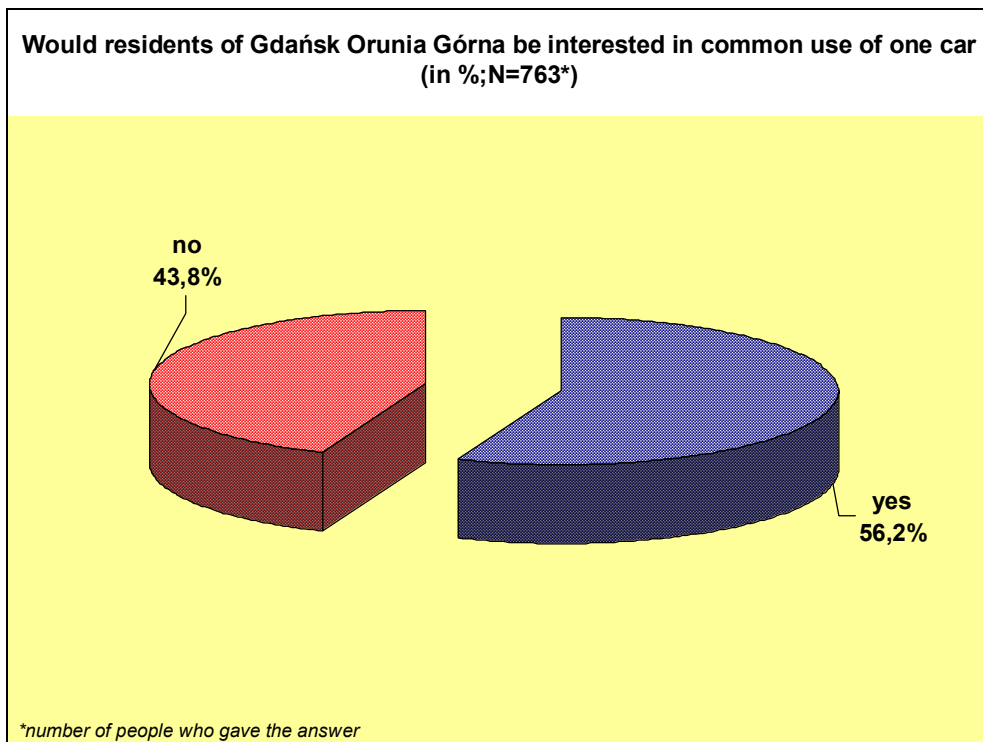


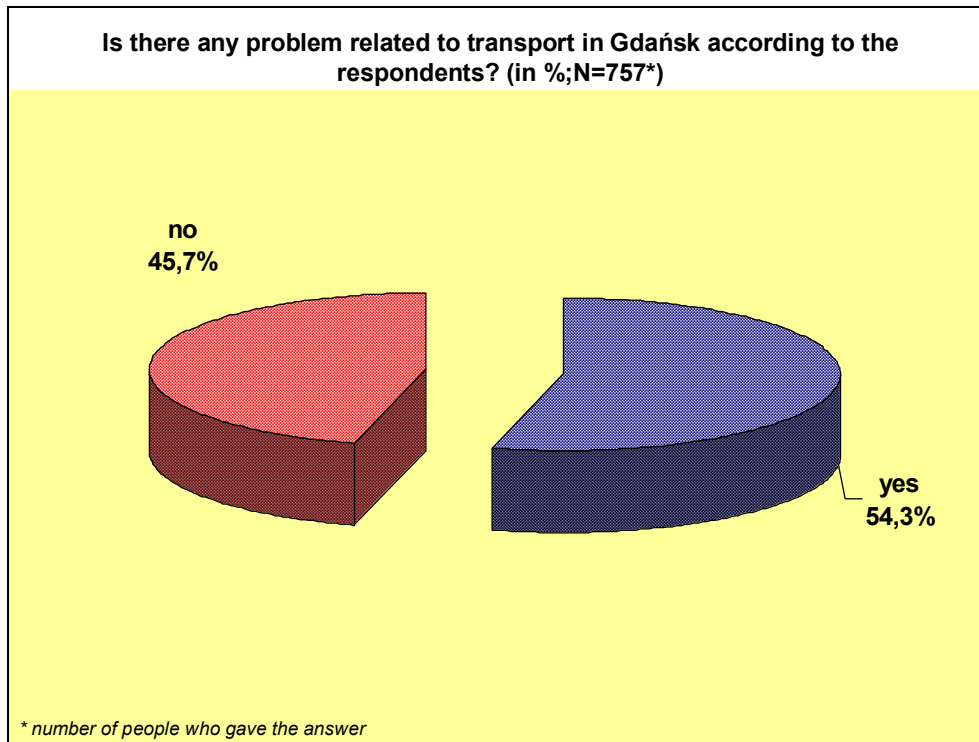
Chart 11



Awareness of transport-related problems

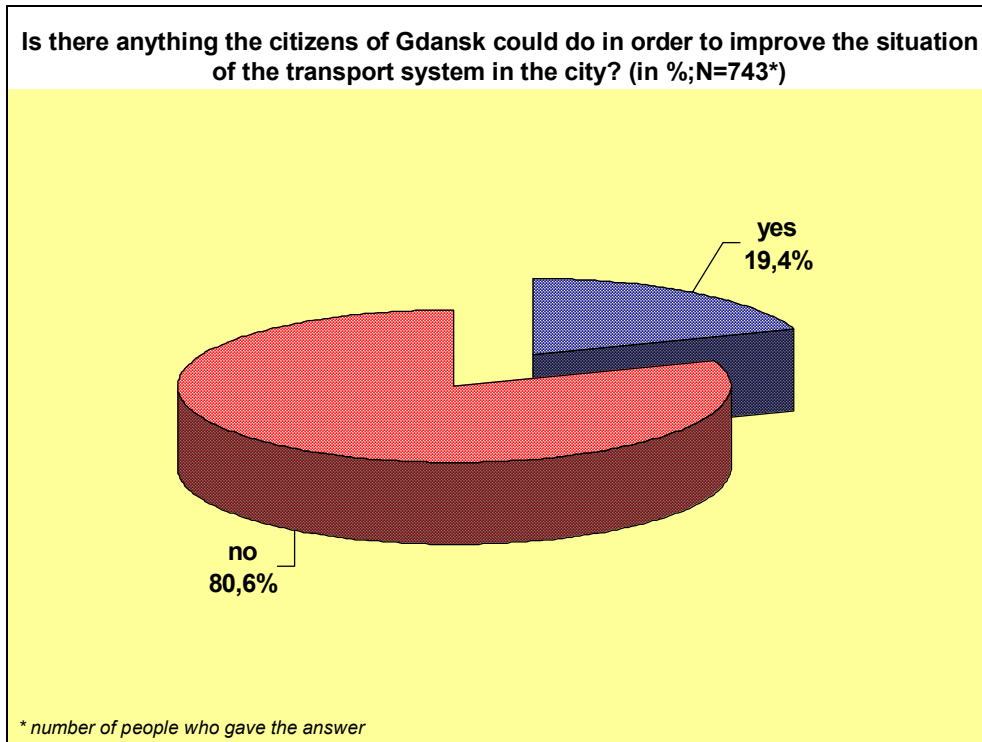
More than half of the respondents claimed that there is a problem with regard to transport in Gdansk. However, not much less people stated the contrary. The following reasons for transport-related problems were given most often spontaneously: congestion / low transfer capability of streets / underdeveloped road network and bad condition of roads. Less frequently mentioned were problems connected with rolling stock, routes, or frequency of runs within the city's public transport system.

Chart 12



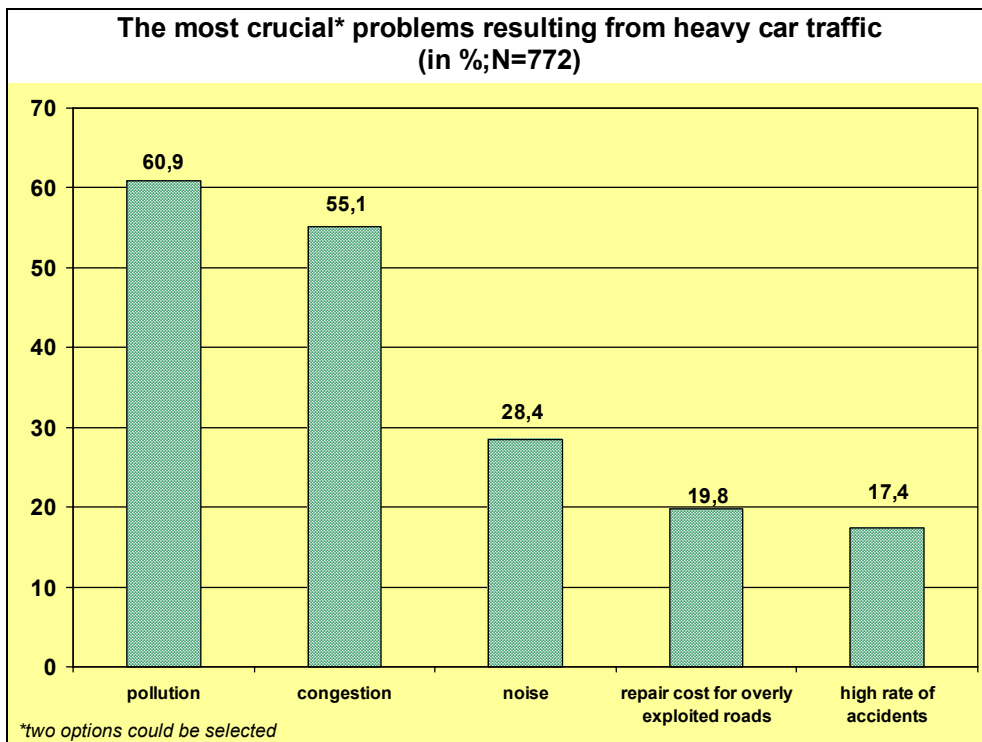
When asked if they could do something personally in order to improve the situation of transport system in the city, the respondents most frequently (77.6%) answered „no”. Even if they replied “yes”, after the question was further specified it usually turned out that the actions that they suggest (e.g. rebuilding the roads, building more paths, increasing the number of transport means, etc.) are hardly in their competences. Only 5% of all respondents stated that they can undertake some viable actions personally, e.g. drive their private car more rarely, ride a bicycle, share their car with others, write a petition, make a complaint, or at least offer a prayer for this intention.

Chart 13



The following problems were indicated by the residents of Orunia Górna district as the most vital issues resulting from heavy car traffic: pollution (60.9%), congestion (55.1%), noise (28.4%), repair cost for the overly exploited roads (19.8%), and a high rate of accidents (17.4%). Apart from the reasons specified in the list, the respondents also mentioned e.g. damaged roads, poor skills and manners of drivers, and disregarding of rules.

Chart 14



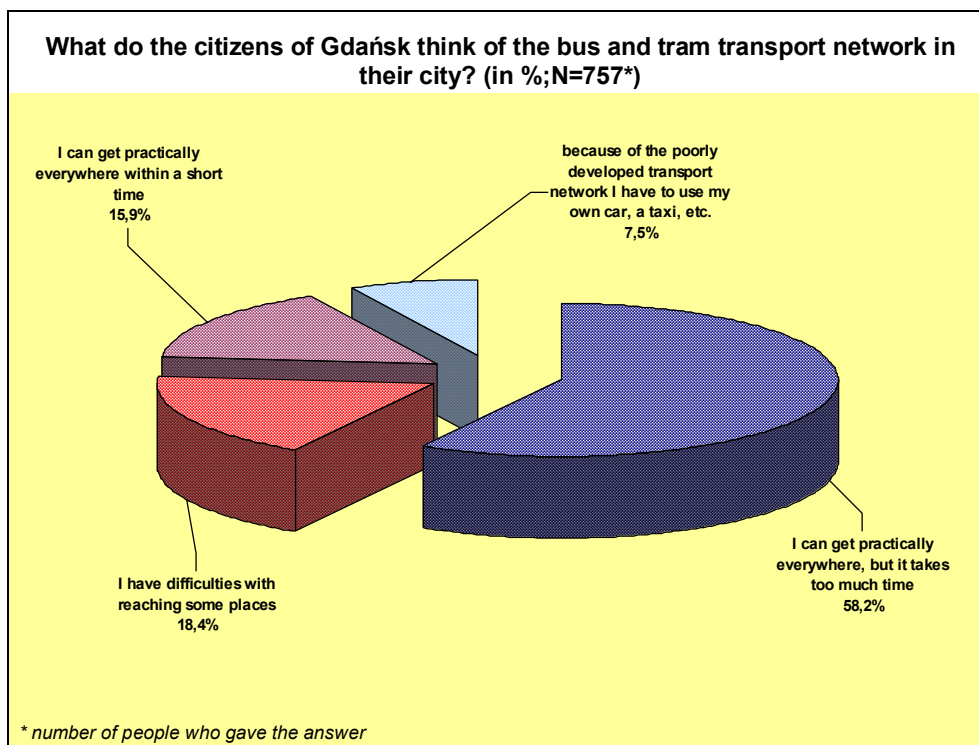
Interesting answers were obtained by asking an open question, where the inquired person was supposed to complete the following sentence as they saw fit: A situation where all residents of my district would move by car only would be...

As it turned out, only 4% of all statements were of positive nature. 89% of them stressed negative results of such situation. The most frequent opinions were that this situation would be: nightmarish, oppressive, bad, catastrophic, dangerous, paradoxical, etc. The respondents pointed out pollution, noise, congestion of streets, traffic impediment and the consequent accidents.

However, there were voices stating that it would be a sign of improvement in the life standard, of normalcy, that life would be easier in such situation.

Finally, the residents were asked for their opinion on the bus and tram connection network in Gdansk. The predominant opinion (57.1%) is that any location can be reached by means of the public transport network, but it takes too much time. 18% declared to have difficulties with reaching some places, but 15.5% of the people stated that they can get to practically any place within a short time. Accordingly, rather positive opinions prevailed. Only 7.4% responded that they have to use their own car or a taxi because of the poorly developed transport network.

Chart 15





Conclusions

The conducted questionnaire research project showed that in general the public transportation in Gdansk is evaluated rather positively by the residents of Orunia Górna. However, it is less popular among young people who have children and possess 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 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.

All these factors make it necessary to prepare for the change in transportation solutions both in technical and infrastructural respect as well as with regard to the change in the attitudes of Gdansk citizens. Changes in peoples' mentality require a long-time process which is not always possible to carry out. Therefore it is all the more important to shape the mentality as early as possible, when people are very young. Although it will not cause a sudden improvement in the public transportation condition, for the good of the community and their own people will certainly be more willing to accept some unavoidable inconveniences related to urbanisation.



Methodology

The research project was conducted on 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, Mrs. Wiesława Roszak, 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.

As the questionnaires collected by the agency of the school were filled out at home, the respondents had more time to consider the answers. Frequently they were completed with the participation of the children who brought the questionnaire home. Consequently, these questionnaires are characterised by higher precision, detailed answers to open questions such as “why?” and “others” are more frequent.

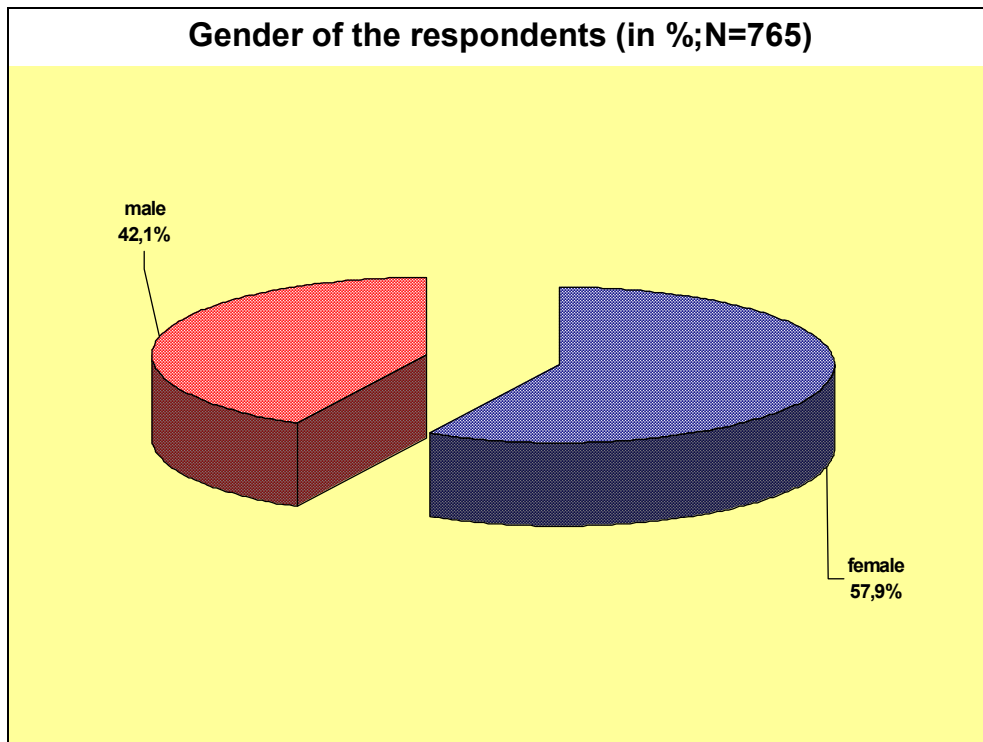
In exchange for a completed questionnaire the respondents received a leaflet, two adhesive labels and a plate to put a mug on. These materials were designed on the basis of the projects of children from the Primary and Secondary Education School no. 6. Those small gifts allowed the respondents to remember 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.

Who is the respondent? – statistical data

The group of research respondents can be characterised in a simple manner on the basis of the completed questionnaires.

People who took part in the research project were for the most part female (57.9%). However, in the group that answered to questions asked by an interviewer, the shares of men and women are more or less equal (52% of women), whereas of the people who completed the questionnaire by themselves (at the request of their children) no less than 76% were female.

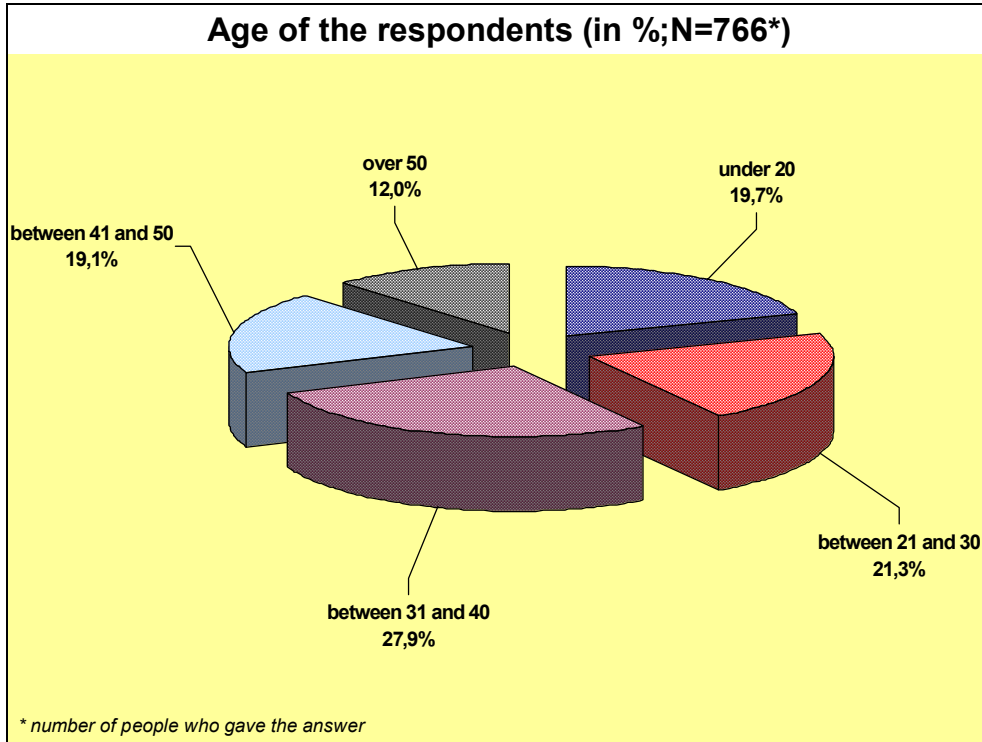
Chart 54





The research participants represented various age groups. The most numerous group consisted of people in the age between 31 and 40 (27.9%); in this age group the rate of people having school-age children is potentially the highest. Another group (21.3%) of the respondents was aged between 21 and 30, 19.7% were less than 20 years old, 19.1% were between 41 and 50, and the smallest group was formed by people over 50 years old.

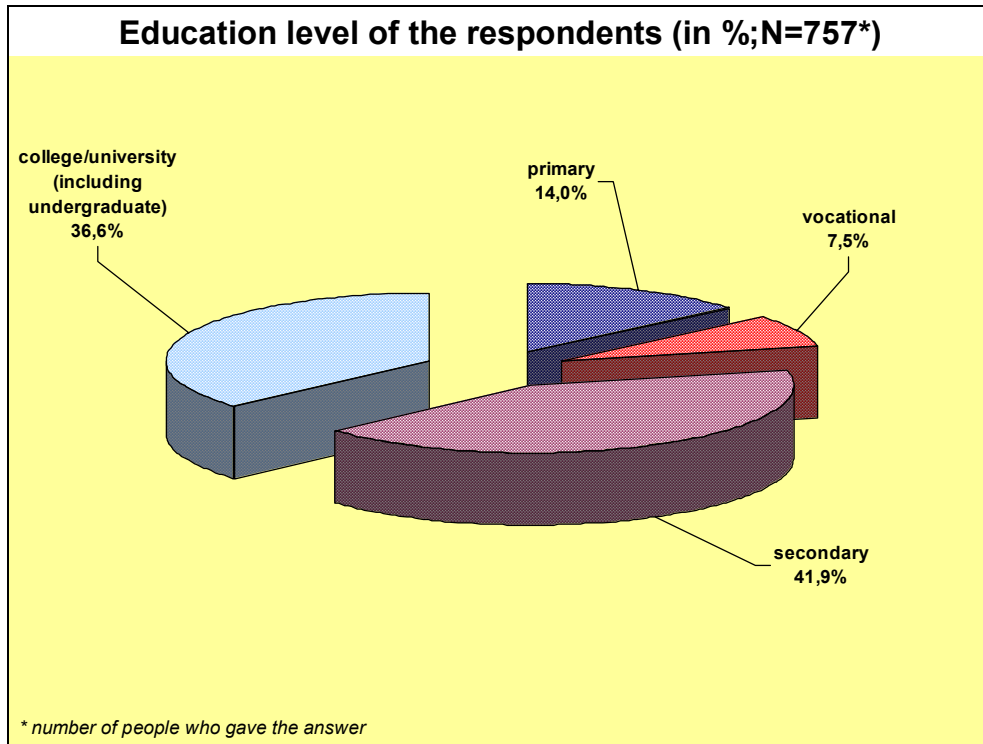
Chart 55





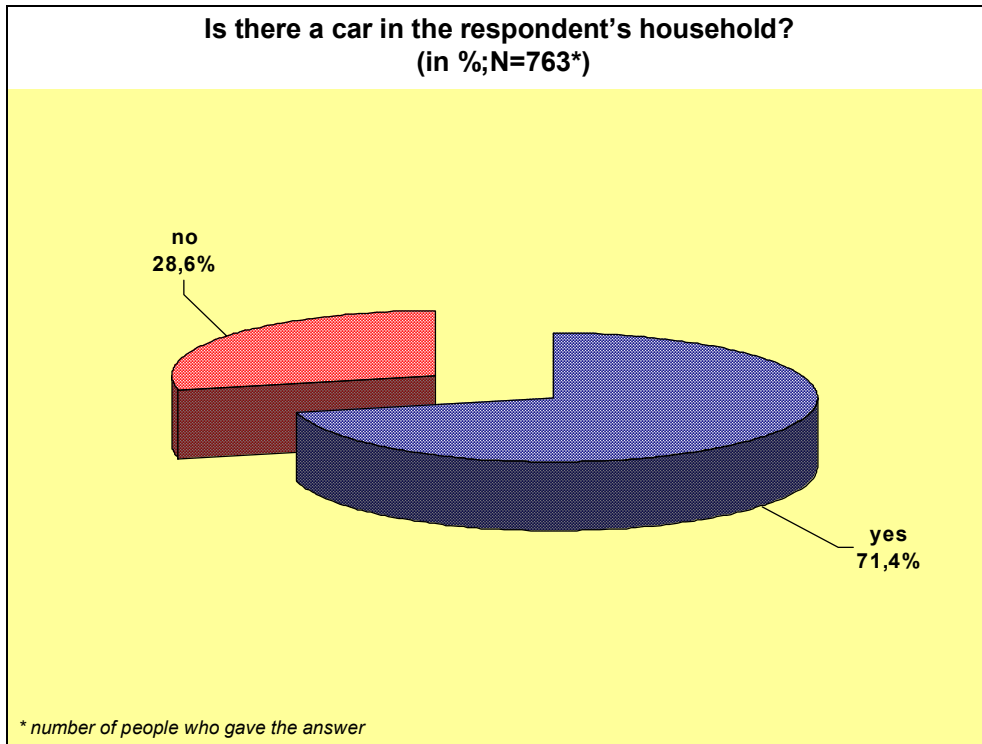
A relatively large group of respondents, in comparison to the entire population of Poland, was formed by people having higher (36.6%) and secondary (41.9%) education. In the group of respondents with primary education (14%) a considerable part were people under 20 (88.5%). This means that they were school-age children. Everything seems to lead to the conclusion that the education level of the interviewed sample of the residents of Orunia Górna district is much higher than in the entire Polish population.

Chart 56



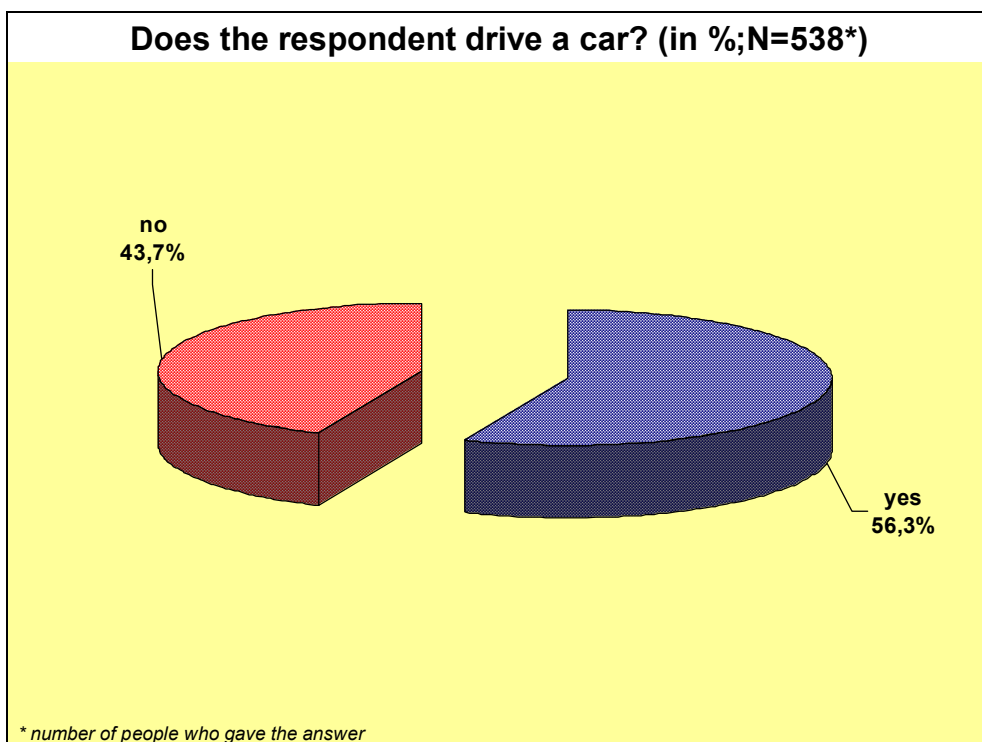
Higher education contributes to higher incomes of the district's residents, and this leads in consequence to having a car in the household. As much as 71.4% of the respondents' families possess a car of their own.

Chart 57



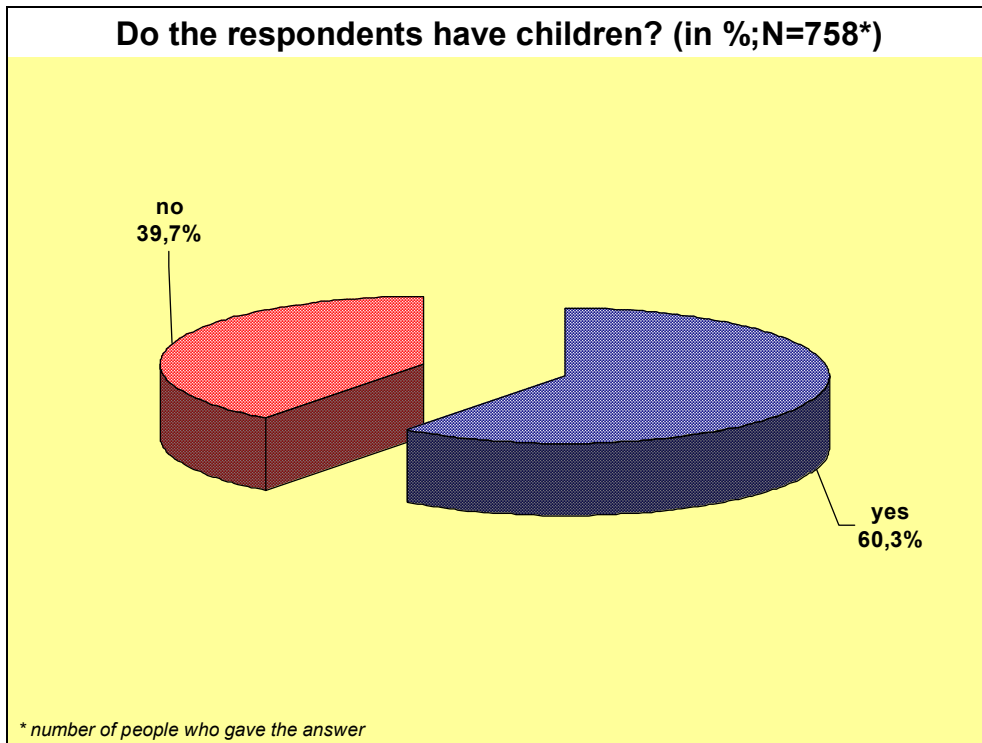
Of those respondents who indicated having a car in their household, 78.9% are the drivers. In total, more than half of all the respondents drive a car.

Chart 58



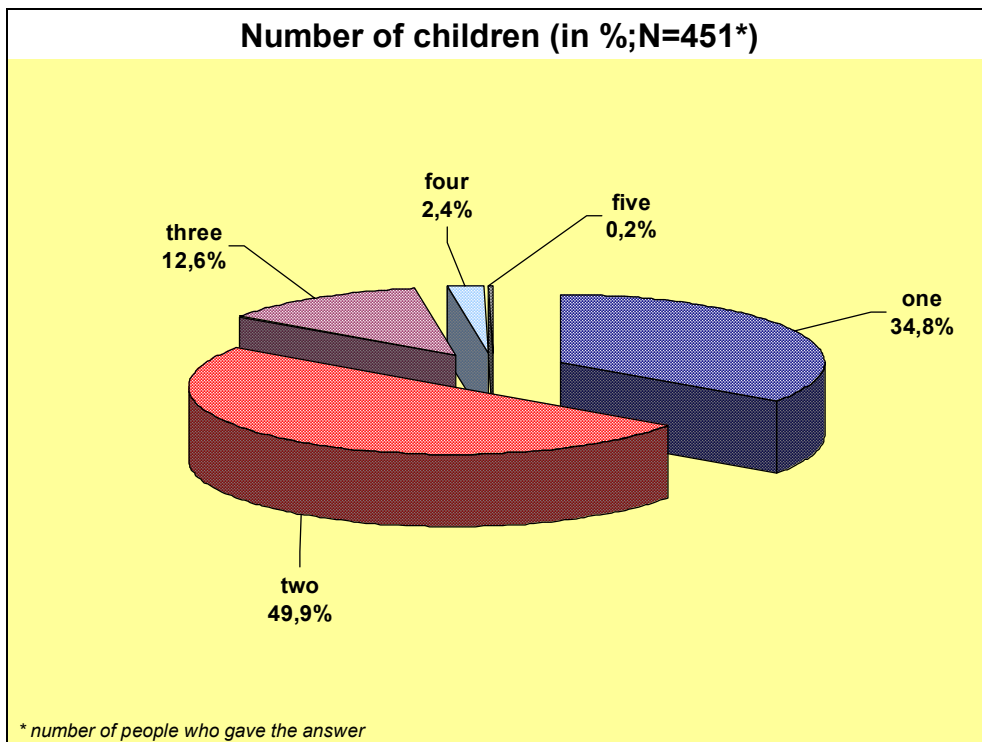
More than 60% of the research participants have children, and 46.7% of the respondents have at least one child under 18, which means of school age.

Chart 59



On the average, the research participants have two children (1.83) – so answered half of the respondents. 34.8% of them have one child, 12.6% - three, and 2.6% have more.

Chart 60





Appendix

Questionnaire