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Increase of knowledge of public authorities about senior citizen's mobility needs through improved participation in Gdańsk

Evaluation Report and Impact Assessment

Content of the pilot:

The Municipality of Gdańsk is implementing a pilot action within the GreenSAM project in order to enhance participation of seniors, that will allow detection user needs. The results will be processed by a new advisory body to the Seniors City Council which will then feed into decision-making processes and could induce solutions in mobility modes and specifically in bike sharing system to make them more user-oriented.

Objectives of the project in Gdańsk

The main objective of the project in Gdańsk is to gain specific knowledge about the needs and ideas of the seniors' user group, to find out more about the problems, needs and expectations of the elderly residents of Gdansk, what barriers keep seniors from cycling and how to overcome these barriers and to find suitable solutions. These findings are compiled in a document, which will be a guideline that will help decision makers to make green mobility modes, PT services and bike sharing system more attractive for seniors.

Achieving this goal is essential to improve decision-making process of local public authorities in matters related to green urban mobility, specifically for senior citizens in Gdansk. In order to accomplish a significant improvement in this regard "Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board" was established. This "Advisory Board", working at the Seniors City Council in Gdańsk, will be the voice of elderly residents in matters concerning active mobility of seniors. It will formulate opinions, recommendations and advice for the City Council of Gdansk, policy and decision makers. The Advisory Board will work beyond the project lifetime and will explore other age-friendly green mobility topics.

The "Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board" will work in "thematic rounds" the first of which will be focussing on barriers in active mobility.

As a part of the project, Gdańsk intends to improve health and well-being of senior citizens also through higher cycling rates among seniors and to increase the effectiveness of green urban mobility offers through higher shares of senior citizens using them- starting from the improvement of the city bike sharing system for seniors.

Activities:

The **situation** in Gdańsk **before** the pilot started:

Gdansk faces the problem of an ageing community with over 120,000 residents over the age 60. What is very significant, the older generation of citizens is mostly living in the city centre, in the Old Town of Gdańsk and is characterized by a low level of active mobility. They rarely cycle and even getting around the city is a challenge for some of them. For many years the needs of elderly people were neglected and their voice not heard. The City authorities decided to take steps to change this situation and make an effort to activate this group of citizens.

The first manifestation of the efforts to change the situation of older residents was the decision to establish Seniors City Council in Gdańsk. The Council the was elected in 2018 as an advisory board to the City Council, representing the interests of elderly inhabitants. Since then, the Council has prepared several resolutions

which were submitted to the city authorities. None of the resolutions dealt with mobility issues, which showed the necessity to establish a team that would respond to issues in this area.

The intention to improve the situation was also a motive as to why the Municipality of Gdańsk joined the GreenSAM project and promoted and guided the introduction of “Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board”. The Advisory Board will be based on participatory processes in its work and will focus on one specific topic per year. It will thereafter compile its findings and opinions on the topic in a “Silver Age Mobility regulation”, a set of policy recommendations that is to be submitted to the City Council.

a. Appointing the “Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board”

Between Summer 2019 and February 2020 a few workshops were held in Gdansk with local stakeholders from the target group and the first ideas for the participation process of selecting the composition of the Advisory Board were discussed, the ideas and hints how to carry out the process best were collected. During the workshops extensive cooperation with organizations and institutions representing seniors was established. Only in the "Meeting of Leaders of clubs and senior circles in Gdansk", which took place on 11.02.2020, participated 90 representatives of different seniors' organizations from Gdańsk.

the process of appointing members of the Advisory Board during direct meetings with various groups of stakeholders was interrupted by the introduction of a lockdown due to the pandemic situation in the country. Ultimately, as a consequence, all members of the “Advisory Board” were appointed by the Chair of Seniors City Council in Gdańsk from the councilors. The Board inaugurated its activities on 23 July 2020. This team consists of 5 members and one of its tasks is to develop recommendations, opinions and directions on topics related to active mobility in the "silver age", which can then be presented to the Gdańsk City Council and other stakeholder groups.

b. Study about senior citizens’ mobility needs

To increase public authorities knowledge about senior citizens’ mobility needs and to find out what barriers keep seniors from cycling and how to overcome these barriers, Gdańsk initiated research to obtain information from senior citizens and formulate conclusions on these issues.

For this purpose the external expert, TUS Foundation, was selected in the offer inquiry procedure, posted on the city's tender website. The choice of the service provider took into account the price of the service in 60% and the provider’s experience in 40%.

The study identifies mental and psychological barriers to senior citizens' mobility, including regard to urban infrastructure. The report is based on the authors’ own study methodology on the mobility of inhabitants of Gdańsk who are over 60 years of age and analysis of the possibilities of encouraging this group of inhabitants to change their mobility habits. In addition, the authors paid considerable attention to the already existing solutions related to public bicycle and the way of its organization in a friendly manner for people over 60 years old. The report takes into consideration the following documents: Gdańsk City Development Strategy; the “Accessibility Plus, 2018 – 2025” Programme of the Ministry of Investment and Development, Accessibility Standards – a study of the Gdańsk University of Technology and good practices developed by partners during the GreenSAM project.

A two-stage testing method was opted for to obtain most relevant results from the most diverse respondents. In the first phase of the authors' activity, a questionnaire was carried out to check how the target group moves around the city – which means of transport they use and to check their attitude towards Gdansk's public transport and the alternative way of moving around i.e. a bicycle. Residents completed the survey in 3 different ways: on-line, using the Internet, by completing the questionnaire electronically, using the attached file and sending it back or by completing the printed questionnaires. The third method was particularly important due to the large group of elderly inhabitants in Gdansk affected by IT exclusion. It was necessary to reach representatives from different environments, groups of different backgrounds - simply those who are not socially active. This first stage of research has been completed and more than one hundred questionnaires have been completed, 85 of which have been completed in full and used. The results obtained in the first stage were extended in the second stage, by means of in-depth studies and interviews.

After collecting the results in the two phases described in conclusion opinions, recommendations and advice for the "Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board", and ultimately for the City Council of Gdansk,. They were based on the surveys which were conducted but they also took into account the assumptions of the strategic documents and good practices of partner cities as well as assumptions of universal design. This document was then ~~and~~ presented as the voice of elderly residents in matters concerning barriers in active mobility.

Report about barriers to senior citizens' mobility document and its use

The document's title is "Mobility of the Gdańsk inhabitants aged 60+".

The Polish report includes:

- a description of the survey methodology providing an overview what, how and why was done;
- description of the current mobility situation among seniors in Gdańsk;
- development of opinions, recommendations & conclusions resulting from the current research carried out among seniors and on their basis determining mental and psychological barriers in the field of mobility of seniors, also in relation to urban infrastructure;
- preparation of a set of expectations and identification of the needs of older people in terms of facilitations and solutions friendly to seniors in the area of mobility, with particular emphasis on the city bike rental system, while taking into account "good practices" and examples of solutions adopted by partner cities of the GreenSAM project in their city bike rental systems;
- proposals of ways to overcome mental barriers in the process of increasing mobile activity among seniors, along with an indication of entities that could implement them;

The English version of the document is shorter and includes background information, general aspects of senior-friendly public transport and the list of recommendations.

Overview of conclusions and recommendations included in the study

1. The direction of the planned actions, in terms of comfortable and safe use of bicycles in cities by senior citizens, depends on the way we want to treat this group of users. Do we think of cycling as recreation, or do we assume that cycling is a means of daily transport. If, as Gdańsk, we want senior citizens to use bicycles more often and on a larger scale, it must be recognised that cycling is one of the elements of intermodal passenger transport.

2. The most common motivation for cycling in a city is cycling safety and the development of a cycling network. It is important that the roads form a real network, giving the possibility of moving around the city, in all directions. A network that is given the same priority as a car road network.
3. Roads for bicycles should be separated from pedestrian and car traffic, both for the safety of pedestrians and people on bicycles. And if the traffic is to take place within the Right-of-Way, it should take place in the area where the traffic is calmed down. According to one of the principles of universal design, the structure of bicycle paths should not force excessive effort.
4. Bicycle paths should be marked intuitively, informing about directions of riding, district names, possible path variants or junctions, according to the principle of easily noticeable information.
5. Bicycle paths should run close to public transport and rail junctions with easy access so that different means of transport can be combined.
6. Bicycle paths, especially in the vicinity of public transport stops, should be separated from pedestrian routes.
7. Bicycle paths should be maintained in good condition: in winter snow must be removed – icy paths are an effective deterrent; in summer and autumn, they should be cleaned so that dust and leaves do not make the surface slippery.
8. Near the roads it is worthwhile to build infrastructure in the form of shelters, benches, roofed places, so that people who get tired of riding have conditions to rest before they continue riding.
9. The length of the cycles of pedestrian lights should be increased – sometimes the time is too short for seniors, even when they ride a bicycle, on a bicycle path.
10. The promotion of intermodal passenger transport, in the case of senior citizens, requires the possibility of entering a tram, bus or a metropolitan train with a bicycle. To make sure that you can always choose a ride – to feel safe, even if you feel unwell, there must be room for a person with a bicycle in every vehicle.
11. The entrance to public transport vehicles should be obstacle-free, in accordance with the principles of universal design and identical use. The placement of a bicycle inside, including electric bikes, should not require physical effort.
12. The idea of public bicycle should be promoted if seniors are to use it – public bicycle is still little known and used by seniors.
13. A system of peer coaching support and youth mentoring should be organised – activities where one can learn how to use a public bike, step by step: registration with the service, payment, collection of the bike and its return.
14. It is beneficial for the promotion of public bicycle to organize trips by public bicycle with an animator from a designated station.
15. It is worthwhile to create a system of subsidies for the purchase of electric bikes, including cargo bikes, as well as a system of subsidies for bicycle repairs. Networks of public bicycles should offer tandem bikes, tricycles, electric bikes.
16. It is essential to create a climate and a message that shows that cycling plus public transport is a great combination. But a similar campaign should also be addressed at other road users in order to change the perception of cycling only as recreation or sport only for young and fit people.

17. It is necessary to organize meetings with senior citizens about public bicycle and the use of electric bikes.
18. It is recommended to organize courses on the rules of cycling e.g. in senior citizens' clubs, which will significantly improve the sense of safety of seniors.
19. Senior citizens more slowly come around to new solutions than other social groups – they have to see them, become familiar with them and “tame” them. It is therefore extremely important that the public bicycle service is sustainable and unchanging in the long term.

Dissemination of the report

In cooperation with Advise Board and the Mayor’s Plenipotentiary for Seniors, a list of addresses to whom the document was shared was created and the document was handed over. The document was made b available to all interested actors, as it was posted on the city's website (www.gdansk.pl), in the Seniors tab on 20th April 2021.

In April 2021 different members of the target group were informed about the process of creating the document and outcomes of the document/guideline by sending the document directly to the appropriate e-mails. It was sent to:

- Seniors City Council of Gdańsk,
- City Council members of the Sustainable Development committee,
- City Council members of the on Sport and tourism committee,
- City Council members of the Economic and maritime policy committee,
- City Council members of the Family and social policy committee,
- chairmen of District’s Councils,
- the Mayor of Gdańsk,
- the Deputy Mayor on Sustainable Development and Housing,
- the Deputy Mayor for Social Development and Equal Treatment,
- President's Plenipotentiary for Seniors,
- directors of relevant City Hall departments: Social Development, Municipal Services, Economic Policy, Investment Projects
- Mobility and Transport Council by the Deputy Mayor,
- Director of Gdańsk Public Transport Management,
- Gdansk Health Promotion Center,
- City Road Safety Council,
- Traffic Management Team,
- Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk for Disabled People and Accessibility

c. Promoting cycling among seniors in Gdańsk.

As a part of the GreenSAM's activities Gdańsk planned to promote cycling among seniors, especially those who, on an everyday basis, do not have opportunities to cycle and/or do not have their own bikes. This activity is based on use of an explorative participation tool and includes professional field exploration activities, testing and training sessions with e-tricycles with the user group to systematically determine their needs and discover if/how such age-friendly bikes could be integrated into the city's BSS. Results of the activities will be processed by a new Advisory Board to the City Council. This explorative participation tool used in promoting cycling in the target group of recipients is a "case study" tool. Through the own experiences of the participants of cycling events, it will be possible to collect tips for the future operator of the bike sharing system

In order to implement this activity the City of Gdańsk purchased 6 electric tricycles. They are owned by the city of Gdańsk, included in the register of fixed assets, and will remain in the ownership of the municipality. They will not become a part of any rental or bike sharing system to be introduced in Gdansk. During the project as well as after its lifetime they will be used free of charge and on a non-discriminatory basis by Gdańsk seniors from relevant NGOs and institutions, for example: senior clubs, municipal cultural houses, third Age University, Gdansk Council for Seniors, Citizen Senior Groups, day care homes for elderly residents. The tricycle will be maintained and managed by an operator contracted by the City of Gdańsk.

The operator is responsible for organization and execution of cycling events for groups of seniors with the use of the e-tricycles: bike rides to the seashore, to supermarket, bike picnics or bike sightseeing tours in Gdansk. The participants of the ride choose the route and date of the ride themselves. The operator provides a guide, who also looks after the group of users, and provides training in driving techniques and road safety rules. During the project's lifetime seniors who use e-tricycles take part in the evaluation process, the results of which will be used in the project. Conclusions from the evaluation will be included in the set of recommendations for the future BSS operator. They will be presented and approved by the Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board.

Due to the pandemic situation, with special concern for elderly people, this activity was postponed and the implementation of this actions started on 28 May 2021. A group of 5 seniors and the organizers took part in the first ride. This trip allowed conclusions to be drawn and the bicycle routes to be modified; for example, that cycling through the city center is too stressful for seniors from the target group due to too much traffic. The rides were organized in June, July, August and mid-September 2021. All in all, there were 33 E-tricycles rides for groups of seniors organized in which 198 participants took part. After each ride, the group of participants filled in a questionnaire within the evaluation process. Summarizing the questionnaires allowed the evaluation of the whole action. Comments and recommendations on tricycles, electric assistance in bicycles and BSS apps were collected and a Guidebook for city bike-sharing system's (BSS) future operator was developed in order to make the BSS in Gdansk more age-friendly. The Guidebook was accepted by the Advisory Board and will be forwarded to the future operator of the city bike-sharing system as soon as the operator is selected.

Indicators:

Project indicator	Local indicator	Target value	Way of measuring	Result	Time frame
no of events	No of events	3 Workshops + Online Participation Presentation of GreenSAM and its objectives. Silver age people's ideas for the process of selecting the composition of the Advisory Board; ; 30 in-depth interviews	List of events		July 2019 – September 2020
No of participants/ people involved	No of participants involved	130 participants (collecting 105 seniors' responses to the questionnaire, different age groups (60- 80+)	List of participants, number of responses for questionnaires		September 2020
Materials compiled or developed during implementing the tool/ pilot	Guide for the bike sharing system operator	The guide is compiled, bike sharing system operator is informed about seniors' needs	Availability of the guide		As soon as the BSS operator is selected

		and recommendation s			
no of in-depth studies and interviews	Development of valid recommendations on mobility of seniors based on in-depth studies	10 interviews			September and October 2020
decision makers' knowledge about the needs of senior citizens and the seniors' knowledge about green mobility solutions has increased	City Transport Authorities has a better idea about the needs and wishes of silver age people in terms of PT, cycling and bike sharing	Yes	A list of target group institutions and organizations with Seniors City Council of Gdańsk, City Council members of the Sustainable Development committee, City Council members of the on Sport and tourism committee, City Council members of the Economic		By the end of the project

			<p>and maritime policy committee,</p> <p>City Council members of the Family and social policy committee,</p> <p>chairmen of District's Councils,</p> <p>the Mayor of Gdańsk,</p> <p>the Deputy Mayor on Sustainable Development and Housing,</p> <p>the Deputy Mayor for Social Development and Equal Treatment,</p> <p>President's Plenipotentiary for Seniors,</p> <p>directors of relevant City Hall departments:</p> <p>Social</p>		
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			<p>Development, Municipal Services, Economic Policy, Investment Projects</p> <p>Mobility and Transport Council by the Deputy Mayor, Director of Gdańsk Public Transport Management, Gdansk Health Promotion Center, City Road Safety Council, Traffic Management Team, Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk for Disabled People and Accessibility</p>		
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			Feedback from Seniors City Council and relevant institutions		
recommendations for changes/ to support development of green transport (development of valid recommendations based on data collection and surveys)	Recommendations have developed (Gdansk Seniors City Council prepares recommendation for the City Council and City authorities based on GreenSAM outputs)	Yes	Feedback from Seniors Citizen Council (presented in the document "Mobility of the Gdańsk inhabitants aged 60+")		By the end of the project
behavioural change of participants and a decrease in perceived barriers, skills or capability of participants	Behaviour has been changed, barriers have been decreased	Yes	Feedback from participating seniors (Paper questionnaire handed out at events)		By the end of the project
No of seniors taking part in E-tricycle rides	Comments and recommendations for BSS operator collected	33 E-tricycle rides for groups of seniors, 198 participants	Feedback from rides participants (paper questionnaire filled in)	The Guidebook for the BSS operator ready and accepted by the	As soon as the BSS operator is selected

				Advisory Board	
report about the results of engagement					
improved engagement of people in silver age					
more convenient public transport (changes in physical and social environment) for people in silver age	Mapped barriers have been solved, Public Transport Authorities understanding about seniors' needs has increased				Throughout and beyond of the project lifetime
as elderly residents' voice was heard, appropriate changes were done in the transport system and more silver age people are using green transport and are therefore more active in social life	Not applicable due to the pandemic situation				Throughout the project lifetime
increased capacity of urban	bike sharing system operator is	Interview			Throughout and

transport actors (authorities, ports, infrastructure providers and operators, transport users)	aware seniors' needs and recommendations (on the basis of the gathered feedback)				beyond of the project lifetime - during the operator selection process
increase in the effectiveness of green urban mobility offers through higher shares of senior citizens using the respective offers (significant increase in the number of senior citizens using the bicycle sharing systems, increase the acceptance and confidence of senior citizens towards Shuttle- on-Demand services)	Not applicable due to the pandemic situation				
improved decision-making processes of local public authorities in matters related to green urban					

mobility ((1) public authorities develop the capacity to seize, evaluate and process user needs, (2) public authorities ensure that this will be done continuously, and not just once, (3) public authorities safeguard that that findings generated through (1) and (2) feed into decision-making					
improved capacity to implement participatory processes					

Impact

The main impact of the project is its contribution to increasing the self-awareness of senior residents needs in the field of mobility in Gdańsk. The “Green Mobility for Seniors Advisory Board” was established and it is working at the Seniors City Council in Gdańsk. This body allowed for the identification of barriers in seniors’ mobility and a presentation of seniors’ needs, opinions, recommendations and advice to the City Council of Gdansk, policy and decision makers in mobility matters. The Advisory Board will work beyond the project lifetime and will explore other age-friendly green mobility topics. It will be the voice of elderly residents of Gdańsk in matters concerning active mobility of seniors also in future.

The first document “Recommendations and advice on the mobility of Gdańsk residents aged 60+” announced by the Advisory Board will help to understand the seniors’ mobility needs by the public authorities and implement recommended improvements. It was presented to interested decision-makers and politicians. The document will be a source material used in adopting subsequent resolutions and issuing opinions of the Seniors City Council on mobility.

Success

During the project’s lifetime different groups of senior residents in Gdansk got involved. They responded to the study, sharing their opinions on mobility issues and helping to increase public authorities knowledge about senior citizens’ mobility needs. They contributed vastly to find out what barriers keep seniors from cycling and how to overcome these barriers. Their opinions, recommendations and advice were presented to the City Council of Gdansk, policy and decision makers, what has undoubtedly contributed the increase of their knowledge. For the first time in the history of the city of Gdańsk, the voice of seniors on mobility was articulated, opinions and comments were collected, conclusions and recommendations were clearly formulated.

However, the project will be a complete success if:

1. these recommendations are implemented by the transport authorities and lead to changes that will make transport services more age-friendly - for example, larger letters on timetables and PT information boards introduced by the Public Transport Authority ;
2. Silver age people start using bike sharing, feel safe biking and encourage other silver age people to bike as well

Lessons learnt

How to create extensive cooperation with organizations?

Check also recommendations above connected to the document "[Mobility of the Gdańsk inhabitants aged 60+](#)"

In order to reach as many respondents as possible and to be able to reach those residents who are less active or have not participated in any social projects so far, you cannot limit yourself to only IT tools. In the research Gdańsk carried out, conducted to collect the views of seniors in the process of preparing a study on barriers to the mobility of seniors, we concluded that to engage people with different background it is important to do it also on paper.

It is very important to specify & reach active persons from elderly residents that will become the "locomotives" in carrying out different action. These are them who will reach others through their own example and personal contacts.

It is important to select "ambassadors" of the planned campaign or action, who in their communities, among peers, will share information about it and encourage participation. This way of reaching seniors is much more effective than other methods of promotion, such as posters, leaflets, advertisements in newspapers (seniors often do not buy press for financial reasons) or through social platforms (a large percentage of seniors do not have a computer or the Internet and do not use these tools due to the IT-exclusion).

It is necessary to make decision-makers and politicians pay more attention to the documents and opinions provided to them by the Seniors City Council or other seniors' groups. This will increase satisfaction with the management of the city by this age group of residents - otherwise, this group of residents feels left out (which may translate into support in the next elections).

There are also recommendations concerning mobility connected to the document "[Mobility of the Gdańsk inhabitants aged 60+](#)"