



**CiViTAS**

Cleaner and better transport in cities

M I M O S A

# CASE STUDY



## ANTI-VANDALISM POLICY IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

### SAFETY AND SECURITY



Like most medium-sized or large cities, Gdansk struggles with regular acts of vandalism and anti-social behaviour in and around public transport vehicles. Within CIVITAS, the city introduced several measures aimed at improving the image of public transport by ensuring the comfort and security of users. The anti-vandalism strategy included awareness-raising meetings with school children, training for drivers on effective methods of dealing with difficult passengers, introducing close-circuit television (CCTV) monitoring on a large scale and reinforcing a long-running 'clean public transport stops' campaign.

#### MUNICIPAL PROFILE

##### LOCATION

Gdansk, Poland

##### POPULATION

458,000

##### LAND AREA

262 km<sup>2</sup>

##### CIVITAS BUDGET

EUR 267,957

#### Municipal context

Gdansk has been at the crossroads of commercial and communication activities for over one thousand years. The city is the largest municipality in the Pomeranian region of northern Poland and one of the country's largest international transport nodes. As the economy grows and people move to the suburbs, Gdansk is anxious to eliminate private car traffic from the city centre. The local authorities are working on a mobility plan to develop and modernise public transport services, expand the cycling

network, improve safety and security policy, improve traffic management, thereby reducing congestion in the city centre.

Within CIVITAS, Gdansk wanted to reduce its reliance on private cars. An important pillar of this is making available a sustainable, efficient, accessible and safe transport system. This challenge requires complex multi-level action. A strategy to shift modal split towards sustainable transport options was accepted by the City Council in April 2011.



#### GDANSK IN CIVITAS

Gdansk (Poland) participated in CIVITAS MIMOSA, an innovative collaboration between the cities of Bologna (Italy), Funchal (Portugal), Gdansk (Poland), Tallinn (Estonia), and Utrecht (Netherlands). The motto of the project is “Making Innovation in Mobility and Sustainable Actions.”

#### CIVITAS MIMOSA

With cities drawn from a range of geographical and economic situations, MIMOSA cities implemented a range of 69 activities, aimed at guaranteeing mobility to all citizens without burdening the environment or weakening the cities’ economy. Shaping a new mentality where conscientious behaviour is perceived as rewarding rather than a sacrifice was at its heart. This effort was reinforced by a host of technical and physical measures. It ran from 2008-2012.

#### READ MORE AT:

[www.civitas.eu/display-all-projects](http://www.civitas.eu/display-all-projects)



Graffiti defaces a tram

### Introduction

Safety and security in public transport is a very complex problem. It concerns every city and has numerous causes, faces and interpretations. Statistics indicate that the perceived level of safety and security is as important as the actual level. The CIVITAS Initiative offered the opportunity to implement safety and security measures alongside the promotion of sustainable modes, such as walking, cycling or using public transport.

Undertaken in 2009, research showed that the most frequent and common types of vandalism are strictly related to defacement, misbehaviour and the feeling of a low level of responsibility for public goods.

### Taking a closer look

In 2010 and 2011, Gdansk purchased and installed 30 sets of fixed and 17 rotary cameras on multiplex video at bus and tram stops, interchanges and tunnels in a number of locations in the city between the old town and shopping district.

From July 2011, selected videos from CCTV monitoring were used to prepare education material for workshop where bus and tram drivers learned to deal with vandalism and offenders. Advice and training on the subject came from

the police, anti-abuse councillors, psychologists, and sociologists. In total, 30 participants were trained to deal with the issue and share this knowledge with their co-workers.

Before CIVITAS, Gdansk’s public transport stop shelters were commonly used by the city’s inhabitants to display various small leaflets and adverts. The overall effect was an untidy mess, spoiling the visual look of shelters and attracting further acts of vandalism. This had a negative impact on people’s perception of safety and security in public transport generally.

During CIVITAS, the firm believe that the solution to such problems lies in a shift of consciousness was at the heart of the approach followed. Following a group evaluation by the different institutions responsible for public transport (shelter maintenance teams, municipal guards, police and operators), a social campaign “Clean PT stops” was launched to improve the perception of safety and security among service users.

The ambitious campaign, launched in September 2011, was expanded in 2012. Initially, 72 special advertisement boards were installed at bus and tramway stops in the city centre of Gdansk. Then, a broad media campaign encouraged citizens to feel ownership and responsibility for the stops.

The campaign slogan “Don’t be ashamed to peel it off” encouraged citizens to get rid of illegal leaflets on shelters and put them on these special notice boards, as a signal to those who do not follow the rules. The campaign was strongly supported.

In July 2012, Gdansk residents had a chance to share ideas on effective ways of dealing with vandalism and misbehaviour through various public consultations.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Supported by European Union funds, since 2008 Gdansk has been investing in an intensive development and modernisation of its public transport infrastructure. By 2011, the city had achieved the most modern bus fleet in Poland. The video surveillance system has now been implemented in all public transport vehicles.

By modernising the bus and tram fleet, passenger comfort has improved considerably. The implementation of a monitoring system has had a very positive impact on safety and security, helping Gdansk achieve its goal of an enhanced sustainable modal split.



Additionally, the vandalism problem was introduced to a pilot group of primary school pupils, with whom talks on vandalism were held in damaged buses and trams. Other activities included an art competition for a new road sign "Stop Vandalism".

The innovative approach of this anti-vandalism strategy was a direct result of a new, positive and preventive rather than repressive approach to the problem. The advertisement boards allowed Gdansk to combat the illegal practices in a constructive way by providing a legal alternative and citizen-led approach. This new concept included a broad information and promotion campaign, public participation, as well as regular evaluation.

## Results

Four years of project implementation seems to be a very short period to change people's behaviour, but it gave sufficient time to evaluate the outcomes of the anti-vandalism action and strategy.

The perception of safety and security among citizens increased by 20 percent, whilst the same indicator concerning exclusively public transport stops shows a 29 percent increase, compared with the 2011 result.

The security camera system has proved to be a good solution to reduce instances of vandalism. The goal of reducing the number of vandalism acts by 20 percent has been only partially achieved. It did however decrease by nearly 15 percent between 2009 and 2011.

As a result of the "Clean PT Stops Campaign" the amount of illegally posted adverts on shelters



New advert board at public transport stops

substantially decreased on those stops where the alternative advertisement boards were installed.

According to the online survey, 71 percent of Gdansk' citizens support the Clean PT Stops campaign and 51 percent are ready to actively participate.

The number of interventions against illegal advertising is increasing, which proved that the citizens are more involved and pay more attention to the problem. Consequently, two other districts councils within Gdansk decided to adopt the "Clean PT Stops" solutions and implement them in their area.

The "train-the-trainer" workshop proved to be a very good way of spreading knowledge strategically. The 30 trained drivers have passed on the knowledge and skills to another 450 co-workers. The method also proved successful as it eliminated the teacher/student barrier. This success prompted public transport operators to include it in employee induction courses.

Improved perception of safety and security had a positive impact with 10-18 percent of Gdansk citizens in 2012 using public transport more frequently. As for the overall objective of influencing modal split in Gdansk, it proved to be an effective tool.

## Lessons learned

Despite the overall success of the anti-vandalism measures, there are some factors that still prevent the complete implementation of the strategy.

The major barrier lies in the fact that there is insufficient data quality on vandalism statistics and the financial consequences, thereof. Since there are many institutions involved in providing public transport services and managing shelters and stops, access to information is difficult and the records obtained are fragmented. This makes them difficult to summarise or compare.

There are also more methodological issues. Unreported acts of vandalism are not registered as such, rather as hazardous damages. These two factors skew the evaluation figures. Thus, it is essential for future evaluation to solve the problem of full data access. Furthermore, a comprehensive definition of the specific act of vandalism, which governs response options to such behaviour, needs to be provided.

Due to insufficient funds, the planned safety measures were implemented in specific localities only.

Regular media information about the campaign, is crucial to a successful anti-vandalism strategy.



CCTV footage used at the workshops



The poorly executed media campaigns about the newly introduced CCTV monitoring system resulted in a low awareness of reinforced security. In contrast, the well prepared media campaign about “Clean PT Stops” with all messages and slogans aiming at increasing public participation (via the internet, TV, radio, press, posters) resulted in a real and visible success.

It is important also to organise educational activities for different target groups: youth, children, drivers among others. Better communication involving citizens and cooperation between different actors and institutions promotes mutual understanding and seems to be the best preventative approach.

### Upscaling and transferability

The preventative anti-vandalism strategy introduced in Gdansk is easily transferable as a whole or on an individual measure basis to other city contexts. So far, two other district councils within the municipality of Gdansk, Oliwa and Wrzeszcz Gorny, have adopted and implemented the “Clean PT Stops” campaign solution. Going beyond, a Warsaw-based NGO “*Moje miasto a w nim*” requested permission to use the “Clean PT Stops” campaign and slogan to achieve similar objectives.

While improvements in monitoring and punitive measures might help in dealing with offenders, preventive instruments, centred around achieving behavioural change, generate the perception of a high degree of safety and security on a more permanent basis.

Regular meetings with youth and school children help promote understanding of the scope of the

problems caused by vandalism. The awareness of costs generated by misbehaviour and vandalism, and the equivalent in investments that could be spent elsewhere, inspire young people to adopt a civic-minded approach to the problem.

The workshop organised for tram and bus drivers on methods of dealing with difficult passengers can significantly improve the security in vehicles. The train-the-trainer workshops were a very effective knowledge transfer methodology.

Participatory campaigns, such as “Clean PT Stop” effectively increase citizen involvement in anti-vandalism policy and therefore boosted the popularity of public transport.

### Budget and Finances

In terms of capital costs, monitoring equipment and installation cost 88,815 EUR.

Expenditures within CIVITAS MIMOSA including investment (advertisement boards), costs of cleaning shelters and boards, media campaigns and other smart activities sum up to 68,435 EUR.

Due to a new system of registration and definition of vandalism since the campaign started, it is difficult to quantify the before and after effect. Direct costs related to dealing with vandalism doubled from 8,290 EUR in 2008 to 16,132 EUR in 2011.

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### References or sources

<http://civitas.eu/content/anti-vandalism-safe-and-secure-public-transport>



### Acknowledgements

Close cooperation between the public transport operator, the municipality, the regional government, hotel directors in the target area allowed for a comprehensive implementation and evaluation of this measure.

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### Publisher

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability,  
Freiburg, Germany  
Executive Director: Wolfgang Teubner

### Date written

16 October 2012

### Series editors

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Young people take part in the “Clean PT Stop” campaign

