



Gdansk

Local Action Plan

CERTIFICATION SYSTEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE
FIELD OF IMPROVING SAFETY AND COMFORT OF
STUDENTS TRAVELING TO SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF
GDANSK

Short summary, English version.



Project: School Chance - SCHOOL mobility CHALLENGE in regioNal Policies

Partner organisation concerned: Municipality of Gdansk

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Policy context

Local Action Plan **impacts to** other development policy instruments “**City Development Strategy - Gdansk 2030 Plus**” the policy instrument for the City of Gdansk, adopted in December 2012 and **Gdansk Operational Program 2023**.

It includes CERTIFICATION SYSTEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE FIELD OF IMPROVING SAFETY AND COMFORT OF STUDENTS TRAVELING TO SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF GDANSK in terms of improving students' comfort and safety during traveling to school in Gdansk, which is in line with strategic city documents, in the following way:

a) City Development Strategy - Gdansk 2030 Plus. Areas of compliance include:

Development challenges (*related to increase of pedestrian traffic, cycling and public transport in citizens' travels*) and strategic goals:

- *Improving everyday mobility conditions (i.e. through refining pedestrian and cycling conditions as well as improving the public transport system integrated with active forms of mobility),*
- *Shaping healthy habits and attitudes of residents, increasing their physical activity and prompting a healthy lifestyle,*
- *Construction and modernization of communication infrastructure and improving Gdansk's transport availability,*
- *Reducing the city's greenhouse gas emission.*

b) Gdansk Operational Program 2023. Operational objectives of VIII operational program “Mobility and transport” responding to the challenges and goals specified in the strategy. Areas of compliance include:

- *Improving pedestrian and cycling conditions.* The certification system refers to areas of school grounds and the area around the school.
- *Promoting sustainable transport and active mobility.* The certification system is a tool for the operational purpose of encouraging the school community, especially students, to travel independently and actively.

Links between VIII operational program „Mobility and transport” and other areas of activity:

1. Education -*improvement of pedestrian and cycling conditions as well as increasing the attractiveness of public transport have had a positive impact on travel time to educational institutions; calming the traffic and limiting the possibility of transporting children by car directly to school will increase safety around school premises; adapting the school network to the demographic situation of the city and districts will support the implementation of the concept of a short distance city; the implementation of projects in the field of physical activity, promotion of a healthy lifestyle and shaping habits and attitudes in the field of active mobility in Gdansk's educational institutions will contribute to changing the transport model to a more sustainable one.*
2. Health and sport - *active mobility should be an important element of daily physical activity, and thanks to the regularity of daily city-travel, becoming one of the ways to stay healthy; improvement of pedestrian and cycling conditions as well as extending the zones of calm traffic will allow easier and safer movement in public space; in addition, increasing the attractiveness of public transport may affect the reduction of car traffic, and consequently reduce emissions, positively affect the living environment of residents; the promotion of sustainable transport and active mobility will contribute to the*

promotion of a healthy lifestyle; increasing the physical activity of residents and their knowledge about the impact of lifestyle and environmental conditions on health will be part of activities that promote sustainable transport and active mobility.

3. Infrastructure- Construction of street lighting, squares, pedestrian and bicycle routes will not only increase the sense of security of the residents but also improve the attractiveness of pedestrian, bicycle and public transport

Goal achievement tools: *promotional and information activities to change the attitudes of residents in the sphere of mobility will play an important role. The certification system is focused on shaping the attitudes of the school community, in particular students.*

c) Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. Areas of compliance apply in particular to activities in the area of cycling, pedestrian and public spaces and to objectives: *improvement of pedestrian and cycling conditions, public transport travel increase, increased safety of all traffic users and reducing the negative impact of transport on people, health and the environment.*



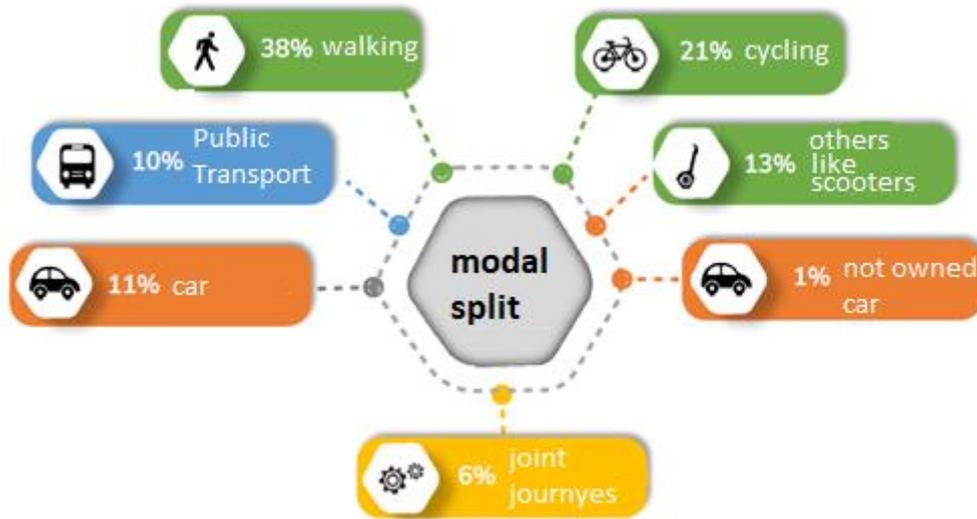
Picture: Example of Sustainable Mobility Plan for school

Action

The Gdansk primary school certification system for improving the safety and comfort of students traveling to school is an urban program.

The document promotes autonomous (independent) and sustainable mobility of children attending elementary schools. The proposed certification system creates a framework for cooperation between schools and other municipal units for changing the transport behaviour of school communities.

Studies of transport behaviour and observations of school surroundings prove that many students commute to school by car, brought by parents or guardians. The choice of using a car results from a sense of greater security, from accompanying children on way to work or from a simple choice of comfort of an accompanying adult. Therefore, there is a need to promote sustainable transport behaviour among students and their parents by creating situations for experiencing new behaviours, consolidating them and, as a result, adopting them as new behavioural patterns.



Picture: Modal split for pupils in classes IV – VI in Gdansk schools

The proposed certification system responds to two main long-term goals for children: the goal of protecting the child against an adverse event and the goal of promoting the child's physical and socio-mental development by encouraging independent and active travel to school. **The safety and comfort of children traveling to school are the responsibility of parents, teachers and school headmasters as well as other local stakeholders: local authorities, police, municipality guards, Traffic Management Company, Road and Greenery Maintains Company.** Ensuring the safe path of students in the home-school-home relationship requires planning of school districts and school areas. Road safety around school premises is a complex problem and requires comprehensive actions in the field of: education and upbringing of traffic participants, in particular children and young people, as well as their parents, organization of road traffic and parking, using methods from the catalogue of safe technical and organizational solutions, legal and organizational activities, spatial development. The Action which will be implemented in order to improve the PI includes elaboration of a guidebook containing methodology and procedure for certification schools in terms of children's safety on the way to school, as a useful and easy to use tool. That is: CERTIFICATION SYSTEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE FIELD OF IMPROVING SAFETY AND COMFORT OF STUDENTS TRAVELING TO SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF GDANSK.

According to the proposed document, the city provides funds for:

- Certifying program implementation,
- Activities related to improving the safety and comfort of traveling to school and around the schools involved in the certification process.

Certificates for schools are awarded for three years on a three-point scale (gold, silver, bronze). The certificate level awarded depends on the implementation of the adopted criteria.

Assessment criteria:

AREAS	Max. points
division of tasks (split model) on travels to school	20
infrastructure and traffic organization within the school	20
infrastructure and traffic organization on the streets in the vicinity of the school	5
mobility and road safety policy run by schools	15
promotional activities	15
theoretical and practical education	25
SUM	100

In the areas of infrastructure and traffic organization around school, mobility policy and road safety activities conducted by schools, promotional activities as well as theoretical and practical education, the following were proposed:

- Mandatory criteria, which must be met to obtain a certificate, and
- Optional criteria, which after meeting the minimum threshold of mandatory criteria may increase the final total points and the awarded certificate level.

The results of the research on the division of transport tasks is an obligatory criterion, and the infrastructure and organization of traffic on the streets in the vicinity of the school is in the group of optional criteria.

The individual criteria consist of specific actions and solutions assigned to scores. The list of activities and solutions, grouped into categories, together with the assigned points form an assessment calculator - a practical tool to help determine the state of preparation of the school and the granting of certificates. Actions and solutions proposed in the calculator are described and illustrated by examples in the catalogues of actions.

The following actions were proposed in individual categories:

Division of transport tasks

- Share of sustainable travel [%]

Infrastructure and traffic organization within the school

- Bicycle stands
- Bicycle stands under the roof
- U-shaped stands
- "Cloakroom" for personal transport equipment
- Accessibility for people with special needs of the school building
- Traffic organization within the school
- School grounds lighting



Photos: Examples from primary schools in Gdansk

Infrastructure and organization of traffic inside the school to promote sustainable mobility

- Organization of safe passenger exchange in tour
- Attractive space dedicated to pedestrians and

Secure infrastructure outside the school

- 30 km/h zone on the streets by the school entrances
- Calmed pedestrian crossings at the school entrances
- KISS & RIDE zone
- Bicycle path directly to school

School policy on sustainable and secure mobility

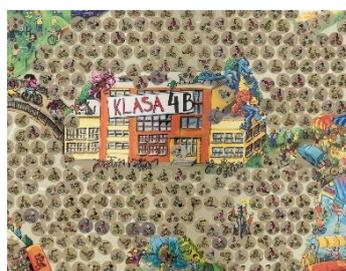
- School statute
- Annual plan of didactic, caring and educational activities
- Mobility plans
- Procedures or policies regarding the safe return and collection of children from school
- Active contact in the field of road safety and mobility with the Road Administrator of the school
- Active contact in the field of road safety and mobility with the Police or City Guard
- Active contact in the field of road safety and mobility with scientific units
- Active contact in the field of road safety and mobility with other units
- Parental involvement in creating mobility policy
- Reaching the school road map
- Periodic street closing



Photos: Examples of solutions promoting cycling in Gdansk schools

Actions promoting active and sustainable mobility

- Appointment of a sustainable mobility coordinator
- Participation in the Bicycle May campaign
- Other actions addressed to schools organized by an external entity
- Encourage parents to allow children to travel to and from school on their own



Actions promoting sustainable and secure mobility

- School campaigns and events promoting active mobility (excluding "Bicycle May")
- Parental involvement in activities for sustainable mobility

Theoretical and practical education promoting sustainable and secure mobility

- Cyclical education
- Occasional education - participation of an external expert
- Occasional education - parental participation (active)
- Practicing behaviour in "bicycle towns" or on the pitch
- Practical classes in real traffic
- Transferring content beyond the core curriculum
- Skill verification



Pictures: Cycling training in Gdansk primary schools.

During the certification process, the school declares and then reports the performance of the activities underlying the assessment. **The following catalogues** support schools in planning activities:

- Examples of organizational and technical solutions on the school premises subject to evaluation in the certification process
- Examples of organizational and technical solutions around the school that are subject to evaluation in the certification process
- Examples of educational and promotional solutions focused on improving the safety and comfort of students traveling to school subject to evaluation in the certification process
- Organizational and technical solutions on the school premises and around the school that are not subject to evaluation in the certification process

The set of actions needed to be taken to improve the conditions of pedestrian and cycling traffic around schools is a summary of audit studies, carried out in 10 schools as a pilot action, and was presented in the form of recommendations.

Recommendations for schools include:

- Changes in the traffic organization on school premises,
- Limiting car traffic,
- Investments increasing the attractiveness of pedestrian space and infrastructure for cyclists and other active forms of mobility.

The proposed solutions to the identified problems are contained in the catalogues of organizational and technical activities the proposed actions and solutions are an integral part of the assessment calculator, a list of actions and solutions grouped into categories with maximum and intermediate points assigned to them, which can be obtained depending on the degree of

fulfilment of the criterion. The assessment calculator is a convenient tool for implementing the certification process (at the stage of self-assessment and final assessment).

Recommendations for owners or managers of adjacent areas (municipality or housing association) include:

- Development of infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists,
- Use of pedestrian and cyclist protection devices,
- Organization of traffic in the area around the school,
- Enforcement of currently binding regulations on streets around schools,
- Traffic calming,
- creating a Kiss & Ride zone in the immediate vicinity of the school,
- introducing housing zones at the school premises

The proposed solutions to the identified problems are contained in the catalogues of organizational and technical activities.

The proposed recommendations cover following areas:

Education:

- a. introducing mandatory training and exams for a cycling license,
- b. developing single teaching programs and materials in the field of safe and sustainable mobility,
- c. an obligation on municipal units (e.g. GAI, GZDiZ) to conduct educational classes,

Information:

Introducing a system of spatial visualization of school areas (signage, colours). It is desirable that the marking of the school area should be associated with information about the school's working time, ideally if it meets the condition of a variable content mark depending on the actual school work time. A low-budget solution that meets the above condition is a system of flags displayed only during schoolwork.

Promotion:

Using the Gdansk educational platform to promote the certification process, participating schools, campaigns promoting sustainable behaviour.

Security:

Recommendation of project catalogues for investments around school premises (e.g. when starting school, closing the road to the school for 15 minutes for car traffic),

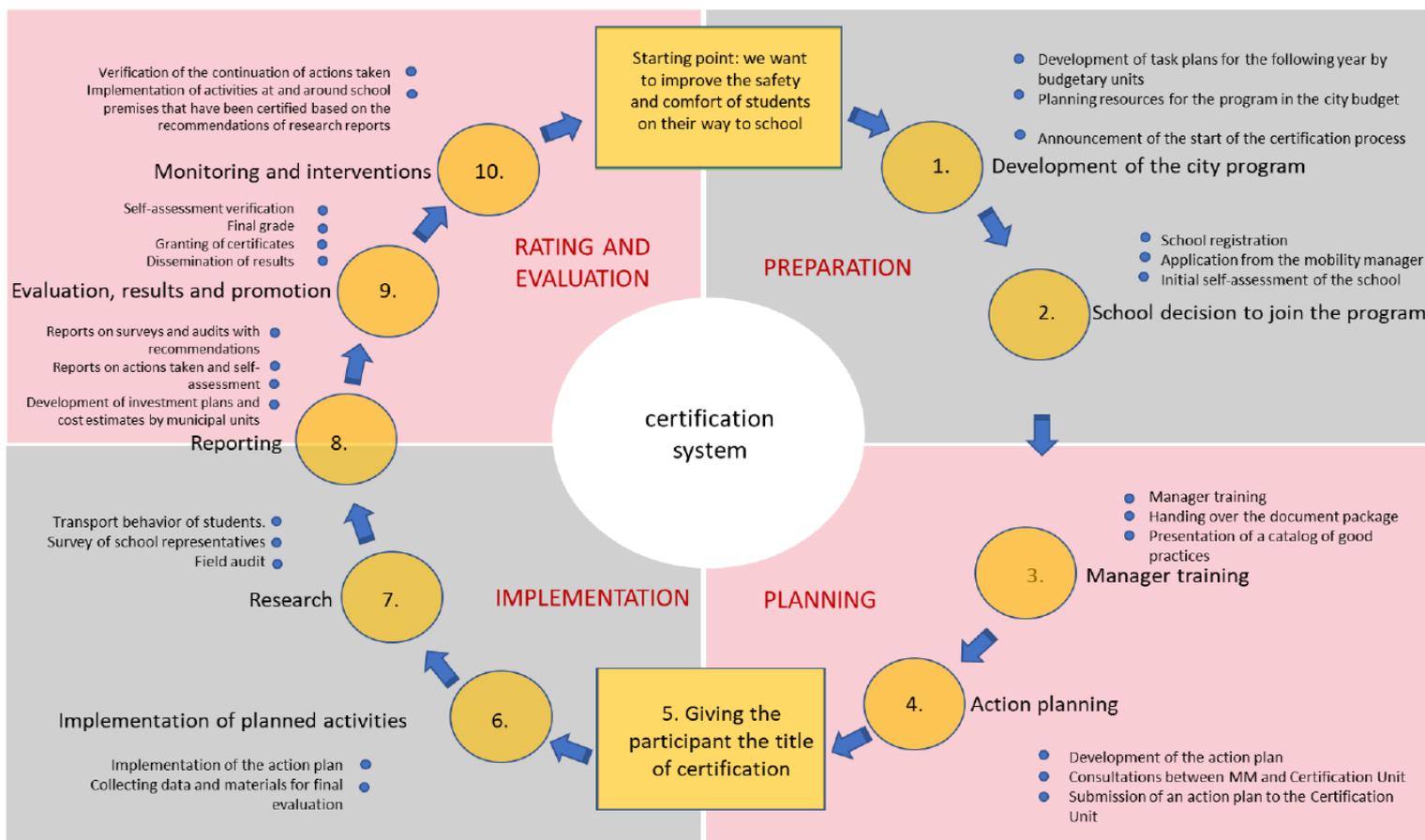
Transport service:

- a. Kiss&Ride – location of this type of parking lots where it is possible and development of a graphic sign and / or colour marking clearly indicating that there is no parking possibility and the parking lot is used for drivers dropping off children. Parking lots must be located near the entrance to the building (in the case of children in classes I-III) and can be located at a greater distance from the building (children in classes IV-VII) and guarantee a safe path to this entrance.
- b. taking into account information about where students travel to given schools and including it in timetables to adapt them to school hours,
- c. designating places in public transport dedicated to school children in the immediate vicinity of the driver.

Planning:

- a. striving to reduce the size of existing school areas in order to reach the school area by 1500 m access distance,

- b. verification of the location of school areas in relation to routes with heavy traffic,
- c. increasing the discipline of compliance with the rules of regionalization.



The certification process addresses primary schools in Gdansk and it consists of: 4 phases, 10 stages and 27 steps presented in figure below (figure 4 in the document).

The preparation phase lasts until the end of June of the year in which the school wants to join the program. It allows the school to become familiar with the principles of the certification process, to make a decision on joining the program based on the developed self-assessment calculator. The possibility of registering a school for the program ends at the end of the school year.

The planning phase begins with training of mobility managers selected from school employees. The planning stage is mainly associated with the development of an action plan necessary to be taken to achieve the assumed level of certification. The certification body provides consultations for MM. This stage falls on the holiday break.

The implementation phase begins at the beginning of the school year and lasts until mid-April. During this time, activities planned to achieve the certificate are implemented, surveys are conducted among students and school authorities, materials and data needed to confirm the implementation of the declared activities are collected.

The assessment and monitoring phase consists in summarizing the level of implementation of activities declared by the school on the basis of forms completed by the school, surveys and field audits and using the assessment calculator. Announcement of results and award ceremony takes

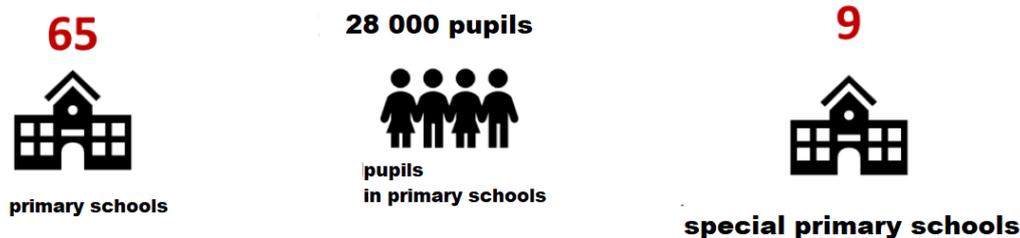
place at an official gala. The monitoring process covers the period from issuing the decision to grant certificates to the next assessment period, during which schools already possessing the certificate will be subject to reassessment whether they have abandoned any activities that constituted the basis for granting the certificate.

The obtained certificate is valid for three years, but each year the level is verified on the basis of a short report submitted by the school. If the school has discontinued mobility activities, the certificate will expire. Applying for a higher level of certification is possible, at the earliest, one year after obtaining a bronze or silver badge. A higher level of certification may be granted provided that the school introduced **new and more mobility-friendly measures** in the past year. By following the procedure, every year the school must prove, by means of a short report, that it still meets the requirements of the level reached.

Maintaining the acquired certificate after three years of its validity requires passing the certification process again and demonstrating positive, measurable changes in the implementation of sustainable mobility activities.

The certification process is related to the field audit and school staff surveys. The results of field research and survey studies are to indicate areas where action is needed. They are to provide a kind of hint for schools and local authorities in which areas actions should be taken first. Establishing minimum points for each category requires a comprehensive approach to the issue of students' travel to school. Infrastructure works to improve the safety and comfort of students, parents and teachers around the school will be carried out by municipal units.

Public schools in Gdansk and number of pupils 2018



Source or inspiration from the project

The Gdansk school certification system, together with the methodology for conducting it, meets the framework conditions set out in the document "Mobility-friendly School Certification" (Mobility-friendly School Certification, 2019), developed as part of the School Chance project. In addition, the set of requirements for the Gdansk certification system contains inspirations from the experience of other School Chance program partners, in particular:

- the participatory nature of the process - the active involvement of authorities, schools, students and parents, inspired by "Good Practices" (DP) presented by Utrecht, especially in the "Road Safety Label and School Zones",
- promoting safe and sustainable mobility (SV in Reggio Emilia, Graz and Utrecht),

- A multifaceted approach combining educational, promotional, information and organizational activities (Utrecht and Venice GPs),
- Incentive mechanisms for participants to develop further, regardless of their certification level (based on Utrecht's experience described at www.interregeurope.eu in the good practices tab),
- Appointment of a Mobility Manager inspired by the good practice of Reggio Emilia, where the need for MM cooperation with the city is emphasized, but also the city's support in terms of tools and knowledge (e.g. manual for MM, trainings, workshops, scope and action plan, terms and conditions of cooperation with the city, etc.).

Also at the stage of formulating evaluation criteria, the partners' experience in the field of:

1. Promotional campaigns. The city of Gdansk is the initiator of the largest nationwide Bicycle May campaign, in which children, through play and mutual competition, gain good experience in cycling to school in May. The experience of other partners provide examples of other campaigns with different coverage and target groups, including:

- promoting cycling among children but also adults (employees, parents) GPs from Gdansk and Utrecht,
- promoting year-round cycling - Winter cycling campaign (SV in Gavle)
- raising drivers' awareness of road behaviour around the school - "Apple Lemon" (Graz)
- practical education in real traffic - Cycling exam (Utrecht, Graz)
- other campaigns, which can be read on www.interregeurope.eu in the good practices tab and on www.rowerowygdansk.pl/start,166,228.html.

Examples of campaigns conducted by other project partners were used to create a catalogue of activities, which constitute a set of hints for school authorities and local authorities in the scope of possible actions to be taken to improve the conditions for walking and cycling in and around the school premises.

2. Education. The inspiration for this document are the conclusions of the Manifesto of Reggio Emilia, in which the necessity is indicated:

- developing a set of teaching materials;
- introducing teacher training courses on sustainable mobility, environmental issues and practical activities to be carried out with students;
- creating an optional educational package on sustainable mobility and security on the road to be integrated with the school curriculum,
- organization of practical bicycle workshops in primary schools (Graz).

Inspired by the experience of Western partners, the authors of the study proposed among the school evaluation criteria an optional criterion related to practical education in real conditions. The catalog of activities also proposes educational activities that use teaching methods more involving children than traditional lectures, including learning through play (e.g. Traffic Snake Game, walking & cycling buses).



European Union | European Regional Development Fund

Relevance

The PI priority is to reduce congestion in the city and reduce CO2 emission, therefore alternatives to private car use, such as walking, cycling and collective transport, should be made more attractive and safe. However the Strategy underlines the goals of creating an efficient, safe and sustainable transport system based on public transport and active mobility, there is no school mobility specifically mentioned. The City aims to work on how to make school surrounding more cycling and walking friendly and above all make cycling and walking safer & more secure. The objective is not only to reduce congestion in front of the schools' entrances but promote cycling and walking to schools on everyday bases. Gdansk would like to achieve the change of behaviour pattern and promote healthier style of life through more active forms of mobility among children. LAP will provide an improvement of PI by developing standards and recommendations for all schools in the city to improve safety of children on their way to school. Safety is the basic, necessary factor for promoting active mobility among pupils.

Monitoring & indicators

The main purpose of the certification process is to change students' transport behaviour to a more sustainable one. Therefore, the basic measure of effectiveness of the implemented system and individual activities will be the division of transport tasks and its changes expressed in the following **indicators**:

- change in the share in total number of travels made during the year using active forms of mobility [%]
- change in the share in total number of travels made during measurement periods using active forms of mobility [%]

Indirect indicators for assessing the certification process will be:

- number of schools joining the certification process [each],
- number of schools obtaining certificates [each],
- completion rate of activities and investments accepted for implementation by local government units as part of the certification process expressed as the share of completed tasks at all planned activities for the given year [%].

It is recommended to develop and make available on the website a short process evaluation survey to be completed by participants of the certification process including MM, students, parents, etc.

Stakeholders

The safety and comfort of children traveling to school are the responsibility of parents, teachers and school headmasters as well as other local stakeholders: local authorities, police, municipality guards, Traffic Management Company, Road and Greenery Maintains Company.

The main final beneficiaries of the certification process are school children 6-15 years old, but also their parents and guardians, as well as the rest of the school community. The recipients of the certification process are also local government units, for which the results of surveys and field audits will be a kind of hint which areas require priority action. Table below (no 3.1 in the document) contains a list of stakeholders along with their assigned roles and a description of the importance of the process for individual groups.

Stakeholders	Importance of the program	Role in the process
School children	stimulating new, sustainable transport behaviour; gaining positive experiences; consolidating sustainable behaviour; acquiring new knowledge and skills within theoretical and practical education; increasing knowledge and awareness about security and sustainable mobility; developing a sense of responsibility for own transport choices; increasing physical activity; promoting a healthy lifestyle.	Main final beneficiaries are expected to: active participation in actions and campaigns; participation in mandatory and additional classes from theoretical and practical education regarding safe and sustainable mobility; travel to school using active forms of mobility or public transport; verification of acquired knowledge and skills - (competitions, cycling license).

School Staff	<p>substantive support in the process of developing the action plan;</p> <p>a catalogue of solutions facilitating the selection of activities, including hints for teachers in the field of teaching methods and educational materials;</p> <p>stimulating new, sustainable transport behaviour;</p> <p>gaining positive experiences;</p> <p>consolidating new sustainable behaviours.</p>	<p>Final beneficiaries and implementing actions. They are expected to:</p> <p>active participation in actions and campaigns;</p> <p>using the catalogue of educational activities to increase the quality and effectiveness of education in the field of safe and sustainable mobility;</p> <p>initiatives beyond the core curriculum (practical classes, interest groups, trips, etc.) of sustainable travel to school.</p>
Parents	<p>increasing parents' awareness of the effects of individual transport choices;</p> <p>incentives to improve children's independence in traveling to school.</p>	<p>introducing mobility provisions in the school statute;</p> <p>acceptance and compliance with the provisions of the statute;</p> <p>supporting actions and campaigns undertaken by the school;</p> <p>compliance with traffic rules around the school.</p>
Inhabitants of the area	<p>changes in the school environment for BRD;</p> <p>reduction of car traffic around the school premises;</p> <p>better quality of life as a result of reducing noise, emissions, and occupancy of the area if the number of children transported by car is reduced.</p>	<p>Indirect beneficiaries. Their role should be to:</p> <p>correct behaviour in traffic;</p> <p>setting an example for students watching them. The education method by example.</p>
City authorities	<p>integrating school community mobility into urban policy;</p> <p>a tool motivating schools to take active steps to change the transport behaviour of school community;</p> <p>better quality of life for residents.</p>	<p>Process organizer.</p> <p>providing funds in the city budget for investments in schools areas;</p> <p>participating in the certification process - crucial for the whole process;</p> <p>including individual municipal units in investment plans resulting from the certification process.</p>



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Costs, Financing sources & Timeframe:

The certification system as a city's initiative is financed from the city's budget. The funds reserved every year should include support for the certification process as well as funds for investments and activities aimed at improving the safety and comfort of children traveling to school, recommended for implementation in audit reports and agreed with schools that have obtained certificates.

The first pilot field audits and surveys of bicycle and pedestrian traffic conditions were conducted in 2019 in 10 Gdansk primary schools, among students from grades IV-VIII and their parents. As a result, a set of recommended actions and investments were created, which will be successively implemented by schools and the city during 2020 and 2021 and later lead to the certification of those schools. The process of the costs estimation of small facilities and infrastructure improvement, recommended as the result of this pilot action, is approximately 500 000 PLN. It should be finalised towards the end of this year.

The conclusions of the research and audits were used to develop the Gdansk primary school certification system to improve the safety and comfort of students traveling to school. It will constitute a continuation and extension of the actions taken.