

The reconstruction of surroundings of the historic Gdańsk University of Technology building

2016



University

Gdańsk University of Technology

Country

Poland

Location



Size



Mobility Organizational Structure



Summary



Aims

- Creating a square in front of the Main Building of the GUT, which will be spacious and both modern and referring to the historical character of this place.
- Creating a friendly, representative space for pedestrians and cyclists with recreational and leisure functions.
- Limiting car traffic on the GUT campus.
- Reduction of the number of vehicles parked on the GUT campus and in its vicinity.
- Encouraging employees and students of the GUT to use the bicycle as a means of transport.



Stakeholders



Background

The Gdansk University of Technology (GUT) is situated in Wrzeszcz, a district which for years has been Gdańsk's main commercial and service hub. GUT has nearly 24,000 students and more than 2,700 staff. Nearly all of the university's buildings are located on the main campus. GUT has location along the city's main transport axis, excellent links to Gdańsk's transport network and to public transport (access to the bus, tram and train network), cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. The PG's academic community accounts for about 5% of Gdansk's population and exceeds population of the district it is in. Therefore, transport behaviors of the academic community can have an impact on the city's transport system. The study [1] shows that the car is the most popular means of transport used in trips to and from the university - 57% by employees and 18% by students. Therefore, the university authorities strive to reduce the number of journeys by car and increase the share of active forms of travel. Such changes would have ecological and health benefits. The university authorities, as part of the spatial development of the campus, implement investments to encourage cycling and walking. Reconstruction of the square in front of the main building is such an example.

The completion of the reconstruction of the square in front of the Main Building of the Gdańsk University of Technology led to the creation of over 200 bicycle places. One of the main objectives of the modernization was to minimize car traffic in the historic part of the campus. Thanks to this, the space between the buildings is more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists. Establishment of a covered bicycle parking facilitates the development of bicycle transport and encourages the students and employees of the GUT to use it.

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Description

As part of the reconstruction of the square:

1. The entry for cars from the side of the main building was closed.
2. The square was established as a pedestrian area. Thus, the possibility of driving between the eastern and western parts of the campus was closed, limiting the inner car traffic at the campus.
3. A covered bicycle parking lot for 200 bicycles was located instead of car parking spaces.
4. The space of the square and footpaths were equipped with benches.
5. The main building, square and benches gained illumination.

One of the assumptions of the modernization was to minimize the car traffic in the historical part of the campus. In front of the entrance to the Main Building, a spacious and representative square was designed, connected with the pedestrian traffic zone. You can easily get to other locations from here, including to the square next to the Auditorium Maximum, located near parks. Its surface was made of granite slabs with three shades of gray (with a visible university logo),

surrounded by narrow stripes made of granite blocks. From the side of the Main Building, the square was closed with stone seats in the shape of an arch. Two fountains and historic street lamps (from the campus construction period) were installed. Several glass-panelled bicycle sheds and uncovered stands were built.

A covered bicycle parking lot was built next to the Main Building of the Gdańsk University of Technology, to the right from the main entrance (from Narutowicza Street). It was located in an easily accessible, visible and well-lit place. Thanks to this, an additional number of bicycle parking places (over 200) was provided.

A self-service repair station was located about 5 meters from the covered parking. The station includes a pump with an adapter for all valves, an adjustable spanner, a set of folding hex keys and screwdrivers, and two tire levers. This mini workshop is also equipped with a rack, on which one can hang the bike. As a result, small repairs can be carried out immediately, without the need to transport the bike to another location.



Indicators

Indicators used to assess the impact of the renovation of the square can be:

- Number of bicycles parked in the newly built parking lot.
- Number of cyclists arriving at PG on a typical day of the week.
- Number of people entering by walking or biking through the main gate of the PG campus located in the northern part of the square.
- Number of people walking or biking across the square in the east-west direction.



Results



Expense & Financing

- ~ 2 900 000 euro - the square modernization
- ~ 60 000 euro - pedestrian routes including
- ~ 7 000 euro for bicycle parking lot

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 Conclusions and Lessons learnt

- Thoughtful, consistently implemented changes bring expected results.
- Drivers are reluctant to accept a traffic change proposals, removing parking spaces, but quickly get used to new solutions.
- Restriction of car traffic positively affects the sense of safety among pedestrians and cyclists.

 Pictures



Fig. 1. Square in front of the main building after reconstruction with the main entrance closed for traffic. Fot.: K.Krzempek



Fig. 2. Audience on the reconstructed square during the concert. Fot.: K.Krzempek



Fig. 3. A covered bicycle parking lot for bicycles in front of the main, historic building of GUT. Fot.: K.Janiszevska



Fig. 4. A covered bicycle parking lot for bicycles in front of the main, historic building of GUT. Fot.: K.Janiszevska



Fig. 5. Self-service repair station for bicycles. Fot.: K.Janiszevska



Fig. 6. Pedestrian zone with benches. Fot.: K.Krzempek