

SPORT-RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF SOPOT

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Abstract: The aim of research was the assessment of sport-recreational infrastructure in Sopot resort by its residents with reference to expectations resulting from free time needs. Adult residents of Sopot from different social groups were examined. It allowed to show variables (ways and sizes) and benefiting from free time groups included in three decades: 25-34 years, 35-44 years and 45-54 years. According to the line set in the Strategic Plan of Sopot city, development of tourism should contribute to increase of visitors, particularly off season and to laying out those arrivals during the year.

Key words: recreational infrastructure, sport activities, free time, resort

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INTRODUCTION

Occurrence on mass scale social and, at the same time, individual wealth called free time is specific achievement of contemporary civilization. This notion is treated not only as essential condition of human culture, but as an indicator of social-economic progress and background of all future “*free time civilization*”. Free time problem belongs to particularly vital and complex issues of contemporary civilization. Its scale, contents and forms of consumption have direct connection with development of human personality, with possibilities of satisfying needs of self-realization. If we assume that the amount of free time constitutes measure of civilization advancement of the country, the ways of benefiting from it will be the indicator of cultural development of society, level of collective consciousness, awakening needs on higher level and aspiration of satisfying them. It is important how much time we can spend on self-realization, rest, entertainment or fun (Gaworecki, 2000). Using this wealth is essential as well. Free time constitutes wealth which allows many human dreams come true. Such factors as level of concentration of population, material conditions, education and professional

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differentiation, activity of social and cultural organizations, institutions organizing free time in local societies and also to a large extent cultural traditions, releasing new interests have influence on contents and form of spending free time. That is why, it is important particularly in greater urban complexes, to aim at building cultural traditions. Big role is also played by:

- Aspiring to technical and social revitalization of big bleak block building districts deprived of places where particularly children and youth could spend free time;
- Indicating on value of upbringing process directing it to benefiting from free time including extra-curricular activities strengthening desirable habits and customs;
- Indicating valuable patterns of spending free time so that they were attractive for particular range of age of pupils;
- Treating realization of function within this aspect by school as investment into resources, which capitalized by pupils will allow to raise quality of spending free time in the essential way;
- Treating conscious and planned learning of accepted patterns of free time as investment into local capital serving the whole society.

Basic factors differentiating method of spending free time are: education (table 1), gender (in much lesser extent) social status and local environment (Przeclawski, 1993). A very vital factors are also economic situation of families and their engagement in performing particular family functions.

Table 1. Level of education of Sopot citizens included in research

Level of education	Research group								
	18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL		
	K	M	K	M	K	M	K	M	
higher	n	23	1	165	119	18	7	206	127
	%	23.0%	1.5%	61.6%	64.4%	37.5%	15.6%	49.5%	43.2%
bachelor	n	9	8	44	14	0	0	53	22
	%	9.0%	12.3%	16.4%	7.6%	0.0%	0.0%	12.7%	7.5%
secondary	n	66	51	55	46	23	29	144	126
	%	66.0%	78.5%	20.5%	25.0%	47.9%	64.4%	34.6%	42.9%
vocational	n	0	0	2	5	7	9	9	14
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	2.7%	14.6%	20.0%	2.2%	4.8%
elementary	n	2	5	2	0	0	0	4	5
	%	2.0%	7.7%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.7%
Total	n	100	65	268	184	48	45	416	294
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Self government authorities of Sopot city, intentional structure, non-governmental organizations and natural upbringing institutions will take steps concerning free time in satisfying needs of citizens in the aspect of free time. To what extent these actions satisfy needs and preferences of Sopot residents themselves?

AIM OF RESEARCH

The aim of research was the assessment of sport-recreational infrastructure in Sopot resort by its residents with reference to expectations resulting from free time needs.

Material and method of research

Adult residents of Sopot from different social groups were examined. It allowed to show variables (ways and sizes) and benefiting from free time groups included in three decades: 25-34 years, 35-44 years and 45-54 years.

In the first group, to 24 years of age, found themselves persons finishing education and starting professional career. The second group included people in working age, who

had stabilized professional situation. The last one, the oldest group constituted people in the pre and in pensionable age, from 55 to 64 years of age.

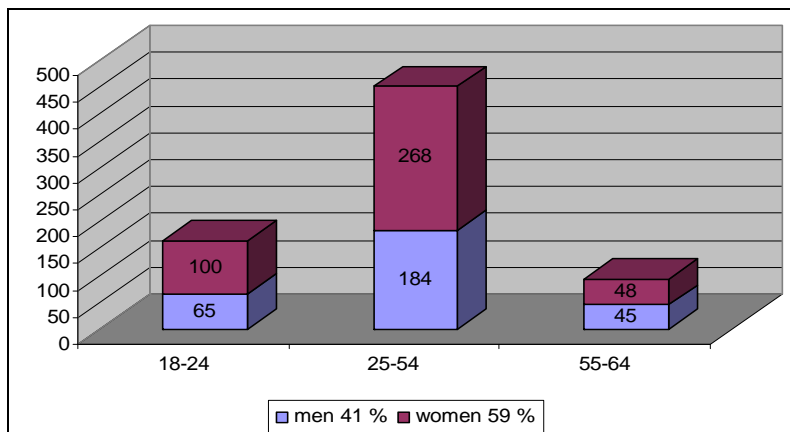


Figure 1. Structure of age and gender of the respondents
(Source: Rocznik statystyczny 2006)

Analyzed were source materials of intentional organizations dealing with programming free time and creating tourist and recreational infrastructure and structure of local self-government which are responsible for creating conditions for active spending free time of adult residents of Sopot. It was assumed that through extending tourist – recreational infrastructure and offer of physical culture, engagement of Sopot citizens in physical recreation may be increased.

Information was gathered by means of questionnaire, interview and analysis of documents. In the questionnaire were applied half closed and closed questions. Interview, as research technique was applied in conversations with representatives of local self government.

The questions, among others, concerned: tourist-recreational infrastructure including Long Term Investment Plan of Sopot City (2007-2014); program offer of physical culture; cooperation with social and cultural organizations. The material was elaborated statistically by using computer calculation technique. MS Office 2003, MS Excel spreadsheets were applied and program Statistica 5.OPL (Kędzior and Karcz, 1997).

Research results

Sopot through sport-recreational infrastructure proposes its residents rich offer of spending free time. Sopot is a place of rest for everybody, regardless of age, gender, education, performed profession or interests. It offers numerous cultural, entertainment and recreational events. Management of free time results from individual needs of residents. Those of them, who need relax, rest may enjoy walking along the sea shore or in the woods, those who search entertainment, may spend time in numerous clubs and pubs, whereas those residents who prefer active way of spending free time may choose from many propositions (swimming pool, pitches, cycling lanes, sport halls etc) (table 2).

Sopot created perfect conditions for active rest, enabling experience in almost any sport discipline. Here you can find among others: the biggest in the country tennis court complex, sport stadiums, horse-race track and ski lift. The city offers possibility of doing water sports thanks to well equipped rental of equipment run by Municipal Centre of Sport and Recreation. Abundant sport infrastructure of Sopot makes organizing many sport events possible-beginning from sailing and windsurfing regatta, through tennis tournaments and track and field meetings. Sport-recreational infrastructure of Sopot, adapted to needs of residents, forms professional proposition of ways of spending free time.

Table 2. Participation in organized forms of spending free time

Type of event		Research group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		K	M	K	M	K	M	K	M
Sport	n	55	27	57	82	0	6	112	115
	%	39.0%	39.1%	18.4%	36.1%	0.0%	11.5%	22.3%	33.0%
Cultural	n	80	42	218	111	25	28	323	181
	%	56.7%	60.9%	70.6%	48.9%	47.2%	53.8%	64.2%	52.0%
Religious	n	0	0	8	7	20	18	28	25
	%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	3.1%	37.7%	34.6%	5.6%	7.2%
Other	n	6	0	26	27	8	0	40	27
	%	4.3%	0.0%	8.4%	11.9%	15.1%	0.0%	8.0%	7.8%
Total of responses	n	141	69	309	227	53	52	503	348
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 3. Organisers of events in free time

Organizer of events		Research group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		K	M	K	M	K	M	K	M
Employer	n	13	18	36	31	0	0	49	49
	%	9.9%	25.0%	11.1%	13.7%	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	14.3%
Club	n	45	22	47	48	0	18	92	88
	%	34.4%	30.6%	14.5%	21.2%	0.0%	40.0%	18.3%	25.7%
Tourist office	n	2	0	22	11	0	0	24	11
	%	1.5%	0.0%	6.8%	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	3.2%
Self organized organization	n	46	28	135	81	0	0	181	109
	%	35.1%	38.9%	41.7%	35.8%	0.0%	0.0%	36.0%	31.8%
City authorities	n	21	4	50	33	20	6	91	43
	%	16.0%	5.6%	15.4%	14.6%	41.7%	13.3%	18.1%	12.5%
Other	n	4	0	34	22	28	21	66	43
	%	3.1%	0.0%	10.5%	9.7%	58.3%	46.7%	13.1%	12.5%
Total of responses	n	131	72	324	226	48	45	503	343
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4. Types of preferred events

Type of event		Research group				
		Persons who learn	Owners of company	White-collar workers	Physical workers	TOTAL
Sport	n	88	19	37	10	154
	%	43.35%	25.68%	26.24%	34.48%	34.45%
Cultural	n	115	53	95	7	270
	%	56.65%	71.62%	67.38%	24.14%	60.40%
Religious	n	0	0	5	0	5
	%	0.00%	0.00%	3.55%	0.00%	1.12%
Other	n	0	2	4	12	18
	%	0.00%	2.70%	2.84%	41.38%	4.03%
Total of responses	n	203	74	141	29	447
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Respondents in the age 18-24 years, most frequently participated in meetings organized individually by clubs or employer. Those respondents who were professionally active, in the age of 25-54 years, most frequently organized free time by themselves, while in the oldest group of respondents choices of events organized by city authorities or other organizations were dominating (table 3). The least popular were events organized by tourist agencies.

Table 5. Importance of physical exercises in the opinion of respondents

Importance of physical exercises		Research group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Unnecessary	n	11	4	2	2	0	0	13	6
	%	11.0%	6.2%	0.7%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	2.0%
Necessary	n	86	47	202	136	18	21	306	204
	%	86.0%	72.3%	75.4%	73.9%	37.5%	46.7%	73.6%	69.4%
For abled	n	0	5	19	22	8	0	27	27
	%	0.0%	7.7%	7.1%	12.0%	16.7%	0.0%	6.5%	9.2%
For children and youth	n	0	0	4	8	11	8	15	16
	%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	4.3%	22.9%	17.8%	3.6%	5.4%
For predisposed	n	3	5	13	3	0	0	16	8
	%	3.0%	7.7%	4.9%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	2.7%
Other	n	0	4	28	13	11	16	39	33
	%	0.0%	6.2%	10.4%	7.1%	22.9%	35.6%	9.4%	11.2%
Total of responses	n	100	65	268	184	48	45	416	294
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Majority of respondents are conscious how important for health are physical exercises (table 5). Only a few claim that they are redundant. In the group of oldest respondents, differentiated opinions on physical activity, may be noticed. Due to high level of consciousness concerning importance of physical activity for human health, sport offer should be constantly extended.

Table 6. Using sport-recreational facilities in Sopot by respondents

Using facilities in Sopot		Research group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
YES	n	80	60	227	158	20	30	327	248
	%	80,0%	92,3%	84,7%	85,9%	41,7%	66,7%	78,6%	84,4%
NO	n	20	5	41	26	28	15	89	46
	%	20,0%	7,7%	15,3%	14,1%	58,3%	33,3%	21,4%	15,6%
Total	n	100	65	268	184	48	45	416	294
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7. Most frequently visited sport-recreational facilities of Sopot

Type of facility		Research group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Pitch	n	21	21	27	37	4	12	52	70
	%	15.3%	19.3%	8.0%	13.9%	20.0%	40.0%	10.5%	17.3%
Bowling alley	n	22	15	29	39	0	2	51	56
	%	16.1%	13.8%	8.6%	14.7%	0.0%	6.7%	10.3%	13.8%
Swimming pool	n	46	30	180	68	14	14	240	112
	%	33.6%	27.5%	53.1%	25.6%	70.0%	46.7%	48.4%	27.7%
Gym	n	15	23	50	61	0	0	65	84
	%	10.9%	21.1%	14.7%	22.9%	0.0%	0.0%	13.1%	20.7%
Billiard	n	13	20	29	44	0	0	42	64
	%	9.5%	18.3%	8.6%	16.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8.5%	15.8%
Other	n	20	0	24	17	2	2	46	19
	%	14.6%	0.0%	7.1%	6.4%	10.0%	6.7%	9.3%	4.7%
Total of responses	n	137	109	339	266	20	30	496	405
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Among respondents prevails positive assessment of sport-recreational basis of Sopot, more than half of the respondents gave such answer. A bit distressing may be the fact that most of the opinions were moderately positive, opinions of the type: "rather good". As many as 52,4% of male respondents and 45,7% of female respondents expressed their opinion in this way. Decidedly positive opinion gave only 2,0% of men and 1.4% women. Men also more frequently than women expressed critical opinions, as many as 34.4% of respondents claimed that sport-recreational basis of Sopot needs improvement (table 8). The city is perceived mainly as the place of summer rest. Residents of Sopot expect yearlong attractiveness of the city as place of their residence, rest and recreation. When asked about the offer of the sport-recreational basis, the residents respond that it is sufficient only in summer. Such opinion was expressed by 90.0% of surveyed women and 93.2% of surveyed men. It is otherwise with reference to winter season. The basis was assessed as unsatisfactory by 11.8% of surveyed women and 12.6% of surveyed men. In the oldest age group no critical opinion appeared.

SUMMARY

Creating proper basis for motor activity is particularly essential when majority of residents of resort chose Sopot as the most important and sometimes as the only place of participation in sport-recreation activities. It is particularly important when we consider location of the city which is at the verge of two other, big urban complexes- Gdynia and Gdańsk- offering richer sport-recreational basis.

Table 8. Assessment of sport-recreational basis of Sopot in the opinion of respondents

Assesment of basis		Research group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Very good	n	0	0	6	6	0	0	6	6
	%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	2.0%
Good	n	17	3	35	12	14	0	66	15
	%	17.0%	4.6%	13.1%	6.5%	29.2%	0.0%	15.9%	5.1%
Rather good	n	54	36	126	106	10	12	190	154
	%	54.0%	55.4%	47.0%	57.6%	20.8%	26.7%	45.7%	52.4%
Rather Bad	n	15	17	50	18	12	23	77	58
	%	15.0%	26.2%	18.7%	9.8%	25.0%	51.1%	18.5%	19.7%
Bad	n	2	9	13	25	0	0	15	34
	%	2.0%	13.8%	4.9%	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	11.6%
Very Bad	n	0	0	15	7	0	2	15	9
	%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	3.8%	0.0%	4.4%	3.6%	3.1%
I don't know	n	12	0	23	10	12	8	47	18
	%	12.0%	0.0%	8.6%	5.4%	25.0%	17.8%	11.3%	6.1%
Total	n	100	65	268	184	48	45	416	294
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Policy of the city is one of the factors deciding about the shape of recreational infrastructure. It forms basis for development of recreation in Poland and it is part of program of city development, adapted to demands, interest and preferences of residents (Smoleń 2006). Each city (including Sopot) should satisfy needs resulting from growing activity in sport, recreation and rest. Besides tourist-recreational infrastructure, very important element constitute activities taken for creating peculiar social infrastructure (calling various non - governmental organizations). Strategic plan of Sopot city assumes realization of these tasks, ensures permanent and balanced development in the degree, which will satisfy needs of present and future generations without disturbing harmony of the environment.

Table 9. Place of realization of sport-recreational activity

City		Reserch group							
		18-24 years		25-54 years		55-64 years		TOTAL	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Sopot	n	68	50	217	135	44	29	329	214
	%	68.0%	76.9%	81.0%	73.4%	91.7%	64.4%	79.1%	72.8%
Gdańsk	n	27	15	39	19	2	2	68	36
	%	27.0%	23.1%	14.6%	10.3%	4.2%	4.4%	16.3%	12.2%
Gdynia	n	2	0	10	27	2	14	14	41
	%	2.0%	0.0%	3.7%	14.7%	4.2%	31.1%	3.4%	13.9%
Other	n	3	0	2	3	0	0	5	3
	%	3.0%	0.0%	0.7%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	1.0%
Total	n	100	65	268	184	48	45	416	294
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

City authorities assume two ways of financing projects. One of them is co-financing by sources of European Union, another is public-private partnership. Those ways are very effective and in perspective of the following years they will certainly be continued. As the most important projects of enlargement of tourist – recreational infrastructure may be considered extension of molo connected with development of yacht marina situated nearby and development of the centre of Sopot. Much indicates that due to these projects Sopot will strengthen its position of national and European meaning what will certainly be translated on organization of congresses, cultural, show and sport events. Council of Sopot city following development of conditions for tourism and rest also accepted Marketing Strategy of Sopot City (Sopot, 2004).

According to the line set in the Strategic Plan of Sopot city, development of tourism should contribute to increase of visitors, particularly off season and to laying out those arrivals during the year. Self governments should create system of support of tourist, cultural and recreational sector.

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