

## **FREE TIME IN THE PARK OF CULTURE AND RECREATION IN THE OPINION OF RZESZÓW INHABITANTS**

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### **Keywords:**

- spare time,
- recreation,
- Rzeszów,
- green areas.

### **Abstract:**

A particular advantage of Rzeszów is its natural beauty. Rzeszów is a city which is exceptionally well maintained and rich in verdure. There is over 1000 ha of green areas on its territory. Urban areas occupy only 1/3 of the City. Rzeszów city parks allow realization of various forms of recreation. The objective of the thesis was to check the opinion of the city residents on the Rzeszów city parks and to get the information on various forms of spending free time.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The concept of the spare time is almost always compiled with the opposite concept, which is work, understood as mandatory activity. In literature we can find many definitions of the spare time, which emphasize on its different aspects. Free time is a break period between work cycles. Nowadays, spare time and the way of using it, are important indicators of the quality of life. Free time can be interpreted as a given time, certain activity, attitude or as a combination of them. [1].

Physical activity of the elderly is a desirable factor which facilitates maintaining good physical condition, and the proper selection of forms and methods, and its competent programming and organizing allows to constructively organize ones free time, which fulfill an important role in geriatric prevention [7].

City parks are important factor of each city decor. Urban parks are permanently inscribed in the landscape of the city. Thanks to the beauty, ensuring these facilities, located in a quiet area and the presence of diverse vegetation are special places - called green lungs of the city. Urban parks of the city are very important, especially because of the role they play for the rest of inhabitants. These places are beautiful, cared for, and also equipped for use by people of all ages and physical activity.

Rzeszów city parks allow for the execution of various forms of recreation. They are equipped with many benches, shaded areas and extensive grassy areas on which we can spend time.

In urban parks, there is also specifically set out cycling routes through which people can actively spend their free time.

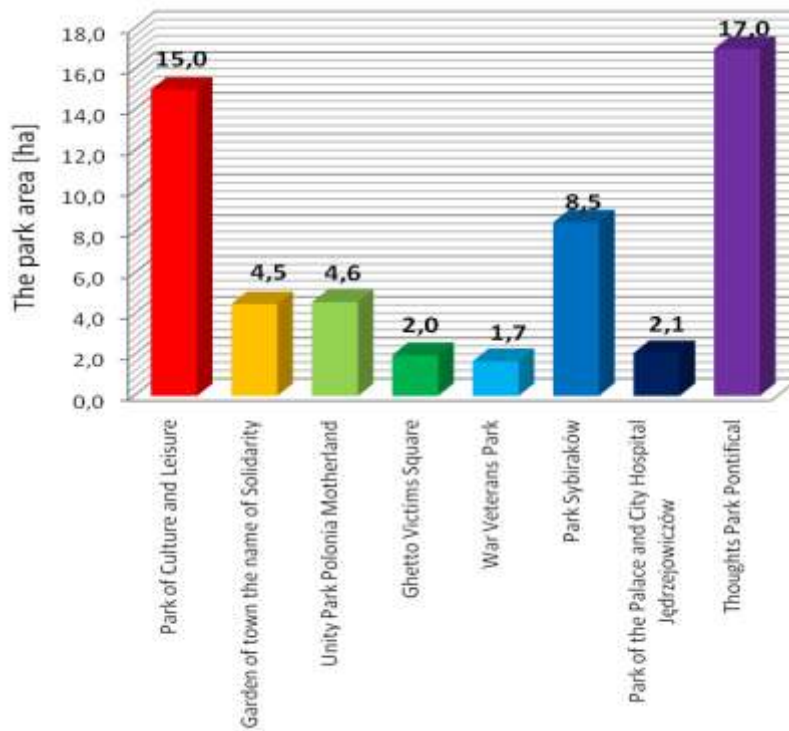
Rzeszow as the capital of Podkarpacie is a very important center of Polish map. Thanks to its location, it plays an increasingly important role in domestic and foreign tourism. The location, an amazing landscape of Podkarpacie and the city charm make this unique atmosphere.

Rzeszów is a place strongly developing. It has extensive tourist facilities, catering, accommodation to meet all the needs of tourists. In addition, the city is an important center of political, cultural, scientific, economic and artistic region. The increasing number of tourists

every year, as well as university students is conducive to increasing the attractiveness of the city.

A particular advantage of Rzeszów is its natural beauty. Rzeszów is a city very well kept and rich in greenery. The site has over 1,000 hectares of green areas which include 10 city parks, 7 complexes allotments, woods, dozens of squares, flowerbeds, trees, shrubs, and 70 hectares of land on the lagoon. Next to the park today complexes are enclaves of historical greenery. One of them is the oldest City Garden. Solidarity Street. Dabrowski and parks in Słocina Staromieściu, Zalesie, Załęże [3].

Urban areas occupy only 1/3 of the city [3]. First graph shows the surfaces of urban parks in Rzeszow.



**Figure 2.** The area of Rzeszow city parks

Source: 2011, *Encyklopedia Rzeszowa*, Rzeszów, s. 849

## THE OBJECTIVE, MATERIAL AND TEST METHODS

The main aim of this study was to examine the opinion of the citizens of the city parks Rzeszow and obtain information on the various forms of leisure as well as ascertain the reasons for which they follow every day, when choosing how to spend free time. Furthermore, a study has allowed residents to get to know the expectations of improving inter alia, the necessary infrastructure in the urban space.

The study also erected specific objectives:

- How respondents perceive Rzeszów city parks?
- Is the appearance of urban parks have an impact on their visit?
- How residents of Rzeszow and the surrounding areas spend their free time?
- What the residents pay attention to while staying in Rzeszow Parks?

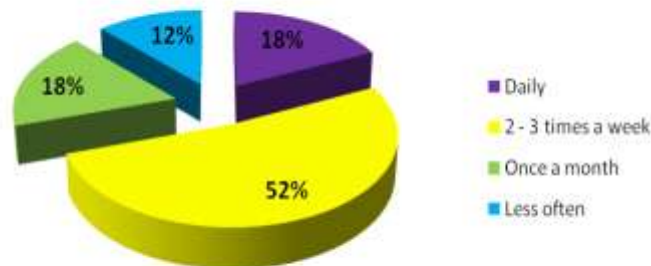
A survey will result in a response to the above mentioned research questions and determine residents' opinions about the parks of the city of Rzeszów. The survey was conducted in Rzeszow in the month of August 2012 in the Park of Culture and Rest with Olszynki located along the left bank of the river Wisłok. A group of 50 people, including 26

women and 24 men, mostly residents of the city. Among the respondents, there were people of all ages and with different backgrounds. The survey was conducted anonymously and therefore encouraged the specific expression, as well as to propose changes and formulating expectations. This approach ensured the credibility and reliability of the information we collect. Respondents were informed of the nature and direction of research. In this paper, a diagnostic survey method was applied using a questionnaire. Prepared questionnaire consisted of 11 questions. The results found the thoroughly analyzed and presented in a descriptive and the part of the graph. The collected material was allowed to formulate the needs and expectations of the residents for their holiday in the city of Rzeszów city parks.

## RESULTS

Among the respondents there were 52% female and 48% male. Most of the respondents were between the ages of 15 - 24 years, ie 46%. In the age group 25 - 34 years was 32%, and at the age of 35 - 44 years was 12%. In a further aged 45 - 54 years, there were 4% and the range 55 - 64 years constituted 2%. The age group over 65 years accounted for 4% of respondents. The study did not attend a person under 15 years of age. The study involved 50 people, 18% of them came from Rzeszow. Almost half of the respondents to the survey had higher education - 48%. Among others, we can distinguish 42% with secondary and 4% with vocational education. Only 6% of respondents had primary education. A significant part of the respondents - 44% sedentary, 30% of respondents frequently change the position of the body during work. Only 26% of people actively spend time. All respondents are of the opinion that outdoor recreation is essential to ensure well-being. Survey results showed that 100% of respondents spend free time in the city of Rzeszow city parks.

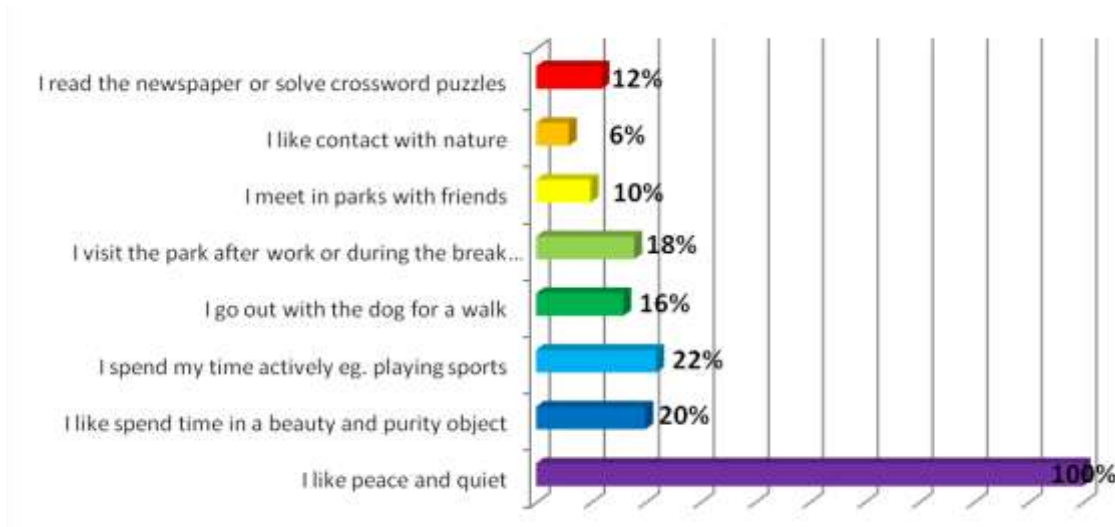
To the question: "How often do you spend in the park?" Majority of respondents answered 2 - 3 times a week (52%). 18% of people responded that they visit parks once a month. The same number of people said that every day. Least of respondents - 12% replied that he had been in the parks at least once a month (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Frequency of visiting the parks  
source: on basis of own research

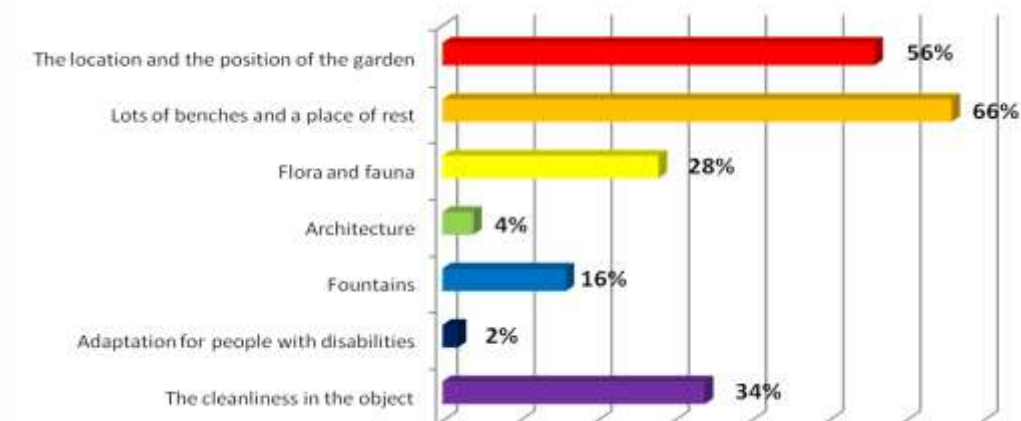
The most popular among respondents enjoyed the Park of Culture and Rest with Olszynki. Slightly less popular are successively Unity Park Polonia Motherland (22%), the Municipal Garden. Solidarity (20%), War Veterans Park (18%), Children of the Ghetto Victims (16%), Park of the Pontifical Thoughts (12%), Park Siberians (10%). The respondents least likely to choose as their holiday destination, the palace Jędrzejowiczów Park and City Hospital (6%). To the question "why do you choose urban parks for your summer

vacation destination?", More than half of the respondents (54%) considered that cherishes peace and quiet. Most of the respondents indicated, however, several reasons why staying in city parks. 44% of the 50 respondents like contact with nature, while 42% are found in parks with friends. 40% of respondents indicated the beauty and purity of the object, as one of the decisive factors influencing the choice of the park as a vacation destination. In contrast, every fifth person, being in greens, reading the newspaper or solve crossword puzzles. Some participants use their time actively eg. playing sports (18%) or leaving the dog for a walk - 12%. Some (16%) visit the park after work or during the break between classes. 14% of those indicated Rzeszów city parks as a place where they spend time with their children, because they see that the kids can play safely there (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** The aim of the leisure in the parks  
Source: on basis of own research

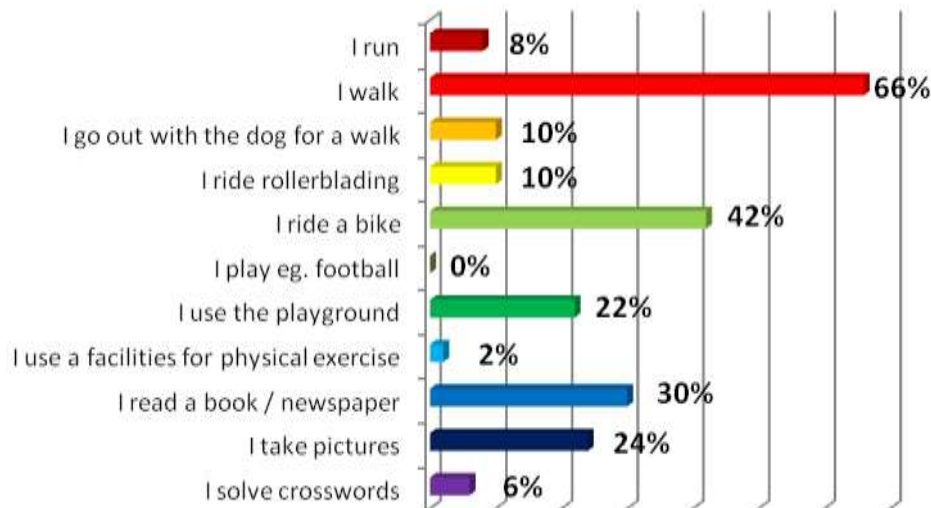
To the question: "What do you believe deserves recognition in the Park of Culture and Leisure with Olszynki?", the majority of respondents (66%) indicated a number of benches and a place of rest. Slightly fewer people pointed to the location and the position of the garden (64%). 34% of respondents appreciated the cleanliness and ensure the object, while 28% of respondents, as remarkable in the park, marked the flora and fauna, the least of contributions stated that the Park of Culture and Rest deserves recognition architecture (4%) and adaptation for people with disabilities (2 %) (Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** Components of Culture and Recreation Park which are praiseworthy  
source: on basis of own research

Most of contributions (66%), walking in the Park of Culture and Recreation. Almost half of the respondents (42%), goes there on a bike and rides on lanes specifically set out. Slightly fewer (30%) come to the park to read a book or newspaper. Part of the respondents spent time photographing wildlife (24%) or playing on the playground with children (22%). The same number of people coming out with the dog for a walk (10%), as those rollerblading (10%). Least of respondents indicated that runs

in the park (8%), solves crossword puzzles (6%) or use an infrastructure designed to exercise (2%). None of the respondents do not play in team games in the city park (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Ways of spending free time in the Park of Culture and Leisure  
source: on basis of own research

All respondents assess the park as an attractive holiday destination and would like to have their friends also spent time in it.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to analyze the opinion of the citizens on the Rzeszow city parks, in particular related to the Park of Culture and Recreation.

The analyzes of the collected material has been shown that the city of Rzeszów city parks are special places and generally elected by the people. The local population spends his free time in them, moreover, Rzeszów parks provide a platform for integration and social gatherings and the place and time spent actively implement interests. Said activity of its own people in the park, most easily seen in the period from spring to autumn. Weather and weather conditions also favor this time, walks and being outdoors in the fresh air, so it has a big impact on the rest of the parks.

The Park of Culture and Recreation, where the study was conducted daily free time spends a lot of people. Most respondents indicated that it is in several times a week. The park is located near the city center, which increases its availability. Most of the respondents were from estates New Town and Dabrowski, probably this is due to the close proximity of these areas in relation to the park. The remaining respondents were from almost all settlements of Rzeszów.

The Park of Culture and Recreation has many valours. One of the positive aspects of the greenery is the differentiation when it comes to the great number of the plants which are growing there. The palace of culture and recreation is well maintained during the summer as

well as during the winter. There are many garbage containers alongside the alleys as well as containers for dog fouling - the comfort of the presence increases and it contributes to the general conviction that this place deserves the name of the leisure enclave. The park is willingly visited by the local people. It should be said, that in conducted survey took part the respondent from Katowice city, who with her opinion confirmed the thesis, that city parks, thankfully to the maintenance and the beauty, showcases the city. The park of culture and recreation joined with Olszynki has many amenities and interesting solutions. It is perfectly adapted for the people in all ages, different level of physical activity and different needs, which the results of the conducted survey confirm. On its site there are located many benches, vacant grassy places, where the habitants willingly spend time during summer, hot days. In the city park additionally specially marked bicycle and running routes. They enable safe motion of the vehicles (eg. Bikes) and pedestrians. It also has big impact on the increase of the popularity among the Rzeszów citizens. Additional, pointed by the majority of the respondents, asset are flat driveways bituminous surface and the lack of stairs and steps. This kind of the architectonic solution, promotes the usage of the park by the elderly and disabled people. Also families with children decide to stay for the recreation in the park of culture and recreation. It gets the appreciation also by the localization of the infrastructure for the children in the remoted part of the park, away from the the noise and the hustle. The respondents pointed the necessity of making a few changes and conveniences in the park, as well as stimulation of the awareness of the habitants. The Park of Culture and Recreation with Olszynki deserves the , which is presented in the results of the conducted survey, because it stands out against other parks in Rzeszów, with its esthetics, land use planning and its safety. The used architectonical solutions, allow the simple usage of it for the all habitants. The park of culture and recreation is a place worth to recommend, and being in it makes a good alternative for spending free time in Rzeszów.

The motives of the usage of the park are important to point out:

1. Motives connected with satisfying the cognitive needs (cognition of nature, culture, social life)
2. Motives connected with satisfying the emotional and estethical needs (making the connection with nature and the art work)
3. Motives connected with regeneration of psychical strengths (the runaway from the stressful environment, different kinds of incentives, ridding of the negative emotions, change of the behavior)
4. Motives connected with the regeneration of physical strengths (passive and active resting)

Sobczak i Kozłowska [6] believe, that arising amount of the spontanice recreational places on the attractive landscapes inform us about the necessity of making space for the group, family and informal relaxation. According to Kacprzyk [2] the essential function of Bhe parks, is recreation and leisure. They should allow the realization of different kinds of mental and physical activities, different from those that come from the daily chores, professional, family and social duties or living needs. According to Maksymiuk [5] as the perfect place for the recreation, just few minutes from home, habitants usually (44%) pointed parks equipped in devices for the active leisure, often defined but also passive.

Such an attitude is the opposite to the concept of the „greening” the lifestyle in the city, that was once proposed. As we can see the perfect parks are something more than walking objects, equipped in at least playground. Habitants would also like that the way of the floral and small architecture arrangement was more sophisticated.

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