

ABSTRACT

One of the most important aspects of a well-prospering territorial self-government unit is its positive image. It is a key-factor for many decisions and local development. The desired image can be shaped by various marketing tools and the local community is a significant segment of the unit. The aim of presented study is the identification of the differences among citizens of small and large communes on the example of Dobczyce and Cracow inhabitants. The research presents their approach to the inhabited unit and perception of its image in reference to the neighbourhood, infrastructure, local authorities, investment area and many others. The results allowed among the others to prove the hypothesis that smaller communities are more likely to identify themselves with inhabited region than large communities.

INTRODUCTION

The creation of territorial self-government units in Poland after 1989 was the reason why its positive image among citizens became truly necessary. The unit's image can be described as a simplified combination of subjective impressions and beliefs that people have about a territorial unit [Dewalska-Opitek, 2010, s. 85].

To help managing such units in a profitable way, the concept of territorial marketing was invented [Sekula, 2005, s.216-218]. The most important group of its recipients are the inhabitants whose opinion and actions have key-meaning for the local growth and maintaining competitive position among the units [Brańska, 2011, s.55].

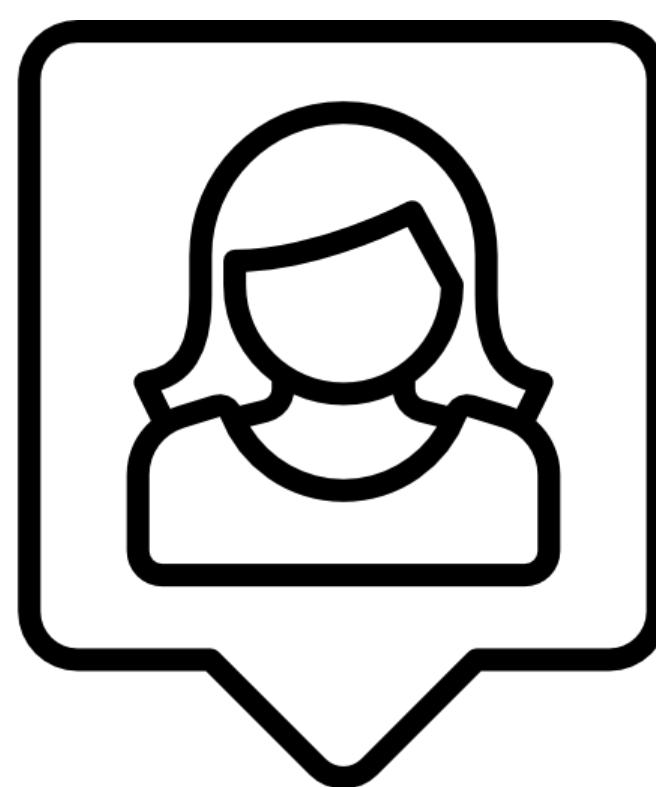
The main aim of this study is the identification and analysis of differences between citizens of small and large communes (Dobczyce and Cracow) in relation to their territorial units' image.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted by the method of a diagnostic survey – in the form of questionnaires. It was carried out in April 2020. The aim of the research was to find out, if the following hypotheses are correct:

- **Small communities are more likely to identify themselves with their region than residents of the city;**
- **Small communities are more collective;**
- **Large communities are less involved in supporting the image of their commune.**

RESPONDENT PROFILE



185 respondents from Dobczyce and 114 from Krakow participated in the survey.
Total: 299 respondents.

Cracow:

- Woman (62,3%)
- Age range 26-45 (45,6%)
- Higher education (69,3%)
- Intellectual work (36,8%)

Dobczyce:

- Woman (73%)
- Age range 26-45 (45,9%)
- Higher education (55,1%)
- Intellectual work (38,4%)

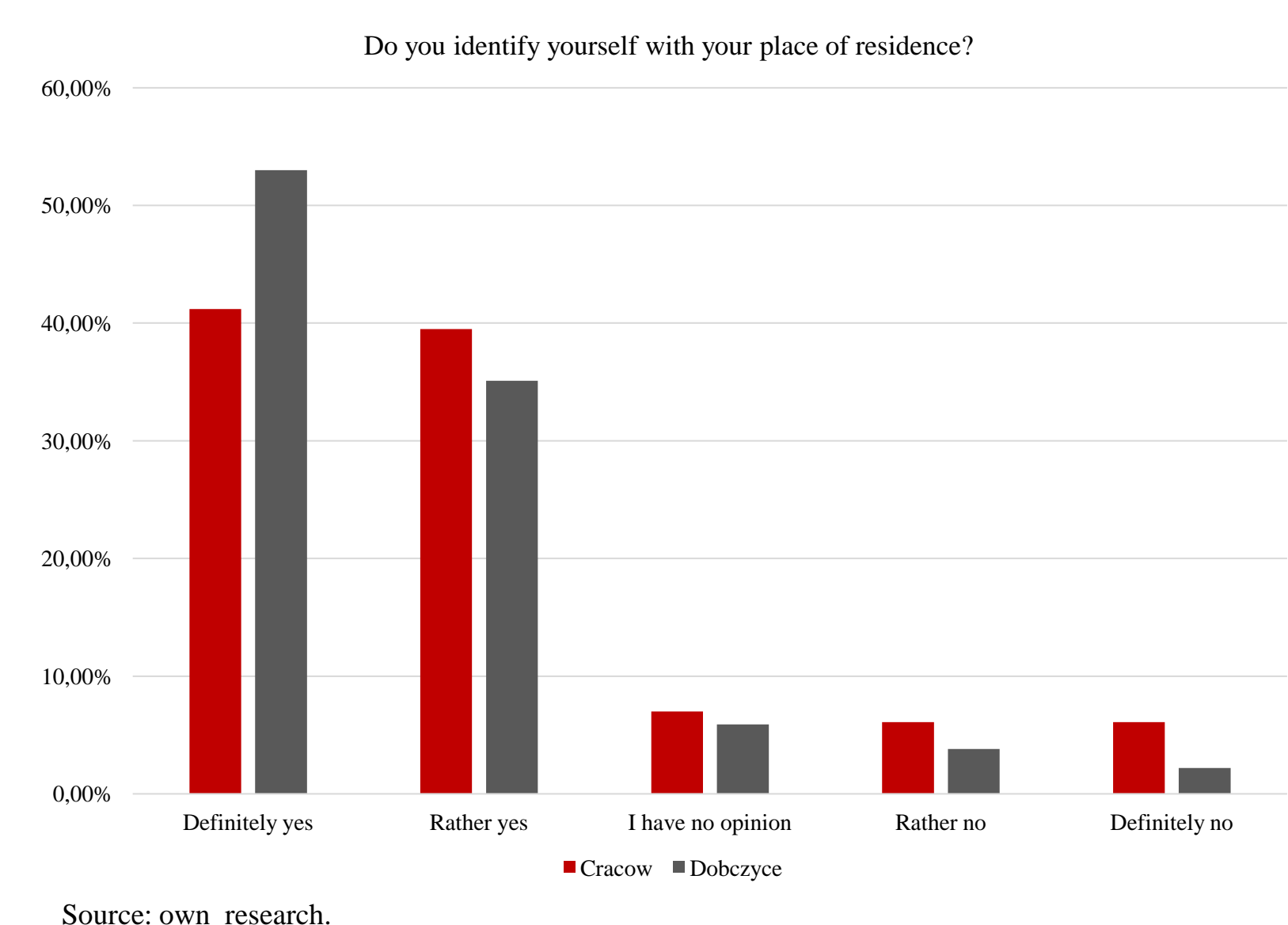
THE IMAGE OF TERRITORIAL SELF-GOVERNMENT UNIT IN OPINION OF ITS INHABITANTS.

THE CASE OF CRACOW AND DOBCZYCE

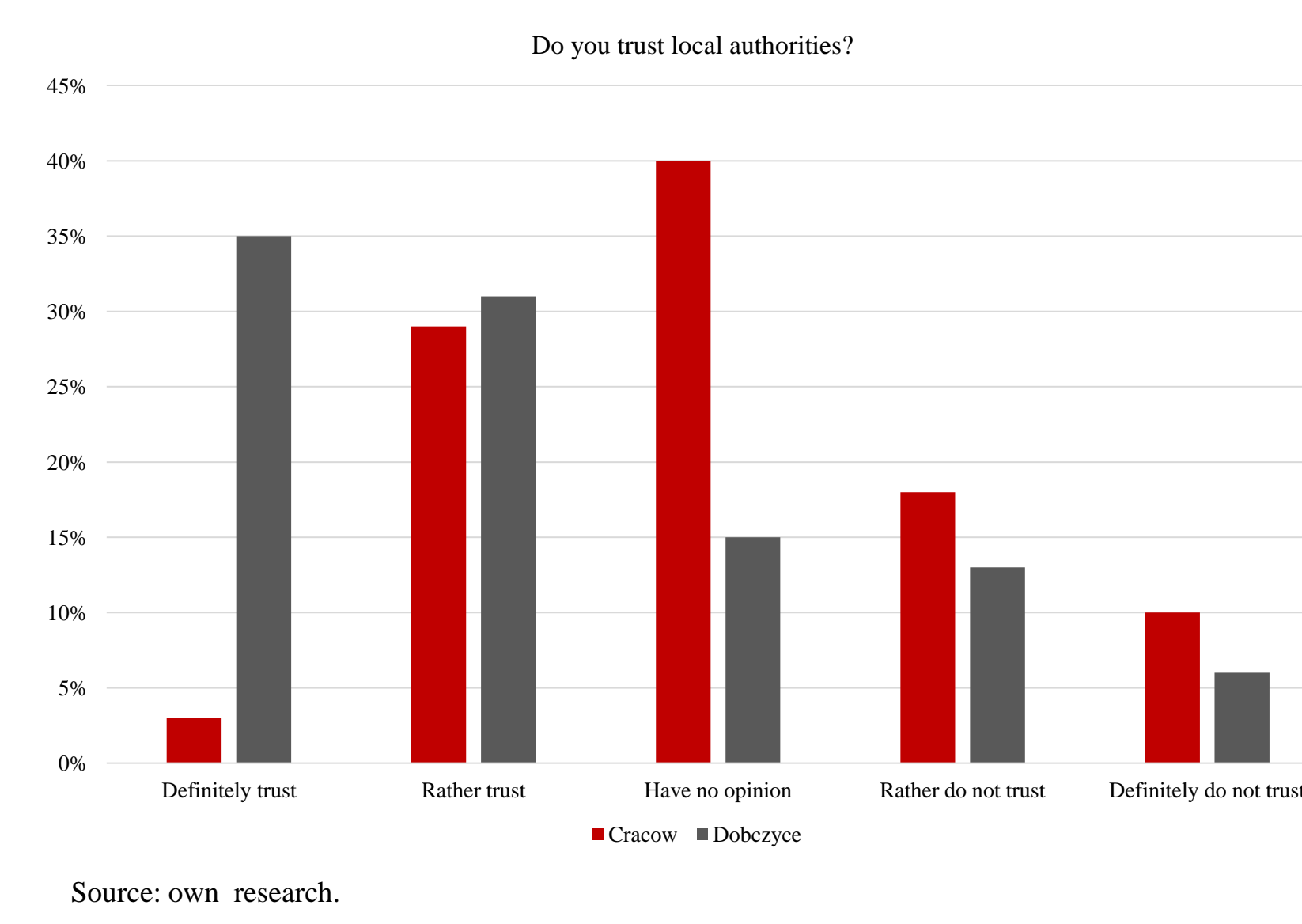
by J. Bisaga, A. Jasek, A. Wójtowicz, T. Grzelak, M. Micherda



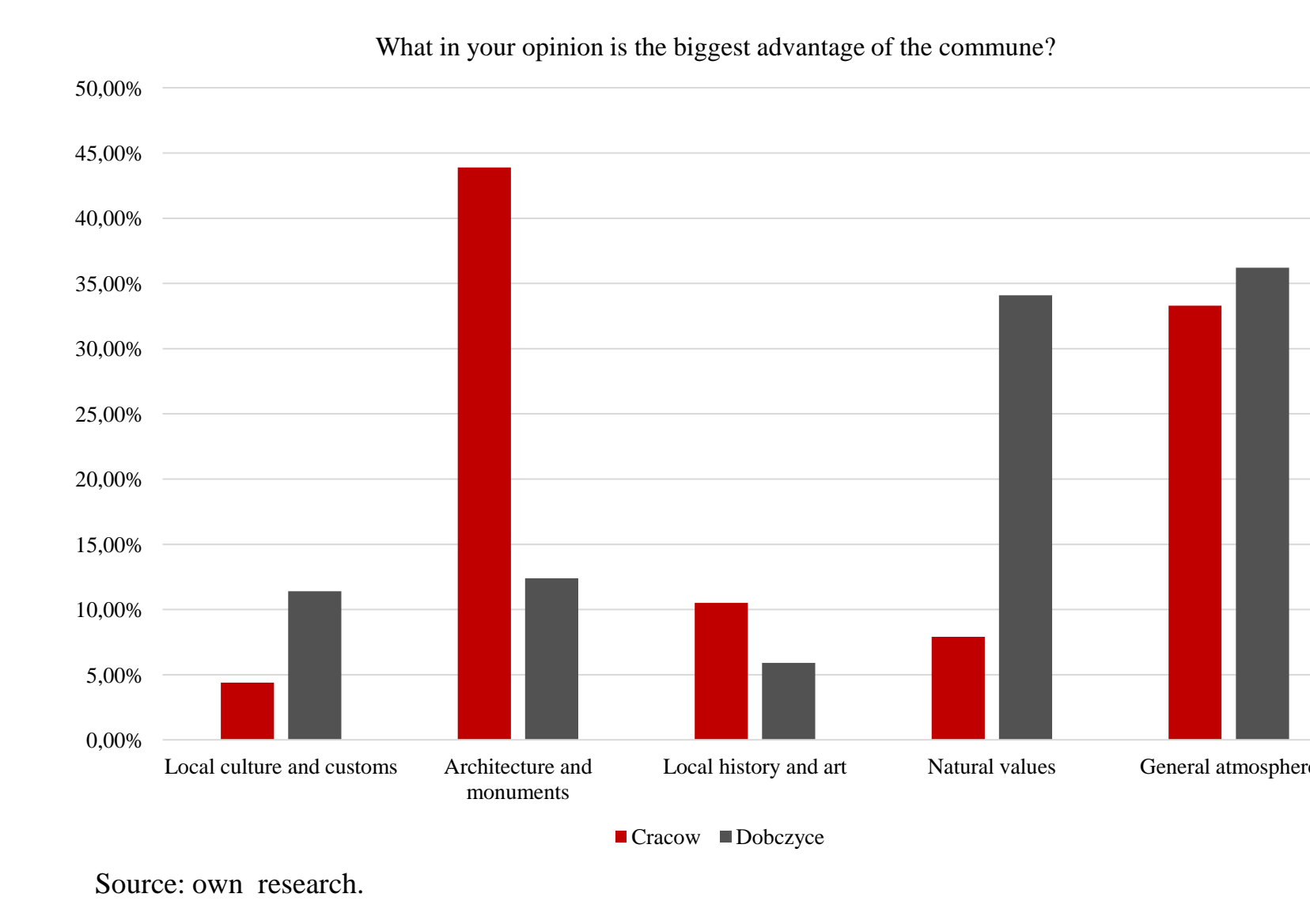
RESIDENTS OF CRACOW AND DOBCZYCE



The differences in response in the researched municipalities are small. More than a half of the inhabitants of Dobczyce are definitely identified with their place of residence (53%), whereas in Cracow the answer "definitely yes" is 41.2%. It can be stated that people living in smaller self-government units are more certain of their belonging to them.



In case of Cracow, the majority of the respondents (40%), do not have an opinion on trusting local authorities. On the contrary, the majority (66%) of the inhabitants of Dobczyce declare trusting their local authorities.



According to the statistic almost 40% of respondents from Dobczyce choose answer "General atmosphere between citizens", and second most popular was "Natural values" (34,1%). In Cracow most popular answer was: "Architecture and monuments" (43,9%). Where as least popular answer in Dobczyce was "Local history and art" (5,9%) and in Cracow: "Local culture and habits" (4,4%).

FEEDBACK FROM CITIZENS

„Do you think that creating civic budget projects is needed?” and „Have you ever participated in voting for civic budget projects?”

The structure of answers in both communes to both questions is very similar. 64.9% of the inhabitants of Dobczyce and 52.6% of the inhabitants of Cracow confirmed that they have not participated in voting for civic budget projects, which constitutes more than half of the respondents. Therefore, the answers to the second question about the need to create these projects seems surprising. 77.3% of the inhabitants of Dobczyce and 86% of the inhabitants of Cracow say that the budget projects are needed. We can notice here a certain inconsistency of one's beliefs in relation to active actions among the respondents.

„What in your opinion is the biggest advantage of the commune?”

According to the statistic almost 68% citizens from Cracow rated their city as very attractive for tourists. In Dobczyce situation was different, 36% of respondents chosen answer that their city is very attractive for tourist. Situation at labour market in the opinion of the respondents was quite similar, 14% from Cracow and 15% from Dobczyce says that is bad or very bad. Vast majority 80,70% respondents from Cracow choose answer that says in their city Sports and recreation offer is on good level or better. Little different situation is at the Dobczyce where 71,89% of respondents says that Sports and recreation offer is on good level or better.

„Do you think that you can count on your neighbors in a difficult situation?”

In Dobczyce 31.9% respondents said that they were sure of help from their neighbors and could count on them, while in Kraków the same answer was marked by significantly fewer 15.3% respondents. It can be said that people from smaller cities feel a greater bond with their neighbors and more often try to help each other in difficult situations.

Are you satisfied with the investments in your commune?

Majority of the inhabitants (over 50%) in both cases indicate that investments in their communes are useful but not exactly sufficient. In case of Dobczyce, 40% of the respondents think that investments are useful and completely sufficient. In contrast, same opinion have 14% of Cracow's inhabitants.



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RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS

Taking everything into consideration, the results have shown some important differences among the inhabitants of Dobczyce and Cracow. Two out of three hypothesis have been confirmed and one of them has turned out to be false. According to the results, smaller communities are more likely to identify themselves with their territorial unit and are more collective than large communities. The research has allowed to disprove the hypothesis that inhabitants of large communes are less involved in supporting their territorial unit.

Furthermore, the research has revealed the inhabitants' perception of their territorial units. If it comes to local authorities, the majority of examined Dobczyce citizens has declared trust in their local government, meanwhile Cracow inhabitants have had no opinion on that. One of interesting aspects was the main advantage of the communes. In Dobczyce people believe that their greatest value is the local atmosphere. On the contrary, Cracow citizens find the architecture as the main advantage of the commune.

Among the similarities, the satisfaction with investments has to be pointed out. Both of examined groups in majority have indicated the answer that investments are useful but not sufficient. Another example is the perception of the commune as a good place for living. In both cases more than a half of Cracow and Dobczyce citizens has declared that inhabited territorial unit is a location where they can fulfill their needs easily. Both groups believe that the neighborhood is friendly for the inhabitants and tourists.

To sum up, the images of both territorial self-government units in the inhabitants opinion are positive. Depending on the field, there are some visible differences and similarities among examined groups. The results may be useful in some deeper analysis and can be an auxiliary material in the case of planning the unit's strategy of activities. The study also has revealed the authentic citizens opinions on specific fields such as infrastructure and investment area in their territorial unit.



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