

URBAN ASPIRATIONS IN OSTRAVA: EXPLORING RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This contribution focuses on the lived experiences and aspirations of Ostrava's residents, as captured through responses within a broader quantitative study. The selected questions explore how they spend their leisure time, their visions for ideal life in the city, their motivations for potentially relocating, and how Ostrava's image in the future. By analysing residents' own words, the study aims to deepen understanding of residents interact with the urban environment beyond structured demographic or behavioural data. The data invite reflection on the emotional, social, and practical factors that shape urban belonging and the perceived quality of life. This contribution also highlights the value of integrating such questions within quantitative designs and discusses how such insights can inform more responsive urban and social policies.

Keywords: Urban Life, Ostrava, Lived Experience, Intentions to Relocate, Satisfaction with Life

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Introduction

Urban life sits at the intersection of place, time, and socioeconomic reproduction. Cities are not only a source of demographic facts but collections of routines, meanings, and opportunities that residents learn to navigate. This contribution brings together insights from urban sociology, family studies, environmental sociology, and mobility research to explain how everyday practices and aspirations co-produce the sense of “urban belonging” and perceived quality of life.

The concept of social reproduction—how societies sustain daily life through care, education, and household labour—locates individuals and families at the heart of urban functioning. Everyday urbanism emphasizes ordinary practices (school runs, shopping, commuting, playground visits) as world-building activities through which residents evaluate the city. These routines reveal path dependencies and transaction costs that various indicators capture.

Theoretical and Conceptual Background

The theoretical context situates respondents' answers at the intersection of everyday urbanism, place attachment and identity, social infrastructure, mobility and residential choice, temporal change, and the specific legacies of post-socialist urban transformation.

Everyday Urbanism, Care, and the Micro-Politics of Place

Everyday urbanism draws attention to ordinary practices—walking to work or school, finding a bench near a playground, combining errands with transit—as the ground on which residents evaluate the city (Chase, Crawford and Kaliski, 2008). For residents and especially for families, these practices are not marginal details but the infrastructure of social reproduction: the chains of movement, coordination, and care through which daily life is sustained. When residents describe daily or after-work routines, they are also describing the fit between the city's spatial form and the time-pressured lives they lead. Gehl's people-first urbanism sharpens this lens by linking small-scale design (edges, seating, micro-climate, walkability) to the frequency and quality of outdoor stays, informal encounters, and children's independent mobility—outcomes that matter directly for family well-being (Gehl, 2010). In this sense, the study's focus on leisure and routine is theoretically central to our paper as the study focused on the satisfaction with leisure time facilities and livability.

Social Infrastructure, Third Places, and Belonging

If everyday practices social infrastructure is the enabling condition. Libraries, parks, sports and cultural facilities, clubs, community centers provide venues for low-stakes sociability and intergenerational contact that build attachment and mutual support (Klinenberg, 2018). Oldenburg's idea of "third places" explains why families emphasize accessible, low-cost, welcoming sites beyond home and work as anchors of neighbourhood life (Oldenburg, 1999). These places are also engines of social capital in Putnam's sense—settings where weak ties and civic habits are cultivated (Putnam, 2000). When respondents appraise Ostrava's leisure offer or identify missing amenities, they are effectively assessing the density, quality, and distribution of social infrastructure, and with it their practical ability to participate in everyday public life.

Place Attachment, Identity, and Dependence

Environmental psychology clarifies the mechanisms by which everyday use and social infrastructure translate into belonging. Proshansky's notion of place identity highlights how urban settings enter the self-concept via memories, roles, and normative expectations (Proshansky, 1978). Low and Altman distinguish place attachment (affective bonds) from place dependence (functional fit)—both relevant when residents compare desired and available affordances (Low and Altman, 1992). Scannell and Gifford's three-dimension framework (person–place–process) offers a vocabulary for interpreting open-ended comments: the person dimension (family histories, child-rearing values), the place dimension (neighbourhood features, symbolic meanings), and the process dimension (affective, cognitive, and behavioural pathways through which attachment forms) (Scannell and Gifford, 2010).

Rights to the City and the Production of Urban Space

Lefebvre's account of the production of space and Harvey's articulation of the right to the city provide a normative backbone for interpreting respondents' evaluations as claims on urban futures (Harvey, 2008; Lefebvre, 1991, 1996). Residents' calls for safer crossings, child-friendly streets, equitable access to green space, or more locally available services are not merely service requests; they are demands for a say in how urban space is produced and allocated. The 15-minute city vision crystallizes this normative program into a proximity-based planning frame that aims to shorten daily trip chains and re-localize essential amenities—an agenda that directly overlaps with the routines and frictions described by caregivers (Moreno, Allam, Chabaud, Gall, and Pratlong, 2021). Open-ended responses about how residents envision the city can thus be read as individual articulations of proximity and attachment to the city.

Housing, Motility, and (Im)mobility

Residential choice research underscores that satisfaction with the place is negotiated under constraints. Clark and Dieleman show how household structure, life course stage, and housing market conditions shape feasible options and perceived outcomes (Clark and Dieleman, 1996). Coulter, van Ham, and Findlay argue for a life-course perspective on residential mobility, emphasizing linked lives, timing, and the interdependencies between family events and moves (Coulter, van Ham, and Findlay, 2016). The concept of motility reframes mobility as of most importance—competences, access, and appropriation capacities that make moves thinkable and executable (Kaufmann, Bergman, and Joye, 2004). In the Ostrava context, the reasons why residents would consider moving might reveal aspiration thresholds and resource endowments: the conditions under which residents imagine a different location as both desirable and attainable. This interpretive lens is crucial for analysing differences between dissatisfaction, mobility aspirations, and actual relocation.

Europeanization, Policy Frames, and post-Socialist Legacies

Local aspirations are also filtered through broader planning and policy imaginaries. Luukkonen's analysis of Europeanization shows how EU spatial visions enter local strategies, sometimes reconfiguring priorities and vocabularies without fully aligning with local needs (Luukkonen, 2011). For post-socialist cities, Sýkora and Bouzarovski trace multiple transformations—economic restructuring, privatization of housing, re-scaling of governance—that have reshaped urban service provision, residential patterns, and socio-spatial inequalities (Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012). These legacies could be visible in residents' expectations of municipal responsibility, in the contrasts between formerly industrial districts and new residential enclaves, and in uneven access to green or cultural amenities across neighbourhoods. Contemporary gentrification dynamics within Czech cities, such as the classical pattern identified for example in Prague's Karlín, signal how inner-city revalorization can alter the opportunity structure for families, shifting school catchments, rental markets, and the composition of third places (Petrović and Ouředníček, 2025). Reading Ostrava through this lens may support the intra-urban differences and the possibility that improvements in one area may be accompanied by displacement pressures in another.

Bringing these strands together, the contribution can model urban life as a negotiation between 1) affordances (what the city makes easy or hard), 2) routines (how residence stitch time and space), 3) attachments (emotions and identities), and 4) aspirations (conditional futures of staying, improving, or relocating).

Methodology and Data

The analysis is based on data from an online survey aimed to tackle the City of Ostrava's Strategic Development Plan 2024–2030 (brand *fajnOVA*, www.fajnova.cz). The overarching aim was to map perceptions and satisfaction with life in Ostrava among people who live in, work in, or visit the city. The design is cross-sectional, collecting self-reported data at a single point in time to provide a snapshot of attitudes and experiences relevant to urban strategy and planning.

Fieldwork and Setting

Data were collected between 6 March and 10 April 2023 via a web questionnaire. Participation was open to residents and visitors; no sampling frame was used and no quotas were imposed. The online mode was chosen to enable rapid dissemination and low-cost participation across diverse city stakeholders.

Recruitment and Sample

Recruitment followed a broad outreach strategy led by the City Hall and its partners:

- A Mayor's call distributed by email to Ostrava-based firms and municipal organizations; employees of the Moravian-Silesian Regional Authority, City Hall, and all 23 city districts; and to primary and high schools (including parents) and universities.
- Posts on *fajnOVA* and City social media channels, with additional organic sharing through other networks and channels.

In total, 5,190 respondents completed the questionnaire. Because the survey used open, volunteer, online participation, the sample is non-probability and self-selected. Consequently, sampling error and confidence intervals in the strict inferential sense are not defined, and results are valid only for this sample.

Measures

The questionnaire comprised closed-ended items assessing satisfaction with life in Ostrava and related domains relevant to the strategic plan (e.g., public services, urban environment, mobility, safety, amenities), alongside open-ended questions designed to elicit qualitative comments that complement the quantitative indicators. The open-ended items provided respondents with space to elaborate on priorities, identify specific problems or strengths, and propose suggestions for improvement. (Exact wording of items and response scales are reported in the instrument repository not provided here.)

Data Management and Analysis

Quantitative responses were summarized using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means) and, where appropriate, cross-tabulations and associations within the sample. Given the non-probability design, any modelling should be interpreted as associational rather than causal and should avoid claims of population parameters. Qualitative, open-ended responses were analysed using a systematic coding approach (e.g., inductive/deductive thematic analysis).

Representativeness and Limitations

The absence of random selection, the online mode, and self-selection introduce coverage error (exclusion of individuals with limited internet access or engagement with city channels) and self-selection bias (over-representation of more civically engaged or network-connected individuals). Without population-aligned quotas or post-stratification procedures, sample margins relative to Ostrava's socio-demographic structure are unknown. Even if auxiliary benchmarks were available, ex-post weighting would remain limited by differential non-coverage and unknown selection mechanisms. In terms of external validity, findings should not be generalized to the broader resident or visitor populations of Ostrava. All estimates, comparisons, and inferences strictly characterize the participating respondents. As in any self-report survey, responses may be affected by recall error, social desirability, and measurement error. The open recruitment across multiple institutional channels may also cluster participation within certain networks (e.g., public employees, parents of schoolchildren, students).

Sample Profile

The achieved sample (N = 5,190) is predominantly female (58% women, 41% men, 1% other/unspecified). Age composition is concentrated in the economically active cohorts: 25–34 (23%) and 35–44 (23%), with

smaller shares at 45–54 (17%) and 55–64 (10%); younger (15–24: 21%) and older (65+: 4%) groups are less represented, and children (0–14: 1%) appear only marginally. Educational attainment is relatively high: 48% report tertiary education, 32% upper-secondary with maturita, 8% higher vocational, 6% secondary without maturita, 9% basic, and 1% without formal education. Spatially, the largest contingents come from Ostrava-Jih (33%), Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz (21%), and Poruba (20%); smaller shares are from Slezská Ostrava (8%), Mariánské Hory a Hulváky (4%), Radvanice a Bartovice (2%), and several districts at ~1% each (Vítkovice, Hrabová, Svinov, Stará Bělá, Michálkovice). Overall, the sample skews toward women, prime-age adults, and respondents with tertiary education, with strongest representation from the three largest city districts.

Results

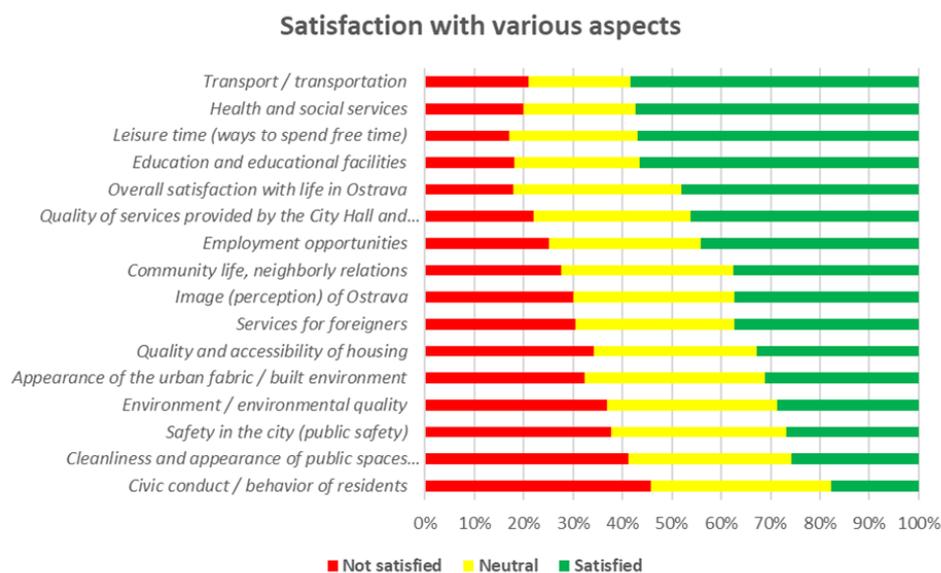
This section presents some empirical findings of the study, moving from the descriptive patterns to domain-specific results.

Quality of Life and Urban Belonging

Across domains, respondents report generally positive evaluations of life in Ostrava, with the most favourable ratings concentrated in transportation, health and social services, leisure opportunities, and education (see Fig. 1). These results align with research showing that everyday, proximate infrastructures—mobility networks, schools, clinics, and “third places” for recreation—are decisive for lived urban quality because they scaffold daily routines and social connection (Gehl, 2010; Oldenburg, 1999; Klinenberg, 2018). High satisfaction with transport also resonates with the idea of motility—the capacity to be mobile as a form of capital that opens access to jobs, services, and social ties (Kaufmann *et al.*, 2004). In planning terms, these patterns are consistent with the 15-minute city perspective that emphasizes dense, mixed-use, service-rich neighbourhoods as a pathway to perceived quality of life (Moreno *et al.*, 2021).

Overall satisfaction with life in Ostrava sits in the upper tier of outcomes, suggesting a broadly positive affect toward the city that extends beyond single-service evaluations. In environmental psychology, such global appraisals often reflect place attachment—the affective, cognitive, and behavioural bonds linking people to place—formed through accumulated daily experiences and accessible social infrastructure (Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). From a Lefebvrian perspective, these satisfactions levels point to how residents appropriate and “produce” urban space through everyday practices rather than solely through formal design (Lefebvre, 1991; 1996; Chase *et al.*, 2008).

Mid-ranked evaluations—covering the quality of municipal services, employment opportunities, neighbourly relations, and the image of Ostrava—speak to the negotiated boundary between institutional performance and community-driven social capital (Putnam, 2000). Residents' moderately positive views of city administration indicate functioning service provision, yet they also highlight that perceived opportunity structures and symbolic reputation lag behind baseline services. The city's post-industrial



1: Satisfaction with various aspects pertaining to infrastructure

Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

trajectory and continued adjustments typical for post-socialist urban transitions may shape these ambivalences, as municipalities balance regeneration, labour market restructuring, and identity work (Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012; Harvey, 2008).

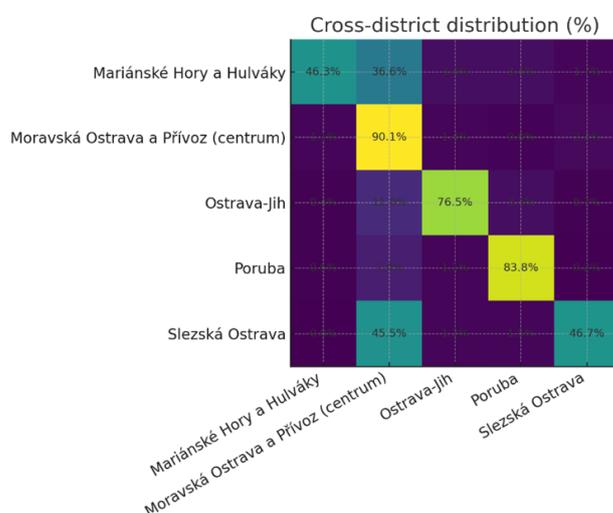
Lower satisfaction emerges in services for foreigners, housing quality and accessibility, the appearance of the built environment, environmental quality, safety, cleanliness of public spaces, and especially civic conduct/behaviour of residents. Together, these domains map onto classic urban dilemmas: integration and inclusion, the affordability–quality nexus in housing, and the maintenance of shared spaces. Housing concerns are well documented in the urban literature: outcomes reflect both household constraints and market structures, not merely preferences (Clark and Dieleman, 1996). In Central European contexts, uneven redevelopment can produce pockets of improvement alongside affordability stress or spatial polarization (Petrović and Ouředníček, 2025). Perceptions of cleanliness, safety, and civic conduct point to the social organization of public space–norms, maintenance, and everyday encounters–which shape belonging as much as physical design (Gehl, 2010; Klinenberg, 2018). For migrants and visitors, deficits in dedicated services can erode both practical access and the symbolic “right to the city” (Harvey, 2008), undermining inclusive place identity.

Strategic planning should therefore read the pattern not as a single scorecard but as a portfolio of everyday urban frictions–some infrastructural, some social, some symbolic. Policy levers likely include: strengthening neighbourhood-scale amenities and maintenance (Gehl, 2010), investing in social infrastructure (libraries, community centres, parks) to bolster norms and cross-group contact (Klinenberg, 2018), targeted integration services for foreigners, and coordinated housing policies that couple rehabilitation with affordability safeguards (Clark and Dieleman, 1996; Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012).

Two caveats are essential for interpretation. First, the underlying survey uses an open, online, volunteer sample; estimates therefore describe the respondents, not the full population of Ostrava’s residents or visitors. Second, satisfaction reflects the tempo of everyday life as much as objective provision; urban experiences are shaped by broader dynamics of social acceleration and institutional time regimes that can amplify minor frictions into salient discontent (Rosa, 2013). Attending to these temporalities, and to the everyday production of space (Lefebvre, 1991), can help translate the pattern of results into concrete, people-centred interventions.

Leisure “Stay-Local” Patterns as Behavioral Signals of Attachment

Cross-tabulating respondents’ district of residence with the district where they spend free time (see Fig. 2) reveals a pronounced diagonal: residents of Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz (centrum) overwhelmingly stay local ($\approx 90\%$), as do those in Poruba ($\approx 84\%$) and Ostrava-Jih ($\approx 77\%$). By contrast, Mariánské Hory a Hulváky shows a split pattern ($\approx 46\%$ local; $\approx 37\%$ center), and Slezská Ostrava is almost evenly divided between local leisure ($\approx 47\%$) and the center ($\approx 46\%$). Interpreted through environmental psychology, these diagonal concentrations are behavioural indicators of place attachment and place dependence–not just liking a place, but routinely using its affordances (Proshansky, 1978; Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). The centre’s strong off-diagonal pull (e.g., inflows from Slezská Ostrava) is consistent with a citywide repertoire of higher-order amenities that feed place identity at the metropolitan scale.



2: Place attachment – cross-district distribution (in %)

Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

High “stay-local” rates align with literatures that link everyday urbanism and people-first design to habitual public use (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski, 2008; Gehl, 2010). Where social infrastructure is dense—parks, libraries, sports facilities, and “third places”—people need not export leisure, and weak ties and civic habits accumulate locally (Oldenburg, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Klinenberg, 2018). The results suggest Poruba and Ostrava-Jih function as relatively self-sufficient leisure ecologies, while Mariánské Hory a Hulváky and Slezská Ostrava exhibit partial dependence on the centre's offer. In capability terms, local leisure choices signal what residents are able to be and do in their home districts, with proximity reducing the everyday “cost of coordination” for care-laden schedules.

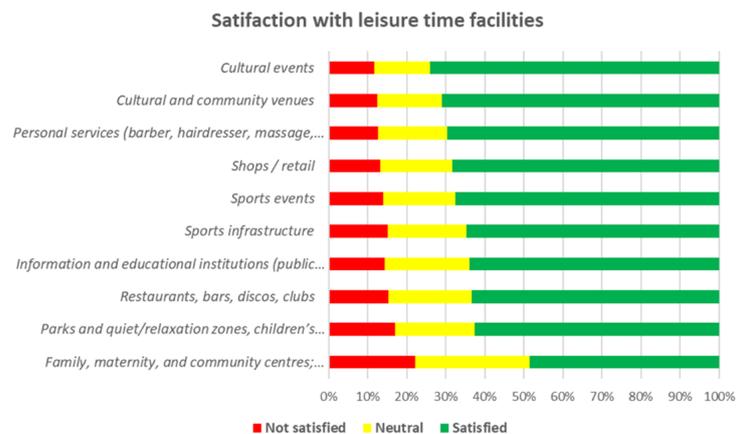
Leisure retention is not only spatial; it is also temporal. Staying local shortens trip chains and dampens the chronopolitical frictions of headways, transfers, and opening hours that families routinely face (Rosa, 2013). The pronounced diagonal in the centre, Poruba, and Ostrava-Jih aligns with proximity planning ideals such as the 15-minute city, where everyday needs are reachable within short travel times (Moreno, Allam, Chabaud, Gall, and Pratlong, 2021). Conversely, districts exporting leisure to the centre likely experience gaps in local offer or temporal misalignments, pushing residents toward central amenities whose schedules and densities better fit family routines. Read normatively through the right to the city, these patterns are everyday claims for equitable access to urban goods near home (Lefebvre, 1991, 1996; Harvey, 2008).

Where residents consistently leave their district for leisure, the behaviour may foreshadow mobility aspirations more broadly, especially for households with the motility (resources, competences, networks) to convert dissatisfaction into moves (Kaufmann, Bergman, and Joye, 2004; Coulter, van Ham, and Findlay, 2016). In the post-socialist context of Ostrava, uneven transformations of services and public space help explain why some districts are “complete” while others lean on the centre (Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012). The recent revalorization of inner-city areas observed in Czech cities indicates how central amenities can intensify their pull, potentially reshaping family geographies of leisure and, over time, residential choices (Petrović and Ouředníček, 2025).

Empirically, high diagonal percentages are best read as revealed-preference proxies for attachment and dependence, complementary to attitudinal scales. Policy-wise, districts with lower retention are candidates for targeted social-infrastructure investment (playgrounds, youth spaces, libraries, low-cost culture) and time-sensitive fixes (opening hours, off-peak transit), while high-retention districts warrant maintenance and protection of existing assets (Klinenberg, 2018; Gehl, 2010). Two caveats apply. First, these are associational patterns: staying local may reflect amenity distribution, transit convenience, or household composition rather than attachment per se. Second, given the non-probability online sample inference should be paired with robustness checks and triangulation using the study's open-ended themes on leisure capability, temporal frictions, and desired improvements. Even with these cautions, the matrix offers a crisp, theory-consistent picture: where everyday affordances are near and usable, families build and display local attachment through their leisure routines—and when they are not, the centre steps in as the city's common living room.

Leisure as Capability and Social Infrastructure

Satisfaction with leisure-time facilities is consistently high across domains—cultural events and venues, shops and personal services, restaurants and nightlife, sports events and infrastructure, parks/quiet zones, and information—educational institutions—indicating a dense ecology of proximate amenities that underwrite everyday urban life (see Fig. 3). Such patterns fit previous knowledge that links perceived



3: Satisfaction with various leisure-time facilities

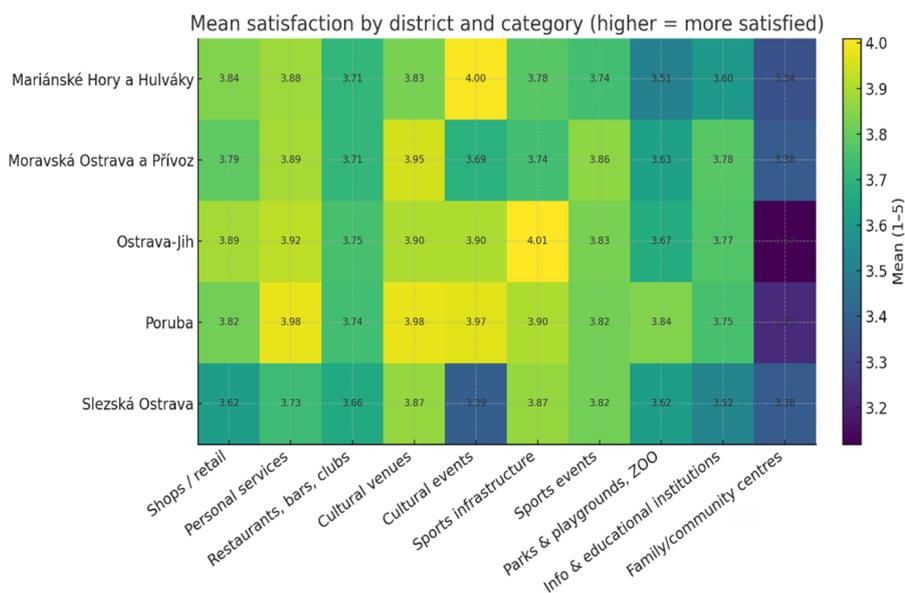
Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

quality of life to accessible “third places” and robust social infrastructure, which generate opportunities for weak ties, trust, and collective efficacy (Oldenburg, 1999; Klinenberg, 2018; Putnam, 2000), and to human-scaled public realms that invite lingering and participation (Gehl, 2010; Chase *et al.*, 2008). They also align with the 15-minute city thesis, whereby mixed-use, service-rich neighbourhoods convert spatial proximity into lived capability (Moreno *et al.*, 2021) and with the notion of motility–mobility as capital enabling access to leisure and social fields (Kaufmann *et al.*, 2004).

Two relative weak spots emerge: family/maternity/community centres and, to a lesser degree, parks and relaxation zones, where neutrality and dissatisfaction are more pronounced. These gaps matter because family-oriented and intergenerational spaces are key sites of place attachment and identity formation (Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010) and because well-maintained, inclusive public spaces support the everyday “production of space” and the substantive right to the city (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 2008). In post-socialist cities managing uneven redevelopment, such deficits can also mirror broader distributional tensions in urban investment (Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012). For planning, the results suggest consolidating already-strong cultural and sports ecosystems while prioritizing family-centred community hubs and high-quality neighbourhood green spaces as social infrastructure that sustains belonging across life stages (Karsten, 2005; Klinenberg, 2018). As with all interpretations here, conclusions pertain to the surveyed sample rather than the full population.

District Patterns of Satisfaction as Signals of Everyday Affordances

The heatmap of mean satisfaction (1–5) across ten leisure-time infrastructure facilities and top five districts describes a coherent geography of everyday affordances in Ostrava (see Fig. 4). Two patterns stand out. First, Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz (centre) leads on cultural venues (theatres, galleries, museums, cinemas), while Poruba and Ostrava-Jih perform strongly on sports infrastructure and cultural events. Second, across districts the weakest scores cluster around family/maternity/community centres (and, to a lesser extent, public information/educational institutions), suggesting a city-wide shortfall in low-threshold, family-facing social infrastructure.



4: Mean satisfaction by district and leisure-time facility
 Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

Interpreted through the lens of everyday urbanism, these differences reflect how ordinary routines—where people shop, play, and meet—are enabled or constrained by local design and provision (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski, 2008; Gehl, 2010). High satisfaction in Poruba and Ostrava-Jih for sports infrastructure and events is consistent with “complete” neighbourhood ecologies that make leisure close-at-hand, lowering coordination costs for households. By contrast, the centre’s advantage in cultural venues is the signature of a metropolitan hub that specializes in higher-order amenities rather than universal-scaled facilities.

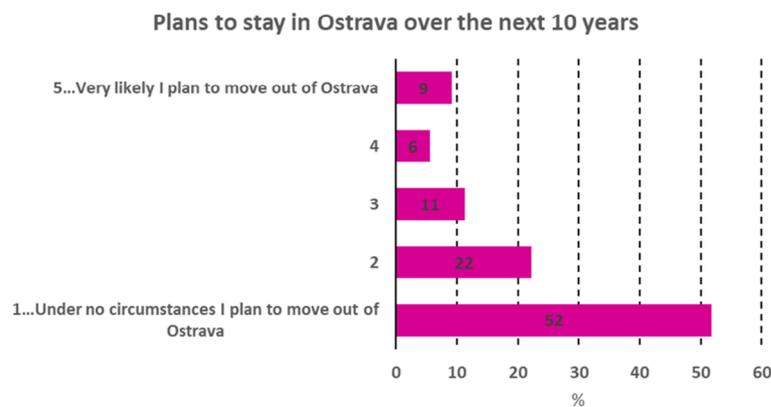
Where satisfaction with proximate amenities is high, residents are more likely to stay local for leisure—a behavioural correlate of place attachment and place dependence (Proshansky, 1978; Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). The categories with the highest means in Poruba and Ostrava-Jih map onto social infrastructure and third places—sports halls and public sport grounds, parks,

and community events—which host low-stakes sociability and reinforce local identity (Oldenburg, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Klinenberg, 2018). In capability terms, these amenities expand what residents are able to be and do within their home districts, making local leisure the default rather than the exception.

The consistently lower satisfaction with family/maternity/community centres is theoretically important: this category anchors intergenerational care and everyday support, the “soft category” through which cities are reproduced socially. Weakness here implies thinner neighbourhood sociality and missed opportunities for low-cost inclusion—precisely the deficit that social-infrastructure literature warns leading to erosion in trust and local resilience (Klinenberg, 2018).

Residential (Im)mobility: Intentions and Reasons

Intentions to stay in Ostrava over the next ten years indicate a markedly rooted sample: just over half declare they will not move under any circumstances in the next decade ($\approx 52\%$), and a further 22% lean toward staying; only about 15% express a clear inclination to leave, with 11% undecided (see Fig. 5). In life-course terms, such intended residential immobility is not merely inertia but a situated outcome of biographies, household constraints, and place ties (Coulter, van Ham and Findlay, 2016; Clark and Dieleman, 1996). High stayers more likely reflect strong place attachment—affective, cognitive, and behavioural bonds rooted in everyday routines and local social infrastructure (Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010; Klinenberg, 2018)—and the practical benefits of proximate amenities that convert distance into capability (Gehl, 2010; Moreno *et al.*, 2021).



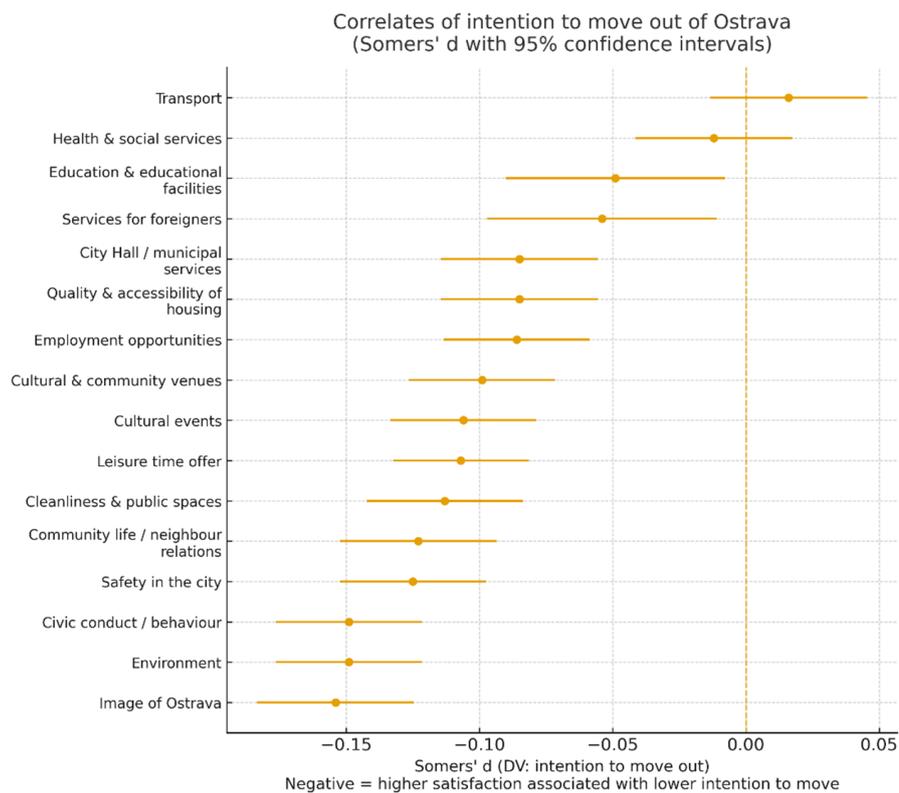
5: Intentions to stay in Ostrava over the next ten years (in %)

Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

At the same time, intentions to remain may also encode capability–constraint dynamics: people weigh motility (mobility as capital) against housing market frictions, employment opportunities, and family obligations (Kaufmann, Bergman and Joye, 2004; Clark and Dieleman, 1996). In post-socialist urban contexts, path-dependent investments and uneven redevelopment can stabilize some residents while nudging others toward exit, reshaping who exercises a substantive “right to the city” (Šýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012; Harvey, 2008; Lefebvre, 1991). For policy, the pattern suggests a robust base of “stayers” to co-produce neighbourhood improvements, alongside a nontrivial minority whose propensity to move signals pressure points—housing affordability/quality, career ladders, employment opportunities or neighbourhood image—that warrant targeted interventions.

All inferences apply to the volunteer online sample rather than the full population; even so, the distribution offers a coherent narrative: Ostrava’s everyday urbanism appears sufficiently supportive to anchor many residents, while a smaller, more mobile contingent highlights the city’s strategic levers—housing, jobs, and amenity quality—that can convert potential exits into renewed attachment (Chase, Crawford and Kaliski, 2008; Clark and Dieleman, 1996).

Bivariate ordinal associations (Somers’ d) between domain-specific satisfaction (higher values = more satisfied) and the intention to move out of Ostrava show a consistent pattern (see Fig. 6): coefficients are predominantly negative, indicating that higher satisfaction aligns with lower plans to move. The largest associations cluster around city image ($d \approx -0.15$), environmental quality (≈ -0.15), civic conduct/behaviour (≈ -0.15), safety (≈ -0.13), community life/neighbour relations (≈ -0.12), and cleanliness & public spaces (≈ -0.11). A second tier—leisure/cultural offer, employment opportunities, housing quality & accessibility, and municipal services—exhibits smaller but still negative coefficients (≈ -0.08 to -0.10). Associations are indistinct for transport and health & social services, with education and services for foreigners similarly modest.



6: Correlation between intentions to move out and satisfaction with various leisure-time facilities

Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

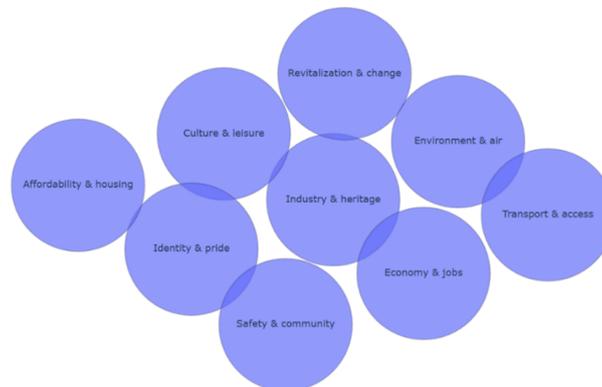
Interpreted through environmental psychology, these results are consistent with place attachment and place dependence: domains tied to affect (image, community, safety) and to everyday affordances (cleanliness, environment) are those most predictive of residential staying (Proshansky, 1978; Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). In the language of everyday urbanism and people-first design, these are precisely the features people encounter in routine, low-effort interactions with streets and public spaces (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski, 2008; Gehl, 2010). High satisfaction there reduces the “everyday cost of coordination” and makes staying locally attractive.

The findings also map onto the literature on social infrastructure and third places. Community life, cleanliness, and the cultural/leisure offer are components of the social ecology that underwrites weak ties and local trust (Oldenburg, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Klinenberg, 2018). Their negative correlations with moving plans suggest that investments in parks, convivial streets, and accessible cultural/sport facilities may operate as retention mechanisms—not just amenities. By contrast, the near-zero association for transport hints that formal network presence alone may be insufficient; as chronopolitics suggests, what matters for residents is often temporal fit, which our satisfaction items may not capture well (Rosa, 2013). This aligns with proximity-based planning ideals such as the 15-minute city, where quality-of-life gains derive from usable closeness rather than abstract accessibility (Moreno *et al.*, 2021).

From the perspective of (im)mobility research, the pattern fits a threshold model: dissatisfaction in core domains of attachment and everyday affordance raises mobility aspirations, which only some households can convert into moves depending on their motility—resources, competences, and networks (Kaufmann, Bergman, and Joye, 2004; Coulter, van Ham, and Findlay, 2016). In a post-socialist urban context marked by uneven service transformation and selective revalorization (Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012; Petrović and Ouředníček, 2025), the salience of image, environment, and safety is unsurprising: these are precisely the domains where legacy industrial forms, investment cycles, and stigma can concentrate, and where improvements may most visibly shift attachment.

As a prioritization signal, the correlation profile points to public realm quality (cleanliness, safety, civic conduct) and environment/amenity image as high-leverage levers for residential retention—complementary to, not substitutes for, housing and employment policies. Policies should read these domains through the right to the city: ensuring equitable access to clean, safe, and convivial spaces across districts, not only in the centre (Lefebvre, 1991, 1996; Harvey, 2008).

Ostrava 2030 In Three Words: Interactive Bubble Map of 9 Themes



7: Main themes for how residents envision Ostrava in 2030

Source: Data from fajnova, www.fajnova.cz (2023), own calculations

Integrating “Words Within Numbers” – Ostrava in 2030

The open-ended items are analysed to recover meanings that structured indicators cannot capture while keeping them commensurable with the quantitative core of the survey. The coding scheme operationalizes respondents' narratives about leisure, urban belonging, time–infrastructure frictions, (im)mobility thresholds, and desired improvements into reproducible variables. It is designed to a) identify the mechanisms through which everyday practices and aspirations shape perceived quality of life and urban attachment, and b) link these mechanisms to spatial context (district), life-course position, and housing situations. The code system is anchored in the study's theoretical pillars. The present paper presents only a small part of the analysis of data from open-ended questions namely the preliminary results based on one question: “Write down 3 words that would characterize Ostrava in 2030”.

Each theme below represents an analytically distinct pathway through which respondents envision Ostrava in 2030 (see Fig. 7). We could identify 9 different themes which are related to some extent.

We shortly present these themes and their main characteristics:

- Theme 1 *industry_heritage* – industrial identity and sites. The keywords for this theme are *průmysl, hutní/hutnictví, doly/důl, Vítkovice, ocel, těžba, industriální*. This theme encodes Ostrava's heavy-industry image (related to Lefebvre's production of space; post-socialist legacies in Sýkora and Bouzarovski).
- Theme 2 *environment_air* – air quality, cleanliness, greenery, riverside. The keywords are: *ovzduší, smog, vzduch, zeleň, příroda, řeka, čistota, špina*. It can be linked to perceived environmental quality (a strong correlate of “stay” in the correlation analysis). It is also an ambivalent theme (for example the duality cleanness vs. dirtiness).
- Theme 3 *culture_leisure* – venues and events; everyday social infrastructure. The keywords are: *kultura, divadlo, galerie, muzeum, koncert, festival, ZOO, sport, kluby; Karolina, DOV*. It represents leisure as capability and third places (see Oldenburg, Klinenberg or Gehl's works).
- Theme 4 *identity_pride* – belonging, pride, “Ostravák”, home. The keywords are: *hrdost, domov, patriot, Ostravák, image, město*. It points to place attachment/identity (as discussed by Proshansky; Low and Altman; Scannell and Gifford).
- Theme 5 *economy_jobs* – employment and economy. The keywords are: *práce, zaměstnání, mzda, investice, ekonomika*. It can be linked to the ties to residential satisfaction for various facilities and mobility thresholds (see Clark and Dieleman; Coulter *et al.*).
- Theme 6 *transport_access* – movement infrastructure. The keywords are: *MHD, tramvaj, autobus, doprava, silnice, cyklo, pěší, parkování*. It makes reference to affordances/proximity vs. chronopolitics (like in Moreno *et al.*; Rosa).
- Theme 7 *revitalization_change* – transformation, modernization, redevelopment. The keywords are: *proměna, transformace, revitalizace, rozvoj, moderní, budoucnost*. It envisions post-industrial change; right to the city as re-making (Lefebvre; Harvey).
- Theme 8 *affordability_life* – costs/affordability, housing. The keywords are: *dostupné, levné/drahé, náklady, bydlení*. It reflects both capability and constraint framing of everyday life.
- Theme 9 *safety_social* – safety and social climate/community. The keywords are: *bezpečnost/bezpečí, komunita, sousedé, přátelský*. It points to a certain social order and in the same time to weak ties (Putnam; Klinenberg). It is a strong correlate of retention.

The themes will be further developed and analysed in the context of the other questions/data and in connection to the theoretical framework.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings converge on a simple but important mechanism: staying is about feelings plus everyday affordances. Higher satisfaction with the city's image, environment, civic conduct, safety, community life, and cleanliness is systematically associated with lower intentions to move out. This pattern is recognised place attachment and place dependence—the affective bonds and functional fit that tie people to settings (Low and Altman, 1992; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). In life-course terms, (im) mobility intentions reflect how households stitch biographies to urban opportunity structures (Coulter, van Ham and Findlay, 2016; Clark and Dieleman, 1996), while the quality of public realms and “third places” makes attachment actionable in daily routines (Oldenburg, 1999; Gehl, 2010; Klinenberg, 2018).

The centre functions as a cultural magnet, whereas Poruba and Ostrava-Jih exhibit “complete” leisure ecologies that retain activity locally. The stay-local matrix and satisfaction heatmap—Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz leading on cultural venues; Poruba and Ostrava-Jih scoring high on sports infrastructure/events—indicate robust social infrastructure distributed in different forms across districts. This aligns with everyday urbanism (Chase, Crawford and Kaliski, 2008) and with the 15-minute city thesis that proximity and mix translate into lived capability (Moreno *et al.*, 2021). Spatial contrasts thus represent differentiated ecologies of everyday life rather than a single core-periphery gradient: higher-order culture in the centre; family-oriented completeness in the suburban districts.

A consistent weak point is family/maternity/community centres. Their lower satisfaction suggests thin routine support for caregivers and intergenerational sociality—precisely the assets that stabilize local belonging (Karsten, 2005; Klinenberg, 2018). Strengthening these hubs would deepen weak ties, reinforce neighbourhood norms, and improve perceived civility—domains already among the strongest correlates of staying (Putnam, 2000).

Transport satisfaction is effectively a non-mover: coefficients hang around zero. Availability alone seems insufficient; what families and workers evaluate is temporal fit—headways, transfer coordination, opening hours—rather than sheer network coverage. The result resonates with the “temporal city” argument: urban quality is experienced through time regimes and synchronization costs, not just spatial provision (Rosa, 2013; Gehl, 2010). Policy should therefore target reliability, cadence, and schedule alignment with school, care, and shift times.

The keyword analysis reveals a dual identity narrative. Terms cluster around Industry & heritage (průmysl, Vítkovice, ocel, těžba) and Revitalization & change (proměna, moderní, budoucnost), with Culture & leisure bridging past and future. This double vision mirrors post-socialist urban transitions—cities negotiating legacy and renewal (Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012)—and speaks to Lefebvre's and Harvey's arguments that the production of space is simultaneously material and symbolic, entailing a substantive right to the city for residents to shape meanings as well as uses (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 2008).

Environmental language is both salient and ambivalent: smog/ovzduší appears alongside zeleň/řeka. Given the strong negative association between environmental dissatisfaction and mobility intentions, environmental gains likely pay direct “stay” dividends. Investments that couple air-quality improvements with accessible green/blue infrastructures would compound benefits, enhancing health, recreation, and place identity (Gehl, 2010; Klinenberg, 2018).

Taken together, the results suggest three actionable levers. First, consolidate strong cultural and sports ecosystems while remedying the family/community-centre gap to support intergenerational everyday life (Oldenburg, 1999; Klinenberg, 2018). Second, optimize the temporal performance of mobility—headways, synchronizations, and hours—to convert availability into capability (Rosa, 2013; Kaufmann, Bergman and Joye, 2004). Third, prioritize environmental quality as a retention policy, pairing emissions reductions with neighbourhood green/blue projects. These moves align with proximity-based planning (Moreno *et al.*, 2021) and recognize that residential (im)mobility is shaped as much by daily infrastructures and norms as by markets and housing stock.

Two cautions are essential. The survey was an open, online, volunteer sample; associations describe participants, not all Ostrava residents or visitors. And intentions are not outcomes: they interact with housing affordability, job opportunities, and family events (Clark and Dieleman, 1996; Coulter *et al.*, 2016). Even so, the evidence is coherent: strengthening these everyday affordances is the most reliable way to strong urban belonging amid the Ostrava's transformation (Chase *et al.*, 2008; Sýkora and Bouzarovski, 2012).

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