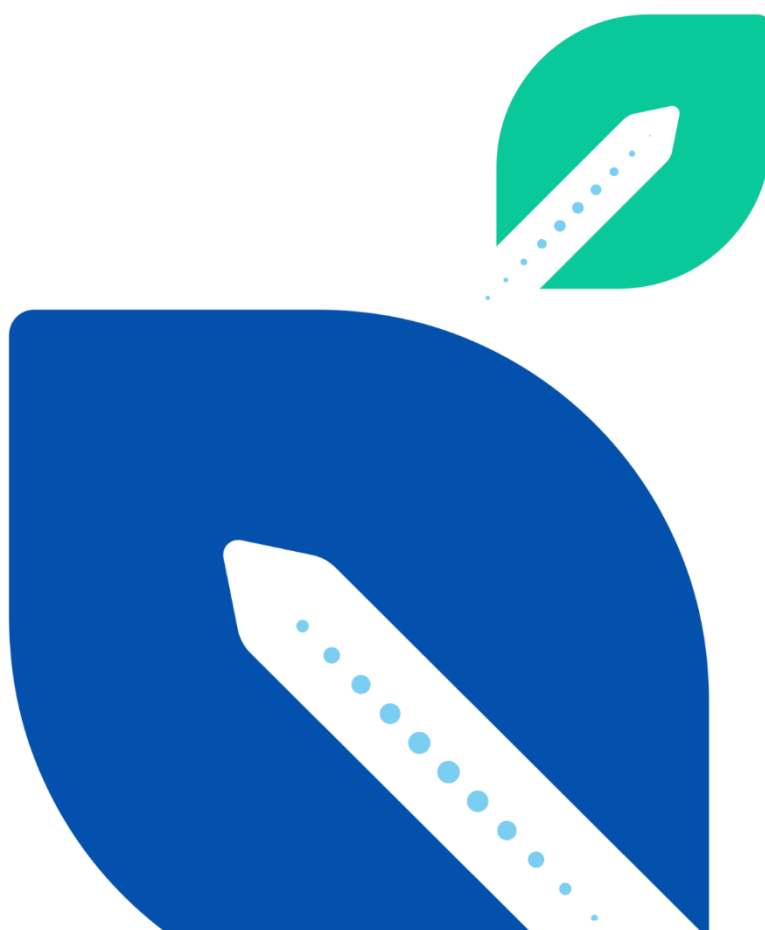




City-specific narrative scenarios

Kalisz



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City-specific narrative scenarios

1.1 Kalisz

1.1.1 Scenario 1- The New Amsterdam

In 2030, Kalisz is nicknamed 'the new Amsterdam', as it is characterised by a rise in ecological awareness. The city has had an important increase in sustainable transport and infrastructure over the past 10 years, leading residents to look for new solutions in city mobility. The city now has over 20 bike sharing stations, both in the city centre and in the suburbs, that residents and tourists can use. There are also a growing number of dock-less bike sharing systems. The new infrastructure, like dedicated bicycle lanes, provides high levels of safety, making it popular in use for all residents. This push towards active modes is also enabled by the fact that all parts of the city are accessible in under 30 minutes. In addition, the mix of companies and residential areas gives citizens the feeling that everything they need is close-by. The new regulations now separating bikes and e-scooters from pedestrians on the sidewalks is a change that is perceived as particularly important. Elderly and disabled citizens, as well as children, moving around individually are therefore not a rare sight in Kalisz in 2030.

In line with their fondness for active modes, the citizens of Kalisz have also gradually moved away from buying new cars, and now increasingly make use of car sharing and carpooling instead. Young families with children, which make up the biggest part of Kalisz' population in 2030, are the only ones who mostly continue to use a private car, causing parking issues in the city centre, especially around kindergartens. However, they are also slowly moving away from private cars, as the cost of ownership is found to be too high, and they can rent shared cars by the minutes, which can use bus lanes according to new local regulations. Residents now also travel more by public transport, as it is free of charge, and more bus routes for commuters were introduced. Technological developments also increased punctuality and frequency of public transport, and routes are now optimized, making it overall more attractive to travel by public transport. The smaller buses in the public transport fleet are electric, in part as a reaction to high temperatures and extreme weather phenomena that are appearing in the city as a consequence of climate change.

These new developments benefit residents, but also tourists: as their numbers increase, the demand for efficient transportation increases as well, generating high demand for public transport and bicycles. They also make use of the city's many green areas, which are also very popular among residents, as they also contain infrastructure for resting and for physical activity.

Kalisz in 2030 is also an increasingly digitalized city. Smart-city technology allows the pre-booking of parking spaces, reducing traffic and air pollution caused by cars driving around looking for a parking spot.

Even though traffic in the city has decreased due to a decrease in private car ownership, the strong increase in activity by courier companies employing gig economy workers has made the centre of the city more congested, and renders parking spots hard to find. Deliveries are

now increasingly made using green modes of transport, such as cargo bikes and electric vans, but they do still contribute to congestion. Additionally, electric vehicles have risen in popularity due to residents being more well-off.

In the summer, as Kalisz regularly experiences heat waves, residents tend to prefer cars (either private or shared) to walking and cycling, as it is too hot outside. In times of extreme heat, air quality is also a problem, further deterring people from active modes of transport. All public transport is equipped with air conditioning, but the city’s elderly complain about the temperature differences between inside the vehicles and outside, which could be unhealthy. On days that are not characterized by extreme heat, however, the air quality in the city has slightly improved, and noise pollution has gone down, as people generally walk or cycle, and many cars are electric.



Figure 1 Kalisz scenario 1: The new Amsterdam

1.1.2 Scenario 2- Never waste a good crisis

Kalisz in 2030 faces an economic crisis that defines its mobility situation. On the one hand, citizens looking to save money avidly use the free public transport that was used by the city. On the other hand, citizens who can still afford owning a private car own older models that have higher emissions, and that do not run on environmentally friendly fuel, as this is too expensive. This means the share of residents who own a private car has not decreased by 2030. This also has an impact on local air quality, which has not improved by 2030. The unavailability of parking spaces also continues to be an issue. In addition, as the

digitalization rate of the city has grown in only a limited way, there is no parking management system that allows users to book parking spots in advance. However, high parking fees have been introduced to free up parking spaces, and citizens now mostly use the “Kiss&Ride” spots around the city. Car-sharing, where available, is also extremely popular among residents as it is cheaper than owning a car, and as the demand for shared cars is quite high, these never spend much time parked.

As residents prefer to live and work in the city but do not get rid of their cars, Kalisz has an increased volume of rush hour traffic. This is further exacerbated by the move towards online shopping by Kalisz residents: the streets are now lined with couriers that add to the city’s traffic, and who are vying for available parking spots.

Besides the economic crisis characterizing the city, another source of worry is the decreasing air quality and the rise in extreme weather events. The frequency of summer heat waves, snowstorms in the winter, and storms, floods, and smog is increasing. On days like that, residents are unwilling to travel - they prefer to stay home, where, they feel safe and protected from the external environment. When they need to travel, they prefer to choose private cars in which they feel safer and can adjust the temperature through air-conditioning and heating. Active travel and the use of public transport on such days are rare. The city, by its own initiative, implemented low-cost but effective solutions to combat the deteriorating environmental quality, by providing more green spaces and meadows within the city and investing in infrastructure for recreation. In addition, in order to limit air pollution, many parts of the city are now 30km/h-zones.

On days without extreme weather events, however, the demand for alternative modes of transport has also increased in 2030. Cycling and walking have become popular, and the city has used parts of its limited available budget to the development of biking infrastructure. This contributes to a healthier population, which is important, as half of Kalisz’ residents are over 60 years old in 2030. This elderly population needs to be encouraged to leave the house, so the city has started to massively put benches on the sidewalks, allowing residents to frequently rest when walking. Additionally, the city has also increased the space allocated to pedestrians, making sidewalks wider. The younger generation of children and teenagers, on the other hand, willingly use shared bikes and scooters, although demand for these services often exceeds supply.

In order to reduce the budget deficit caused by the economic crisis and a reduction in the number of residents, city authorities actively support tourism development. For this purpose, they have increased the number of information boards, timetables, and websites available to consult itineraries, and these are available in many different languages. The city now also has the popular Polish route planner JakDojade, making it easy for tourists to move around the city. This is also beneficial to the city’s growing immigrant population. It now also provides special tourist buses that go to Kalisz’ main attractions, in order to facilitate movement by tourists. As electrification has made some advances over the year, part of that fleet of buses is electric.

Despite the decrease in air quality and the rise in extreme weather events the city is encountering, the city is making an effort to increase liveability where possible. It has

managed to do so in terms of proximity: there is now a well-thought mix between residential areas and commercial districts, so that everything residents need is close-by.



Figure 2 Kalisz scenario 2: Never waste a good crisis

1.1.3 Scenario 3- Technophilia

The streets of Kalisz in 2030 are overrun with people. Even though Kalisz’ own population is declining, this development is unnoticeable, as the streets have been taken over by tourists, and as there is an influx of immigrants. The city characterizes itself as one of true sustainable development, and is considered the leader in smart and environmentally friendly mobility solutions, such as shared bicycles, shared (e-)scooters, car sharing and electric vehicles. The city is now host to multiple alternative mobility solutions operators. Charging stations for electric vehicles can be found all over the city, and the demand for alternative mobility solutions is so high that there is high wear and tear of the vehicles. In addition, residents now have access to completely free and electrified public transport. All of these developments have made residents keen on giving up their private cars, which is also a result of the growing environmental awareness that characterizes citizens. The effects of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has further helped in changing citizen’s habits, as teleworking has now become a common practice. The pandemic also helped jumpstart digital solutions for ride sharing and deliveries from various service points. The city used these pandemic habits to further develop e-commerce, and the streets are lined with smart unloading bays for couriers, and lockers for parcel deliveries. As e-commerce enjoys an enormous popularity in the city,

companies are now making use of delivery drones, in order to help reduce the traffic generated by couriers and the overload of the parcel lockers. As parking can be an issue to some couriers, the city also had smart loading bays installed, which can be booked through an app for a specific amount of time.

The city centre is now a 30km/h-zone, which has helped calm down traffic and further increases the demand for public transport. Active modes are now preferred, especially since the centre has become a place for recreation and relaxation. It is full of greenery, cafes, restaurants, and there are only a limited number of parking spots available. This makes it attractive for all layers of the population: families with children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. As there is a vast and safe walking and biking infrastructure, these last two groups can now easily move around town on their own as well on wide sidewalks and dedicated lanes for bikes and micromobility. This is an important development, as the city's population is growing older. This ageing demographic has gotten used to technological developments, and can now easily understand the information tables, digital timetables, and apps aimed at making their mobility easier. These features are developed in multiple languages, to accommodate the growing number of tourists and immigrants. The city further encourages its ageing citizens to travel by public transport or active modes, as there is an increasing number of accidents involving cars driven by older residents.

Kalisz citizens have all but given up on private car ownership, in part due to high parking fees and taxes on high-emission vehicles. The private cars that can be seen driving around on the streets are electric, leading to clean air and quieter streets. This further encourages citizens to walk and cycle, which is further exacerbated by the fact that everything in the city can be reached in under 30 minutes - a result of an urban development that increasingly seeks to mix residential and commercial activities. The only times there is now an increase in car use in Kalisz is in the summer, when occasional heat waves occur, and people prefer the comfort of an air-conditioned car for their travels. However, there is still some upwards pressure on traffic coming from personal mobility due to the high number of tourists entering the city, who rent cars or use dedicated tourist buses.

Kalisz in 2030 has become a highly enjoyable place to live, and citizens and tourists alike appreciate walking or biking around the city, as the levels of air and noise pollution have decreased significantly thanks to the incentives towards clean mobility instated by the city.



Figure 3 Kalisz scenario 3: Technophilia