

**REVITALISATION ISSUES OF SETTLEMENTS BUILT
IN 1946 – 1974 IN TERMS OF SOCIAL
AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES**

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The paper refers to the issues of forming the revitalisation programs of settlements in particular houses built in 1946-1974 in terms of the understanding of social – demographic changes which have been taking place in a modern society. Paragraphs 3 and 4 contain the description of general social and legal factors which influenced the shape of a family and the residential structure built in 1946-1974. Paragraph 5 is devoted to the predicted changes in the family sizes and the functions predicted by GUS (Central Statistical Office) which are taking place in light of progressive egalitarian relations in a family. The sixth part shows strong and weak points of residential buildings which were built in 1946-1974 in relation to the new family models. The conclusions include main directives, which should be followed, when the revitalisation activities of such objects are formulated, dedicated mainly to the increasing target groups with specific needs: elderly people and childless, economically active young people.

Keywords: architecture, revitalisation, demography, modern family

1. INTRODUCTION

Reflecting on the implementation of revitalisation projects within the settlements built in 1946-1974, some of the social-demographic aspects of the issue which may release their potentials deserve thinking over. The date 1974 is a rather presumed limit more connected with the implementation of some urban and housing norms, which will be discussed further, as well as with the spread of prefabricated construction techniques – panel buildings, which may themselves be the subject of a separate elaboration due to the different set of problems of social and technical nature.

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2. SOCIAL SITUATION IN THE AFTER-WAR PERIOD

Reading “Sociology of a family” by Tomasz Szlendak [1] we realise, and in fact often intuitively notice, that the family which is indirectly designing its basic tool – a house or a flat, being the aim of our work, is not that definable and stable as some people think, but is a dynamic, changeable formation, in which relations and mutual interdependence do not change only with time and according to its particular stages, but also due to the general changes taking place in the society. It is not the architect’s job to analyse the reasons and results of these changes but we should be aware of them, so to skilfully react on the processes through suitably designed houses. As far as the existing objects are concerned, we should think how to exploit them and how to transform them so that their potentials would be best exploited. Looking at the construction industry in the period after World War II, we should remember that it was formed in determined social, demographic political cultural and economic conditions.

Not only was the number of houses in the interwar period insufficient, but many of houses were destroyed in war operations. The ones that preserved, were managed in such a way that they would have accommodated the largest number of people. Additionally, as a result of border changes, we must remember about the great migration of the population from the eastern territories to Silesia and “Regained Territories”. An excellent picture of the migration we can see in the Ethnographic Museum of Opole Silesia. People brought not only their culture, possessions but also their fear and uncertainty of the future. However, such towns as Gliwice, Wroclaw gained immensely in this mixing of cultures where the tradition of Silesia met with Lviv, forming a new quality. The post-war trauma caused a kind of “conservative rockburst” (T.S s. 353) within which, the family model and mutual relationships should resemble those of the Victorian era. The 50s harden the “traditional” roles of a mother, best with a few children, and a man “*the only breadwinner to the household*” (T.S s. 356). Simultaneously, much pressure was put on “demographic reconstruction” of the country: “*In 1950, the rate of live births in Poland exceeded even the American record and was 30.7 per 1,000 people*” (T.S s. 353 after Duch Krzysztozek 1998 s 31). In 2009, the birth rate was 10.9 [2]. It should be remembered that it all happened in the reality determined with the political system which we had at that time, and which contributed to the isolation of ideas. Changes which started to take place in the western societies yet in the sixties, did not reach our country until the nineties, thus the more dramatic they seem today.

3. CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY OF THE AFTERWAR PERIOD UNTIL 1974

The PRL times, and particularly the 50s, were the period when every aspect of life, and especially social life – construction including, was under political control. Fast development of towns and the growth of industry, which were followed by the migration of population to towns, were the priorities of the authorities. Apart from the development within the existing towns, new totally artificial formations appeared, e.g. the town of Tychy was established by the resolution of the Government Praesidium of 04.10.1950 and the Regulation of the Prime Minister 09.11.1950 “*In order to improve the living conditions of the working class of the Central Coal Basin*” [3]. In order to establish new living space “appropriate” for socialistic society, new norms were sought for with which the construction process could be kept under control. Act of July 3, 1947 was the base for the activities. It imposed a requirement on the Minister of Reconstruction to formulate building standards. It resulted in the announcement of instruction of 10 September 1947. Not only did the Instruction formed the spacious norms for particular standards of flat categories, but also stated the quantitative relations for the particular categories in the new designed residential complexes. It is worth mentioning that not only a living room or a bedroom was considered a room but also the kitchen if it had a window and was separated with walls.

Table 1. Norms for flats from 1947 [5].

Flat category	Usable space in m ²	Out of which living area	Sample numerical solution
I	22	16	1 or 1.5 rooms
II	35	24	2 rooms
III	41	28	2,5-3 rooms
IV	48	32	3-3,5 rooms
V	58	40	4 rooms

The norms allowed designing rooms lesser than 8 m², e.g. bedroom annexes, which had to be opened to other spaces, though, but could be designed without windows.

A flat of type III was considered to be the basic one and so was decided to be built in 3/5 of the newly erected blocks of flats, whereas the proportions for types I + II and V amounted 1/5 each. Simultaneously, a committee was formed within the Institute of Housing, which was to elaborate new standards. The

assumptions the committee made are worth citing here as they reveal the picture of the criteria they used [6]:

1. „The average floor area should not exceed 11.3m^2 per person.
2. A minimum living space per person amounts 7m^2 , and it is expected to be enlarged to 8.5m^2 and then to 10.5m^2 per person.
3. Each family receives a separate apartment.
4. Every citizen, regardless of age is considered a person.
5. A bedroom for 3 people is considered unacceptable, with the exception of marriage with a child under 5. It is unacceptable or at least highly inappropriate that two persons sleep in one room, especially persons more than 12-14 years old, of the opposite gender. Also, sleeping in the kitchen is unacceptable

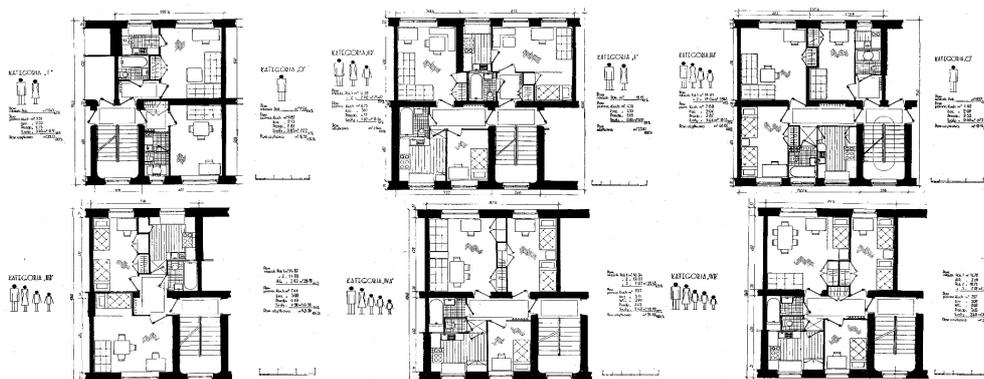


Fig. 1. Examples of flat plans elaborated by the Institute in 1950. Illustrations are taken from the „Report of the Committee of Housing Standards volume 1 IBM Warsaw 12 1950 Book 1”

The additional results of the committee's work were the architectural solutions for flats elaborated by engineer Szperling (IL.:1), some of which are presented below. These solutions were in use for many years. The proposed by the Institute standards were accepted as a flat norm in 1954 [7].

In both cases, a living room meant a bedroom for parents, which did not provide expected privacy. Looking at the housing structure, we can see that single-room flats and double-room flats composed 80% of the total number of flats, which for the average family (2+2) presented a considerable housing problem. The situation became even worse after introducing the standard in 1959 [8]. It introduced the limit of 44m^2 for a flat in the newly designed buildings and settlements. It was then that the nomenclature was introduced to determine a flat by the number of its residents.

Table 2. Comparison between the results of IBM work and standards from 1954 and 1959

Committee of Housing Standards (IBM) 1950					Standards from 1954					Standards 1959		
Flat type	Flat component	Usable surface	Living space in	Kitchen area	Flat type	Flat component	Usable surface	Living space in	Kitchen area	Flat type	Usable surface m ²	Number of dwellers
0	P+W K	18- 20	12	05	P	P+W K+ WC	18- 22	14	10%	M1	17- 20	1
I	P+K	25- 27	15	4	PK	P+K +Ł	28- 39	18	43%	M2	24- 30	2
II a i b	P+Pj +K	35- 38	21	6	2PK	2P+ K+Ł	41- 50	28	37%	M3	33- 38	3
IIIa i b	2P+ K	44- 48	28	7	3PK	3P+ K+Ł	51- 58	36	10%	M4	42- 48	4
IV a i b	2P+P j+K	53- 58	35	7	4PK	4P+ K+Ł	59- 66	45	do 2%	M5	51- 57	5
										M6	59- 65	6
V a i b	3P+P j+K	63+6 8	43	7	P- room , Pj single room - bedroom, WK kitchen annex , K- kitchen, Ł- bathroom					M7	67- 71	7
VI a i b	3P+P j+K	75- 80	49	8								

Looking at buildings from the period 1945-1974, it can be noticed that they frequently do not compose large settlements, although sometimes they initiated their development. A lot of settlements were built within the after-war restorations, often as single buildings or as a small group next to the existing buildings. Additionally, many of them, since they were built as the first ones, are best located and are best communicated with the rest of the town.

The year 1974 is the date which separates the post-war period in the building industry for two reasons. The first one is that this is the year when new building and town planning standards were established, which serve as a cornerstone for new large settlements [9], and the second one – is a widespread usage of panel building. The difference between these two periods is vivid enough to consider the problems occurring in these estates as separate problems of space in town planning, structural-technical, and social.

We can read more on this topic in papers by Władysław Korzeniowski (Budownictwo Mieszkaniowe Poradnik Projektanta) or Andrzej Tokajuk (Zespoły mieszkaniowe z lat 1945-1970....)

4. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES AFTER 1989.

The year 1989 is a special date for our society not only because of the political transformations that took place in our country. It is also the date after which the effects of these changes have a huge impact on most areas of our lives. The collapse of the planned economy and thus the heavy industry and mining, which were the basis of employment in urban areas such as Silesia, results in the fact that those who migrated to these centres in search for work began to leave them. For instance, in 1988, the population of Silesia was 4 907 919 [10] people, whereas twelve years later, in 2010, it was 4 635 882 [11] people. The difference 272 037 can be compared to a medium-sized town e.g. Częstochowa. The drainage of the town residents is tightly correlated with the size of businesses which located in various towns. The prognosis prepared by the Central Statistical Office foresees the further decrease in the number of population in 2008-2035 [12], to reach the number of 4 052 211 people, i.e. by 855 708 people fewer. It is as if a towns such as Katowice, Sosnowiec and Częstochowa were depopulated. What is additionally significant, is the changes which are taking place in the structure of the population. The prognosis says that the percentage of elderly people in the population structure will increase whereas productive group will shrink.

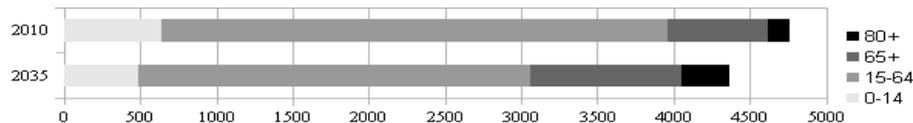


Fig. 2. Population structure in Upper Silesia in 2010 together with the prognosis for 2035

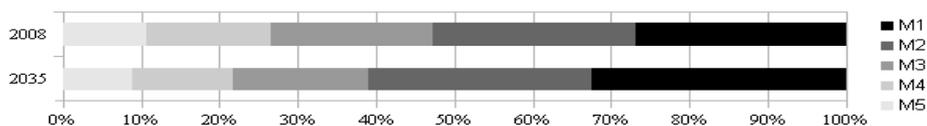


Fig. 3. Structure of household sizes in 2008 and prognosis for 2035

The changes are followed by the expected changes in the structure of households. As can be observed in Fig. 3, the vast majority of households will fall into the group with 3 residents, whereas flats with one or two residents will compose 61.2% of the total number of flats. There are numerous reasons for this

situation, although they are mainly related to the progressive globalization and the changes that take place within the family – i.e. mutual relationships of their members. It is not a local problem, although the strong changes which are taking place refer to countries well rooted in Catholicism and patriarchal traditions. The fertility rates of women are significantly decreasing in these countries [T.S. pp. 367-369], simultaneously, the marriage institution is becoming more and more unstable, and the divorce rates are considerably rising. *“In just 1998, the numbers of divorces in particular countries were as follows: 578 (in 1000) Finnish marriages, 525 British, 563 Hungarian, and 584 Russian”* [T.S. p. 370] *„It is estimated that 300 marriages out of 1000 get divorced currently in Poland.”* [T.S. p. 372]. The number of people who decide to live as singles is considerably increasing, which refers mainly to women, and also people who live together but do not get married. People tend to get married later and later, if at all. A model of an egalitarian family is formed, in which all the members are respected, as well as their professional choices and lifetime ambitions, and also various alternatives for what was previously called a classical nucleus family. Each of the models will approach the living space in a slightly different manner. We, the architects, understanding the new demands, should consider them and reflect in our work. What will connect these models is definitely the general trend to individualise the space providing intimacy for their residents, and also transferring the traditional functions of a family to external institutions.

5. CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN 1946-1974 IN LIGHT OF NEW FAMILY MODELS

Looking at the issue from the point of the anticipated demand for flats, it should be noticed that what was the curse of its times – a minimum surface of a flat - , may now be the biggest trump of the facilities built in the after-war period. Obviously, the settlements, or particular buildings have their strengths and weaknesses.

5.1. Strengths :

- The most probable strong point, apart from the surface, is their central location in the town structure, as they were built at the beginnings of the urbanisation process.
- The facilities are usually well communicated with the rest of the town, or are located within a walking distance.
- The settlements are surrounded by well developed green areas, although frequently neglected.
- To a large extent the estates have a well-established social structure of a peaceful nature.

- The general technical condition of the facilities (in construction terms) is satisfactory.
- Some of these estates, especially the ones which were particularly solicitously designed, may, with their unique architecture, deserve a respect to be referred to as "cult estates" and after modernisation their attractiveness may vanquish even modern buildings. A good example of such buildings may be "Superjednostka" in Katowice, designed by Mieczysław Król in 1972 and recently modernised.

5.2. Weaknesses

Obviously, such estates have their weak points, too. They should be solved and corrected within revitalisation works:

- A barracks-like layout of the buildings shapes the space giving it impersonal appearance, which also refers to the shape of the buildings themselves.
- As a result of a weak commitment to the development of spatial order of these settlements, attention should be paid to a very poor arrangement of space around the buildings – damaged sidewalks, lack of playgrounds or meeting places.
- Extremely limited parking places. What refers mainly to older buildings.
- Although the overall small living space of these flats is their strong point, it should be noted that a large part of the premises do not meet the currently accepted standards. It particularly refers to rooms such as kitchens, bathrooms, and bedrooms. Frequently, there are no balconies.
- The buildings are in a very poor condition in terms of their technical infrastructure. Starting with such issues as carbon-fired ovens which were built due to the lack of gas supply, finishing with hazardous gas-powered water heaters. A part of the buildings were heated by inefficient and polluting coal-powered municipal heating plants.
- Thermal parameters of buildings, especially of the ones from the late seventies, are very low. It may be an additional problem, as these particular buildings often have "deliberately designed modernist facade" showing the structure or texture of the materials. (eg, buildings designed by a team of Majerski Duchowicz at Stawowa Street now Dunikowskiego Street in Gliwice).
- Poor accessibility for the disabled and elderly people – buildings do not have elevators and their ground floors are often raised.
- Such buildings are often in the poor areas of the town, which reduces the value of the neighbourhood, and thus blocks the financial capacity to carry out the necessary repairs.
- Dispersed ownership structure which may present a significant obstacle for the decision about carrying out the repair works.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Viewing the problem from the perspective of social changes, there are two possible target groups in terms of the demand for small apartments. However the two groups have different requirements in terms of urban and living spaces.

The first of these groups comprises elderly people, who present a very traditional approach to the living space. Obviously, these people have their specific needs which should be met when revitalising a building. This group is characterized by the fact that individuals are often lonely, after they lost their spouses, and it is very important for them to have the opportunity to maintain relationships with other persons at a similar age. It is important from the point of view of the group to provide these contacts within the municipal area. Additionally, it is important that the surroundings is safe and quiet with the utility facilities within a walking distance (shops, medical services, meeting places). Adjusting the internal structure of these buildings and their infrastructure to meet the needs of elderly people, in the context of their potential disabilities, seems to be challenging, though not hopeless, due to their traditional constructing technologies. The key is to install a lift and reconstruct the sanitary facilities. Elderly people, due to their lower material status, often cook their meals at home. Also, they more frequently pay visits, so the kitchen area and the living room require a good solution.

The second group of people who might be interested in such revitalization projects are active young people living alone or in pairs, referred to as DINKS (Double Income No Kids). The average size of such apartments ranges 40-44 m² with two rooms is rather intended for families with no children if the twenty-first century living standards were to be maintained. From the point of view of town planning, the important issue for such persons is the proximity to their work places and utility facilities in the town centre, due to their specific lifestyle. Because of their young age, they put less importance on a peaceful and secure neighbourhood and more on the architectural quality of the object itself - hence the phenomenon of "Superjednostka". They will also consider the standard of finishing as a significant issue. While older people spend more time at home or in the neighbourhood, this group treats the living space differently. Due to the strong commitment to work, home remains the mainstay of everyday rest (sleep) and possible contact with the nearest person. Much less time is spent on the preparation of meals – it is pointless to expect from anyone to cook a "full-sized dinner" after coming back late from work. The kitchen may be marginalized here to a row of cupboards including a kitchen working space. These people are more often willing to take an active vacation away from home (sports trips, etc.). Similarly, relationship with friends are transferred to clubs, pubs and restaurants. The separation of the daily area from the intimate area is of less importance than it was in case of elderly people.

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IL.: 2, 3 opracowanie własne na podstawie analizy wyników GUS [10, 11, 12].

PROBLEMY REWITALIZACJI OSIEDLI MIESZKANIOWYCH
Z LAT 1946-1974 W ASPEKCIE ZMIAN SPOŁECZNYCH I DEMOGRAFICZNYCH

Streszczenie

Artykuł dotyczy problematyki możliwości kształtowania programów rewitalizacji osiedli i poszczególnych obiektów mieszkaniowych z lat 1946-1974 w oparciu o zrozumienie zmian społeczno demograficznych, jakie zachodzą we współczesnym społeczeństwie. W akapitach 3 i 4 opisano ogólnie czynniki społeczne i prawne, jakie miały wpływ na kształt rodziny i struktury mieszkaniowej powstałej w okresie lat 1946-1974. Akapit 5 poświęcony jest przewidywanym zmianom w funkcjonowaniu i wielkości rodzin- „gospodarstw domowych”, jakie są przewidywane w oparciu o prognozy GUS i zachodzące w ramach postępującej egalitaryzacji rodziny. Część szósta pokazuje silne i słabe strony zabudowy mieszkaniowej z lat 1946-1974 w relacji do nowych modeli rodziny. W ramach wniosków przedstawiono główne wytyczne, którymi powinno się kierować, w ramach formułowania działań rewitalizacyjnych, takich obiektów, dedykowanych dla powiększających się i specyficznych w swych potrzebach grup docelowych: osób starszych i aktywnych zawodowo bezdzietnych osób młodych.