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Participation by Residents as Precondition for Successful Implementation of Housing Estate Rehabilitation

1. Introduction

In Slovenia, similarly to other ex-socialist Central and East European countries, large housing estates constitute an important aspect of housing supply. While in West European countries only 10 percent of the population live in large housing estates, this proportion rises to 20 and 35 percent in Central and East European countries and even up to 60 percent in some urban areas (Murie, Knorr-Siedow and Van Kempen, 2003). The 2002 census showed that the proportion of homes in multiple occupation in Slovenia amounted to 31 percent of the entire housing stock.

In the period of great housing shortage after World War II, large prefabricated housing estates constituted the fastest and most efficient way of mass housing provision. But the defects of this type of residence surfaced shortly. In West European countries they began to realise the deficiency of this kind of housing solution and started doing away with them (even by demolition) already in the 70'. In ex-socialist countries, on the contrary, such housing estates were still being built in the late 80'.

Today large housing estates constitute an ever more questionable and weak segment of the housing market. This is especially true for the ex-socialist countries. But at the same time we can ascertain that it is these very central and east European countries, which still have no policies devised to solve the problems of large housing estates. Slovenia is no exception. Furthermore, at the state level Slovenia has not yet adopted a strategy for tackling the rehabilitation of housing estates, which could be used as the groundwork for systematic rehabilitation and regeneration schemes for large housing estates at the municipal level. It should be pointed out that neglect of issues of housing estates can result in unpredictable negative social and economic consequences. Experiences from other countries, where they have had to face the physical and social decline of such residential areas, should be regarded as a serious warning.

Experts believe that the dwelling and its quality play a special role in the assertion of economic and social life (Power, 1987; Pinto, 1993). According to a poll, conducted by a German newspaper in the east part of Berlin, residents placed the dwelling on top of their priority list, even ahead of job, income and safety (Schumer-Strucksberg, 1997). Unfortunately housing quality in large housing estates is often rather low. For this reason the dwellings and housing premises require appropriate maintenance and timely renovations. We also have to realise that the rehabilitation of housing estates constitutes an important issue in public housing policy and infrastructure investment. Maintaining, improving and rehabilitating housing

estates are indispensable if we want to ensure their competitiveness in relation to the emerging new housing typologies.

Ljubljana, the largest town in Slovenia, also has the greatest concentration of large housing estates. Inactivity in this sector might eventually induce in Ljubljana's neighbourhoods the characteristic negative processes, seen as: great concentration of economically weaker households, high unemployment rate, social exclusiveness, deviant behaviour (especially of younger tenants), the feeling of living in an unsafe environment and *de facto* unsafe environment etc. In the following phase (if not already simultaneously to these processes) we will unwittingly assist the moving out of the tenants who are able to provide themselves better residential conditions, which is only the final act in the process of physical decline and market devaluation of these neighbourhoods.

In order to evade the above scenario the Municipality of Ljubljana should be setting up an urgent overall strategy for renovation and rehabilitation of large residential neighbourhoods in the Ljubljana area. With this scope in mind the research project underpinning this paper has partly been realised. A pilot research was commissioned by the Municipality of Ljubljana (Department for cultural and research activities, Public housing fund and Department for urban planning) and carried out jointly by the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia and the Institute for Social Sciences at the Faculty for Social Sciences. The researched area was the west part of Savsko naselje. Š1Č The fundamental task of the first phase of the research was to undertake an extensive analysis of conditions within the housing estate and to form guidelines and suggestions for possible solutions. The aim was to produce a strategy for the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood which would define urgent rehabilitation measures, individual activities in particular phases of the rehabilitation, scopes of individual measures and the end objectives of the rehabilitation (more about the research, see: Sendi et al., 2004). The lessons learned during the project should serve as a guideline for the future planning and developing of strategies and schemes for rehabilitation of other neighbourhoods in Ljubljana.

2. Research methodology

The approach to rehabilitation of residential neighbourhoods, which was used in this research, is based on the methodology we developed at the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia during one of the previous extensive analyses of various models of rehabilitation (Dimitrovska Andrews, 1999). In the said research we produced a »rehabilitative framework for overall regeneration of housing estates«, which includes five main phases:

- Analysis (evaluation) of the situation,
- Presentation of the analysis findings and production of suggestions for viable solutions,
- Definition of the vision and development strategy,
- Implementation of rehabilitation measures (schemes),
- Evaluation of rehabilitation results.

In this part of the research we completed the first two phases i.e. the analysis of the situation and the production of viable solutions (Sendi et al., 2004). An extensive analysis of the situation included the following actions:

- Creation of an essential database about the neighbourhood,

- Analysis of the structural and technical conditions of the premises (assessment of seismic hazards, which the housing premises may be subject to),
- Analysis of the technical systems of the buildings (analysis and assessment of the power supply and sanitary conditions of the premises),
- Analysis of the urbanistic and design specifics of the neighbourhood (settlement density, functional communications, analysis of the types of premises, infrastructural facilities, traffic regulation, green spaces etc.)
- Analysis of the tenants' participation (polling and urban planning workshop), and
- Analysis of the dwelling prices in the Bežigrad area.

The key factor of the applied »methodology of the overall rehabilitation of neighbourhoods« was early inclusion and active participation of the residents of the housing estate, dealt with in the preparation of the rehabilitation strategy. The fundamental principle, which we were keen to assert, was that no alterations inside a large housing estate could be imposed from outside. The more efficient approach is to undertake improvement measures from within the housing estates by active participation, meaning with the assistance and support from the people who live there and use the space. Participation of tenants in maintaining, managing, renovating and deciding about all relevant aspects of development of the neighbourhood constitute the mandatory part of planning practice in the majority of west European countries (more about it see: Cole, et al., 1999; Cooper & Hawtin, 1997; Cooper & Hawtin, 1998; Ford et al., 2001; Malpass, 1997; Power, 1999; Somerville, 1998; Wates, 1996).

We empowered the tenants to actively participate in the process of rehabilitation by polling the residents of the neighbourhood and by organising an urban planning workshop. To carry out the poll we used the random pattern method. Of all 650 questionnaires distributed, 584 were returned, which means a 90 percent achievement. In our opinion such a high response rate can be attributed especially to the fear of the tenants of *again* becoming objects of stealthy plans of the Municipality of Ljubljana (who commissioned the survey) to intervene into their environment without their consent (more about it later). The survey was very extensive (53 questions altogether), but in this paper we only deal with those results, which are most relevant to the discussion.

In the following chapter the findings of the analysis of the tenants' participation are presented. We first describe the organisation and course of the urban planning workshop and then summarise the most important statements made by participants. Further we present the polling results. We attempt to interpret some of them in relation to the statements made by the participants in the urban planning workshop. The parallel treatment of the findings from both analyses is very helpful in interpreting some phenomena as well as in corroborating or rejecting certain hypotheses.

3. Analysis of participation by residents

As mentioned earlier the main objective of the workshop was to enable a more direct and concrete participation of the residents of the neighbourhood in the activities concerning the renovation. We invited to the workshop all the interested tenants and other land users (the school, the kindergarten, the

Institute for Agriculture) occupying the area of research. We wanted the tenants to tell us about the most disturbing facts and main deficiencies which they experience in the housing estate, how they want their housing estate to be put in order and which forms of modernisation would suit them. Our objective was to work together with them and identify the biggest problems in the neighbourhood, as well as to find the best solutions allowing us to make suggestions about the measures needed to rehabilitate the neighbourhood. We also tried to find out which improvements and rehabilitation schemes the tenants would be willing to support with their own financial (or other) participation.

The workshop was conceived as a two-day event and took place in the afternoons. The first day was dedicated to identifying and discussing the problems of the housing estate, while the second one was used for searching and suggesting possible solutions. We were (pleasantly) surprised by the participation in the workshop. The first day the workshop was visited by 39 tenants and on the second day we had 43 participants. Regardless of the fact that these figures represent only approximately 8 percent of the actual pattern that we took into consideration for polling, we also need to state that the citizens as a rule react very reservedly to such events. In order to additionally arouse interest in the workshop we marked the areas needing renovation on the poster inviting the tenants to the workshop. Judging from the remarks by a considerable number of the participants, we may say that many were there just because of these »discussion topics«.

After the introductory presentation of the results of the polling and the urbanistic and architectural analysis we invited all persons present to help us identify the major problems in the housing estate. In the course of the workshop we should find the appropriate solutions to those problems. We told them that we had discovered through analyses to date and our observations certain deteriorations and defects in the housing estate, but we wish them to tell us how they experience the space they live in and what they find most disturbing. We stressed that in this phase we do not offer any concrete solutions for we wish to come to solutions together with them.

From the start the residents of the housing estate clearly showed their distrust of the research team and kept repeating their anticipation that there was a hidden agenda to what we were presenting. They would find »justifications« for their suspicions also in the invitation to the workshop, where particular critical sites in the housing estate were markedly exposed. We had to go to great length to explain and eventually persuade the persons present that there were real problems in the housing estate (traffic and parking irregularities, badly defined open spaces, derelict green spaces, poorly kept and improperly equipped children's playgrounds, non-harmonised renovations of the balconies and other face elements etc.). We stressed that these defects and inconsistencies should be taken care of as soon as possible to prevent them from deteriorating.

In the first part of the workshop the debate was happening more or less as follows: »we are happy in our housing estate as it is, we need nothing..., you want to take away and sell our land..., leave us alone, we don't need you at all..., don't offer solutions to what we don't need..., this housing estate can serve as an example to others..., the neighbouring ones are even worse..., etc. Nevertheless, the mode of

discussion eventually became calmer and towards the end of the meeting some individuals did ask questions about feasible solutions and suggested concrete solutions to certain problems.

After making an abstract of the discussion with the tenants we selected the most relevant statements made by individual participants, most frequently mentioned problems of the neighbourhood and some concrete suggestions for solutions:

- environment maintenance is a catastrophe, parking lots are littered, green plots are not being mowed – the same problems every year,
- as to the green spaces, I think the municipality should make it possible to do something with them – the municipality takes no care of them, and we are not their owners,
- the Municipality of Ljubljana has to keep the green spaces in good order, every year the same problem to cope with,
- we would pay for the cleaning of the environment if it were really done, but we feel double-crossed,
- there are many difficulties due to the undetermined »functional« land around the buildings (used for engineering operations),
- faulty sewer (Črtomirova 31) provoking flooding at every heavy downpour,
- disorderly sites for litterbins,
- acute issues are parking lots and traffic management,
- we need garages and children's playgrounds maintained in good order,
- parking spaces envisaged during the construction of the »avenue of the giants« never came into being,
- traffic jam at Topniška str. 58a – access for emergency vehicles practically hampered,
- mums with baby carriages forced to walk on the roadway as the pavements are occupied by parked cars,
- garages at Zupančičeva jama are only 60 percent occupied, rents are high, asking prices astronomical,
- if the (vacant) garages at Zupančičeva jama were available for free or at decent prices this problem in our neighbourhood would be considerably less severe,
- who is going to finance the rehabilitation?
- if we wanted to renovate our houses, we should find financial resources,
- I think you should first suggest your solutions, then we can discuss the methods and approaches,
- what to do with the balconies in Novakova str. where every dwelling has a different approach? Is it possible to find a common solution, an economic one and aesthetically acceptable?
- we have two suitable sites for a parking house, under the Zvezda recreation ground & park (football field) and under the parking lots on the opposite side of the Črtomirova str.,
- the apartment buildings on Neubergerjeva str. 2 and 4 and on Črtomirova str. 3 and 5 are very old, so the renovation of balconies and replacement of windows and roofs have started. Please find a common suitable solution for these replacements – the neighbours should talk matters over and harmonise their options,
- the apartment buildings by the side of Linhartova str. are a nice challenge for a good architect. A fine solution can be contrived there,
- we are excluded from making decisions about the ways of rehabilitation of the neighbourhood,
- suggestions regarding the erection of new housing premises do not heed the wishes and needs of the tenants,

- advising on renovation offered by the municipal services is unsatisfactory (an example is Črtomirova str. 31 where they wanted to renew the facade in accordance with the rest of the neighbourhood but at the administrative unit they were unable to advise them properly,
- we have a feeling to be exploited by the municipality.

The quoted résumés show that the tenants enumerated some relevant problems and defects of their housing estate despite their unkind reception and initial claims that their residential environment is all right. The statements resumed here can be divided into two main groups. The first group (n° 1-21) refers to the identification of the problems and deficiencies of the housing estate and to seeking solutions to the ascertained deficiencies. The second group (n° 22-25) refers to the relationship between the tenants and the municipal authorities. The second group implicitly refers also to the relationship between the users of land and its designers (experts). It is our thesis that the major difficulties in the field of rehabilitation are brought up in the statements of the participants in the workshop which we put into the second group. In the following pages we attempt to corroborate this thesis by empirical findings from the poll.

At first we present some findings from the poll concerning the tenants' evaluation of their residential environment.

These evaluations serve as a basic orientation in the dealing with the tenant's attitude towards their residential environment as well as in ascertaining their attitude towards maintenance and renewal. The question »How would you evaluate the orderliness of your neighbourhood?« was answered by a little less than half of the respondents (47 percent) with »orderly«, two-fifths are of opinion the neighbourhood is neither orderly nor disorderly, and a good tenth think it is disorderly. In this connection we further asked the respondents about the comparisons between their neighbourhood and other neighbourhoods in Ljubljana. Nearly 60 percent of the respondents are of opinion that the orderliness of the neighbourhood resembles that in the majority of other neighbourhoods in Ljubljana while nearly one-third assess their neighbourhood is comparatively more orderly. We can infer from these answers that most respondents believe their neighbourhood does not deviate from the average as regards orderliness. The percentage of respondents who regard the neighbourhood as disorderly and very disorderly respectively (12 percent) and the percentage of those who find the neighbourhood as derelict and much more derelict respectively (9.1 percent) compared to others, is also worthwhile noting. Considering both results it is possible to infer that the tenants who valued negatively the orderliness of the neighbourhood, valued it negatively in comparison with others as well.

It is also sensible to consider the questions and answers regarding the quality and orderliness of the neighbourhood in relation to the questions about the (dis)satisfaction with certain aspects of the residential environment and the questions about the disturbing phenomena in it.

It appears from the Table 1 that the respondents are generally quite satisfied with the majority of the enumerated characteristics of their neighbourhood. If we add together the results in both right columns (rather satisfied and very satisfied), the average rate of satisfaction amounts to 62 percent. In addition, it is worthwhile mentioning, that 66 percent of the respondents answered they would recommend moving into their neighbourhood. It points to a certain con-

sistency in the respondents' evaluation of the neighbourhood quality. The respondents are most satisfied with the kindergarten and the elementary school (86 percent), retail supply (82 percent) and catering services (81 percent). Gi-

ven that there is no store in the region of the research and that there is but one pub (in the south end of the housing estate alongside Vilharjeva str.), it is possible to surmise the tenants are satisfied primarily with the rich supply of these

Table 1: (Dis)satisfaction with the characteristics of the neighbourhood

How are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the characteristics of your neighbourhood indicated below	Very dissatisfied %	Partly dissatisfied %	Rather satisfied %	Very satisfied %
1. Image of the neighbourhood	5,3	25,4	61,1	8,2
2. Neighbourhood density	13,7	32,8	43,0	10,6
3. Public passenger transport	6,6	18,2	46,8	28,4
4. Orderliness of public green spaces	13,5	26,8	47,2	12,5
5. Traffic regulation in the neighbourhood	28,3	32,6	32,6	6,5
6. Maintenance of roads and footways	10,0	27,4	53,6	9,0
7. Parking lots	60,2	23,7	12,0	4,1
8. Collection and removal of garbage	3,9	17,1	55,6	23,4
9. Kindergarten and elementary school	5,2	8,8	47,7	38,3
10. Children's playgrounds	23,4	28,3	33,6	14,7
11. Sports and recreation facilities	22,9	35,9	34,8	6,4
12. Retail stores supply	5,4	12,5	52,2	29,8
13. Catering services	6,2	12,6	58,1	23,1
14. Cleanliness of the neighbourhood	10,5	31,7	51,2	6,6
15. Maintenance of buildings in the neighbourhood	8,9	29,8	53,8	7,4
16. Management of your house	15,2	27,1	44,2	13,5
17. Quietness of the neighbourhood	12,1	22,4	48,1	17,4
18. Air quality	13,5	28,6	48,7	9,2
19. Other tenants	5,0	18,3	56,9	19,8
20. Safety in the neighbourhood	10,5	27,0	52,7	9,8

Table 2: Disturbing phenomena

How often the following disturbing phenomena occur in your neighbourhood?	Never %	Sometimes %	Often %	Continually %
1. Poorly maintained children's playgrounds	8,0	42,1	30,6	19,3
2. Traffic congestion	19,9	39,8	30,0	10,3
3. Noisy neighbours	18,6	57,6	18,6	5,3
4. Noisy passers-by	18,5	54,1	21,2	6,2
5. Noisy stores, restaurants and clubs	65,8	26,2	6,5	1,5
6. Graffiti on the walls	37,9	48,0	11,4	2,7
7. Insufficient parking facilities	4,9	15,9	19,5	59,7
8. Littered streets (garbage, canine excrements)	6,4	35,1	32,3	26,3
9. Littered green plots	7,7	41,0	32,0	19,3
10. Traffic noise	14,3	40,7	23,5	21,6
11. Stolen or ruined mail	60,3	32,4	5,5	1,7
12. Break-ins into cars (including attempts)	16,4	57,7	20,2	5,7
13. Break-ins into cellars (including attempts)	27,0	58,0	11,8	3,2
14. Break-ins into homes (including attempts)	39,4	52,6	5,7	2,3
15. Smell of exhaust gases	19,0	40,6	22,4	18,0

services in the neighbouring housing estate, Zupančičeva jama. By far the most acute source of dissatisfaction are (of course) the parking lots and badly regulated traffic in the neighbourhood, followed by the poorly kept children's playgrounds and lacking sports and recreation facilities. The chaotic parking conditions were the problem most frequently brought up at the urban planning workshop too.

When we analyse the replies concerning the disturbing phenomena (Table 2), it also makes sense adding together percentages in both columns on the right so as to obtain the overall assessment of the extent of these phenomena in the neighbourhood. It is evident from the table that parking conditions again stand out as the most disturbing phenomenon in the housing estate (79 percent). In the second place on the disturbing phenomena list we find the littered

streets (59 percent), and in the third place there are the littered green plots (51 percent). Here we have a case of a slight contradiction if we compare these results with the results from the Table 1 where we can observe that as many as 58 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the cleanness of the neighbourhood. It is, however, surprising to note that the tenants do not register heavier traffic congestions despite their high degree of dissatisfaction with the insufficient parking spaces and traffic irregularities.

It is interesting to note, too, that the neighbourhood has no serious problems with noise from shops, restaurants and clubs in spite of its rather central location. As already stated earlier, it is due to the variety of services which are available in the proximity of the researched area i.e. at the neighbouring Zupančičeva jama. It is evident from the ans-

Table 3: The necessary renovations

If you think the neighbourhood needs rehabilitation, would you please point out which of the shown below should be renovated or done anew	Not necessary at all %	Not necessary %	Neither necessary nor unnecessary %	Necessary %	Very necessary %
1. Renovate entrances and staircases	11,7	28,5	19,6	29,1	10,9
2. Install elevators (if missing)	18,6	27,5	15,5	23,4	15,1
3. Renovate roofs	10,3	24,5	24,5	31,8	8,9
4. Facades	6,3	16,1	18,6	37,6	21,4
5. Complete thermal insulation of buildings	8,2	21,2	22,7	32,8	15,1
6. Renovate plumbing and sewage	7,5	22,2	25,7	32,4	12,2
7. Renovate heating	8,6	29,4	25,9	26,5	9,6
8. Renovate electric circuitry	12,4	24,5	27,3	25,2	10,7
9. Build additional housing premises in the neighbourhood	52,5	30,4	9,1	6,0	2,0
10. Build extensions for new housing up to the height of buildings at Zupančičeva jama	51,7	27,8	10,1	8,1	2,2
11. Bring attics into use for new housing	34,6	23,7	15,4	20,0	6,3
12. Children's playgrounds	5,0	11,2	14,9	37,3	31,5
13. Public green areas	4,4	11,2	17,6	36,5	30,3
14. Improve traffic communications between the neighbourhood and the town centre by extending Neuberger Str. across the railway	15,4	20,2	18,2	26,9	19,2
15. Bring public passenger transport closer to the neighbourhood	14,3	27,4	18,9	23,3	16,1
16. Build parking houses	7,4	12,5	15,9	32,8	31,4
17. Build a residential care home for older people	12,0	18,2	24,0	29,6	16,2
18. Provide sheltered housing for older people	7,2	13,5	24,3	40,2	14,9
19. Provide social and cultural facilities in the neighbourhood	6,8	17,1	26,0	34,4	15,7
20. Set up the neighbourhood e-point with free access to internet	10,5	14,8	24,2	33,8	16,8
21. Improve retail supply	15,3	29,8	26,2	21,9	6,8
22. Improve catering services	25,6	34,9	23,1	12,0	4,5
23. Provide more »eco islands« with recycling facilities	6,6	20,9	24,7	33,4	14,3
24. Make municipal services take better care of environment	3,4	11,5	19,9	44,3	20,9
25. Encourage tenants to take care of the environment	5,0	10,3	17,9	44,0	22,8
26. Improve safety in the neighbourhood by introducing video surveillance	9,3	17,1	22,1	32,6	18,8
27. Other	10,8	11,8	12,9	15,1	49,5

wers that the neighbourhood has a relatively low rate of vandalism and only occasional occurrences of burglaries which affect chiefly cars, cellars and homes. It is a rather quiet and safe neighbourhood.

Having reviewed one part of the results, we can primarily ascertain that the tenants evaluate the quality of their residential environment in a relatively appropriate way. They are aware of its positive qualities as well as of its characteristic defects and deficiencies. They emphasize the parking conditions as the most acute issue of the neighbourhood which is followed by the issues linked to keeping the green spaces, children's playgrounds and to insufficient recreation facilities. It is well-known that parking constitutes a major problem in other neighbourhoods in town, too, and that tackling this problem is the greatest challenge for the tenants as well as for the spatial planners. It will be possible to solve this problem only through active collaboration between the tenants, municipal authorities and experts.

On the other hand it should be pointed out that the issues related to the management of green spaces and children's playgrounds are primarily connected with the problem of determining the »functional« land around the buildings in the neighbourhood. The tenants claim the management of this land is incumbent upon the owner i.e. the Municipality of Ljubljana, while the Municipality expects the home owners to assume the responsibility for managing their residential environment. The final decision on ownership of this land would contribute to a more transparent definition of responsibilities in this field

A surprising finding turned up in this part of the analysis, i.e. that the tenants are most satisfied with the performance of the »accompanying« social services (school, kindergarten, shops, pubs). The more relevant indicators of the residential environment quality (e.g. image of the neighbourhood, neighbourhood density, orderliness of public green spaces, orderliness of the children's playgrounds, maintenance of buildings, air quality, safety, sports and recreation facilities etc.) are rated lower on the scale but are still positive. The maintenance of buildings in the neighbourhood is only in the eleventh place, house management in the fourteenth. These facts demonstrate the tenants are not well enough aware of the necessity of appropriate maintenance of their property and responsibility for it. This finding is unfortunately also corroborated by the answers to other questions in the poll.

The second set of questions refers directly to the issues of the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood. We asked the following question: »Given that your neighbourhood was built years ago, do you think the neighbourhood as a whole needs rehabilitation?«. 63 percent of the respondents answered the neighbourhood badly needed rehabilitation and 37 percent of them thought it was not necessary. We further asked the respondents who believed the neighbourhood needing rehabilitation, what concretely should be renewed (Table 3). At first sight the answers may be surprising. What surprises is first of all the fact that tackling the parking problem, which was emphasized in all past answers as well as at the urban planning workshop as a major defect of the housing estate, does not feature in the first place on the list of deficiencies that have to be done away with. The respondents for the most part opted for renovating the children's playgrounds, putting in order public green spaces, encouraging tenants to keep environment in good

order, better work of the municipal service taking care of the environment and – only in the fifth place – they mentioned building a parking house. One-fifth of the respondents even think the building of the parking house is not necessary at all. There is a sensible explanation for it.

The most important finding in this part of the analysis is by all means the fact that the respondents are absolutely opposed to: building supplemental housing premises in the neighbourhood (83 percent), building extensions for new homes (80 percent) and converting attics into new flats (58 percent). We believe that these answers also contain the explanation for the lack of enthusiasm about building a new parking house in spite of enormous difficulties caused by chaotic parking conditions.

At this point we touch the core of the issue of rehabilitation of this neighbourhood. The strong resistance of the tenants to any modification whatsoever within the housing estate results from the actions (realised already or planned) of the Municipality of Ljubljana. It must be admitted that the key interest of the Municipality of Ljubljana who had commissioned the research, was to ascertain whether it was possible to realise any one of the above mentioned ways of making the settlement denser by building new premises in the researched area. After having successfully built an extension to a block of flats (Topniška str. 58a), the Municipality was planning to construct new corner extensions to the blocks of flats by the side of Črtomirova and Neubergerjeva streets. Also, the plan contained the construction of an underground garage to solve the present chaotic state of the stationary traffic. After the tenants' stormy protests and their complaint against the already issued planning permission, the provision issued by the Ministry for the Environment and Physical Planning stopped the planned construction. In their opposition to building and issuing the planning permission the tenants stated, among other things, the following arguments: deterioration of residential conditions, disturbing vibrations during the building operations, breaking installations due to the works of building, brutal intervention in the existing state, exhaust gases at the recreation ground that would supposedly rise from the underground garage etc. An important reason for the dispute was also the unfinished inscription on land register of the horizontal properties and »functional« land around the buildings. The tenants were also troubled by the fact that by implementing these plans the investor prejudged the exclusive ownership of the land which he intended to develop.

Regardless of who was right and who was wrong in this dispute, our view is that the whole matter is about something completely different. The interventions in residential environments which are wholly planned from outside and implemented without consultation and previous reconciliation of viewpoints with the tenants are no longer acceptable. Such interventions are especially questionable if they primarily satisfy the investors' interests without considering the interests of the people already living in a particular environment.

Anticipating strong opposition to such interventions, we asked the respondents on what conditions they would agree to setting up supplemental housing premises in their housing estate. The respondents were allowed to state several conditions. The answers confirm the expected opposition to supplemental constructions of whatever kind. Three quarters of the respondents replied »On no account«. The re-

maining quarter who might concede the building of new homes, stated 180 different conditions. Table 4 displays a review of these conditions arranged by topics reiterated at least 5 times.

Table 4: Conditions for building additional dwellings (N = 131)

Condition	Frequency
Build an underground garage	37
Favourable loan schemes	26
Tackle parking spaces	23
Renovation of old buildings	19
Build garages	16
Improve public passenger transport	11
Bring attics into use/Build extensions	8
More green plots/playgrounds	6
Affordable dwelling prices	5

It is evident from the table above that the minority who might agree to building supplemental homes, would do it only on condition the parking problem was resolved. Tackling the parking issue remains, nonetheless, the main priority. It would just be necessary to look for appropriate manners of implementation based primarily on an agreement with the tenants. This group of respondents consider favourable loan schemes an important condition for them to agree to this kind of rehabilitation plans. The need for assistance in supplying resources for various activities connected with the rehabilitation was often mentioned at the urban planning workshop, too. An appropriate policy and an adequate approach to solving the problems might enable the Municipality to use the financial instruments as a powerful negotiating tool.

It should by all means be emphasized that the responsibility for the maintenance and renovation of the residential environment rests with the residents themselves. Even the most co-operative local authority cannot achieve anything in this region unless there is an adequate collaboration from the tenants. For this reason we put a question which would help us find out if and in what manner the respondents would be ready to participate in the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood. The question was »Would you personally be ready to participate in the rehabilitation?« It received a positive response from 27 percent of the respondents, a negative one from 23 percent of them, and 50 percent of the respondents answered they didn't know and

Table 5: Participation in the maintenance and rehabilitation

Maintenance nad rehabilitation demand additional resources. Would you be personally willing to:	%
1. Yes, I am ready to pay for the maintenance and rehabilitation of the neighbourhood	16,4
2. I am ready to contribute my labour to the maintenance and rehabilitation	22,6
3. I am ready to contribute my knowledge to the maintenance and rehabilitation	16,6
4. I am not ready to invest into the maintenance and rehabilitation of the neighbourhood	44,4

have not yet thought about it. It means that in the course of the survey only a good quarter of the respondents would be ready to participate in the rehabilitation. Being aware of the importance of the participation of the tenants in the activities of maintenance and rehabilitation, we put the respondents another question in which we offered them four options (Table 5). And again we find that the majority of the respondents is not ready to invest in whatever way into the maintenance and rehabilitation of the neighbourhood.

In this connection we also wanted to check to what extent the respondents were actually aware of the fact that the market value of their property depended, among other things, on the quality of its maintenance (Table 6). Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (63 percent) were of opinion there is little probability or not at all that bad maintenance might provoke a decline in value of their property. This explains the viewpoint of some participants in the workshop who are confident there are no deficiencies in their neighbourhood and the conviction of the 37 percent of the respondents who think the rehabilitation is not necessary at all.

Table 6: Possible devaluation of the property

Experiences in many towns show that in badly maintained neighbourhoods the value of properties decreases. Do you think it may also occur in your neighbourhood?	%
1. It doesn't seem probable in our neighbourhood	20,2
2. It is seems hardly probable in our neighbourhood	42,5
3. It will probably occur in our neighbourhood	27,9
4. It will certainly occur in our neighbourhood	4,2
5. It's already occurring in our neighbourhood	5,1

There may be several reasons for such erroneous conviction, but we highlighted only two principal assumptions. It may, in the first place, arise from the distorted and inefficient housing market we today have in Slovenia. In the condition of minimal housing supply in the primary as well as in the secondary market, the majority of home owners do not consider marketing the property. Under normal market conditions property selling is prompted by moving to a better, a smaller or a bigger flat, to a new flat or a new detached home, depending on the needs and financial potential of the household. Under the given circumstances in Slovenia, the dwelling as a rule functions exclusively as a residential premise, what matters is just having it. For this reason many a home owner does not realise that his or her property has a market value, which may diminish if not taken care of and which even requires investing in order to make it grow.

Our second assumption about what might generate such erroneous convictions regards the way of acquisition of property. We should bear in mind that many home owners in the houses in multiple occupation acquired home ownership at a very low cost through the privatisation of the social housing stock. According to the words of one of the house managers in the housing estate »the home owners who were practically given their dwellings, respect them in proportion to the price they paid for them«. The attitudes of some home owners towards the maintenance and rehabilitation unfortunately support this view.

Nevertheless, the municipality (as well as the state) has an important role to play in this case too. Neighbourhood renewal has to be organised in a systematic manner and has to rest on a carefully prepared national strategy acting as the groundwork for setting out the development programmes at the municipal level as well as the particular rehabilitation projects for individual residential areas. As Slovenia does not yet have such a strategy, the municipalities do not deal systematically with problems of large housing estates (provided they deal with them at all). Under these circumstances it is difficult to expect the tenants to organise themselves and implement the activities which (at this time) they do not regard as urgent. We should realise, however, that delays in implementing certain rehabilitative activities may result in the decline of the residential environment, deterioration of the dwelling quality and decrease in property value.

At the end we return to the key issue of mutual trust and relationships between the tenants, authorities and various experts in the field of spatial management. We were interested to know whom the tenants would prefer to see in the steering role if the programme of the overall neighbourhood renewal were to be implemented. We gave the respondents 4 options (Table 7).

Table 7: Steering rehabilitation

Who should lead the neighbourhood renewal?	%
1. The devolved services of the Municipality of Ljubljana	23,2
2. A team composed of the tenants' representatives, urban planners, architects, builders and sociologists	51,9
3. An authorised private urban regeneration company	11,2
4. A new company founded by the tenants and the Municipality of Ljubljana to this end	13,8

A good half of the respondents opted for an interdisciplinary team of experts involving the tenants' representatives, and a little less than a quarter would entrust the rehabilitation to the devolved services of the Municipality of Ljubljana. It is in this context that the respondents' answers to the question about the degree of trust in different state and expert institutions should be treated (Table 8).

Table 8: Degree of trust in state and expert institutions

To what extent do you trust:	Not at all %	A little %	Rather %	Completely %	No opinion %
1. Municipal authorities	26,3	56,2	10,2	1,0	6,3
2. Mayor of the Municipality of Ljubljana	29,1	40,0	18,9	4,4	7,6
3. Opposition in the Municipal Counsel	31,2	44,4	10,3	2,9	11,1
4. Municipal Department for Urban Planning	24,6	45,9	16,0	1,0	12,5
5. Municipal Public Housing fund	25,7	45,1	13,1	2,2	13,9
6. Municipal Public Services companies	10,4	39,6	36,6	6,1	7,3
7. Urban planners	15,8	43,2	24,9	3,9	12,2
8. Architects	15,3	38,4	27,6	5,9	12,7
9. Spatial sociologists	16,8	34,8	24,0	5,0	19,4

Given the situations described earlier it is no surprise that responses to this question reveal a high degree of the citizens' mistrust of social institutions. To uncover the true message contained in these answers it is sensible to add together the percentages in the columns »rather« and »completely« and those in the columns »not at all« and »a little«. Adding them up we get the following results: 83 percent of the respondents have not much trust in the municipal authorities, 71 percent do not trust the Department for Urban Planning of the Municipality of Ljubljana, the same percentage have no trust in the Public Housing Fund of the Municipality of Ljubljana, 59 percent do not trust the urban planners, 54 percent do not trust the architects and 52 percent do not trust the spatial sociologists. Among all the institutions enumerated in the table, the ones which the greatest amount of confidence (perhaps even incomprehensibly) is placed in, are the municipal public services companies (34 percent).

The answers to this question offer nothing but an empirical affirmation of the statements made by the participants in the urban planning workshop, which we sorted in the second group at the start of the presentation of the research results. All who are in whatever way involved in these activities should regard these answers as a serious admonition as to the efficiency and quality of their own work. This is particularly true for the municipal authority, which is primarily responsible for the planning of housing estates in the entire city area as well as for the provision of the housing fitness standards in individual residential environments.

4. Conclusion

The research demonstrated that the residents of the targeted area are in principle well aware of the qualities of their residential environment. The trouble is they are not well enough aware of the need for appropriate and permanent maintenance and timely implementation of renewal activities. The first urgent measure, which would contribute to a more active role of the tenants of this area, is producing and adopting a strategy for rehabilitation.

The most relevant finding of the research is that the tenants by no means welcome outside interventions, which are not aligned with their interests. They want to be involved and actively participate in deciding about actions in their resi-

dential environment. Successful undertaking of a long-term rehabilitation of a housing estate is only feasible in collaboration with the people who live and work in a particular area. It is necessary to ensure their active participation in all steps of the renewal process, from ascertaining advantages and disadvantages of the neighbourhood to producing a vision and a strategy of the renewal. This includes also the determination of priorities and steps to be followed in the implementation of the renewal programme. But it is also about asserting the democratic right of the tenants to take part in deciding about the way and quality of life in their environment.

For the purpose of constructively involving the tenants into the neighbourhood rehabilitation process it is necessary to introduce a system of community planning and provide for their education primarily through the organisation of the urban planning workshops and design consultations.

The tenants get involved into the process of rehabilitation, maintenance and management through *the tenants' association* or via *the Management Board of the Neighbourhood*. Considering the »fragmented« management in our residential neighbourhoods, establishing a *Neighbourhood Management Board* to co-ordinate the rehabilitation and individual maintenance and management measures would be a suitable organisational form of the tenants' participation

The system of *community planning* is implemented by means of the *planning for real* methodology. Under the guidance of the planning experts, »planning for real« usually takes place as a two-day event. An important expedient for this work is a sizeable model, a plastic representation of the neighbourhood, which enables the tenants to actively participate in the planning exercise by presenting their views about the development of the neighbourhood as a whole or about the desired developments of particular locations (options available from the list of possible solutions). This event is followed by a series of housing workshops (urban planning and design workshops) which treat the characteristic areas of the neighbourhood with the purpose of detailed checking and defining the housing views and wishes as to the development of the physical environment and immediate residential environment respectively. It is necessary to prepare a report on the course of the workshop for each one of the treated areas, which in conclusion presents in a graphical way the abstract of the tenants' suggestions. This material is then used as groundwork for the preparation of the urban planning documentation and programme & design guidelines needed for arrangements and negotiations with potential investors.

Modern times require modern approaches to planning housing areas. The old »bulldozing« manners of planning neighbourhoods where views and wishes of the tenants didn't matter at all, are no longer acceptable, they don't work any more. In the researched area the tenants managed to obstruct the planned building operations even though the project envisaged solving the parking problem which generated the greatest dissatisfaction among the tenants. A mass rejection of erecting supplemental homes in the housing estate, clearly showed by the polling, is an additional message to the authorities that the tenants no longer agree to interventions into their environment which are dictated from outside without their consent. We find that some of the solutions proposed in the plans of the Municipality of Ljubljana might even be quite suitable. We have to

realise the urban space is limited and therefore very expensive. It should be used very rationally. Increasing housing density, wherever it is possible (and of course in accordance with suitable standards), is an instrument of land use planning which cannot be completely given up. The fundamental problem with us is that we tackle such projects in a wrong way. Lessons learned at Savsko naselje admonish us that some things urgently need to be changed. In connection with the right to participate in decision making a lady at the workshop so expressed her opinion: »As we are in the European Union now, owners have to be asked about constructions and alterations«. It may sound ingenuous, but the point is that people are ever more aware of their rights and expect corresponding systemic shifts if for no other reason than the EU membership. Times have changed, people's interests have changed, their awareness has changed, and their expectations have changed. The planning practice must change too, and adapt to new times. »Dialogue«, is the magic word.

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Note:

[1] Most residents do not acknowledge their area to be a part of Savsko naselje, but they are not concordant as to what the real name of the neighbourhood is. The prevailing conviction among the residents is that the area is named »Local community Boris Ziherl«.

For sources and literature turn to page 15.

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Drago KOS

Participatory urban renewal

1. The starting points of participatory urban renewal

The first problem of urban renewal is undoubtedly the question of methodology. The subject is hard to handle because of strong and interwoven social, capital and political interests. Many experiences are available, mostly foreign, but their practical applicability is locally specific and limited. The most comprehensive approach is desired, but this soon exceeds financial and other implementation possibilities. So each time anew a question needs to be asked: where and how to start, and most importantly, how to maintain adequate openness of procedures. Precedential decisions that would in advance block changes and additions occurring throughout the procedures because of the unpredictable life situations should be avoided in the renewal process.