PERCEPTION OF HOUSING QUARTERS QUALITY IN BRATISLAVA BY ITS INHABITANTS

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Abstract: This paper analyses quality of housing and significance of criteria for housing location selection, according to housing quarters in Bratislava. Basic information concerning these phenomena was obtained by questionnaires, whereby respondents were Bratislava's residents. Method of questionnaire research is explained at the beginning of the paper. Collected data offer interesting view on housing quality differentiation in Bratislava, as well as preferred criteria for housing location selection. Conclusions besides summarising the research results also compare these results with other authors' findings.

Key words: housing quarter, housing estate, housing quality, questionnaire.

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

The perception of housing environment in particular city by its inhabitants is quite usual research aim for urban geographers. We can find numerous articles dealing with this problem in Slovak as well in foreign literature (Bašovský, Paulov, Ira 1981, Bartnicka 1986, 1987, Franců, Paluš 1982; Radváni 1983, 1990; Ira 1984, 1989; Matlovič 1992; Kollár 1992; Galasová 1993). Current reasons to analyse this phenomenon are influenced by more factors. We consider as the most important in a case of Bratislava the following:

1. Bratislava has regarding its location, natural conditions, historical development and housing quarters' development since 1948 to 1989, very differentiated housing environment from qualitative point of view. One aim of this paper is in comparison of housing environment evaluation by city's inhabitants, with results presented in other

- works, that prepared authors from different scientific disciplines (architects, sociologists, geographers, ecologist etc).
- 2. The economic conditions and social position of large part of the population changed very much during ten years since "velvet revolution". Individual households started to consider potential change of housing location within the city border, eventually even outside the city borders. Current causes of local population dissatisfaction with housing situation can be transformed for reasons to move within short time period.

We asked respondents to express their opinions on five problems within the research questionnaire. At first, they should select three from proposed twenty housing quarters, that they consider as the most suitable for housing. Three the most unsuitable quarters for housing should be marked in similar way (Table 1 and Table 2). As the second problem, they should select three from 12 criteria that they consider as the most important within the process of housing location selection, as well as three of the lowest importance (Table 3 and Table 4). Third part of our research focused on inhabitants' satisfaction with environment of housing quarter where they live. They should express their preference by selection of one possibility from three possible - very good, average, or unsatisfactorily. The fourth issue concerned expression of three the most important positive characteristics and three the most negative characteristics of housing quarter where they live. At fifth, respondents should indicate the most preferred housing quarter in Bratislava, where they would like to live.

We received answers from 2301 respondents - inhabitants of Bratislava in total. Personal characteristics of respondents included place of their living, sex, education, employment and age. Basic rules for questionnaire based research were respected in relation the respondents selection. The number of respondents from particular housing quarters in Bratislava was proportional according to number of population living in housing quarters. We also respected sex, education and age structure of Bratislava's population.

Twenty housing quarters in Bratislava were defined, respecting three requirements. First condition was that housing quarters are homogenous in relation to age and type of buildings. The second requirement was that the quarter is spatially continual. The third requirement was that they cover whole housing environment in Bratislava. Questionnaires were collected form 12 May to 18 May 1999. We analyse only first two problem issues in submitted paper. A complex evaluation of whole research requires much wider space.

2. HOUSING QUARTERS WITH THE MOST SUITABLE AND NON ATTRACTIVE FOR HOUSING

Basic information concerning evaluation of particular housing quarters by inhabitants are documented in Table 1 and Table 2. Separate as well as summarised inhabitants' evaluation of particular quarter is in lines. Information how inhabitants' of

particular quarter evaluate all other quarters is in columns. These tables contain quite a lot of interesting information. We will analyse only selected data that we consider as the most important from the investigated phenomena point of view.

The most important results concerning housing quarters' suitability for living are the following:

- 1. Housing quarters Hrad Slavín Horský park, Koliba Kramáre and Centrum Staré mesto obtained the highest portion of preferences. Very positive evaluation of these quarters is not surprising, although positive characteristics of first two quarters are different comparing to the third one. Top position of these three quarters, as well as differences in obtained percentage (16.3%, 12.4%, and 9.7% in mentioned order) are quite expected. Group consisting number of other housing quarters that received approximately 6 to 7% of preferences (Karlova Ves, Dúbravka, Ružinov, Záhorská Bystrica a Devin) is behind this three prominent quarters. The difference in relation to obtained positive preferences is observable only in a case of Ružinov. While Ružinov received almost 50% of preferences from inhabitants living in this housing quarter, other four housing quarters received preferences homogeneously from all housing quarters. The lowest share of positive preferences (below 2%) received three housing quarters located in compact built environment of the city with important breakthrough of production functions (Nivy, Trnávka and Prievoz), and new large mono-functional housing estates Dolné Hony and Medzi jarkami. Relatively high share of positive preferences that obtained housing quarter Petržalka can be explained by high preferences obtained from inhabitants living in this quarter (61% from total preferences).
- 2. Under detailed study of evaluation of the three the best placed quarters (three highest values in each column), there emerged interesting picture. The inhabitants of almost all housing quarters placed two quarters Hrad Slavín Horský Park and Koliba Kramáre among three the best quarters. Remarkable is bright diagonal observable in Table 1. It is consequence that inhabitants living in mentioned housing quarter perceive own quarter better, comparing to inhabitants from outside quarters. Inhabitants of only three quarters (Nové Mesto, Lamač, Petržalka) did not place own housing quarters among the first three quarters (in a case of Nové Mesto one respondent was decisive).
- 3. Extraordinary is fact, that inhabitants of the largest mono-functional housing estate Petržalka gave quite a lot of preferences to typically rural housing quarters (Záhorská Bystrica, Devín, and Jarovce-Rusovce Čuňovo). It is probably compensatory reaction on conditions in own housing quarter with high density of high rise buildings.
- 4. Taking into account territory of the whole city, better is evaluated in respect to housing environment its northwest part. Southeast half of the city located at the Podunajská nížina is perceived substantially worse. Besides type of built environment and concentration of production activities, these two parts of the city differ substantially by air pollution and other direct indicators of environmental quality.

We expected opposite view comparing to previous evaluation when dealing with preferences expressed as the most non-attractive quarters for housing (Table 2). It was

really true in some cases. Besides this, there also appeared some new facts. We consider as important following findings:

- 1. The dominant position of Petržalka housing quarter as the most non-attractive for housing is strong. Petržalka obtained more than one fifth of all preferences (21.4%). We remind that it could receive one third of preferences as maximum (33.3%). This housing quarter is clearly on the first place according to the respondents from all housing quarters. It has to be mentioned that its preferences many times exceed housing quarters placed at the second and third place. Petržalka inhabitants themselves placed own housing quarter on the first place, although with smaller gap. Housing quarter Dolné Hony Medzi jarkami second place was also more or less expected. Comparing to results from Table 1, surprising is very bad evaluation of housing quarter Centrum Staré mesto, which obtained 6.8% of all preferences. It means fourth place among the most non-attractive housing quarter.
- 2. The diagonal strongly appeared also in a case of evaluation of the most non-attractive quarters. The fact, that inhabitants living in Hrad Slavín Horský park, Koliba Kramáre, Jarovce Rusovce Čuňovo, as well as residing in Dúbravka and Karlova Ves, will not select own housing quarter among the most non-attractive quarters was expected. We did not expect so clear 'local patriotism' expressed in a case of housing quarters Devínska Nová Ves, Rača and Lamač, especially when comparing to results in Table 1.
- 3. The lowest values in Table 2 have quarters Hrad Slavín Horský park, Koliba Kramáre and Karlova Ves. Besides the fact, that all their values are very low, interesting is their close similarity (1.4%, 1.4%, 1.5%). Very low value in a case of Karlova Ves is surprising in respect to previous evaluation. Very good evaluation of Karlova Ves we observe among respondents living in the largest Bratislava housing estates (Petržalka, Ružinov, Dolné Hony Medzi jarkami and Dúbravka).

3. THE MOST IMPORTANT AND THE MOST UNIMPORTANT CRITERIA FOR HOUSING LOCATION SELECTION

The most important information concerning significance of particular criteria evaluation for housing location selection is fully expressed in Table 3 and 4. Good selection of criteria offered for evaluation documents the fact that the alternative 'other criteria' was during evaluation selected only in 22 cases from total 13806 cases.

The most important criterion for housing location selection, according to respondents' choice, is size of an apartment. The difference of this criterion to the second placed one is quite big - 3.2%. This reflects one important fact, not mentioning some other aspects. The majority of respondents obtained their apartments during period 1961 to 1990. All apartments were built especially in housing estates typical by high rise buildings. The concrete panel form of housing construction in these estates usually

offered apartments with three and less rooms. Size of such housing units was usually up to 60-70% m², and from this reason, these apartments offer only very low housing standard. From this aspect, the leading position of 'size of apartment' criterion is understandable.

Eight other criteria are behind this first criterion in relatively small range from 11.3% to 7.6%. Their top-down ranking is following - public transport connection, green spaces, retailing and services, crime rate, type of buildings, distance to city centre, level of noise and transport intensity, and air pollution. High value for 'public transport connection' reveals the problem of Bratislava's urban spatial structure. It concerns long distance of housing quarters from city centre. This criterion indirectly reflects lower level of individual car use, especially among numerous economic middle class members. The third position of 'green spaces' is little surprising. We should take into account that with exception of quarters located in northeast part of the city, there are quite large green spaces directly in housing quarters or their immediate neighbourhood. We do not consider as inevitable to analyse all eight mentioned criteria. Our attention attracts low value achieved for criterion 'air pollution' (7.6%) that is interesting especially in Bratislava case and high value for criterion 'crime rate' (9.1%). The value obtained for 'crime rate' confirms that security of housing quarters has become serious problem in Bratislava during last 10 years.

The criteria 'density of population', 'distance to sport and recreation facilities' and 'inhabited by similar social groups' got last three places. If we had an intention to explain this phenomena precisely, more research would be needed. Nevertheless, we can emphasise even now the fact, that low significance of these criteria depends on still prevailing way of life and existing hierarchy of values inclined by Bratislava inhabitants. Our realistic supposition is that after basic economic problems will be overcome and new social structure of population with clearly defined borders among individual social groups will be formed, then the importance of these criteria will grow.

Evaluating of criteria which are the most unimportant for housing location selection are presented in Table 4. We can observe some remarkable fact also here. As an opposite reflection to Table 3, there are two the most unimportant criteria 'population density' and 'social groups similarity' (17.0% and 16.4%). The third position of criterion 'distance to sport and recreation facilities', which logically belong to this group according to previous evaluation, already has value 3% lower. The final distribution of values in this table is different comparing to Table 3. With exception of already mentioned fact, our attention attract bigger range of values in Table 4, different distribution of values in this range and unexpected values related to some criteria comparing to Table 3.

Comparing the results form Table 3 and Table 4 for Bratislava as one unit to particular housing quarters, or comparing results among housing quarter we investigate, we can observe that preferences for particular criteria are distributed homogeneously. We do not observe any distinct preference for particular criterion, or criteria of particular housing quarter in comparison to total evaluation. However, we can find some exceptions, for example high share of preferences that expressed inhabitants of Karlova Ves to criterion 'similar social group' in Table 3.

4. CONCLUSION

The results we obtained by questionnaire based research we can summarise in several points. Research confirmed existence of two different territories from the quality of housing point of view in Bratislava. This fact highlights many authors (Moncmanová, Závodský 1990, Korec, Galasová 1993 etc.). The line which divide this territories traces river Danube (from state border with Austria to Nový Most), Staromestská street, Štefánikova street and railway line (with starting point in Main Railway Station and following direction to stations Vinohrady and Rača). The respondents evaluated substantially better the territory located in northwest direction from this line, comparing to the territory located in southeast direction.

The results of this research confirms that there are two very attractive (Hrad - Slavín - Horský park and Koliba - Kramáre) and one extremely bad perceived (Petržalka) housing quarters in Bratislava. Broadly understood quality of housing in Petržalka is for sure not ideal. Our opinion is that strong influence on bad perception of this housing quarter has created myths (bad social structure of population, high crime rate, extraordinary high intensity of building, mono-functional character, underdeveloped retailing and services etc). Boška (1996) and Maier (1997) document based on results from analysis of large Prague housing estates that majority of myths on them are not true. After all, it is confirmed by Petržalka own inhabitants perception of housing.

During evaluation of criteria important for housing location selection we discovered that high significance have criteria typical for previous period of social development (size of apartment, public transport connection, green space presence, retail and service facilities availability). Priorities that are more typical for current period of development were revealed in our research in less extent (similar social group, distance to sport and recreation facilities, density of population). One factor, which significance substantially grew during short period of ten years is crime rate.

The results obtained by questionnaires are in consent with conclusions presented in many other works dealing with housing environment of former communist countries (Boška 1996, Berey 1997, Maier 1997, Weclawowicz 1997 etc). We can mention following results - inhabitants living in large housing estates are less critical toward these estates as inhabitants living outside them; inhabitants rarely criticise architecture or urban concept of housing estate; sources of dissatisfaction concern mainly fields of urban mass transport, retailing and services; young population is more critical to housing environment comparing to older inhabitants; inhabitants living in defined housing quarter, evaluate it better as inhabitant living outside etc. Concluding from criterion significance analysis in relation to selection of housing location, we can agree with Maier's opinion (1997), who asserts, that the causes of inhabitants' dissatisfaction are sometimes far distant from problems which try to solve professionals - experts.

Table 1 Housing quarters the most suitable for housing

	Housing quarters	1.	2.	36.	78.	9.	10.	11.12.	13.16.	14.	15.	17.18.	19.	20.	Total	Share-%
1.	Centrum	96	22	98	52	41	10	30	65	43	30	6	169	8	670	9,7
2.	Hrad, Slavín	118	34	181	81	78	28	62	53	81	36	28	325	20	1125	16,3
3.	Ružinov	26	5	219	43	32	10	20	13	17	5	6	45	13	454	6,6
4.	Nivy	10	0	29	2	8	2	3	9	9	0	0	9	6	87	1,3
5.	Trnávka	4	1	21	12	8	0	6	2	4	0	1	24	4	87	1,3
6.	Prievoz	6	3	45	24	9	4	6	4	2	1	0	24	4	132	1,9
7.	Dolné Hony, Medzi jarkami	6	0	4	22	8	2	1	2	2	1	0	12	9	69	1,0
8.	Pod. Biskupice, Vrakuňa	6	2	11	87	6	0	5	3	5	1	0	23	5	154	2,2
9.	Nové Mesto	16	1	20	3	40	5	16	2	15	7	0	43	5	173	2,5
10.	Koliba, Kramáre	70	22	148	63	64	25	63	60	50	34	15	227	17	858	12,4
11.	Rača	18	4	44	5	17	2	131	6	8	1	6	75	5	322	4,7
12.	Vajnory	2	2	24	13	10	4	54	1	17	0	1	21	2	151	2,2
13.	Karlova Ves	40	5	67	18	28	10	23	60	68	14	29	95	9	466	6,8
14.	Dúbravka	36	3	48	48	26	6	22	27	129	12	15	74	9	455	6,6
15.	Lamač	8	4	27	15	11	1	10	14	33	18	15	33	4	193	2,8
16.	Devin	20	9	52	55	20	8	15	24	43	11	5	132	6	400	5,8
17.	Devínska Nová Ves	10	2	12	23	12	8	14	5	15	8	55	44	5	213	3,1
18.	Záhorská Bystrica	24	7	54	67	30	7	15	21	15	8	17	137	4	406	5,9
19.	Petržalka	14	0	26	5	9	2	5	4	18	2	2	144	5	236	3,4
20.	Jarovce, Rusovce, Čunovo	10	3	25	16	1	11	12	3	26	0	3	126	16	252	3,7
To	tal	540	129	1155	654	468	135	513	378	600	189	204	1782	156	6903	100

Table 2 Housing quarters the most non-attractive for housing

	Housing quarters	1.	2.	36.	78.	9.	10.	11.12.	13.16.	14.	15.	17.18.	19.	20.	Total	Share-%
1.	Centrum	21	1	98	63	26	12	38	1	33	4	22	145	5	469	6,8
2.	Hrad, Slavín	4	X0	15	6	8	0	8	0	10	3	3	36	2	95	1,4
3.	Ružinov	16	4	19	1	11	0	2	54	24	6	10	45	4	196	2,8
4.	Nivy	23	9	14	39	15	3	15	6	19	9	7	72	5	236	3,4
5.	Trnávka	28	11	65	19	22	9	47	37	35	2	17	135	14	441	6,4
6.	Prievoz	15	4	14	22	22	8	23	19	26	10	15	81	6	265	3,8
7.	Dolné Hony, Medzi jarkami	53	9	184	75	41	18	46	6	57	7	27	174	17	714	10,3
8.	Pod. Biskupice, Vrakuna	-34	10	157	36	30	10	39	16	36	15	20	177	8	588	8,5
9.	Nové Mesto	23	12	61	81	17	6	30	2	23	16	12	99	11	393	5,7
10.	Koliba, Kramáre	15	0	25	7	5	X 1	6	2	7	3	4	30	0	105	1,5
11.	Rača	7	5	11	42	24	7	X 4	7	22	12	5	42	8	196	2,8
12.	Vajnory	22	2	15	11	21	3	8	24	30	17	3	69	4	229	3,3
13.	Karlova Ves	13	3	12	2	10	1	10	X 4	5	7	1	24	- 5	97	1,4
14.	Dúbravka	19	4	18	3	19	4	18	5	X 7	6	2	45	10	160	2,3
15.	Lamač	32	4	17	1	12	2	8	45	11	X 5	1	63	10	211	3,1
16.	Devín	11	3	27	2	7	4	6	28	9	3	3	46	2	151	2,2
17.	Devínska Nová Ves	31	1	41	13	18	3	9	3	25	7	ΧO	61	5	217	3,1
18.	Záhorská Bystrica	24	3	23	2	14	6	24	6	13	3	1	96	5	220	3,2
19.	Petržalka	116	39	281	170	113	28	143	92	152	44	30	234	35	1477	21,4
20.	Jarovce, Rusovce, Čunovo	33	5	58	59	33	10	29	21	56	10	21	108	ΧO	443	6,4
To	tal	540	129	1155	654	468	135	513	378	600	189	204	1782	156	6903	100

Table 3 The most important criteria for housing location selection

	Type of criteria	1.*	2.	36.	78.	9.	10.	11.12.	13.16.	14.	15.	17.18.	19.	20.	Total	%
1.	Type of buildings	52	18	106	59	47	10	58	22	25	14	23	174	16	624	9,0
2.	Size of apartment	63	15	149	82	73	25	59	87	95	33	32	272	15	1000	14,5
3.	Population density	22	9	54	7	33	9	14	4	19	7	7	81	26	292	4,2
4.	Distance to city centre	64	11	71	43	44	12	31	27	41	13	16	210	16	599	8,7
5.	Dist. to sport and recreation	25	0	31	19	15	5	13	2	37	8	11	75	10	251	3,6
6.	Public transport connection	61	11	134	120	49	14	60	12	81	19	20	189	8	778	11,3
7.	Retailing and services	38	5	113	138	38	10	45	15	73	24	12	141	12	664	9,6
8.	Green spaces	43	10	158	71	28	11	44	48	94	27	31	171	6	742	10,7
9.	Air pollution	50	15	84	46	40	9	55	16	37	10	26	123	11	522	7,6
10.	Noise and transport intensity	45	14	97	41	36	12	60	48	41	12	10	135	11	562	8,1
11.	Social groups similarity	23	5	40	2	11	5	16	50	11	6	3	42	8	222	3,2
12.	Crime	54	15	118	25	54	13	52	47	44	16	13	162	17	630	9,1
13.	Other criteria	0	1	0	1	0	0	6	0	2	0	0	7	0	17	0,2
Tot	al	540	129	1155	654	468	135	513	378	600	189	204	1782	156	6903	100

^{* 1., 2., ..., 20. -} number of housing quarter used in table 1 and table 2

Table 4 The most unimportant criteria for housing location selection

	Type of criteria	1.*	2.	36.	78.	9.	10.	11.12.	13.16.	14.	15.	17.18.	19.	20.	Total	%
1.	Type of buildings	54	9	146	112	46	10	51	48	95	31	26	171	8	807	11,7
2.	Size of apartment	40	11	66	31	23	4	25	14	32	11	14	78	8	357	5,2
3.	Population density	97	19	186	147	60	13	73	98	93	40	37	297	14	1174	17,0
4.	Distance to city centre	40	13	109	59	46	11	69	43	72	14	23	180	11	690	10,0
5.	Dist. to sport and recreation	65	27	190	82	71	18	75	42	68	18	18	228	21	923	13,4
6.	Public transport connection	36	2	51	9	26	10	36	17	24	9	13	87	23	343	5,0
7.	Retailing and services	32	14	46	6	16	10	24	18	21	11	4	114	14	330	4,8
8.	Green spaces	29	2	25	1	20	8	10	14	10	4	0	24	10	157	2,3
9.	Air pollution	30	4	38	23	35	8	20	9	19	11	1	96	10	304	4,4
10.	Noise and transport intensity	36	5	44	13	31	9	31	17	29	7	17	108	10	357	5,2
11.	Social groups similarity	49	19	191	140	78	29	78	43	102	26	35	324	17	1131	16,4
12.	Crime	32	4	63	31	16	5	19	12	35	7	16	75	10	325	4,7
13.	Other criteria	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	0,1
Tot	tal	540	129	1155	654	468	135	513	378	600	189	204	1782	156	6903	100

^{* 1., 2., ..., 20. -} number of housing quarter used in table 1 and table 2

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Resume

Percepcia kvality bývania v Bratislave obyvateľmi mesta

Kvalita bývania v jednotlivých oblastiach Bratislavy je vzhľadom na polohu sídla, jeho prírodné podmienky, históriu a vývoj bytového fondu v období od roku 1948 do 1989 veľmi diferencovaná. Ako dôsledok zmenených ekonomických podmienok a sociálneho postavenia po roku 1989 pomerne veľa obyvateľov Bratislavy uvažuje o zmene miesta bývania, či už v rámci mesta alebo za jeho hranice. Pre tieto dva dôvody je sledovanie percepcie obytného prostredia Bratislavy obyvateľmi mesta v súčasnosti veľmi aktuálne.

Dotazníkovým prieskumom boli získané informácie o kvalite bývania v Bratislave od 2301 respondentov. Medzi najdôležitejšie výsledky urobeného prieskumu možno považovať nasledovné skutočnosti. Odpovede respondentov potvrdili, že z hľadiska kvality bývania je možné Bratislavu rozdeliť na dve odlišné časti. Veľmi dobré podmienky pre bývanie má severozápadná časť mesta, podstatne horšie sú podmienky v juhovýchodnej časti nachádzajúcej sa na Podunajskej nížine.

Výsledky výskumu ukázali, že v Bratislave sú dva veľmi atraktívne obytné areály (Hrad - Slavín - Horský park a Koliba - Kramáre) a jeden extrémne zlý (Petržalka). Zaujímavým zistením je fakt, že veľa obyvateľov hodnotí areál Centrum - Staré mesto ako oblasť veľmi atraktívnu pre bývanie, ale takisto veľa obyvateľov ho považuje za málo vhodný pre bývanie. Hodnotením významnosti kritérií pre výber miesta bývania sa zistilo, že vysokú významnosť majú stále kritériá typické pre predchádzajúce obdobie spoločenského vývoja (veľkosť bytu, dobrá dostupnosť MHD, vybavenosť obchodmi a službami a rozsah zelene), pričom priority, ktoré charaktarizujú súčasné obdobie majú malé preferencie (susedstvo obyvateľov rovnakých sociálnych skupín, vzdialenosť od oblastí rekreácie a športu a hustota obyvateľstva).

Výsledky získané dotazníkovým prieskumom u obyvateľov Bratislavy sa zhodujú s výsledkami, získanými pri hodnotení obytného prostredia iných miest bývalých komunistických štátov (obyvatelia veľkých sídlisk sú k nim menej kritickí ako obyvatelia žijúci mimo nich, obyvatelia zriedkavo kritizujú architektúru a urbanistickú koncepciu sídelného celku, nespokojnosť obyvateľov sa sústreďuje hlavne na mestskú hromadnú dopravu a vybavenosť obchodmi a službami, obyvatelia daného obytného areálu hodnotia tento areál podstatne lepšie ako obyvatelia iných areálov, mladšie obyvateľstvo je kritickejšie k obytnému prostrediu, kde žije ako obyvatelia starších vekových skupín a iné).