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DIFFERENCES IN THE HOUSING POLICY IN THE ŁÓDŹ AGGLOMERATION

From among the three tiers of self-government in Poland: the commune, district and voivodship level, it is the lowest local level that plays a major role in space management. It is due to the fact that local government approves local plans of spatial development, which in this way become local law and determine the shape and quality of space. Moreover, according to art. 7th of the act on local government, its tasks include satisfaction of collective needs of the local community.

A list of mandatory tasks of a municipality indicates that the entire policy of local government is set in space, so the quality of life and the degree of satisfying particular needs depend directly on the spatial development of a commune.

Comparison of legal acts regulating the activity of local government and spatial planning shows strong interconnection between local government responsibilities and spatial planning. There is strong interaction between spatial policy and spectral and branch policies. Where these policies are clearly defined, it is easier to use spatial planning as an instrument of their implementation. If such policies do not exist, it is more difficult to consciously correlate the expectations of the local community with the interests of particular branches.

Spatial planning comprises:

- formulation of spatial policy for the whole territory of a commune and coordination of the various local and supralocal undertakings – in a study of determinants and directions of spatial development,
- allocation of land for particular uses and definition of the principles of spatial development – in local plans of spatial development,

- articulation of the principles of land use change and development, where there are no local plans – in decisions on land use and development¹.

All studies and documents prepared within the framework of a local planning system should be interlinked and complementary to each other. They deal with spatial planning issues at various dimensions.

In order to properly plan spatial development it is essential to be well acquainted with the characteristics of a given area of land and to identify the determinants both relating to the natural conditions, existing land use, buildings and physical infrastructure, condition of the environment and property rights, and relating to functions serving supralocal public purposes.

Analysis of existing determinants and articulation of spatial policies is made in a study of determinants and directions of spatial policy. Although this study is not a legal document (it does not provide a basis for administrative decisions, especially on the conditions of land use and development), its significance for local policy is great.

It is the only comprehensive planning document prepared for the whole commune and the principal document articulating spatial policies adopted by local authorities.

In view of the above this document has been chosen as a basis for the analysis of policy pursued by selected communes of the Łódź voivodship with regard to housing.

As far as the structure of the Łódź voivodship is concerned, the core of the agglomeration is Łódź and the surrounding towns forming the Łódź Urban Complex: Zgierz, Aleksandrów Łódzki, Konstantynów Łódzki and Pabianice. Chief difficulties facing this region are insufficient functionality and restructuring processes. The remaining territory of the voivodship is either fully urbanized (Ozorków, Stryków, Głowno), or undergoes urbanization, or belongs to the agricultural and forest category.

The aim of this study is analysis of policies developed by communes situated in immediate neighbourhood of Łódź (table 1). It seems that their location in relation to Łódź has considerable impact both upon the nature of processes occurring in space and on the housing policy articulated – due to its being an integral element of local development strategy – in the study of determinants and directions of spatial development.

¹ B. Zastawniak: *Miejscowe planowanie przestrzenne*, in: *Gospodarka przestrzenna gmin*. IGPiK oddz. w Krakowie, Llewelyn-Davies, London, Fundusz Współpracy, Brytyjski Fundusz KNOW-HOW, Kraków 1998.

Table 1

Characteristics of selected communes of the Łódź voivodship (data is for 1999)

Characteristics	Aleksandrów Łódzki (town and commune)	Andrespol commune	Brójce commune	Konstantynów Łódzki	Ksawerów commune	Nowosolna commune	Pabianice commune	Pabianice	Rzgów (town and commune)	Stryków commune	Zgierz commune	Zgierz
Area in hectares	11,558	2,377	6,955	2,687	1,364	5,398	8,857	3,298	6,597	15,784	19,924	4,232
Population size as on 31 Dec. (in thousands)	25.5	10.8	5.2	17.5	6.9	2.6	5.3	74.7	8.4	11.8	10.2	58.9
Natural increase	-82	-49	4	-86	-9	-4	-20	-266	-29	-65	131	-228
Housing stock: - number of flats - total floor space (in thousands)	8,888 465.4	3,198 201.5	1,435 109.1	6,109 344.7	2,001 144.3	765 53.1	1,528 110.2	29,779 1469.6	2265 180.5	3669 223.1	3110 204.5	21226 1118.1
New flats: - number of floats - total floor space (in thousands)	23 1988	31 3879	18 2020	28 6138	30 2504	14 2460	9 1075	101 9642	31 5183	11 1787	44 10463	201
Budgetary revenues (in thousands)	24,349	10,610	6,062	15,832	8,838	3,794	5,705	71,975	15,714	12,028	12,484	59,139
Budgetary spending (in thousands)	25,172	9,730	6,668	15,630	8,846	3,551	5,543	82,057	13,624	13,735	12,033	59,767

Source: Author's research on the basis of data from the Central Statistical Office in Łódź.

From among the various requirements the study should satisfy, two seem to be particularly important:

- examination and diagnosis of the actual situation of a commune, its determinants and problems connected with its development,
- formulation of directions in spatial development and local spatial policies.

The housing stock tends to be differentiated depending on differentiation on wealth, tastes and needs of various groups of the society and related standards of living, social composition of the inhabitants and postulates concerning future directions in public regulation. On the one hand, therefore, there will be pressure to provide public – legal guarantees ensuring that the standard of individual spatial units will be maintained, and on the other there will be postulates for public intervention in cases of degraded areas and for support for social housing².

On the territories of the municipalities under study certain specific phenomena can be observed.

First of all there is a fairly rapid growth of housing for non-agricultural population. This is housing for permanent residence in the form of single-family houses, sometimes with a workshop on the premises, and residence-type buildings (mansions). Particularly marked is growth of housing construction in suburban areas. A very unfavourable phenomenon is progressing dispersion of compact building by expanding into open spaces beyond the existing concentration. This concerns mainly recreational housing, which is experiencing one more interesting phenomenon – transformation of holiday homes into permanent dwellings.

As regards formulation of directions of spatial development and the principles of local spatial policy, housing is often regarded as the principal element of the plans (leading function), while holiday housing is treated as a secondary function. Long-term policy with regard to residential housing should comprise designation of land for particular types of housing, renovation of the existing stock, functional transformation, funding of building projects from the municipal budget, construction of new social housing etc.

Designation of areas for settlement in attractive environment and with good transport connections with Łódź provides an encouragement for the inhabitants of Łódź to move to suburban areas, which is in line with a general trend towards moving from areas of intensive development to urban fringes.

² R. Iwanicw: *Uwarunkowania społeczne*, in: *Gospodarka przestrzenna*, op. cit., 1998.

On the other hand, apart from creation of new spatial structures through allocation of land for urbanization, a very frequent occurrence is continuation of the development of the existing settlement structures.

This is done through filling in the existing spatial structures so as to achieve complete settlement units and through improvement of their functionality.

Improvement of the existing development is a frequent element in the study. Local authorities assume that new houses should be constructed along main and local transport routes (see Nowosolna, Wiączyń Dolny, Lipiny, Natolin, Teolin, Nowe Skoszewy, Stare Skoszewy, Kopanka, Ksawerów) (Fig. 1). Given that farm-type and single-family housing is characterised by strong dispersion, which provides opportunity to density the development, it is the most rational approach, allowing spatial order and functional harmony to be preserved or, where is lacking, to be introduced. Another important aspect its articulation in the study of the need to follow traditional construction patterns, that is size and architectural form of buildings (study for the Rzgów municipality, guidelines for the centre of Rzgów). Many single-family housing complexes have been built in Rzgów, Gospodarz, Bronisin Dworski and Starowa Góra; residence-type housing – in Starowa Góra-Wschód, Konstantyn; single-family buildings with a service func-

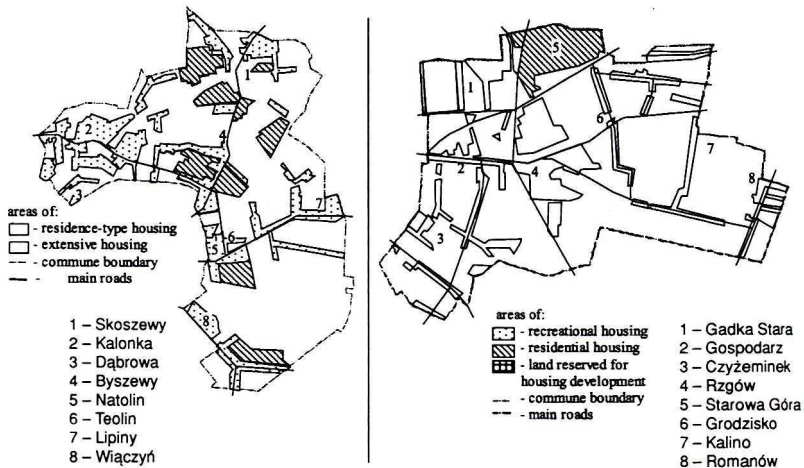


Fig. 1. Areas allocated for new housing in the Study of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development for Nowosolna and Rzgów communes

Source: Author's research.

tion (small business) in Rzgów, Gadka Stara and Starowa Góra; farm-type housing in numerous villages (Fig. 1). In response to the trend towards development of single-family housing large areas of land have been allocated for this purpose in the villages of Kalonka, Kopanka, Grabina and Stare Skoszewy in the Nowosolna commune. The tendency to transform holiday homes into permanent dwellings has been reflected in designation of such a land use in Nowosolna commune.

It is important to note the relationship between studies of determinants and directions of spatial development and local plans. Two main provisions are found in the analysed documents. The first is consequent upon current spatial development plans (e.g. Rzgów commune), while the other is due to the requirement of preparing local plans of areas allocated for fulfilling the housing needs of local communities (under art 13, § 1, p. 3a of an act on spatial development of 7th July 1994), and to the existing determinants (art 13, § 1, p. 4). In Rzgów commune 14 such (14-90 ha each) have been designated, in Nowosolna commune – 8 areas, in Konstanyńów Łódzki – 9 areas, and in the town and commune of Stryków – 3 areas.

Apart from introduction of changes aimed at expansion of areas designated for residential use, the studies include provisions regulating a number of minor issues, such as minimum size of building lots (e.g. Pabianice, Nowosolna and Rzgów municipalities), gross population densities (Nowosolna commune) or height of particular types of housing (Pabianice and Nowosolna communes).

The studies sometimes prohibit development in specified zones, e.g. an area along a motorway in Nowosolna.

Main directions in the spatial development of the municipalities under study include allocation of land for adaptation and development. The term "adaptation" is used by the authors in reference to built-up areas with urban or rural-type housing, with the process of development largely completed and a definite spatial pattern. They are mostly designated for redevelopment on the basis of the latest plan. It is possible to carry out modernization, reconstruction and expansion of the existing buildings, and, in most municipalities, to build up existing land reserves (which have or do not have permission to change the present land use).

Development areas are defined as areas suitable for development, mainly agricultural. They are designated for development due to their central location in areas of urbanisation, land shortage or social pressure. A frequent occurrence is their location inside existing housing quarters.

Analysis of the provisions of studies for individual municipalities shows that they permit housing development in several basic forms: multi-family, single-family, holiday, holiday-permanent, residence-type, farm-type and single-family with the business function (services, trade, manufacturing).

Single-family housing is a term used to define single-family houses or their complexes (detached, semi-detached, terraced and atrium-type), as well as buildings with no more than 4 flats, or their complexes.

All the municipalities plan allocation of land for single-family housing. Two types of activity are provided for in the studies in respect of such housing: adaptation of the existing buildings and construction of new houses. It will take place mainly in central areas of Pabianice, Zgierz, Konstancynów Łódzki, Aleksandrów Łódzki and Stryków, but also in suburban zones, e.g. in Pabianice municipality (Fig. 2) or in the neighbourhood of Andrespol, Bedoń Przykościelny, Janówka, Kraszew and Wiśniowa Góra (Fig. 2).

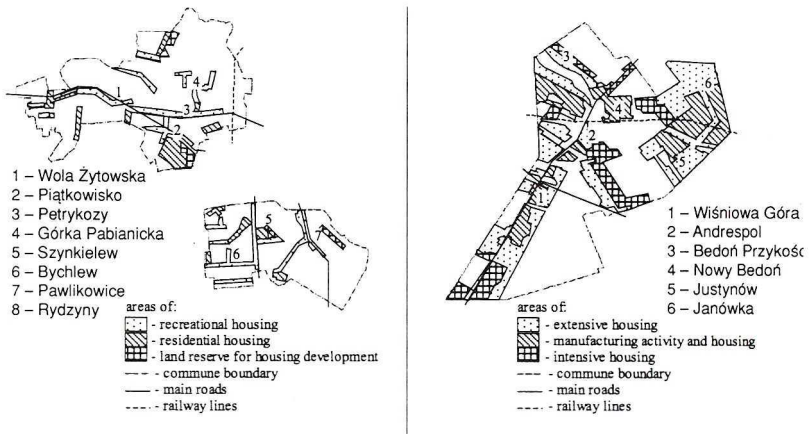


Fig. 2. Areas allocated for new housing in the Study of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development for Pabianice and Andrespol communes

Source: Author's research.

As regards new buildings, nearly all studies provide for their construction on the territory of the entire municipality, mainly in the form of detached and semi-detached houses. More intensive forms include buildings with up to 4 flats, terraced and atrium-type houses, and concentrations in various forms-housing estates, housing complexes and

fillings- in of the existing structures. Construction of new houses must be carried out in accordance with local plans. This particularly concerns organised forms of building investments.

There is also a practice of providing for possibility of building new houses on designated lost forming part of a sequence of existing farm-type housing. Such building sites are planned e.g. in Ksawerów commune (in intensive urbanization zone forming a compact spatial system with Łódź and Pabianice through inaction areas important for future spatial solutions), in Nowosolna commune with main concentrations in the neighbourhood of Grabiny, Kopanka, Kalonka and Natolin, in Zgierz commune (Fig. 3) – on designated areas in the villages of Dąbrówka Wielka, Łągiewniki, Skotniki, Józefów, Czaplinek, Leonów, Dzierżazna, Biała, Kotowice, Gieczno, Emilia i Malice-Lućmierz, and in Stryków commune (Wyskoki, Bratoszewice) (Fig. 3).

A specific type of single-family housing is housing combined with the business function. Only two municipalities have in their studies provisions for this type of housing: Andrespol (total area of about 200 ha) and Stryków (areas of land in the villages of Tymianka, Wyskoki, Bra-

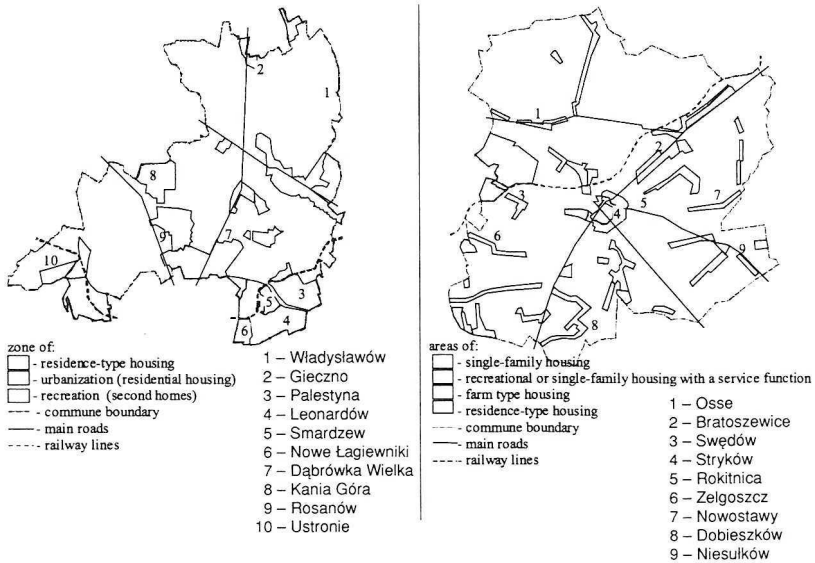


Fig. 3. Areas allocated for new housing in the Study of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development for Stryków commune and Zgierz

Source: Author's research.

toszewice – a total of 200 ha). It should be noted here that combination of business activity and permanent residence is a very frequent occurrence. This is due to the fact that legal regulations permit business activity (services, trade or manufacturing) to be conducted on residential lots unless its noxious effects get beyond the lot.

A type of housing that recently is experiencing a very rapid growth is vacation housing. It is interesting to note that despite this fact a rather low proportion of total land designated for development is allocated for this type of housing, with the exception of Pabianice municipality, where this proportion is more 50% (order 500 ha). This can be explained by various ways of defining this type of land use, e.g. "vacation-permanent housing", or "permanent-vacation housing", depending on which function dominates, or even "housing for permanent residence with possibility of recreational use", although the latter function will actually dominate. Such a practice is a result of the fact that very often functional changes are made in existing buildings, consisting mostly of transforming vacation homes into permanent residences or replacing them with new buildings for permanent habitation so defining land-use in one of the ways mentioned above leaves more freedom upon starting an investment project.

As far as the farm-type housing is concerned, the studies provide for adaptation or replacement of existing buildings on the old sites. In view of the tendency to division of farms into smaller units and reduction of the agricultural function in favour of new houses and small businesses, which leads to chaotic and uncoordinated building, the studies restrict location of new building sites in designated belts along the roads (e.g. Andrespol municipality – the villages of Bedoń Wieś, Stróża, Kraszew, Janówka; Zgierz municipality – Słowik, Zimna Woda, Wiktorów, Bądków, Biesiekierz, Szczawin, Maciejów and about 110 ha in total in the villages of Gadka Nowa, Wola Zaradzyńska, Ksawerów Wschód in Ksawerów commune (Fig. 4); nearly 150 ha in Aleksandrów Łódzki municipality (Fig. 4) and over 500 ha in Stryków municipality.

Areas of land designated for recreational development are often characterised by scenic beauty and natural attractions, e.g. Wiśniowa Góra, Justynów, Janówka in Andrespol commune; Krzemień, Grotniki, Jedlicze, Słowik, Kania Góra, Emilia, Cyprianów, Skotniki in Zgierz commune; or Prawda, Guzew, Czyżeminek, Romanów (Rzgów commune) situated on the edge of forest complexes.

Sometimes studies of determinants and directions of spatial development include a provision prohibiting construction of homes for permanent habitation in areas classed as recreational (mainly in places of

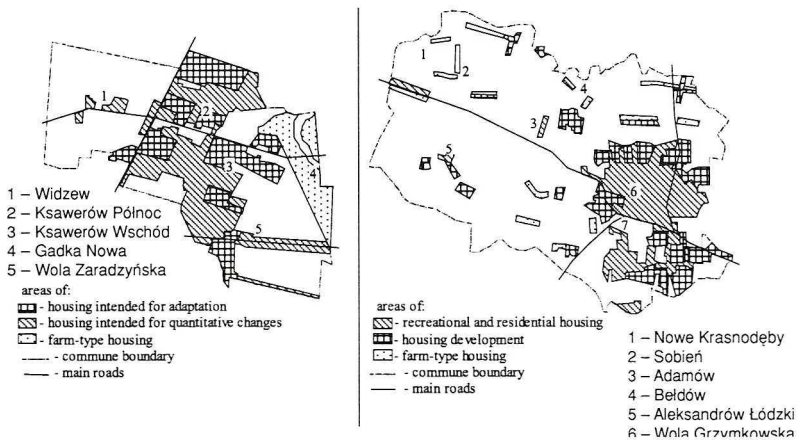


Fig. 4. Areas allocated for new housing in the Study of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development for Ksawerów and Aleksandrów Łódzki communes

Source: Author's research.

outstanding natural beauty). There are also restrictions on introduction of other functions, the proportion of a lot to be built up, removal of trees, etc. A characteristic feature of this type of housing is that it is mainly realised by the inhabitants of Łódź.

Another type of development is residence-type housing, that is single-family housing of higher standard and specific architectural design, intended for permanent habitation. Given the fact that communes usually allocate large areas of land for this type of development (e.g. Nowosolna commune – over 400 ha, Zgierz commune – 340 ha (that is about 70% of all space for new housing), Konstaktyńów Łódzki (Fig. 5) and Stryków communes – over 120 ha each), it is likely to become the dominant function in many communes. Just like in the case of recreational land use, land designated for residence-type housing is characterised by natural beauty (the villages of Niesułków, Warszewice and Klęk in the Łódź Heights Landscape Park, or Ustronie and Palestyna in Zgierz commune).

One more type of housing specified in studies of determinants and directions of spatial development is multi-family housing. This term denotes buildings containing more than four flats, or complexes of such buildings, including the necessary infrastructure, green areas and space for recreation.

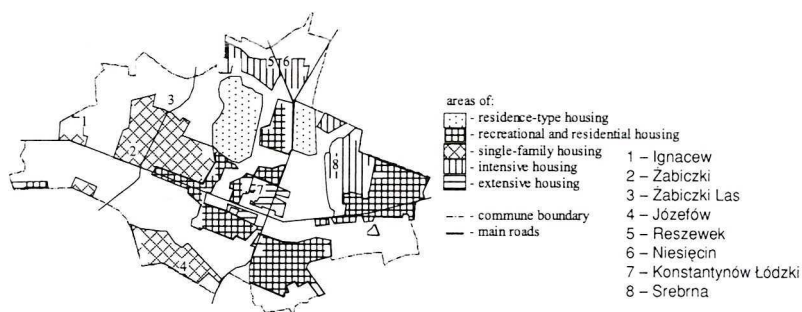


Fig. 5. Areas allocated for new housing in the Study of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development for Konstantynów Łódzki

Source: Author's research.

New multi-family housing is planned only in municipalities (urban-type communes), mainly in Zgierz (in Kurak housing estate and in Aleksandrowska Street – about 230 ha, which constitutes 1/5 of all the land for residential use). The other towns in the region under study are chiefly planning such activities as adaptation, modernization and densification of the existing housing estates (Pabianice, Stryków, Konstantynów Łódzki).

In rural areas, new multi-family housing generally is not allowed, only in justified cases it may be located in development areas. In the entire region, new multi-family housing ought to be realised in the form of small buildings or their complexes.

In the studies of determinants and directions of spatial development local authorities articulate decisions on the creation of spatial conditions for the required increment in the housing stock. The need for clear formulation of spatial policy in relation to expected demand for the different types of housing in the context of territorial demands and preferences makes it possible to identify a number of policies relating to phenomena which can be regarded as characteristic³:

- 1) policy relating to demand for land for new housing generated by the neighbouring communes⁴,
- 2) policy relating to outflow of investors (chiefly individual) to neighbouring communes (e.g. offering land at lower prices or more liberal investment conditions),

³ E. Podolakowa, M. Jaśkiewicz: *Problemy szczegółowe planowania miejscowego*, in: *Gospodarka przestrzenna gmin*, op. cit., 1998.

⁴ A phenomenon characteristic of rural communes situated on the outskirts of the agglomeration and large municipalities.

- 3) policy of stimulating proper proportions in the location of new housing:
 - 3A) in areas where new, changed use allows location of housing,
 - 3B) in areas already developed with recognized possibility of intensification or adaptation of housing (including areas degraded or in need of rehabilitation),
- 4) policy of defining local standards of dwelling, including:
 - minimum standards of municipal housing,
 - minimum standards of housing realized by other investors,
 - rules and standards regarding spatial and architectural requirements.

In attempting to classify housing policies in communes neighbouring with Łódź according to the pattern outlined above, the following features have been taken into account:

- 1) proportion of a commune's area designated for house-building in a study of determinants and directions of spatial development,
- 2) number of persons⁵ per 1 ha of land allocated for new housing,
- 3) proportions of areas for new housing (mainly recreational and residence-type) in relation to each other,
- 4) distribution of areas intended for house-building in the context of the existing development.

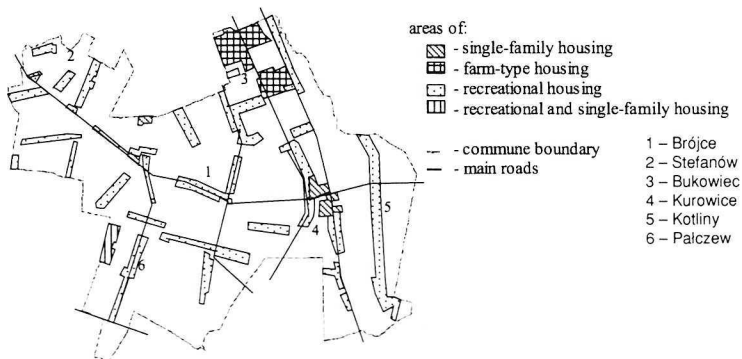


Fig. 6. Areas allocated for new housing in the Study of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development for Brójce commune

Source: Author's research.

In the initial phase of the project only quantitative aspects were the subject of analysis.

⁵ As at the end of 2000.

The largest areas of land for residential development are reserved in the studies of Ksawerów commune (over 50% of total area), Andrespol commune (over 40%) and Konstaktyńów Łódzki (over 40%). Two municipalities, Pabianice and Stryków, have allocated for this purpose only about 10% of their respective areas. In the other communes this indicator ranges from 20% to 30% (Fig. 7).

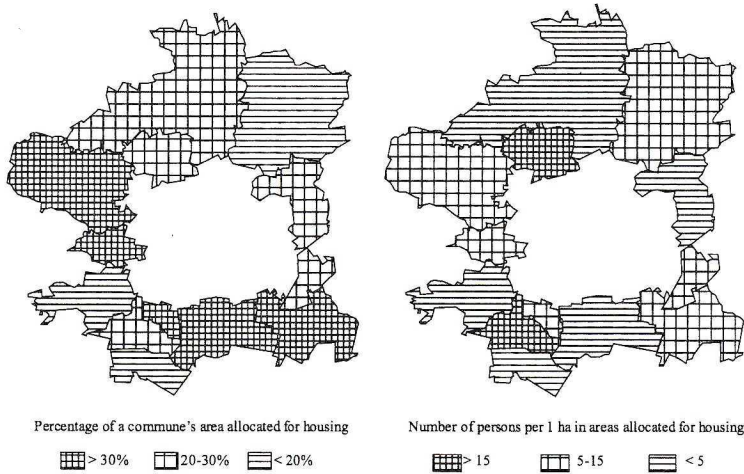


Fig. 7. Percentage of area and number of persons per 1 ha of land reserved for residential use in the communes of the Łódź agglomeration

Source: Author's research based on Local Studies of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development.

Equally interesting is the situation in respect of the number of persons per 1 ha of land for residential development. For the purposes of this analysis two administrative units have been distinguished from the group of the analysed units, namely the towns of Pabianice and Zgierz, on account of their having a character quite different from the other towns and communes, with a definitely higher population density. In the remaining territory the number of persons per 1 ha does not exceed 20.

Two groups have been identified:

- 1) with more than 5 persons per 1ha (Konstaktyńów Łódzki – 15 p./1 ha, town and commune of Stryków and the communes of Aleksandrów Łódzki, Andrespol and Ksawerów – each about 10 p./1 ha);
- 2) with 2-5 persons per 1 ha, embracing all the remaining communes in the region under study (Fig. 7).

Taking into account the aspects specified above, 4 major classes have been identified:

- 1) communes with a high proportion of land reserved for housing and more than 5 persons per 1 ha (the communes of Andrespol, Konstantynów Łódzki, Ksawerów and Rzgów)⁶,
- 2) communes where land designated as residential constitutes 20% of total area and the number of persons/1 ha is low (communes of Zgierz, Nowosolna and, despite the population density of 10 p./1 ha, Aleksandrów Łódzki),
- 3) the town and commune of Stryków and Pabianice commune, which are administrative units with a low share of housing areas,
- 4) Pabianice and Zgierz, with a high population density due to the specific character of their space (Fig. 8).

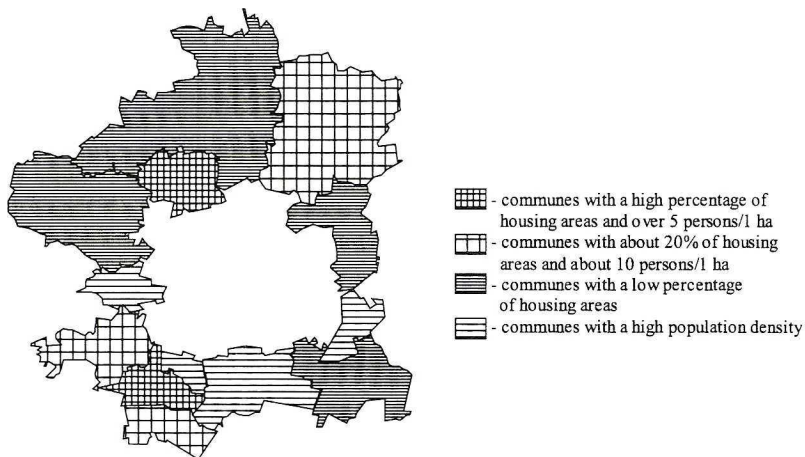


Fig. 8. Types of communes classified on the basis of the percentage of housing areas and number of persons per 1 ha in these areas

Source: Author's research based on Local Studies of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development.

Analysis shows that not in all cases quantitative analysis reflects the specific local policies regarding housing. Its qualitative differentiation has turned out to be a decisive factor. Following the earlier pattern of division into four groups pursuing different policies, the following classes have been identified:

⁶ Rzgów commune is an exception in this group, with only about 2,5 persons per 1 ha of housing areas.

- I) communes pursuing policy relating to demand for housing generated by neighbouring communes (expansive policy),
- II) communes pursuing policy of stimulating proper proportions in location of new housing (complementary policy),
- III) communes pursuing policy of shaping local standards of dwelling conditions (conservative policy) (see Fig. 9).

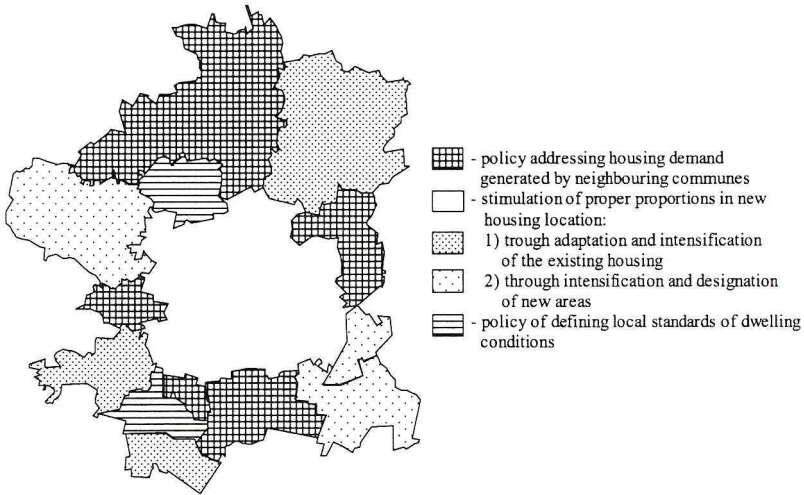


Fig. 9. Housing policies pursued by the communes of Łódź voivodship

Source: Author's research based on Local Studies of Determinants and Directions of Spatial Development.

Class I comprises 5 communes: Konstantynów Łódzki, Ksawerów and Rzgów (with a high share of residential areas) and Nowosolna and Zgierz (where residential areas will constitute 1/4 of total area). First three communes have been classified in this group on the basis of a quantitative criterion, that is a disproportionately large percentage of land allocated for housing development. In the case of Nowosolna commune it was a very large share of residence-type land use, and in the case of Zgierz commune – allocation of 70% of all areas reserved for housing development for recreational building. Allocation structure in respect of type of housing in Konstantynów Łódzki is similar – over 5% of total area (about 15% of housing areas) are reserved for high standard single-family housing (residence-type housing). The high share of this kind of land use suggests that local policy is oriented towards demand from beyond commune boundaries.

In two other communes, Rzgów and Ksawerów, single-family housing is to be the dominant type, on account of local tendency to give preference to suburban zones with good communication links.

Class II comprises 5 communes: Aleksandrów Łódzki, Andrespol, Pabianice, Brójce and Stryków. Due to considerable internal differentiation two sub-classes have been distinguished on the basis of housing policies. Stryków, Brójce and Pabianice are in the first group, in which chief activities will be adaptation and intensification of the existing housing.

Expansion beyond these structures is allowed only in exceptional cases. Only about 10% of total area is reserved for this activity. The planned vacation or residence-type housing will be "inscribed" in the present structures so as to retain the character of the commune.

In the sub-class consisting of the remaining two communes, apart from planned densification, new areas have been allocated for development, with special focus on single-family farm-type housing.

Zgierz and Pabianice, two largest towns in the analysed region, make up the fourth class. Their policies consist primarily of satisfying the housing needs of their residents through adaptation, modernization and replacement of the existing buildings. New housing is planned only as fillings and, in rare cases, on new areas.

Conclusion

Implementation of the adopted policy necessitates definition of tasks and instruments to be used. Two groups have been identified on the basis of Local Studies:

- 1) connected with funding, organisational aspects, rents and allocation of dwelling units, privatisation and management, etc.,
- 2) (more relevant to this analysis) specific to spatial planning:
 - development of alternative conceptions of housing development, both for built-up and new areas,
 - identification of optional or the most realistic spatial variant, coordinated with other "sectoral strategies"⁷,

⁷ Decision the size of areas for new housing ought to be based on estimated rate of growth in time and scale of the planned investment projects. Shortage of land reserved for housing may lead to pressures to allocate public or protected zones for housing purposes, while excessive land reserve leads to dispersed building, ineffective use of infrastructure and spatial chaos.

- delimitation of areas for rehabilitation, for organized investment activity (and, if necessary, areas which require division on integration).

Allocation of municipal land for housing is an element of establishing land use and principles of local development as a basis for decisions regulating spontaneous processes of spatial development, and of spatial policy formulation, that is formulation of objectives and directions of spatial planning based on broad cognizance of present and future determinants. Formulation of spatial policy makes it possible to foresee the effects of undertaken activities, thus facilitating proper choice of actions with respect to identified goals.

It should be added that in a number of cases communes prepare additional studies in the form of a local housing strategy. Its aims are, among others, diagnosing the housing situation, its growth determinants and needs in respect of modernisation; defining the role and tasks of local government as investor, owner and administrator as well as specifying the available instruments or such instruments as can be obtained thanks to active funding initiatives, stimulation and control of the real estate market, etc.

Diagnosis of the housing situation carried out as part of strategy development, including operating directions and programmes and their spatial aspects, ought to constitute a major element of the spatial planning process, because only a comprehensive view of the housing issue will allow local governments to make it an element of local policy, well integrated with all other sectoral policies pursued on a commune's territory.