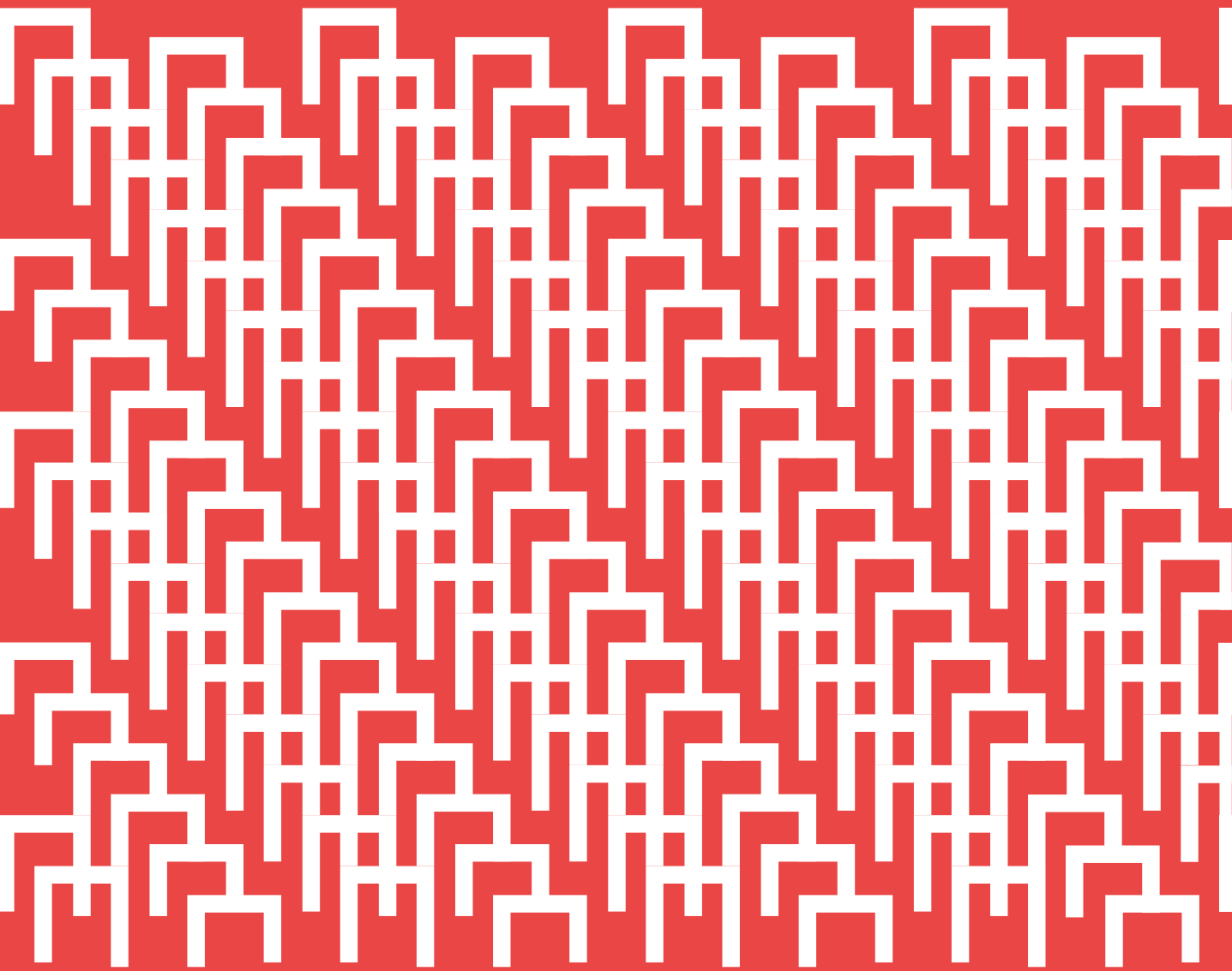


Working Group 2  
MCMH ATLAS

# European Middle-Class Mass Housing LEXICON



**Els De Vos**  
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Editors

## **Working Group 2**

### **MCMH ATLAS**

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# Introduction

Els De Vos



## Terminology of Middle Class Mass Housing

During the collective meetings organized in the COST Action, the definition of Middle Class Mass Housing (hereinafter MCMH) came up again and again. This topic, although it was postponing other discussions, revealed a range of interesting cultural variations. We distinguished several approaches to the "middle class", as well as different ways to define the housing of this multi-faceted social group<sup>1</sup>. Likewise, the topic of "mass housing" elicited various interpretations. Gradually, we came to the conclusion that it is almost impossible to establish a single definition of MCMH in a continent as diverse as Europe, with its manifold histories, nationalities, cultures, languages, customs and urban planning. This publication aims to illustrate these different perspectives, highlighting the rich variety of housing cultures in European countries and regions.

### *No middle class?*

In former Eastern Europe, during the Cold War, officially, there was no middle class housing. However, scholars did distinguish housing typologies that can be compared to MCMH in former Western Europe. In Estonia, for example, you had central collective farm settlements (kolkhoz), inspired by Scandinavian models; "these buildings are a rare example of the once hoped-for Soviet welfare in the Estonian countryside", Epp Lankots argues. In Lithuania, such housing was inspired by cooperative apartment arrangements that were common in the entire Soviet Union, in which residents contributed with their own funds to housing construction and in return received an apartment that was larger or more comfortable than the standard houses provided by the state (Lithuanian coop-

erative apartments accounted for 18 percent of all new apartments in the 1970s, more than the Soviet average of 6 percent). However, instead of trying to establish a definition of MCMH, we came up with specific examples and contrasting themes that characterize MCMH in different countries.

## Lexicon

In this lexicon, we present descriptions of MCMH from different countries, cultures and urban planning contexts. Additionally, we include specific terms that characterize MCMH or certain aspects of it. As Gaia Caramellino argues in the book *Post-war Middle-Class Housing* (2015, 33): "Words related to housing and dwellings are a powerful vehicle of cultural mediation and are central for the comprehension of unique forms of habitat, as well as expressions of specific social and cultural practices"<sup>2</sup>. This lexicon contains terms from several jargons and languages: popular, technical, professional, academic, institutional, architecture criticism, etc. Across the different countries, we see comparable terms crop up, which in turn have subtle (or not so subtle) differences.

## Terms for housing type

One example that illustrates regional and national housing culture is the farmhouse style. Different names are used for this specific typology, such as **fermette** in Belgium, Chalondonette in France and **boerderette** in the Netherlands. The Flemish, French and Dutch terms all refer to a type of middle class housing and have the same French suffix (-ette), which is a diminutive marker.

**Boerderette** and **fermette** have a similar meaning because they both refer to imitation farmhouses inhabited by non-farmers, which could be smaller than a farmhouse (but not always). In Belgium, **fermette** was initially used for small, abandoned farms that were renovated as single family homes, but later for new constructions with those characteristics<sup>3</sup>. For realtors and inhabitants, the terms designate a popular, highly marketable style type that visually resembles a farmhouse. However, in the architectural discourse they are always used in a mocking or derogatory way to refer to tasteless "catalogue" houses, at least by architects who detest the tawdriness of the **fermette**.

In Flanders, the Dutch speaking part of Belgium, the French term **fermette** continues to be used because it gives these types of houses a higher standing (French was the official language used by the nobility and bourgeoisie, especially after the rejection of the Dutch monarchy in 1830). At the same time, the **fermette** can be distinguished from its Dutch variant primarily by the importance it acquired in Flemish residential culture. Even though the **fermette** bore a French name, it was praised in Flanders for its supposed 'Flemishness.' The **fermette** seemed to frame itself within Flemish peasant culture, portrayed by

painters such as Gust De Smet (1877-1943), Albert Servaes (1883-1966) and Constant Permeke (1886-1952), and writers such as Stijn Streuvels (1871-1969), Ernest Claes (1885-1968) and Felix Timmermans (1886-1947) during the interwar period. In the Netherlands the Dutch term **boerderette** has only been in use since 1980, appearing first in newspapers and 17 years later in texts on urban planning and architecture. In the latter publications it was also used as a derogatory term.

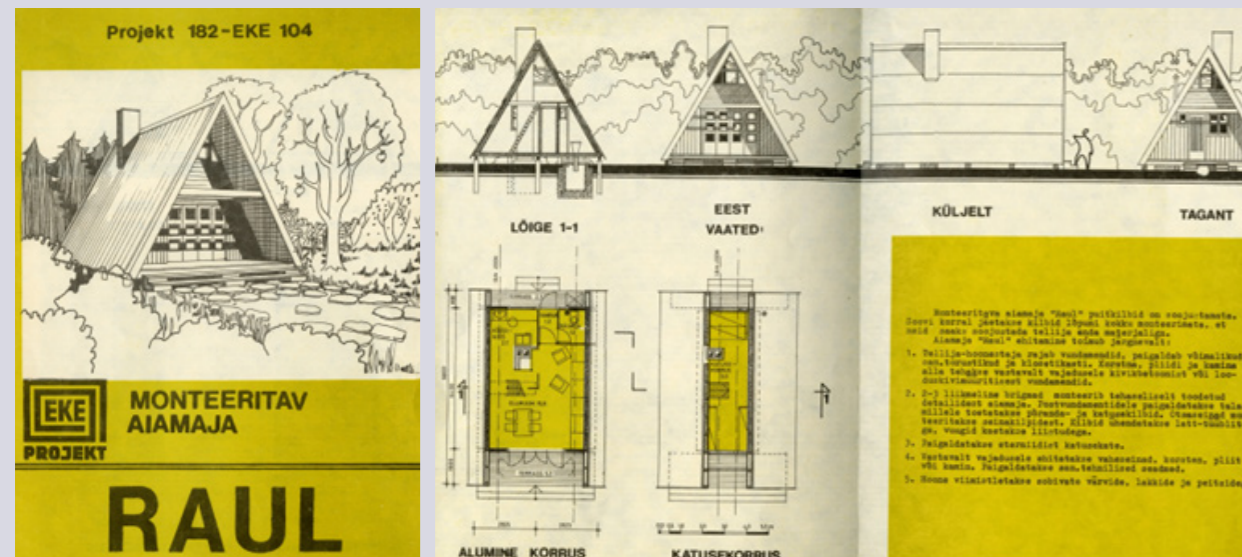
The French word **Chalondonnette** did not originate from the farm, but from Albin Chalandon, the Minister of Infrastructure who launched a competition in 1969 to design vast, dense complexes of individual houses. As Yankel Fijalkow, Ahmed Benbernou and Yaneira Wilson explain, "the diminutive (-ette) from the term **Chalondonnette** expresses houses of low value, corresponding to a negative view of the middle classes and the ambition of the state towards them: hence, sam's suffit (that is enough for me)". So while the suffix '-ette' brings a certain prestige to the Flemish word **fermette** and the Dutch word **boerderette** (at least for the wider population), this is not the case with the French term. However, among Belgian and Dutch architectural critics and urban planners, the terms **fermette** and **boerderette** are always used in a mocking way.

These examples show that approaching housing as a linguistic phenomenon reveals a lot of aspects and connotations of middle class mass housing. It demonstrates that a certain word can have one meaning for the masses and another for professionals, such as architects and urban planners. However, it also shows how countries sometimes borrow housing terms from other countries and give them their own meaning.

## Terms for rooms

The terms in the lexicon bring to the fore certain privileges or status symbols associated with the middle class. This can take the form of a second home that people own, such as the **Vikendica** in Bosnia-Herzegovina – a term coined in the 1950s from the English word “weekend”- or the “summerhouse” in Estonia. In Portugal it was common for middle class families to have a live-in servant, which manifests itself in the presence of a **quarto da empregada** (housekeeper’s room/bedroom) which was a small room/bedroom specifically designed for the housekeeper. However, in the rest of post-war Europe, it was quite rare to have a live-in servant, as they had become too expensive.

What seems to have been more common throughout Europe was the presence of a “guest room”, “best room”, “salon”, etc. Such rooms could be found in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Greece, North Macedonia and Turkey. Often the French term “salon” was used, and mostly reflected a bourgeois concept of the home. The salon was literally a room equipped with the finest furniture, where the family received guests and showcased their social status and well-being. Until the early/mid 1960s it was also a place where the dead were laid to rest. In Portugal this room was called the television room. Nowadays the room has mostly disappeared in favour of the living room, which now serves as a room to receive guests but also to enjoy family life.



The brochure introducing a pre-fab A-frame summerhouse “Raul” from the 1970s in Estonia. Architect Rein Randväli, EKE Projekt. (Source: Estonian Museum of Architecture)



Example of a guest room in a middle-class family home in Türkiye © Sahibinden website: Autonomous, 2023; <https://www.sahibinden.com/ilan/ikinci-el-ve-sifir-alisveris-ev-dekorasyon-mobilya-misafir-odasi-takimi-1062614830/detay>

## Terms related to class

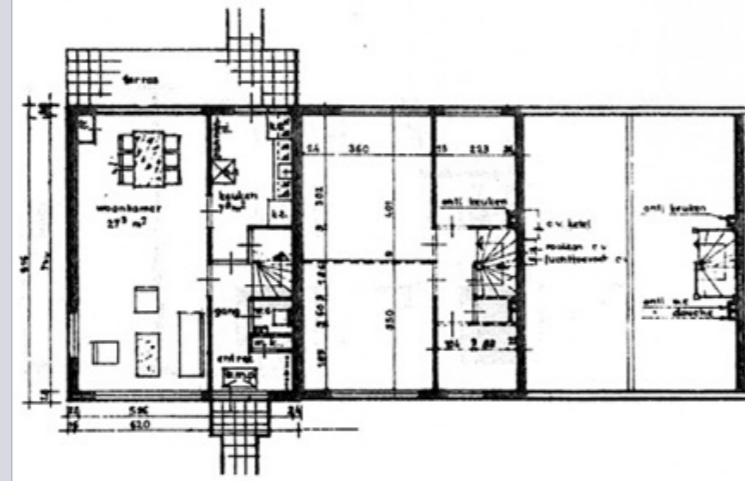
What also became evident in discussing the lexicon during the Writing MCMH Workshop in Antwerp (06-08/04/2022), was the changing reputation, and often also population, of the buildings. We noticed a transience or temporality in the buildings, whose reputation evolved over time. Housing once intended for the middle classes became deprived housing, while social housing that was renovated and sold to the middle class increased in prestige.

We also noticed that MCMH often had ornaments and architectonic details which added prestige to a certain building. The entrance hall, frontage and front lawn in particular received a lot of design attention. And of course, one couldn’t forget the large parking space, an indispensable part of the middle class way of living.

Furthermore, we discovered terms that refer to a standard floor plan or the shape of that floor plan, and are associated with a certain social class. For example, the floor plan of a **pistolgang** (hallway) in Denmark literally has the shape of a pistol. The **doorzonwoning** (literally, sun-through house) in the Netherlands and Belgium has a living room that extends from front to back, with a large window on each side through which the sun shines in. The ordinary character of this housing type brings to mind the average “middleclass” family.

## Terms for mass housing

We mostly associate the term “mass housing” with high-rise projects, such as those in urban Spain, Italy and Portugal. However, this lexicon makes clear that the low rise was the dominant form for the middle classes in many countries, such as Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Macedonia, Cyprus and the South of Italy. As Lidwine Spoomans points out in her description of Dutch housing neighbourhoods, “low-rise is mass housing in disguise”. There, massification happens in a horizontal way and is often self-built. A special case of the private initiative is the **polykatoikia** (meaning multi-residence) in Greece. This is “a building type produced mainly through the system of **antiparochi** (meaning in-exchange), a quid-pro-quo arrangement whereby a landowner offered their plot to a contractor in exchange for a number of apartments in the **polykatoikia** built by the contractor on the plot”, as Konstantina Kalfa explains.



Doorzon typology in Nagele in the Netherlands, by architect Groosman(© HNI, photographer unknown). Right: typical 'doorzon' floorplan.

## Terms for techniques

Finally, many construction terms from prefabricated or industrialized housing construction are included in the lexicon, such as **placa**, **Plattenbau**, **panelák** and **panel**. In Portugal, estate agents and middle-class house buyers use the term **placa** (plate) for "reinforced concrete slab". The German term **Plattenbau** is quite common and refers to buildings that consist of precast concrete parts for walls and ceilings. Especially in the German Democratic Republic, the so-called **Platte** was a common sight and sought-after, as Lisa Kaufmann points out. In Slovakia, a prefabricated house or common block of flats was called a **panelák**, while in Hungary, panel was a **pars pro toto** for housing estates, regardless of the building technology and age of the estate, at least in colloquial speech.

## Terms as an expression of culture

What this lexicon presents is a broad range of terms that come from architectural journals, books, policy documents, technical specifications, urban planning, but also popular media and colloquial speech. This variety is not so surprising given that housing is entangled in so many aspects of people's lives, as well as the building industry, architectural culture, bourgeois dwelling cultures, etc. To what extent does the everyday language on MCMH correspond with the technocratic terminology of housing? Is there a tension between these two categories of terms? And do the terms express the structure and systems of social stratification of MCMH? We hope that this lexicon forms a first step in the development of a methodology to study the concepts of MCMH.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Uta Pottgiesser, Wido Quist, Ana Vaz Miheiro, Dalit Shach-Pinsly, Els De Vos, Gaia Caramellino, Ines Lima Rodrigues, Kostas Tsiambaos, Müge Akkar Ercan, Yankel Fijalkow (eds.), *Special Issue on Middle Class Mass Housing, Docomomo-Journal* (April 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Gaia Caramellino, Federico Zanfi (eds.), *Post-War Middle-Class Housing: Models, Construction and Change*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2015, 236-282.

<sup>3</sup> Els De Vos, Hilde Heynen, "Shaping popular taste: The Belgian Farmers' Association and the fermette during the 1960s-1970s", *Home Cultures*, 4 (2007) 3, 237-260.

MCMH-EU  
Lexicon



# Belgium

**Els De Vos**  
University of Antwerp



Image of middle class mbass housing De Bist (©Google maps 2018)



Since the 1960s, the majority of middle class inhabitants live in a freestanding family house, mostly in brick and with a tiled saddle roof. They are homeowners who appointed their own architect to design according to their wishes.

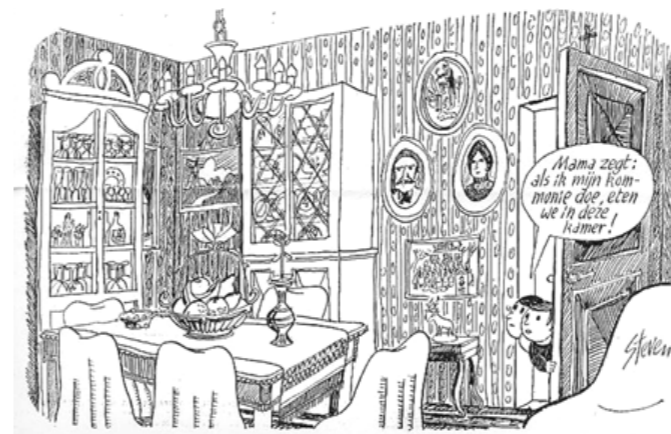
Apartment blocks in the fringe of the cities or nearby parks, are typical middle class mass housing. Under mass housing in Belgium, we understand physical building masses. These apartments are built by one firm and sold to middle class people as investment or as home. At the Belgium coast, apartment buildings at the sea wall are often bought by the middle class as second home.



Image of middle class housing (© photo: Els De Vos, 2010)

## Fermette Faux-farmstyle house or imitation house

It is a French term standardly used in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, to describe a, in the 1960s to 1980s, very popular house, namely an old renovated farm into a single family dwelling or a newly built single-family house with the appearance of a traditional farmhouse. Its image refers to an old farmer's home, but it has inside all contemporary comfort and technology. This 'imitation farmhouse' is sharply criticised in discourses on architecture and urbanism because it has the look of a traditional farm, but it is not designed as such, neither inhabited by a farmer. It's moreover a space consuming type of dwelling which supposedly invokes the spirit of the countryside, but in fact threatens the rural landscape because of the sprawl it gives rise to. Its rural image thus seems to cover up its real signification. Despite its supposedly Flemish character, people used a French term to give it a higher standing, since French was originally in 1830 the official language used by the nobility and the bourgeoisie, especially after the rejection of the Dutch monarchy. The **fermette** still exerts great appeal today. But it faces competition from 'parsonage-style' homes, which are similar in style but have a different formal language.



"Mum says, when I do my communion, we can eat in this room". (Cartoon of the "Best Room" in: *De Bond*, (10 okt. 1969) 39, 7)

## Beste kamer Best room

Literally translated as 'best room' or drawing room, sometimes indicated with the French term 'salon', a bourgeois concept of the home, a room fitted with all the best furniture and intended to receive prestigious visitors. In the 1920s till 1960s, the room was located at the front of the house, facing the street. Housing reformers opposed the best room, because the room was hardly used (s. cartoon). According to the modernist ideology, a house should be functional, which the 'best room' was not. However, the room had a function that is forgotten today. It was the place where a family member who died, was laid out, and where mourners could give a last salute to the deceased.

## Atlantic Wall

An expression used by urbanists and architects to mock the line of apartments along the sea front. These apartments, bought by the middle and upper classes as a second home, are very popular because they have a direct sea view. However, they obstruct the view between the sea and the hinterland. For this reason, they are criticized by urban planners. The word originally refers to the extensive system of coastal defences and fortifications built by Nazi Germany in WWII, along the coast of continental Europe and Scandinavia, as a defence against an anticipated Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe from the United Kingdom.

# Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Anita Milaković**  
**Nevena Novaković**  
University of Banja Luka



Middle class mass housing, Borik neighbourhood in Banja Luka (© photo: Tomas Damjanović, 2021)



Single-family housing is a dominant residential typology in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mass construction of privately owned houses began with the mass migration from rural areas to cities after World War II. However, it has never been the subject of a state housing program. Single-family houses were gradually constructed near city centres and on the remote periphery. Some houses were built without a building permit, but usually, they were similar in form and quality of construction to legally built ones.

Regarding the form typology, these are detached houses on private plots. Citizens, in many cases, build their own houses with the help of a master builder, family, friends and neighbours. Houses are often built and furnished in stages. The owners move in on the ground floor while the rest of the house remains unfinished. Some houses are left without a facade for years after the owners have moved in.

The significant housing demand at the end of the 1950s was met with the planning and mass construction of multi-apartment housing, as in the other parts of former Yugoslavia. The planning and construction system developed from typical modest buildings into large-scale neighbourhoods of complex spatial features with educational, commercial, cultural and recreational facilities. Construction was financed by the state, municipalities and socially owned companies, with a mandatory contribution to the housing fund for every worker. Residents had a life-long right to use apartments (occupancy right), although buildings were socially owned. Today, these buildings and neighbourhoods are valued for the quality of the spatial organization of the apartments and the abundant open spaces.



Single-family middle class housing in Banja Luka (© photo: Tomas Damjanović, 2020)

## Dvorište Yard

A term that denotes the open space surrounding a detached house on a private plot. In common parlance, open spaces next to multi-apartment buildings are often referred to by the same name: **dvorište**.

Multi-apartment buildings from the 1950s and 1960s usually had two to four floors and were built as detached buildings on a green plot, often with fences. In these small multi-apartment buildings, open spaces were perceived and referred to as yards (the name and way of using open spaces were inherited from single-family housing). In the 1960s and 1970s, residential buildings and neighbourhoods became more complex, and the open spaces around them lost the characteristics of yards. However, the term **dvorište** was maintained and is often heard in everyday conversation when discussing the use of open spaces near residential buildings.

## Naselje Residential area, settlement

A term that describes any compact set of residential buildings, regardless of size. The residential area is also "the place where I live".

People identify their place of living with **naselje**, which always has a unique name. The residential area is a spatial whole on the district or neighbourhood scale.

## Primaća soba Living room

The largest room in the spatial organization of the apartment, intended for daily activities and used as a dining room on certain social occasions.

This room is the family temple of social protocol. It is a room for receiving (- primati) guests, for entertainment, watching television and other social activities. It is usually equipped with sofas and armchairs, a small table and a wooden cabinet that covers the entire wall. The room is furnished representatively, not practically.

## Vikendica Weekend house

A detached house surrounded by greenery, often outside large cities. It can be a prefabricated or solid construction and is a cottage type of house, modest in size and decoration.

The term (coined by analogy with the English "weekend") entered the vernacular in the 1950s. It became popular in the next decade when more people could afford a weekend house for themselves. It was a place to escape from the city and be "in nature" or "on vacation". Also, for people who moved to the city from villages during accelerated urbanization, the weekend house was a way of staying attached to the homeland. From the end of the 1980s until the break-up of former Yugoslavia, the **vikendica** became an important status symbol for those who owned it and often a desired object for those who did not.





Mladost residential estate in Sofia, built 1980s (© 2023 Брсномех)

# Bulgaria

**Veneta Zlatinova**

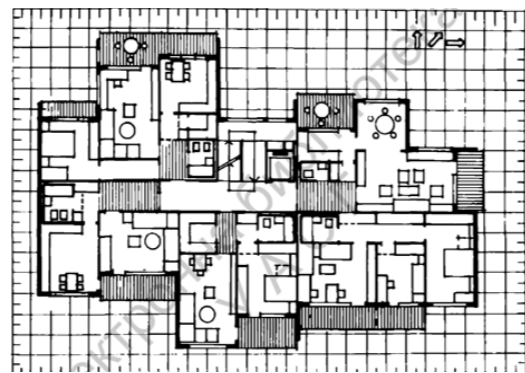
University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy

Apartment buildings or multifamily buildings dominate the residential landscapes of all Bulgarian cities. They were introduced in the 1920s and after the World War II became the most widely spread type of housing sheltering all social classes. By 1990s they were associated with urbanization and industrialization as well as urban lifestyle while single family houses were associated with rural and low quality of living. Contemporary middle class housing inherited the typology adapting it to the new materials and technologies and embedding it in the up-to-date zoning regulations of increased density.

Mass housing in Bulgaria refers to the large-scale residential estates planned, designed and built extensively between the 1960s and 1990s. They were built as green-field developments on the city outskirts. The development of uniform plans and repetitive buildings followed the requirements of the totalitarian state government for a fast and cheap supply of urban housing. The typology was diversified in the 1970s and especially the 1980s with the introduction of different structural systems, scales, heights and units as well as master plans. Following the radical social, economic and political upheavals of the 1990s, the middle class gradually began migrating to new buildings, but the number of housing units constructed annually in the last decades is far below the levels seen in previous periods of population growth, rapid industrialization and urbanization.



Middle Class housing in Bulgaria. Krasno selo residential estate in Sofia, 2019 (@Google Earth Pro)



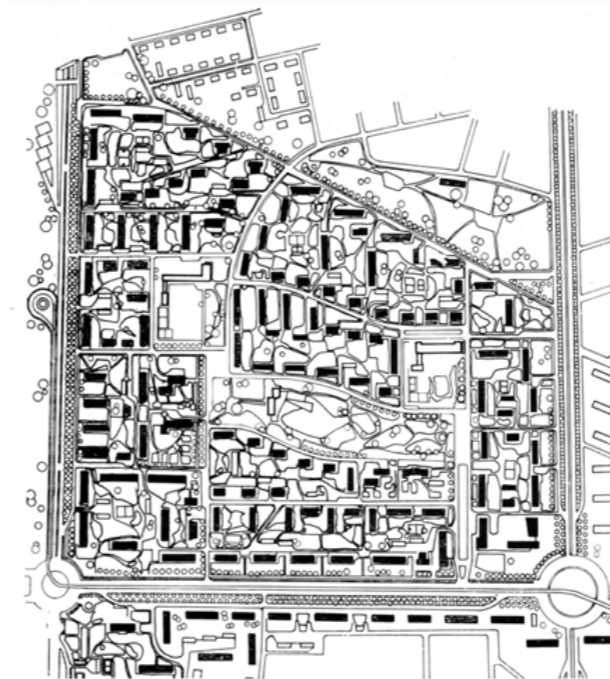
Design of a residential module (seksia) (source: Dragiev [1983])

## Комплекс Complex

A large-scale housing estate, planned as a residential district of large multifamily apartment blocks, usually built using prefabricated elements or other industrialized technologies, and following a master plan providing all the necessary social infrastructure (this is the origin of the term "complex services").

## Блок Block

A uniform multifamily residential building, most commonly referring to the apartment blocks in the large-scale housing estates, e.g. mass housing.



Zapaden park residential estate (complex) in Sofia, designed 1960s, arch. K. Bosev (source: Tonev, P. et. al [1971])



Residential building (block) in Sofia, Hipodroma residential estate, built ca. 1960; source: Stoychev [1976].

## Кооперация Cooperatsia

A block of flats, built collectively by the families that later inhabit it and who jointly provide funding and hire construction workers to build it (rather like housing co-operatives but more informal). This form of housing was inherited from the pre-war period, and in the second half of the 20th century became associated with middle class housing as opposed to mass housing (due to the smaller number of dwelling units and therefore inhabitants, the non-uniform architecture and the non-industrial construction technology). The word literally means "cooperation".

## Секция Sektsia

A repetitive module of the prefabricated multifamily residential buildings that could exist as a separate entity and was usually, but not always, linked to a single staircase. One of the most common modules was seven floors high with three apartments on each floor.

# Croatia



Image of Middle-Class housing (© photo: Zlata Dolaček-Alduk, 2020)

**Zlata Dolaček-Alduk**  
**Ivana Brkanić Mihić**  
University of Osijek



Apartment buildings and high-rise buildings built in existing neighborhoods as well as in newly planned settlements on the outskirts of the city are typical examples of middle-class housing construction in Croatian cities. In the second half of the 20th century, the construction of these residential buildings and entire residential areas was financed by the state, individual municipalities and socially owned companies. According to urban plans, in the new neighborhoods, after the construction of residential buildings, commercial and recreational facilities, kindergartens, elementary schools and parks were also built.

Despite the large number of apartments built during the socialist period, the state could not meet the housing needs of all residents. Therefore, the most representative type of middle class housing in Croatia is the single-family house. These houses were built by families, with the help of state loans, on the outskirts of the cities, especially in less urban areas. The trend began during the socialist period and continues to this day. These houses have a ground floor with one floor or attic and a kitchen, living room, dining room, up to two bathrooms and several bedrooms. Often, there is an apartment for the parents on the ground floor and an independent living space for an adult offspring upstairs.



Image of Middle-Class Mass housing (© photo: Ivana Brkanić Mihić, 2022)

## Višestambeno naselje Collective housing neighborhood

A middle- to high-density urban, predominantly residential unit, with most of the services required for everyday needs within walking distance. In Croatia, most of these units were built during the socialist period in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, using mass production and prefabricated technology. The neighborhood was usually functionally zoned as a housing area and central zone with educational and shopping facilities. Multifamily slabs and high-rise residential buildings were designed with open public spaces, linear pedestrian walks, sports facilities, children's playgrounds, and green areas with planned green infrastructure between them.

## Zgrada za kolektivno stanovanje Building for collective housing

A building with a large number of independently functioning housing units (with bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom) and communal spaces: entrances, staircases and hallways, communal storage rooms for bicycles and strollers, a communal bin room, drying and laundry rooms, roof terraces, and a house counseling room. In recent decades, the number of communal rooms has decreased as the standard of the apartments themselves has increased.

## Društveni stan Communal apartment

Under socialism (1945-91) this was an apartment owned by the state, a social organization, or later a trade union organization, which tenants usually received from their employer and for which they paid the minimum rent.

## POS stanovi POS apartments

Apartments built under the program for state-subsidized housing (since 2004). The aim of this program is to give citizens the opportunity to solve their housing problems at much more favorable conditions than on the market. The program is available to all citizens of the Republic of Croatia, according to their needs and depending on their financial situation, age and number of family members. It is accompanied by a regulation that determines the size and content of apartments and residential buildings, as well as the minimum elements of their design.

## Pravo na stan Right to housing

The right to housing is a fundamental legal institution that represents one of the most important means of livelihood for the working classes. In former Yugoslavia in the 1950s, attempts were made to regulate housing on the basis of social criteria introduced by the social authorities with the aim of providing permanent and secure housing in a given dwelling. In collective housing, financed by the state budget, local authorities or social enterprises, tenants had a right of occupancy and the right to use the apartment for life.

# Cyprus

**Lora Nicolaou**  
**Byronas Ioannou**  
Frederick University



Image of middle class housing: Paradise Development, Limassol, 2019 (© photo: Lora Nicolaou, 2018)

Private housing built in separate blocks catering to young urban professionals and foreign investors / permanent residents. This particular one (shown in the image), caters to the upper end of the market. The height setback and organization on the plot, even the balcony organization are all determined by the zoning regulation and therefore commonly seen in blocks catering to the lower end of the market. The difference between different rental/sales levels is defined by the quality of internal finishes, the fit out of the outdoor space (pools, play areas, etc.), the extent of underground parking and the scale of the common areas.

This free-standing type of housing characterizes the whole of suburbia in Cyprus, which often begins in locations only a few kilometres from the city centre. Plot sizes of around 550 to 700 m<sup>2</sup> are typical for lower middle and upper middle class incomes. The organization of the block is also characteristic and is defined by a 3 m obligatory setback and the individual owner's demand for maximizing the building coefficient and site coverage (a cultural condition). The typology of the layout was relatively standard and typical during the second half of the 20th century. More recently, European designer house models and prototypes have been individualizing layouts to a great extent. The level of landscape, the quality of construction materials, the quality of architectural design, and the number of parking garages often indicate the economic scale.



Middle Class Housing in Cyprus Agios Dometios, Nicosia © Lora Nicolaou, 2018

## Monokatikia, dyplokatikia, tetrakatikia

Terms referring to a single home on a single plot, and two houses on the same-size single plot, either in the form of two **maisonettes** or two separate units on two floors. A fourth typology on the same plot size can accommodate up to four smaller residential units. Neighbourhoods are sometimes uniform in terms of the number of units on each plot, or characterized by a mix of types. Morphologies are consistent across the suburban expansion, despite the number of units per plot, since the planning zoning dictates the built space geometries according to the plot size and shape, which are consistent across most of the suburban expansion. A strict zoning system and the luck of having similar types of development in the past have resulted in this typological consistency not only in terms of the urban plans but also with regard to their architecture, which is marked by endless repetition that fails to create distinct 'places'.

## Cypriot Housing Block

This is a typology of "flatted housing" which also emerged in the middle of 20th century with no historical precedent to fall back on (unlike most European cities with a mature urban design). It is characterized by the same patterns of land subdivision in square plots of around 550 m<sup>2</sup>, similar to single housing plots. The freestanding aspect of the individual plots falls within the same zoning planning regulation. The first blocks of flats – much more interesting as housing models – made an appearance in the early 1930s, mainly within the fabric of the older historical parts of the city. They were directly influenced by architectural trends in Europe at the time and were highly successful in adopting and integrating the continuous building frontage system.

# Denmark



Image of middle class mass housing, 1969-1972 (© photo: Claus Bech-Danielsen, 1989)

**Claus Bech-Danielsen**  
Aalborg University



Most of the middle class mass housing in Denmark was built in 1960-1979 as a result of industrialized construction. Two very different typologies were developed: detached houses and multi-storey apartment blocks.

The detached houses are typically privately owned by residents. They are constructed as detached houses with a private garden. This is the most common housing type in Denmark, and it is very popular: 50 per cent of the Danish population lives in a single family house.

The other typology is the multi-storey apartment block from the 1960s and the 1970s. They are typically constructed as large-scale social housing with outdoor spaces designed as common areas. In Denmark, social housing is non-profit housing meant for everyone – including the middle class. However, many of the social housing areas have become derelict and today have a high concentration of low income residents. Approximately 20 per cent of the Danish population lives in social housing.



Image of middle class mass housing in Denmark (© photo: Claus Bech-Danielsen, 2004)

## Parcelhus Home on a plot/ cadastre

A privately owned detached house with a private garden – built in 1960-1979. While they are not appreciated for their aesthetic qualities (neither by the residents themselves nor by residents of other housing types), they are considered functional housing suitable for family life (Bech-Danielsen, C. & Gram-Hanssen, K., 2004. "Home-Building and Identity – the Soul of a House and the Personal Touch" in *Urban Lifescape: Anthology*, Bech-Danielsen, C. et al. (eds.), Aalborg: Aalborg University Publisher, pp. 140-158).

## Ligusterfascister Privet fascists

The word **ligusterfascist** is used derogatively to describe the owners of detached houses who cultivate privacy and are not open to other communities or solidarity. **Liguster** is the name of the plant that creates a hedge around the plots of many Danish single-family houses.

## Pistolgang Pistol hallway

A hallway in a typical MCMH single family house in Denmark. Danish single family houses from the 1960s and 1970s are typically organized with the private spaces (bedrooms and bathroom) in one part of the house, and the kitchen, dining room and living room in the other. The entrance and hallway giving access to the house's private rooms are typically connected at an angle, forming the shape of a pistol (see housing plan below). The word **pistolgang** has a negative connotation, relating to the uniformity of post-war single-family homes – if you've seen one, you've seen them all.



Standardized single family house from the 1960s. Note the hallway shaped as a pistol. (© Claus Bech-Danielsen, Mette Mechlenborg and Marie Stender: *Welcome Home*. Copenhagen, Politikens Forlag, 2018).



# Estonia

**Epp Lankots**

Estonian Academy of Arts



Väike-Õismäe Mass Housing Estate in Tallinn, planned in 1968 and built in 1974–1983. Architects Mart Port and Malle Meelak © Estonian Museum of Architecture

The urgent need to address the housing shortage in the Soviet Union changed course with Nikita Khrushchev's initiative in the late 1950s: the housing question was to be solved by constructing industrially produced prefabricated buildings that would provide every family with a separate flat. The centrally planned system, industry-led economy and state ownership of land made a unified vision of urbanization possible. The large housing estates (built from the 1960s to the 1980s), consisting mostly of state-level mass-produced standard series with certain local variations, were planned according to a unit-based approach on every scale: the districts consisted of **microrayons** (the Soviet equivalent of a neighbourhood unit) with schools, kindergartens, shops, service and entertainment facilities, and state-subsidized flats organized on a square-metre based norm of floor area per person.

During the 1960s-1980s, several hundred central collective farm settlements (**kolkhoz**) were built across Estonia, introducing an urban lifestyle to the countryside. This was enabled by the large-scale Soviet agricultural production: the **kolkhozes** had more economic independence as they were cooperatively owned, and selling meat and dairy products to the large Soviet market helped them to grow into wealthy agricultural enterprises. Built on the site of existing villages, the central settlements developed into communities of about 5,000-10,000 residents. With public buildings at the core of the settlement and the residential area nearby, the workers lived primarily in the apartment buildings, but had gardens and barns on the edge of the settlement. In addition to the standardized apartment buildings, the groups of detached or semi-detached family houses built for the new rural technocratic elite and middle class who were behind the economic success of the **kolkhozes** illustrate how the urban concept that was initially imposed on the villages metamorphosed into that of a garden city. The family dwellings usually formed a rural-living cooperative and featured somewhat larger floor area norms. Many standard designs worked out in state design offices took their inspiration from Scandinavian models, and these buildings are a rare example of the once hoped-for Soviet welfare in the Estonian countryside.

The growth of the second home in Estonia was a by-product of large-scale housing estates: from the 1960s to the 1980s, thousands of small summer houses were built by residents of the mass-produced flats that dotted the areas around the cities. The summer house areas were cooperatively built and served both as sites of subsistence farming and as places for family holidays or weekend getaways. Being self-built and thus different from the mass-produced prefabricated housing, yet also subjected to the floor area limitation (25 m<sup>2</sup> for the garden house and 40 m<sup>2</sup> for the summer cottage), their architecture enabled strategies for creating more enjoyable, liveable and leisurely spaces within restrictive norms. Lightweight A-frame structures became the most iconic form of the summer house in Soviet Estonia, as the sloping walls provided a different spatial experience to the square-cornered city apartment. The summer cottage with a terrace, outdoor fireplace and sauna became a location where the new leisurely lifestyle took root: it reappropriated the reductionist aesthetic of the normative space in order to accommodate the aspirations of middle-class life, with its connotations of idleness and aspiring material self-affirmation.



Summerhouse from the mid-1960s in Kloogaranna, Estonia. Architect Udo Ivask ©Epp Lankots, 2019.

## Floor area

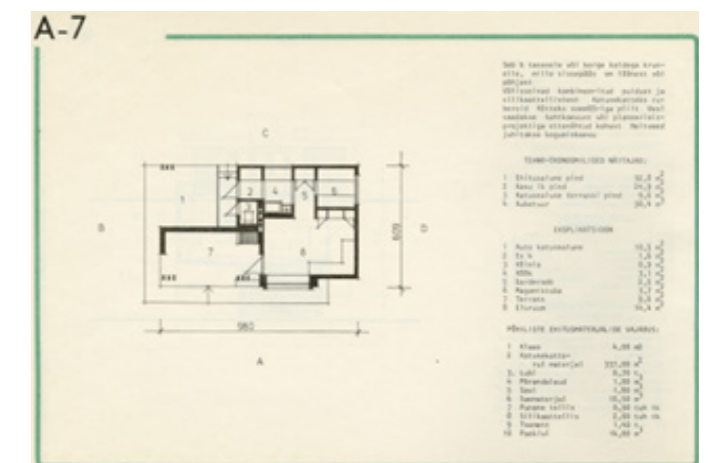
A key concept in Soviet housing programmes in the late 1950s, designating a utopia of social equality to be realized through central planning, standardization and industrialization of construction. Adapted from the pan-European idea of minimum dwelling, the fundamental architectural measure for addressing housing needs in the Soviet Union, including Estonia, stipulated that just nine square metres of liveable "floor area" were required for a satisfying and healthy life. Other terms such as "home" and even "flat" were deemed unduly burdened with connotations of Western "private life", so the term "floor area" was appropriated from technical jargon to replace them. By the end of the 1960s, the "floor area" concept had lost its reformist spirit, as the variety of dwelling types, floor plans and designs initially drawn up in the experimental departments of construction research institutes were cast aside to be superseded by production lines geared to producing only a limited series of standardized sections. Consequently, "floor area" came to stand for the total unification of housing areas across a vast Soviet territory that stretched from the Baltic coast in the west to the Bering Strait in the east.

## Standard design

The basis of all kinds of construction and building activities in the Soviet Union, and its use became especially widespread after the adoption of large panels in the 1960s. In residential architecture, the application of standard design was overwhelmingly dominant. It defined the domestic environment in mass housing estates in the cities, in rural life, in the apartment building or family house, in the collective farm settlement, as well as in the second home or summer house built in extra-urban areas close to the big cities.

## Leisure/recreation

The new family-centred approach to the socialist way of life represented by the new small-size flat (as opposed to earlier utopian ideas about collective living in a communal house), which became vital after Khrushchev's reforms, was a sign of rising living standards in USSR. Another keyword that signalled the rise in material well-being and became rooted in domestic life was leisure. The scientific forecasts of the 1960s prognosed a decline in work and the gradual increase of free time by the year 2000. In spatial terms, this led to a notable shift towards leisure on various scales after the introduction of the five-day work week in Estonia in 1966. The new general plans conceived for larger cities in Estonia during the 1960s and the 1970s planned an extensive green belt around the cities for recreational purposes, where residents of the new mass housing estates could go and enjoy their weekend or long vacation. A detailed nomenclature of leisure buildings and infrastructure to be erected close to the cities (including areas for building summer houses) was established with these plans. The cooperative apartment houses in the cities that were built according to individual designs often featured hobby or wellness rooms for their residents: a table-tennis room or dark room for photo developing in the basement, a Finnish sauna with a party room, or in some cases a roof terrace with a solarium.



The most popular standard design (No A-7) for a summer/gardening house in Estonia with a floor area of 24.9m<sup>2</sup>. Architect Reginald Liiberg, 1966.

# France



City of Sarcelles

**Yankel Fijalkow**  
**Ahmed Benbernou**  
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ENSA Val-en-Seine



In the 19th century, the **pavillon** was a small building made of light materials, erected on a bourgeois estate in a park or garden. It could be used as a shelter or shed, or even as a hunting lodge. Since the beginning of the 20th century, it has referred to a detached house, usually surrounded by a plot of land, found in rural areas or in certain suburbs of large cities. Since 1977, government subsidies have made it easier for middle-class households with two children to buy a house. These **pavillons** became known as **chalandonnettes**, deriving their name from the government minister Albin Chalandon, one of the first supporters of this cheap and average-quality construction formula. The construction of houses in industrial series thus spread in housing estates of several thousand hectares.



Image of middle class housing

## HLM

Abbreviation for **Habitation à Loyer Modéré**. According to the dictionary definition, these are 'low-cost or medium-rent buildings reserved for people of modest means, built in part with the help of state subsidies and, as such, subject to appropriate regulations'. The 1950-1975 period of HLM saw the mass construction of large housing estates and a social mix in housing, during which the middle and working classes cohabited. This ceased when government subsidies allowed the middle classes to leave the HLM. Emblematic project: Sarcelles.

## Grands ensembles Large housing estates

"The large-scale housing project thus appears as a relatively autonomous housing unit made up of collective buildings, built in a fairly short period of time, according to an overall plan which includes more than 1,000 dwellings. Theoretically, the numerous inorganic conglomerates formed by the coalescence, fortuitous or otherwise, of several small juxtaposed real estate operations would be excluded from these large-scale housing complexes, intended as such." (G. Lacoste, geographer, 1963)

## Chalandonnette

The moniker of **chalandonnette** designates a vast, dense complex of individual houses built in series, within the framework of a competition launched in 1969 by the Minister for Infrastructure, Albin Chalandon. The diminutive expresses houses of low value, corresponding to a negative view of the middle classes and the ambition of the state towards them: hence, **sam'suffit** (that's enough for me).

## Sam'suffit

Sam'suffit (that's enough for me), a very common expression.



(©Région Rhône-Alpes, Inventaire général du patrimoine culturel)

## The Castors

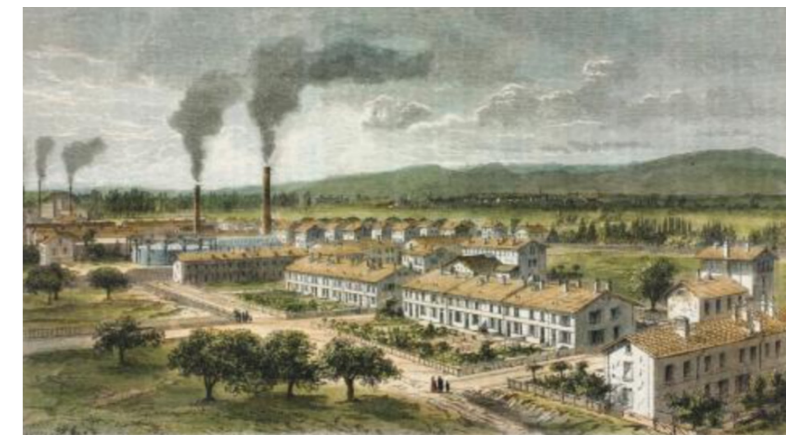
After 1945, the Castors (Beavers) movement, corresponding to a series of popular initiatives, emerged outside the institutions. In the midst of the housing crisis, families living in slums or young couples obliged to live with their parents got together and bought land to build on. Thanks to the collective work done during their free time, the financial weakness of the partners was no longer an obstacle. Each person paid for his or her house at the cost price and a solidarity fund for the work helped those in difficulties. By meeting and comparing their experiences, sometimes in conjunction with political and religious groups, sites were created, such as in Pessac in the Bordeaux suburbs, Montreuil in the Paris region, and Rezé in the Nantes suburbs.



Mulhouse's workers' city (©wiki commons)

## Employers' housing

In the 19th century, employers' housing corresponded to the workers' housing built by large companies to accommodate their workers. In Mulhouse and Le Creusot, these consisted of small houses surrounded by a garden. However, the workers had to move out when they left the company. In order to leave this paternalistic system behind and to provide social protection, a 1957 law created the 1% employers' contribution, or 1% housing contribution, paid each year by private sector and agricultural companies with more than 50 employees. The sums collected were used to finance social housing, particularly large housing complexes.



Mulhouse's workers' city (©wiki commons)



# Germany



Neighborhood in Bremen, Germany, 1955-57 (© photo: Lisa Kaufmann, 2023).

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In the early 1950s, Germany experienced a massive housing shortage. Because of wartime destruction, mostly in the inner cities, two different approaches to housing emerged: mass housing surrounded by vast greenery in urban or suburban areas, and single-family homes as row or detached houses. The Allied occupation powers supported the economy and the housing sector through the so-called Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program).

Starting with **Zeilenbau** – multifamily residential buildings in linear alignment, with two to four storeys and a saddle roof – mass housing soon evolved into more organic forms and differentiating heights. Large housing estates with high-rise buildings on the periphery became the dominant symbol and characterized urban planning of the 1960s to 1980s. They consisted of functionally independent multi-storey buildings, built in a short time period, with high density and at least 1,000 housing units.



Middle Class Mass Housing in Germany © Lutz Kleinhans, 1965

## Gliederung und Auflockerung Structuring and loosening up

In 1957, Göderitz, Rainer and Hoffmann published an urban development model ("Die gegliederte und aufgelockerte Stadt") which became the most influential model in the FRG and GDR for post-war urban planning. The city was structured in different usage areas (production, housing, leisure, traffic) with a centre for administration, education, and shopping. In between the different areas, green corridors were meant to connect the city with nearby recreational areas.

## Urbanität durch Dichte Urbanity through density

Soon after the first settlements of the **Gliederung und Auflockerung** era were constructed, critiques emerged regarding their monofunctionally, monotonous appearance and suburban perception. Through higher density, height, and more utilization possibilities, the urban feeling of newly constructed settlements was increased. The faith in technical progress and material wealth was unwavering. Prefabricated elements were used on a large scale and the different usages were intertwined.

## Plattenbau Plate building

Buildings that consist of precast concrete parts for walls and ceilings. Especially in the GDR, the so-called **Platte** was a common sight and sought after. Whole new cities emerged with this construction method – as seen in Halle-Neustadt. Some of these projects were social housing (e.g. Berlin-Gropiusstadt) while others combined living, working and leisure time as a modern approach to housing (München-Neuperlach and other satellite cities).



Thought bubble reads: "Actually, I wouldn't mind a bit of gentrification". Below: "Somewhere in Germany".

# Greece

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Image of middle class mass housing in Greece (<https://www.lifo.gr/now/athens/i-athinaiki-polykatoikia-zei-ti-diki-tis-stigma>). Typical Athenian polykatoikies.

Between the 1950s and the 1980s, the majority of middle class inhabitants in Greece lived in **polykatoikia** apartments. The **polykatoikia** (multi-residence) is a building type produced mainly through the system of **antiparochi** (in exchange), a quid-pro-quo arrangement whereby a landowner offers their plot to a contractor in exchange for a number of apartments (usually two or three) in the **polykatoikia** built by the contractor on the plot. Because of the small size of plots in Athens, as well as the low-tech building techniques applied by the contractors of that era, the **polykatoikia** evolved to become a small condominium, a mid-rise concrete-frame building type.

Although the **polykatoikia** is a massive form of middle class housing in Greece, there are no mass housing complexes (physical building masses) destined for the middle class which are produced by a single firm or developer. Exceptions are large-scale **polykatoikies**, like the one portrayed in image 2, designed by the esteemed architect Alexandros Tombazis and the building company Difros, with clear metabolist and brutalist influences, of the 1960s to 1980s. They consisted of functionally independent multi-storey buildings, built in a short time period, with high density and at least 1,000 housing units.



An exceptional form of middle class mass housing (©[http://www.culture2000.tee.gr/ATHENS/GREEK/BUILDINGS/BUILD\\_TEXTS/B155\\_1.html](http://www.culture2000.tee.gr/ATHENS/GREEK/BUILDINGS/BUILD_TEXTS/B155_1.html)). Alexandros Tombazis, polykatoikia at Ag.Varvara, Attica, 1971-9175

## Akalyptos

A mandatory open space at the back of each **polykatoikia** that is meant to be planted, so as to create a favourable microclimate both for the building and for the building block (the result of this regulatory provision is an irregular-shaped open space, of dubious merit, in the middle of each building block).

## Antiparochi

The system through which the **polykatoikia** proliferated; a quid-pro-quo arrangement between a landowner and a contractor, whereby the landowner turned over his/her plot in exchange for a number of apartments in the **polykatoikia** to be built on the plot by the contractor.

## Ergolaviko Constructor's contract

The signed contract between the landowner and the contractor in which the contractor "undertook" the obligation of carrying out the works of constructing a **polykatoikia** on the landowner's tract of land, under mutually agreed terms.

## Polykatoikia

A typical mid-rise apartment building.

## Typiki katopsi Typical apartment plan

This was the floor plan illustrated in the **ergolaviko**, produced by the contractor to facilitate the agreement with the landowner as well as to indicate the square metres to be given to each party (landowner and contractor). However, in practice, this plan was rarely realized as the owners of the apartments usually bought them off-the-plans and asked for many changes, to adapt them to their different lifestyles.

## Diari, triari, tessari Two-room, three-room, four-room apartment

Apartments of the built **polykatoikias** were advertised and culturally evaluated by the number of rooms they had, rather than by their surface area (sqm) or their arrangement and interior design. A "three-room apartment" meant that an apartment had two bedrooms and a living room. This was socially more relevant than referring to the square metres. No matter how small the rooms were, a four- or five-room apartment was a symbol of social status.

## Retiré

A top-level setback at a **polykatoikia** building, determined by law to ensure efficient lighting and ventilation at the street level. The term also refers to the penthouse located on the setback level, which, due to its privileged position, became a sign of urban affluence for its owners and renters.



# Hungary

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Havana housing estate built by prefab technology in the 18th district of Budapest in the second half of the 1970s (© photo: Tamás Egedy, 2017)

In Hungary, the first housing-estate type neighbourhoods appeared before World War I. These early estates were garden-city type compounds with, primarily, small dwellings built for the working class. In the interwar period, several barrack estates of low quality were built in order to ease the housing shortage and provide shelter for Hungarian refugees expelled from the neighbouring countries. Housing estates meeting modern criteria appeared in Hungary only after World War II. Housing estates in the 1950s were usually developed on sites close to the inner city which had already been provided with public utilities or were easily accessible. In 1960, the so-called 15-year housing development programme was launched in Hungary and the principles of modernist architecture and standardization in housing construction became commonplace.

The peak of housing construction in Hungary during state socialism was reached in the 1970s due to the spread of prefabricated technology. Housing estate development concentrated mainly on the periphery and unurbanized areas of Budapest and other larger regional centres.

In the 1980s, thanks to efforts to "humanize" the environment of housing estates, planners managed to break through the schematism characterizing the estates in the previous decades. In the beginning of the 1990s, the construction of housing estates ceased in Hungary and a new era of development started in the housing market with the mushrooming of residential parks.



Typical housing estate buildings from the 1960s (right) and the 1970s (left) – József Attila Housing Estate in 9th district of Budapest (© photo: Tamás Egedy, 2017)

## Lakótelep Housing estate

In the beginning of the 1980s, a housing estate was defined as part of a municipality, usually bounded by roads, with a group of dwellings forming a coherent unit. It had to contain at least one electoral district and have a separate name. In the second half of the decade, a different definition was adopted: a housing estate was defined as a form of housing development based on a single plan, built in an organized way, usually based on a standard plan containing multi-storey dwellings on common plots. In the 1990s, the concept of housing estates became much simpler: they were defined as a group of medium- and high-rise blocks of flats, mostly built using prefabricated technology.

## Panel

In the vernacular and in everyday life, the word panel is often used to refer to housing estates, regardless of the construction technology and the age of the estate.



Gloriette housing estate built in the second half of the 1980s in the 18th district of Budapest (© Tamás Egedy, 2017)

# Israel

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Arieh Sharon, Dov Karmi, Ram Karmi, Benjamin Idelson, Isaac Melzer, Be'eri Estate, Tel Aviv, 1965



## (New) Brutalism

In the Israeli context the term "Brutalism" is identified in both professional and popular discourse with Team 10 inspired critiques of Brutalism - namely with New Brutalism - while the Brutalist architecture of the 1950s-1960s, primarily mass housing in new development towns, is identified with the Hebrew term Shikun (literally housing). While the historiography of Israeli architecture of the New Brutalist generation identifies the ethical aspects of European Team 10 discourse and their influence on local Team 10 architecture, scholars, architects, and the public have largely identified the introduction of New Brutalism as the introduction of high architecture and mixed-use architecture into Shikun mass housing, distinguishing it with the term "Brutalism" as shorthand.

A remarkable example is Beit Be'eri, a New Brutalist single-shared housing estate built in Tel Aviv in 1965 on a full urban block, and cooperatively managed by 192 families since its opening. A living example of a long-lasting community for over fifty years, the estate is a local interpreta-



BYOH, Ramot Neighborhood, Be'er Sheva (© photo: Eddau, Wikimedia Commons, 2012).

tion of New Brutalist ethical call to plan the city as a big house, and the house as a small city. Designed by a team of noted Israeli architects including Ari-eh Sharon, Dov Karmi, Ram Karmi, Benjamin Idelson, Isaac Melzer, and landscape architects Lipa Yahalom and Dan Zur, Be'eri employs explicit New Brutalist design principles.

## Build Your Own House (BYOH)

Build Your Own House (**Bne-Betcha**) is an Israeli mass-housing policy and practice introduced following the 1977 regime change, that was significant for the middle classes. It granted access to suburban one-two story single-family dwellings, for citizens who had previously resided in mass housing apartment buildings (shikunim - see New Brutalism entry above). A significant amount of BYOH MCMH were introduced into Development Towns, characterized by a lower-middle class population of Mizrahi origin, and improving the latter's dwelling standards was a major goal of BYOH. Land cost and infrastructure were formally assigned to the residents yet were in fact financed by the state, therefore making this a

public housing project. Between 1980-1989, 4284 housing units were added to development towns alone, and as a policy BYOH has endured and continued to be applied across Israel.

## Large Urban Developments (LUDs)

Large urban developments (LUDs) have been driving contemporary neoliberal urban housing development worldwide, marked by scholarly and public discourses on the transition from housing as a basic civil right to housing as an investment channel and financial good. Compared with state housing or with mass housing estates for the working classes in market conditions, which portray a reality of replicated, uniform dwelling units in repetitive residential buildings and neighbourhoods - LUDs geared at the middle classes tend to fulfil the free market promise of variety and multiple choice. The corresponding relationship between design elements, design processes, and entrepreneurial marketing decision-making points to the cardinal role of architectural design in characterizing, financing, licensing, and marketing LUDs, labelling them as unique—rather than uniform—developments compared with 'regular' neighbourhoods.

## LUD's Large Urban Developments

Developments that have been prevalent in Israel since the 1990s, characterized by a functional goal to provide variety in apartment types and neighbourhood amenities and an aesthetic image focused on creating variety and "uniqueness."



LUD, Kika Braz Architects, Herzliya Hills, Herzliya. (© photo: Kika Braz Architects).

## Shikun

A mass housing apartment building development in Israeli towns, initiated following the establishment of the state in 1948.

## Bne-Betcha Build Your Own House

A mass housing building development consisting of single-family dwellings with a garden, initiated following the 1977 change of regime.

# Italy



Image of middle class mass housing, Piazza Pitagora, Turin (© photo: Michela Pace, 2012)

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The entrance to middle-class apartment buildings became a distinctive feature in the production of a new housing environment for the emerging urban middle class in Italy, between the 1950s and 1970s. Professionals and builders were able to interpret the aspirations and desires of Italian families through the design of richly finished representative spaces on the ground floor. These semi-private communal areas became transitional spaces between the public realm of the street and the private sphere of the apartments.



Image of middle class mass housing (© photo: Michela Pace, 2012)

This urban district of apartment buildings on the outskirts of a major industrial city was built for an emerging urban middle class between the 1950s and the 1970s. Multiple developers, professionals, institutions and cooperatives, with their diverse rationales and agencies, operated in the urban sector and contributed to the mass construction of this fragmented residential environment, leaving lasting traces on the contemporary city.

## Atrio Entrance hall

A distinctive feature in Italian middle-class collective housing, the atrio conferred an exclusive status to the building and helped to differentiate it from housing solutions for the lower classes, where the spaces of the ground floor were intensively exploited. Richly decorated with prestigious finishes, this representative space acquired a symbolic value in the residents' quest for social status and offered architects an exceptional ground for experimenting with new solutions. Once equipped with a porter's lodge where the doorman used to live and work, this semi-public transitional space has today lost much of its original relevance, and presents excessive maintenance costs for the dwellers.

## Economica Economic

One of the three levels of a housing classification that was commonly used in Italy during the middle decades of the 20th century, the other two being **popolare** (popular) and **di lusso** (luxury). This intermediate category ambiguously designated the average housing production, promoted by a plurality of actors (public agencies, housing cooperatives, private developers) and usually made up of housing complexes intended for middle-class home ownership. Public subsidies for housing, generally destined for **edilizia economica e popolare** (economic and popular housing), ensured financial support for the construction of this residential stock.

## Parco Park

The word Park is referred to a residential park. The Park differs from the Condominium. While the Condominium is usually one building with several apartments, the Park contains several housing buildings generally of 7/8 levels together with, sometimes, single or semi-detached houses. The Park is characterized by a border fence with an entry gate and an inner space which can be organized in gardens, paths, parking lots, and other residential's utilities.

## Condominium Condo

The Condominium refers to one or more housing buildings with some common spaces such as the Entrance Hall, the Doorman Room, Doorman Apartment, main staircase, service staircase, service spaces, parking spaces, and others. A middle class condominium is characterised by a larger number of common spaces in relation to the working class condominium building.

## Residence

This term was ambiguously used in Italy to refer to both "the apartment hotel providing fully furnished and serviced residential spaces for temporary use", and "the housing complexes for the middle classes that were advertised as exclusive and/or equipped with various residential amenities". The potentially flexible use of this English term helps to explain its fate in the Italian vocabulary of post-WWII middle-class housing, where it was often associated with residential schemes that evoked images of upper-class lifestyle and modern comfort. Housing complexes dubbed as "residences" were typically found in major cities, but also proliferated in seaside and mountain resorts, as part of the postwar boom of investment on second homes.

## Salotto/Soggiorno/Sala da pranzo Living room/Sitting room/Dining room

The three words refer to the spaces of the house for daily family life and reception. Salotto is more connected with the action of sitting, while the Soggiorno, as the word 'giorno' (trans. day/morning) said, is the place where the family spends the daylight part of their life. The two words are generally used as synonyms. In that spaces, there is the sofa for sitting, the tv, sometimes the library of the house and a studio. The Sala da Pranzo instead is the place where the family has lunch or dinner not daily but just on special occasions or with guests. The Sala da Pranzo can be a single room or just an area with a large table and chairs in the Soggiorno/Salotto. In that case, the Soggiorno/Salotto is organized like an open space with different furniture in order to have more than one spacial use.



# Lithuania

**Marija Drėmaitė**  
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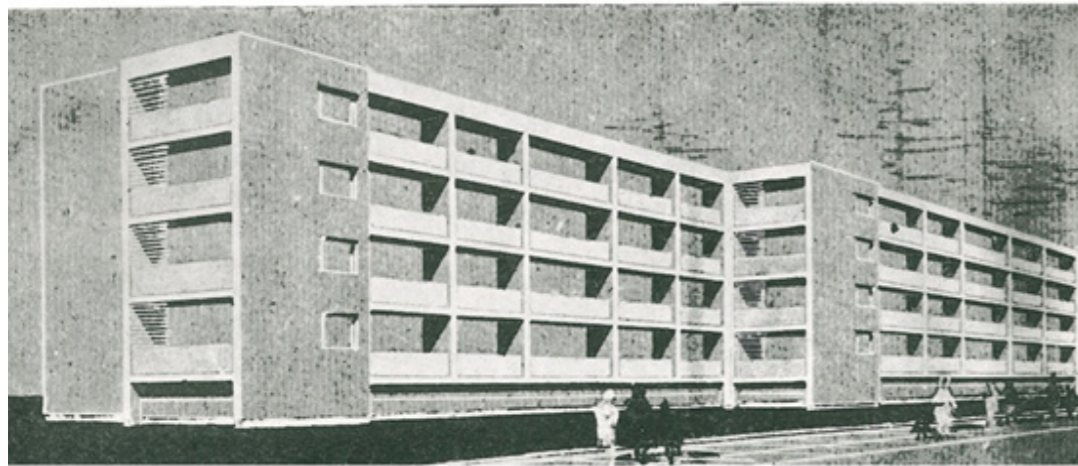
House-building co-operative for artists "Art", 28 row houses, after construction (north façade), Šilo g. 29, Vilnius, 1975, personal archive of architect Algimantas Mačiulis

## Kooperatinis namas / kooperatinis butas Co-operative house / co-operative apartment

Co-operative apartment arrangements (ZhSK) in the entire Soviet Union meant that residents could contribute their own funds to housing construction, thereby shortening their time on the waiting list and securing the opportunity to build an apartment that was larger than what may have been allocated to them according to standard regulations. Housing co-operatives operated on the basis of a group of households sharing the cost of the down payment for an apartment block, and taking out state credits of 60 to 70 per cent, repayable over 10 to 20 years at an interest rate of 0.5 per cent. Co-operative apartments were seen as markers of material success. From a social perspective, the process of co-operative housing construction accelerated the concentration of more affluent urban dwellers that could, conditionally, be considered the Soviet middle-class.



House-building co-operative for architects, 24 row houses, architect Algirdas Kaušpėdas, Plieno Street, Kaunas, 1985. Photo: Česlovas Mazūras, 1985, personal archives of Mazūras



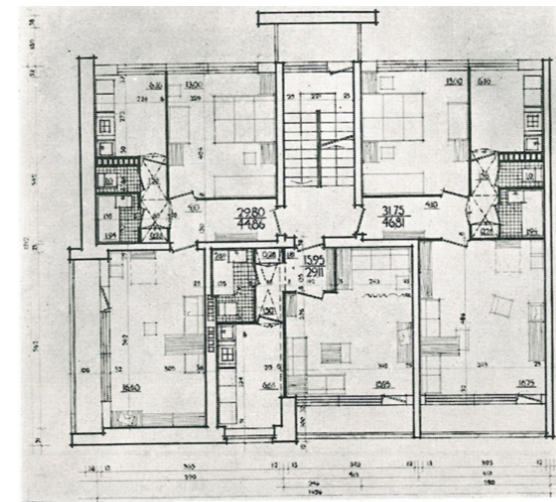
Design for a house-building co-operative of 20 improved apartments, architect Algimantas Umbrasas, Vilnius State Urban Planning Design Institute, 1966: façade. The house would be built of red and yellow brick with coloured loggias. Source: *Statyba ir architektūra*, 1966, No. 8, p. 27-28]

## Pagerintas planavimas Improved design

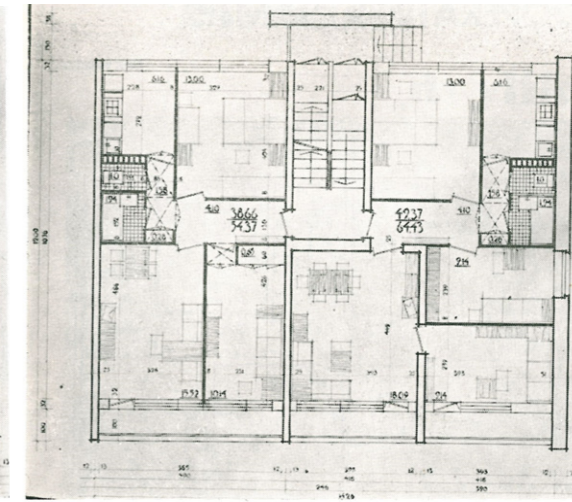
The increasing demand for custom designs from house-building co-operatives led urban planners and construction officials to create custom designs for improved apartments. Such a decision seemed like a smart compromise between standard and custom designs in the context of a rigid economy that controlled housing design in the Soviet Union. Better planned apartment units contained extra utility space, larger kitchens, and the opportunity to fit out more rooms than the standard 9-metre per person norm. Better houses were built of better materials (brick instead of large prefabricated panels) and had better finishes.

## Sublokuoti namai Row houses

Rows of row houses of two or three floors with separate entrances, fireplaces and halls were an exceptional house type, mostly available only to members of official creative societies (Union of Artists, Union of Composers) or house-building co-operatives established by the creative societies.



20 butų gyvenamasis namas, Sekcija 2—1—2



20 butų gyvenamasis namas, Sekcija 3—4

Design for a house-building co-operative of 20 improved apartments, architect Algimantas Umbrasas, Vilnius State Urban Planning Design Institute, 1966: (a) façade; (b) section floor plan with three apartments (1-room, 2-room, 1-room); (c) a section floor plan with two apartments (3 and 4 rooms). In the house, the plan specified four 1-room apartments, four 3-room apartments, four 4-room apartments and eight 2-room apartments, which were the most popular. The house would be built of red and yellow brick with coloured loggias. Source: *Statyba ir architektūra*, 1966, No. 8, p. 27-28]



# Montenegro

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Image of middle class mass housing (© photo: Luka Zeković, 2023)

Houses were built for the most part in suburban settlements, mostly of stone or concrete blocks, with a brick roof. They were usually inhabited by one family, or several families with separate entrances or floors. Most of the owners designed their houses themselves. Such houses usually had a kitchen, living room and two bedrooms, with a vegetable garden outside.

Social equality was one of the basic principles of every conception of socialism, including the Yugoslav one, and it sought to manifest itself in the sphere of housing, an important area of everyday life. Urbanism and the spatial economy of socialist cities relied on the redistributive power of the party elite, whose primary goal was to spatially depict the classless character of socialist society. This resulted in the absence of spatial stratification to the extent that was present in capitalist societies, where housing characteristics were a reflection of income opportunities.

Buildings for mass housing were therefore at the same time a place of living for working families, families of administrative workers, artisans, as well as families of experts and managers. The buildings had parking, gardens with green areas and playgrounds for children.

The post-socialist period brought changes in the area of housing. Social stratification, as an important feature of the post-socialist stage, was also reflected in space. With the establishment of the real estate market, some neighbourhoods began to stand out – those where housing units were mainly affordable to members of the middle and upper classes. Spatial stratification is especially evident in these newly built neighbourhoods. A characteristic of these neighbourhoods is that they do not have enough parking spaces and hardly any green areas or playgrounds for children.



Image of middle class mass housing (© photo: Luka Zeković, 2023)

## Društveni stan Community apartment

The increasing demand for custom designs from house-building co-operatives led urban planners and construction officials to create custom designs for improved apartments. Such a decision seemed like a smart compromise between standard and custom designs in the context of a rigid economy that controlled housing design in the Soviet Union. Better planned apartment units contained extra utility space, larger kitchens, and the opportunity to fit out more rooms than the standard 9-metre per person norm. Better houses were built of better materials (brick instead of large prefabricated panels) and had better finishes.



Image of middle class housing (© photo: Goran Čeranić, 2021)

## Stambeni fond Housing fund

The state or company fund for providing apartments to employees. Funding from the state budget was replaced by funding from companies that set aside a housing contribution in order to take care of housing for their employees.

## Stanarsko pravo Tenancy right

A way of solving the housing problem. The employee obtains a right of occupancy by being assigned an apartment by the company. The apartment assigned to the employee is not his or her property, but has the status of state property – that is, the formal owner of the apartment is the company that assigns the employee the apartment, or the municipality. The employee pays a symbolic rent and after a certain period of time has the right to move to a different apartment.

# The Netherlands

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Delft University of Technology



Image of middle class mass housing: Bijlmermeer, Amsterdam (© photo: Hans Peters via Wikimedia Commons, 1974)



The suburban low-rise neighbourhood is the 'ideal' of the Dutch middle class. After WWII, a series of planning concepts were implemented on a national level: post-war expansion districts (1945-1965), Groeikernen (1965-1985), and Vinex districts (1995-2005). Middle-class families of successive generations moved into these (once) new neighbourhoods, leaving the city for "huisje, boompje, beestje" (house, tree, animal), a Dutch saying meaning the bourgeois life in a house with a garden, children and pets.

Although the majority of the Dutch population (64%) lives in a single-family home, 'mass housing' in Dutch refers to multifamily homes, in mid-rise or high-rise blocks in repetitive urban 'stamp' patterns. Especially in the post-WWII period, high numbers of repetitive high-rise flats were developed in city expansion areas.



Image of middle class housing: Almere-Haven, Almere (© photo: stadsarchief Almere, 1980)

## Portiek Walk-up access and apartment

The word **portiek** can be used for the access typology (central staircase providing access to six or eight apartments), the physical space ('let's meet in the **portiek**') or the people living in the apartments around the **portiek** ('a barbecue for our **portiek**'). So, it can refer to a concept, a space or a community.



Portiek entrance, Rotterdam (© Lidwine Spoomans, 2021)

## Boerderette Size

The word first appeared on 24 November 1980 in a newspaper article of the **Volkscrant** by journalist B. Hn -probably Bert Haveman, and was later used in comic texts and sketches by writer and artist Wim T. Schippers. Since the late 1990's 'boerderette' appeared in texts and policies on urban planning and architecture. For estate agents, the term describes a commercial style type that has visual similarities to a farmhouse ('boerderij' in Dutch). However, in the architectural discourse the term refers to a distasteful 'tacky' type of catalog house. The archetypal appearance of the 'boerderette' is described by historian Ileen Montijn (**Naar buiten!**, 2002, p 175) as follows: 'a small villa of white brick with wolf ends to the gray, glazed tiled roof, and underneath a slightly protruding window that extends from the first floor to the second floor. In several places, the house has arches (a window, an entryway) that should perhaps recall stall doors.' However, it can have also a pink, red or yellow façade. All sorts of attributes that people associate with farm life, like a wagon wheel as a fence or ceiling light or a milk can as an umbrella stand or mailbox, make the 'boerderette' recognisable.

## Doorzonwoning Sun-through house

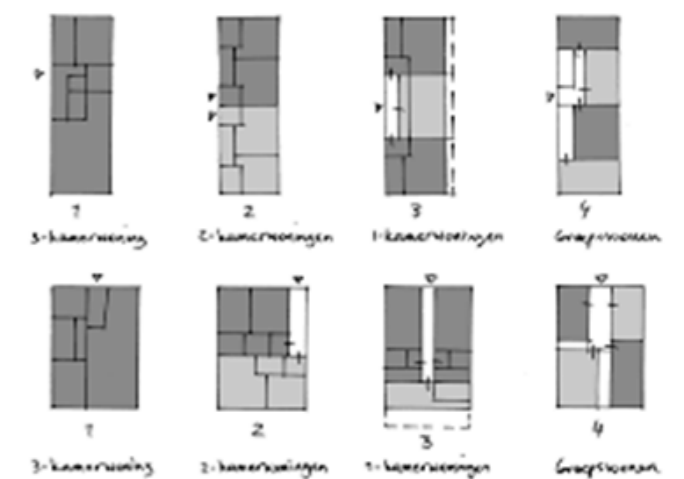
In this house type, the living room on the ground floor extends from front to back. Both the street facade and the garden facade have a large window through which the sun shines in abundantly (**doorzon**). This house type is so common in the Netherlands that it also refers to the average family, 'de familie Doorzon', which is also the name of a Dutch comic strip.

## Beukmaat Nave size

The **beukmaat** is an all-important measure in Dutch housing because it determines the house type, access typology, car parking grid, construction method, possible number of rooms and living quality. Especially for terraced houses, the optimization in Dutch house building has led to a standardized (4.8/5.1/5.4/6.0 m), but minimal, **beukmaat**.

## Volkshuisvesting Housing the population

In the Netherlands, the national government plays a leading role in spatial planning through a series of ministerial policy documents. Although in recent years more is 'left to the market', the government has significant influence on housing policy (compared to other Western European countries) due to subsidy programmes and active land policy. These planning policies include housing for the entire population (not just public housing).



Study by Martin Liebrechts and Sandra Arts, mapping 'beukmaat' and plan possibilities

# North Macedonia

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Housing Development Karposh I and II, Skopje Housing development Karposh I and II in Skopje from the 1960s (© photo: wikipedia.org, author and year unknown).



At the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, due to an accelerated birth rate and the migration of the rural population to urban centres, the rising housing demand was met with the planning and construction of large housing developments, which contained a wide programme of buildings covering commercial, educational, social, cultural and recreational needs.

In the major Skopje earthquake of 1963, approximately 80 per cent of the existing housing stock was either destroyed or deemed unsuitable for living. To cover the urgent housing needs, settlements with prefabricated homes were built on green-field locations. These prefabricated homes became the prevailing form of mass housing.

The plan was for these prefabricated houses to be replaced, within a period of twenty years, by housing developments of higher densities with towers and slabs. The popularity of living in a single house with a yard completely changed the initial plans, and permission for building additions or completely new buildings with two to four levels was granted, retaining the existing layouts of the settlements.

Following the dissatisfaction with the planning of housing developments according to modernist models from the early 1960s, other planning approaches were introduced, including the separation of different modes of traffic, pedestrian streets as core elements of the design layout, physical preconditions for a higher degree of social interaction, etc.



Emergency Housing Settlements built after the 1963 earthquake, Skopje. Source: Private Archive, Author unknown, ca. mid 1960s

## **Objekti od opshtestven standard** Social standard facilities

So-called extended housing facilities. In the urban planning model that was adopted and developed after WWII, in each housing area of 5,000-6,000 inhabitants, according to officially accepted standards, these facilities were planned and developed with green generators, schools and local centres. Social standard facilities included green areas, open sports fields, playgrounds, kindergartens, recreation areas, as well as pedestrian and vehicular carriage-ways, parking in underground garages and parking lots at ground level.

## **Salon or Gostinska soba** Salon or guest room

The concept of 'salon' as a guest reception room in larger houses or apartments echoed the bourgeois concept of the salon as a room fitted out with the best furniture and other accessories, where the family received guests and sought to display their social status and well-being. This was related to an earlier way of life, where the kitchen served as the main living space and family hub due to problems with heating, running water, etc., while the living room was sacrificed for representational purposes. This was especially the case in the 1950s before new concepts and contemporary tendencies of modernist architecture were introduced and advertised through special exhibitions such as **Family and Household**, aimed at changing living habits by changing the living environment.



Housing Development Jane Sandanski / Aerodrom, Skopje (© BIMAS 2, 1983)

## **Baraka or Montazhna kukja** Barrack or prefabricated house

A single-family prefabricated multi-bedroom house with a yard and garage, which was massively introduced as emergency housing after the earthquake of 1963 in Skopje. Although originally planned as a temporary urgent solution to the housing needs of people left homeless, these prefabricated houses became popular working- and middle-class single-family houses with a yard, enabling modifications and additions to the initial plan, and transforming them into permanent buildings.



# Portugal

**Leonor Matos Silva**  
ISCTE-IUL



Middle-class building by Fernando Silva in the suburbs of Lisbon, 1968. Street view (© Lisbon city council archives)

This is a multi-family building designed in the 1960s by architect Fernando Silva, located on what was then the outskirts of the city of Lisbon. This building, overlooked among a group of his works specifically devoted to mass housing, questions the Portuguese middle-class concept. Although, at the time, the building was designed for the middle/upper class, today it is unquestionably middle-class oriented, based on reference factors such as a stable income, high level of education, and a self-owned place of residence.



Middle-class building by Fernando Silva in the suburbs of Lisbon, 2022 (© Leonor Matos Silva)

### **Placa** Plate

Informal term for reinforced concrete slab, used by estate agents and middle-class house buyers.

### **Marquise** From the French marquise

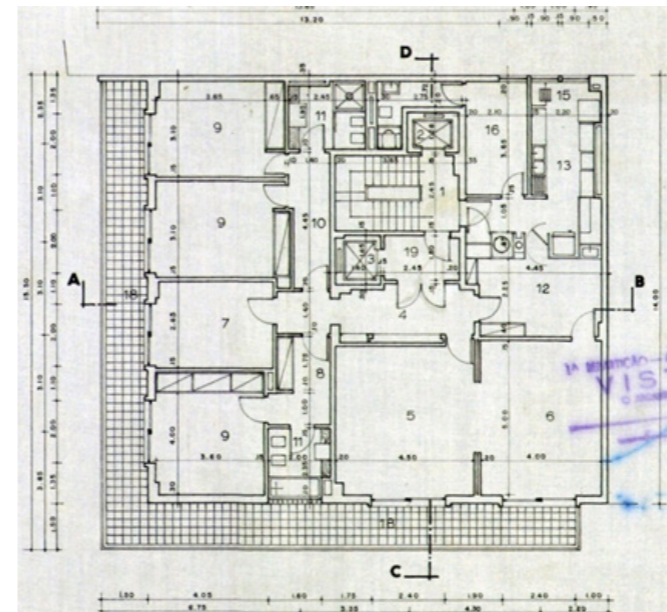
Glazed structure typically used to protect verandas, often seen in middle-class buildings in the suburbs.

### **Elevador social/monta cargas** Social elevator/freight elevator

A separate elevator for a domestic worker or other specific functions, to avoid using the main entrance to the house. The expression "social elevator" may be understood in the literal sense or used figuratively, to mean "elevation" from a different social class.

### **Quarto da empregada** Domestic worker's room/bedroom

A small room/bedroom specifically designed for a live-in worker (usually a woman).



Middle-class building by Fernando Silva in the suburbs of Lisbon, 1960s. Floor plan (© Lisbon city council archives)

# Serbia



Middle class housing (© photo: Žana Stevanović, 06.09.2020)

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## Concepts of urban planning during the period of 1970s and 1980s and now

The members of the MCMH group emphasized the use of public roads and various structures in their urban studies. The overall profile of each complex's design highlighted the need to accommodate the growing population and goods in the urban region.

The role of urban planning in achieving sustainable urban development is discussed in article by Shirin Toghyani and Fereshte Ahmedi and it involves the design and construction of physical structures that will improve the living conditions in cities. During the 1970 and 1980s, the goal of urban planning was to classify the land into urban regions.

The concept of urban planning is a vital part of the process of achieving sustainable urban development. It involves the planning of physical structures such as roads to meet the objectives of the cities. This process was carried out through the use of traffic planning. This technique was very effective in helping to move goods and services in an efficient manner.

The designs of Rudo presented by Vera Ćirković group during the 1970s were characterized by their utilization of large public roads in a city of Belgrade. Their preference for heavy concert structures was also apparent. The various complex designs by the group were characterized by the use of public roads, which served as the ideal solution for accommodating the many people and goods moving through the cities. Their urban designs also featured the use of concert structures, which is referred to as a "brutal beauty style".

The construction of various types of buildings during the 1970 and 1980s occurred in social environments, which allowed these structures to meet the varying social and economic needs of different communities. Milica Jovanović and coauthors specified in "National brochures" that most of Belgrade's apartments had square footages of less than 70 square meters during this period.

Lisa Mummery and Mat Santamouris talk about the different causes of urban heat in their book. Ecological planning is important when it comes to developing a project, as it involves considering factors such as the building's surroundings and functions. The authors discuss the various causes of climate change and their mitigation strategies. This concept is an integral part of any urban development project's planning process. It involves considering the building's environmental and structural characteristics, as well as the surrounding area. Aside from focusing on these aspects, it also tackles the other elements that are linked to climate change. Urban planning is a process utilized by cities to improve the quality of life within their communities and ecological planning is a vital part of any project's development, as it involves taking into consideration the building's functions and surroundings.

The law stipulates that private property, as well as state property, is different from an endowment. In this context, the right to property in such areas is regarded as private. It includes the right to use, to maintain, and to privacy. On the other hand, state property, which is commonly used for schools, kindergartens, and nursing homes, is considered to be public

Multi-storey collective residential buildings in planned housing estates, inside or outside the city centre, were typical cases of middle class mass housing in Serbia. During the studied period, middle class mass housing was collective housing. These housing estates were planned and the construction was financed from the budget of socially-owned enterprises, the state budget, the municipal budget, etc., according to the politics of self-management. The socially-owned housing fund consisted, in a certain percentage, of allocations from the salaries of all employees.

Middle Class housing was represented in Serbia, during the period of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as freestanding family houses built by the homeowners. It was possible to take a home loan from a bank for buying a plot and constructing the house. Thus created housing units compensated for the lack of apartments built by socially-owned housing funds.



Middle class housing (© photo: Marija Milinković, 2021)

## Kolektivno stanovanje Collective housing

Planned housing settlements and residential buildings with different types of apartments, as family units. Collective housing did not imply collective living in buildings, like in student dormitories, boarding schools or pensions. The units were independent of each other, but the entrance, staircase, elevator, corridors, attic, drying room, laundry etc., were common areas of the building. The open spaces in these settlements, which were socially owned, were planned and designed as an inseparable part of the housing estates, together with various facilities of social standard, such as schools, kindergartens, sports centres, etc.

## Stanarsko pravo Occupancy right

The collective housing estates were planned and the construction was financed from the budget of socially-owned enterprises, the state budget, the municipal budget, etc. Although the buildings were socially owned, the tenants were occupancy right holders and they had the right to use the apartments for the rest of their lives.

# Slovakia

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Paneláky, Trnava city, Slovakia (© photo: Barbora Čakovská, 2022)



In Central and Eastern Europe, housing estates are being sufficiently modified. They have a good social mix and are home to residents from all walks of life – from the poorest to the highest earners (Rowlands et al. 2009: 10). However, it was typical in Czechoslovak settlements for different people to live together in the same house: a professor together with a worker or bus driver (Musil 1985: 61).

Mass housing construction began in 1948 with the so-called masonry buildings made of solid fired brick with the application of prefabricated elements (ceiling slabs, lintels, etc.). The first panel blocks respected urban development and the division of the streets.

From the 1970s, housing settlements began to emerge in larger cities on green meadows. The main goal was to build as many panel houses as possible and to accommodate people coming from rural areas to the city. People basically lived on the construction site.



Image of middle class housing built in the 1950s (© photo: Barbora Čakovská, 2022)

## **Rabbit hutches**

The colloquial name for a complex of block of flats. A prefabricated house or block of flats, commonly called **Panelák**, is a house built of prefabricated reinforced concrete panels. Prefabricated houses are located mainly in housing settlements called **Sídlisko**

## **Sídlisko**

A housing estate or housing project. This term has a ghetto-like connotation in Slovakia, although housing projects in Slovakia are very different to those in the United States. They generally do not have a notorious history, and usually have a mix of social classes.



Sídlisko Klokočina, Nitra, Slovakia (© photo: Barbora Čakovská, 2022)



# Spain



Image of middle-class mass housing, Moratalaz, Madrid (© photo: unknown)

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In Spain, new neighbourhoods – somewhat incomplete and marginalized from the big city after they were built – emerged in well-defined plots from the 1950s onwards, due to population growth and migration from the countryside to the city.

Cities became bigger, adding on neighbourhoods that took the names of the very areas in which people settled, straddling the countryside and the city, living there for only half a day, but immediately making their presence felt, changing the urban landscape of the city.



Image of middle class mass housing toldo (© photo: Fernando Gómez Mateus)

## **Obra vista** Brickwork

This type of façade is widely used in all regions of Spain, as it is durable, constructively efficient and easy to maintain. The price of this brick and its installation is higher than that of conventional brick, but it saves on the final coating. In addition to the direct economic aspect, one of its greatest advantages is the low maintenance it requires and its durability, regardless of the external agents to which it is subjected. It can be found in a multitude of formats and colours.



Image of middle class mass housing, obra vista and persiana (© photo: Omar Ornaque Mor)

## **Persiana** Roller shutter

This is a distinctive feature of popular culture. In Spain, shutters are necessary because, among other things, it is the country that has the most hours of sunshine in Europe. In most European countries, a thin curtain is more than enough, but **persianas** are also important for cultural reasons. Shutters are good for privacy and for not being seen from the outside.

## **Toldo** Awning

The awning is part of what defines a Spanish street, such as the air conditioning machines on the façade, the exposed brick, etc. The phenomenon started between the 1960s and 1980s. Aesthetic value aside, it is part of Spanish cultural heritage. These awnings, mostly seen in working class neighbourhoods, were usually green in colour and this trend continues today because if a user wants to install a new awning, it has to be the same colour as the original.



Image of middle class mass housing, Cotxeres, Barcelona (© photo: Teresa Rovira, 2021)



# Switzerland



Langgrüt housing estate, Zürich, market-rate rental and condominium apartments, Ernst Göhner AG, 1968–1971 (© photo: Marc Landolt, 2019, Hochschule Luzern – Technik & Architektur)

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## Garden city settlements

After the First World War, faced with the dire shortage of affordable housing, settlements were built in Switzerland based on the garden city model — or low-rise, residential-only settlements on the urban periphery. Some were built directly by municipalities, others through independent, non-profit cooperative organizations supported by

municipalities through preferential access to land and financing. This approach of having housing for the working and middle classes built by non-profit or for-profit developers, but backed by the state, was scaled in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Cantonal and municipal governments have always played a more important role than their federal counterpart, leading to a regionally highly diversified landscape of housing production.



Bernoullihäuser, cooperative single-family homes, Zurich, 1929 (© photo: Julie Haller, 2015, Baugeschichtliches Archiv/City of Zurich)

## Large housing estates / pre-fabricated modular buildings

At the end of the 1940s, in the aftermath of the Second World War, Switzerland experienced tremendous growth in population and urban extensions; new towns were not a dominant model, given the limited central planning powers (Eisinger 2004). This growth was accompanied by cultural transformations in the realm of the private life, such as the family and intergenerational relationships, resulting in an increasing demand for housing (Althaus 2018: 99-102). The Swiss building boom of the 1960s and 1970s was characterized by a "shift away from the two- and three-storey row buildings typical of the 1950s" to "new structural forms of high-rises, and individual low-rise buildings" (Gysi et al. 1988: 184). Many of these were built as prefabricated modular buildings on the outskirts of cities and in agglomeration areas, and were promoted on a large scale, in particular by the private construction company Ernst Göhner AG, Zurich. Between 1966 and 1975, the company built around 9,000 apartments in the element construction system in the Swiss mid-lands alone (Furter/Schoeck 2013: 9). However, Göhner was also active in western Switzerland: the 2000 apartment, Avanchet Parc, in Geneva is the best-known example (Graf/Marino 2021). Representing the entire industry, Ernst Göhner AG had a lasting impact on the public debate on housing. In public debates, criticism of this form of housing construction increased until the 1970s — especially regarding its quantity, density, and uniformity. However, architecture history and heritage studies as well as recent media coverage try to cast these buildings in a new light (ICOMOS AG System & Serie 2022). In her research on the social space of high-rise buildings in Switzerland, seen from an anthropological perspective, Althaus (2018) highlights the living qualities of this form of building and housing, repeatedly reported by residents in her study. Originally inhabited by the new middle class and designed to meet their comfort and housing needs (Furter/Schoeck 2013, 12f), these settlements are nowadays home to a far more socially diverse population.

## Single-family homes

From the mid-1970s onwards, as a result of increased construction costs due, in part, to the oil crisis, as well as the criticism of its perceived social consequences, "the idea of a machine for living in Switzerland fell asleep. [...] In its place, the large-scale [consumption of land through single family houses] began in the agglomerations" — made possible through new mortgage instruments as well as disposable income (Furter/Schoeck 2013: 16). During its boom phase between 1960 and 2000, most of these homes were equipped with a gable roof and consisted of two to three stories, providing four to five rooms on 120 to 135 square metres, much larger than had been the standard during the immediate postwar years (Hartmann 2020: 70). In 1980, a record year, nearly 16,960 of these single-family homes were built, almost 70 per workday. Their appearance changed over time, so that the one-story bungalow with a flat roof coexists alongside different prefabricated housing typologies with a traditional gable roof (ibid.).

## Keywords of middle class housing

cooperative housing, industrialized housing, single-family housing



Rebenstrasse 74/76, two-family freestanding house in individual ownership, Zurich, District Leimbach, 1964 (© photo: Wolf-Bender's Erben, Baugeschichtliches Archiv/City of Zurich, 1965)



Kavaklıdere district in the 1980s, one of the middle-class neighbourhoods in Ankara with five- to six-storey apartment buildings (©Antoloji Ankara: Anonymous, no date, <https://twitter.com/antolojiankara/status/1279836879123349505?lang=gu>)

# Türkiye

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Before the 1950s, the population living in Turkish cities and the urbanization rate were low. The state could provide sufficient housing to address housing needs. In this period, middle-class housing policies targeted the housing needs of high-ranking government and military officers. The housing cooperatives founded in the 1940s and 1950s built terrace houses and garden city settlements in big cities. Some early examples of such middle-class neighbourhoods in Ankara are Mebusevleri, Saraçoğlu and Bahçelievler.

After the 1950s, with the migration from the rural areas to big cities in Türkiye, the state had to tackle the housing needs of a large working class. While migrants from rural regions found a solution to their housing problem by building squatter camps on state-owned land on the periphery of the big cities, in the 1960s, the tiny single or terraced houses in the city's core were demolished. In their place, the "build-and-sell contractors" built four- to six-storey apartment blocks according to the zoning plans. These apartment buildings (called "condominiums") created modern middle-class neighbourhoods with social and environmental amenities, such as primary, secondary and high schools, parks, and small shops.

In the 1970s, many housing cooperatives that were established with the Housing Cooperative Law built mass housing sites with five- to six-storey buildings on the periphery of cities, where land prices were relatively low compared to the inner city. These large estates were planned with social amenities, such as a kindergarten, primary school, parks, a shopping centre, and a community centre. After the housing cooperatives completed the construction of these houses, they transformed into housing management cooperatives.



Dikmen Valley Housing Project in Ankara (© Sabah Emlak: Autonomous, 2009; <http://mimdap.org/2009/06/dikmen-vadisi-kentsel-donuthum-projesi-iptal-edildi/>)

After the 1980s, the Mass Housing Administration became the leading state agency responsible for planning, financing, and building mass housing for the low and middle classes through public-private partnerships. The mass housing sites for the middle class were generally constructed in the prestigious areas of cities with a high potential for urban transformation. These lands, covered mainly by squatter neighbourhoods on the periphery of big cities, were redeveloped and turned into middle-class mass housing sites. These large housing estates, such as Dikmen Valley in Ankara, included different housing types and several social amenities, such as sports facilities, cafés, restaurants, offices, and a large urban park.

## **Misafir salonu** Guest room

In middle-class mass housing in Türkiye, a **misafir salonu** is mainly used for hosting guests. It is decorated with the most expensive furniture and accessories a household can afford. It usually contains a dining table with chairs, a seating group, and furniture for storing ceramic crockery, cutlery, etc. It is also common to see photos of old and young family members, some religious and shamanic symbols (prayer beads, evil eye beads, etc.), lace or knitted tablecloths, broderie on coffee and side tables, a cabinet with shelves and glass doors that is used to display expensive items such as silver plates, crystal glasses, or a wine carafe, high-quality carpets, and specially designed curtains. The guest room is decorated to show a Turkish household's socio-economic and cultural status. It may vary widely, according to the city and district.

## **Oturma odası** Living room

The **oturma odası** is a living room for family members to gather, chat and spend time together, watch TV, and do domestic work like ironing during the day or after dinner. The living room is decorated and furnished with simple, comfortable furniture for family members to relax in. In recent years, the 'guest room' concept has been disappearing from modern middle-class mass housing, due to the changes in living culture, habits and everyday routines. While the floor area and the number of rooms in middle-class residential units are decreasing in large metropolitan cities, middle-class families cannot afford big apartments or houses. Therefore, most families use their guest rooms as their living rooms.



Ümitköy Sitesi in the 1970s, one of the first housing cooperatives in the west-end suburb of Ankara (©Ümitköy Sitesi Archive: Anonymous, no date)





Image of middle class mass housing (© photo: Jasna Mariotti, 2023)

# UK Northern Ireland

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Queen's University Belfast

Two-storey semi-detached houses, with a small garden in the front and a larger garden at the rear, were constructed in the outskirts of Northern Irish cities for the growing middle class. These houses have a party wall on one side, are symmetrical and are often built from red bricks. The living room, on the ground floor, is connected to the bay window and often, three bedrooms are located on the upper level. In 2017, 26% of the total housing stock in Belfast were semi-detached houses.

Red-brick terraced houses, with shared party walls, are ubiquitous in cities in Northern Ireland. Housing single families, this housing typology features a front door that is accessed directly from the street and a small back yard. Parking for terraced houses is on street and often there is a back alley that can be accessed through the back door. In their internal organization, terraced houses are often referred to as "two-up two-down", with two rooms located on the ground floor and two rooms on the upper floor – the living room and the kitchen are located on the ground floor, while two bedrooms are located on the first floor. In 2017, 43% of the total housing stock in Belfast were terraced houses.

## **Flats**

High-rise apartment blocks built from concrete, whose residents are mostly working-class families in larger cities in Northern Ireland.



Image of middle class housing (© photo: Jasna Mariotti, 2023)

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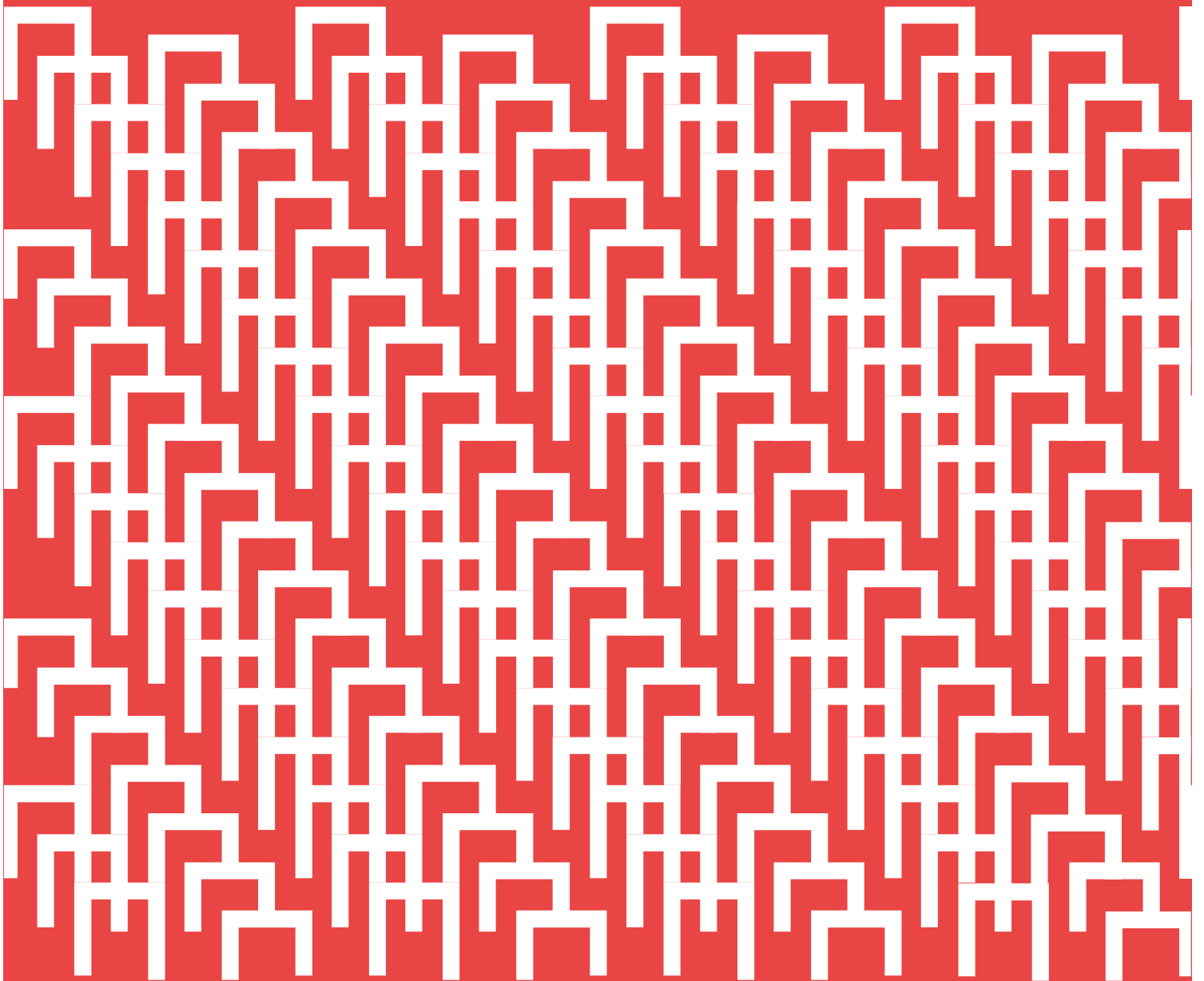
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