

ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF HOUSING FOR LONGEVITY BASED ON CASE STUDIES OF MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS IN POLAND

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ABSTRACT

Motives: This article summarizes the results of several years of research and observations by the author during the implementation of three representative multigenerational housing facilities in Poland in response to an ageing population. In two of these facilities, the author had the opportunity to participate in various stages of developing and implementing models for these investments.

Aims: The purpose of the study was to define the components of model multigenerational households based on the German multigenerational house program, which is recognized as one of the best practices in European cities (McNeill & Hunter, 2014), and to describe the similarities and differences with multigenerational homes in Poland.

Results: The innovative multigenerational household model focuses on three main pillars – care, education and animation – that should be considered in the process of organizing these households. Multigenerational homes should motivate central, regional, and local authorities to systematically include this type of housing in government programs, as well as in other projects and initiatives in Poland, as is the case in Germany (multigenerational housing).

Keywords: multigenerational housing, longevity, new forms of living, Lodz, Wroclaw, Warsaw

INTRODUCTION

The increase in life expectancy is one of the outstanding achievements of modern society. In the 21st century we are living longer than ever before in human history, on average almost twice as long as at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1841, a girl was expected to live only 42 years. The average person born in 1960 was expected to live to 69. Currently, the average life expectancy in the Western world is 79.5 years, and there are more and more of us living to that age. Life expectancy indicators in Poland show a positive trend and are gradually approaching

the average of European countries (Projected life expectancy by age..., 2023). According to the World Economic Forum, the over-65s make up a larger share of the world's population than the under-5s. In Europe, life expectancy is increasing by five hours per day, and children born after 2000 will live to be 100 years old. The increase in the life expectancy of the society leads to the challenges arising from the aging of the society – a process that is gaining momentum not only in Poland, but also in the European countries and in most of the developed countries of the world. Among the most obvious are the challenges for health care systems. However, in the

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next decade, social, economic, technological, political, and spatial challenges will become no less critical. Przybyłka (2017) discusses the wide range of health issues facing the Polish health care system due to the aging population. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of elderly care in Poland are also discussed by Zawojcka, Wrzesińska-Kowal, and Siudek (2021). An important prerequisite for healthy aging is the maintenance of physical activity in the elderly, which has a positive impact on their emotional state and quality of life (Gałuszka, 2022).

In the literature on this subject, it is becoming increasingly important to consider this issue in the context of preparing for a healthy and independent long life. The question of how to prolong health is crucial in the context of current models of aging. The main goal of “gero-scientific” research is to expand the scope of health and achieve healthy longevity, where people live longer but with good health and a high quality of life. This includes increased productivity, functionality, and independence so that people can participate actively in social and economic life for longer (The Lancet H.L., 2020).

Maintaining and nurturing health at every stage of life is linked to the need to provide living arrangements that meet the interests and needs of individuals and communities, as well as the challenges associated with the costs of financing and organizing such arrangements so that society remains healthy and active for as long as possible. Societies around the world are at different stages of awareness of the challenges of an aging population. These differences are evident in the article by Sengers and Peine (2021), in which they analyze innovative approaches to organizing aging in several European countries: Poland, France, Ireland, and the Netherlands. The results reflect a variety of alternatives in organizing the lives of older people, which are social and technical experiments at the time of their implementation, and for followers – proven options for social and technical innovations to create a supportive environment and safe urban space for aging. In Poland, there are more and more studies on places of residence in the lives of older

people, such as the works of Jancz and Trojanek (2020), Tanaś et al. (2019), Bojanowska (2021), Bartoszek et al. (2012), Brzeski et al. (2015). While acknowledging the importance of these studies in assessing the readiness of older people in Polish cities to make decisions about shaping the conditions for comfortable and safe aging, it should be noted that the issues raised in them mainly reflect the choice of place and living conditions, while omitting the aspects of opportunities offered by alternative forms of aging. Residences such as multigenerational houses in the process of preparing for aging, except Jonda (2008), Labus (2021; 2015), Domagała and Ciechanowicz (2019).

There have, of course, been institutions that bring together people of different ages within local communities for centuries. Faith groups and churches, and many community organizations and enthusiast groups (for example around fishing and amateur dramatics) are obvious examples of this. However, with growing concern about the needs of an ageing population, attention is being given to cross-generational work and activity. It is part of a process of rethinking of how we approach ‘social care’ so that people may live decent lives and flourish within local communities (McNeill & Hunter, 2014, p. 4). Strengthening neighborhood networks so that people remain connected and socially and physically active is an important element in creating change. In contrast to countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and Japan, Poland is lagging behind in cultivating these types of networks on a national scale. Author argues that Germany is an exemplar for Poland, because multigenerational living is a relatively new area of interest in Poland.

Multigenerational households, or multigenerational living, are terms that are generally considered to cover at least two generations of the same family living together (Easthope et al., 2015; Pilkauskas & Martinson, 2014; Simpson, 2015); sometimes this definition of multigenerational living is referred to as intergenerational living (Aviva, 2012). Whilst multigenerational households may, or may not, include children, in the literature reviewed here the authors often stipulate extra conditions on multigenerational households for their research purposes; for example, no one can

be younger than 18 (Easthope et al., 2015), or there must be a young child in the household (Pilkaukas & Martinson, 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Multigenerational houses in Germany

Germany's multigenerational houses (in German: Mehrgenerationenhäuser) are funded by the federal government and are a key part of Germany's ageing population plan. These community spaces provide support in daily activities for older people, crucially alongside other age groups. This national scheme is popular with families, employers and local public services as well as older people, because each benefit from the mutual support they unlock, which is simple in itself, but which cumulatively creates abundant value. German's model of multigenerational houses is recognized as one of the best practices in European cities (McNeill & Hunter, 2014) therefore, it provides inspiration for building the theoretical framework of this study.

Multigenerational housing in this sense, another term for a residence of representatives of several generations of the same family, is understood as a place of communal living for people of different ages, but not related to each other, who form a neighborhood community and help each other. There are various configurations of multigenerational houses:

- a place for different social groups to live together, whose members maintain their independence while living in the same house. Such a space usually consists of a private part (apartment) and a common part (living room, garden, kitchen, workspace, etc.). The adopted rules of cohabitation are designed in such a way that the privacy of each resident is not violated;
- a meeting place for different generations, whose members simply meet and exchange experiences. This encourages the development of mutual services, self-help and volunteering (examples are a mother-child center, a family center, a nursing home, etc.);

- a place of help where different types of services are offered, e.g. repair of appliances, help with housework, etc.

German government program multigenerational houses (part II) (Mehrgenerationenhäuser II, 2018; Federal Programme, 2022) is part of the demographic change strategy in Germany and supports more than 530 multigenerational households (Bundesprogramm, 2023). The intergenerational relationships traditionally maintained and developed by multigenerational households are losing strength, and the percentage of households maintaining this type of relationship is declining. The main reasons for this are increasing urbanization and occupational mobility, which lead to the search for new forms and models of cohabitation. The project's multigenerational houses solve several important problems by bringing together under one roof groups and services that previously worked in isolation. These include childcare services, youth groups, support for young mothers, daycare for the elderly, and counseling services. With this approach, all age groups have a common center where they can offer and receive support according to their strengths and needs (Mehrgenerationenhäuser II, 2018). Each multigenerational house in the Multigenerational House program will receive federal funding of 30,000 euros per year from 2017 to 2020 and additional municipal funding of 10,000 euros per year. In 2021, funding for the program was extended for eight years (Federal Programme, 2022). Multigenerational houses organize activities tailored to local needs. They cooperate with volunteer agencies, clubs and associations, and cultural institutions to avoid overlapping programs. In this way, a synergy is created that has a strong impact on local initiatives. In Germany, more than 20,000 volunteers have participated in the creation of multigenerational houses under the Multigenerational Houses program (II, 2018).

Issues facing multigenerational houses under the Multigenerational House program include:

- budget constraints that allow only half of the annual budget to be spent on salaries; this is done to encourage the use of volunteers;

- bureaucratic procedures that include reporting and auditing requirements, as well as an annual co-funding statement signed by the municipality;
- accreditation requirements that specify that the multigenerational home must be operational before receiving public funding, e.g., as a nursing home.

In Germany, various models of multigenerational houses are practiced as places of residence and/or care and/or meeting places (Jonda, 2008). Kehl and Volker (2013) note that the multigenerational house program has many similarities with cohousing models that have been implemented for over 40 years in Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, and the United States. However, in Germany, the multigenerational house model offers many advantages, the most important of which are improved health outcomes and reduced need for professional care. The impact of the cohousing model on social health was examined by Warner et al. (2020). The authors assessed the extent to which cohousing contributes to the social health of multigenerational residents based on research from 28 academic databases. The study concluded by recommending that more rigorous and primary studies of cohousing models be conducted to determine social health benefits. It was suggested that rather than treating and developing multigenerational cohousing as an innovative ecosystem, the boundaries of this model should be expanded while maintaining the principles of multigenerational cohousing.

Multigenerational centers create many unique services for the people who live there for example:

1. Pop in for a coffee, get to know people of all ages – everyone is welcome at “Offener Treff”.
2. Get involved and make use of your talents and skills. Make yourself and others smile by volunteering.
3. Learn from and with each other – such as when it comes to starting a professional career or learning to use a smartphone or tablet as an elderly person.
4. Breathe new life into old things and do your bit for sustainability – for example in exchange clubs or in the bicycle workshop.
5. Get advice and support in the multi-generational center – such as parenting tips or advice on how to reconcile family, care, and work.

6. Express opinion when it comes to shaping neighborhood – in the multi-generational centers your voice is heard.

The ‘mix’ of practices that makes multigenerational houses based on 3 pillars (Smith, 2014):

1. Care – caring for others i.e., attending to their needs, and caring about people and communities.
2. Education – helping people to reflect, believe and act.
3. Animation – joining with others to breathe life into situations.

The 3 pillars are presented graphically below Fig. 1.

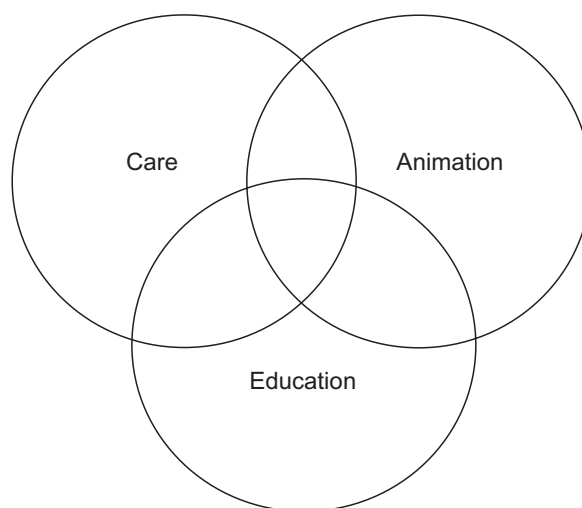


Fig. 1. Three pillars of multigenerational houses

Source: own elaboration.

This mix is also underpinned by training in management and leadership, community development, and particular areas of specialism such as outdoor education, music, and art. The important point here is that while multigenerational houses may have workers drawn from different professional groupings, at its core is a single practitioner or small group of practitioners who are poly-professionals.

The German example of the multigenerational houses is one of the most successful models for promoting an alternative approach to shaping the lives of older people so it may be an inspiration for a model for implementing a multigenerational house ecosystem in Poland.

Alternative ways of living in Poland

In Poland the organization of elderly care is divided into: institutional (formal) and informal approaches are alternative options for organizing care and lifestyle in the process of aging. The institutional approach provides care for people of geriatric age through the operation of public and private specialized facilities, where both long-term and short-term stays are possible. Institutional care for the elderly in Poland is provided by health care system facilities: Nursing and Treatment Facilities (in Polish: *zakład opiekuńczo-leczniczy*, ZOL), Nursing and Care Facilities (in Polish: *zakład pielęgnacyjno-opiekuńczy*, ZPO), and Palliative Care Facilities (hospices).

People over the age of 60 account for 66.7% of all people cared for in Ministry of Health facilities (GUS, 2022). Facilities within the social care structures of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy include social welfare homes (in Polish: *dom pomocy społecznej*, DPS) and adult day care homes (in Polish: *dzienny dom pomocy społecznej*, DDPS) (Golinowska, 2010; Golinowska et al., 2020). In addition, there are private non-profit nursing homes, home and inpatient hospices, rehabilitation centers, and senior clubs run by welfare associations. Caritas (Caritas Polska, 2023) is one of the most represented organizations in Poland. An alternative to public long-term care facilities for the elderly are private, commercial nursing homes. Home care is the sole responsibility of local authorities (Zigante & King, 2019).

Despite the steady growth in demand for places in specialized elder care, research and reports (Long-term care report, 2021; Quality assurance practices in long-term care, 2021; Zigante & King, 2019) point to several significant problems that undermine confidence in the system and make the choice to live in an institutional care facility compelling. Lack of humanistic patient care, inadequate staffing, and low quality of services are some of the most cited problems. Long-term care in nursing homes and other specialized facilities can be an important support for older people who need ongoing medical care or help with daily living. By providing a safe environment, nursing homes and other specialized facilities can

help older people maintain a high quality of life and well-being, and they can provide a sense of security for family members, caregivers, and caregivers. An alternative to the institutional approach to organizing care for the elderly is an informal approach. The informal approach to aging, i.e., aging in place that provides conditions for safe and comfortable aging in one's own and familiar surroundings, with the possibility of maintaining independence as long as possible, is most widely recognized in contemporary gerontological research. Relevant and popular variants of informal approaches to organizing aging are cohousing or intergenerational communities; communities of older people; and others implemented in many European countries, such as the Netherlands, which has one of the most innovative housing policies in implementing differentiated housing models in the face of an aging population (Labus, 2021). For most people as they age, living in their own home and in a familiar community is a desirable goal that is achievable if informal care arrangements are sufficient to provide a safe environment and conditions for active and healthy aging. Innovative approaches to organizing aging can take advantage of an informal approach while ensuring a high quality of life in old age and lower living costs (Glass, 2012; Sengers & Peine, 2021).

However, the transition to alternative forms of care and organization of aging should be accompanied by comprehensive support to ensure an age-friendly built environment in various areas. Iwanowska and Józwiak (2017) examined the problems of upholding the rights of nursing home residents in Poland, analyzing both systemic problems and best practices and offering suggestions, including the need for legislative initiatives. The challenges related to dignified living and care in institutional approaches to organizing care for the elderly often coincide, although research is conducted in different countries. The right of older people to make decisions about their lifestyles in old age is one of the prerequisites for ensuring mental health, which is considered in the research. Wamara and Naumiuk (2021) examined older people's participation in decision making during the transition

to long-term care. The authors pointed out the lack of participation of older people in the processes that accompany their transition to long-term care in institutional care. In Przybyłka's (2017) research, he points out that older people increasingly want to be active participants in the processes of making decisions about the type of care they receive. Therefore, it is important not only to give older people the opportunity to make decisions about their future, but also to provide them with comprehensive information about the prospects of using different types of housing and care, including financial issues and limitations. The characteristics of aging in place and the role of the supportive environment in creating a supportive environment that determines the choice of alternative living arrangements are also explored by Choi (2020). Strengthening the move away from institutional forms of care through various sociotechnical and gerontological innovations has a positive impact on older people's self-esteem and reduces functional limitations and social isolation. Płoskonka et al. (2018) noted that maintaining a high quality of life for older people requires a comprehensive approach that includes physical and mental activity and necessary medical care. The authors examine the positive impact of leisure activities, including organized forms of activities such as "wellness", on creating conditions for active and healthy aging. Przybyłka (2017) assesses the problem of population aging as a challenge for the health care system in Poland, whose pressure is increasing due to the need to respond to the growing demand for health care services by older

people. Mikołajczyk and Gałązka (2020) studied the interaction between physical activity and depression in the elderly. The authors' research results confirm that the level of physical activity in the elderly depends on their fitness and emotional state, as well as age-related limitations, the presence of chronic diseases, and the level of education. Moreover, improvement in well-being after physical activity is the strongest motivator for continuing physical activity. Research findings (Gałaszka, 2022; Mikołajczyk & Gałązka, 2020; Płoskonka et al., 2018) suggest that opportunities to support healthy active aging in the Polish population, including the urban population, are increased by physical activity, psychological, and social support. The importance of each element of support, including health prevention in advancing age, is reflected in the developed system of support for older people in the selection and deliberate transition to alternative forms of housing in the aging process. In the case of alternative housing to meet the needs of an aging society, Sengers and Peine (2021) assert that most of the innovations implemented in Poland, France, the Netherlands, and Ireland are social and conceptual rather than technical. Based on the literature review, the conceptualization of the support and components important in model of multigenerational houses should be based on five interconnected blocks, shown in Table 1.

The division of forms of support into separate units is quite conventional (with the exception of architectural and spatial solutions), since most of the interventions offered within a separate group

Table 1. Components in model of multigenerational houses

Architectural and spatial aspects	Support for residents' physical activity	Support for mental well-being	Social and integrative aspects	Organization of additional activities
Ramps wider doorways Wheelchair – friendly bathrooms home modifications to prevent falls and other accidents	Access to preventive health care services regular physical exercise and activity health eating habits	Counselling and therapy support groups technology-based interventions social events and activities	Family and friends volunteer support religious communities senior centres intergenerational programmes assistive technology and robots social media and online communities	Arts and crafts classes music lessons and music therapy recreational activities gardening low-impact sports educational activities
geronotological, social, technical and technological innovation				

Source: own elaboration.

are comprehensive and have a synergistic effect that affects several areas of the elderly's life. For example, technology-based interventions classified as psychological support may be offered in the form of fitness or health trackers that allow individuals to track their physical activity, monitor their health, and stay in touch with their caregivers. The literature review shows that architectural and spatial solutions implemented in the form of different housing projects should fit harmoniously into the context of the place and ensure the availability of assistance when needed (on demand). They should also take into account age-related functional limitations to ensure mobility, safety and psychological well-being. At the same time, it is important to maintain and create new opportunities for communication with the outside world and participation in social life. In this way, the use of separate measures to support older people in practice can effectively achieve goals in various areas of life. Physical support is designed to help reduce the risk of chronic disease, maintain mobility, and improve overall well-being. Positive mental health care aims to help older people maintain independence, increase resilience, adapt to age-related difficulties, and learn to respond appropriately. Building and

maintaining social ties and recreational activities enable older people to engage socially, maintain cognitive function, and reduce the risk of depression and other mental health problems.

At the graph below Fig. 2 we can see how components in model of multigenerational houses are included in German's model of Multigenerational Houses which provides the theoretical framework for the research in this article.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was conducted using the case study method, using desk research, website and social media analysis for individual investments, and interviews with architects, managers of these houses and people involved in their activities. The author has also synthesized architectural drawings of multigenerational homes based on materials provided by the managers or architects of these homes.

The multi-generation houses selected for the analysis are representative buildings that have won awards in Poland (DW Warszawa, DW Wroclaw) and Europe (DW in Lodz). Lodz, Warsaw and Wroclaw are the cities where the implementation of such functions was attempted for the first time, which makes them an experiment in Poland. In the case of two facilities, the author of this article participated in selected stages of implementation. In the case of the multigenerational home in Lodz, the author participated in the process of implementing the home function model as a project coordinator on behalf of the contractor – the LAB 60+ Foundation – from February 2018 to January 2019. As part of this research, the following methods were used to analyze the multigenerational house in Lodz: on site, interview with the project coordinator on behalf of the city of Lodz and a resident of the house (May 2023).

As part of the multi-generational rental house in Warsaw, in 2017, during the phase of formulating the assumptions of this project with the Blisko Foundation, the author published the report “Tenant mix. A model tenement house for Warsaw”, held an interview with a representative of TBS in Warsaw

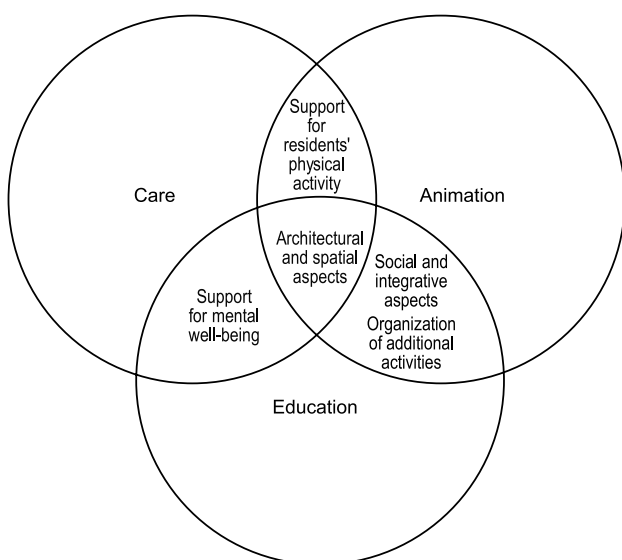


Fig. 2. Innovation model of Multigenerational House
Source: own elaboration.

and with selected residents at one of the meetings in a local café. In the case of the multi-generation house in Wrocław, the author conducted an interview with a representative of TBS Wrocław (May 2023) and the architect responsible for the project from the Major Architect studio (June 2020 (in the house) and February 2023).

The case studies were discussed in relation to the theoretical framework built at the desk research stage based on the following: general information, assumptions and conditions for the development of the investment, location in relation to the city, architectural and spatial aspects, support for physical activity of residents, support for mental well-being, social and integrating aspects, organization of additional activities. The aim was to find out how the spatial and architectural aspects of multi-generational houses respond to three pillars: care, education, animation of the German model.

MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSES IN POLISH CITIES – CASE STUDIES

In Poland, research (Szarek-Iwaniuk, 2019) shows that changes in the housing sector are beneficial. This can be seen in the growing housing capacity. Living conditions have improved, e.g., the total floor space per inhabitant has increased, the number of people per dwelling has decreased, and the total number of dwellings has increased by almost 30%. However, there is no clearly defined housing policy, especially with regard to the design of alternative forms of housing in the context of demographic change, apart from the Law on Cooperatives that came into force in 2022 (Law of November 4, 2022, on housing cooperatives and the rules for the sale of real estate from the municipal real estate portfolio to support the implementation of housing investments).

Multi-generational houses in Polish cities are a relatively new trend in the design of architecturally and organizationally separate spaces, designed according to the standards of universal design, free from spatial barriers, flexible and adaptable.

The author of this article focused on the analysis of 3 experimental projects of multigenerational

houses implemented in Polish cities after 2018 as a representative project in Poland. Currently, there is no government program in Poland that would systematically co-finance the creation of multi-generational houses, following the example of the German program.

Multi-generational house in Lodz

General information

Address: Wólczańska 168, Lodz

Date of construction: 2018

Number of apartments: 16

Residents: elderly people, young people, people with disabilities, families with children

Assumptions and conditions for the creation of the investment

The multigenerational house in Lodz is an action implemented as part of a pilot project in the field of revitalization entitled “Development of a model for revitalization of urban areas in a selected area of the city of Lodz – Stage 2” (project co-financed by the Cohesion Fund under the Operational Program Technical Assistance 2014–2020). The aim of the project was to develop a model setting the rules for the settlement of real estate and the rules for the functioning of the residents of a multigenerational



Fig. 3. Multigenerational house in Lodz from the side of the courtyard

Source: own photo (23.05.2023).

house, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the created system in the context of achieving the effect of building neighborly ties and cooperation mechanisms. The tenants of the house should be both seniors, families with many children, people with physical disabilities, single people, people living in informal relationships or children from orphanages entering the stage of independence. The multigenerational house project which can be seen on Fig. 3 is a housing program in the revitalization area to ensure a social mix.

Location in relation to the city

Near the city center, parallel to the main street Piotrkowska in Lodz, with good access to services and public transport, and close to green areas which can be seen on Fig. 4.

Architectural and spatial aspects

The multigenerational house was adapted in the building of a 19th century villa, 16 apartments for different social groups were designed considering the standards of universal design (Fig. 5 and Fig. 6). The building was equipped with an elevator and bathrooms with amenities for people with mobility problems. Residents were matched in terms of health status, lifestyle, and family size which was discussed at treatment workshops by the LAB 60+ Foundation 4th July 2018 (Fig. 7).

Encouraging physical activity of residents

Measures are taken to integrate different groups in the outdoor area, e.g. planting as a micro-initiative under the municipal program GreeningMY.

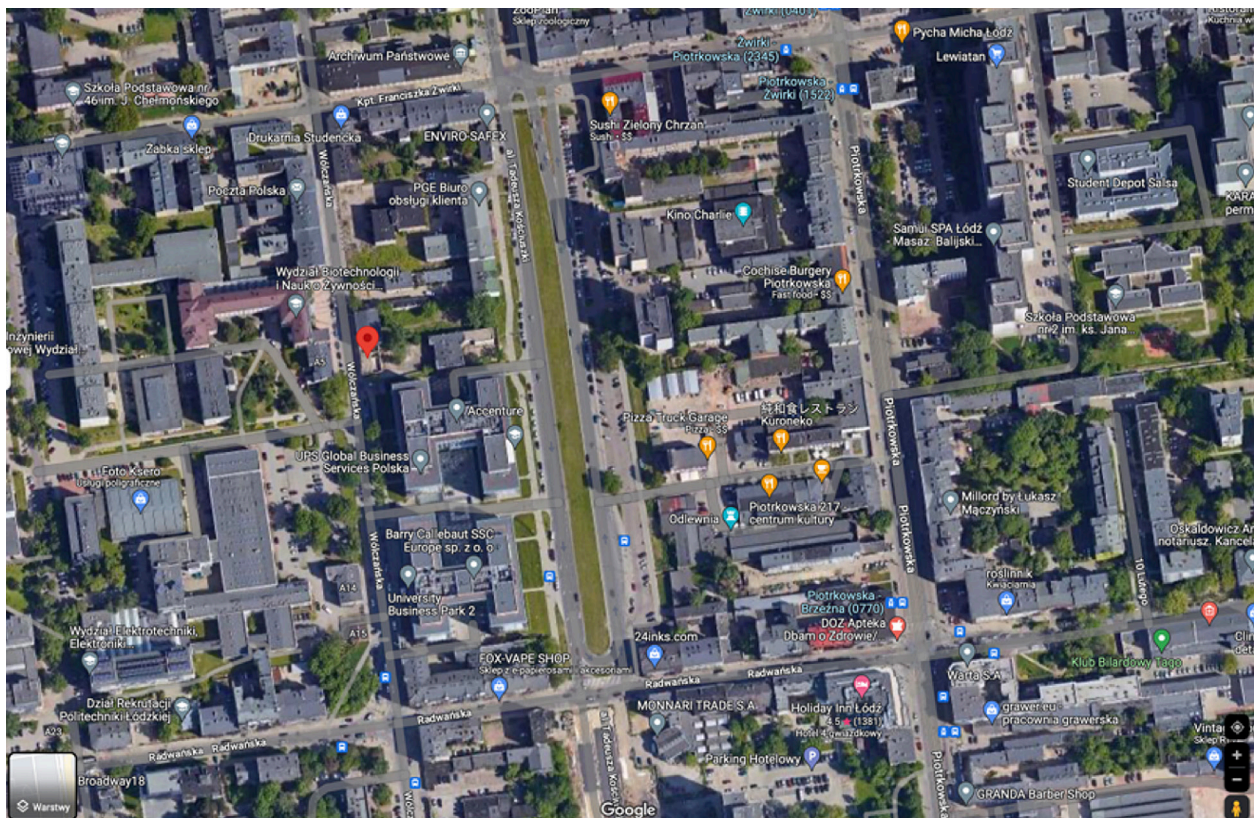


Fig. 4. Location of the multigenerational house in Lodz
Source: Google Maps (24.06.2023).

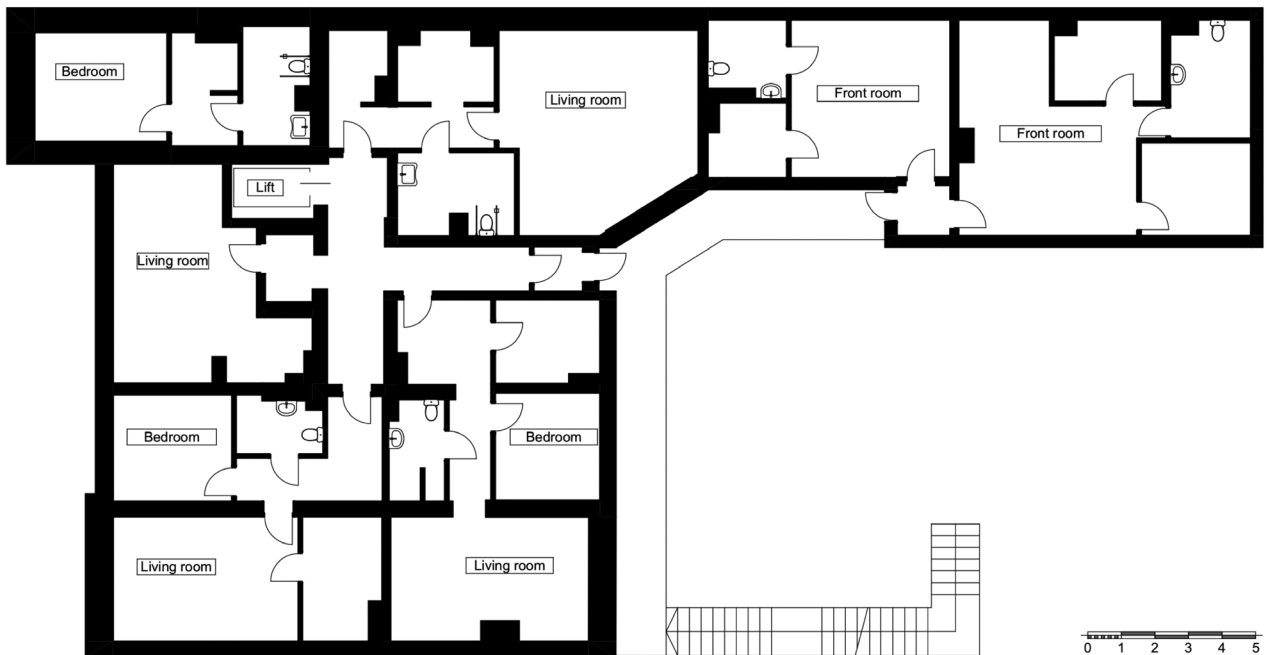


Fig. 5. Plan of the first floor of the local activity place in the Multigenerational House in Lodz
Source: own elaboration.

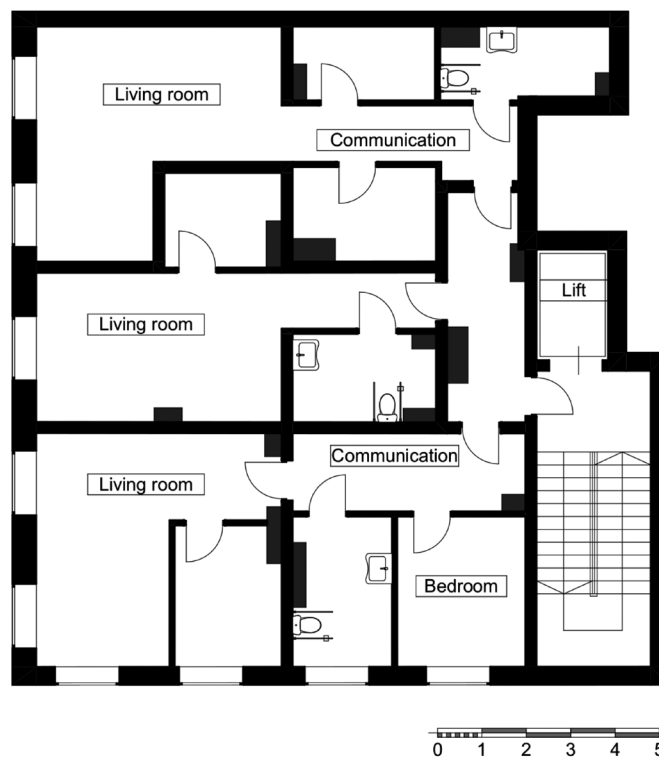


Fig. 6. Floor plan of the first floor of the Multigenerational House in Lodz
Source: own elaboration.



Fig. 7. Workshops 4th July 2028 with potential residents of the multigenerational house in Lodz
Source: Archive of the Foundation LAB 60+.

Mental well-being support

All activities related to the involvement of residents in common integration, including Christmas workshops, family picnics, most activities are dedicated to children, as part of funding from the United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF.

Social and integrative aspects

The operator of the activities within the DW is an NGO organization selected through a tender by the City of Lodz, whose goal is to animate and organize events for the residents of the house, as well as openness to the involvement of the local community for integration purposes. Unfortunately, from the conversations held with both the resident of the house and the project coordinator, it appears that these activities have been stopped at the moment.

Organization of additional activities

For several years, joint meetings were organized, which could be followed on the Facebook page of DW in Lodz under the name Local Community Place Wólczńska 168 (last post from December 2022).

Comments

The multigenerational house in Lodz does not offer a sufficient program in the field of care, animation and education, as it is implemented in multigenerational houses in Germany. The development process of the house did not begin with the phase of co-designing the adaptation of the architectural and urban structure with the residents of the house. In terms of care, there is no direct support or social services that would accompany the functioning of the house; this form can be provided by an operator (NGO) to which the residents of the house can turn. In terms of animation, sporadic actions and meetings are carried out by the residents of the house, less often with the local community, mostly during holiday periods. There is currently (according to interviews) a conflict between some residents, which significantly limits the possibilities and willingness to integrate and spend time together. The animation activities were discontinued in 2022. There is a lack of a mediator in the house to help resolve the conflict and educate on various levels, including in the area of healthy lifestyles.

Multigenerational rental house in Warsaw

General Information

Address: Stalowa 29, Warsaw

Date of construction: end of 19th century (construction), 2019 (renovation)

Number of apartments: 12 apartments + 7 common rooms

Residents: independent seniors, families with children, a nursing and educational institution SAWA-TECH

Requirements and conditions for making the investment

The project was carried out as part of the implementation of the Integrated Revitalization Program of the Capital City of Warsaw until 2022 in cooperation with TBS Warszawa Południe Sp. z o.o. The partner of the project is the Multicultural Center in Warsaw. The goal of the project was to modernize the historic apartment building, save

it from demolition, and restore its architectural details (Kamienica Wielopokoleniowa..., 2021). The goal was to create a diverse profile of people living in the building in order to improve the stability of their lives. As part of the preliminary design process, workshops were held with potential residents.

Location in relation to the city

Multigenerational rental house in Warsaw is located in Praga-Północ district, in close proximity to services, public transport and green areas which can be seen on Fig. 8.

Architectural and spatial aspects

On the first floor of the building there is a local café with a room for a nurse and a toilet for people with disabilities. On the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors there are 4 1- and 2-room apartments each with kitchenette and toilet for disabled people, intended for elderly people and people with mobility problems (Fig. 9 and Fig. 10). On the fourth floor, there is a shared kitchen with dining room and pantry, a lounge for residents

and 2 rooms for young people from educational and care institutions with a shared bathroom and a separate room for a caregiver. The top floor also houses shared apartments, 5 double rooms with two shared bathrooms and space for joint activities. The building is equipped with an elevator.

Support for residents' physical activity

Lack of information.

Support for mental well-being

The spaces provided in the apartment building for spending time with neighbors on the fourth floor and in the multigenerational club & café on the first floor are intended to counteract the isolation and loneliness of social groups living in the building and to promote intergenerational relations. As part of the city's activities, various events will be organized on Stalowa Street to support not only the residents of the multigenerational house, but also the residents of the surrounding apartment buildings, such as the "Breakfast on Stalowa" event on August 22, 2022.

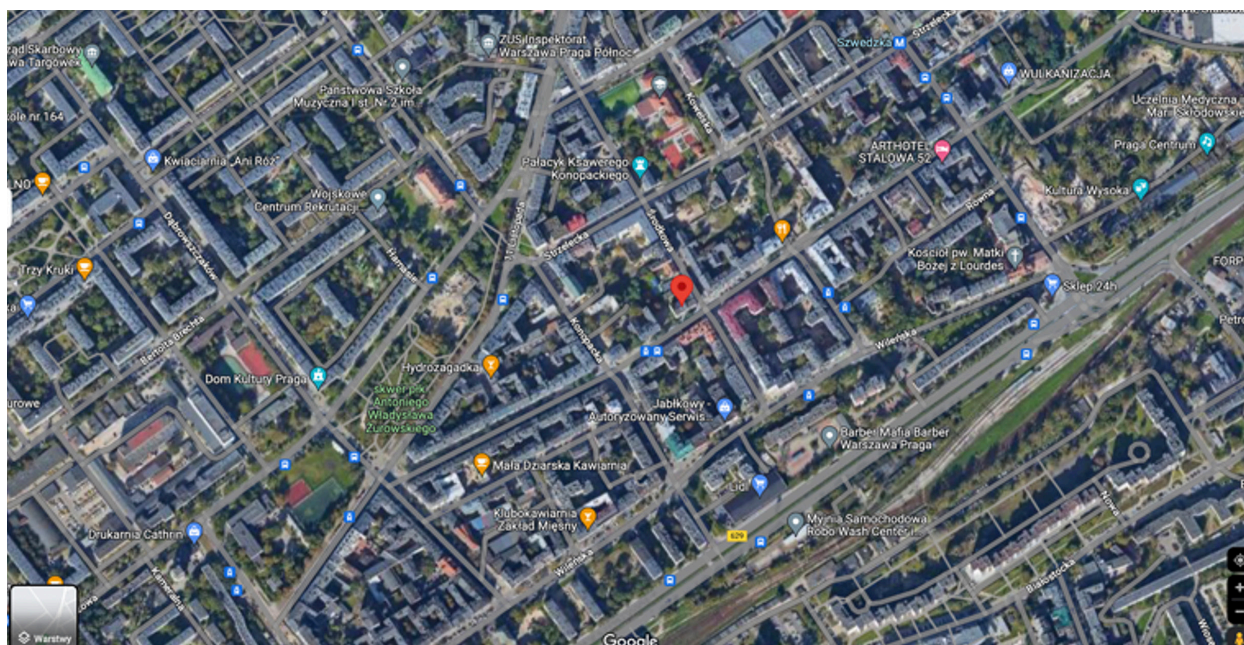


Fig. 8. Location of the multigenerational rental house in Warsaw
Source: Google Maps (24.06.2023).

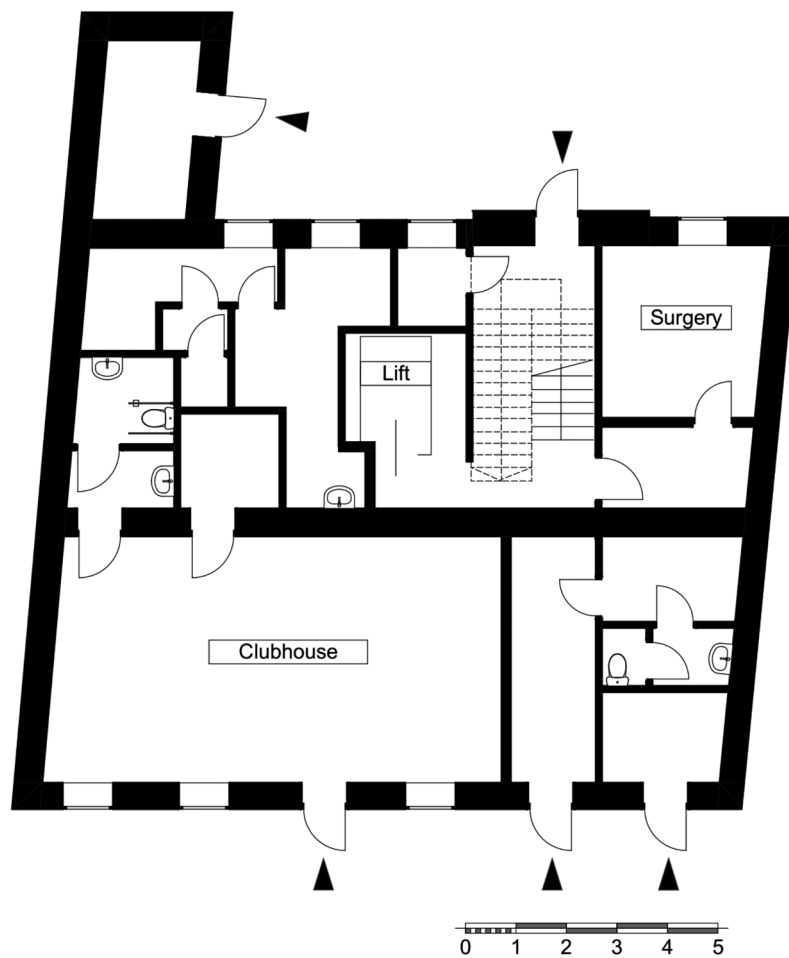


Fig. 9. Floor plan of the first floor of the multigenerational rental house in Warsaw
Source: own elaboration.

Social and integrative aspects

The club café in the multigenerational house was established in 2021 as a recreational meeting place for all social groups.

Organization of additional activities

Cultural events organized by various institutions and organizations take place in the neighborhood, such as Hashtag Ensemble | Ownership: Steel | 65th Warsaw Autumn Festival of Contemporary Music.

Comments

A multi-generational house in Warsaw is an example of a residence with a meeting place open to the local community in the form of a café, which is also a place for various meetings and activities. There are no supporting facilities within the apartment building, such as a kindergarten, a café or a fitness area. Given the good location of the apartment building in the center of Warsaw, it gives you the opportunity to use a wide range of the city's offer. In terms of medical care, you can only use it within the scope of your own registration.

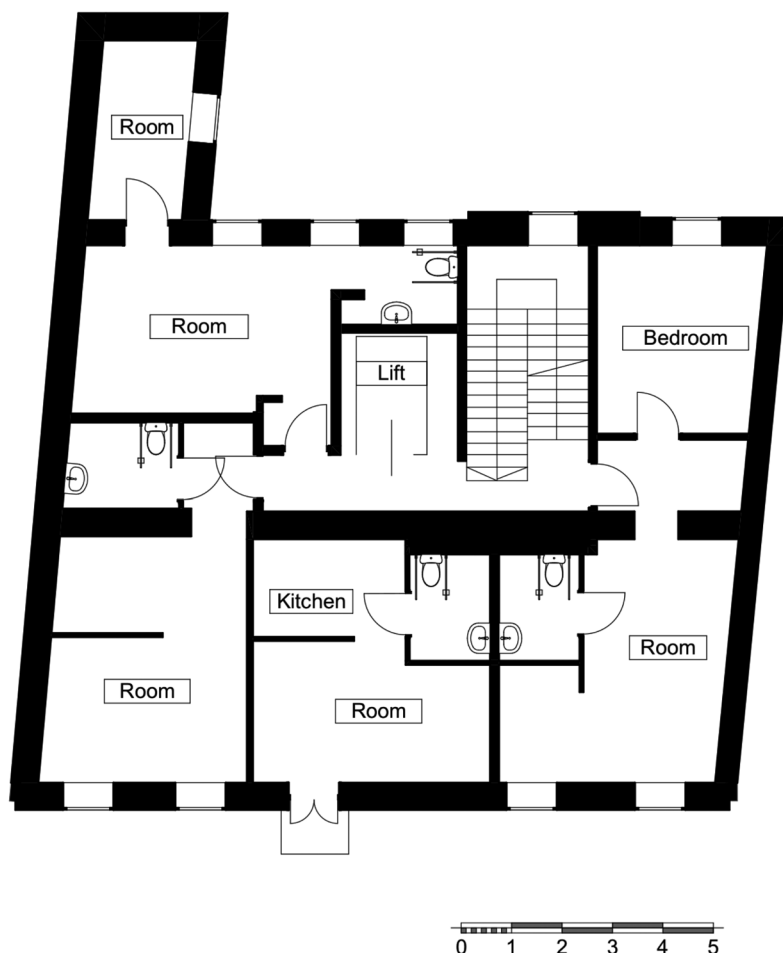


Fig. 10. Floor plan of the second floor multigenerational rental house in Warsaw
Source: own elaboration.

Multigenerational House in Wrocław

General information

Address: Tadeusza Brzozy Street, housing estate Nowe Żerniki, Wrocław

Date of construction: 2019

Number of apartments: 57 assisted living apartments and 60 rental apartments for young families.

Residents: elderly people, families with children

Assumptions and conditions for the realization of the investment

A multigenerational house in Wrocław is an investment implemented by TBS in Wrocław. It was created as part of a competition, the main idea of which

was to create a multi-family residential complex: a home for the elderly, apartments for young families and a kindergarten. The main prize was awarded to the project of the Major Architect office from Wrocław, which stood out for its atypical approach, envisaging a compact neighborhood development in response to the heterogeneous urban environment.

Location in relation to the city

The multigenerational house in Wrocław is located on the main axis of the Nowe Żerniki model settlement, which has won several awards in Poland, in a suburb of Wrocław which can be seen on Fig. 11 and Fig. 12.

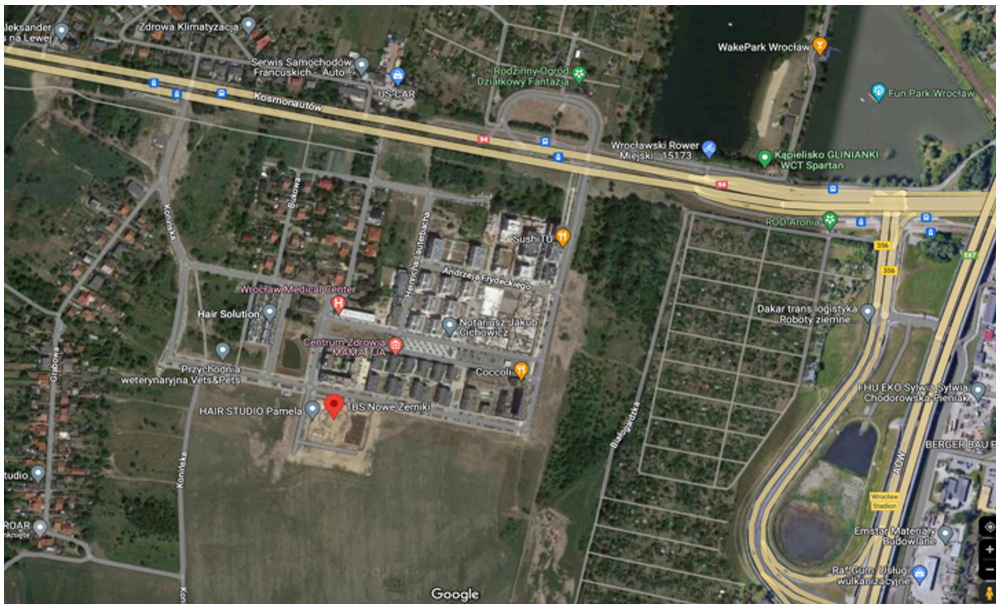


Fig. 11. Location of the multigenerational house in Wrocław
Source: Google Maps (24.06.2023).

DOM WIELOPOKOLENIOWY TBS
WROCLAW, NOWE ŻERNIKI

majorarchitekci 

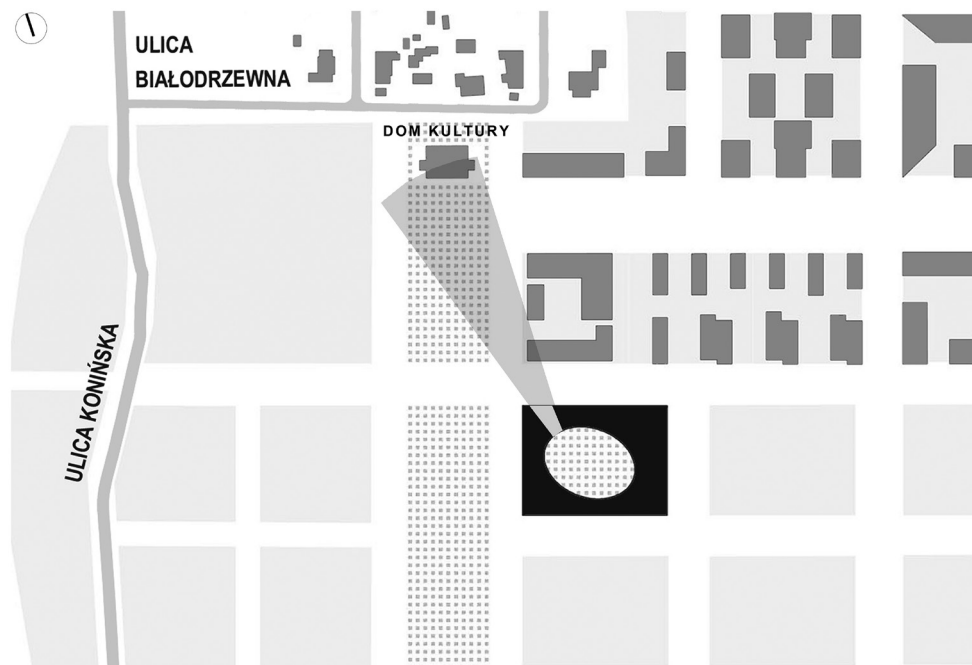


Fig. 12. Location of the multigenerational house in the scale of the settlement Nowe Żerniki
Source: developed by Major Architect (with permission).

Architectural and spatial aspects

In the estate of Nowe Żerniki, a 4-story, approximately 15 m high building was built in the form of a cuboid, with an oval courtyard cut out in its center (Fig. 13). Its shape results from the desire



Fig. 13. The courtyard of the multigenerational house in Wrocław

Source: own photo (2019).

to create a space without barriers and visual separations. The perforations on the first floor allow contact with the building's surroundings, and the main entrance to the courtyard is a diagonal opening that visually connects it with the nearby park and the planned local cultural center.

The development quarter was divided into 3 functional and spatial zones (Fig. 14, Fig. 15 and Fig. 16). The residential zone (outside the building) consists of an independent part: 57 assisted apartments and 60 rental apartments for young families. These parts have two independent entrances, communication shafts and corridors that run along the perimeter of the building. This functional and formal measure – in the form of a ring surrounding the entire complex – is intended to connect residents, creating an intergenerational community while providing a sense of independence. An important element of the design assumptions was to maintain the residential rather than institutional character of the retirement and nursing home. The varied but continuous form of the corridor provides freedom and

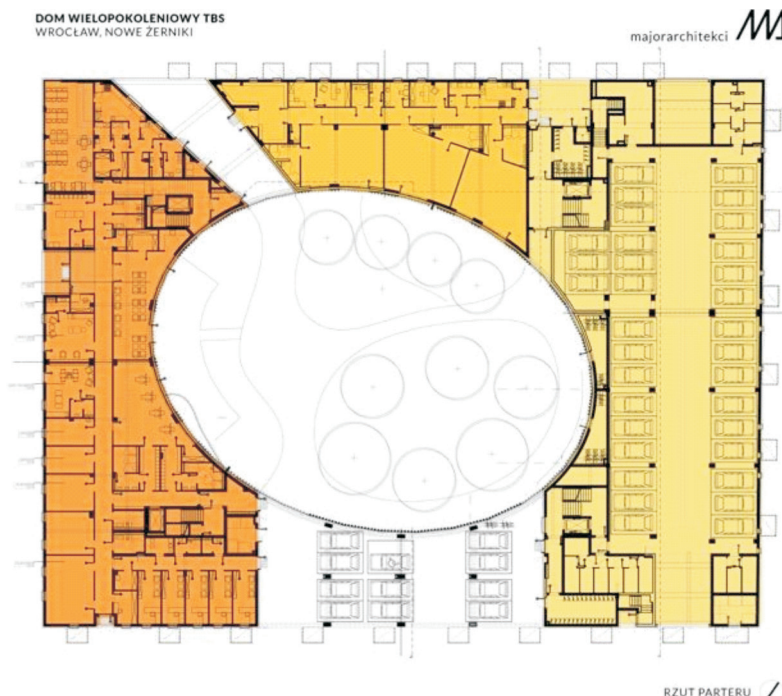


Fig. 14. Ground floor plan of the multigenerational house in Wrocław

Source: developed by Major Architect (with permission).

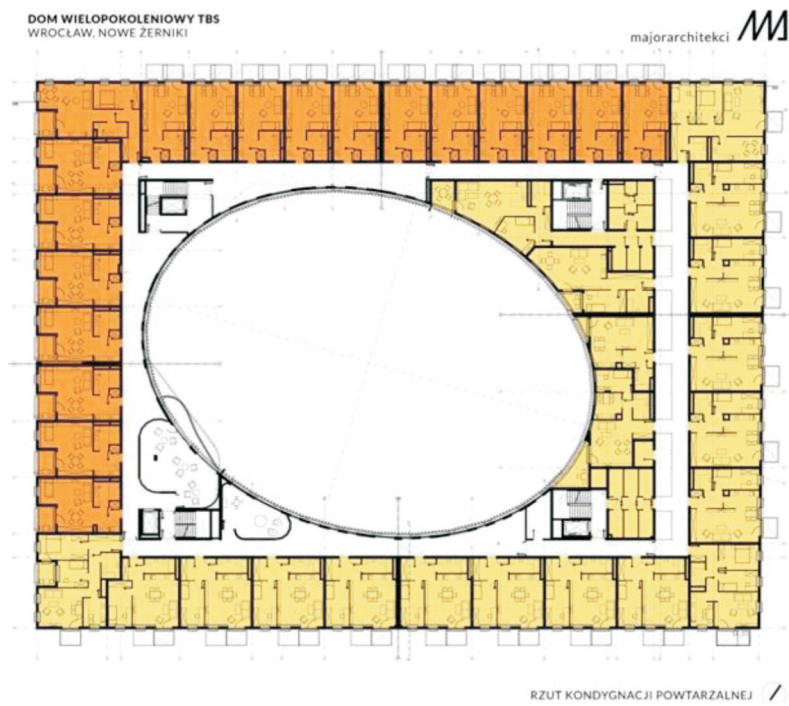


Fig. 15. Floor plan of a repeating multigenerational house in Wrocław
Source: developed by Major Architect (with permission).

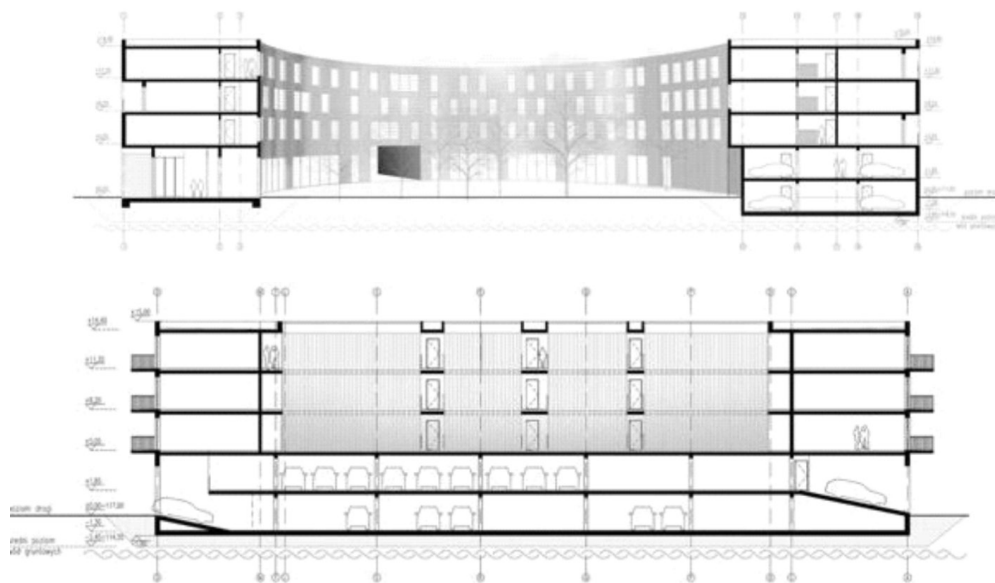


Fig. 16. Cross-sections of the multigenerational house in Wrocław
Source: developed by Major Architect (with permission).

a sense of participation, and the use of skylights in part of the communication and walkways leading to the apartments brought natural light inside. The layout was minimalist – the interiors are dominated by white and wood accents. Identification of individual rooms was achieved by wooden cubic boxes on the apartment doors, which personalize the private space (Fig. 17).



Fig. 17. Personalization of the entrance to the apartment in the multigenerational house in Wrocław
Source: own photo (2019).

Supporting physical activity for residents

There is a rehabilitation center in the multigenerational building with an internal gym, with access to locker rooms and restrooms.

Support for psychological well-being

The apartments in the multigenerational house are designed as so-called assisted apartments for the elderly and people with disabilities, have a floor space of about 40 m² and are located on 3 floors. The interiors are uniformly designed and have a kitchenette, a room with a balcony, which combines the functions of dining room, rest and sleeping, and a bathroom suitable for the disabled. Emergency call buttons have been installed in the apartments.

Apartments for families differ in having a larger area and an additional room for a child and are not equipped with call systems.

Social and integrative aspects

In the multigenerational house, service functions are located on the first floor. On the north side there was a kindergarten, on the park side a canteen, commercial spaces, club and recreational rooms and the administration of the day home, as well as wheelchair and bicycle rooms. The eastern part of the first floor was intended for garages on two floors. In addition, each floor has separate indoor spaces for the integration of residents, with access to balconies as well as common spaces (Fig. 18), with a recreation courtyard in the western part, near the club room, with an outdoor gym and a playground.



Fig. 18. Separated common room in the multigenerational house in Wrocław
Source: own photo (2019).

Organization of additional activities

Different types of activities can take place in common rooms, which are designed on each floor, except on the first floor, within the corridor area as separate rooms available to residents according to their willingness and ideas for these activities. no information.

Comments

A multi-generational house in Wroclaw offers support with medical and social care thanks to the functions of a rehabilitation center and a gym on the first floor of the building. In terms of education, a kindergarten is an accompanying function. Various animation activities are within the willingness and possibilities of the residents of the house in the separate rooms for joint meetings of the residents.

RESULTS

The research conducted has shown that there is a lack of systemic support in Poland (as in the case of the German multigenerational house program) for the construction of alternative forms

of housing to meet the needs of a long-lived and aging society, such as Multigenerational Houses (MH). In recent years, three local governments in Poland have developed experimental designs of multigenerational houses as places of housing, support, and integration for different social groups. The literature research shows that architectural and spatial solutions implemented in the form of various housing projects should fit harmoniously into the context of the location and ensure the availability of services and support when needed. The analyzed case studies show that the multigenerational houses are located in different urban contexts (MH in Lodz – the city center, MH in Warsaw – a neighborhood, MH in Wroclaw – a settlement in the suburbs), but all are located in close proximity to basic services and public transportation. Two of the studied buildings

Table 2. Comparative conclusions related to the support system for older people in terms of choice and deliberate transition to alternative forms of housing

Multigenerational house	Architectural and spatial aspects	Supporting physical activity for residents	Supporting psychological well-being	Social and integrative facilities	Organization of additional activities
Multigenerational house in Lodz	16 Apartments common space common	activities of NGO (of Multigenerational house operator), e.g., joint planting	Christmas workshops, family picnics, most activities are for children	Local Activity Place as part of the DW, where events are organized for the residents of the house, as well as openness to involve the local community for integration	activities suspended in 2022
Multigenerational rental house in Warsaw	12 apartments and 7 common rooms	-	provision of spaces in the apartment building for coexistence with neighbors, but also activities that go beyond the multigenerational building and involve neighbors from neighboring apartment buildings	in 2021, the Club Café opened in the multigenerational house as a place for leisure activities for all social groups	activities and integrative measures in Stalowa Street in Warsaw (next door)
Multigenerational house in Wroclaw	57 subsidized apartments and 60 apartments for young families	gymnasium and rehabilitation center with integration rooms on each floor for residents	integration spaces on each floor for residents	additional services, e.g. kindergarten, rehabilitation center, canteen, business premises, club and recreation rooms and the administration of the day center	on their own, residents in the area of the rooms in the area of the corridors

Source: own study.

were built as an adaptation of a 19th century villa (MH in Lodz) and as an adaptation of an apartment building (MH in Warsaw), and one of them as a newly designed building (MH in Wroclaw).

Within the case study analysis, the comparative conclusions presented in Table 2 were selected components of multigenerational houses.

This research examined how the spatial solutions of multigenerational houses ensures the implementation of the three pillars with which multigenerational houses which are equipped according to the German model. As part of the analysis of 3 multigenerational houses in Poland, the design of the space of these houses can be observed based on 3 pillars in the following areas:

- **care:** based on literature review, physical support aims to reduce the risk of chronic disease, maintain mobility, and improve general wellbeing. Positive mental health support aims to help older people maintain their independence, increase their resilience, adapt to age-related difficulties, and learn to respond appropriately. The multigenerational house in Wroclaw is equipped with additional functions of a rehabilitation center, other multigenerational homes have no additional functions in this respect. Flats can be equipped with telecare systems in the form of devices that allow individuals to track their physical activity, monitor their health and stay in touch with caregivers. In the case of the multigenerational house in Lodz, the apartments for the elderly are equipped with call systems (telecare); in the case of the multigenerational house in Lodz and Warsaw, there are no such alternatives;
- **education:** based on literature review, establishing and maintaining social contacts and leisure activities enable older adults to participate in social life, maintain cognitive function and reduce the risk of depression and other mental health problems. The multigenerational house in Wroclaw is equipped with an accompanying function – a kindergarten that can promote intergenerational integration; the other facilities are not equipped with educational functions. Education at various levels can take

place within the framework of organized events and meetings in the multifunctional common rooms set up in the three houses;

- **animation:** based on literature review, it is important to maintain and create new ways of communicating with the outside world and participating in social life. In this way, by using separate activities to support older people in practice, you can effectively achieve goals in various areas of life. Each of the three houses has spaces for joint neighborhood meetings, such as the Neighborhood Club in the multi-generational house in Lodz, flexible spaces on each floor in the multi-generational house in Wroclaw and a local café on the first floor of the multi-generational house in Warsaw. Each of these spaces is also open to the local community (as part of organized meetings), with the exception of the café in the multigenerational house in Warsaw, which is open at certain times. In the case of the multigenerational house in Lodz, activities ceased after 2022, when a conflict arose between the residents of the house (at the time of the research).

The variety of alternative approaches to life management and care in process of ageing should allow different social groups to choose the most appropriate and desirable lifestyle, depending on the available options and services. It is important to combine different social and age groups with different economic status, different lifestyles within the framework of alternative living arrangements that can ensure independent living in an intergenerational community and counteract the isolation and loneliness of different social groups. The research findings on the importance of building and implementing new organizational models and everyday practices that change the concept of social relations and housing, which are necessary for creating an environment conducive to healthy and positive aging, show that architectural, spatial, technical, and technological solutions can act as prerequisites (foundations) necessary to further develop and implement them. Apart from Internet access, the multigenerational homes studied were not equipped with modern technologies. An exception is the newly designed

multigenerational house in Wrocław, which was equipped with call systems in the apartments for elderly people. Multigenerational houses should be an incentive for central, regional, and local authorities to systematically include this type of housing in government programs or other projects and initiatives in Poland, as is the case in Germany (multigenerational house). Multigenerational houses can also be an important element in counteracting ageism in the planning and design of urban space (as opposed to housing estates for 60+) and building an ecosystem of support in the field of accessible housing, social integration and social care for Polish society and local authorities on the way to building age-friendly communities and preparing for long life. The Multigenerational Houses can be a response not only to demographic change, but also to the challenges associated with the difficult housing situation generally. Some cities, such as Łódź, have gone through the transformation phase very painfully. The decline of the textile industry's role in shaping the cityscape was not accompanied by the payment of compensation that representatives of other professions received. A major resource was destroyed without any new growth being generated (Kucharska-Stasiak, 2008). Such cities require a change in the cityscape and innovative ideas for the urban renewal and housing resources, of which this may be an example of Multigenerational Housing.

CONCLUSIONS

The effectiveness of implementing housing in Polish cities that supports people at every stage of the human life cycle can be ensured by implementing a comprehensive support system whose elements combine social, technical, and technological, and gerontological innovations. The synergistic effect is achieved through appropriate architectural and spatial solutions, support of health, physical activity and functional status, psychological and social support, and organization of additional activities. Gerontological, social, technical, and technological innovations have the potential to accelerate the transition

from institutional and curative care to supportive and preventive care to enable people to live long and healthy lives. Research on the experience of establishing and operating multigenerational homes in Polish cities has confirmed their potential to integrate the following spatial and social aspects in the context of 3 pillar of German's model of multigenerational houses (care, education, animation). There is a great need for education and training in this area. Prospects for future research include expanding research on the list of alternative housing types in Polish cities and their potential for implementation at the central, regional, and local levels, as mixed-use systems for housing, care, education, and integration (animation).

It was not possible for the author to conduct broader sociological and economic studies with the inhabitants of the houses; these were only individual interviews, so it would be worthwhile conducting such studies, e.g., using the POE method researching the needs of residents while using these facilities in order to better respond to changing needs. Another aspect that has not been considered in this study and could represent a further step in this direction is research related to the financing of the operation of multigenerational homes, especially maintenance costs and issues related to their optimization. The author is aware that this requires an interdisciplinary team of researchers from sociology, economics, and psychology, which could be a further step towards more comprehensive research in this area. This will be a further research step to diagnose the spatial needs of residents on their way to healthy longevity and positive aging.

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