

Housing estates and complexes in Wrocław in the years 1918 – 1940 Weimar Republic and the Third Reich

Scientific purpose

- **The scientific goal of the research project will be to present the influence of the city authorities on the housing policy of Wrocław in the interwar period and to show the specific values of this housing construction against the background of the situation in Germany at that time (activities of the Werkbund and the State Research Society for Economics in Construction and Housing - Reichsforschungsgesellschaft für Wirtschaftlichkeit im Bau- und Wohnungswesen – RFG, Ch. Dawes' plan) and against the background of the city's problems regarding the lack of land for development (competition for the city's development and discussion on the first general plan).**
- **The next goal will be to present the transformations in the development of complexes, housing estates and apartments during the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich in Wrocław, in relation to the social situation in Germany at that time.**

The changes in architecture concerned not only the form of houses, but also construction solutions, building materials, color scheme, layout of apartments, the way of living in the houses promoted at that time, and new urban planning, which was a composition not only of residential houses, but also of functions accompanying housing complexes (churches, trade, services).

Description of research

The research group will consist of 4 people. The research was divided into three phases: study phase, in situ research and summary phase.

Project participants will use research methods typical of the workshop of a historian of architecture and urban planning, as well as the classic methodology of a historian critically examining archival and written sources and their hermeneutical interpretation.

The development will be consistent with the long-term strategy of the European Union, which pays special attention to historic buildings and historic urban complexes. This results from the awareness of the important role of heritage in shaping the identity of Europeans, countries and regions.

The study will be consistent with the standards of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP). Two members from the team have experience in developing CMP, as they were beneficiaries of a grant from The Getty Foundation, in 2015/16 ([Centennial Hall in Wrocław: Conservation Management Plan \(getty.edu\)](https://www.getty.edu/conservation/centennial_hall_wroclaw/)).

Reason for undertaking the research topic

In today's world of building developer housing complexes with parameters dependent on profit, we need to look at housing complexes built in the interwar period, which still exist today and are still in use. Moreover, they enjoy great sympathy among the inhabitants, despite their progressive degradation and lack of proper conservation activities. It is therefore necessary to find, using scientific methods, the reasons for this state of affairs.

The destruction and the need for proper revalorization require the launch of programs to save this valuable heritage of the city. The problem of housing construction at that time has not been comprehensively developed to this day, and no inventory of housing estates has been carried out.

The most important expected effects

The final result of the research will be:

- Creation of the first synthetic study on the housing development of Wrocław in the years 1918-1940.
- Formulating an answer to the question - What is the value of pre-war housing complexes?
- Preparation of conservation proposals that will be useful for conservation services and architects dealing with the revitalization of such housing complexes.
- Indicating the need to launch appropriate revitalization programs for pre-war Wrocław; this is extremely important in the context of the trends already presented by the European Union. By the middle of this century, architects will be more concerned with renovating old buildings than designing new ones, out of concern for respecting our living environment.

The analysis of the social character of housing development in the years 1918-1940 and the application of the research results to the present day should be considered as the innovative nature of the research.

The collected material will be used to diagnose the suitability of Wrocław's estates from the interwar period for the modern city. This is particularly important for Wrocław, because residential houses were built for a different society and different needs.

The research work will be completed in a comprehensive report, the content of which will be made available for use by various stakeholders (conservator, architects, developers, students and researchers, ...)