FEELING THE SENSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD

by Taja Benčina
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ABSTRACT

The following paper is a description of an investigation on human connections in living environment. This topic was researched, as human beings today are more and more individualistic. Moreover, such social characteristic is highly present in Slovenian social environment, which served as a context of this investigation. Therefore, the main research question posed has been: how should a neighborhood in Ljubljana be designed and organized according to its functional and physical characteristics that it would encourage connections between its inhabitants, individuals? Research was divided into theoretical and practical part. In the first one, mostly, literature was studied, where in the second one, nine interviews were made with the residents of the city Ljubljana. A notion ‘the sense of neighborhood’ was realized as a crucial point in connecting inhabitants in the neighborhood. Furthermore, it has contained two sub-notions, interactions in and identity of the built environment. A list of characteristics of built environment was collected, firstly, encouraging interaction and secondly, strengthening identity. These principles were verified with the use of interviews and are answering the set research question.
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The problematic aspect of these trends is that, on one side, separate units combined are not creating unified urban environment, but moreover, the problem occurring is that in this kind of environment, there is no common places for individuals to connect, to interact. As Mandić (Mandić, 2005) points out, common space is necessary for the existence of diverse groups and their connecting, a space, in which connecting processes in community or civil society can constantly ongoing and renewing. The lack of common spaces in today’s local environment should be, according to Mandič, a consequence of the elimination of so-called local communities, as a mean of collective managing, known in the former social system in Slovenia (as a part of Yugoslavia). As side product, also, an erosion of local and communal identities occurred.

Firstly, this text proves that individualism is a strong value or orientation, present in Slovenian social context. Moreover, individualism has influenced the formation and organization of built environment. On one hand, the environment is less unified and on the other, there is a lack of common spaces. Consequently, because of this phenomenon, inhabitants are less connected one to another. As individualism has been considered as problematic, it has been taken as a drive and starting point of this research.

Strong individualism in Slovenia is also evident from the organization of built environment. According to Ivanšek (Ivanšek, 1988), the most typical and highly popular type of housing in Slovenia is detached single-family house, which is high individualistic. Individuals wish to possess individual house, standing in the middle of a parcel, with a path going around the house. On the other hand, each individual house should differ from others in at least some details, as for example, color. This individuals’ tendencies are partly traditional rooted, but are, moreover, the legacy of the past social system.

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1_ LITERATURE REVIEW

“The literature” is defined, “as a body of information, existing in a wide variety of stored formats, that has conceptual relevance for a particular topic of inquiry” (Groat, 2002).

Studied literature has embraced different relevant books, as well as research papers. It has been used mostly in the first, theoretical, part of the research. Opinions from various authors, deriving from different backgrounds, were studied. The list of literature is attached at the end of the theoretical part. Firstly, literature was studied to define the framework of the research. Next to that, it served as a tool for defining the background topics relevant for the research. Mostly, literature was used to answer the research question, find out how to connect inhabitants within the neighborhood, through or with the use of architectural means.

Some sociological literature was studied to identify social phenomena such as modern social conditions, individualism, individualization, communities, social networks, the sense of neighborhood, interactions, public space and public domain, identity and identity of neighborhood. Secondly, additional literature linked to the field of architecture was investigated, to find out about architectural properties relevant for answering the research question and for defining next terms, functional diversity, functional distribution, indetermination of spaces, articulation of spaces, siting, readability of space, distinctiveness and unity and so forth.

As literature derived from various cultural backgrounds, it was mostly not linked to specific Slovenian conditions.


2_ OBSERVATIONS

During the theoretical research, an assignment was taken identifying different types of interactions in an outside physical space, as well as recognizing different types of outside spaces, where interactions happen. Different kinds of interactions were observed, photographed and classified. The interactions were observed in three cities: Delft, Venice and Ljubljana, the locations within these cities were diverse and not linked to the context of neighborhoods. Apparently, the observations do not apply to Slovenian context only. The course of the assignment is described in the chapter ‘Interactions and space’.

3_ SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The practical part of the research is structured according to the analysis of the interviews. This methodology was used to verify the conclusions from the theoretical part, within the Slovenian context. Nine semi-structured interviews were taken with the nine different inhabitants of Ljubljana, potential clients of the neighborhood. Five of participants were women, in the age from 25 until 43 years old, where other four inhabitants were men, in the age from 25 till 65 years old. Each interview has included 25 questions, which are attached at the end of this paper. However, depending on the interview, some extra, not structured, questions were taken. Interviews took from half an hour until one hour, they were taken separately, at different places and time frames. The content of the interviews is described and presented in the second, practical part of this paper.
RESEARCH SCHEME

A problem

Theoretical part of the research

Practical part of the research

- Literature
- Observations
- Interviews
THEORETICAL
RESEARCH
INTRODUCTION

Human beings are nowadays more individually orientated, therefore, they are less connected to each other. Consequently, a purpose of this research has been to investigate on how it is possible to connect individuals within a neighbourhood, mostly, by the help or through built environment, more specifically, with the use of functional and physical characteristics of the neighbourhood. In the first, theoretical part, literature was used to explore this problem. Theoretical part of the exploration was not link to specific Slovenian conditions, but to a wider social context.
A collection of various sources had a common theme, connecting individuals in a context of built environment or a neighborhood. Here, a notion neighborhood means, in geographical terms, a distinctive area in a city or a town consisting of a collection of residential units. Additionally, in sociological terms, it means a gathering of individuals, who might be connected via geographically based relationships or being neighbours. Others main terms used within this research and in research question, such as for example, individualism, connections between individuals, the sense of neighborhood, interaction, common space, identity and etc., will be defined in related chapters.

Firstly, some sociological literature was studied to identify recent social phenomenon marked as individualism. According to many, an individual today became a basic unit of society and replaced the former one, a family. As this phenomenon is omnipresent it should be understand properly. Following, it was studied, how people have been connecting within the built context. As the intention was to bond inhabitants through the built environment, I used the notion sense of neighborhood and predicted that you can connect the inhabitants through the sense of belonging to their environment. This notion can be then further on divided into two poles, it is possible to strengthen the sense of neighborhood with an increased level of interactions between residents and with strong identity of the neighborhood. Therefore, an additional part of investigation was concerned with collecting principles that encourage interaction in the neighborhood and are linked to functional and physical characteristics of built environment. Similar exploration was done to find out, how it is possible to strengthen identity of the neighborhood. These main several principles are also the main points, which can be used, when designing a neighborhood. Their importance is based on convictions of various authors or on established behavioral patterns of our social environment. Presupposing, a design including them would encourage connections in a neighborhood, however, there is no guarantee for such result.

Following, the structure of this paper and its content by the chapters will be explained. The text is written as narrative or a collection of facts and information in linear order, therefore, it should be read in such order. In the first chapter, ‘Individualism: a problem’ present social conditions linked to a notion of individualism will be explained. The term individualism will be defined, as well as related term individualization. Social conditions changed drastically form the past, even though, it is hard to extract certain historical points causing this changes, some influences, encouraging individualism, can be identified. Finally, individualists can be characterized, as they behave in a certain way. Their mostly negative characteristics will be highlighted within the same chapter.

In chapter named ‘Connections between individuals’ the nature of connections between people in the living environment in the past and today will be described. In traditional societies people were strongly connected to others closely living human beings. Similar conditions that have been causing individualism, loosened bonds between people. It will be illuminated, how the nature of bonds, linked to built environment, has been changing historically and how it is today. Especially, because the phenomenon of individualism has risen, connections between inhabitants are extremely prominent.

Local neighborhood is significant in the lives of residents, as most of their experience and meaning is based there. In the local environment human beings form relations, but they also evolve an attachment towards the neighborhood. In the next chapter, ‘The sense of the neighborhood’ this notion will be described more specifically and recognized as crucial link for connecting inhabitants through the attachment to their environment. Also, its division in sub-terms will be defined. The first phenomenon affecting the sense of neighborhood is interaction. In the segment ‘Interactions and space’ this process will be defined. Interactions can be divided in four groups and each of these groups is connected to different kind of spaces. These groups were observed within a photo-
Today we live in an era of ‘late modern’, according to numerous sociologists, like Ulrich Beck (Beck, 1992) and so forth. This is an epoch of processes such as ‘globalization’, ‘de-traditionalization’ and ‘individualization’. Late modern can be also marked as ‘liquid modernity’, a term introduced by Zygmund Bauman (Bauman, 1992), which means a society occupied by informational flows, also a society, where social structure is replaced by ‘matrix of random connections’ and where human beings need to act flexible and changing their social positions according to instantaneous changes to ensure their own prosperity. Furthermore, in this era, “… the individual is becoming the basic unit of social reproduction for the first time in history. To put it in a nutshell - individualization is becoming the social structure of second modern society itself” as Ulrich Beck points out (Beck, 2001, p. XXii).

As demonstrated, individualism is a characteristic phenomenon of today’s society. Taking this into account, the beginning part of the research was dedicated to the exploration of this occurrence. Therefore, in this first chapter, these findings will be presented. Firstly, the difference between individualization and individualism will be pointed out. Then, most notable historic principles, causing individualism will be briefly described, mostly, to understand why this phenomenon is highly rooted in contemporary society. Finally, the characteristics of individualists can be positive, however, predominate are the negative connotations, therefore, they will be highlighted, also it will be explained why they are problematic. Understanding these problems will be particularly important for the future reading.
Further on, it is significant to distinguish between two terms, individualization and individualism, as one is representing a social process and the other a characteristic of a person. Both of them will be defined, however, mostly, term individualism is relevant for the future understanding.

Firstly, individualization stands for a process, influencing many changes in the contemporary social structure. As Beck points out, “… individualization means the disintegration of previously existing social forms - for example, the increasing fragility of such categories as class and social status, gender roles, family, neighborhood etc.” (Beck, 2001, p.2). In other words, with the process of individualization traditional structure of the society transformed drastically, mostly, occurrences such as social groups, collective values and norms almost distinguished, where on the other hand, individual tendencies increased, moreover, individualism became a representative value.

Finally, individualism means an ideology or a value, also, “…the orientation of the man to himself (or to his family), to the pursuit of his own goals and interests and it also means the society, where social ties between members are not strong,” according to Milan Zver and Tjaša Živko (Zver, Živko, 1991, p.48). As the collective norms are less durable, individual is convicted to frame his own subjective rules, his own life and biography, consequently, he is more self-sufficient.

It can be concluded, that past processes have loosened the bonds between social members and shattered the human relations. Further research was, therefore, pointed towards revealing the causes for the rise of the individualism.

To begin with, it needs to be expressed that it is nearly impossible to extract reasons, which had a vital role in framing individualized society. However, in this next part, some crucial motives, which might have been encouraging individualism, will be expressed.

Starting with, an important issue was surely the emphasis of personal freedom quite some years ago, “as de Tocqueville long suspected, setting people free may make them indifferent,” as Bauman points out (Bauman, 2000, p. 36). The liberation of the individual made him more interested in his or her own persona, his or her own personal achievements and goals, therefore, less receptive for collective good. “… The ‘project of self’, with an emphasis on individual self-fulfillment and personal development, comes to replace relational, social aims,” according to Duncan and Darren (Duncan, Darren, 2006, p.4).

Further on, emphasising the personal freedom, firstly, resulted in setting up personal rules and biographies, but moreover, intensified in stressing ones intimate matters. Individuals focusing on their personal self-fulfillment represent, what Richard Sennet calls ‘intimate society’. This term describes society, where relations between people are based only on expressing emotions. In given circumstances, the only way to protect yourself from exposure to others is to depart in isolation. (Sennet, 1977) Clearly, the state of ‘departing in isolation’ is contributing to the occurrence of individualism.

Another cause that influenced the rise of individualism came from the period of Industrial revolution. Radical changes in this period modified human perception, they enhanced the transformation of physical environment, moreover, the social character changed profoundly. For example, a change occurred was that main working facilities, large industries were placed on the periphery, therefore, work was separated from local living environment. A consequence was that people spent less time in their local built environment, thus also relations between humans partly detached from living settings.

Further on, another characteristic of the period of industrialization was so-called ‘mass production’. In the time, series of the same products were manufactured. The trend of the time also influenced the formation of the unified norms. Therefore, we could see the individualism as reaction and objection to ‘common rules’ formed by industrialization. Also, the logic behind industrial capitalism highlighted the phenomenon of individualism, as it has encouraged people focusing on their own profits and not on the cooperation with others. This fact is pointed out by the following statement by Zygmund Bauman, “Individual exposure to the vagaries of commodity-and-labor markets inspires and promotes division, not unity; it puts a premium on competitive attitudes, while degrading collaboration and team work to the rank of temporary strategies that need to suspended or terminated the moment their benefits have been used up” (Bauman, 2007, p. 2,3).

Additionally, economic conditions improved in the 20th century, consequently, people became less dependent on others and thus, less attached to one another. The ‘increased prosperity’ is stimulating individualism, according to Herman Hertzberger (1991, p. 48).

Finally, in more recent times, due to the increased potential of technology, people are more attached to the technical apparatus, such as for example computers. They can work, educate, entertain themselves or order necessities and commodities, without leaving certain place and engaging in any physical human contact.

Exposed above are just some extracted facts. It is assumed that they have contributed to the escalation of the individualism. They influenced this social change and altered the humans’ behavioral patterns. The further research was focused on the exploration of these new patterns and features of the individualists.

Nowadays, individuals, deprived of collective norms, with no clear authority, are free-choosers of their life-trajectories. This may, on one hand be positive, as individuals have a ‘precarious freedom’ to customize their lifestyles and be more independent. However, there exists a strong negative side of this story.

To explain it more into depth, people today are compelled to frame their defensive autobiographies’. As Beck illuminates: “One was born into traditional society and its preconditions (such as social estate and religion). For modern social advantages one has to do something, to take an active effort” (Beck, 2001, p.3). On one hand, individuals are obliged to take decisions for their lives, where on the other, it is expected that they would be responsible for their own choices, as there is no real cover of higher social mechanism. Moreover, they need to be flexible and, in any given moment, adapt their life-styles to ever-changing conditions. Therefore, their everyday life focus on the short-term achieving goals and it is full of risks. As this has become a common course, Ulrich Beck introduces their own new term describing these conditions, the ‘Society of risk’. More problematic is that everyday risks intensify in a state of permanent uncertainty, which also brings stress in the everyday lives of people.

Finally, individualism is predominantly a negative phenomenon or a value, as individualists are oriented towards their self-fulfillment, compelled to frame their life-styles and left alone in a condition of stress, if failing on their mission.

To summarize this chapter, one of the strong contemporary social values is individualism. It is indicating more self-assured social members and fewer connections between them. The importance of this phenomenon was increasing with a parallel of many past social processes or changes, such as for example the liberation of human beings, the occurrence of industrial revolution and the further development of industry, also with the rise of social-economic orientation, marked as capitalism and finally, with the development of
recent technologies. The stronger that individualism became, more it became problematic. Today, individuals are forced to play actively and left on their own, to find out their life-paths. As the conditions are changing on daily basis, they need to be in a constant standby, prepared to react on current changes and take risks. Thus, stress is their regular companion, causing physical and psychological instability.
CONNECTIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS

To begin with, the main focus of the research was to find out, how to connect individuals in their living environment, through the built environment. Therefore, in the second part of the exploration, it was investigated, what has been the nature of connections between people in the living environment. Following, it will be described, firstly, how people were connecting in living settlements in traditional societies, then, how this changed and why. Furthermore, it will be explained, what is the nature of bonds between human beings today and most importantly, why connecting in neighborhood is still so significant. Finally, it was investigated and will be explained, what are the potential causes for linking individuals.
First indication of social connections, ties or collective social form in built environment can be noted as community. There exist many definitions on what community may mean. However, the main motive for its formation, in the past, was a permanent geographical location or setting. At that time, people were tight to their local environment, further on, drastic social transformations changed this perception. Inversely proportional with the rise of individualism, social connections became flexible, weak and less valued.

In pre-capitalists, traditional societies strong hierarchy between its members indicated stronger and more cohesive social unity. Communities were mostly tied to local villages, where relations were mostly formed between family members, close neighbors and often represented a strong kinship. The specific was that connections between co-inhabitants were intimate, private, open and emotional. Inhabitants generally worked for common good and maintained land together. An important sociologist, studying communities (traditional and post-traditional), was Ferdinand Toennies, who understood traditional community as, “a creative process of interaction which involves moral commitment and loyalty to a social form and provides to participants a sense of unity and belonging.” He also marked pre-capitalist community as ‘Gemeinschaft’ (Macionis, 1978, p.2). Another important sociologist, studying communities (traditional and post-traditional), was Ferdinand Toennies, who understood traditional community as, “a creative process of interaction which involves moral commitment and loyalty to a social form and provides to participants a sense of unity and belonging.”

As traditional social structure changed, firstly, by the effects of industrialization, capitalism and further on by consumerism of masses, many strive towards an old social arrangement, community and started seeing it as an ideal. “Demands for a community-oriented approach came to the fore in the 1950s,” according to Simon Richards (Menin, 2003, p. 113). The participants of this ‘movements’ were nostalgic about the communities and the idea of fixed homes, what manifested, mostly, in regeneration of the old traditional settlements and in establishment of new neighborhoods. This ‘vibrace’ started mostly in America, where new models of suburbs were introduced. “A vast development of homes going up in Miramar, Florida, is being called the world’s most perfect community by its backers,” as to Simon Richds explains (Menin, 2003, p. 114). However, there appeared also opposed opinions as a reaction to the ‘striving towards community’ movements. Figures such as Reisman, Packard, Gans and Whyte, at least partially, express skepticism to new rose models, jeopardizing the autonomy of individuals (Menin, 2003). Moreover, in 1960s Jane Jacobs gain many followers by promoting communal ideas. She strived towards redevelopement of cities and suburbs, mostly by focusing on re-encouraging of social ties between inhabitants. She was considering the notion of community as non-problematic, but saw it as a ‘collective struggle for survival’. Furthermore, ‘Congress for New Urbanism’ in 1993, in America was another merchant ‘movement’, emphasizing the importance of connections between inhabitants in the built environment and the significance of community. Its members were promoting diversity of land uses, facilities in walkable distances, open public spaces and so-on. Most of their principles were positive and very noble, however, they had exaggerated expectations, when proposing models, where people would be re-connected in a closed-up traditional-like communities and sharing intimate emotional bonds (Kim, Kaplan, 2004).

We can grasp from the described that even though in the ‘modern’ age social structure changed drastically and connections between people became less strong and reflexive, there was and would probably always exist a nostalgic wish towards communities. As Bauman points out, “In short, ‘community’ stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us - but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to repossess” (Bauman, 2001, p. 3).

**CONNECTIONS NOWADAYS**

Despite all the attempts for the reestablishment of the community in a local built environment, most of sociologist, mainly in Twenty-First Century, but already in the Twenty century, viewed social connections between individuals as social networks, not tight to specific location.

According to some sociologists, even contemporary communities were found in networks, not closed-up groups. Barry Wellman points out the following, “I define ‘community’ as networks of interpersonal ties that provide sociability, support, information, a sense of belonging, and social identity. I do not limit my thinking about community to neighborhoods and villages” (Wellman, 2001, p.2).

But more importantly, the characteristics of the connections between individuals in ‘Network society’ are that they are extremely flexible and not tied to specific location. Individuals interact with diverse others and are engaged in multiple networks, also, there is no strong social hierarchies.

Further on, according to Zygmund Bauman: “Society’ is increasingly viewed and treated as a ‘network’ rather than a ‘structure’ (let alone a solid ‘totality’): it is perceived and treated as a matrix of random connections and disconnections and of an essentially infinite volume of possible permutations” (Bauman, 2007, p.3).

The fact that society is currently operating as sum of networks between different social members, not as totally of closed bonded social groups is certainly an important characteristic and should not be neglected. This should be of extreme importance, when making a residential settlement.

In this part, I would like to highlight that even though we live in an era of radical transformations, strong globalization, mobility and so-fort, people do tend to establish their lives in a local built environment. Therefore, also, the degree of connections on local level is highly important.

This fact is also highlighted by the quotation from the book ‘In search of new public domain’ by Hajer and Reijndorp: “What is distinctive of new social structure, the networked society, is that most dominant processes, concentrating pow- ers, wealth, and information, are organized in the space of flows. Most human experience, and meaning, are still locally based” (Hajer, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 60). Moreover, many sociological researches were done on the theme of connections in neighborhoods, as for example the one form Maša Filipović Hrast and Vesna Dolničar (2011), which had illuminated that despite of ‘postmodern trends’ of decreased connection to place and so forth, local neighborhood is still relevant for people. “Neighborhoods represent a place where people form ties, develop relations, and establish trust,” as they point out (Filipović Hrast, Dolničar 2011, p. 1). Moreover, even, if human beings consciously would not care about their local environment, their everyday life is still depended and
highly influenced by the way neighborhoods are formed and organized.

Furthermore, openness brought by globalization and everyday risks taken by individuals are bringing general uncertainty and stress, as already explained in the previous chapter. “On the individual level, stronger networks in the neighborhood and belonging to the neighborhood have been proven to reduce stress and fear and increase physical and psychological well-being and satisfaction,” according to Filipović Hrst and Dolničar (Filipović Hrst, Dolničar, 2011, p.2).

Nevertheless, it also depends, where on the globe neighborhood is established. As different locations are differently exposed to the processes, such as globalization and mobility, therefore, the amount of the connection between inhabitants and their wish towards the relations with others may vary drastically from place to place.

Today, an unconditional attempt to relate individuals in a close-related, closed unity, with its self-established norms, as what community was in traditional sense, would be unjustified. Nonetheless, it is important to encourage connection between inhabitants on local level, but, within this, they still need to maintain their ‘freedom and individuality’.

“In developed modernity—…human mutuality and community rest no longer on solidly established traditions, but, rather, on a paradoxical collectivity of reciprocal individuals,” according to Beck (Beck, 2001, XXi). Also, a neighborhood should not be seen as closed-up entity, but it should establish many relations with external environment, thus increasing the level of social networks. “We must first of all drop any ideal of neighborhoods as self-contained or introverted units,” as Jane Jacobs points it out (Jacobs, 1961, p. 114). She also explains that a neighborhood established in the city operates different as the one in small town, as the city is bigger it can never achieve the degree of intimacy in the town. Therefore, the introverted neighborhood in the city cannot operate well, even more, it can be harmful for the city itself as degrading it in smaller segments. (Jacobs, 1961)

### CAUSE FOR CONNECTING

In the past, there were several causes, why people ‘summed up’, however, nowadays, as each individual lives his or her own life, looking for ‘common cause’ became problematic. Here, it will be briefly discussed, what were and what might be different reasons encouraging social connections.

There are several motives for human integration, as Beck points out, such as, common values, national consciousness or joint share in prosperity might be the motives. However, due to the diversification of cultural perceptions, but moreover, reflexive biographies established by individuals, make it hard to bind over common values or national consciousness. (Beck, 2001, p. 17, 18) As for ‘joint material interests’ is concerning, in my opinion, the problem is in the competitive attitudes between individuals, as they promote short-term collaboration.

Another cause pointed out by Bauman might be the following, “The sharing of intimacies, as Richard Sennett keeps pointing out, tends to be the preferred, perhaps the only remaining, method of ‘community building’” (Bauman, 2000, p. 37).

Though, if the only link between individuals would be emotions and feelings, connections would be short-lived. In such society, mutual relations are oriented towards satisfying emotional needs, but if they fail to achieve that, they rapidly fade away. Moreover, the cause for connecting might be simply the negative consequence of individualism, the risks people are facing on everyday bases. “It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that the daily struggle for a life of one’s own has become the collective experience of the Western world. It expresses the remnant of our communal feeling,” as Beck illuminates it (Beck, 2001, p. 23) Nevertheless, people need example of how others are confronting with similar troubles in the everyday life. However, this cannot be the main reason for bonds between individuals.

Finally, maybe the reason itself is not of such importance, as it is still left to individual to decide. In my opinion, concerning the built environment, the only solution here is, the establishment of possibilities and opportunities for individuals to meet unintentionally, on one hand and identifying common activities they are engaging in, on the other, and then hoping they would relate upon common interest or just mutual need, which might once grow into relationship.

To sum-up and conclude this episode, there is a huge difference between how social structure was showing in traditional societies and how it is appearing in post-industrial organization. In traditional societies, bonds in communities were strong, intimate and open, moreover, tight to specific location. Mostly, rapid changes carried by the processes of industrialization, transformed the nature of connections between human beings, they became more short-lived and ever changing. Through the history, many attempts were made trying to re-establish the ‘traditional’ communities, some more others less successful. Today, predominant conviction is that the links between individuals are drastically different from that in the past, extremely flexible and marked as social networks. However, regardless the nature of the connections, it is proven by many sociologists that the level of social connections in the living environment, neighborhood is extremely important, as most of the human experience and meaning is based there. Also, they, connections, tend to increase inhabitants’ well-being. But, another attempt to bond human beings in a traditional-like community would not be fruitful, therefore, it is important to connect individuals in such a way that they, until some point, maintain they ‘freedom and individuality’. Moreover, it needs to be, when making a neighborhood, assured that it has a relation with its external context, thus enlarging the area for possibility of social networks. As architects, the only attempt we can do is try to link the inhabitants with the clever organization and physical manifestation of the built environment itself.
As already identified, local environment is of a large importance in the everyday life of inhabitants. In the neighborhood people develop connections, relations and after a certain amount of time, also a special attachment towards the environment itself. The next part of the research focused more on a built environment itself. It was explored, what were the essences, characteristics of built environment influencing sociability and connection between dwellers. Within that, the notion ‘sense of neighborhood’ was recognized as a crucial link. It was predicted that you could connect different inhabitants through the sense of belonging to their environment. Moreover, we can assume that "... your relations with others are influenced by the environment…", as Hertzberger argues (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 47).

Therefore, further on, it will be explained, what the term sense of the neighborhood means, why it is relevant and how it can be further on divided in sub-terms, relevant for the following narrative.
A SENSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD

To begin with, two similar terms are used in different sociological studies, describing similar issues. One is the ‘sense of community’, where the other is ‘sense of neighborhood’. First, both will be defined and the difference between two will be revealed. As might be expected, there are several definitions for both terms, where here, important acknowledgements will be summarized. More importantly, it will be explained, how a term the sense of neighborhood embraces two sub-elements, interactions in neighborhood and identity of the built environment.

“Sense of community is one of the concepts used to capture people’s perceptions of their locality, their feelings toward it, their sense of belonging, and their relationships within it,” as described by Maša Filipovič Hrast and Vesna Dolničar (Filipovič Hrast, Dolničar, 2011, p.3). Usually, sense of community refers more to the psychological or symbolical elements of the environment.

Further on, similarly, the sense of neighborhood refers to human perception of their environment, attachment to it and relations, feelings in a local environment. According to Filipovič Hrast, “… a sense of neighborhood refers to having a positive attitude toward one’s neighborhood and cohesive relations in the neighborhood and it is defined here as a feeling of attachment to one’s neighborhood, having social relations in the neighborhood, and a trusting relationship with one’s neighbors” (Filipovič Hrast, Dolničar, 2011, p.5).

However, where the concept of the sense of community is more associated with symbolic elements, the sense of neighborhood is concerned with physical elements or characteristics of the environment.

Further on, the term ‘sense of local environment’ may be further on divided into some sub-elements. In the study ‘Physical and Psychological Factors in Sense of Community: New Urbanism Kentlands and Village’, they explain that four different indicators are embraced by this notion. In this point, I need to emphasize that even though they are referring to the term sense of community, they are mostly focusing on the physical factors of environment. They distinguished between four different components: community or place attachments, community or place identity, social interaction and pedestrianism. Further on, they can be divided in two distinctive poles. On one hand, community or place attachment and pedestrianism present mostly an individual perception on the sense of living environment, where on the other hand, community or place identity and social interactions present the collective perception of the same term. (Kim, Kaplan, 2004)

Within the research, as the interest lay in connections between inhabitants, collective indicators of the sense of living environment were identified as useful, social interactions within locality and identity of the environment itself. Both elements have been considered as key factors in establishing the sense of neighborhood.

Further more, also other authors recognized these two elements as relevant ones, however, they are referring to the sense of place, instead of the sense of neighborhood. “Places are marked by identity, social relations and history,” according to Hajer and Maarten (Hajer, Maarten, 2001, p. 45).

Secondly, in book ‘Place, identity & everyday life in a globalizing world’ Harvey and Perkins explain that social interaction and identity have an influence on forming a sense of place, although this relation also works reciprocally, as everyday places influence on how people identify themselves and interact with others (Harvey, Perkins 2012, p. 13).

To conclude, it is possible to strengthen connections between inhabitants in the local environment, with the increased sense of belonging to their neighborhood. Here the sense of neighborhood indicates having positive attitude toward one’s neighborhood and cohesive relations in the neighborhood. As this notion might be divided into two poles, interactions within environment and identity of built environment, it is assumed that it is possible to encourage connections between inhabitants by encouraging interactions and establishment of a strong identity of local environment. Within this, further on, the focus will lay on the physical and functional characteristics of the built environment.
As explained in the previous chapter, social interactions are one of the two indicators, influencing the sense of neighborhood. Therefore, a fragment of the research was dedicated to identify the nature of interactions in the physical space. In general, it is hard to predict, how people will form connections in the neighborhood, though it is possible to create opportunities, where it would be more likely for people to interact. In this segment, on one hand, the nature of interactions will be discussed, mostly the types of interactions will be identified and on the other hand, characterization of the common space, as generator of interactions, will be revealed.
INTERACTIONS

In this section, the nature of interactions will be explained. Firstly, a process itself will be defined and then four types of interactions will be revealed based on a practical assignment made within the research. Also, interactions occurring in the neighborhood will be distinct and sort according to known types. Finally, it will be illuminated, why the level of interactions in the built environment is important and also the role of the friendship tied to them.

To begin with, interaction is a complicated social process between two or more social actors. “In sum, the concept of social interaction points attention to the properties of the feedback processes by which organisms influence each other,” according to Robert Cairns (Cairns, 1979, p. 4).

Moreover, an interaction here may be seen as an activity between human beings, which always appears in physical space, therefore, it is indisputable related to and influence by the physical environment. For the sake of the research, an assignment was taken, identifying different types of interactions in an outside physical space. The assignment encompassed simply observing interactions in space and photographing them. After analyzing the produced material, some interesting conclusions can be made. It can be determined that interactions can be first divided into two types, deliberate and undeliberate or random. Where, the nature of deliberate interaction is that it was planned, ‘announced’, therefore, it is more permanent. Further on, the undeliberate interaction is not planned and it is usually stimulated by unintended encounter. Next, interactions can also always be divided in interactions with pure ‘interational’ nature or they can be possibly tied to specific function, activity or object. Again, they can be deliberate or random. Interaction with purely ‘interational’ nature happens, when people gather purely to interact, for example talk and it does not include any other intention. When the other type is linked to the special intention, more important then the interaction itself. In this case, interaction happen only as a consequence of another activity, such as for example football match, where participants gather to play a game of football, however, after it, they usually engage into conversation.

Following described, first group of interactions is ‘random and interational’, where these interactions are the most temporal one and almost always happen in transit spaces, such as for example streets, where you can unintentionally meet many others. However, its duration might be extended, with a direct proximity of the specific objects, supporting the nature of interaction, such as benches or just specific objects to lean-on. Next group is ‘random and linked to specific functions’, these ones happen in less transit spaces, however, usually in a proximity of transit spaces and certain attractive functions. Furthermore, ‘deliberate and interational’ interactions occur in transit spaces, however, they are more permanent then first group, as they are intended. Finally, ‘deliberate and linked to specific functions’ usually occur in non-transit spaces and close to functions, such as cafes, sport activities and other commonly visited places.

Furthermore, more specifically, interactions in neighborhood were examined and will be discussed here. Social interaction in the neighborhood is defined as formal (e.g., active, planned) or informal (e.g., casual, unplanned) social opportunity in which two or more residents attend to the quality of their relationships,” explained by Kim and Kaplan (Kim, Kaplan 2004, p. 5). It is also explained, by the same authors that interactions happening in the neighborhood may be divided into following groups: causal social interaction, neighboring, community participation and social support (mostly friendship networks). This division may be more accurate for the closed-up community, as it is predicted that most interactions happen between already known neighbors. Where in the casual neighborhood, it can be expected that interaction might happens with a non-resident, an external person. “Within an expansive and mobile social system, the individual encounters many non-local ‘others’, often on a regular basis...” as Macions explain for the circumstances in a neighborhood (Macions, 1978, p. 3).

Additionally, in a new made neighborhood, we cannot expect that the inhabitants will became good neighbors or participate in communal activities, however, we can allow these opportunities to happen. But, moreover we can establish common spaces, where interactions might happen, based on inhabitants’ free will. If we provide several opportunities for interactions, there is a larger chance that they will repeat and might in the future grow into relationship. Moreover, the importance of friendship ties is relevant here, as a process driven by individual choice. “Friendship is, in this sense, the result of an interational process in which the development of affect plays a crucial role,” as Macions points out (Macions, 1978, p. 6). A significant fact is that friendship is based on selectivity and may be altered by individual. Therefore, on one hand, it may not be for-ever-lasting, but, it greatly contributes to more connect ed neighborhood. Affect usually develops through the common interest. This is why we should, in the neighborhood, establish different kinds and identify common kind of activities, where individuals might be participating according to their interest. Then, the probability is larger that primary network would develop through the process of friendship. Last but not the least, friendship might be a useful tool in everyday traumas, which come as a consequence of daily risks.

In general, an interaction represents feedback processes between human beings, where in the living environment, these opportunities occur between residents, who might or might not know each other. As demonstrated, linked to built environment, they can always be placed in four groups, they are deliberate or random on one side and on the other, interactional or linked to specific function. In the neighborhood, we cannot assume that inhabitants would all be engaged in strong relationships, however, the establishment of opportunities for interactions, appropriate common spaces, is increasing their possibility. Encouraging unintentional interactions, but moreover, establishing spaces, where residents might interact upon common cause, is extremely important, as this repetitive action might once influence a friendship.
COMMON SPACE

Social interactions and consequently, social networks in the neighborhood are manifested mostly in a non-individual space, where this might be from the point you exit your house. We can say that most of the interactions happen in a common space. There are several gradations of common space. However, this characteristic will be discussed further on. More importantly, as observed, term common space has been used here instead of a similar term public space. That is mostly because, different experts define term public space very differently. But before the definition of the common space will be given, it will looked into, what various opinions see in a term public space. At the end, it will be explained, what might be done to increase the liveliness of the common space.

Some of the authors, such as for example Richard Sennet, claim that public space does not exist anymore. In the book ‘The fall of public man’ he explains that in bourgeois middle-class society, private and public life were separate, where public life was generated in an institutions, such as coffee shops and represented an important role for that time city-inhabitants. According to Sennet, an introduction of the idea of liberty, new promotion of secularism and the rise of capitalism, all influenced the fall of public life. Moreover, mostly, privatization, cost by the impact of industrial capitalism, became a crucial problem for public life. Due to the listed reasons, society changed from ‘outer-directed’ towards ‘inner-directed’ and turned to be intimate. The obsessions of individuals with their personal conditions started penetrating into public life. Also, missing ‘social values’ contributed to the obliteraton between public and private. Finally, private preoccupied public life, correspondingly, according to Sennet, public space vanished. (Sennet, 1977)

Opposite vision on public space is expressed by Hajer and Reijndorp. “Public space is in essence a space that is freely accessible for everyone: public is the opposite of private,” according to them. This is mostly true for all freely accessible outside spaces. However, they explain that also all the collective spaces managed by private can still function as public domain, where they define public domain as “...those places where an exchange between different social groups is possible and also actually occurs.” (Hajer, Reijndorp 2001, 11) Similarly, Hertzberger recognizes public as “...an area that is accessible to everyone at all times...” however, he claims “responsibility for upkeep is held collectively” (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 12). He sees a distinction between public and private mostly according to the degree of accessibility, but also according to who is responsible for certain space.

Where in the book Mass housing in Europe, Sendi, Aalbers and Trigueiro talk about public space in the neighborhood, they define it as “open, publicly accessible spaces where people go for group or individual activities.” (Rowlands, Musterd, Van Kampen, 2009, p. 132) Same authors talk further on about social space, which, according to them, if well-planned, can stimulate people to live in a well-organized and well-maintained, contribute greatly to the creation of the sense of the neighborhood.

Next, in the future, term common space will be used. It will refer to all spaces freely accessible for everyone, where, it will not be limited to the collective responsibility. As some privately maintained, however, collective spaces, such as for example cafes or bars, can also function similarly as ‘public’ spaces. As long as the rules of the use aren’t too strict, it can frame all kinds of lively happenings.

Further on, it is important that common space encourage sociality and liveliness. To establish liveliness of the common space it is important, according to Hajer and Reijndorp to “frame encounters that are both intimate and intrusive” (Hajer, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 117). This might sounds as problematic, regarding the local neighborhood, as the aim is to establish better connection between inhabitants. However, as already explained, the relation with the external context is significant. Inhabitants need to have an option of choice on what they will do and with whom they will interact. But moreover, the ‘intrusive’ encounters in neighborhood’s common space might encourage its publicness and its liveliness. Established liveliness in the neighborhood might increase the inhabitants’ interest and consequently potential options for interactions between them.

Finally, it is significant that the common space in the neighborhood is accessible for everyone and it can operate well, even if it is under private ownership. Next, it can achieve a larger degree of the liveliness, when it is linked to external context and not closed to outside visitors.

To summarize the chapter, it cannot be expected that residents in a certain neighborhood would instantly engaged in strong relationships, also this should not be enforced. However, friendships might be stimulated by repeated interactions. Therefore, the chances for interactions should be created by appropriation of the common spaces. Built environment should be organized in such a way that interactions between residents, who do not yet know each other, would be encouraged. Especially, the unintentional interactions should be stimulated, both interactional one and the one linked to specific functions. To attract residents, some common spaces should achieve a high degree of liveliness, by being accessible to everyone, also outside visitors, thus linked to external context.
In previous part, it was mostly explained what is the nature of interactions. Where the next chapter will be a description of a research about stimulating interactions. It will be illuminated, how the built environment should be organized and formatted that it would encourage interactions between inhabitants of the neighborhood. The first part of the chapter will be a collection of principles concerning functional characteristics of a neighborhood, stimulating encounters. Where in the second one, in a similar manner, points regarding physical characteristics will be gathered and clarified.
THROUGH FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The organization of functions or uses in a living environment has significant role. Here the focus will lie especially on uses of common spaces and ‘public’ facilities. Following, distinctive functional principles, contributing to higher degree of interactions and liveliness of a common space, will be delivered. Within the research, firstly, types and diversity of functions in a relation to the level of sociability have been examined, then, their distribution was studied and finally the level of the indetermination and flexibility, in a relation to the degree of liveliness, was researched.

1 DIVERSITY AND TYPES

As already introduced, one of today’s social characteristics is the ‘individualization of the life-style’, meaning people establish their own life-trajectories according to their desires and choices. “Daily life may lead to a large degree amount to routine, but individuals still attach a personal interpretation to what they do,” according to Hajer and Reijndorp (Hajer, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 64). To satisfy everyone’s needs, it is important, firstly, to establish different opportunities, functional diversity and secondly, as it is impossible to establish all functions, to acknowledge, which types of functions might be close to different individuals.

1.1 DIVERSITY

First principle, important for liveliness of the common space and a neighborhood in general is a diversity of functions.

In the period of modernism, there was a belief that it is better to isolate different functions, so-called ‘homogenization’ of use was distinctive for the period. “Howard set spinning powerful and city-destroying ideas: He conceived that the way to deal with the city’s functions was to sort and sift out of the whole certain simple uses, and to arrange each of these in relative self-containment,” as Jane Jacobs points out (Jacobs, 1961, p. 18). He was of course not the only one, many architects believed in this idea. So-called “zoning” was problematic for built environment in many ways, one of the problems was that it was extremely deterministic, not adaptable to future changes or needs, however, most importantly, homogenization also obviously decreased diversity and thus liveliness. Single function produces single public, but “the idea of single public itself is difficult to sustain since there are many public whose legitimacy may be defined as much by the context of the place as by the social character of the individuals,” according to Atkinson (Rowlands, Musterd, Van Kempen, 2009, p. 131). As single uses may produce users with similar characteristic, similar behavioral patterns, it is hard in this way to produce lively common space. Furthermore, different uses are responding to different needs, therefore, different users. “The district, and indeed as many of its internal parts as possible, must serve more than one primary function; preferably more than two. These must insure the presence of people who go outdoors on different schedules and are in the place for different purposes, but who are able to use many facilities in common,” as Jane Jacobs explains (Jacobs, 1961, p. 150). Although she refers to a ‘district and its internal parts’, similar can be true for city neighborhood. Vividity of a neighborhood can be achieved with an assemblage of different small components attributed to different functions. It is easier to achieve diversity with small elements, as they require less people.

Moreover, Jane Jacobs also points out that diversity should be established in functional, sociological, but also economical, “… wherever we find a city district with an exuberant variety and plenty in its commerce, we are apt to find that it contains a good many other kinds of diversity also, including variety of cultural opportunities, variety of scenes, and a great variety in its population and other users” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 148). However, this depends on how big the neighborhood is and if it produce enough public for sustaining such diversity. In any way, it needs to be measured, how much public is expected and adopt a diversity according to that.

Functional monotony decreases the level of interactions in a certain area, as single function produces single public, with similar characteristics. For a lively neighborhood, diversity of functions must be assured, different uses responding to different needs, therefore, different users. Moreover, many small diverse elements of functional infrastructure are relevant here, as they demand fewer residents. Finally, if possible, also commercial diversity is welcoming.

1.2 TYPES

Here, it will be discussed, how different functional types, stimulating liveliness, can be identified. But first, it will be explained, what are the types of common spaces in the neighborhood, where they occur and what are their functional characteristics.

Mostly, outside spaces serve as common places, such as streets, markets, parks, parking and so on. They might not require any specific function, despite serving as places embracing interactions. But, if they do not contain any other use, despite being open spaces, they might fail in attracting people. At least, if a park for example, does not encompass any additional functions, variety of uses in the context should support its liveliness. Similarly, outside spaces around different public institution can attract certain users, therefore, they can serve as common places. Such example is a primary school, which might attract many visitors, who stay in its proximity, even in non-operating time.

Moreover, also inside spaces might serve as common spaces, generating interactions. For example, facilities, such as café, restaurant, library, museum, cinema and so on, can host planned meeting, but also stimulate unexpected encounters. Another issue needs to be mentioned at this point, several levels of common spaces may appear in the living environment, ranging from more private to more public. Several levels, as well as the clear hierarchy between them is important for a higher level of liveliness and is suggested by several authors, such as for example Machiel J. van Dorst or Jan Gehl. This issue will be discussed further on in the part ‘Articulation of space’.

Concluding, common spaces in the neighborhood are mostly outside spaces, but, connected to specific use, they can be also generated inside. Also, in the neighborhood, there may be several levels of common space, ranging from more private to more public.

In identifying the type of use in the neighborhood, first, target group needs to be defined. When this fact is known, it is possible to recognize what the needs and desires of the inhabitants are, what kind of functions they use, what kind of activities they do and what do they have in common.

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If there is no specific target group, we could predict the following. We could say that new neighborhoods are mostly placed on the periphery of the city, into suburbia. This new established areas might be the domains of the ‘middle-class culture’. ‘If we regard city and periphery as a single urban filed then we discover countless places that perhaps form the new public domains that we are seeking. … The urban field is no longer the domain of civic openness, as the traditional city was, but the territory of a middle-class culture...’ as Hager and Reijndorp explained (Hager, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 28). Several characteristic of such culture might be recognized, however, the most typical one, accepted by many experts, is mass consumption. Here, it is mostly referred to the consumption of goods, but also, consumption of events and places is distinguished. As consequence of consumption, individuals become passive participants. Therefore, Hager and Reijndorp discuss about ‘animation of public space’, where it is expected that people are provided by ‘some kind of experience. It is explained that animation and thematization on one hand prevent violence, but on the other hand encourage even more passiveness and inhibit sociability. (Hager, Reijndorp, 2001)

Moreover, many authors suggest that the most usual type of use, encouraging liveliness was always commerce. “The most basic reason for social intercourse has always been trade, which in all forms of community life takes place to a certain extend in the street,” as Herman Hertzberger points out (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 68).

Also, Jane Jacobs in her book ‘The death and life of great American cities’ agrees that retail is the facility, providing street safety, but also stimulating social encounters. It is true that while shopping you can meet acquaintances or even strangers, but it is, on the other hand, highly passive event. Also, it is important in what kind of form trade is established. Large scale stores, as for example shopping malls, where there is no accompanying functions, may certainly decerase sociability. “The rise of department store, mundane a subject as it may seen, is in fact in capsule form the very paradigm of how the public realm as an active interchange gave way in people’s lives to an experience of publicness more intense and less sociable,” as Sennet points out (Sennet, 1977, p. 141). The rise of department stores, shopping malls gave up on an active participation in retail, which was known before for small-scale trade facilities. However, an active participation, concerning commerce, it is still known today in some cases, such place is for example marketplace. Marketplace encourage active participation of buyers on one hand and stimulate interactions on the other.

To summarize, lively common spaces are generally situated outside, as enclosed entities or in a relation to public institutions, however, common spaces can also be established inside, in institutions, such as for example cafes or restaurants. Further on, there may be several levels of common space, ranging from more private to more public. Next, to design a common space or a neighborhood with a high level of interacations, it needs to be identified, what kind of residents will participate there and what are their needs and desires, then types functions can be set. If it is not possible to predict the target group, at least some cultural characteristics can be taken into account. Furthermore, some small scale shopping facilities should be predicted, as they are necessities anyway, however, if possible places such as for example marketplace should be proposed.

2. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNCTIONS

As acknowledge, certain types of functions may attract more inhabitants and thus encourage more lively common space, moreover, functional variety influences such spaces. Another crucial point is, how uses are then spread in the neighborhood. It is important to compose uses in such a way that different spheres are mixed and additionally that they are places in sequence, creating different experiences.

2.1 MIXING SPHERES

In this paragraph, it will be explained, why it is important to mix different groups or spheres of inhabitants, by mixing different uses.

When Richard Sendi is talking about ‘public space in housing estates’, he gives specific example and explains that different inhabitants have different rhythm and are attached to different uses, so they might be identified as potential users of certain spaces and might form a group. Moreover, “it is generally possible to established a connection between some groups and the spaces that they frequently use,” according to him (Rowlands, Musterd, Van Kempen, 2009, p. 136). Connecting different users’ groups increases sociability. He is not alone in this thinking, Hager and Reijndorp explain that “the essence of public domain, whether as regards specific space like the Ramblas in Barcelona or a type such as street, lies not in the formal characteristic but in the overlapping of and exchange between different social realms” (Hager, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 113). Interactions between inhabitants using common facilities or spaces might grow in strong relations, but with interconnections between different groups of users, experience, thus interest increases.

Furthermore, the interrelations between uses are important, as they are providing support to each other. First they need to support each other ‘socially’, as already explained, but there also need to provide mutual ‘economical’ support, as Jane Jacobs points it out (Jacobs, 1961, p. 14).

As illuminated, some inhabitants are more attach to specific use or space then others, they form a group. To increase the experience and establish more sociable spaces, functions should be placed...
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Furthermore, the exact composition of different functions is relevant. Here, it will be advocated that, if diverse uses are placed in a sequence, common spaces attach to them become consequently more attractive.

Going along the path, traveling through different places conditioned with certain use, produces changed impressions, thus experience. According to Hajer and Reijndorp, "... the diversity is also born out by different atmospheres..." (Hajer, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 125). Sequence of atmospheres, as generating an experience, attracts people. This phenomenon represents, for example, each shopping street, where display-windows are lined in sequence.

Next, the complexity of composition attracts public even more. Elements, such as stopping points or intersections, break the rhythm and make a composition more diverse. A practical example might be exposed by Jane Jacobs, "... to use parks and squares and public buildings as part of this street fabric; use them to intensify and knit together the fabric’s complexity and multiple use" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 129).

To conclude, when functions are placed in a sequence, a travel along them might be more attractive, if different spaces create an experience. The interest might even rise, if certain braking points are inserted in a sequence, such as distinctive crossings or voids.

2_ INDETERMINATION AND FLEXIBILITY

Next part of the research was dealing with answering the following question: Should the functions and certain common spaces in the neighborhood be previously and unchangeable specified or also some interpretations of users should be allowed?

Consequently, flexibility and indetermination as functional characteristics were consider as relevant.

To begin with, there exist specific places intentionally designed for socializing, possible established by some specific organization or institutions, where on the other side, there are informal common spaces, such as for example street. Strongly functional determinate common spaces might be problematic, as they decrease socializing. If the ‘Functional programming of the space’, as Hajer and Reijndorp address this phenomenon, is too determinate, it requires more discipline and it is accompanied with stricter rules. In this way, it provides less frictions, however, it decreases liveliness. This might happen for example in shopping mall (Hajer, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 96, 97). Some common spaces should allow open options for interpretation of inhabitants, though, they need to be supported with some suggestions or, as already explained accompanied with supportive uses. If residents can use common space in a way expressing their positions, they might use it with greater respect and more often.

Also, strong functional determination does not allow flexibility, therefore, specific places or facilities are not changeable according to future demands. Thus, such building environment is unsustainable. Flexibility of uses in the neighborhood might be understood in two ways. Firstly, specific common space might be established in a way encouraging flexibility. “Further more, we seem to think too much about public space in the sense of fixed and permanent physical spaces, and we give insufficient consideration to the way in which public domain comes into being in places in flux, often extremely temporary,” according to Hajer and Reijndor (Hajer, Reijndor, 2001, p. 16). If a common space might be transformed, it may be used for different purposes, thus it would be used more often and achieve higher level of interactions. For example, common space in the neighborhood might be once uses as place, where children play, when other time might serve as picnic place or for some other common event.

Secondly, a settlement might be achieved in a flexible way, when it functional parts can be replaced and the whole is still operating. Such flexibility is achieved with diversity.

When spaces in the neighborhood are functional determinate, strict rules might be prescribed with their use, then socializing decreases. Some common spaces should partly allow the interpretation of inhabitants, but encourage it with some suggestions. Next, flexibility is important, in terms of common spaces and neighborhood functions in general. If a common space can be transformed, it can be used for diverse intentions, thus more often. Finally, as demands will probably change in the future, neighborhood should be made in such way that some functions could change with no harm.

Before shifting to principles concerning physical characteristics, concluded functional issues will be stressed out once again. For a lively neighborhood setting following principles are significant, firstly, diversity of uses, as different functions are responding to different needs of users. Next, types of functions should be established in a way answering common inhabitants’ desires. Then, these uses should be interrelated with other ones. But moreover, they should be placed in a sequence, with some breaking points included, as they tend to be more appealing in such composition. Finally, some common spaces should stay partly indeterminate and flexible, so they can adapt to inhabitants’ current desires and thus serve them better. But also determinate functions should allow the level of flexibility for the future demands.
THROUGH PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

In the following part, it will be discussed, what should be a specific physical characteristics of the built environment, how should the neighborhood be formed in order to encourage interactions between its residents. Firstly, it will be considered, what should the level of articulation of the common space be, such as, its size, degree of enclosure and its folding, secondly, the disconnection between the floors will be discussed, finally the congestion of building tissue and the siting of residential units will be examined.

1_ARTICULATION OF SPACE

To begin with, articulation of the space actually indicates, how a certain space is formed. More specific, “articulation refers to the manner in which the surfaces of a form come together to define its shape and volume,” as Francis Ching explains (Ching, 2007, 81). Here, he uses term form instead of space, but similar definition might be valid, if the words would be swapped. After the process of articulation, certain characteristics of a space might be distinct, such as for example, a size, degree of enclosure or folding of a space. Following, physical characteristics relevant for the higher level of interactions will be discussed.

1_1 SIZE

To begin with, relevant for any space and also, for common space is that it is pleasant, only then, people will be willing to stay there. Therefore, we should take ‘human measure’ into account, when designing any space.

Firstly, when designing common space, the amount of expected users should be consider, then, the space should be dimensioned according to this quantity. Herman Hertzberger, supports predicted, as he points out that the disappointment of the result of the common space usually lies in “...miscalculation of the ratio between the size of the public space and the number of the people that may be expected to use it” (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 63). Sometimes an urban regulation dictates the size of the space according to expected users. However, it is almost impossible to rely on numeric data, when creating a pleasant common space, architect should, according to his feeling, consider the stated.

Moreover, in the book ‘The fall of public man’ Richard Sennet is talking about ‘dead public space’. Here, he refers to the period of modernism (‘The International School’), when talking about public space as ‘abandoned as empty’. He explains that, when thinking about large-scale buildings, architects forget about proportions of public spaces. However, this was just one of the reasons causing the loss of the public domain, others will be explained in the next part. (Sennet, 1986, p. 12, 13.)

The proportions of the common space should not be too extensive, moreover, the size needs to follow the amount of expected consumers and consider a ‘human measure’, only then, such space would be used optimal.

1_2 DEGREE OF ENCLOSURE

“The degree of enclosure of a space, as determined by the configuration of its defining elements and the pattern of its openings, has a significant impact on our perception...” as Ching points it out (Ching, 2007, 172). Following, the level of enclosure of common space will be discussed.

It could be stated that, when a degree of openness of a common space is too high, sociability decreases. This fact can be supported by the observation by Richard Sennet, referring to a decline of a public space in the period of modernism. He illuminates that due to the use of new materials, such as steel and glass, architects in modernism created a phenomenon named ‘permeable wall’. The characteristic of this element was that it was ‘ultimate in visibility’, meaning it established complete ‘visible exposure’. Due to the high level of visibility, users had each other under surveillance, therefore, the sociability decreased. According to Sennet, “people are more sociable, the more they have some tangible barriers between them, just as they need specific places in public whose sole purpose is to bring them together.” Due to the high level of surveillance, person protects himself by isolation from others (Sennet, 1986, p. 15).

Therefore, the common space should be to some degree enclosed. The enclosure is possible by the placement of buildings’ units. Jane Jacobs is talking about this fact related to the formation of a park. As she justifies, “…the presence of buildings around a park is important in design. They enclose it. They make a definite shape out of the space, so that it appears as an important event in the city scene, a positive feature, rather than a no-account leftover” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 106).

Taking into consideration the effects of enclosure and openness, people feel the most secure and pleasant in “environments that offer various covers and at the same time allow overlooking large other spaces,” as Franz Gerald puts it (Gerald, 2005, p. 103). In other words, users feel well, when they have an option to secure them-selves on one hand, but do have, at the same time, the possibility to overlook the space they are situated in. Moreover, on one hand, people feel secure, by overlooking the space, however, they also enter themselves by watching activities of others. Jane Jacobs, when talking about a variety of uses of common space, such as for example park, explains that, there are many options why people come to the park, however, they mostly want to be entertained by ‘the sight of other people’ (Jacobs, 1961, p. 103). Additionally, people feel safe in enclosed space, because of the ‘interior-like feeling’. It is possible to mimicking this feeling with shaping specific form, but also with right dimensions and with a proper choice of materials.

To concluded, if the space is to open and users are visible exposed, they become less social. Therefore, built environment should embrace the common spaces and enclose them. However, the level of enclosure should not be too high, as people feel the most pleasant, when they indeed feel secure in enclosed spaces, but still have a visual contact with broader surroundings, mostly, to observe lively happenings and activates of other participants. Finally, the pleasant feeling of enclosed space might be stimulated by the use of interior-like materials.

1_3 FOLDING

Folding refers here to a degree of an articulation, also the level of articulation is influencing the level of expected interactions in a common space.

“The more articulation there is the smaller the spatial unit will be, and the more centers of attention there are the more individualizing the overall effect becomes – that is, that several activities can be pursued by the separate groups at the same time,” as Hertzberger explains (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 193). On one hand, ‘boundary folds’ create smaller ‘protected’ and more present places, facing the overall space. This was already marked as relevant in the previous part.

Next to that, if this principle is adapted to a common space, such as for example park, ‘mixing of spheres’ can be established, as the larger space is
divided in smaller partitions and be thus used by several groups.

When the common space is more articulated, also many centers of attraction are established, therefore, it is more individualized and consider as more pleasant. The variety of different places within one space can attract different groups of users, interacting in one space.

2_DISCONNECTION BY FLOORS

If a space is divided by floors, it is physically unrelated. In this next part, it will be discussed, how the disconnection by the floors influencing the liveliness of the neighborhood.

In the neighborhood, this phenomenon might occur in two ways, firstly, if common space extents through several levels, these levels become physically un-related and secondly, similar can happen in a multiple-leveled building. In both cases, the division by floors has a negative influence on a level of interactions. In the neighborhood, the most typical is the second occurrence and will be thus discussed here.

Several authors argue that, design of high-rise housing estates negatively influences the level of sociability. As it is explained in the book Mass housing in Europe, according to Alice Coleman, such design is ‘responsible for antisocial behavior’. Moreover, Oscar Newman points out that ‘physical design of these estates discourage collective community actions’. Furthermore, according to Newman, it is crucial, especially, for the young families, that they are ‘housed in walk-up buildings no higher than three stories’. (Beckhoven, Gideon, Van Kempen, 2009, p. 22)

What is problematic in such housing is that certain apartments units do not have any relation to the outside, common space, therefore, it is unlikely that residents would stay in such common spaces. Different levels in such way disconnect individuals. Also, the only possible contact between inhabitants might occur in a spaces such as, elevators, stairs, halls and so on, which are, in many cases extremely displeased and inhospitable. Therefore, Herman Hertzberger points out that in the case of multifamily house “… the attention must be paid in particular to the spatial disposition, which may be conducive to the social contacts that may be expected to exists between various occupants of the building” (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 35) This might be achieved by an establishment of, for example, interior common space or a building, designed in such way that exterior spaces of individual units allow the visual contact between residents, to a degree, not disturbing their privacy.

In new established neighborhood, the residential buildings should not be higher then three stories. In such way, there are less vertical divisions between residents, but also they have more direct access to outside common spaces. Therefore, the expected level of interactions is higher. If higher buildings are required regardless of this fact, then, the problem might be eased by the establishment of the inside common spaces or with a design allowing more visual contact between neighbors.

3_CONGESTION AND SITING

In the first part, emphasis was on articulation of the built tissue in order to achieve a proper common space. Here, a discussion will be about a formation of built environment itself in relation to the high level of sociability. Firstly, the debate will be about a density of residential units in the neighborhood and secondly, siting of units in relation to the common space and to each other.

3.1_CONGESTION

Density of residential units, thus inhabitants, in a certain point of the neighborhood is another factor relevant in achieving set goal.

What distinct past from the future and what was influential for the reduction of human connections in the living environment is that a density of residential units over years decreased. As Herman Hertzberger illuminates, new established residential building tissue became rare, housing units became bigger and the number of residents per house lesser. As there are fewer inhabitants per street, a street is significantly emptier. (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 48, 49) However, similar might be true for any common space in the neighborhood.

For a lively environment, a concentration of residents in certain point needs to be adequate. The same factor is important for the establishment of the functional diversity, already noted as essential. Jane Jacobs explains that one of the reasons for generating ‘exuberant diversity’ is following: “There must be a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purposes they may be there. This includes dense concentration in the case of people who are there because of residence” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 103).

However, if the concentration would be to high, inhabitants would be complete strangers to each other, this for example, usually occurs in old city centers. Moreover, to high congestion might disrupt basic privacy.
In present times, residential units are bigger than in the past, also there are less inhabitants per house. The decreased density negatively influenced the level of interactions between residents. Thus, outside spaces are emptier. In new neighborhood, adequate amount of residential units in certain point should be achieved, firstly, for greater liveliness and secondly, to support functional diversity.

3.2 Placement of Units in Relation to the Common Space

For the formation of lively common space, the siting of residential units should be appropriate, moreover, there should be a certain relation between housing units and common spaces.

To start with, residential units should not be turned away from the street nor any other common space. The consequence of a ‘garden movement’ was an outcome of a ‘super-block’, as Jane Jacobs explains, this was a specific layout for a neighborhood, where houses were turned away from the street atmosphere. The only relation housing units had with the outside environment was via private gardens. This unchanged plan supposedly decreased sociability. (Jacobs, 1961, p. 20)

Therefore, “We must consider the quality of street-space and of buildings in relation to each other,” as Hertzberger states. The organization of ‘urban’ should be established in such way that builds’ units and empty space would be interrelated, but moreover, in such manner that the division between ‘private and public’ is gradated. (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 79) The softened distinction might be achieved with some architectural ‘in-between elements’ such as for example porch, terrace, balcony, etc., as this components are still ‘private’, however, are touching upon common space. Moreover, Van Dorst suggests that several levels of such gradation should be established. “The model of zones with various meanings for privacy and social interaction is called privacy zoning,” he goes further referring to privacy zoning, “… it is a tool with which designers can make a contribution to the control of social interaction by residents themselves” (Van Dorst, 2012, p. 9). In such way the level of interactions increases. In his examples, he introduces living environments, which include from 5 to 9 such zones. (Van Dorst, 2012)

Another author, Jan Gehl promotes the same method, “the establishment of a … physical structure with communal spaces at various levels permits movement from small groups and spaces toward larger ones and from the more private to the gradually more public spaces, giving a greater feeling of security and a stronger sense of belonging to the areas of outside the private residence. The area that the individual perceives as belonging to the dwelling, the residential environment, can extend well beyond the actual dwelling. This in itself may result in greater use of public spaces – such as parents permitting young children to play outdoors at an earlier age than they otherwise might” (Gehl, 2006, p. 59).

Moreover, if several levels of a common space are established, inhabitants have always an in-view to the level hierarchically above the current one. As residents have an insight to a common space, they are able to judge the activity and choose to participate or not. Additionally, this may contribute to higher degree of a safety, even though this is not really an issue here.

Residential units and outside common space need to be interrelated, in a way that buildings are turned towards it. The urban layout of a neighborhood needs to design in such way that several levels of private and public are established. In this manner, the feeling of security increases, as well as the level of interactions. Moreover, inhabitants can view the outside activities in a level hierarchically above the current one and choose to participate or not.

3.3 Placement of Units in Relation One to Another

Similarly, next to the relation between the residential units and common space, another principle is the control of social interaction by residents themselves” (Van Dorst, 2012, p. 9). In such way the level of interactions increases. In his examples, he introduces living environments, which include from 5 to 9 such zones. (Van Dorst, 2012)

Another author, Jan Gehl promotes the same method, “the establishment of a … physical structure with communal spaces at various levels permits movement from small groups and spaces toward larger ones and from the more private to the gradually more public spaces, giving a greater feeling of security and a stronger sense of belonging to the areas of outside the private residence. The area that the individual perceives as belonging to the dwelling, the residential environment, can extend well beyond the actual dwelling. This in itself may result in greater use of public spaces – such as parents permitting young children to play outdoors at an earlier age than they otherwise might” (Gehl, 2006, p. 59).

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To summarize the partial conclusions, concerning the level of interactions, next physical characteristics of the neighborhood are acknowledged as valuable. To begin with, regarding articulation of the common space, firstly, the size needs to be appropriate and determined according to the number of users. Secondly, lively common spaces are not too open, as they are pleasant, when inhabitants feel protected on one hand and still have an in-view in broader environment. Thirdly, the level of articulation of the common space should be high, thus more individualized. Next, the residential buildings not higher then three stories are contributing to the more sociable outside space, as inhabitants have more direct access to the outside. In new neighborhood, also satisfactory quantity of apartments in given spot is relevant, as more housing units mean more people, thus more interactions. Finally, the level of liveliness in outside spaces is higher, when buildings are turned towards them, but also, when the layout is made in such way that several levels of private and public are established. Also, the level of unplanned interactions is greater, if houses are sited one to another.
Image 32: Relation between private units

Image 33: Hierarchy of privacy

Image 34: Enclosure
Another part of the research was dedicated to define what identity of the built environment means and what are the characteristics of this phenomenon, as it is the second element influencing the sense of the neighborhood. Identity is a term for a complex occurrence, hard to define. However, in this chapter, firstly, the term identity will be defined and discussed and secondly, readability, as relevant for gaining better identity, will be exposed.
IDENTITY AND IDENTITY OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Identity may apply to every object, thing, human being, therefore, also to built environment. People might assign identity to a group of buildings different from other built tissue and label them as a certain neighborhood. Here, some definitions will be given to clarify selected terms, such as identity, identity of the place and identity of the neighborhood. Also, it will be discussed, what are the sub-elements of an identity or indicators influencing it and how the collective identity is formed.

In general, many authors term identity in different words, however, they all subscribe it similar meaning. As Kevin Lynch explains, identity “…implies its distinction from other things, its recognition as separate entity” (Lynch, 1960, p. 8). Furthermore, Relph Edward points out, “the identity of something refers to a persistent sameness and unity, which allows that thing to be differentiated from others” (Relph, 1976, p. 45). In other words, identity is occurrence, which indicates that each thing is specific and distinguishable from others according to its specific characteristics. Similarly, an identity of a person means a profile, from which one person may be different from another. Likewise, an identity of built environment, of a place may mean an individuality of a place, according to which a specific place is distinguish from other built tissue and label them as a specific physically bounded neighborhood. Further on, functional and formal characteristics of a built environment will be represented as factor of identity of a neighborhood. Nevertheless, built environment, architecture should offer inhabitants their personal and collective identifications. On the contrary, if setting is impersonal and not a reference for identification, alienation from the environment occurs, consequently “…alienation from your fellow residents,” according to Hertzberger (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 47).

A certain object, but also built environment gains a strong identity, when it is distinguishable ‘from others’ according to specific characteristics and perceived as an entity or one unity. Also, when people assign meaning and identity to a space, it becomes more personal, thus marked as place. Next to meaning, physical characteristics and human activity are basic essences framing identity of a place. Individual perceives these features, therefore, assign identity to specific place, then, individual identities are joined to form a collective identity. Moreover, identity of the neighborhood means, mostly, public identifications with a specific physically bounded neighborhood.

READING OF THE SPACE

When the built tissue is more readable, we can perceive it easier, thus it gains the identity faster. Following, firstly, this process will be described and secondly, it will be illuminated, what a mental image of an environment means and how does it fit in this context.

Built environment is read with the use of our senses, this impression is then combined with our memory of the past experience and formed into perception, valuable for gaining an identity. More then an environment is pleasant and readable, more an individual or specific group can belong to it and identify with it, according to Sendi, Aalbers and Trigueiro (Rowlands, Musteder, Van Kempen, 2009, p. 136). Readable environment is distinct, well formed, coherent and consists of a clear layout. This consistent clarity can be also marked as legibility as Kevin Lynch presupposes (Lynch, 1960). However, identity is one of the components needed for a well ‘mental image’ of an environment. Clear environmental image is important for practical means, as it can help in better orientation, “but an order environment can do more than this; it may serve as a broad frame of reference, an organizer of activity or belief or knowledge,” according to Lynch (Lynch, 1960, p. 4). Each individual creates his own image, however, common culture usually encourages that all participants inherit similar mental images. Therefore, a clear environmental image serves also for gaining collective memories.

The distinct and coherent environment is more readable, therefore, we can sense and perceive it better. Also, it is easier to assign an identity to a place. All of these facts are significant in creating an individual, but also in gaining a collective environmental image.

To conclude a chapter, more then a specific built environment is distinguishable form other tissue and apparent as one unity, easier is to form its perception, more it is readable, thus identifiable. Firstly, individual form an identity of a place, then, these identities are joined into a collective identity. Similar is valid for gaining the identity of a neighborhood. Moreover, elements such as meaning, physical characteristics and human activity are influencing the identity of the place and of a neighborhood.
STRENGTHENING AN IDENTITY

After, it was acknowledged, what identity mean and that good readability of the environment is significant for a faster process of gaining an identity of an environment, it was researched, what are the specific principles or characteristics of the environment, which are helpful in strengthening identity. In the following chapter, it will be explained, how it is possible to strengthen an identity of a neighborhood, with the use of the functional and physical characteristics of the environment. The first part of the chapter will be a gathering of principles concerning functions characteristics of a neighborhood and the second one, a collection of points regarding physical characteristics.
THROUGH FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

As we already acknowledged, the types of functions, their organization and flexibility were all relevant for the level of interactions in the neighborhood. Also, certain functional characteristics can contribute to stronger identity of the neighborhood. Within the research, firstly, properties such as uniqueness and distinctiveness have been examined and secondly, it has been studied, if flexibility or indetermination can contribute to improved identity of a place or have a contrary effect.

1. UNIQUENESS AND DISTINCTIVENESS

To begin with, presupposing, each settlement is unique. It is unique by its distinctive features. More than some characteristics are special, more a specific neighborhood is distinctive and unique. Where, distinctiveness here refers to, “being different from others through associating with a group or a place.” (Kim, Kaplan, 2004, p. 5). In this part, it will be discussed, if distinctiveness is helpful in gaining identity or if it stimulate the opposite.

As specific built environment is distinctive and recognizable, its readability is increased, thus it is easier identifiable. That is important as, “indeed, a distinctive and legible environment … heightens the potential depth and intensity of human experience,” as Kevin Lynch points out (Lynch, 1960, p. 5). It is important that the physical characteristics of an environment are clear and distinctive, however, this will be discussed in the second section of this chapter. Furthermore, as we identify with environment as we use it, therefore, its function is principal. Also, more then it is attractive, more we will use it. For a general neighborhood’s layout is important that functional diversity is provided. As Jane Jacobs explains, “differences, not duplications, make for cross-use and hence for, a person’s identification with an area greater than his immediate street network” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 130). Diversity of uses contributes to larger readability of environment, as we distinguish different facilities or places and memorize certain ones. Next to general diversity, it is significant that some functions are more memorable than others, as then they contribute to a better recognition. Moreover, as Jane Jacobs explains, establishing ‘centres of use’ in a neighborhood, a district or in a park is important. “Centers of use grow up in lively, diverse districts, just as centers of use occur on a smaller scale in parks, and such centers count especially in district identification if they contain also a landmark that comes to stand for the place symbolically and, in a way, for the district,” according to Jacobs (Jacobs, 1961, p. 130). Centers improve the readability of a neighborhood layout, as they contribute to a hierarchy of a built environment. Within this, is it not necessary that one center is created solely. Numerous significant common spaces can be generated. Hajer and Reijndorp expose, when commenting on significant public spaces, such as for example Ramblas in Barcelona, “they are examples of spaces that have a strong public significance; places with which people identify and make a city what it is, an integral part of urban identity” (Hajer, Reijndor 2001, p. 7). Even though, they are referring to grate places and they are talking about cities in general, an anticipation of distinctive places is important, when planning a neighborhood’s layout.

Furthermore, as exemplified, characteristic functions are prominent for strengthening an identity, but, also an establishment of collective functions or activities is significant for encouraging common identity. If not enforced, collective activities, such as cooperative gardening or farming, can contribute to greater identity of the neighborhood.

To summarize, if a neighborhood include special properties, it is more distinctive, thus more unique. Also, then its readability increases, therefore, it is more identifiable. Concerning functional characteristics, diversity of functions increases the identity of the environment, as we distinguish different functions, facilities or places and memorize certain ones. Moreover, more then a certain function is attractive and distinctive, more we will memorise it. Next, if certain uses are distributed to form a ‘centre of use’, this brings a hierarchy in a neighborhood’s layout and it is better for identification. Finally, it is not necessary that just one center is created, numerous such places can be established.

2. INDETERMINATION AND FLEXIBILITY

To begin with, on one hand, it is important to create a distinctive built environment, containing strong characteristics, with which we can identify. Where on the other hand, we live in an era of flows, where adoptable, flexible spaces are in need. As explained in the introductory chapter about identity, a place today should not be seen as static, inflexible point, but as a node of flows and networks. Here, indetermination and flexibility of...
the functional characteristics of the neighborhood will be discussed in relation to set goal, strengthening identity.

Concerning flexibility, specific function or use can be changed and the settlement still remains distinguishable, if the overall layout of a neighborhood or more specifically its structure is well formed. Then, it can survive transformations, while retaining its identity. Moreover, we could state that a space is usually recognizable more over the form, then over the function. Herman Hertzberger acknowledged, when examining the relation between form and function, in mostly historical cities that "in none of this cases does the actual structure change under the influence of its new function ... the form is capable of adopting itself to variety of functions ... while remaining essentially the same," thus recognizable (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 102, 103). When such transformation or spatial intervention occurs, the meaning might be lost, however, intervention, a novelty, can also established a new meaning.

Next point, if functional characteristics are unchangeable predefined, it is less likely people will identify with specific space. Firstly, functions should be chosen with a cooperation of inhabitants, according to current needs. But, secondly, some spaces should be left undetermined and left to inhabitants deciding their usage. "The point is to give public spaces form in such a way that the local community will feel personally responsible for them, so that each member of the community will contribute in his or her own way to an environment that he or she can relate to and can identify with," as predicted by Hertzberger (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 45). Even though, he refers to a community, similarly can be considered for neighborhood. Such thinking may be seen as naive, but it might work, when additional outside organ is provided to take care of such space, if needed. As it is explained by Beckhoven, Gideon and Van Kempen, for a successful common space more then just inhabitants should be involved in its maintenance. The involvement of residents is important, but additional management groups need to be involved, such as for example, local government, housing association and companies or special service agents (Rowlands, Rob, Musterd, 2009, p. 145, 146).

To repeat, when a structure of a neighborhood is well formed, it allows functional flexibility, as certain functions can be changed and the settlement still remains distinguishable and maintains its identity. Secondly, if functions are chosen according to inhabitants desires, but moreover, if some places are left indeterminate for inhabitants to contribute to their usage, they would identity with them better. However, some external supervision should observe the operation of such spaces.

To summarize functional principles, distinctive neighborhood is more identifiable. Firstly, diversity of functions strengthens the identity and more then certain function is distinctive, more we will memorise it. Moreover, a ‘centre of use’ in a neighborhood or a multitude of them is better for identification. However, a certain functions can be changed and identity is still maintained, if a neighborhood is well formed. Finally, if inhabitants can contribute in choosing functions or in determination of significant places, it would be better for their process of gaining identity.
THROUGH PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

After principles concerning functions characteristics, also physical one were examined, strengthening identity of the neighborhood. Firstly, again uniqueness and distinctiveness, but now regarding physical properties, have been considered, then, it was researched, if a unity of a neighborhood is contributing to a better identity and finally, if flexibility or indetermination helping in achieving the same goal.

1_ UNIQUENESS AND DISTINCTIVENESS

In the previous section, it was already discussed, what unity and distinctiveness mean. Referring to neighborhood, special built environment is more unique and recognizable, thus more identifiable.

In previous part, these two principles were discussed in relation to functional characteristic, here it will be related to physical ones.

Firstly, it is important that the overall physical structure and a layout of a neighborhood are distinguishable and readable. This is achieved, when a neighborhood is different from any other urban tissue. As already illuminated, readable environment helps established better identity.

On the other hand, it is significant that distinctive formal difference occur within overall pattern. They can appear as, for example, a visible accent, a merchant crossing or a void. More specifically, such distinctive differences may vary in height, have a noticeable form, color or material, etc. The idea behind this is that they break current rhythm and deliberate or unintentionally attract our attention. Such a ‘surprise or amazement’ serves for better memorability and it is strengthening an identity.

A neighborhood is more identifiable, if its overall structure or a layout is distinctive, as being different from other built tissue. Next to that, physical distinctive difference, a visible accent serves for better readability of the environment, thus identity.

2_ UNITY

In this next part, it will be discussed, firstly, when an environment is unified and secondly, if this characteristic is relevant for better identity of a neighborhood.

Firstly, a neighborhood achieves better identity, if its urban patter is unified. On the other hand, mostly visual qualities of infills, residential units are significant for creating unity, thus identity. As Hertzberger claims, “...the dwellings together determine the appearance of the whole” (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 109).

More then the properties of individual units are similar, more the whole neighborhood stands for one unity. “The more buildings stand apart as autonomous volumes with individualized facades and private entrances the less cohesion there is...” as Herman Hertzberger explains (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 77, 78).

However, on the other hand, too strong unification destroys expressiveness of individuals, thus can be problematic for set goal. Especially, as individualism is a strong value today and individuals live according to their own believes, complete unification is unjustifiable. Therefore, an important task is to find out, according to which properties, units can differ one from another that the whole is still identifiable. This can be acknowledged by looking at old towns or city centers. For the sake of this investigation, an old town Piran was observed. It is situated in Slovenia and on one hand, it represents a strongly unified town, where on the other, units within the structure vary one from another. However, some same properties are identifiable by all the units, such as, similar articulation, sameness of units’ height or at least the range of the height has the same rhythm, units have similar range and proportions, rhythm of openings is comparable, the size of openings is corresponding, roof angles are similar, color ranges in the same specter, similar materials are used and so on.

Unified urban patter, but moreover, unified built environment, where residential units contain similar properties, is distinct from surrounding built tissue and serves for better identity of a neighborhood. However, the unity should be established in such way that still some physical variety is contained.

3_ INDETERMINATION AND FLEXIBILITY

Last but not the least, again indetermination and flexibility will be discussed, this time regarding physical properties of built in the neighborhood.

To begin with, flexibility in residential environment is important, as users might change sooner than in other types of architecture. Physical flexibility can be allowed, if the urban layout has a strong structure, then, even with some transformations stays identifiable. According to Hertzberger, “…structure stands for the collective, general, (more) objective, and permits interpretation in terms of what is expected and demanded of it in a specific situation” (Hertzberger, 1991, p. 94). Moreover, transformations of residential units need to be made according to ‘global rules’, as discussed in the previous part, then neighborhood is still distinguishable as a unity.

Next, the design of residential units should be established is such way that it allows at least some interpretations of a user. “In many cases design has the effect of what he calls de-sign, that is, the removal of the signs and meanings of a particular place,” as Hajer and Reijndorp point out (Hajer, Reijndorp, 2001, p. 101). Just when users can participate and contribute to the process of ‘designing’, if they can inject personal meaning in their living environment, it is more likely they would identify with their own environment.

As inhabitants may move in the future, physical flexibility in the neighborhood should be allowed. Urban layout with a strong structure and neighborhood with determined rules for physical properties of residential units may tolerate the flexibility and still establish strong identity. Moreover, physical setting should permit the interpretations of residents, if they can contribute in making their homes, they would also relate to it better.

To repeat the principles concerning physical characteristics of built environment, a neighborhood has a stronger identity, if its layout is distinctive, different from surrounding environment and contains some visible accents. But also, if we can perceive it as unity by its urban pattern and residential units. However, within this unity, some properties should be undetermined for inhabitants to decide, as this helps them to identify better with the environment. Finally, as users might change in the future, physical flexibility of residential units should be possible.
The main drive of this research has been an aim to connect individuals within a built environment, with a use of a built environment, more specifically with the use of the functional and physical characteristic of a neighborhood. The first two chapters of this theoretical collection illuminated two related phenomena, individualism and social connection and their characteristics. Then, chapters about the sense of neighborhood, interactions and identity defined these terms, as well as explained the relation between the terms and their relevance for encouraging connections in the neighborhood. Finally, the essential chapters were ‘Encouraging interactions’ and ‘Strengthening identity’, from which a list of principles answering a research question can be extracted. Prominent conclusions will be presented in the following text.
Long time ago, in preindustrial, traditional societies bonds between human beings were strong, intimate and open, people lived within social structures named as communities, which were also tight to specific location. Specific processes altered previous social conditions, such as for example the liberation of human beings, the occurrence of industrial revolution and the further development of industry, also the rise of social-economic orientation, marked as capitalism and finally the development of technologies. On one hand, connections between people became more short-lived and consequently, social members became more self-assured, less connected and more individualistic. Many have tried to reestablish, what had been lost. Therefore, an attempts have been made trying to re-establish the ‘traditional’ communities, some more, others less successful.

Nonetheless, today, the connections, social networks, between individuals are extremely flexible and not tight to specific location. Moreover, individualism is a strong social orientation and a problematic one. Individuals are left on their own, following solely established life-paths. But more problematic, they need to be constantly prepared to react on contemporary, ever-changing, conditions and take risks. Such life-styles tend to be extremely stressful, causing physical and psychological disorders. Moreover, in living environment neighbors are less connected, facing similar troubles.

On the other hand, many sociologist have proven that level of social connections in the living environment, neighborhood is extremely important, as most of the human life and meaning is situated there. Improved connections between residents tend to increase individuals’ well-being. However, an attempt to reestablish a traditional, community-like neighborhood would be unjustified. Individuals should be bonded in a way that they maintain they ‘freedom and individuality’ and have a connection to outside environment, a possibility to form various social networks. Therefore, as designers, we can take this into consideration and make an attempt to link the inhabitants, with the clever organization and physical manifestation of the built environment itself.

It was discovered that it is possible to strengthen connections between inhabitants in the local environment, with the environment itself and that is, with the increased sense of belonging to their neighborhood. As this notion might be divided further on into two sub-terms, interactions within environment and identity of built environment, it is assumed that it is possible to encourage connections between inhabitants by encouraging interactions and by establishing a strong identity of a local neighborhood. So, a neighborhood should be organized and formed in such a way that it would enable both occurrences.

Firstly, instead of bonding inhabitants into enclosed social circle, the functional and physical characteristics of a built should stimulate all kinds of interactions, especially, the unintentional one, which might happen between known or unknown inhabitants, but also with other individuals from outside the neighborhood. Then, after a while repeated interactions might arouse stronger connections. The interactions can be generated by appropriate common spaces, which are made in a way to achieve a high degree of liveliness.

Secondly, it is possible to encourage the sense of neighborhood, by strengthening the identity of local environment. The identity of neighborhood is stronger, if a built environment is easily readable. More then a neighborhood is distinguishable form surrounding urban tissue and more it is apparent as one unity, more it is readable. Such specific characteristics influence the individual to form a stronger identity of a place, but also, stronger collective identity is assured in such way.

After an extensive investigation, a list of functional and physical characteristics of built environment influencing the level of interactions will be given and then the one strengthening the identity of the neighborhood will be presented. Principles listed by points are:
1. DIVERSITY AND TYPES
FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

To begin with, monotony decreases liveliness, as single function attracts users with similar characteristics, therefore, functional diversity is an important principle. Varied functions attract diverse crowd, but also are responding to different needs of users. Next, types of functions should be set according to inhabitants’ desires. Moreover, as it is not possible to provide everything, it is important to identify, what inhabitants might have in common.

2. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNCTIONS
FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

As marked in the previous point, different inhabitants are attached to different uses. It is possible to establish connections between them and create more sociable space, by placing functions in such a way that interactions between different spheres would be possible. But moreover, functions should be placed in a sequence. In such way, these different spaces create an experience and make a travel along them more attractive.

3. FLEXIBILITY AND INDETERMINATION
FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

When a common space is functionally too determined, it requires more discipline and it is accompanied with strict rules, then liveliness decreases. Therefore, some common spaces should allow the interpretation of inhabitants, but encourage it with some suggestions. In this way a common space is also flexible, thus it can be used for diverse intentions and more often. Also, neighborhood’s functions in general should be flexible to some point, as demands will probably change in the future.

4. ARTICULATION OF SPACE
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

To begin with, regarding articulation of the common space, firstly, the size needs to be appropriate, the proportions of the common space should not be too extensive, moreover, the size needs to follow the amount of expected consumers. Secondly, regarding the level of openness and enclosure, people feel comfortable, when inhabitants feel protected on one hand and still have an in-view in broader environment. Lively common spaces are not too open, but enclosed with built environment. Thirdly, when the common space is more articulated, also many centers of attraction are established, therefore, it is more individualized and consider as more pleasant.

5. DISCONNECTION BY FLOORS
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

If any space is divided by floors, it is physically unrelated, in such way the level of interactions decreases. This might be valid for common space, but also for buildings. For example, it is advised that residential buildings are not higher then three stories, in such way, there are less vertical divisions between residents, but also they have more direct access to outside common spaces. along them more attractive.

6. CONGESTION AND SITING
PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

For higher percentage of interactions in new neighborhood, a concentration of housing units, consequently inhabitants, in certain point should be adequate. Secondly, residential units and outside common space should be interrelated, in a way that buildings are turned towards it, then, inhabitants can choose to participate or not in lively happenings. Also, layout needs to be made in such way that several levels of private and public are established. Also, the level of unplanned interactions is greater, if houses are sited one to another. However, within this, still enough privacy should be provided.
7. UNIQUENESS AND DISTINCTIVENESS

When a neighborhood includes special properties, it is more distinctive, thus more recognizable and identifiable. Concerning functional characteristics, diversity of functions increases the identity of the environment, as well as certain attractive and distinctive functions, as they increase the memorability of the place. Moreover, a ‘centre of use’ in a neighborhood or a multitude of them is better for identification. Concerning physical characteristics, a neighborhood is more identifiable, if its overall structure or a layout is distinctive, as being different from surrounding built tissue. Moreover, physical distinctive differences or visible accents serve for better readability of the environment.

8. UNITY

Unity of a neighborhood is an important point in establishing stronger identity of a neighborhood. If the urban pattern is unified, but moreover, if residential units are unified by containing similar properties, the neighborhood is distinct from surrounding built tissue.

9. FLEXIBILITY AND IDETERMINATION

Some functions can be changed and identity of a neighborhood is still maintained, if its layout is well formed. Secondly, if inhabitants can participate in choosing functions or in determination of significant places, they would identify better with their living environment. Urban layout with a strong structure and a neighborhood with some set rules for physical properties of residential units might tolerate the physical flexibility and still establish strong identity. Flexibility of residential units is relevant as the inhabitants might change in the future. But moreover, physical setting should permit the interpretations of residents, as if they can contribute in making their homes, they would also relate to them better.

Considering and applying these functional and physical principles to a design of a neighborhood should strengthen the sense of a neighborhood and encourage the connections between inhabitants in the built environment. However, these principles were set, mainly following certain theoretical prediction from literature. Therefore, there is no guarantee that after applying them the aim would be actually achieved. Moreover, some sort of a practical test should be held in order to verify principles and achieve better results. For the sake of these specific investigation, the practical experiment was held for that reason and is explained in the second part of this paper. Practical investigation will give results linked to specific cultural background, thus complete answer to the research question.
1. Individualism

2. Defining connections between individualists
- Filipovič Hrast, Maša, Dolničar, Vesna (2011) Sense of community and the importance of values: compari-son of two neighborhoods in Slovenia. Ljubljana: University in Ljubljana, Faculty for social studies.

3. Neighborhood and sense of neighborhood

4. Interactions and common space

5. Encouraging interactions

6. An identity of built environment

7. Strengthening an identity

Legend: Main literature, Additional quotations
INTRODUCTION

To begin with, the purpose of the first, theoretical part of the research has been to investigate on, how it is possible to connect individuals within a neighbourhood, mostly, by the help or through built environment, more specifically, with the use of functional and physical characteristics of the neighbourhood. Theoretical principles were searched with the use of the literature. As various authors derived from different backgrounds, findings were linked to the wider social context.

Where the second part of the research has been more practically oriented and linked to specific Slovenian conditions. Within this part, nine interviews were made with the residents of the city Ljubljana. Five participants were women, from 25 until 43 years old, where other four inhabitants were men, from 25 till 65 years old. Each interview has included 25 questions, which are attached at the end of practical part of the paper. Mainly, the purpose of the interviews has been to verify theoretical principles or conclusions and identify certain characteristics of Slovenian inhabitants. So, only after the analysis of these interviews, there would be possible to fully answer the research question.
To repeat, in the theoretical part, next principles were found as relevant. Firstly, in the chapter ‘Encouraging interactions’, some functional and some physical characteristics were described as positive for encouraging liveliness of a common space or a neighborhood. Principles concerning functional characteristics are ‘types of functions and diversity’, ‘distribution of functions in a sequence, in a way that different spheres are mixed’, ‘flexibility and indetermination of some functions in the neighborhood’. Where, principles concerning physical characteristics have been: ‘suitable articulation: appropriate size of a space, appropriate ratio between openness and enclosure and adequate folding of a space’, then, ‘connection between floors’ and ‘adequate congestion of residential units and their siting’. Secondly, also some functional and some physical characteristics were found as relevant for strengthening an identity of a neighborhood. ‘Uniqueness and distinctiveness’ and ‘flexibility and indetermination’ were realized as important functional characteristics, helping in strengthening identity. Furthermore, the same two principles linked to physical characteristics were found as significant. Moreover, ‘Unity’ of the built environment has been important for strengthening identity of the neighborhood. Mostly, all of these principles were verified with the use of the interviews. Some of them, such as for example, ‘diversity of the functions’, ‘distribution of functions in a sequence, in a way that different spheres are mixed’ and ‘connection between floors’ in relation to encouraging liveliness, were left out, as it was realized, it is hard to verify them.

The order of the questions within the interviews is not following the direct order of the principles. Where, the structure of the text in these next paragraphs will follow the order of the interviews. The interviews are not fully written, the text following is an analysis of the interviews, including some quotations of the residents.

In the first chapter ‘Common activities’ common activities of the residents, relevant in determining different types of functions in the neighborhood, will be presented. As introduction, daily rhythm of inhabitants will be presented, then, everyday activities or regular activities and special or weekend activities will be pointed out, also, the activities inhabitants do in their neighborhoods or the one that they do with other neighbors will be presented, finally, activities or public facilities that inhabitants currently miss in their neighborhoods will be listed.

Next, in the section ‘Indetermination’ it will be exposed, if inhabitants think that, if they could contribute to the use of common spaces in their neighborhood, such as being involved in determining its function, they would use them more often. Indetermination here is a principle linked to functional characteristics and it is relevant for encouraging interactions.

Next, a special task was given to inhabitants. They needed to sketch a common space, where they interact with other people and it is special to them. It was not necessary that this space has been situated in their neighborhood. After that, certain questions were given to residents. Questions were identifying, what kind of characteristics of the space have been relevant for them, functional, physical or any other characteristics not considered before. In the chapter ‘Common space’, firstly, each of these spaces will be described briefly, then, general characteristics, concerning their answers, will be extracted. If characteristics that are important to inhabitants would be applied on a common space in a neighborhood, it is theoretically predicted that they would use it more often, therefore, its liveliness would increase.

Another task was given to residents. They needed to sketch a layout of their neighborhood or environment, where they live. Firstly, in the section ‘Neighborhood’s layout’, siting of their residential units and its relation to meeting other residents in the neighborhood will be reviled. This is of course relevant for a level of interactions. Next, respondents were asked, if they recognize their environment as distinct or unified. Then, the intention was to identify, if they, because of this fact, feel more connected to it. However, this task was quite complicated. These principles are relevant for strengthening identity of the neighborhood. Last but not the least, in the chapter ‘Indetermination’ it will be explained, if inhabitants think that, if they could contribute, firstly, to the use of common spaces in their neighborhood, such as being involved in determining its function, they would connect and identify with them better. And secondly, if inhabitants think that, if they could contribute to creation of their built environment, they would connect and identify with it better. Indetermination here is a principle linked to, firstly, functional and secondly, physical characteristics and it is relevant for strengthening identity.
It is a common belief that individuals today live their lives according to their own values and established life-styles. Especially, in Slovenia, where people are highly individualistic, this should be strongly apparent. Within the first part of the interviews, the goal was to identify, how different inhabitants live their lives and if they still have anything in common or what are the common activities that they do. Firstly, they described their common day, then, they pointed out, what are the activities they do everyday or on regular basis and after that, they explained, what special activities they do, as for example on weekends. Next, the aim was to discover, what people usually do within they neighborhood and if there are any activities that people engage in with their neighbors. Finally, the quest was to find out, what inhabitants miss in their neighborhood or in the environment they currently live in. All this would be relevant, when choosing functions within the neighborhood and will be described in this first paragraph.
Firstly, each inhabitant described, hers or his daily rhythm, with basic time frames. A lot of participants were relatively young, as the aim was to discover the characteristics of ‘future generation’. On the other hand this was problematic, as quite some of them have not yet stabilized their daily rhythms.

Three inhabitants from nine were students, all in the age of 25. Therefore, they have not yet established their daily rhythms. Also, one of the older inhabitants did not have a steady everyday, even though he had a regular, but specific job. The same is valid for the oldest participant, as he was retired. Regardless of that, one can find certain similarities between them. Firstly, people that have been going to work everyday, they all leave their house between 7.00 and 8.00. In general, most of the people come home from work from 15.30 to 16.30 and after that usually have lunch. Moreover, all of them do certain regular activities in the afternoon or in the evening, which are not necessarily tied to their home. Also, most of the people with not stabilized daily rhythm tend to do most of their activities or socialize with other people in the afternoon or in the evening. Also, the youngest and the oldest inhabitants do socialize more, then the residents with young families (Maja, Mojca, David), as they do a lot of activities with just their families.

To sum up, most of inhabitants do not have a steady daily rhythm. The one, who do have it, are also employed. However, almost all of the inhabitants do their individual or social, ‘not work related’ activities in the afternoon, after 17.00, in the evening or on weekends.
Everyday activities or regular activities

Following, the aim was to find out, what are these ‘not work related’ activities that participants do everyday or at least on certain steady days. Firstly, activities were sorted according to each resident, and then a list of common activities was made.

To begin with, it is evident that some participants do more activities related to one function, as for example sport activities or they like to socialize, however, mostly, they tend to do diverse activities. On the list of common activities, sport activities are the most popular. Sixteen different activities are sport related, meaning, most of inhabitants do more than one regular sport activity. Next, ten activities listed are in the group or social activities, such as for example socializing with friends or going for a coffee. Activities from both groups were found among youngest, as well as among oldest responders. Following activity is, as expected shopping or grocery shopping, which means for some just a necessity and for other, as for example Urša, a special activity that she likes to do in her free time. Also, six participants like to take a walk in their neighborhood or somewhere in the nature. Finally, some inhabitants like to do cultural activities, but also the one tied to their home.

Highly predominant activities that are common to residents, are sports activities. Then, they like to socialize and they need to shop on a regular basis.
Some of the activities people tend to do in a scheduled rhythm, where the others are special and happen more unplanned and less regular. These second one will be presented here.

In general, special activities are more linked to socializing with other people or serve as relaxing points in residents’ lives. Eight activities are linked to culture, such as going to a movie or going to a concert. However, not all inhabitants tend to do cultural activities. Next, taking long walks, going to trips or to mountains is an activity that mostly all of inhabitants like to do, especially on weekends. Moreover, they also like to socialize on special events, such as going out or having picnics. They also do some special sport activities, working around the house or gardening and visiting their relatives.

In this section of activities the prevalent group is cultural, also people like to socialize on special occasions and taking walks to nature.
The bonds between neighbors became frail through the years. Also, Maja remembers past activities with her neighbors and miss them, “I have been living in this neighborhood, from when I was a child. Then, we had many picnics, also, community-cleaning actions and we played different ball-sports. Today, I miss picnics with the neighbors.” (Maja, 38, Murgle)

In Ema’s case, the bonds between her neighbors were even stronger in the past, but when known inhabitants moved away and new one came, this community-like feeling faded away. “In my old neighborhood we were celebrating different events together, like birthdays. Children also created different objects for playing, such as sandpit. … We established out internal-community. But, when people start moving away and new ones start coming, this changed.” As she recently moved to a new location, she also commended this quote relates to current social conditions, however, it also illuminates the nature of Slovenians. In this section, it will be explained, how Slovenians are active in their living environment and if they engage in activities with their neighbors. Firstly, some of participants’ opinions will be given, then, common activities in the neighborhood and with neighbors will be shown.

To begin with, a lot of residents explained that in the past they were socializing a lot with their neighbors, today, this activity almost faded away. Moreover, quite some became nostalgic about this issue, as they miss the activities with their neighbors.

Firstly, Sara explained, “I do not know, if the period we live in has an influence, but relations between neighbors are not the same anymore,” also she described, “in the past, we were making snowmen with our neighbors and then, the neighbor brought some warm wine. We were also shoveling snow together.” Moreover, she would still like to engage in activities with neighbors, “it would be nice, if it would be possible to establish some common activities in the neighborhood.” (Sara, 25, Dravíje)

Furthermore, similarly, Rajko explained “a few years ago we were having a lot of picnics at our back yard. Back then, a lot of people came. But today all these activities died away.” These events were happening, as he was more related with his neighbors, “16 years back we all knew each other in our street. Today, I barely know my neighbors. … There are no genuine contacts anymore.” (Rajko, 65, Barje)

The bonds between neighbors became frail through the years.

get use to the way of life, which is predefined with the type of neighborhood.” Also, Mojca has felt that the type of buildings and organization of the neighborhood influenced the fact that people are more individualistic in her neighborhood. “As everything here is high fenced, you do not have any contact with your neighbors, in many cases, you do not even know them, even though, they live in the same street.” (Mojca, 43, Murgle)

Most of the activities that people do in their neighborhoods are more individualistic, such as for example, playing different sports, which is also the most popular activity, attached to built environment. Secondly, inhabitants also shop or take walks in their living environment. They also socialize in their neighborhoods in some cases, but usually, when people living close by are also their neighbors. Some of the inhabitants got to know their neighbors over some activity in the neighborhood, such as for example, volleyball. Also, the one having small children became more related to other parents in the neighborhood.

To sum up, six participants in these interviews were, in the past, participating in different activities with their neighbors. Due to several reasons, they became more disconnected from other inhabitants in their living environment, general social conditions changed, especially, in larger cities, also, people that they knew moved away. Where, two residents claimed that they have fewer contacts in their neighborhoods, due to specific organization or typology of their built environment. Most common activities, happening in a neighborhood are different sport activities, basic shopping or taking a walk. Also, some social activities are quite popular, when people living close by evolve in a friendship.
Activities in the neighborhood or with neighbours: Results

**Emi 25**
- Grocery shopping
- Visiting elderly (before)
- Taking walks
- Sport activities
- Picknics: neighbours (before)

**Sara 25**
- Taking walks
- Grocery shopping
- Gardening
- Shoveling snow: neighbours
- Sport activities: neighbours, who are also friends

**Urša 26**
- Grocery shopping
- Taking walks
- Having coffees: neighbours, who are also friends

**Matevž 25**
- Jogging
- Grocery shopping
- Shoveling snow: neighbours

**Tadej 27**
- Grocery shopping
- Fitness
- Going to library
- Having coffees: neighbours, who are also friends

**Maja 38**
- Taking walks with a dog
- Playing volleyball
- Fitness
- Grocery shopping
- Jogging
- Having coffees: neighbours

**Mojca 43**
- Playing volleyball
- Grocery shopping
- Activities related to children: neighbours

**David 42**
- Fitness
- Playing volleyball
- Picknics: neighbours (before)

**Rajko, 65**
- Socializing

Activities in the neighborhood or with neighbours: Everyday with neighbors

**Sport**
- Fitness
- Jogging
- Playing volleyball
- Sport activities

**Grocery**
- Shopping
- Grocery shopping
- Visiting elderly (before)

**Social**
- Socializing
- Having coffees: neighbours
- Picknics: neighbours

**Socila**
- Picknics: neighbours (before)
- Having coffees: neighbours, who are also friends

**Walks**
- Taking walks
- Going to library

**Shoveling**
- Shoveling snow: neighbours
- Shoveling snow: neighbours

**Home related**
- Gardening

**Other**
- Visiting elderly (before)
- Going to library
- Activities related to children: neighbours
5. ACTIVITIES AND PUBLIC FACILITIES THAT INHABITANTS MISS

When finding out about, what people miss in their living environment, it was realized that people generally do not miss different activities or public facilities so much, as their living environment is usually well provided with public infrastructure, especially, basic one, such as for example, grocery stores, different places that sales food, kindergartens, schools, sport facilities and so on. The only exception was built environment on Barje, where there is almost no public infrastructure. In this part, firstly, inhabitants’ opinion will be given and then, most missed activities and facilities will be reviled.

To begin with, when talking about Murgle, Mojca explained that “this neighborhood is well placed in the city, there are bus connections, schools are no more then 1.5 kilometer away, there are two kindergartens, two sport courses, a tennis course and a fitness center, also, there is a store, a stadium and football course near by”. (Mojca, 43, Murgle)

However, she explained that she misses a playground for children, safer sport course for children and open arranged spaces between the houses, as the existing ones are too small.

Maja, living in the same neighborhood, shared the opinion about playgrounds and courses. Moreover, she added, “there is a lot of elderly people in this neighborhood, there should be some activities for elderly people as well, such as some sports activities.” (Maja, 38, Murgle)

Furthermore, Ema does not miss any activities or public facilities as, “a part of built tissue, where I live now, is close to the supermarket and transit road, so, it is very well linked to the surroundings.” However, she also expressed, “in general, I think that homes for elderly are not connected enough to the surroundings. Especially, some public activities are missing there,” when she was thinking about her former living environment. (Ema, 25, Vič)

Tadej explained that in general he misses some arranged outside spaces in neighborhoods in Slovenia. “I lived for a while in a neighborhood in Germany, where they have more things, activities arranged outside in the nature. You could sit there, put a blanket on the floor, listen to music, have a picnic and relax. You could even sunbath there and swim. I really liked that. Such places we do not have in Slovenia. I really miss that.” (Tadej, 27, Šiška)

In most of the neighborhoods, public infrastructure was well arranged, according to inhabitants. Only Rajko shared, when talking about Barje, “we have a large shopping center a few kilometers away. But, you always need to sit in the car and drive for a while. It is a problem for housewives, when they, for example, just need a spoon of sugar.” Even thought, there were also no other public facilities in his living environment, he explained that he does not miss them, as he does not use them in general. (Rajko, 65, Barje)

Morover, Matevž lives in a neighborhood, where there is, according to him, all needed public infrastructure, except cultural facilities, however, he expressed, “for some things, like theatre, is maybe good to go out of your neighborhood.” (Matevž, 25, Kodeljevo)

Finally, also in Sara’s case public infrastructure is provided, but what she misses is socializing, “I do miss socializing with other people in my neighborhood.” (Sara, 25, Dravlje)

Regardless of the written, it was analyzed, what inhabitants miss the most. Firstly, they miss playgrounds and sport courses for children, where there are not any, also, socializing with their neighbors or socializing in general in their neighborhood. They also desire some specific sports that they are lacking in their built environment. Moreover, arranged outside spaces are problematic, as there are not any or they are badly arranged. Some of them miss some additional shopping facilities or activities for elderly inhabitants.

Most of the living environment, where residents live is well connected to the surrounding context and therefore, well provided with activities they like to do and facilities they use. In some cases, even if there is a lack of some facilities, inhabitants do not see that as a problem, if a neighborhood is well connected to surroundings. However, what they miss the most are arranged places for children, socializing with their neighbors, some sport facilities and arranged outside spaces. Also, in neighborhoods, where there is not even basic public infrastructure, mostly grocery stores are missed.

To sum up the chapter, individuals today do live their own, specific lifestyles. Some of them have completely different daily rhythms, where others established similar ones, usually, when they have a steady job operating at certain hours. In their free time, they do diverse activities, but there are some that are common to different residents. Inhabitants in Slovenia mostly like to play different sports, they like to jog, go to fitness or ride a bike, moreover, they like to socialize or take a walk. On special occasions, they visit some cultural institution or go for a trip or to mountains. In some cases, they like to do different activities tied to their home. Most of these activities they do in a range of their living environment, such as playing different sports, shopping, socializing and taking walks. However, individuals participate less in activities with their neighbors. Due to several reasons, such as altered social conditions or specific built environment determining their lifestyles, connections with their neighbors are not strong anymore or they never were. Though, some, due to different purposes, gained friends in the proximity of their homes. In these cases, they still socialize with people living near by. In general, they do not miss mostly any public infrastructure in their living environment, though, places for children are not adequately arranged, also inhabitants miss socializing with others and as expected, some sport facilities. Moreover, they miss outside arranged common places. These data were gathered and analyzed, as it might be helpful in identifying diverse functions in a new built neighborhood.
Activities and public facilities that inhabitants miss

- **Ema 25**
  - Activities for elderly

- **Sara 25**
  - Socializing with neighbours

- **Urša 26**
  - Shopping facilities
  - Sauna
  - Sport activities

- **Matevž 25**
  - Climbing wall

- **Tadej 27**
  - Picknics places
  - Green outside spaces

- **Maja 38**
  - Picknics: neighbours
  - Safe sport course
  - Playground for children
  - Activities for elderly

- **Mojca 43**
  - Arranged outside spaces
  - Playground for children
  - Safe sport course

- **David 42**
  - Picknics: neighbours
  - Dentist

- **Rajko, 65**
  - Shopping facilities

Activities and public facilities that inhabitants miss: Results

- **Playground**
  - Playground for children
  - Safe sport course

- **Social**
  - Picknics: neighbours
  - Socializing with neighbours
  - Picknics places
  - Picknics: neighbours

- **Sport**
  - Climbing wall
  - Sport activities
  - Sauna

- **Common space**
  - Green outside spaces
  - Arranged outside spaces

- **Shopping**
  - Shopping facilities

- **Elderly**
  - Activities for elderly

- **Other**
  - Dentist
Encouraging interactions_ functional characteristic

‘When spaces in the neighborhood are functional determinate, strict rules might be prescribed with their use, then socializing decreases. Some common spaces should partly allow the interpretation of inhabitants, but encourage it with some suggestions,’ this was a fact realized in a theoretical part of the research. Following this prediction, residents of Ljubljana were asked, if they think that, if they could contribute to the use of common spaces in their neighborhood, such as being involved in determining its function, if they would therefore use them more often.
In general, all of inhabitants think that they would use certain space in the neighborhood more often, if they could be involved in its functional determination. Though, participation between them would be requited and they would need to agree on common choice. Most of respondents would like to participate in such common action, where some would even like to organize it.

For example, Maja claimed, “I would already be happy, if there would be any common spaces that I could use in my neighborhood. Then, also, the function of these spaces would be important.” (Maja, 38, Murgle) Problematic fact, concerning neighborhood Murgle is that there is a lack of arranged common outside spaces between residential units.

Ema answered the same question, “it depends, if this would concern some arranged outside spaces, then, I think, I would visited them and hang out there more often. But, if this would concern some inside spaces, then, probably, I would not use them more. Only, if this would regard some special activity that I am doing, such as for example, exercising, then, I think, I would.” (Ema, 25, Vič) Meaning, she would use a space more often, if she could choose a function she needs or activity she likes to do. Moreover, Sara would like, next to choosing an activity, even cooperate in organizing it, “I would definitely like to organize any activity in my neighborhood. But, it also depends on other inhabitants, if it would be even possible to make a contact with my neighbors,” she also added, “you always feel better, if you have many people placed around you.” (Sara, 25, Dravlje) Definitely, if participating, people would use such space more regularly, however, the problem here is that they would need to agree upon common solution.

In general, eight of nine participants answered this question affirmatively. The only one, who does not agree with this fact is David, he thinks that such participating would not affect him or his intention to use such space.

To conclude, firstly, this verification was done strictly theoretically, as only inhabitants’ opinion was taken into consideration. In such real situation, residents might act differently that they think they would. However, in general, residents would use certain space in the neighborhood more often, if they could be involved in its functional determination. Though, participation between them would be requited and they would need to agree on common choice. Most of respondents would like to participate in such common action, where some would even like to organize it.

Cooperating in determining function vrs. influence on: using the space, liveliness of the space

If I could cooperate in determining the function of the space, I would use it more often.

|Maja 38| Yes| Yes| Yes|
|Sara 25| Yes| No| Yes|
|Urša 26| Yes| Yes| Yes|
|Matevž 25| Yes| Yes| Yes|
|Tadej 27| Yes| Yes| Yes|
|Mojca 43| Yes| Yes| Yes|
|David 42| No| No| Yes|
|Rajko, 65| Yes| Yes| Yes|
Encouraging interactions_ functional and physical characteristics

It is more likely that people would make connections, interact with one another in non-individual, common space. Within theoretical part, it was determined that certain spatial characteristics may influence the level of liveliness of such space and consequently interactions, as certain characteristics make space more pleasant and therefore, more used. Between functional characteristics, a type of function applied on such space matters, as well as functional diversity, certain distribution of functions and indetermination of a space. Also, some physical characteristics may influence a space that becomes more pleasant and vivid, such as appropriate size, the ration between openness and enclosure or folding of such space and so on. Within interviews, a special assignment was given to inhabitants. They needed to sketch a common space, where they interact with other people. Selected spaces could be situated anywhere, however, six participants chose a space in a proximity of their current or previous home. Then, inhabitants were asked to explain, if there are any certain spatial characteristics that encourage them to stay in such spaces. Within this part, firstly, some of participants' thinking will be presented and then, different important spatial characteristic of a common space will be given.
1_Inhabitants’ Descriptions

To begin with, three of nine spaces described were interior, privately owned and other six exterior and mostly public. They will be briefly introduced in this order, with participants’ opinion added.

Firstly, after Sara sketched a common space, where she likes to interact with other people, she added, “it is common that, when people socialize with others, a certain concentric shape gets formed, people get in circle”. Though, this might happen, when a group of people, who already know each other, gather and personalize space, so that they can interact with one another. Also, she was, in this context, describing a private apartment, where she was gathering with known people. Moreover, she explained, “a space is definitely important, but, if you get along with people, then, you do not mind so much, what the surrounding is”. Additionally, she illuminated, as she was describing an interior space that a comfort and pleasantness of a space is relevant and the position of furniture within this space. (Sara, 25, Dravlje)

Furthermore, Maja presented an interior ‘common space’, however, this one was more public then the previous one, as she described a restaurant. “This space is a restaurant and a bar, called Hombre and it is located in our neighborhood, in a proximity of our home. We are going to this place for a drink, after a game of volleyball, therefore, it gained this special, domestic feeling. It is also pleasant that everyone knows me there, therefore, I sometimes even take my children there for a pizza.” Being in proximity of her home was a large advantage of this place. But, according to her, also, some physical characteristics were relevant, “We are going to this place, as it is close to our homes, but also, because it is pleasant”. Moreover, she explained that important characteristics of this restaurant were warm colors, many plants present, openness to outside garden and Mexican style. (Maja, 38, Murgle)

Another interior space was presented by Rajko. “If there is a good company, it is nice even under the tree. However, it helps, if a space is pleasant, warm, in pleasant colors, then, it contributes that people stay there.” Next, he explained, “pleasant space is the one, which is warm and has a warm atmosphere, sterile is not pleasant”. He also illustrated that the size of such space should be appropriate, but moreover that it should feel domestic. “If the place looks to prestige, like in a church, where everything is shiny, if it is too large in scale, we feel small and we do not feel pleasant. More then the space feel large, more you feel lonely.” (Rajko, 65, Barje)

Furthermore, Urša drawn an outside space, however, she counted many characteristics, usually relevant for interior spaces. “The atmosphere of a space is important, in this specific space, the materials are important, such as for example, wood on the floors,” she added, “also, the nature is relevant for me”. Moreover, she emphasized the liveliness of and familiarity with the space, as important. “In general, I usually hang out in spaces, which I visited many times. Then, they become more domestic, home-like as they become special, moreover, they gain identity”. (Urša, 43, Šiška)

For Ema, familiarity with a space was significant, but also, its distinctive location and setting, “this space was, on one hand, in the center of happenings, because there were two roads near by, but, on the other hand, you were quite remote, so, no one could see you, if you were sitting on the tree, for example”. Space described was a public space in a park, near her former living environment, “this was a public space, not regularly used by others, so we, children, privatize it”. As they were staying there often, they got a feeling that this space belong to them, “when you thinking about something as ‘your own’, then you feel more attached to it, it becomes more personal and it gains special identity”. (Ema, 25, Vič)

Mojca presented a space in her former neighborhood, where she was staying as a child, “functions in some near by common spaces were determinate, but we were hanging out on this one, because it was an open space, it was positioned between several blocks of flats and it was functionally indeterminate”. (Matevž, 25, Kodeljevo)

Furthermore, Tadej sketched a common space in a park, surrounded with nature, where you can see the surroundings, but still you are in an intimate environment. “In general, I usually hang out in open spaces, then the space feel large, more you feel lonely.” (Tadej, 27, Šiška)

Last, but not the least, David presented a place in a center of Ljubljana, along the river Ljubljanica. He describes, how this space is arranged for socializing, as it contains some elements, such as stands placed along the space. Mostly, its liveliness impressed him, “it is nice, because you see other people walking along, there is some life going on, something is happening there and I like that”. However, he also likes some physical characteristics of this space, such as for example openness towards the castle, “the view from this place is nice, you can see city castle and city center”. (David, 42, Murgle)

To sum up, in general, when it comes to a common space, where people interact with each other, participants cherish elements, such as proximity to their home and closeness to the nature. Then, talking about interior spaces, people described the importance of physical atmosphere, such as natural materials, pleasant colors and temperature, domestic feeling, presence of known people, appropriate placement of furniture, etc. Where, for exterior spaces some other characteristics were mentioned, liveliness of a space, appropriate ratio between openness and enclosure, functional indetermination and so on. Further on, these characteristics will be placed in three categories and listed according to their importance.
A particular common space, where inhabitants interact with others

Sara 25, Vič

Ema 25, Park in 'Poljane'

Important characteristics of this particular space

Functional characteristics

Have no influence

Physical characteristics

Protection by certain elements
Insight into surroundings

Other

Tree and statue are important elements
Fence as an important element
Transit, but remote location
Looking at other people passing
Feeling of 'privatization' of a space

Sara 25, Dravlje

Ema 25, Vič

Image 54: Common space, Ema

Image 55: Common space, Sara
A particular common space, where inhabitants interact with others

Urša 26, Šiška

Important characteristics of this particular space

Functional characteristics
- Have no influence

Physical characteristics
- Natural materials
- Wooden floor
- Large glass window
- Openness
- Pleasant atmosphere created by physical characteristics

Other
- Trees, nature
- Liveliness of the space
- Known people
- Possibility of observing others
- Proximity of her own apartment

---

A particular common space, where inhabitants interact with others

Matevž 25, Bežigrad

Important characteristics of this particular space

Functional characteristics
- Important that function was not determined
- Children created a baseball field

Physical characteristics
- Openness
- Larger size
- The position of this space was important, as it was placed between the blocks of flats

Other
- The position of this space was important, as it was placed between the blocks of flats

---

Image 56: Common space, Urša

Image 57: Common space, Matevž
Important characteristics of this particular space

**Functional characteristics**
- Have no influence

**Physical characteristics**
- Openness
- But discreteness

**Other**
- Nature
- Pond
- Trees
- Benches
- Pedestrian path
- Relaxing place

---

Important characteristics of this particular space

**Functional characteristics**
- Dancing activity possible

**Physical characteristics**
- Warm colors
- Adequate size for human movement
- Pleasant atmosphere, because of the physical characteristics
- Openness, to outside garden

**Other**
- Proximity to her home
- Plants
- Mexican style
- Outside garden
- Domestic feeling
- Special meaning
A particular common space, where inhabitants interact with others

Mojca 43, Murglje

Important characteristics of this particular space

**Functional characteristics**
- Important that function was not determined

**Physical characteristics**
- High density of residential units
- Placement of residential units
- View from her house
- Small scale of the space

**Other**
- Dead-end street
- Proximity of a forest
- Proximity to her home
- Liveliness, a lot of children

---

A particular common space, where inhabitants interact with others

David 42, Murglje

Important characteristics of this particular space

**Functional characteristics**
- Arranged for socializing
- You can go for a coffee or wine
- Stands placed along

**Physical characteristics**
- Openness, view towards the city castle and center

**Other**
- Liveliness
- Transit place, watching people pass by
- Nice appearance
A particular common space, where inhabitants interact with others

Rajko 65, Barje

Important characteristics of this particular space

2_ FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

To begin with, within interviews, people pointed out different functional characteristic concerning different spaces, here these features will be presented, according to their importance.

Surprisingly, four participants did not mention that function of a described space would have any influence on their staying in such space. Moreover, two inhabitants pointed out that portrayed spaces, where they were hanging out in their childhood, were significant, as the function was not determined. Furthermore, the only functionally prearranged spaces that inhabitants mentioned as attractive were spaces arranged for socializing and such, in proximity of facilities selling coffee, wine or other threats.

In general, when looking at common spaces, appealing for socializing, people described spaces, where function was not a main feature. Especially, when coming to spaces situated in their neighborhood, they emphasized functional indetermination and an importance of a domestic-like feeling.

3_ PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Physical characteristics of a space were more relevant to residents of Ljubljana, then functional ones. They will be described in this paragraph.

To begin with, six inhabitants mentioned the ratio between openness and enclosure as important physical characteristic. Four pointed that openness of a space, its surroundings or openness of interior space to exterior, is a relevant characteristic of a common space. Next, two explained that they feel pleasant, where they feel protected, but still have an in-view in brother surroundings. In most cases, people prefer to see brother surroundings, so that they can observe the activity of other human beings. Further on, general atmosphere of a common space was significant to three participants. For interior and exterior spaces, adequate size of a space matters to three inhabitants and materials to one. When talking about interior spaces, colors were relevant for two inhabitants. For a lively space in a neighborhood, one participant pointed out a relevance of adequate congestion and appropriate placement of residential units. Finally, a central formation of a common space was significant to one person.

In theoretical findings, the right ratio between openness and enclosure was found as relevant characteristic of a common space. Here, it was pointed out by two inhabitants, where, four inhabitants pointed out the openness of a space, as relevant. Moreover, according to theoretical findings, spaces made in human scale should be significant, also, interviews showed the same preferences. Within the theoretical part, materials and colors were not discussed, however, apparently they are relevant. It is verified that congestion and sitting matter for lively places in neighborhood. Finally, places should be made in central organization, when taking into account one group. However, when it comes to exterior spaces, usually, more groups or users are expected, therefore, theoretical findings promote decentralization with folding, over centralization.

4_ OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

Theoretical part of this paper addressed just some characteristics of a common space, found as relevant within the literature. Interviews showed that there are also some others. They will be briefly presented within this part.

Surprisingly, five from nine inhabitants pointed out the relevance of specific elements placed in common space and their position, this was concerning inside and outside spaces. Elements listed were benches, stage, chairs and tables, trees to sit on, fences and so on. These kind of urban or interior elements might extant a duration of specific interaction. Next, already established liveliness of a common space was pointed out as impor-
tant, as liveliness encourage even more liveliness. Also, proximity of nature and moreover, domestic feeling may contribute to the pleasantness of the space, where domestic feeling is mostly considered, when talking about interior spaces. Some participants prefer transit location, where others cherish remote ones. Also, proximity of a common space to their home is relevant for some inhabitants and to meet familiar people for others. Finally, as expected, general pleasantness is desired.

In this part, some characteristics of pleasant common space, not considered before were reviled. Mostly, placement of specific elements might help, when aiming to create a lively space. Also, placement of natural elements is relevant. Next, creating a space placed on transit, yet remote location and finally, an establishment of domestic atmosphere and general pleasantness.

To sum up this chapter, even though that functional characteristics of common space were found as relevant within theoretical part, interviews shown that, when people are interacting, any other function is mostly less relevant. Except, activities such children playing, people drinking some beverages or dancing were described as relevant in such spaces. Also, indetermination of common spaces was relevant to some participants.

Within physical features, concerning a common space, the right ratio between openness and enclosure was found as relevant in some cases, where, openness of such spaces was cherished in others, especially, when they were set in a location, where density of built tissue was high. Moreover, a common space should be made in appropriate size, pleasant, in warm colors and pleasant materials. In the neighborhood, a congestion of residential units and placement of units in relation to common space was found as significant.

Additionally, some other characteristics were found as relevant, when talking about common spaces. Mostly, placement of specific elements might encourage or extant interactions. Proximity of nature makes space more pleasant, according to some participants. Then, it was found out that place can be livelier, if placed next to transit location, but still in remote distance and finally, a domestic feeling of a common place can contribute that the space becomes visited more frequently.

To sum up this chapter, even though that functional characteristics of common space were found as relevant within theoretical part, interviews shown that, when people are interacting, any other function is mostly less relevant. Except, activities such children playing, people drinking some beverages or dancing were described as relevant in such spaces. Also, indetermination of common spaces was relevant to some participants.

### Function: Dancing
- Dancing activity possible (Rajko)
- Dancing activity possible (Maja)

### Function: Socializing
- Arranged for socializing (David)

### Function: Baseball
- Children created a baseball field (Matevž)

### Function: Cafe or wine
- You can go for a coffee or wine (David)

### Function: Attraction
- Stands placed along (David)
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There are many influences that encourage inhabitants to be individualistic. Also, the organization and formation of a neighborhood’s layout may contribute to the strengthening of this social phenomenon. Again, another sketching task was given to the participants of the interviews. They needed to draw their living environment, with their house included. First set of questions was verifying, if the siting of residential units is influencing the level of interactions between neighbors. In theoretical part, it was acknowledged that congestion and siting should influence the liveliness of the space. Firstly, participants were asked, if they have a view to a common space from their private unit and then, if they can see any neighbors’ activities. Secondly, they were asked, how often do they meet their neighbors. Within the second part of this assignment, the aim was to find out, if inhabitants live in a distinctive or unified built environment and if it is, therefore, more special to them. Following, firstly, some of participants’ thinking will be presented. Then, it will be exposed, if there is a relation between the siting of units in a neighborhood and a higher level of interactions. Finally, it will be illuminated, if a distinctive or unified built environment is strengthening an identity of a neighborhood.
Within this first part, participants’ neighborhoods will be presented, with their descriptions. They will be presented in the following order, firstly, distinct or unified neighborhoods will be described and then, a living environment, not being considered as special.

To begin with, according to her, Sara lives in a special neighborhood, “our neighborhood is made in a way that houses are placed around the common green space, where different activities might happen, because of this arrangement, the neighbors are paying too much attention to what you are doing, therefore, I would like to have more privacy”. In her case, a problematic thing is that just a few houses are placed around green, circular space, where everyone can see you coming or living. Moreover, as there are just a few houses, the atmosphere is very intimate, thus problematic. Apparently, this setup is made in a way that she meets her neighbors regularly. However, seeing her neighbors’ units does not disturb her. In any case, her neighborhood is different and distinctive, “it is special, because of the unique organization, urbanization and a lot of greenery, also, because every person has its own garden”. Also, she explained that her neighborhood is unified, “all the houses are the same, they have the same height, roofs have the same angle and shape, all the facades are white, the same materials are used, there is the same avenue everywhere, the same kind of trees and hedges, also, the organization and all the plans are the same”. Even though that the neighborhood is distinctive and unified, she thinks that it does not affect, how she identity with it, “I think that you relate to, identify with any built environment you are born in, as you are determinate by it, this happens in any case, if it is special or not”. (Sara, 25, Dravlje)

Following three inhabitants all live in the same neighborhood, called Murgle. Firstly, Maja explained that she can see a smaller open space from her house and that does not disturb her, she would even like to have a view to a lively common space. Moreover, she pointed out, “I like high fences, strictly because of the safety, otherwise, I do not mind seeing activities of my neighbors. I like it, how this new, modern blocks of flats are made, where you can see, what others are doing”. As she lives in a well-known, distinctive and unified Slovenian neighborhood, she described, “what makes this neighborhood unified is, the color of the facades, same roof angles, low houses, fences, the way of how pedestrian paths are placed, the system of garages, also, the same way of how houses are built and that all houses have atriums”. But then she added, “I feel more labeled, because of the distinct neighborhood, but not more connected to it”. It is true that the built environment is highly different from the surrounding and also inhabitants perceive it like that, however, as mostly affluent people live in this neighborhood, participants do not like it that they are labeled from people living somewhere else. (Maja, 38, Murgle)

David, living in the same neighborhood, had similar opinions. He explained, “in such a way that you would see other people, therefore, I do not meet them often or hang out with them”. He also agreed that neighborhood is unified, “yes, all the houses are small and low, they also have the same appearance, the roof angles are the same, also windows, there is the same system through the whole neighborhood”. He also confirmed that a neighborhood is distinctive, “yes, it is special, it has a special reputation, therefore, I am even less connected to it”. (David, 42, Murgle)

Moreover, Mojca from Murgle shared similar opinion. She added to that, “in Murgle, there is no clearance, houses are close together and there are no outside, arranged common spaces”. (Mojca, 43, Murgle)

Also, following two participants live in a special living environment. However, they live in a block of flats. Matevž described a neighborhood, where he lived as a child, “it did not disturb me that we saw the common space, that we saw other people, what they were doing and where they were going,” he also added, “there were also a lot of different public facilities there, therefore, it was really lively”. He could also see the neighbors’ apartments from his unit and that did not bother him. Moreover, he confirmed that he met a lot of neighbors in this environment. He also perceived this neighborhood as distinct, “this neighborhood was special, mostly, because of the placement of buildings”. Moreover, the neighborhood was unified, “all the blocks of flats looked the same, all the building volumes were the same, had the same form, dimensions, just the texture of facades was different and windows’ frames sometimes”. As this living environment was special, he added, “I felt more connected, attached to the neighborhood, because it looked specific and different”. (Matevž, 25, Kodeljevo)

Next, Tadej lives in a block of flats and has a view on a common space, “yes, I see common space and I like it, there is also a playground and I am disturbed as the swings are screeching”. He also can see the neighbors’ units and he is not disturbed, moreover, he added, “you meet a lot of people in such living environments, because a lot of people is living here”. Furthermore, he feels that his living environment is distinctive, “yes, it is distinctive, these blocks of flats are a bit older and they are all quite high, they are different from newer ones around”. His neighborhood is also unified, “blocks of flats are totally the same, they have the same facade color, height, sitting and plan of the apartments is the same”. However, he added, “I do not think that, as this built environment is different, I can relate better to it”.

(Tadej, 27, Šiška)

Following three inhabitants felt that they do not live in a distinctive nor unified environment. Ema does not see an appealing outside space at the moment, but, if it would be nice she would not mind seeing it, “I can see the parking spaces and some road with heavy traffic from my apartment, therefore, the noise and its unappealing look are bothering me, but, I would like it, if I could see a park or some other green common space from my apartment”. Furthermore, she likes to look at neighbors’ activities. She also added, “I do not often meet my neighbors outside, but sometimes inside of the block, in a hall”. Next to that she feels, “if I look at the micro-location, then, it is unified, because there are some blocks of flats, which look similar, but, broader built environment is not unified, as the buildings are dispersed and not unique in form”. (Ema, 25, VLD)

Urša feels similar, “yes, I have a view to common space and I see, what neighbors are doing, however, it does not disturb me, the opposite, I am glad, when I see, what neighbors are doing”. Next to that she often meets her neighbors in front of her block of flats or in the elevator. Also, she does not feel that her neighborhood is distinct or unified, “my living environment is typical and it is not special or distinct from surrounding living environment, also, it is not unified, as here are various different blocks and houses”. (Urša, 43, Šiška)

Finally, Rajko lives in a single-family house, in not unified living environment. He cannot view any common space from his house, as there is not any, “I would not be bothered, if I could see any common space, contrary”. He also cannot see his neighbors, but he likes it like that. Furthermore, he feels that his living environment is not unified, but that it is special, however, not because of the buildings, “no, this built environment is not unified, I identify with it, because of the special location and marsh”. (Rajko, 65, Barje)

To sum up, in general participants do not mind so much, if they can view any common space or their neighbors’ activities. Some are meeting their neighbors regularly, where others very rarely. Usually, in blocks of flats, it is more common that they meet their neighbors, as they can meet them inside and outside the buildings. Furthermore, six of inhabitants feel that they live in a distinct or unified living environment, where other three does not have this impression.
Layout of the neighborhood or built environment, where inhabitant lives

Ema 25, Vič

Physical characteristics, siting: interactions
- View on common space
- View on neighbour’s unit
- Not problematic
- Not problematic

Siting vrs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants
- Meeting other inhabitants, not so often

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity
- Not distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

She does not think that her living environment is different from other built tissue in Ljubljana

Physical characteristics, unity: identity
- Not unified living environment or a neighbourhood

A few blocks of flates look the same, wider area not unified

Image 67: Neighborhood’s layout, Ema

Layout of the neighborhood or built environment, where inhabitant lives

Sara 25, Dravlje

Physical characteristics, siting: interactions
- View on common space
- View on neighbour’s unit
- Sometimes problematic
- Not problematic

Siting vrs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants
- Meeting other inhabitants often

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity
- Distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

Identified with the environment, as we are born in it, not because it is special

Physical characteristics, unity: identity
- Unified living environment or a neighbourhood

The same houses, same height, the same roofs, white facades, the same materials, the same avenue, the same, trees and hedges, the organization and, the same plans

Image 68: Neighborhood’s layout, Sara
Physical characteristics, siting: interactions

View on common space

View on neighbour’s unit

Not problematic

Not problematic

Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants

Meeting other inhabitants often

Inside in the elevator and infront of the block

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity

Not distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

She does not think that her living environment is different from other built tissue in Ljubljana

Physical characteristics, unity: identity

Not unified living environment or a neighbourhood

In is not unified, because the blocks and houses are diverse

Layout of the neighborhood or built environment, where inhabitant lives

Urša 26, Šiška

Layout of the neighborhood or built environment, where inhabitant lives

Mateviž 25, Bežigrad

Physical characteristics, siting: interactions

View on common space

View on neighbour’s unit

Not problematic

Not problematic

Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants

Meeting other inhabitants often

Inside and outside

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity

Distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

The placement of the building is distinctive, because it is distinctive he feels more connected

Physical characteristics, unity: identity

Unified living environment or a neighbourhood

Same blocks of flats, same volumes, similar form, dimensions, the texture of façade is different and windows’ frames sometimes
Physical characteristics, siting: interactions

View on common space
Not problematic

View on neighbour’s unit
Not problematic

Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants

Meeting other inhabitants often

Mostly inside the building

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity

Distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

The blocks are older and higher form the surrounding: He does not relate to the environment better because of that

Physical characteristics, unity: identity

Unified living environment or a neighbourhood

The same blocks of flats, same façade color, height, siting, plan of the apartments

---

Physical characteristics, siting: interactions

View on common space
No view on neighbour’s unit

Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants

Not meeting other inhabitants often

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity

Distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

She feel labeled, because she lives in this distinct neighborhood

Physical characteristics, unity: identity

Unified living environment or a neighbourhood

The same facade color, same roof angles, low houses, the way of how pedestrian pathways are placed, the same garage system, all houses have atriums
Physical characteristics, siting: interactions

No view on common space  No view on neighbour’s unit
Not problematic  Not problematic

Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants

Not meeting other inhabitants often

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity

Distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

Houses different from other built environment, dense, enclosed

Physical characteristics, unity: identity

Unified living environment or a neighbourhood

Unified houses, same roofs, low houses, same path system, same trees

Physical characteristics, siting: interactions

View on common space  No view on neighbour’s unit
Not problematic  Not problematic

Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants

Not meeting other inhabitants often

Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity

Distinctive living environment or a neighbourhood

Distinctive because of a special reputation: therefore he is less connected to it

Physical characteristics, unity: identity

Unified living environment or a neighbourhood

Small and low houses, with same appearance, same roof angles, similar windows, the same ‘system’ applied through the whole neighborhood: less connected
In the following paragraph, it will be summarized and explained, if there is, in general, a correlation between the way of siting of residential units in the neighborhoods and an amount of encounters between inhabitants.

Within interviews, seven residents from nine answered that they can see a common space from their residential units. In general, just one of them was not pleased with this fact. Moreover, five of nine participants expressed that they can view neighbors’ units from their home. One of residents, who currently cannot see his neighbors’ activities, explained that he finds seeing his neighbors problematic. Additionally, five from nine inhabitants can constantly view some common space and are meeting their neighbors regularly. Also, their residential units have a direct relation and accesses to a common space. There was not a case, where residential units would not have a relation to a common space, but inhabitants would meet regularly. Four participants, all-living in an individual house, do not meet their neighbors very often, actually, almost never. Two from them have a view on a smaller, not often visited open space, where other two cannot view it at all.

In the theoretical findings, it was realized that if residential units were sited in a relation to one another and to a common space, if inhabitants can view the common space, then, it would be more likely that they would interact with each other. Interviews shown that, if residents can view a common space, if buildings are placed in relation to it, people are meeting each other more often. However, that does not necessarily mean that they would connect or engage in a relation with each other more, but certainly, the chances are higher in such urban layout.

Surprisingly, six from nine residents of Ljubljana think that they live in a special, distinctive built environment. Moreover, the same six inhabitants feel that they live in unified built environment. In all the cases, their neighborhood is distinctive, as it is unified and different from the surrounding urban tissue. Here, mostly, physical characteristics had a significant influence on distinctiveness of a built environment. Even more surpassingly is that just one of six participants, who lives in a distinctive, unified environment, thus, feels more connected to it and can identify better, where other five feel differently. Three form six participants, living in Murgle, do not feel more connected to their neighborhood, even thought it is distinctive and unified, due to a special reputation this neighborhood inherit. Other reasons are evident from inhabitants’ descriptions presented before.

In theoretical part it was realized that more then a neighborhood is distinct and unified, stronger should be its identity. It is almost impossible to verify this, however, previously described assignment showed that one of participants confirmed this prediction. In five other cases an identity of a neighborhood is strong, however, inhabitants does not feel connected to it.

To sum up this chapter, firstly, it was realized that it is relevant, how the residential units in a neighborhood are sited, in a relation to the level of encounters between residents. When the units are set in a relation to a common space, if inhabitants can view the common space, then, it would be more likely that they would interact with each other. Interviews shown that, if residents can view a common space, if buildings are placed in relation to it, people are meeting each other more often. However, that does not necessarily mean that they would connect or engage in a relation with each other more, but certainly, the chances are higher in such urban layout.

In the following paragraph, it will be summarized and explained, if there is, in general, a correlation between the way of siting of residential units in the neighborhoods and an amount of encounters between inhabitants.

Within interviews, seven residents from nine answered that they can see a common space from their residential units. In general, just one of them was not pleased with this fact. Moreover, five of nine participants expressed that they can view neighbors’ units from their home. One of residents, who currently cannot see his neighbors’ activities, explained that he finds seeing his neighbors problematic. Additionally, five from nine inhabitants can constantly view some common space and are meeting their neighbors regularly. Also, their residential units have a direct relation and accesses to a common space. There was not a case, where residential units would not have a relation to a common space, but inhabitants would meet regularly. Four participants, all-living in an individual house, do not meet their neighbors very often, actually, almost never. Two from them have a view on a smaller, not often visited open space, where other two cannot view it at all.

In the theoretical findings, it was realized that if residential units were sited in a relation to one another and to a common space, if inhabitants can view the common space, then, it would be more likely that they would interact with each other. Interviews shown that, if residents can view a common space, if buildings are placed in relation to it, people are meeting each other more often. However, that does not necessarily mean that they would connect or engage in a relation with each other more, but certainly, the chances are higher in such urban layout.

In next part, it will be illuminated, according to interviews, if a neighborhood or living environment, which is distinctive and unified, also has a greater identity.

Surprisingly, six from nine residents of Ljubljana think that they live in a special, distinctive built environment. Moreover, the same six inhabitants feel that they live in unified built environment. In all the cases, their neighborhood is distinctive, as it is unified and different from the surrounding urban tissue. Here, mostly, physical characteristics had a significant influence on distinctiveness of a built environment. Even more surpassingly is that just one of six participants, who lives in a distinctive, unified environment, thus, feels more connected to it and can identify better, where other five feel differently. Three form six participants, living in Murgle, do not feel more connected to their neighborhood, even thought it is distinctive and unified, due to a special reputation this neighborhood inherit. Other reasons are evident from inhabitants’ descriptions presented before.

In theoretical part it was realized that more then a neighborhood is distinct and unified, stronger should be its identity. It is almost impossible to verify this, however, previously described assignment showed that one of participants confirmed this prediction. In five other cases an identity of a neighborhood is strong, however, inhabitants does not feel connected to it.

To sum up this chapter, firstly, it was realized that it is relevant, how the residential units in a neighborhood are sited, in a relation to the level of encounters between residents. When the units are set in a relation to a common space, if inhabitants can view it, then, the level of encounters increases. However, that does not mean that people would actually engage in conversation or connect, thus, the chances are higher in this way. Moreover, usually, in blocks of flats, it is more common that residents meet their neighbors, as the encounter can happen inside or outside the buildings. Secondly, in theory, it is predicted that if a neighborhood is distinct and unified, it should have gain
a strong identity. Interviews did not verify this prediction, as just one of the six participants, living in a distinct neighborhood, feels connected to his neighborhood and thinks that it gained a stronger identity, as it is distinctive and unified. However, it is not necessary that the theoretical prediction is wrong. Firstly, the sample taken might have been inadequate. Secondly, the three inhabitants, living in Murgle, do not feel connected to their living environment, due to special occurrences, its specific reputation.

**Layout of the neighborhood or built environment, where inhabitant lives:**

**Physical characteristics, siting (unit to common space): interactions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View on common space</th>
<th>No view on common space</th>
<th>View on common space problematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 inhabitants</td>
<td>2 inhabitants</td>
<td>1 inhabitant, sometimes problematic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Physical characteristics, siting (unit to unit): interactions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View on neighbour’s unit</th>
<th>No view on neighbour’s unit</th>
<th>View on neighbour’s unit problematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 inhabitants</td>
<td>4 inhabitants</td>
<td>1 inhabitant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View on common space + meeting other inhabitants</th>
<th>No view on common space + meeting other inhabitants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 inhabitants</td>
<td>0 inhabitants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Siting vs. meeting, interacting with other inhabitants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View on common space + not meeting other</th>
<th>No view on common space + not meeting other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 inhabitants</td>
<td>2 inhabitants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctive environment</th>
<th>Not distinctive environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 inhabitants</td>
<td>3 inhabitants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Functional and physical characteristics, distinctiveness: identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctive environment + connected to it</th>
<th>Distinctive environment + not connected to it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 inhabitants</td>
<td>4 inhabitants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Physical characteristics, unity: identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unified environment</th>
<th>Unified environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 inhabitants</td>
<td>3 inhabitants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same residential units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same blocks of flats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same blocks of flats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same apperance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same volumes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small and low houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same roofs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same roof angles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same roof angles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same roofs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same roofs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same organization/siting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same ‘system’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same plants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees and hedges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same façade color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White façades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same facade color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same plan of the apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The same path system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same path system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same way of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how pedestrian pathways are placed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All houses have atriums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same garage system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar windows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDETERMINATION

Strengthening identity_ functional and physical characteristic

‘When inhabitants can contribute in choosing functions and to determination of some places in a neighborhood, they would identity with them better. Moreover, if physical setting permits interpretations of residents, if they can contribute in making their homes, they would also relate to it better.’ These were two predictions from a theoretical part of a research. To investigate them, next questions were set and given to participants of interviews. Firstly, would you feel more connected to the built environment, where you would live or could you identify better with it, if you could contribute to determining functions in your neighborhood? And secondly, do you think, you would be more connected, you could identify better with your living environment or your apartment, house, if you could influence on how it is designed, formed? In this last chapter, the responses to both questions will be described.
1_FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

In this first part, it will be explained, if residents would feel more connected to their living environment, if they could contribute to the functions in their neighborhood. Some opinions of participants will be presented here, as well as general opinion will be given.

To begin with, concerning this question, Ema expressed, “I think that if a change occurs in a space, with which you agree, then, this space has more domestic, home-like feeling, probably, because you can consume it better” . (Ema, 25, Vič) Ema would feel more connected to her environment, if she could contribute to its functional determination.

Next, Urša had similar opinion, “yes, I think, I would feel more connected to the environment, if I could contribute to determination of functions within it”. (Urša, 43, Šiška)

Moreover, Tadej answered this question, “yes, definitely”. (Tadej, 27, Šiška)

In general, seven of nine participants answer this question affirmatively. Only Sara and David think that such participating would not affect that they would connect to environment better.

Interviews confirmed the theoretical prediction, as general opinion was that residents would identify with certain neighborhood better, if they could be involved in its functional determination. However, at least some participation between them would be required and they would need to agree on common choice.

2_PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Next, it will be described, if inhabitants would feel more connected to their environment, if they could influence on, how it is designed. Again, firstly, some opinions of participants will be expressed, then, a general opinion will be given.

To begin with, Matevž answered this question positively, “if you can contribute to some space, you automatically feel better there” — “if I could influence the appearance of my house, I would feel more attached to it”. (Matevž, 25, Kodeljevo)

Furthermore, Ema agreed with the prediction, “of course, if you insert your own idea in space and let it live, then, this becomes a part of you, you are more attached to it”. (Ema, 25, Vič)

David lives in unified, fixed living environment, where he cannot change anything, therefore, he expressed, “it disturbs me, how this houses are made and that you cannot change anything, for example make them higher”. He also added that, if he could influence his environment, he would feel more connected to it. (David, 42, Murgle)

Rajko was actually the only one, who contributed in designing process of his house. He pointed out, “I have this privilege that I know this old architect with fresh ideas, he has this skill that he drags yours desires out of you, I think that, it is an art, to get out of a person, what he really wants”. Additionally, he feels more attached to his house, as he had an influence on its design. (Rajko, 65, Barje)

Maja, on other hand, answered the question negatively, “maybe some people express themselves with designing the house, I do not care about it”. (Maja, 38, Murgle)

In general, seven of nine participants answered this question affirmatively. Only Maja and Mojca think that cooperating in designing a house, would not influence the fact that they would identity better with their environment.

To conclude, the final chapter of interviews’ analysis showed that both predictions could be confirmed. Firstly, people do feel more connected to their living environment and can identify better with it, if they can contribute to determining some functions in their neighborhood. And secondly, they do feel more connected to the environment, if they can influence on, how it is designed, formed. However, this verification was done theoretically, as inhabitants predict, how they would act in certain situation. In such real situation, residents might act differently that they think they would.

Cooperating in determining function vrs. influence on: better identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cooperating in determining function of the space, I would use it more often.</th>
<th>If I could cooperate in determining the function of the space, I would be more connected to it/identify better.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ema 25</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara 25</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urša 26</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matevž 25</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadej 27</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maja 38</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mojca 43</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David 42</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajko, 65</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cooperating in determining function vs. influence on: better identity

If I could cooperate in determining the function of the space, I would use it more often.

If I could cooperate in determining the physical characteristics of the space, I would be more connected to it/identify better.

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes
CONCLUSIONS

The intent of the overall research was to answer the research question set at the beginning:

“How should a neighborhood in Ljubljana be designed and organized according to its functional and physical characteristics that it would encourage connections (encourage interactions and strengthen identity) between its inhabitants, individuals?”

Within the theoretical part of the research this question was partly answered. A result was a list of principles, functional and physical characteristics of the built environment, which might be used for encouraging connections between inhabitants within the neighborhood. However, that list might be applied to any neighborhood in the world. The point of the practical investigation, the interviews, was to find out specific cultural characteristics of inhabitants in Ljubljana and try to verify the list of established theoretical principles in relation to new practical findings. Some of the principles were not considered in practical part, as it was too difficult to verify them, as for example ‘Diversity of functions’, ‘Distribution of functions’ and ‘Disconnection by floors’ were left out. Interviews did not follow the exact order of the theoretical principles, however, the relation between principles and interviews can be made. Therefore, these conclusions of practical findings will be made in a way following the exact list of the theoretical principles.
1. DIVERSITY AND TYPES
FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

‘Types of functions should be set according to inhabitants’ desires. Moreover, as it is not possible to provide everything, it is important to identify what inhabitants might have in common.’

To begin with, individuals nowadays establish their personal lifestyles, which vary from one to another, however, they also have some things in common. Firstly, it was realized that employed inhabitants have similar daily rhythm, due to the similar working hours. In general, all the inhabitants do different activities or socialize in the afternoon, after 17.00 or on weekends. Inhabitants of Ljubljana do diverse everyday activities in their free time, thus there are some that are common to different residents. They, mostly, like to play different sports, as for example, they like jogging, go to fitness or ride a bike, moreover, they like to socialize or take a walk. Also, a necessity that they do very often is shopping. On special occasions, inhabitants visit some cultural institution or go for a trip to nature or to mountains. In some cases, they like to do different activities, tied to their home. Residents do most of their everyday activities in a range of their living environment, such as for example, they play different sports there, they grocery-shop, socialize or take a walk. However, individuals participate less in activities with their neighbors than in the past. Though, some, due to different purposes, gained friends in the proximity of their homes. In general, participants do not miss much public infrastructure in their living environment, as it is usually well provided. However, playgrounds for children are usually not adequately arranged, also inhabitants miss socializing with others and as expected some sport facilities, moreover, they miss outside arranged common places. Also, in living environment, where there is not even basic public infrastructure, grocery stores are missed. These data can be valuable for identifying diverse functions, when designing a new neighborhood in Ljubljana.

2. INDETERMINATION
FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

‘When a common space is functionally too determined, it requires more discipline and it is accompanied with strict rules, then liveliness decreases. Therefore, some common spaces should allow the interpretation of inhabitants, but encourage it with some suggestions.’

This verification was done based on residents’ opinion. Eight from nine residents have thought that they would use certain space in the neighborhood more often, if they could be involved in its functional determination. Though, participation between them would be required and they would need to agree on a common choice. Most of respondents would like to participate in such common action, where some would even like to organize it.
3. **ARTICULATION OF SPACE**

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

‘Regarding articulation of the common space, firstly, the size needs to be appropriate, it needs to follow the amount of expected consumers. Secondly, people feel comfortable, when they feel protected on one hand and still have an in-view in broader environment. Thirdly, when the common space is more articulated, also many centers of attraction are established, therefore, it is more individualized and consider as more pleasant.’

Regarding openness and enclosure of common space, two inhabitants pointed out that they feel pleasant, when they are secured, but still have an in-view into surroundings, where, four inhabitants pointed out the openness of a space, as relevant. Moreover, interviews shown that open spaces made in human scale have been relevant to participants. Next, within the theoretical part, pleasant materials and colors were not considered as relevant, however, apparently they are significant, especially, when it comes to interior spaces. Finally, a participant pointed out, when talking about interior space that common place should be made in central organization. However, when it comes to exterior spaces, usually, more groups or users are expected, therefore, theoretical findings promote decentralization with folding over centralization.

Next to the physical characteristics, also, some others were found as valuable, when it comes to common space. To begin with, the function of the common space hasn’t been so relevant for residents. Some of them even emphasized the indetermination of common space as relevant. Moreover, placement of specific elements has been significant, it can even encourage or extant interaction, elements such as benches, chairs, tables or some natural elements, such as trees. Next, participants reviled that they were socializing within space located on transit, but remote location. Also, an establishment of domestic atmosphere and general pleasantness of such spaces is significant. Last but not the least, many of residents have been socializing in common space located near their home, as that was more convenient for them.

4. **SITING**

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC, ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

‘For higher percentage of interactions residential units and outside common space should be inter-related, in a way that buildings are turned towards it, then, inhabitants can choose to participate or not in lively happenings. However, still enough privacy should be provided. Also, the level of unplanned interactions is greater, if houses are sited one to another.’

Interviews shown that, if residents can view a common space, if residential units are placed in relation to it, people are meeting each other more often. However, that does not necessarily mean that they would engage in relationships with each other, but certainly, the chances for interactions are higher in such urban layout. Usually, people living in blocks of flats are unintentionally meeting their neighbors more often then the one living in typical individual house. Finally, most of the participants do not mind to view any common space or their neighbors’ activities.
5. UNITY AND DISTINCTIVENESS
FUNCTIONAL & PHYSICAL CHAR., STRENGTHENING IDENTITY

‘When a neighborhood includes special properties, such as specific functions or functional arrangements, specific structure or physical visible accents, it is more distinctive, thus more recognizable and identifiable.’

‘Furthermore, if the urban pattern is unified, but moreover, if residential units are unified by containing similar properties, the neighborhood is distinct from surrounding built tissue.’

It is almost impossible to verify this fact with the use of interviews, however, such attempt was made. To begin with, each time that inhabitants confirmed that they live in a special, distinctive neighborhood that was realized due to unified physical properties. Therefore, it can be predicted that each time that a neighborhood is unified it is also distinctive, however, it is not necessary the other way around. Moreover, participants realized instantly, if a neighborhood was distinctive and unified, also they were able to list properties causing such conditions. The list of properties can be found within graphical material. The properties are ordered hierarchically, from the one that residents perceived more often as making unity of the neighborhood, to the one least apparent. However, the interviews did not verify the theoretical prediction, as just one of the six participants, living in a distinct and unified neighborhood, feels connected to his neighborhood. However, it is not necessary that this prediction is wrong. Firstly, as the sample might be inadequate and secondly, due to a specific conditions, as three inhabitants of Murge do not feel connected to their living environment, due to a specific reputation.

6. INDETERMINATION
FUNCTIONAL & PHYSICAL CHAR., STRENGTHENING IDENTITY

‘When inhabitants can participate in choosing functions or in determination of significant places, they would identity better with their living environment.’

‘Physical setting should permit the interpretations of residents, as if they can contribute in making their homes, they would also relate to them better.’

Interviews confirmed both theoretical predictions. Firstly, general opinion was that residents would identify with certain neighborhood better, if they could be involved in functional determination of certain spaces. Secondly, seven of nine participants would feel more connected to their environment, if they can influence on how it is designed, formed.

To conclude the description of a practical part of the research, almost all of the practical verifications confirmed theoretical principals as accurate. In the investigation of the properties of the common spaces, even some additional properties were realized as relevant. The only problematic prediction was that, when a neighbourhood is distinctive and unified, people would identify better with it. However, there are several reasons, already described, why people do not feel like that. The tested principles might apparently be applied in a cultural context of Ljubljana and therefore, answer the research question set in the beginning.
TYPES OF FUNCTION, FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS
ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

How does your usual everyday look like? What kind of activities do you do?
What are the special activities that you do or what kind of activities do you do on weekends?
Do you do any activities within your neighborhood?
Do you participate in any activities with your neighbors?
What kind of public facilities do you miss in your neighborhood?

FLEXIBILITY AND DETERMINATION, FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS
ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

Do you think that if you could contribute to the use of common spaces in your neighborhood, such as being involved in determining its function, would you therefore use them more often?

SKETCHING COMMON SPACE

Does it exist any particular, special common space, where do you usually engage in common activities, interactions with others?
Could you please sketch this space?

TYPES OF FUNCTION, FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS
ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

Why do you think, this space is special to you?
Is it the function of this space important that you use this space and encourage you to interact with others?

SIZE, OPENNESS AND ENCLOSURE, FOLDING; PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS
ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

Are the physical characteristics of this space important for you and encourage you to interact with others?
Such as for example size, openness or enclosure, or folding?
Are there any other characteristics of this space that are important?

SKETCHING THE LAYOUT OF THEIR BUILT ENVIRONMENT, NEIGHBORHOOD

Can you please sketch the situation of the built environment, where you currently live? (With your house included.)

SITING, PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS
ENCOURAGING INTERACTIONS

Do you have an insight to any common space, such as for example street, park, etc.? Do you mind that you can view this common space?
Can you, by any chance, see, from your house any activities that your neighbors do?
Do you mind that you can view your neighbor’s activities?
Do you regularly meet your neighbors in your built environment?

UNIQUENESS AND DISTINCTIVENESS, FUNCTION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS STRENGTHENING IDENTITY

Would you characterize the built environment, where you live as unique, distinctive or specific?
Do you, because of that, feel more connected to it, can you identify better with it?
Why do you think, this environment is distinctive?

UNITY, PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS
STRENGTHENING IDENTITY

Do you perceive the built environment, where you live, as unified?
Do you because of that feel more connected to it, can you identify better with it?
Why do you think, this environment is unified?

FLEXIBILITY AND DETERMINATION, FUNCTION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS STRENGTHENING IDENTITY

Would you feel more connected to the built environment where you would live or could you identify better with it, if you could contribute to determining functions in your neighborhood?
Did you design your apartment/house on your own or with the help of architect?
Do you think you would be more connected, you could identify better with your living environment or your apartment/house, if you could influence on how it is designed, formed?
LIST OF IMAGES


Image 31: Relation between private units and common space: Benčina, Taja (2013) Independent graphic design.


Image 41: Inhabitants on the map of Ljubljana: Benčina, Taja (2013) Independent graphic design.
