

THE FIRST COMMUNITY HOUSING MODEL CONSTRUCTED IN HUNGARY – THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE IN MISKOLC

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The purpose of the study is to present Hungary's first project related to today's co-housing model in many ways, and which was thus ahead of its time in terms of its social, technical, and economic aspects. The building was completed in 1979 at the initiative of architecture students in Miskolc, Northern Hungary, where young engineers were needed due to the forced industrialization of state socialism. For this reason, the city administration of the era accepted the novel initiative of a university architectural community and built the so-called Collective House, which created the framework for a form of housing previously unknown in Hungary. In addition to the unique use of space, the building was experimental in several ways, including the plans being prepared within the framework of participation, with the involvement of later movers. In addition, panel technology was used for the structure of the building, which until then was mainly typical for the construction of monotonous 5-10-story panel apartment buildings.

Key words: collectivity, state socialism, Miskolc, Hungary, co-housing, prefabricated, panel.

INTRODUCTION

Community living is becoming more and more popular. We use communal cars and bicycles for travel, and create community gardens on empty city center lots. Almost all household items can be rented for a short period, from clothes to tools, and community offices enjoy unwavering popularity in the field of work. Many people see co-housing as an alternative way of living together in the city. It is now widely accepted that community living can provide answers to many of the problems of modern societies, including alienation, social isolation, and the lack of sustainable living (Szabó *et al.*, 2019). However, the various presentations of the topic often fail to distinguish between practical, sharing-based collaboration and intellectual community engagement.

In Hungary, the co-housing model (shared space, shared creation, shared activities, shared tenure) is not yet

widespread, and only a few such initiatives can be found in Budapest (Babos *et al.*, 2020). All of this is striking, not only because the new model of co-housing is already so popular internationally, but also because there is a very widely known example – the Collective House in Miskolc – which, as a model of experimental co-housing, has been a kind of “cult” Hungarian model since the 1970s, and which has the particular value of having the above-mentioned intellectual content. The project was created on the initiative of 30 young university students studying architecture. Their goal was to ensure that relationships forged during their university years would remain together as they started adult life. Miskolc was chosen as the place of settlement, where one of the most important industrial centers in the country was built at the time, which was of particular economic and political importance to the state leadership. The city needed specialists, including young engineers and designers. Perhaps it was also for this reason that the city administration at the time gave the initiators the opportunity to construct a residential building with communal spaces.

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The aim of this study is to present the above specific example from a social, technical, and economic points of view, after a brief historical summary of collective coexistence. The topic is given relevance by the current model change in the field of urban co-housing forms, and the broad international interest in new models, regarding which, in addition to the experience of market-based co-housing construction, the nearly 50-year history of the community-oriented Collective House in Miskolc can provide a new point of view.

The basis of the study, in addition to the literature, was provided by questionnaire surveys and personal interviews with former planners and residents between 2018 and 2023 (István Bede, Pál Farkas, János Golda, Klára Karmazsin, Ágnes Novák, László Szőke, Márta Tóth, Attila Pirity, Péter Albert, János Dobai, Csaba Bodonyi). The research focuses on the period between construction of the Collective House and the change of regime in Hungary in 1989, when the building was still functioning according to the ideas of the designer and the first inhabitants.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF COLLECTIVE HOUSE

Fourier's Phalanster can be singled out as a relevant antecedent from the aspect of this article among the multi-directional experiments of collective cohabitation. In his study "New Industrial World" (1829), he characterized his era as a civilizational age of atrophy, after the fall of which he hoped for the creation of a higher social state based on care and cooperation, although social classes, private property, and taxation would remain. He believed that if this principle were successful, the productivity of society would also increase. In the living and working community of 1,600 people that he formulated, people from the most diverse social classes and age groups benefited equally from the goods they produced (food, clothing, services, etc.) and they could work wherever they wanted, with unpleasant work being compensated with higher wages. According to his ideas, the foundation of the community was not the family, but the "emotional attraction" between the individual members. That the theory strongly resonated with a kind of social need is proven by its widespread distribution and the large number of practical experiments that were directly or indirectly inspired by the principles formulated by Fourier (Fried and Sanders, 1964). Godin (1856) – who made a fortune manufacturing stoves – respected Fourier's ideas and wanted to put them into practice, but he rejected the principle of "emotional attraction". He wanted to provide more favorable housing conditions for working families. He bought a plot of land in Guise, northern France, to build his three-block complex on. Since the foundation of his community was families, his building complex was named Familistère (Brauman, 1976; Frampton, 2009; Meggyesi, 2005; Fernández Per *et al.*, 2013). The examples linked to Fourier and Godin started from a social model, but they also associated their own architectural concept with it, with a conservative approach to mass and space in many respects, typically with symmetrically composed building complexes.

In Russia in the 1920s, everything that the previous social order stood for was rejected. New ideas and new plans were needed, as a result of which a kind of experimental spirit was

released. In 1923, the OSA (Organization of Contemporary Architects), an organization dealing with Soviet avant-garde architecture, was established under the leadership of Moisei Ginzburg. In 1927, a series of questions were published in the columns of a magazine called *Modern Architecture*, which the authors wanted to use to assess what people thought about a new form of communal housing, the dom-commune. Following the series of questions, a tender was issued for the design of communal houses, that is, they also looked for architectural possibilities that could be associated with the social vision. The first – a U-shaped building with 5-6 floors – was built in 1929 based on the plans of architects Wolfelson and Leontovics in Moscow. It had small apartments with a shared kitchen and dining room on each floor. That year saw the pamphlet "Theses on Housing" published by the Association of Soviet Architects, in which they argued for the complete nationalization of education, households, and services. The theses also had extreme representatives (Szabsovics, Miljutyin, Kuzmin), who proposed 5 m² cell-like spaces that could open into each other to establish and function "periodic and voluntary" relationships. In the commune, the activities of the residents, from waking up to going to bed, were broken down to the minute. The Narkomfin building was built in 1932, based on the design of Moisei Ginzburg; it was a communal house for high-ranking Russian officials with 52 apartments. The communal houses also significantly influenced the new city model, as the services would have been provided in 1-1 housing units, so there was no need for a city center. According to Szabsovics, the model could have been increased to a size of 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants. However, these efforts were stalled at the experimental stage, as a decision by the Central Committee in 1932 made the whole Russian avant-garde movement impossible (Kopp, 1969; Meggyesi, 2005; Frampton, 2009).

In Hungary, the CIAM group (Congres Internationalaux d'Architecture Moderne) worked on the design of a collective house in 1931, called Kolház. It was envisioned with two 8-story building blocks, a 400-seat restaurant, a theater and exhibition hall, a gymnasium, a library, a club, laundry rooms and other communal spaces for 800 residents. The Kolház was a building complex in which only the bathroom and bedroom functions were kept in the living quarters. In 1931, one of the Kolház apartments was built at the Autumn Housewares and Home Furnishings Fair organized in an event centre called 'Iparcsarnok' in Budapest, but the project ultimately remained only a plan (Stern, 1931; Gábor, 1980). The opinion of the authors is that the examples of the Russian avant-garde movement and the Hungarian Kolház were not primarily motivated by the idealism of collectivity, but rather as an architectural experiment to find an adequate spatial system for this new lifestyle. Their model and spatial organization resembled modern co-housing.

The closest antecedent to the Collective House of Miskolc is the Školka (meaning: kindergarten) building, built in 1971 in Liberec, Czech Republic (Table 1). It was a boarding office created from an old restaurant, which was loosely connected to the state through an architectural company called SIAL (Sdružení inženýrů a architektů Liberec – Society of Liberec Engineers and Architects). The office took responsibility for the plans of the young architects, and the professional



Figure 1. The community space of Školka in Liberec
(Source: Babos, A., Lukács, Zs. I. (2014). <https://epiteszforum.hu/kollektiv-haz-hosszu-tavu-mukodese>)

engineers also came from there. In this way, it was possible to plan freely, but still have supervision that gave a certain sense of security. You could live in the building for a certain period, after which you could join the activities of the architectural company. The maximum number of people was 15. An important factor in the building was that it was an existing building that needed to be converted, so the floor plan was constrained. The common design space was located in the center, which was surrounded on two sides, without a transition, by living rooms and service functions (bathroom, toilet, dining room, kitchen, photo lab, workshop) (Figure 1). In the living rooms, the bed was placed one level higher, in front of which a gallery corridor surrounded the air space of the community space (Miljacki, 2013; Sulyok, 2019; Sulyok, 2022; Reimholz and Puhl, 1977). The leading figure in the young architectural community was Miroslav

Masák, who continued the architecture of traditional Czech constructivism, following the director of SIAL, Karel Hubáček (Svácha, 2012). Školka was active until 1990, but after the change of regime, the state design offices were abolished in the Czech Republic, and privatization began, which hindered the project. The building was demolished in 2010 (Babos and Lukács, 2014). The two buildings have in common that their creation was primarily motivated by the idealism of collectivity and the possibility of professional cooperation. It is interesting to note that the residents of the Collective House in Miskolc also visited the Školka building in 1985. In the case of Školka, it was a matter of remodeling an existing building, and the experimentation with the layout and space could only take effect within the given framework, which is an important difference from the Collective House, which was created later.

THE HISTORY OF THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE

The era of state socialism – extending from 1947 to 1989/90 in Hungary – had a significant impact on the historical economic structure. The Hungarian economy had been defined as basically agrarian. The program of so-called forced industrialisation, started in the 1950s, was more than just a question of economic politics – it was also a matter of ideology. It involved the construction of several socialist industrial New Towns following the Soviet example. Besides New Towns, historical towns with already existing industrial traditions were also given prominent roles in state socialist industrial development policies and became so-called socialist industrial towns.

Miskolc, as the center of an industrial district with significant potential mining and industrial reserves, became

Table 1. Comparison between the Collective House in Miskolc and Skolka in Liberec
(Source: Babos, A., Lukács, Zs. I. (2014). <https://epiteszforum.hu/kollektiv-haz-hosszu-tavu-mukodese>)

	Collective House, Miskolc Hungary	Školka, Liberec Czech Republic
Construction year	1979	1969-1971
Initial function	Housing, workplace	Housing, workplace
Brief description of the building	Newly built using panel technology. Not the typical floor plan of the period. Free standing development in a residential area.	Conversion of an old inn building.
Residents	Originally architects, now mixed.	Architects. They were constantly changing.
Ownership	They rented the house as an association from the city council. After the change of regime in Hungary in 1989, it became undivided common property.	Founded by 15 architects and financed by a state planning office.
Community spaces	Interior: Large, flexible community space with private work areas. There was also a shared laundry room, modelling space, a photo lab and storage facilities. Exterior: Two shared gardens, one for adults and one for children.	Interior: An ample community space with a gallery, the gallery serves as an exhibition space, with separate workspaces, a kitchen, dining room, washroom, photo lab, and workshop space on one side. Exterior: None
Operational rules	Various decisions about the house were taken by the residents' association. There was no fixed-term residence.	The tenants could only live here for a limited period. A system of rules similar to dormitories. Everything was decided in joint meetings.
Contemporary function	Community housing spaces are not in use.	Demolished in 2010

a privileged city within state socialist regional politics. The size and population increased dramatically over a short time, boosting it to being the second-largest Hungarian city by population behind the capital. This process was only partially generated by administrative measures – the extension of its area to include neighboring settlements – but also by the naturally increasing and artificially enhanced appeal of the industry as well (Kissfazekas, 2020). New neighborhoods were built to meet the growing demand for housing due to industrialization. Approximately 20-22% of national investments were realized in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county. In comparison, out of the country's 4,500 graduated architects, 2,500 worked in Budapest and only 80 stayed in the county (Golda, 1988). Most of the architectural tasks in the region and in Miskolc were carried out by ÉSZAKTERV (Northern Hungarian Design Company). ÉSZAKTERV started its operations in 1948 as part of the Magasépítési Tervező Vállalat (Building Construction Design Company), which was managed from Budapest. In 1950, it became an independent economic institution as one of 4 rural offices outside Budapest (Kmetty, 1970). From the beginning, the company's engineers dealt with planning tasks in Northern Hungary, i.e. Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Heves, and Nógrád counties. In the 1950s, the priority was primarily the preparation for future industrialization and the creation of housing. Most of the local, prefabricated panel system designs in Hungary were completed at the company. The reason for this was primarily the rapid construction, since due to the forced industrial development of Miskolc, a large number of construction tasks fell on the contractors. In the meantime, of course, the company was also responsible for the design of the most important, unique public buildings in the region. In fact, ÉSZAKTERV was an institution that included all segments of construction and carried out very serious professional work, which in itself could have been an attractive destination for a budding architect looking for a place to work (Pirity, 2018; Horváth, 2001).

The Collective House of Miskolc came into being thanks to three main factors. The first was a group of university students who came up with and, until the end of their university years, stood firmly behind their shared vision of co-housing. The second was the Miskolc City Council, which showed flexibility to achieve its own goals, and it financed the building. And the third was the host institution, ÉSZAKTERV, which provided an intellectual base and work for young people starting their careers through diverse tasks and highly knowledgeable masters.

During the interviews conducted for this study, it was revealed that the idea of the Collective House was formulated by the initiators in 1971 during the compulsory military service before their university years. A group of like-minded people was formed (Dezső Ekler, János Golda, Zoltán Horváth, Zoltán F. Horváth, Tamás Noll, László Szántó, László Szőke, Béla Pazár, Károly Pap, Ottó Szabó, Péter Veszmár), who wanted to live and work together after graduation (Bán, 2022). During their university years, the idea remained and more people joined this initiative, so at that time the community numbered 30-40 people. One of the masterminds, Zoltán Horváth, worked at ÉSZAKTERV in Miskolc during his university years. The word reached the

City Council that 30-40 young architects were looking for a place where they could live and work together. Although this type of collectivity and community organization was not desirable in the political environment of the time, they accepted this as a compromise due to economic constraints.

In 1977, with the relocation of university students from Budapest and the involvement of young architects with ties to Miskolc, a group was spontaneously formed, which was later called the Architectural Workshop of Miskolc. It was not an official organization, but rather a professionally friendly organization with shared values. The existence of the organization created a kind of spiritual connection between the inhabitants of Collective House and ÉSZAKTERV. The spirit of the group was indirectly determined by the professional guidelines of architect Antal Plesz, and directly by architects Csaba Bodonyi and István Ferenc. Their ideology was permeated by disillusionment with modern architecture, and a belief in rational, place-bound, adaptive solutions instead of placeless, abstract truths. Like the Hungarian representatives of critical regionalism, they focused on the natural and built environment of the place, and the architectural heritage, as opposed to the utopias of modernism (Sulyok, 2015; Somogyi, 2018). Their commitment to the panel systems dictated by the zeitgeist was not characteristic of them. They believed that the creative spirit is more important than the materials and technologies used, and that any structure can be used well (Bodonyi, 2009).

The young team behind the idea graduated from university in 1977. As the plan was completed and construction started at that time, they were forced to temporarily move to 'council' apartments allocated by the City Council in Miskolc due to work being carried out on ÉSZAKTERV. The first years spent in ÉSZAKTERV were about learning. They gradually took part in more and more serious tasks. They did not yet have independent planning tasks, which is why the possibility of in-house design competitions was an important factor. The company's employees were able to participate in these competitions.

The Collective House was completed in 1979 (Figure 2), and moving in began in the summer of that year. The number of people moving in decreased, since many people were unsure or had found job opportunities in Budapest. Of the original 30-40-person university team, roughly 10 people remained, so additional movers had to be recruited. ÉSZAKTERV included young architects from Miskolc (István Bede, Pál Farkas, Zoltán Klie, Emőke Lautner, Mária Lohrmann, Attila Pirity), who had graduated from university a few years earlier and liked the initiative. The residential community was mostly joined by them, or people outside the profession based on acquaintances (Péter Albert organ builder/electrical engineer, Benő Horváth limnologist, Katalin Hudák landscape architect, Péter Koródy landscape architect, Ildikó Vincze ceramist).

The first months were characterized by euphoria. The dream cherished by the architecture students for 8 years has come true. The children who moved in with their families enjoyed and took advantage of the large spaces. A kitchen was created in the main space for communal cooking, which



Figure 2. Exterior view of the finished Collective House, from the side of the private apartments
(Source: Photo by János Golda)

was also used by the residents. There was no leader in the community, rather they became the leaders of individual activities, who were able to carry out their vision by finding partners, whether for cooking, organizing an event, or organizing the teams for individual architectural tenders.

The events were an important part of common life. The spacious public area was suitable for holding concerts and exhibitions. In addition to public events, it is also important to mention the private celebrations among the residents. There were no spaces in the apartments that could accommodate larger families, so family events were primarily organized in the communal area (Figure 3).

Several families with young children moved into the Collective House, so the issue of raising children gradually became more and more important. Setting boundaries was an important issue, for example they had to decide to what extent an event was considered family and to what extent community and whether it was possible to have a say in the educational principles of others. The crossing of such borders caused conflicts and friction between the residents.



Figure 2. Christmas in the community space of the Collective House
(Source: Photo by Attila Pirity)

SOCIAL PERCEPTION OF THE COLLECTIVE HOUSE

The question may arise as to how the establishment and operation of the Collective House of Miskolc were possible in a political environment that wanted to control the forms of contact so strongly, as was the case in Hungary in the 1970s.

Equality and collectivity can also be considered one of the basic ideological elements of state socialism. The community was given a key role in building the society of the future, symbolised by a committed, enthusiastic and active common will that transcended bourgeois values. The new social nucleus remained the family and did not change (father, mother, children), but the expectations for participation and social awareness of the participants became completely different. However, in a study published in 1970 by Ágnes Heller and Mihály Vajda, the commune was also mentioned as a possible family type in a communist society, as the “successor” of the bourgeois family. It was a freely chosen community into which individuals would enter; and in the case of families, each adult member would be a member of the community as an individual.

Individual roles were reassessed, while working together for the community, for a common “better future”, which was a prominent message among them. In contrast to participation in organized and controlled community activities, the system tried to limit other types of group togetherness with rules and controls, often referring to “socialist” behavioral norms that corresponded to the moral expectations of the new society.

The idea of those who brought the Collective House to life was basically the search for a spiritual and physical form of a friendly, creative community, and not the strengthening of the state socialist ethos. It also did not fit into the experimental model described above for outlining the type of family in the communist society. At the same time, the politicians and ideologues of the era were preoccupied with the idea of a new type of community model, where “there is no difference between collective and private life in terms of the negative effects of the past” (Heller and Vajda, 1970).

The system of Collective House included the possibility of a traditional but idealized “socialist” family model and work-based community belonging. Perhaps this explains how the idea and intention of the Miskolc experiment could be given free rein within an otherwise extremely suspicious, politically controlled system. In addition, the perception of the Collective House at the time varied in the local and national press. Some wrote about the building critically, focusing on the problems of coexistence, while others praised the initiative. After the handover, an article published in a magazine of the time also testifies to this: “The advantages of the Collective House and collective life are disputed by many. There are those who dismiss the Miskolc attempt with a wave of the hand, others watch the news with not-so-good-natured interest and wait – for bankruptcy. It is more important for us that this Collective House was born and a small group took on the role of pioneers when we could not get enough of crying over the graying of life in the housing estates, the decline of the collective spirit” (Bekes, 1980, p. 16).

The theme of the Collective House also inspired Hungarian filmmakers. The feature film 'Riasztólövés' (Alarm Shot) was directed by Péter Bacsó (1977) and primarily dealt with the conflicts of the preparations leading to a collective lifestyle, but László Vitézy's documentary (1980) was already specifically about the Collective House and the people who moved in. The film presents the dark side and pitfalls of the communal way of life in a somewhat one-sided way. The spirit of the local architectural community, the results achieved, and the practical operation of the house were pushed into the background or not mentioned. The film pointed out that among the political and professional actors who made statements and defended the existing system, this housing model was merely a tolerated experiment (Vámos, 2011).

The interviews with the residents showed that the building and the community living in it received a mixed reception among the people living in the area. They did not understand why the building was like that and why these people lived like that. As an assumption, the suspicion of a social model based on libertarian love arose, which is somewhat understandable, knowing the filtered and manipulated information about the Western youth and hippie movements at the time.

SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

One of the most important elements of the house's architectural history is the planning process, a method that is now widely used in participatory planning. After

the Miskolc City Council agreed to the establishment of the Collective House, in 1975 ÉSZAKTERV announced a house design competition in which future architects – who were still university students at the time – could participate. Participatory planning in this form focused primarily on the architectural members of the residential community. Non-professionals (husbands, wives) were only indirectly involved in the conceptual design. In the end, Csaba Bodonyi and István Ferencz won the tender (Figure 4). In their project, spaces for common and individual use were already well separated, but at the same time, the apartments had no connection to the garden, and the bathroom, kitchen, and dining room were to be created as shared spaces opposite the apartments. The community space in the plan was about 250 m², which was more than twice as large as the plan that was implemented. Its layout was also different, as it was separated into two parts with a central traffic section. The spaces suitable for storage would have been connected to the common spaces, and the working and living zones were separated by a transitional space. The main entrance opened from the side of the public spaces, so it was not possible to reach the private spaces directly. Compared to the plan that was implemented, it was a solution that relegated private spaces to the background and tended toward a dormitory lifestyle. However, the program was reduced due to its costs, and based on the suggestions of the future residents, the kitchen, dining room, and bathroom were moved to the apartments in the completed building (Golda, 1988).

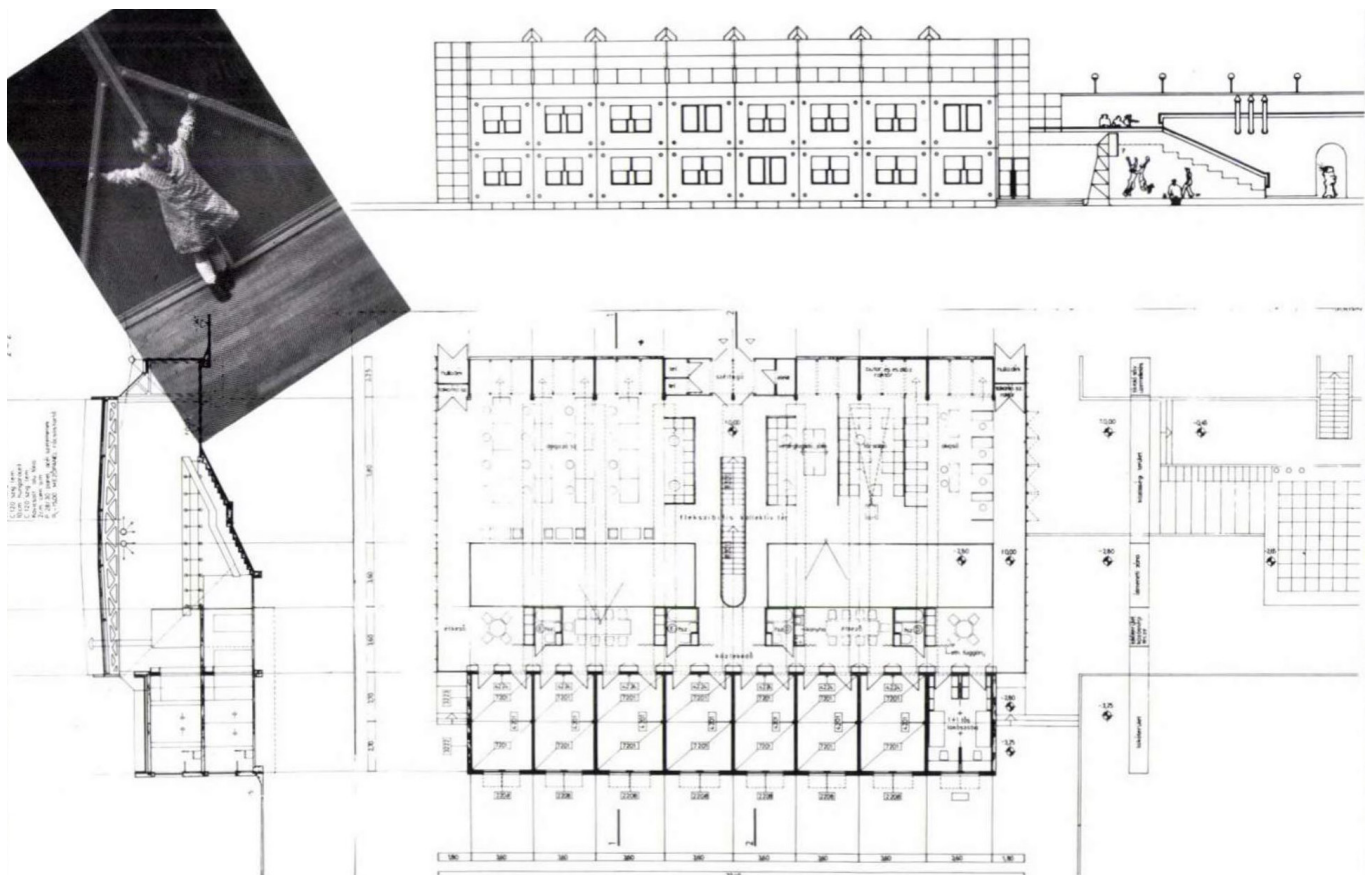


Figure 4. Winning tender plan for the Collective House of Miskolc (Source: Golda (1988, p. 12))

The design of the completed building was prepared by Csaba Bodonyi (Figure 5 and Figure 6). His goal for the application was that the individual and community spaces join each other in harmony, but in isolation, harmonizing the needs of the two lifestyles. The apartments were designed based on the 54 m² size of average panel apartments, from which 18 m² was deducted for the benefit of the communal spaces. This is how the final size of 36 m² was created. In apartments created in this way, 2 people could live separately, or a maximum of a family of four could live in open quarters. In reality, however, it could only work for families with one child, and for the second child they added an 18 m² living room area, thus creating an apartment of 54 m². Of the 36 m² apartments, 6 units were built on each floor, making a total of 12, which were supplemented by 2 more 54 m² apartments. The living spaces were flexible, and with a pre-planned and removable soundproof partition structure in the transverse walls separating the apartments, it was possible to solve any needs arising that required expansion. This feature allowed 18 m² living room units to be freely connected or separated. The residents' association, which included all the residents, decided whether to reduce or increase the size of the flats. The apartments on the ground floor had an atrium garden of 18 m² per living room, and a balcony of 6 m² on the first floor.

The apartments opened from a road with a N-S axis, and on the other side were the common areas, which included an approx. 120 m², continuous community space. This was joined by 5 smaller spaces that could be used as storage or more private workspaces, as well as a covered terrace on the north and south sides. The stairwells and other common spaces of 12 m² each were also located on the west side, at the two ends of the building. Shared gardens were located on both sides of the centrally located community space, one of which was designated by the designer as a children's playground and the other as a relaxation garden for adults (Bodonyi, 1978).

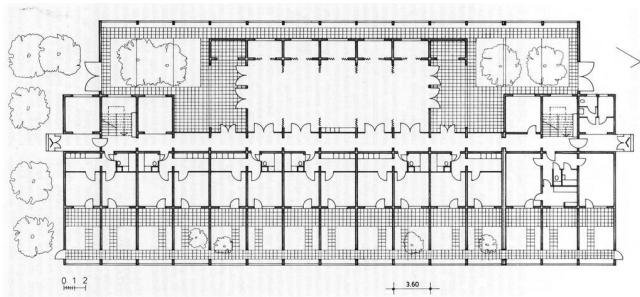


Figure 5. Ground floor plan of the Collective House, Miskolc
(Source: Photo by János Golda)

According to the responses in the interviews, everyone was satisfied with the completed building. The pre-planning tender, where it was possible to put individual ideas on paper, and the participatory planning, during which you could have your say on the plans, played a part in this. During the use of the building, however, several people missed the transitional spaces between the common and private spaces, which were included in the tender plan, but fell victim to cost reduction. Some people found the size of the laundry room small. According to some, a maturation process took place between the application and implementation, whereby an

idealistic idea of spaces organized for community space with minimal individual use reached a solution organized with proportional spaces for shared and private use (Pirity and Kissfazekas, 2020).

IMPLEMENTATION – THE TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

After the design was completed, construction could begin. As stated in the introduction, this house was a unique solution from a construction point of view. The panel factory of the Borsod County State Construction Company (BÁÉV) operated in Alsószolca and was handed over in 1969. Prefabricated building systems developed jointly with ÉSZAKTERV were manufactured here. These differed based on their functions and demand levels. In 1969, the production of Soviet-style panel structures, primarily suitable for the construction of apartment buildings, began (BÁÉV Házgyár panel). This was followed by the production of the BVPR-A system, used for the construction of educational institutions, in 1972. The BVPR-B system was developed to solve commercial buildings with a panel structure. The BÁÉV Házgyár panel system was used for the Collective House, although panel systems used in public buildings suitable for larger spaces were already available during the planning period. The goal of the designer was to offer a construction alternative to the monotonous panel houses with 5-10 floors. The task was also important for the manufacturer, as it raised the possibility that the product could also be useful for the construction of panel buildings, small apartment buildings, and terraced houses. Both the architect and the manufacturer wanted to prove that it was possible to come up with diverse solutions for this otherwise constrained construction system. The construction itself took place quickly: the plan was completed in 1977 and it was possible to move there in 1979. According to what has been said, despite the very low construction/execution standard typical of the era, the work was carried out professionally, which was probably due to the special professional attention within ÉSZAKTERV, the excellent construction manager of the BÁÉV, and the good cooperation between the designer and the contractor (Pirity and Kissfazekas, 2023; Petrasovszky, 2005).

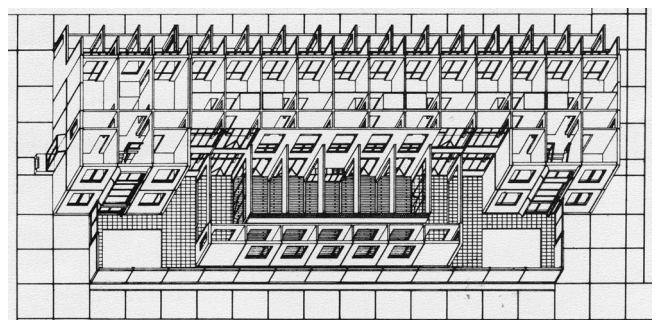


Figure 6. Exploded, axonometric view of the Collective House, Miskolc
(Source: Photo by János Golda)

ECONOMIC ASPECTS – OPERATION, MAINTENANCE

During the years spent in Miskolc, the operating form that provided a framework for coexistence matured among the architects who moved in (Figure 7). The point was that the house was not rented by individuals from the Miskolc City

Council, but by an association, so it was possible to control the order of moving in and out and to make joint decisions about the house and the house rules. Compared to the operating model typical of today's co-housing, this idea was also ahead of its time. This can be imagined as a residential assembly within a kind of organizational framework, which exercised the right of ownership. It was called TEAMPANNON Collective House Association and was established in 1979 after moving in. The most important points in the statutes of the association were:

“II/1. The stated goal of the association is to create a way of life that ensures the internal development, professional and cultural activities of the individual and the family, as well as their participation in the social division of labor, within a qualitatively new framework through a voluntary community. In order to achieve the general objective, the association sets active participation in the architectural shaping of the city as a professional public goal.

II/2. The means of achieving this goal is the Collective House, which is an inspiring spatial framework for the community's way of life.

VI/1 The leading body of the association is the general assembly...” (Golda, 1988 p. 12)

The structure of the organization was developed in the same way as other associations.



Figure 7. The community of the Collective House in 1979
(Source: Photo by János Golda)

They were elected officials for a specific period. The residents paid HUF 750 per person (currently worth approximately 44,000 HUF/ 117 EUR), of which HUF 150 was the association membership fee and the remaining HUF 600 went to the utilities for individual and common rooms. The association membership fee was intended to solve any ongoing problems related to the building. In the 1970s, the starting salary of an architect designer at ÉSZAKTERV was 2,500-3,000 HUF (currently approximately 146,000-175,000 HUF/ 389-467 EUR), from which it follows that 30-25% of the residents' salary was paid for the costs of the Collective House (Danyi, 2023).

No specific information about the construction costs of the Collective House has survived. The client, i.e. the City Council, expected that the equivalent value of the Collective House building could not exceed the equivalent value of 14 average panel apartments (54 m²). That is why the program of the 1975 winning tender plan was reduced, and they were

only able to create communal spaces at the expense of the size of the average apartment (Bodonyi, 2009).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The nearly 50-year history of the Collective House of Miskolc provided an opportunity to examine the model's long-term viability, the main basis of which was questionnaires and interviews, in order to find out the personal experiences of its residents. During the research, personal interviews were conducted with 10 of the residents, 6 of whom were founding members, and 2 are still living in the house.

The building has had several eras. For 10 years between its construction in 1979 and the change of regime in Hungary in 1989, the building functioned according to the ideas of the designer and the occupants. The interviews revealed that there were several advantages and disadvantages during this period, which can be summarized as follows (Table 2):

Table 2. Summary about the advantages and disadvantages of the Collective House, Miskolc

Advantages:	Disadvantages:
The possibility of joint work with professional colleagues	Boarding is for an indefinite period/the system becomes rigid
Transfer of knowledge and experience	Conflicts arising from living together/differences in values generated by family life
Supporting Community	Disadvantages of social life/the need to separate one's private life
A residential association represents common interests	Taking apartments into private ownership/putting community goals and interests in the background, making turnover impossible
Apartments that can be changed as needed	Professional competition generated by a disintegrating professional community, resulting in conflicts affecting coexistence
Multidirectional usability of community spaces	
Satisfying social life	
In terms of raising children, it is an inspiring environment, with many common programs and opportunities for daily interaction.	

After the regime change in Hungary in 1989, the further operation of ÉSZAKTERV became uncertain. Privatization of a large amount of state property began in 1992, so the office building of ÉSZAKTERV went into private hands. Privatization also affected the Collective House. Most of the original residents – taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the City Council – bought their apartments in the size they were using at the time. This resulted in tensions and injustices. The uniform background provided by the ÉSZAKTERV ceased to exist, and there were no more in-house tenders or joint works. After the establishment of their own companies, the competitive situation between

the individual organizations for obtaining work intensified, due to the uncertain existence, few professional links would have kept the entire community together. During the 1990s, most of the original residents moved after selling their apartments.

The Collective House continues to operate as a simple apartment building after the purchase of the apartments in the mid-90s. The community space thus became obsolete; after the majority of the original residents moved out, the new residents could no longer find a suitable function for its use, so the condition of the community spaces began to deteriorate. Due to the unused communal spaces, the cost of maintaining the building was very high compared to the size of the apartments, and the age of the building meant that a general renovation was also justified.

The regime change that brought privatization and an atmosphere of freedom paradoxically resulted in the cessation of the Collective House's original function. The house is still standing, but today it has lost its essence, the content of the community. The communal space is rarely used by the current residents (Figure 8). The cost of maintaining the unused space is an additional burden which would not be incurred in a typical condominium.



Figure 8. The community space of the Collective House in 2018
(Source: Photo by Adam Pirity)

The question may therefore arise as to what should/could be different for it to be suitable even in today's conditions for the mission in the spirit of which it set out. In response to the question in the interview, "How could the Collective House function today?" the most common answer was related to ownership. A foundation or association is needed – following the original founding model – which buys the entire building and rents it out for a fixed period, thereby creating a continuous fluctuation. Fixed tenure is important because the Collective House can operate efficiently in a specific phase of life. As the children begin to grow, the priorities are rearranged according to the law, which is natural, but these are contrary to social and professional aspects of the house. In addition, all residents must agree from the beginning with the rules and goals set by the community, avoiding tensions arising later. For such a place to be created and grouped around a profession, a common background is needed, which could be an office or

other work community. The competitive situation between residents, regardless of profession, makes collectivity difficult. If several professions were grouped around the Collective House, it would solve the contradictions arising from the competitive situation, but it would make it difficult to work together. This could only work if representatives of professions capable of cooperation lived together. Regarding the Collective House, several interviewees mentioned that there could have been more opportunities for professional development in addition to the joint applications. And the most important factor is the will and the need for such a community to be created, to survive, and at the same time to be updated.


In summary, the following would be necessary for the current functioning of the Collective House, but also for preserving the original founding intentions:

- Will: A group's need to live and work together;
- Ownership: In the hands of an association/foundation;
- Use: Limited period of residence;
- Condition: All movers must accept the goals/rules of the collective;
- If they have the same profession: All residents belong to one office; and
- If they have different professions: Representatives of professions capable of cooperation live together.

The Collective House was a building that was built in a way that was well ahead of its time, including both a residential and a professional community. From a professional point of view, it provided a unique framework, thanks to which architects of different styles and ways of thinking were able to create a unit in the Architectural Workshop of Miskolc. From the point of view of the community, it proved that despite political pressure, it has the right to live and work as an interdependent collective, presenting the advantages and disadvantages of the lifestyle to posterity.

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