



GATED COMMUNITIES IN LVIV: BETWEEN SOCIAL DEMAND AND SPATIAL LIMITATION

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The article considers the phenomenon of the positive perception of gated communities in Lviv, with an emphasis on historical aspects of urban planning. The research has shown that under certain conditions, the existence of gated communities is necessary and their popularity is justified. Therefore, it is necessary to develop mechanisms to avoid their negative consequences. In order to understand how closed communities function, and to identify natural trends in the development of this type of facility, their formation in other parts of Europe was analyzed. The results show that this approach is common for the living environment, but that it has its own characteristics at the level of formal expression and functional content. Form and location in the city structure are not essential for the formation of gated communities, with their effective functioning and logical connection with the external environment being more important. There is also a contradiction between the current situation, which is to ensure the physical security of the inhabitants, and the principles of sustainable urban development aimed at the concept of barrier-free space.

Key words: city planning, gated communities, Lviv.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of gated communities has become popular due to the progress of the theory of inclusive urban space. It is especially relevant for urban environments marked by cultural and ethnic diversity, which need positive integration and the neutralization of potential conflicts. Gradually, a consensus has been formed that interprets the spatial isolation of different groups of the population from each other negatively.

The sociological study of gated communities is characterized by a number of different points of view. One of them is the understanding of a gated community as a form of housing, which at the territorial level has signs of isolation and control. There are examples whereby convenience and safety have led to the formation of gated communities as towns, with their own street and public facilities. There are also situations in which a gated community is the industry standard for the real estate market. There is therefore

special interest in studying this debatable phenomenon, which on the one hand is a guarantee of security, stability and segregation, and on the other has a negative impact on the development of a city and its inhabitants living outside such communities. The paper begins by determining the place of gated communities in the urban development strategy of Ukraine. The main part of the study describes the functioning and specifics of the closed communities in Lviv in the city planning context.

BASIC THEORY PART

Recently, a large number of documents have been approved on the need to strike a balance between the modern needs of mankind and protecting the interests of future generations. Within the framework of this concept, a strategy for the development of European cities was agreed in 2007 at an informal meeting of ministers for urban development and territorial unity held in Leipzig, Germany. The basic principles in the field of urban development policy were defined, taking into account today's challenges and historical, economic, social and environmental aspects (Buchholz and Weigel, 2021; Weigel, 2021).

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Against the background of complex political transformations in 2015, Ukraine also announced a strategy which declared the goal of implementing European living standards (Ukaz prezidenta Ukraïny *Pro Stratehiïu staloho rozvytku 'Ukraïna – 2020'*). In parallel with the implementation of tasks of national importance, an idea aimed at the development of Ukrainian cities based on the model of European ones was presented. One related project was "Integrated Urban Development in Ukraine", developed specifically for Ukraine jointly by Germany and Switzerland (N'oltin, 2020). These ideas are currently being promoted and implemented in eight of Ukraine's cities (Lviv, Chernivtsi, Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Poltava, Melitopol, Kharkiv and the Podilskyi district of Kyiv). The basis for this concept was the Leipzig Charter for a Sustainable European City and the UN Sustainable Development Agenda until 2030. Finally, Ukraine has recently been actively working on various international projects based on sustainable urban development.

A number of European organizations working to implement the concept of sustainable development are promoting territorial cohesion. For example, the European Commission, working on the development of modern European cities, sees the problem of a lack of territorial cohesion and emphasizes the need for an integrated approach to this type of problem, in order to solve it (Weigel, 2021). Focusing on integrity and systematicity, an approach is proposed in the documents mentioned above that ensures physical accessibility and functional diversity. At the level of the gated communities in a single city, these aspects are also very important, as they are related to the quality of urban space, the formation of social ties, and satisfaction with the living environment within a certain area. With the coordinated functioning of all parts of the material and spatial environment of human life, it is possible to ensure the balanced and harmonious development of a city as a whole.

In Ukraine, the implementation of the principles of the European city at the level of reforming and modernizing the living environment is also noticeable. According to sociologists and city planners, new standards need to be introduced to ensure comfortable and safe living. In this situation, the real estate market is also important, which in conditions of competition tries to please the buyer in various ways and promote, in their opinion, "modern" approaches to the formation of residential complexes. A new urban form called the "gated community" is emerging.

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE GATED COMMUNITY DISCOURSE

The theoretical basis of the study is: work on the sustainable development of cities (Buchholz and Weigel, 2021; Weigel, 2021; N'oltin, 2020; President of Ukraine, 2015); issues related to the definition of a gated community (Roitman, 2010); the nature of closed communities within a city (Blandy, 2007; Durlington, 2011; Lentz, 2004; Low, 2001; Marcuse, 1997); and the specifics and features of their organization at the territorial level (Balčaitė and Krupickaitė, 2018; Ghonimi *et al.*, 2011; Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004; Le Goix, 2003; Mohamed and Ayad, 2018; Webster *et al.*, 2002). In Ukraine at the beginning of the 2020s, this topic remains virtually unrepresented among the array of local scientific

reflections. The local scientific and expert community has not yet formed its attitude to the phenomenon of gated communities in the city, and there is no research on their impact on the quality of urban space, social ties, subjective satisfaction with the living environment, etc. The appeals to limit the development of gated communities, that are so typical of European urbanist thought, do not have a favorable response in the context of the Ukrainian city.

The methodological foundations of the study are philosophical, ideological and logical-epistemological approaches. Their application is determined by the specificity of the phenomenon of "closedness" and "community" in urban planning and the definition of the features that can describe them. The method of theoretical analysis was used to choose the research topic, define the etymology and essence of the key concept for the study of gated communities, and systematize and generalize the facts about the specifics of the functioning and formation of gated communities in Lviv at the territorial level. The use of the hypothetical-deductive method was based on the need to substantiate the reason for the existence of a gated community and to conclude that the problem of its functioning also occurs in the field of urban planning. Morphological description was used at the initial stage of the research to collect information about the formal properties of the residential formations, such as shape and geometric characteristics. Cluster analysis was used to identify groups of structural elements in the city that were similar in formal features. Before using this analysis, the objects were systematized. Their main characteristics (for example, the composition of the building) and the degree of similarity (or difference) were determined.

The object of consideration is the gated community, which since the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century, has acquired clear expressive qualities in the life of society. The spread of such communities has attracted the attention of a wide range of scientists, with discussion among sociologists and city planners about their impact on the life of society and on the functioning of the city. Some emphasize their advantages, while others point out their shortcomings and illegality, due to non-compliance with the requirements for installing enclosing structures within the living environment. This uncertain situation is justified by the need to form a full barrier-free environment for everyday human life, formulated in the State Building Regulations B 2.2-12: 2018 "Planning and development of territories" (Derzhavni Budivel'ni Normy Ukraïny, 2019). The authors of the article do not aim to take anyone's position, but rather try to understand how gated communities are formed at the territorial level and discover what their impact is on the functional and planning development of the city.

Of certain research interest is the difference in the values attached to the definition of closed formations. The concepts of spatial segregation and gated communities began to be studied in relation to different conditions and cities in Latin America (Sabatini, 2006; Peters and Skop, 2007), Asia (Firman, 2004), Africa (Nesma, 2018) and Europe (Rokem and Vaughan, 2018), including Eastern Europe (Balčaitė and Krupickaitė, 2018; Chabanyuk *et al.*, 2021; Polanska, 2010). This topic has also caused some interest also in Ukraine

(Prepotenska and Tymashova, 2016).

Roitman (2010, p. 31) emphasizes the problem of conceptualizing the phenomenon of the gated community, as some authors prefer to use definitions such as “gated residential developments” or “condominiums”. In the theory and practice of urban planning, this issue will remain open until the nature of how closed communities function and their impact on the functional and planning development of the city become clear.

GATED COMMUNITIES AS A SUBJECT FOR STUDY IN THE CITY PLANNING CONTEXT

A community is an association of people united by common living conditions, goals and interests, which is an important category in sociology, but this is interpreted differently in various concepts of society. The current state of scientific discourse demonstrates the extraordinary diversity of communities, reflecting the historical and other contexts of the countries in which they emerge. In some cases, the community is associated with a specific area, in others – an imagined one. Also, gated communities are the subject of study in various fields of knowledge. For example: the behavioral nature of expression is the subject of attention for psychologists; living in a particular place is of interest to geographers; common property and incentives to meet individual needs are of interest to economists; and all of these influence planning and the resulting functional qualities.

Due to the possibility of access only for a certain, limited number of people, communities can be described as either open or closed. Open communities can be considered capable of establishing social ties, and are unlimited in social, spiritual and physical dimensions. Diametrically different are closed communities, which have restricted access, and in which normally public spaces are privatized (Roitman, 2010, p. 31).

Concepts of the modern European city contradict the way gated communities function. As a result, many scholars are prejudiced against closed communities, recommending they should be avoided and opposed in cases where such communities have already been formed. This is based on stereotypes, the first of which is that such communities are typical of areas with poor living conditions, or areas in which there are social groups whose views do not agree with the majority of the population. The second has relative characteristics, as it is associated with a feeling of physical limitations, namely that if certain boundaries are set, a person experiences a lack of development. And the third has to do with aesthetics: the harmony of the city and its components, and a sense of comfort, coziness and security.

Studying the specifics of functioning, and the features of the formation and development of the urban environment, urban planners recommend avoiding this type of community and emphasize the various problems that may arise. Particular attention is paid to the fear caused by political control and migration management. Therefore, the problem is not just a threat to the comfort of citizens, but rather it also has a political aspect.

In one of the first fundamental works, *Gated Communities in the United States* by Blakely and Snyder, on American closed communities, it was noted that since the 1970s, isolated neighborhoods have developed significantly, becoming a symbol of the fragmentation of cities and growth of social segregation (Le Goix, 2003).

Research conducted on this topic in Lviv (Ukraine) has shown that under certain conditions, the existence of gated communities is sometimes necessary, and their popularity among the population is justified. According to ordinary citizens, they can provide comfortable living and improve the quality of life in the city. Therefore, at some point the developer responds to customer requests and installs a fence to increase the cost of sales, or residents do it themselves, when initially there is no such fence. In such a situation, it is necessary to develop other original mechanisms to avoid the negative consequences of the existence of gated communities. At the same time, their development should be preceded by a thorough study of the formation peculiarities of closed communities in the structure of the city at the territorial level, which is the purpose of this article.

FEATURES OF THE FUNCTIONING AND FORMATION OF LVIV'S GATED COMMUNITIES

In the context of the problem of forming an inclusive living environment, the countries that were once members of the so-called “socialist camp” have a special place. This is due to the legacy of the egalitarian housing estates of the 1960s and 1980s, built on standard designs. Although they have traditionally been criticized for monotony and pragmatism, they have been characterized by the principles of inclusiveness, which precluded spatial separation on the basis of property or status. Historical centers in the Soviet era also underwent egalitarian transformation. Large multi-room apartments were redesigned so that several smaller ones appeared in their place.

By the end of the twentieth century, Lviv already looked like a city where spatial segregation on a social basis was significantly leveled (Senkiv, 2021). For example, the Sykhiv residential district in Lviv was founded in the 1970s. It developed in accordance with the clearly defined norms and principles of the time, which were formulated in response to the then problems associated with the development of industry. As a result, spacious, green residential yards were created on the territory of the new residential area as the main places of recreation for the population, as well as pedestrian alleys and boulevards, which connected all elements of the neighborhoods (Cherkes, 2015). This connection united groups of separately located and grouped houses into one whole. This approach to the formation of new residential areas was typical in Lviv and other cities that were growing in Soviet times. In these circumstances, it should not be surprising that the problem of gated communities and spatial segregation has long been completely absent among the urban planning issues of Lviv, as well as many other similar cities.

Today Lviv is a city with a long history that is known for its many architectural monuments. It attracts the attention of many people because of its compact shape and geographical proximity to the European Union. This strengthens internal

migration processes and contributes to the rapid growth of housing construction. The Main Office of Statistics for the Lviv region has been recording an increase in the volume of housing construction for seven years (since 2015) (Main Statistical Office in Lviv Region).

Along with the increase in construction, various forms of organization of the living environment are developing. In particular, there is a tendency to fence off an area, even before the commissioning of a facility. In this way, the inhabitants of residential buildings and the surrounding area begin to exist according to the rules of the so-called gated community.

Here appears a problem that, at first glance, has a social and economic nature. However, in-depth analysis makes it clear that the problem exists at a territorial level. Since the problems of the formation of the material and spatial environment of the city are touched upon, it is time to involve the competence of urban planners.

During 2021, some work was carried out to determine the zones with the greatest distribution of closed communities in Lviv. These were the territories of new buildings with a high density of housing and public buildings, as well as those that are within or in close proximity to the historic center of the city (Figure 1).

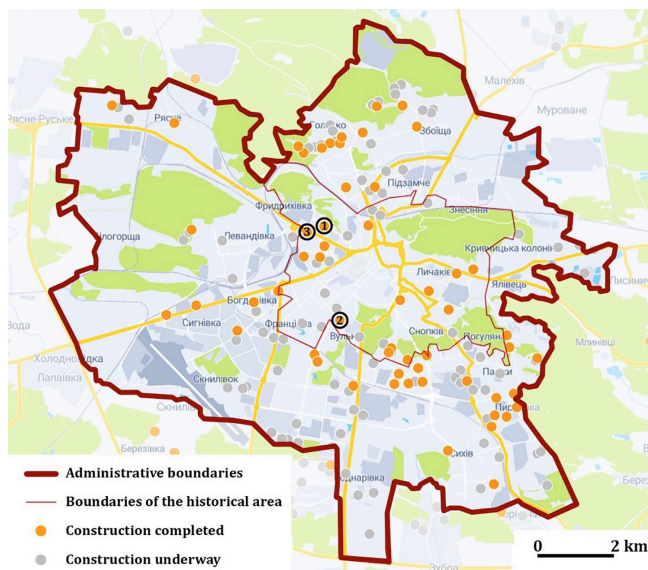


Figure 1. Area of distribution of new buildings in Lviv; the central district is the historical area of the city: 1 – Zolota, 10; 2 – Karpynets, 8; 3 – Shevchenko, 80

(Source: Summarized by Yuliya Idak based on the online catalog of new buildings in Ukraine LUN, 2022 (Katalog novobudov v Ukraïni LUN))

The identification of gated communities on the territory of Lviv was carried out based on the presence of vertical fencing structures of the open type, built around one or several multi-apartment residential buildings, which have the character of a new residential district or quarter.

The ideal model of a closed community at the territorial level can be represented as a fragment of the city bounded by objects that create logical boundaries in the form of a polygon. It contains buildings and a free area for the implementation of communication and recreation functions. The most common components include approaches,

transport entrances, car parks and a playground.

The ideality of the model is related to interdependent categories: *privacy* → *closedness* → *security*. Privacy is seen as a state in which a group of building occupants establish control over the functioning of an adjacent area and protect it from unwanted access, thus providing physical isolation. Gatedness occurs due to autonomous enclosing structures of a closed or open type. The main criterion for organizing the living environment is safety, which is expressed as guaranteed protection from outsiders. Finally, in the process of popularizing housing, along with detailed technological characteristics of the building, there are data on the infrastructure of the territory, which is reduced to information about the gated area and the presence of a children's playground (and, in some cases, sports area).

In quantitative terms, the Lviv gated communities are not yet a noticeable phenomenon. At the same time, their number is constantly growing. They are organized both in already functioning housing units and those that are just being designed. The characteristics of new construction projects are widely available, emphasizing that in the future the territory will be “closed to cars and outsiders”.

The gated communities which emerged in Lviv at the beginning of the 21st century initially simply looked like isolated buildings which were designed according to the stereotypes of modernist urban planning, in accordance with the principle of convenience and spaciousness (for example, Zolota, 10; Karpynets, 8). Later, some gated groups appeared. Depending on the relationship with the residential building, they began to reflect centric (characteristic of closed communities functioning in the so-called internal space of the building), one-sided (on one side of the building) and multi-sided (simultaneously from several sides or around the building) schemes (Figure 2 a, b).

Studies of a number of closed communities have shown that as of 2021, Lviv has developed an exceptionally positive attitude towards the isolation of the environment. The main factor noted by residents is security. Homeless people, drug addicts and criminals are most often among the neighborhood dangers that can be avoided by isolation. It should be noted that the separation of space for security reasons occurs both at the design stage and as the initiative of existing residents from open residential complexes. The feeling of insecurity from crime and drug trafficking networks completely eliminates the arguments against gated communities, such as greater solidarity with the surrounding residents, avoidance of social tensions, and so on. In one case, residents' self-isolation, the final argument in favor of segregation, was the murder of a gardener by a group of criminals who entered a residential complex located in a socially problematic area near the train station.

In addition to this main safety criterion, the isolation of the adjacent space is positively perceived for reasons of child care. Residents note the convenience of fencing, which makes it possible to leave children for some time without direct adult supervision. Over time, a certain team of children and parents is formed, which gradually unites, and additionally contributes to the safety of children and the convenience of those who care for them.



Figure 2. The main types and examples of the organization of gated communities in Lviv: a – one-sided, Zolota, 10; b – versatile, Karpinets, 8; c – unilateral, Shevchenko, 80 (Source: Roman Frankiv, 2022)

Gated communities become a place for the formation of more sophisticated neighborhood solidarity groups. Together they solve the problems of landscaping, their way of life, and entertainment. There is a kind of family microclimate, which helps to overcome feelings of loneliness and alienation from neighbors, which are characteristic of traditional residential buildings. In this sense, we can say that closed communities play a positive role and solve the problem of socialization of the resident in the urban space, which in this case is narrowed to a scale capable of forming a cohesive community.

The next factor that can be related to the post-Soviet specifics of Lviv society is the emergence of a sense of “privacy” within a closed community. In the communist era, public space was perceived as “state” and began at the door of the apartment. The feeling of personal involvement in such a state environment was quite low. The space of the gated community became the place where the feeling of personal involvement in the living environment outside the apartments of the residents returned.

Another argument in favor of gated communities in Lviv, which is post-Soviet in nature, is a reference to historical analogues. In the days of the collapse of the communist system, the “progressive” model of the worldview was revised. Positive patterns of life began to be taken from the pre-modern past, which have undergone significant

idealization. The fencing of courtyards and adjacent territories has become associated with a return to a more “correct” organization of life in historical urban neighborhoods with closed atriums.

Although, as research has shown, the isolation of courtyards in Lviv is perceived positively, it is worth noting some of their problematic aspects. In the context of social interaction, in some cases, we can note the deterioration of attitudes towards the residents in gated communities among the surrounding residents of traditional open houses. There are two factors for consideration. The first is the emergence of differences in the ability to move through urban space. Residents of gated communities have more freedom of choice than residents of open space areas, who are restricted from accessing gated areas. This is especially noticeable in the area within the radius of pedestrian accessibility. Residents of open spaces become restricted in movement, while residents of closed spaces do not. Thus, the second negative factor in the growth of gated communities in Lviv is the complication of spatial communication. The growth of gated communities leads to the withdrawal of large areas from public access, which is especially felt in those buildings that are designed on the principles of modernist urbanism. According to the principles of the Athens Charter, the urban fabric is formed by separately located multi-storey buildings surrounded by landscaping and communications. In Lviv,

there are cases in which the area around such buildings is fenced off, which limits and complicates the movement of other residents, and blocks their access to the shortest pedestrian routes (Karpintsa, 8) and recreational and landscape areas (Zolota, 10) (Figure 2 a, b).

It is also worth noting that despite the traits of solidarity and cohesion within closed communities, these traits are degrading on a large scale. The participants of various isolated courtyards, both gated and not gated, are alienated from each other. The communicative cluster of pedestrian accessibility, the importance of which has increased in modern urban planning (Moreno *et al.*, 2021), is fragmented and is losing its potential.

Preliminary observations have shown that there are fewer and fewer places where residents in areas with closed communities can meet and interact in some way. In Lviv, these places are shops and churches. Kindergartens and schools are no longer places of universal communication, as more affluent residents of gated communities choose paid institutions with higher levels of service for their children, ignoring existing communal institutions in their place of residence. The same can be said of the health care system. The rise of home delivery services and the decline of post-Soviet religious enthusiasm threaten to eliminate these last two venues for residents within the same residential area.

In view of the above, it can be argued that in the post-Soviet context, in particular in Lviv, gated communities have a favorable public perception and play a positive role in the evolution of the urban community. Negative factors that have led to criticism of gated communities in European urban planning, in particular social segregation and growing conflict, are largely offset by the great egalitarian legacy of the Soviet period and the relative ethnic and cultural homogeneity of society. In major European cities, spatial segregation occurs in large numbers of immigrant communities and identities. As a result, there is a growing threat of isolation of certain ethnic and religious groups in their closed environment, which may lead to increased alienation and conflict. In Lviv, where immigrant communities are very insignificant, there is no such danger. Instead, there is growth in tensions between various rich and poor segments of the population, a growth of hostility and alienation, which are exacerbated by the spread of such concepts as “elite area”, “elite house” and so on. A common condition of being “elite” is closedness and isolation from the “others”.

Lviv has a difficult security situation and a significant number of homeless people. Therefore, closed housing communities are an element of the commercial positioning of real estate in the market. On official websites of developers (Kataloh novobudov v Ukraïni - LUN, 2022), information about the “closedness” of the territory is mandatory.

These facts show that the concept of criticism of closed communities, characteristic of European urban planning, cannot be mechanically transferred to post-Soviet soil, in particular in Lviv. Probably, a promising way to avoid the negative consequences of spatial separation may be new public spaces, which will replace (or supplement) shopping malls and religious buildings.

CONCLUSION

The specifics of the phenomenon of spatial segregation in Lviv have been outlined, as well as the peculiarities of its perception by residents and predominant social groups. The low initial level of socio-spatial segregation associated with the legacy of egalitarian Soviet urban planning has been identified. A number of factors have been revealed that contribute to the positive perception of gated communities, among which the main ones are security, a sense of privacy, convenience of child care and solidarity of the neighborhood's team.



The study of the peculiarities of gated communities in Lviv on the territory of newly built housing showed that at the city level they function like a territorial object with clear features and characteristics:

- *a fixed boundary*, fixed by various types of fences in order to physically separate from the public area. Depending on its size and the status of the community, one or more entrance doors and gates are installed in the fence structure. It is one of the key features of closed communities;
- *a typical functional organization*, which is based on the observance of the clarity of the residential, recreational and economic zone and their rational placement. Depending on the size of the territory and the status of the community, their number and size differ significantly;
- *with a connecting element*, which, depending on the size of the territory and the status of the community, is denoted by a street or a small area. They act as transits between different functional areas and are directly related to the entrance to the community; and
- *the necessary set of infrastructure components* for the proper functioning of the living environment. Such objects can be recreational centers for different age groups, facilities for physical culture and health purposes, various forms of institutions for children of preschool and primary school age, etc. Depending on the size of the territory and the status of the community, their presence and variety differ significantly.

It has been revealed that in addition to the prevailing positive perception of gated communities in Lviv, there are also negative consequences. These include difficulties in spatial communication, blocking access to landscape and recreational areas, and a possible increase in alienation and hostility between the residents of closed and open communities.

As a result of this analysis, it was found that such post-Soviet cities as Lviv have their own specifics, for which European principles of avoiding spatial segregation cannot be applied by the method of mechanical inheritance. The outlined set of features should be the subject of a separate scientific analysis and a separate set of interpretations of gated communities, given their positive perception by society, and advantages in areas with a low level of security and a large number of problematic social groups.

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