

Space, environment, housing

This edition exceptionally differs from the standard thematic issue practice. On this occasion, the publication offers some kind of cross-sectional review of some of the current challenges of spatial planning in Slovenia. The first article deals with a topic, which is arguably the most debated subject today world-wide, namely, sustainable development. One of the major obstacles to achieving sustainable development is the inability to effectively resolve conflicts that arise from the various interests of the various users of limited natural and other resources. It is, as such, normally very difficult to achieve an equilibrium between economic, environmental, social and political interests in the efforts to reach majority consensus. It is, however, increasingly being recognised, that the basic condition for achieving equilibrium, is ensuring the highest level of participation of the public concerned, in the entire decision-making process. The authors of the introductory article underline co-decision making as an indispensable component of spatial planning that is geared towards the achievement of sustainable development.

The next article is essentially about the same topic of sustainability, whereby the author describes the spatial elements that influence the quality of living in open urban space. This is followed by papers discussing a variety of spatial planning issues and the various approaches applied in dealing with them in different parts of Slovenia. This is then followed by a review of the housing situation in the Municipality of Ljubljana. The articles presented in this section present part of the results of a research project entitled »The City's Housing Policy« which was commissioned by Ljubljana Municipality in 2006. Papers discussing: preventive measures for flood control; farm succession as a consequence of socio-demographic structure factors, and the application of dredging technology in the development of coastal space, conclude the issue.

Notwithstanding the diversity of the topics discussed concerning spatial, environmental and housing planning, it is easy to recognize a common underlying theme all throughout, i.e., the desire to achieve a high quality living environment. As has been, and continues to be emphasised globally, a high quality living environment can be achieved solely by taking into account and complying with the basic principles of sustainable development.

Richard Sendi