

Špela Verovšek: TRAJNOST IN KAKOVOST SLOVENSКИH SOSESK (2018)

SUSTAINABILITY AND QUALITY OF SLOVENIAN NEIGHBORHOODS (2018)



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IZVLEČEK

Anketna raziskava v štirih slovenskih soseskah je bila izvedena kot pilotni del projekta z naslovom »Sistemska podpora odločanju pri urbani prenovi slovenskih naselij z vidika uravnoteženja energetske učinkovitosti in upravljanja z lokalnimi viri v soseskah«. Raziskovalni projekt predlaga vzpostavitev podatkovno-osnovanega sistema za podporo odločanju pri modularni urbani prenovi slovenskih naselij na ravni sosesk z vidika njihove trajnostne učinkovitosti. Anketa je bila zasnovana v skladu z dvema ciljema in sicer: 1) pridobiti nekatere manjkajoče podatke o učinkovitosti in trajnosti pilotnih sosesk in 2) ugotoviti stopnjo odzivnosti prebivalcev sosesk, težave pri pridobivanju podatkov na tak način in pretres možnosti za sistemsko vključitev tako pridobljenih podatkov v predhodno osnovan model vrednotenja sosesk. Glavni problemi, ki so obravnavani v anketi, in s katerimi se obračamo na prebivalce izbranih sosesk so: zadovoljstvo z javnimi odprtimi prostori in opremljenostjo ter zadovoljstvo s prometno infrastrukturo, navade prebivalcev v zvezi z uporabo javnih odprtih površin, navade povezane z dnevnimi potovanji in uporabo prometnih sredstev, navade povezane s uporabo virov (energija, voda, čas...), stopnja pripadnosti in odnos prebivalstva do lokalnega okolja, aktivnost skupnosti in uporaba naprednih tehnologij.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

trajnostne soseske, anketna raziskava, vedenjski vzorci, revitalizacija

ABSTRACT

The paper outline and debate the approach, methodologies and nature of the results delivered through the questionnaire-based survey in four Slovenian neighbourhoods, which was carried out as a pilot part of the project *Urban renewal decision support system balancing energy efficiency and management of local resources in neighbourhoods in Slovenia*. The project aim was to establish the data-based system to support urban decisions targeting the urban renewal of Slovenian settlements. The research focuses to the spatial scale similar to neighbourhood's size and role, considering its sustainability, effectiveness and quality. The survey was designed in accordance with two objectives, namely: 1) to fill data gaps on the efficiency and sustainability in pilot neighbourhoods and 2) to determine the degree of responsiveness of the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods, difficulties in obtaining data with survey methodologies and to reconsider the possibilities to systemically integrate it into the pre-based model of neighbourhoods assessment. The main thematic scopes addressed in the survey are related to satisfaction with open public places, the habits associated with daily trips and the use of transport modes, habits related to the use of resources as well as residents' engagement in the community matters and their capability of using smart technologies for more efficiency..

KEY-WORDS

sustainable neighbourhoods, questionnaires query, behaviour patterns, revitalisation

1. INTRODUCTION

The survey in four Slovenian neighbourhoods was carried out as a pilot part of the project entitled “Urban renewal decision support system balancing energy efficiency and management of local resources in neighbourhoods in Slovenia». This project proposed the establishment of data-based system for decision support in urban renewal of Slovenian settlements at the neighbourhood level in terms of their sustainable effectiveness and quality. The survey was designed in accordance with two objectives, namely: 1) to obtain data gaps on the efficiency and sustainability of pilot neighbourhoods and 2) to determine the degree of responsiveness of the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods, difficulties in obtaining data with survey methodologies and to reconsider the possibilities to systemically integrate it into the pre-based model of neighbourhoods assessment. The main thematic scopes addressed in the survey are, e.g. the level of satisfaction with open spaces within the neighbourhoods, the level of satisfaction with mobility and transport infrastructure, the habits associated with daily trips and the use of transport modes, habits related to the use of resources (energy, water, time ...) etc.

In almost all respects, characteristics of built environment are very important factors or at least make an important contribution to users' sustainable or unsustainable responses and their changes (Williams & Dair, 2007; Shove, 2014). By the more sustainable environment we consider the environment that encourages more sustainable behavioural patterns, such as selection of the means of transport; patterns related to household provisioning and consumption; patterns related to the use of resources; attitude toward the natural and cultural living environment, and last but not least, attitude toward the neighbourhood community and participation in the broad range of its activities.

2. METHODOLOGY USED

The empirical study of assessing sustainability awareness and behaviour of the population in Slovene towns and villages has been devised as a survey conducted in four of Slovene neighbourhoods. The main goal was to gain insights against our hypotheses about sustainability awareness and behaviour of population in neighbourhoods in dependence of different types of living environments, geo-local context and demographic characteristics of individual researched population. We were interested to find whether there are statistically important differences in sustainability behaviour, beliefs and habits of populations in different neighbourhoods. The selection of pilot neighbourhoods was based on four key factors that ensured higher diversity of researched forms and consequently higher universality of the final instrument for evaluation of neighbourhoods (Verovšek et al., 2016). All neighbourhoods were selected on the basis of spatial districts. Due to restrictions posed by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURs) to provide probability sampling, addresses and existing data, all neighbourhoods are groupings of spatial districts covering at least 500 permanent inhabitants. The target population of the survey were individuals older than 15 years with permanent residence in the selected settlements. Sampling was made on the basis of the Population Register by the SURs. Our application to obtain stratified probability sample and addresses of the target population was approved by the Data Protection Committee. The sample included 40% of randomly selected units of the target population in each neighbourhood.

We conducted the survey using two techniques, that is, by mail (printed copy) and online (application Enka) and kept a clear



Figure 1. Neighbourhood in Kamnik. Photo: Verovšek, Š.

separation line between the stage of contacting the sampling population and the data collection stage (Lyberg et al., 1997). Our sampling was conducted exclusively on the basis of address database in a specific geographical unit. Each physical copy of the questionnaire sent included an invitation to provide responses online (QR code or link) should the respondents wish to answer the questions in this way.

The questionnaire's theme was interdisciplinary, devised by the members of our project group in accordance with outcomes from a series of panel meetings. The questionnaire which includes 50 questions in five sections addresses the realisation of sustainability outcomes on different levels. Questions from individual sections were goal-oriented and directly or indirectly considered the realisation of a specific goal of sustainability development. Most questions were closed-ended with the ordinal scale of values that allowed for quantitative statistical analysis. To confirm the significance of differences among the groups we used relevant nonparametric tests, most frequently the statistical test for homogeneity of variance (Levene's test) and two-tailed dependent t-test (significance level $\alpha=0.05$).

3. RESPONSES GAINED

The final realized sample included 321 valid units of the population with the average age of 48 years. Out of 312 completed surveys, 261 were filled in via mail and 51 online. At the time of participation, completed high school was the level of education for 48% of the respondents, short cycle higher education for 15% and higher education or higher for 22% of the respondents. From the employment perspective, the majority of the population was employed (47%), followed by retirees (37%) and students (10%). There was a balance among the respondents in terms of gender. Demographic-social characteristics of the collected sample showed a fairly good balance in comparison with the values obtained in the target population (official statistical data by SURs, 2017). There were no statistically significant differences at the regular degree of risk or the limit of statistical characteristic between the population and the realised sample in terms of gender representation, the average age of respondents, the type of household and the average household size.

4. CONCLUSION

The question of behaviour of a specific community is very complex as it involves shared responsibility and action (Niedderer et al., 2017) that can be researched from the perspective of the individual, small communities, local authorities or different initiatives. All behaviours to some extent always reflect its socio-economic, regulative and geospatial context. This adds to the equation many variables that determine in greater or in lower extent the beneficial final outcomes for the individual or the community.

The results of this survey contribute to the repository of knowledge, enlightening current trends and tendencies regarding sustainable behaviour of the residents in selected settlements. From the perspective of the existing available data at the level of neighbourhoods (or similar spatial scales), the results, although thematically selective, represent a welcome contribution, not only for the evaluation of sustainable efficiency, but also in terms of the perceived quality of living by the residents of this region, their attitudes and opinions towards some of the contemporary issues in the local and temporal context.

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