Governing Urban Diversity:
Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today’s Hyper-diversified Cities

Report 2d
Fieldwork inhabitants, Budapest (Hungary)

Work package 6: Fieldwork inhabitants
Deliverable nr.: D 6.1
Lead partner: Partner 10 (EKKE)
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Nature: Report
Dissemination level: PP
Status: Final Version
Date: 24 July 2015

This project is funded by the European Union under the 7th Framework Programme; Theme: SSH.2012.2.2.1; Governance of cohesion and diversity in urban contexts

This report has been put together by the authors, and revised on the basis of the valuable comments, suggestions, and contributions of all DIVERCITIES partners.

The views expressed in this report are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of European Commission.
1. Introduction

There is a growing conventional wisdom in writings on European cities that presents them as centres of ‘super-diversity’ (Vertovec, 2007). This refers specifically to their increasing ethnic diversity and to the demographic diversity between and within such ethnic groups. However, cities are becoming increasingly diverse, not only in socio-economic, social and ethnic terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes and activities. To indicate this enormous diversity, we proposed to use the term hyper-diversity (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

Within cities, groups can live segregated or rather mixed. Urban neighbourhoods may be fairly homogeneous residential areas in terms of housing and population, but they may also be heavily mixed with respect to types of housing (tenure, type, price) and population categories (income, ethnicity, household composition, age). In addition, individuals who belong to the same ‘official’ demographic category may possess quite different lifestyles and attitudes and involve themselves in a wide range of activities. Some may for example have a very neighbourhood-oriented life, with all their friends and activities in a very small area, while others may have their social activities stretched over the whole city or even beyond. Residents of mixed urban neighbourhoods may happily live together, live parallel lives, or be in open conflict with each other (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

This report is written as part of the EU-FP7 DIVERCITIES project. In this project we aim to find out how urban hyper-diversity affects social cohesion and social mobility of residents of deprived and dynamic urban areas and the economic performance of entrepreneurs with their enterprise in such areas. In this report we focus on the findings from our interviews with residents in which we explored their experiences of living with hyper-diversity and how it affects their lives.

This general aim can be broken down into more detailed and concrete research questions. They are central in the chapters of this report:

1. Why did people move to the diverse area they live in now? To what extent has the diversity of the area been a pull-factor? Or were other aspects (such as the availability of inexpensive dwellings) a much stronger motive to settle in the present area? (Chapter 3)
2. How do residents think about the area they live in? Do residents see their neighbourhood’s diversity as an asset or a liability? (Chapter 4)
3. How do residents make use of the diversified areas they live in? Do they actively engage in diversified relations and activities in their neighbourhood? To what extent is the area they live in more important than other areas in terms of activities? (Chapter 5)
4. To what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion? Which elements foster social cohesion, which elements hinder the development of social cohesion in the area? (Chapter 6)
5. To what extent is the diversity of the neighbourhood important for social mobility? Which elements foster social mobility and which elements hinder social mobility? (Chapter 7)
6. How are diversity-related policies perceived by the inhabitants of the area? (Chapter 8)

Our study focuses on the city of Budapest which is the main political, cultural and economic centre of Hungary. Budapest – with its more than 1.7 million inhabitants – is the largest urban area and also one of the most diverse cities in the country in terms of population. The city and its agglomeration is the most prosperous region of the country but it was also affected by the economic crisis. The employment rate is still higher (57%) and unemployment is lower (9%) than the national average but notable socio-spatial inequalities can be detected within the city,
mirrored by segregation processes and concentrations of homeless and poor people (Municipality of Budapest, 2013). In general, the population of Budapest is older than the national average (42.4 comparing to 40.9 years in 2011) and prognoses predict further demographic ageing and a shrinking of active age groups by 2031. Nevertheless, natural loss is outweighed by domestic and foreign in-migration flows. Since Budapest is the primary destination of domestic and international migrants in Hungary the proportion of ethnic minorities of its total population is above the national average. According to the 2011 National Census, approximately 118,000 local residents have some ethnic minority background (4.8% of the city population), among which 77,000 belong to ‘historical’ ethnic groups¹ and 41,000 (e.g. Chinese, Vietnamese or Arabic people) arrived mainly as part of new immigration in post-socialism. The diversity of the local society is recognised by various national, regional and city level policies, and several aspects of its heterogeneity (e.g. cultural values, creative labour) are highlighted as key factors related to the economic competitiveness of Budapest (for further details see Fabula et al., 2014).

Within Budapest the research took place in the area of Józsefváros (8th District) which is one of the 23 independent district municipalities of the city. Despite its relatively small territory (6.85 km²), the district is socially and culturally one of the most diverse parts of the city. It has 76,250 inhabitants (2011) of whom the proportion of non-Hungarian ethnic groups is 11.9 per cent. The Gypsy/Roma is the largest ethnic minority group and in some parts of the district they comprise around 50 per cent of the local inhabitants. There are significant communities of international migrants (especially those coming from South Eastern Asia and Africa) in the area as Józsefváros and particularly its central neighbourhoods is a popular destination for immigrants from other parts of the country and more recently from abroad (China, Vietnam etc.) as well. There is also a large number of homeless people and poor households in the district. However, the area’s extreme negative image is slowly changing as a result of urban rehabilitation programmes and gentrification.

We conducted 50 interviews with residents of Józsefváros. These interviews were held between September, 2014 and March, 2015. In the next chapter we will first give some more information on the methodology that was adopted. This is then followed by six chapters in which we will answer the research questions above. In the conclusions we summarise the main results and address our main questions. We will also give some broader guidance for policy-making.

2. The interviewees

2.1 Selection procedure: how did we select our interviewees?

In order to reflect the diverse population of the case study area, interview partners were recruited through different channels. Before the beginning of the fieldwork a list of approximately 25-30 potential respondents were composed. In each case (after permission was given by the residents) name, correspondence and further basic personal data were provided us by RÉV8² which has developed a broad social network in Józsefváros because of former renewal projects and the

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¹ According to the Act CLXXIX of 2011 on the Rights of Nationalities, the 13 ‘historical’ national/ethnic minority groups in Hungary are the Bulgarian, the Gipsy/Roma, the Greek, the Croatian, the Polish, the German, the Armenian, the Romanian, the Rusyn, the Serbian, the Slovakian, the Slovenian and the Ukrainian.

² RÉV8 is a company founded by the local government of Józsefváros. Its primary aim is to manage local urban renewal programmes.
active participation of local residents. These residents can be considered as key informants in the case-study area (e.g. representatives of homeowners’ associations or civil organisations) and they served as entry points. With their help new contacts could be established so the sampling was continued by snowballing method. Participation in the research was voluntary for everyone. For poor people and lower status residents a small gift (approx. € 10) was offered.

2.2 Which groups did we miss?

We intended to compose a group of interviewees which appropriately represent a balanced picture of diversity in Józsefváros (Appendix 1). The sample however has certain shortcomings. For example, there is a notable majority of female (62%) and middle-aged (especially those between 31 and 60 years) respondents. The most difficult group to approach was that of migrants from Eastern Asia (Chinese, Vietnamese). They are amongst the most important ethnic minority groups in Józsefváros: they have a significant impact on the cultural landscape and on the economic performance of the district. However, they live in quite closed communities and it proved to be hard to involve them in social research. We requested help from civil organisations (e.g. migrant advocacy groups) and other local initiatives we were in touch earlier but our efforts remained rather unsuccessful.

2.3 Some general characteristics of the interviewees

The major characteristics of the 50 interviewees are as follows.

- Among the 50 respondents, 31 of them are female and 19 are male.
- The largest group of interviewees (more than one-third of them) belong to 31-45 age group (19), while the number of interviewees from 18-30 age group is 9, from 46-60 age group is 13, and interviewees over 60 is 9 (two of them over 75).
- Data on ethnic background are based on the self-identification of the respondents. According to these figures the sample is comprised predominantly by ethnic Hungarians. In addition approximately one-fourth of the interviewees (13) reported on at least one ethnicity other than Hungarian. Regarding their country of origin, 8 is foreign born; they are mainly from the neighbouring countries, namely Slovakia and Romania.
- Among the interviewees 28 are married, 16 are single, 5 are divorced and 1 person is widowed.
- As for their length of residence in Józsefváros, 26 persons have been living in the case-study area for 20 or more years, while 9 people moved here less than 5 years ago (newcomers – i.e. people moving to the area – have an important role among the interviewees because of the ongoing gentrification process taking place in Józsefváros). The length of residence of the other interviewees: 5-9 years 7 persons, 10-14 years 5, 15-19 years 3.
- Regarding the spatial distribution of the interviewees, they come from all official 11 Quarters (called ‘Negyed’ in Hungarian language) of Józsefváros. Most of them though live in Inner- and Middle-Józsefváros (Figure 1).
3. Housing choice and residential mobility

3.1 Introduction

Residential mobility is the process by which households match their housing needs to the houses available to them. The choice is a result of their housing needs, external factors and the housing stock available on the market (Clark, 2012). At the neighbourhood level residential mobility is the core process which keeps neighbourhoods changing. Some neighbourhoods are becoming more diverse, others more homogeneous due to residential mobility. Neighbourhoods and their impacts on residential mobility are becoming more important in housing research as households evaluate their housing and community satisfaction (Van Ham and Clark, 2008). The literature shows that not only objective characteristics of neighbourhoods (e.g. location, density, housing stock) but more often soft factors like reputation, social and cultural milieu, coolness play a role in stimulating residential mobility (Permentier et al., 2009).

In this chapter we try to answer the following questions. Why did people move to our case-study area (the 8th District in Budapest)? What have been the most important triggering factors of the move and to what extent has the diversity of the area been a pull-factor? Before we turn to these questions some important features of the local housing market need to be highlighted.

The 8th District of Budapest (Józsefváros) has a highly diversified housing stock due to continuous building activities and large-scale regeneration programmes. The inner part of the district was built up already before World War I, with 3-4 storey tenement buildings. As an outcome of the communist slum clearance programme of the 1970s, pre-fab high rise buildings
appeared in the area replacing some part of the old dilapidated housing stock. From the late 1990s the renovation of rundown buildings as well as construction of new ones speeded up considerably, due to local government-initiated regeneration programmes and investments by private developers. Between the last two censuses (2001-2011) about 5,000 new (mostly upmarket) dwellings were added to the local housing stock of approximately 33,000, which means a 12 percent growth within a decade. This was one of the highest values among the 23 districts of Budapest during the period.

Due to the extension of the housing market and recent regeneration activities, above average residential mobility was recorded in the case-study area. In Budapest, on the eve of the 2011 census 45 percent of the residents had moved to his/her dwelling in the previous ten years, which was 52 percent in the 8th District. New construction and regeneration have also resulted in the rapid modernisation of the local housing stock. In 2001, the share of low-comfort dwellings (without toilet and/or bathroom inside the flat) was 22.3 percent, which decreased to 9.4 percent by 2011, yet, it was still significantly above the Budapest average (3.9%). In terms of tenure, the share of rental dwellings (both public and private) was 20.7 percent in the 8th District in 2011, whereas it was only 10.6 percent in Budapest. The weight of public housing is the highest here in the city with 11.5 percent in 2011, compared to the average figure of Budapest (5.0%). Public housing is spatially highly concentrated in the central parts of the district (i.e. Magdolna and Orczy quarters), where over one third of the housing stock is publicly owned. To sum up, the quality of the housing stock has significantly improved over the last two decades. New constructions and regeneration activities have brought above slow but steady influx of higher-income households (Kovács et al., 2013).

3.2 Why did the residents come to live here?

Given the high share of rental dwellings (both public and private) and the highly diversified housing stock the district provides good opportunities for those searching for shelter. It is easier to enter the housing market of the city in Józsefváros than in other districts of Budapest. Józsefváros can be divided into three distinct parts based on the housing conditions, social milieu, and possible motivations of newcomers (see also Figure 1). Palota Quarter is situated near to the city centre and this part of the district has the highest prestige as well as social status. The milieu of this area is described by interviewees as ‘family friendly’. At the eastern edge of the district Tisztviselőtelep is a low-rise residential neighbourhood with suburban/rural-type character and relatively high status. The area between Tisztviselőtelep and the Grand Boulevard is in transition and has a highly fragmented spatial structure; in some parts the social status of residents increased recently due to urban regeneration and upgrading while other parts remained quite deprived. The social milieu can change from one street or block to another. The smallest apartments and worst housing conditions prevail in this part of the district. Within this zone the status of residents decreases as we move further out from the city centre.

According to the interviewees, the main advantages of Józsefváros are its good location and the value for money. Many interviewees emphasised that the accessibility of the area and the transport connections were among the key reasons why they chose the neighbourhood. Also, due to the historically evolved poor reputation the apartments in the district were significantly cheaper than in other similar districts. Therefore, the residents could benefit from better services and job opportunities provided by the city centre while enjoying lower dwelling prices or rents. There are local residents who previously lived in neighbouring (and more expensive) districts and were aware of the advantageous location of Józsefváros and chose the district based on their previous knowledge and the price level.
“Maybe the central location is the greatest advantage. Several parts of the city centre are accessible in a few minutes, the Grand Boulevard, Blaha Square, Nagyvárad Square in the other direction etc. The renewed centre of the District or the Corvin Plaza shopping mall are also located nearby. Shops, offices, health care facilities are all easily available in the neighbourhood. Therefore, it is one of the most favourable locations within Budapest if you do not take into account its social background.” (R5, male, 47 years old, social worker/teacher, Hungarian).

Furthermore, workplace, study opportunities and family reasons (new marriage, newly born child etc.) were also important motivations for newcomers in Józsefváros. Because of the good public transport connections most parts of the district are linked with the city centre or other parts of Budapest. Therefore, those who got a job in any part of Budapest could easily commute to work from Józsefváros. Several university buildings are also located in the 8th District or are easily accessible from here – therefore, the area is very attractive for students moving to Budapest who can benefit from the huge variety of rental dwellings and the affordable rents. According to one of the interviewees, Józsefváros offers a good compromise between the ‘boring’ outskirts and the tourist-flooded city centre.

“A what I like in this neighbourhood or in its location within the city is that it is not the very centre, which is very jam-packed for me, a jungle of concrete full of people; but at the same time it (Józsefváros) is not at the edge of the city also. Somehow it is at the border, the 8th and 9th districts and this neighbourhood, so you can easily get into the city but it is less dense, greener, there isn’t such a heavy congestion” (R6, female, 36 years, chemical engineer, Hungarian).

A gender dimension can also be identified among the family-related motivations; women are more likely to move into Józsefváros following their partners (e.g. moving to the district because the husband lives there or has a flat there). This finding suggests that there is considerable similarity between Józsefváros and some Western European neighbourhoods as far as the role of women in residential choice is concerned (see e.g. Kley, 2011).

Based on the interviews we can say that Józsefváros has a ‘gateway function’: both for those who are moving to Budapest from rural areas of Hungary or from other countries. They often buy or rent their first apartment here – which is triggered mainly by the relatively low prices and the high number of available rental apartments.

“I love District 8. And a lot of my friends have moved here recently. The [dwelling] prices are so low. It is worth to mention that I am from Bratislava. My friends from Bratislava come here and they ask about the price of this apartment and it is unbelievably cheap... So in Bratislava, I don’t know, a basement room cannot be rented for this money” (R32, male, 34 years, museologist/webpage designer, Hungarian).

In some areas (e.g. in the Magdolna Quarter) the fluctuation of residents is really very high. This is partly because of the relatively high number of students who live here temporarily during their studies and the above mentioned gateway function of the district, receiving long distance migrants and also foreigners. Within Józsefváros the area of Tisztviselőtelep seems to have the most stable residential pattern and the lowest fluctuation.

3 Ethnicity is based on self-identification. For further information, see Appendix 1.
Those who were born and raised in Józsefváros emphasised two reasons why they remained in the district. Firstly, their attachment to the area that gradually evolved. Secondly, that they could not afford a flat in other parts of the city – this is particularly typical for those who live in small and low quality, mostly publicly owned apartments. They belong to the trapped, immobile part of the local society (Musterd and Van Kempen, 2007).

“Yes, she [the respondent’s mother] had lived here before and she wasn’t in that financial situation – we have never been – that she would have been able to move to a larger apartment. And we had been planning to change this flat to another with of better quality but after the renovation we stayed here. All in all, we have never been in such a financial situation to move to a bigger apartment” (R3, male, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

Newcomers who moved to Józsefváros after the turn of the millennium have clearly contributed to growing social and cultural diversity. For example, ethnic Hungarians (from Romania and Ukraine), Chinese, Romanians and other foreigners moved to Józsefváros in significant numbers in the last two decades. Furthermore, due to immigration, the social status of the area is slowly increasing but this is spatially an uneven process; in some parts of the district it is more rapid and more visible than in others. The most intense changes took place in the neighbourhoods that were transformed by local government led urban regeneration (e.g. Corvin Quarter near the Grand Boulevard) where the housing has been completely replaced by newly built apartments (new-build gentrification). The status of the area between Corvin Quarter and Magdolna Quarter is also slowly increasing. One of the most remote quarters from the Grand Boulevard, the so-called Orczy Quarter and some parts of Magdolna Quarter have the lowest socio-economic status; this is where the poorest people live who were edged out from the inner parts of the district. Palota Quarter close to the city centre attracts the greatest number of foreigners, while younger Hungarians move mainly to the middle (and cheaper) parts of the district.

The social and cultural diversity of the district has been often mentioned as an asset in the interviews (mostly by the younger and better educated interviewees) but hardly anyone was motivated solely by the diversity to move here. But once they already live here usually they appreciate the diversity and vibrant character of the area.

“…in my opinion the most beautiful and best feature of District 8 is its diversity. So the foreigners; and I mean, not only the skin colours. Because in Western Europe it is totally accepted that they have different colours, different ethnic backgrounds, and I think this is amazing. This is the best part. […] I was against the 8th District before because it scared me, but since I walk around here more often I simply feel that a better move couldn’t have been made” (R39, female, 26 years, graphic designer, Hungarian).

It was also noted by several interviewees that the external image of the district is worse than their own personal experiences. Józsefváros has been traditionally associated with high crime rates and violence while the experiences of the interviewees show that the situation is much better than they previously expected.

“We did not search an apartment in the 8th District because of the gipsies and stuff […], after a lot of disappointments because of the poor quality and overpriced apartments we took a look at some apartments here and we were thinking that this is practically the centre of the city, it is near to the Palota Quarter which is not a bad neighbourhood at all. […] Then we took a walk down the Práter Street and there were no problems. The flat was nice, so we bought it two days later” (R11, male, 30 years, private entrepreneur: programmer/webpage designer, Hungarian).
The immigration and renovation of the built environment slowly changes the image of Józsefváros; newcomers are usually younger and better educated than the sitting population, and they have jobs with higher income. The area is clearly subject to gentrification let it be either new construction or renovation.

3.3 Moving to the present neighbourhood: improvement or not?

Evaluating if the interviewees’ move to their current dwelling meant an improvement or retrogression in their housing conditions is a rather complex task, and the answers were often contradictory. Therefore, several factors should be taken into account when addressing this issue. Firstly, it is important to make a distinction whether the objective parameters of the former and current dwelling (e.g. size, comfort), and the neighbourhood (e.g. quality of the physical environment, income level of the local population) or various subjective aspects (e.g. personal or family career stages, psychological factors) are being examined. Secondly, improvement or retrogression in housing conditions can be the results of the features of the dwelling, the characteristics of the neighbourhood, or both. Thirdly, the migrants’ demographic and socio-economic characteristics can also significantly affect the circumstances of the move and also the perceptions of these people regarding the change.

As for objective housing parameters, it can be stated that in several cases the previous dwelling was of better quality than the current one. From this aspect, consequently, the change did not result in a (considerable) improvement in these people’s housing conditions. For example, it is a widely common phenomenon that larger dwellings were changed for smaller ones located in Józsefváros. The main reason behind this phenomenon is that the large number of relatively inexpensive houses and rents makes the District quite attractive to those looking for inexpensive dwelling, while for those who moved to Budapest from other municipalities the better labour market situation was also an important pull factor. Moreover, there were interviewees who moved to this district from a more elegant neighbourhood on the Buda side of the city (the Western part of Budapest with higher status profile) or from a suburban location. Such findings draw the attention to the fact that a housing career (Pickles and Davies, 1991) is not necessarily a progressive process because moves do not always result in better housing quality if comparing consecutive stages of the sequence (see e.g. Bolt and Van Kempen, 2002).

Nevertheless, the majority of those respondents who moved to their present dwelling from their old family home (i.e. where they lived with their parents) or from a small rental for childless couples, rated their relocation as a positive change. One of the main reasons behind this stance is that the new dwellings fit better their current stage in the life-cycles.

“Well, renting an apartment was okay as long as we were students but when we started our own family it was an important point to have a home base. And we were in a big dilemma whether we should move to the suburbs or to the downtown but several connections tie us to the city centre...”

(R45, female, 32 years, real estate agent/developer, Hungarian).

As former research has already demonstrated, developments in a household’s housing career are often closely connected to turning points in other careers or in the family life-cycle (Kley, 2011; Özüekren and Van Kempen, 2002). On the other hand, in several cases the positive features of the new neighbourhood outweigh the negative ones caused by the lower-quality of the dwelling.

One of the most important factors that made the last change of home an improvement for several interviewees is the location of their current dwelling. As it was already discussed above, the abundant working and study opportunities nearby were significant pull-factors for the respondents when moving into Józsefváros. Therefore, occupying a new dwelling in the vicinity
of the workplace is a significant improvement for these people. The location of home, however, is of great importance not only because of the distance from the workplace. Several respondents emphasised that finding a residence in Józsefváros had notably improved their living conditions since this district is relatively close to the city centre and it has very good transport connections. As a consequence, besides good working and study opportunities, the wide range of services provided by the inner districts of Budapest became also easily available to them.

As it was already described in section 3.2 relatively low and affordable housing prices and rents were also important triggering factors for newcomers. Since many of them reported that finding a new dwelling at a reasonable price in the district was a significant improvement in their housing career, their move to the present place could be considered as a success. This finding has notable implications for housing policy and housing studies. On the one hand, the need for affordable dwellings and a certain diversity of the housing stock in an urban area can be underlined. On the other hand, the results are in accordance with the findings of some of the international literature, that the income of households has utmost importance regarding their housing careers (Özüekren and Van Kempen, 2002).

Other neighbourhood characteristics had much less influence on the housing choices of the interview partners. For example, for some (especially the older ones) improvement means a move to a quiet and peaceful neighbourhood but this opinion is not common among the respondents. Similarly, the composition of the local population and social diversity also rarely come into play when talking about progress in housing career. However, some interviewees reported that changing neighbours contributed to their happiness when they moved to their new homes. As a respondent talked about her and her partner’s moves from Józsefváros to Buda and back to Józsefváros:

“...I felt very bad in Buda. I absolutely felt that the neighbourhood was not for me. I was very bothered by that kind of elite behaviour of the local residents. So in the house where we lived we were scolded if the TV was a little bit louder. I think a paranoid old lady lived next door, as she came to us complaining even if we pulled a chair aside. So I got used to this lifestyle quite hard, especially after the lively 8th District” (R4, female, 47 years, social worker, Hungarian).

Similarly to the majority of the interviewees, the above cited person considers the diversity of Józsefváros as a positive feature but other aspects (especially workplace, accessibility, value for money) played much greater role in her housing choice.

Regarding the interviewees’ former places of residence, no significant difference can be identified between the satisfaction with new dwellings of those who changed home within Budapest and those who arrived from outside the city. However, on the basis of the interviews, members of the former group seem more likely to experience improvement in the objective housing parameters. It is also important to note that none of the interviewees changed his/her dwelling as a result of direct coercion (e.g. demolition of houses, gentrification).

It is worth to mention that in-migrants can enhance their housing conditions after moving to a new place, with the mobilisation of different kinds of resources. Besides individual-, family- and community-related resource mobilisations, urban policies like Magdolna Quarter Regeneration Programme also play a significant role, as a unique feature of Józsefváros. As emphasised by one of the respondents for example, the Magdolna integrated social urban renewal project provided him resources to improve his dwelling.
“I was very satisfied and happy as the district government offered us a participation in the Magdolna Quarter Programme but it was required of my partner and me to do our own part in order to have a good flat-swap with the municipality and get this former laundry room [as apartment] here on the ground level” (R12, male, 55 years, security officer at Hungarian Railways, Roma).

This interviewee received financial support for building materials from a non-profit organisation too. The relevance of social housing initiatives in Józsefváros is evident, taking the relatively high proportion of low-income households into consideration. Such programmes can prevent or at least temper extreme gentrification processes, thus, contributing to the sustainable diversity of the district.

3.4 Conclusions

To sum up we can conclude that the socio-cultural diversity of the neighbourhood is perceived by many as an asset, but it does not play a significant role in moving in the area. Key triggering factors are rather the excellent location and the value for money of dwellings. The arrival of newcomers clearly contributes to the growing diversity of the district and improves the image and reputation of the area. At the same time the local housing market becomes spatially fragmented due to the coexistence of urban decay and residualisation on the one hand, and local government as well as private developers initiated renewals, on the other.

4. Perceptions of the diversity in the neighbourhood

4.1 Introduction

Since space is socially constructed (Lefebvre 1991, Harvey 1990), the perceived boundaries of a neighbourhood and the attitudes towards diversity influence everyday practices. Taking this into account, the aim of this chapter is to present the residents’ view on the diversity of Józsefváros. To this end, we analyse how the interviewees see the boundaries and extent of their neighbourhood, and how they evaluate the diversity of local society – if they are aware of it.

Recent studies have shown that the ‘official’ (e.g. administrative or census borders) boundaries can be quite different from the ones perceived by local residents. Research in this field usually builds on the neighbourhood boundaries defined by authorities but social interactions and real estate prices are influenced more by the perceived boundaries ( Sampson et al., 2002). The perceived boundaries (and place names which are strongly related to identity) are based on local practices, shared local culture and symbols and can be very stable over the time. However, residents from the same neighbourhood but with different racial, educational background or income level usually define the same area differently (Coulton et al., 2001; Hunter, 1974). Therefore, in socially mixed areas the perception of boundaries can differ from one group to another.

The most essential forms of diversity identified by residents of mixed population neighbourhoods are usually race/ethnicity or income level, although other factors (such as age, household type etc.) can also be important ( Sarkissian, 1976; Talen, 2010). Several researches (e.g. Myerson, 2001; Nyden et al., 1997; Talen, 2010) have highlighted the role of physical and neighbourhood factors (e.g. good transport connections, diversity of the built environment, mixed use of facilities etc.) which can contribute to the creation of diverse neighbourhoods and can help keeping them diverse.
Regarding the opinions on diversity, Bell and Hartmann (2007) argue that there is often a ‘cultural ambiguity’ in the related discourses. On the one hand, people tend to have mostly positive views on diversity in the abstract, but on the other hand, deep tensions can arise from the context of everyday social live. At the same time, narratives and practices can be contradictory: while narratives may report on conflicts between residents, everyday practices can show the positive effects of social mixing (Van Eijk, 2012). In super-diverse neighbourhoods, positive attitudes towards diversity are not only manifested in the acceptance or appraisal of diversity, but also in seeing it as ordinary. In these cases the mixed character of the local population is not a particular topic to talk about, because people are used to it (Van Leeuwen, 2010; Wessendorf, 2013).

The perception of diversity can influence the strength of prejudice, but the connection between them has been interpreted differently depending on the perspectives used by different authors. The contact theory approaches are focusing on the positive effects of diversity claiming that the contacts and positive experiences between different groups reduce prejudice. According to some scholars (e.g. Pettigrew et al., 2010; Wagner et al., 2006), greater perceived diversity has positive effects on social contacts which could reduce prejudice and discrimination. Others however emphasise that the relation between diversity, contacts and prejudice can be contradictory. According to conflict theory approaches, the increased social/cultural/ethnic diversity can be considered as a threat to the majority groups’ position. This results in stronger attachment to their culture and leads to increasing prejudice (Schmid et al., 2014; Valentine, 2013). Putnam’s constrict theory also emphasises the negative outcomes of diversity on social contacts and trust. According to this theory, diversity causes a general withdrawal from society (not only from other groups but from their own ethnic or social groups as well) thus isolating the individuals (Putnam, 2000; 2007).

Bearing these findings in mind, we address two main research questions in this chapter. Firstly: How do the respondents think about the area they live in? Secondly: Do the residents of Józsefváros see their neighbourhood’s diversity as an asset or a liability? The rest of the chapter is divided into four sub-chapters: in the first one the perceived (internal and external) boundaries of Józsefváros are presented; the second one highlights the interviewees’ opinions on their neighbours; in the third one the respondents’ perceptions of their neighbourhood (its positive and negative aspects) are discussed; and finally the chapter ends with some concluding remarks.

4.2 Perceived boundaries of the neighbourhood

This sub-chapter deals with the questions how local residents interpret their neighbourhood and what the perceived boundaries within the case-study area are. Before turning to the results of the interviews we would like to discuss briefly the general perceptions of neighbourhoods in Budapest at different territorial scales.

Within the city, districts (kerület) have a very strong imprint on the mental map of people. There are altogether 23 districts in Budapest which are discrete administrative units with democratically elected local governments and a high level of autonomy as far as urban development and planning is concerned. Some of the districts have a long history (mostly the inner-districts) coupled with strong local identity. As many peripheral districts were artificially created in 1950 through the amalgamation of formerly independent suburban communities, very often in these districts local identity is much more articulated at the sub-district level (i.e. independent communes before 1950). Our case-study area Józsefváros is a typical inner-city district (8th District of Budapest) which had been part of Budapest well before 1950, thus, the boundaries of the district are well-perceived by local people, most of whom have a distinct ‘Józsefváros identity’.
Below the level of districts we find **quarters (negyed)** with a varying role in peoples’ attitude and spatial behaviour (i.e. mental map). Quarters are delimited mainly on morphological basis (characteristics of the built environment) and they serve as basic units for urban planning, but very often they have also distinct functional and cultural features, which strengthen local identity (e.g. Jewish Quarter, University Quarter). In Józsefváros there are 11 quarters with ca. 8-10,000 inhabitants which were delimited by the local planning office in 2004 (see Figure 1). Only a few of them (e.g. Palotanegyed, Tisztviselőtelep) retain historical traditions and distinct local identities, most of them were delimited artificially according to architectural and functional parameters for planning purposes.

The notion of **neighbourhood (környék)** means the activity space of local residents where they live, where they move on a daily basis and use public space and services regularly. The interpretation of neighbourhood differs from person to person depending on age, qualification, family relations etc. The boundaries of neighbourhoods are less exact and they often do not coincide with the boundaries of quarters or even districts.

During the interviews respondents had very vague interpretations about the notion of neighbourhood. Very often neighbourhood (környék) was not understood as a compact territorial unit with distinct boundaries but a mixture of lines, landmarks and dots on the mental map. Within the neighbourhood personal activity space (own building, street and micro-environment) did not have marked boundaries either. The size of perceived neighbourhood differed very much among the interviewees according to their socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. age, sex, marital status, employment, income) and type of residential area (e.g. the inner-part or the outskirts of district, old tenement blocks or prefabricated housing estates), as well as the length of stay in the area. Some of the interviewees (typically the elderly) understood a couple of blocks nearby within the district while others (young people and families with kids) had broader understanding incorporating even sections of neighbouring districts. Newcomers who moved recently to the upgraded parts of the district form a special group in this respect. They maintain strong links outside the district, their neighbourhood definition is very narrow, covering only the place of residence (street, or block). Their opinion about their ‘own neighbourhood’ is very positive, however, they have very negative image about the rest of Józsefváros.

The external boundaries of the 8th district were very much felt by residents living in the middle and outer parts of Józsefváros, they appeared as strict geographical limitations. However, in the inner part of Józsefváros (Palotanegyed) the otherwise strict district boundary became very much faded by an inner-city identity. People living inside the arc of Grand Boulevard have a strong city-centre identity, at the same time many of them have much less place attachment to Józsefváros than residents of the outer quarters.

Regarding the internal boundaries within the district the Grand Boulevard is the most significant dividing line, separating the Palotanegyed (Palace Quarter) and the rest of the district (see Figure 2). This quarter has a relatively high prestige as opposed to the rest of Józsefváros, large part of the building stock was built by aristocrats during the last quarter of the 19th century. The name Palace Quarter reflects well the unique architectural milieu of the area. Both residents of the Palace Quarter and the rest of the district feel that the Grand Boulevard creates a wall between the inner and outer parts of Józsefváros.

“I consider 8th District (józsefváros) as my neighbourhood, but perhaps areas behind the Grand Boulevard, the so-called Palotanegyed, do not belong to it. That area is a bit posh, different from the
rest of the district, and it does not really fit to the picture I associate with Józsefváros” (R34, female, 61 years, stylist/designer, Hungarian-Jewish).

The Grand Boulevard serves not only as a functional and morphological boundary between the Palace Quarter and the rest of Józsefváros, but also as a social demarcation line between the better off and the less affluent parts of the district. Simultaneously, residents of the Palace Quarter have strong inner-city orientation in their lifestyle.

“I hardly cross the line of the Grand Boulevard, unless I go to visit my girlfriend. Otherwise we go regularly to the 5th District as far as the Ferenciek square or even the Deák square [i.e. the very downtown of Budapest]” (R18, female, 36 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

Similar socio-spatial and mental separation could be detected between residents of the Tisztviselőtelep (Official’s Estate) located in the outer part of Józsefváros and the rest of the district.

“I live in a relatively good neighbourhood within the district called Tisztviselőtelep. This is a 120 year old estate built originally for officials. The area is a small oasis in the city with villas comprising one, two or four flats, and beautiful big gardens behind. We are in the middle of Budapest, but close to the Népliget [People's Park, which is the biggest public park in Budapest]. The prices of dwellings are relatively high here, they compete with the Palotanegyed, and it is easy to sell them” (R23, male, 65 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).
The boundary between Tisztviselőtelep and the neighbouring Orczy Quarter is also sharp both architecturally and socially. Within Orczy Quarter the adjacent area near Diószeghy Street has the worst reputation. Local residents living nearby try to avoid going there.

“If I say Diószeghy Sámuel Street, and Lujza Street, well these two streets are very repulsive. I do not like to go there, especially in the evening” (R35, female, 53 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

An interesting location within Józsefváros is the Corvin Quarter. The area has been subject to a large scale regeneration programme since 2004. Práter Street constitutes a sharp boundary within the quarter separating the old, run down blocks from the newly built areas. New-built sections contain upmarket housing, offices and a fancy shopping-mall. Residents in this area are young affluent people, typical gentrifiers. According to the interviews they hardly ever cross the line of Práter Street, they do not mix with residents of the dilapidated area. However, due to the shopping mall and other adjoining services the regeneration area serves as a magnet for residents of the poorer neighbourhoods.

“…I go over the Práter [street] very seldom, maybe 5 times a year, for instance if I go to the local mayor office to arrange something. If I do not need to go that direction I never cross Práter Street” (R11, male, 30 years, private entrepreneur: programmer/webpage designer, Hungarian).

We can conclude that the extent of perceived ‘own neighbourhood’ very much depends on the age, family status, income, profession of respondents and also for how long they have been living in the district. According to the interviews, sharp boundaries can be drawn between ‘poor’ and ‘rich’ parts of the district (Orczy Street, Grand Boulevard, Práter Street). It can also be stated that for long-term residents outer borders of Józsefváros play more important role than internal boundaries. Regarding the mental maps of youngsters and young families however, outer boundaries have much less relevance than for other groups. Finally, the perception of boundaries depends also on the location of the respondents’ homes: for example clearer perceived boundaries can be identified in historical (Palotanegyed, Tisztviselőnegyed) and in transforming neighbourhoods (Magdolna negyed, Corvin negyed).

### 4.3 Perceptions of neighbours

Usually neighbours were understood by respondents as people living in the same residential unit (e.g. floor, staircase, block, street). The most important dimensions used to describe the neighbours were their age, nationality, ethnicity, lifestyle, financial background and employment situation. The area is seen as a rapidly changing part of Budapest affected by urban regeneration programmes and new waves of immigration from other parts of Hungary and abroad.

According to the answers four types of groups could be identified among neighbours: (1) those that were considered as anti-social individuals (e.g. homeless people, drug addicts, illegal residents); (2) newcomers (e.g. foreigners, immigrants, youngsters); (3) poor people; and (4) native inhabitants. The most visible and most often mentioned categories were (1) and (2). It is important to emphasise that these are not clearly distinct groups but often overlapping categories (e.g. Roma people was mentioned often within (1), (2) and (3) categories).

In the first group Roma people and drug addicts were mentioned most often but homeless and unemployed people were also frequently recalled.
“There are a lot of drug addicts. Very very addicted people. A lot of youngsters are heavily addicted to drugs here” (R41, female, 55 years, cleaner, Hungarian-Roma).

In some cases crime and other deviant behaviour was identified with Roma people and those neighbourhoods where they live in larger groups were considered dangerous.

“The building where I live is not [dangerous]. There are no gypsies there” (R25, male, 50 years, chef, Egyptian).

Members of the second major group (newcomers) of neighbours were described by the residents most often as ‘students’, ‘rural people’, ‘Arabs’, ‘blacks’, ‘Romanians’, ‘Western Europeans’, or in many cases simply as ‘foreigners’.

“...in the District, and maybe in whole Budapest there are a lot of tenants from Hungary or from abroad. A black man has just moved into one of the flats on the upper floor” (R47, female, 78 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

The intense fluctuation of tenants was a recurring topic in the interviews – especially when talking about students. Interestingly, Asian immigrants were only rarely mentioned in the interviews although the biggest Chinese market in Hungary is located in Józsefváros. In some cases, immigrants were considered threatening. According to several respondents newcomers can often be characterised by deviant behaviour.

“...a lot of Romanian workers have moved into the neighbourhood... they are noisy, littering, they distract the peace of our house” (R21, female, 63 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

On the other hand, immigrants were perceived also positively, once they have solid financial background they contribute more to the finances of condominiums.

“Many young people have moved in and honestly I am happy for that, because they pay the common fees of the building regularly and they take care about their environment” (R19, female, 37 years, dispatcher, Hungarian).

Poor people (3) and native inhabitants (4) were frequently associated with the studentification and the subsequent gentrification process. They are most often displaced by gentrification in the rapidly upgrading areas affected by urban regeneration. The presence of the third group (poor people) is the most characteristic in the peripheral parts of the district. The rehabilitation of the inner parts of Józsefváros pushes the poor people out from the more central areas.

“When I moved in at least ten gypsy families lived in the building. Nowadays there is only one. ... They rented the flats. Then the owners renovated their apartments and sold them or rent it for a higher price which the gypsies could not afford” (R48, female, 28 years, student/trainee lawyer, Hungarian).

Native inhabitants (group 4) are those who live in the area the longest. However, the flats of deceased elderly people are often rented or sold by their heirs on the market providing space for newcomers. There is a clear gap between the lifestyle and mentality of native inhabitants and those who are newcomers.

Different quarters of Józsefváros have quite different socio-economic profile and clear pattern of segregation can be observed among them. Palota Quarter and Corvin Quarter have the highest
prestige and social status, Tisztviselőtelep is in the middle, while poorer people concentrate mainly in the Orczy and Magdolna Quarters.

“The District is quite diverse and the lowest strata are also present. But my neighbourhood belongs to the other end of society, fortunately. The presence of the Universities in Palota Quarter shows that it is a prestigious neighbourhood” (R22, male, 48 years, architect, Hungarian).

To sum up, the changing character and the growing diversity of the neighbourhood are important issues for the interviewees. According to the local residents the diversity of the district is strengthening and the prestige of the area (especially in the inner parts) is steadily growing which will attract further new inhabitants with higher social status. Based on the interviews the most significant social process is the arrival of young generations and foreigners to the area. Newcomers are, however, not always seen positively, there are also ‘bad foreigners’ identified among them.

### 4.4 Perceptions of the neighbourhood: positive and negative aspects

**Positive aspects of the neighbourhood**

Presenting their neighbourhood interviewees mentioned several positive as well as negative aspects of Józsefváros. Among the positive aspects the advantages deriving from the location and the functional richness of the district were most often mentioned. Therefore, positive factors show a significant similarity to those highlighted at housing choices in Chapter 3. First of all, the majority of the interviewees emphasised the excellent transport connections of the district. Józsefváros is in the close proximity of Downtown Budapest, with three connecting underground lines. As a result of the good connectivity workplaces and services are easily accessible for local residents. In spite of its relatively central location Józsefváros is much quieter and less crowded than the inner-city areas of Budapest. Therefore, the district can be perceived as a transitional zone between the busy downtown and the green periphery, which feature was much appreciated by some of the respondents. The second important positive feature is the wide range of available services within the district:

“The health-care centre is very close. Shopping facilities; the market is really at our doorstep. ... Everything is close to our neighbourhood. It is such a huge advantage that I would never live in Buda. Because I have never had so much time to cover great distances for anything” (R1, female, 63 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

Relatively inexpensive rents and low property prices were also mentioned by several interviewees as positive features of their neighbourhoods, and at the same time one of the greatest motives for newcomers to move into Józsefváros⁴. Another topic was the recent improvement of public security in the district. The general image of Józsefváros has been negative because of high crime rates in the past, but the present local government has introduced a new policy with the aim to maintain ‘social order’ and fight ‘deviant’ forms of behaviour. Some interviewees welcomed new security arrangements, for example the reinforcement of police patrol activity or the use of video surveillance system in public spaces, while others evaluated such changes as ineffective or even

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⁴ Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in several old buildings high collective maintenance fees can counterweight cheap rents.
oppressive. For some respondents urban rehabilitation programmes resulted in other positive features, for instance the rising house prices or the revitalisation of public spaces.

Although social diversity was rarely perceived by the interviewees as the primary advantage of their neighbourhood, several people mentioned positive features connected to the existing social mix of Józsefváros. Firstly, in the opinion of some respondents diversity contributed to the vibrant urban life of the district, making the area more attractive, especially for younger residents. Secondly, since the local population is quite heterogeneous in Hungarian comparison – including groups of very different demographic, socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds – there is a higher level of tolerance towards almost any kind of difference than in other parts of Budapest. As one of the interviewees explained why he liked living in his neighbourhood:

“Because [there is] a lot of different people, situations, circumstances. But the most important is that people are open, thus personal relationships can be made with many. They are open for a lot of things, they talk, they don’t mistrust each other. They are open, diverse. There is a vibrant life. I think there is always something happening, something exciting. Of course there are always bad things but there are several good things too” (R3, male, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

For some interviewees with very different characteristics the diverse social milieu can be considered as an opportunity to interact with people with different cultural backgrounds.

“It is very good that we meet African people, Chinese people, and make friendships. We have an Arabic friend, from the flower shop. We often go to the Chinese to eat; he knows everything about us. Therefore, my daughter is growing up among various ethnic groups and it is normal for her to live with African people, Arabic people, Chinese people, Roma people. ... I consider it good. I mean I think this is how the world works nowadays, without segregation” (R4, female, 47 years, social worker, Hungarian).

Besides new immigration, the population of Józsefváros is very dynamic due to the recent urban regeneration programmes and the concomitant gentrification which contributes significantly to the displacement of inhabitants. For some interviewees one of the positive results of the process is the inflow of higher-status people to the area.

“Well, frankly I might see diversity rather positive because in the past the district was more homogeneous in a negative sense, but with the renewed blocks of flats and with the arrival of a wealthier, more qualified group the overall prestige of the neighbourhood has been rising. And from this point of view the growing social heterogeneity of the neighbourhood is a positive thing, I guess, because the former homogeneity was quite negative, and that meant mainly the presence of deprived, poor and criminal elements” (R10, male, 36 years, journalist, Hungarian).

Negative aspects of the neighbourhood

According to the interviewees, the diversity of the local population has several negative aspects as well. The most important is the high proportion of deprived households and the visible presence of poverty in public spaces. As some of the respondents mentioned, in some parts of Józsefváros it was quite common to see homeless people and beggars on the streets, parks or in subways. Others emphasised the adverse situation of the Roma community: a lot of Roma people, for whom the integration to the primary labour market was unsuccessful, now live in poverty. These interviewees also mentioned factors which are closely connected to the concentration of low-status residents. For example, some inhabitants were concerned about the low hygienic standards of their neighbours since in certain parts of the case study area it was quite common to see litter on the street. Drug use is another challenging problem of the district: since the Kék Pont (Blue
Point) infection prevention facility closed its needle exchange programme due to a lack of financing, the number of thrown-away used needles has increased significantly in public spaces, posing a threat to people using these spaces. As a consequence of such factors and the traditionally bad reputation, Józsefváros has a very negative image among the Budapest districts:

“I had friends who did not visit me because they had a fear of coming here. They do not come to visit me. The bolder ones pay a visit sometimes, while those who are scared do not come here. So I have friends in Budapest who do not come outside the Grand Boulevard. This district has a bad reputation. But I think its image is worse than the reality. I do not feel I am in danger here” (R2, female, 30 years, Lutheran priest/pastor, Hungarian).

There are also conflicts related to the co-existence of various cultures and lifestyles in the area. For instance, some interviewees stressed that certain groups (e.g. the Roma, some immigrant communities) make much more noise than acceptable. However, these are only minor tensions and other respondents even expressed their joy over the liveliness of their neighbourhoods.

A more serious disadvantage of the area is the weakness of social ties among local inhabitants. As some of the interviewees mentioned, although several groups with different cultural backgrounds live in the area close interactions among them are relatively rare:

“Diversity wouldn’t be a problem if the different kinds of people knew each other, respected each other, respected each other’s values, and could cooperate. If they could identify their common interests and act together to achieve their goals. I think the more diverse a community is, the stronger it can be. However, if in a diverse society distinct, closed communities are formed, each little group lives in its own world, and the others are perceived as strangers, despised, hated, etc., they do not mix and they don’t have common goals, common interest, there isn’t cooperation, then diversity is not an asset but a chaos…” (R5, male, 47 years, social worker/teacher, Hungarian).

Beside the challenges of diversification, various environmental factors were mentioned during the interviews as negative aspects of the neighbourhood (e.g. scarcity of green areas, air pollution, parking problems).

4.5 Conclusions

On the basis of the interviews we can conclude that the majority of the respondents perceive diversity as a main feature of Józsefváros. However, this diversity was understood very broadly from functional and architectural characteristics of the district to the social and cultural background of local residents. We can point out two major strands of view considering social diversity. By more tolerant and open respondents diversity was perceived as the primary advantage as well as one of the main assets of the area. Local people also think that the diversity of the district is continuously growing and it contributes to a vibrant urban life, making the area more attractive for younger and better-off people and those with alternative lifestyle. However, there were also residents who formulated negative opinions about the arrival of newcomers, socially and culturally very different groups of people to the area.

The dynamism of changes has been well perceived by local people independently from socio-economic background. The most significant social process is being described as the arrival of young people and foreigners to the area partly linked to the gentrification and studentification process. This process results in a growing mix of people with very different demographic, socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Due to increasing heterogeneity in the society there is a higher level of tolerance among them towards almost any kind of difference than in other parts of Budapest.
5. Activities in and outside the neighbourhood

5.1 Introduction

Neighbourhoods are often perceived and analysed as residential places with special attention to segregation, social bonds and life chances. However, a growing body of literature suggests that neighbourhoods should not be the only analytical units when researching social relations (Van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). There is strong empirical evidence that diverse neighbourhoods do not mean necessarily that there are diverse social networks among residents (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2000; Blokland and Van Eijk, 2010; Lees, 2008; Van Beckhoven and Van Kempen, 2003; Wissink and Hazelzet, 2012). Other places, such as the working place, sites of consumption, school, public spaces can be equally important for establishing contacts, because of proximity, similarity of interests, frequency of encounters etc. (Peters and de Haan, 2011; Van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). These places can be both located in and outside of the neighbourhood, shaping the spatial activities of locals. Therefore, social interactions, relations, bonds are significantly influenced by the places (and the flows between them) where residents spend their time: spaces of work, family life and free time. These activities are not fixed in space, instead they are characterised by mobility within uneven networks (Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007). Moreover, public spaces or places of consumption create the sense of belonging and comfort through the casual encounters with familiar faces and environments (Blokland and Nast, 2014). Participation in these ‘third places’ (places outside home and work) provide vital elements of social existence through enabling and liberating experiences (Oldenburg and Brissett, 1982). Therefore, to gain deeper knowledge on the extent and strength of social networks of the residents of Józsefváros, it is important to analyse the types of activities of local people and the places where they are performed.

In this chapter the emphasis is on the diversity of the neighbourhood as far as the daily routine, and free time activities of local residents are concerned. We seek answer to the following questions: To what extent has the neighbourhood an impact on the practices of local people regarding work and leisure? How do local residents use the public spaces in the district? How do the place of living, work and leisure reconstitute the overall relation of urban diversity and social cohesion/social mobility in the neighbourhood?

5.2 Activities: where and with whom?

According to respondents’ stage in the family life-cycle and their socio-cultural background, four main groups of residents could be identified with distinct variations in daily routine and free-time activities: (1) young singles (below 35); (2) families with children; (3) middle-aged and older people (over 50); (4) migrants and minorities. Within this latter category three subgroups could be defined: (a) ethnic Hungarians born in the neighbouring states (i.e. Slovakia, Romania) who moved to Hungary after 1990; (b) Roma people being either residents of Budapest already before 1990, or moving to the city after the political changes, (c) international migrants who moved to Hungary/Budapest after 1990 (e.g. Arabs and Chinese).

Daily routine

Among young singles new, flexible forms of work are typical: They are often freelancers or employed in flexible working hours, or telework. Hence the actual place of work is either at home or at shifting locations in Budapest or even beyond (businessmen, agents etc.). Their daily routine is closely linked with other parts of the city, however, their local activity space within Józsefváros is very narrow and it concentrates only to the house, the surroundings blocks or streets. They mix with local people very rarely.
“Public spaces are occupied by drug addicts and homeless people, which does not make the neighbourhood attractive for a stroll” (R30, male, 25 years, private entrepreneur: agent of financial products, Hungarian).

“…I use the Corvin-Szigony Promenade [i.e. new upmarket shopping mall, and housing] most regularly. I even make a de tour if I want to catch the tramline on the Grand Boulevard and take the Promenade instead of Práter Street [which is inhabited predominantly by Roma]…” (R11, male, 30 years, private entrepreneur: programmer/webpage designer, Hungarian).

The daily activity space of people living in families with children is determined by the triangle of home, workplace and institutions of children (kindergarten, school, sport-fields, music school etc.). Their daily activity space is more related to Józsefváros or even to the neighbourhood than in the previous case. Families living in Palotanegyed often take their children to kindergartens or schools in the neighbouring 5th District, where the number of children is much less, and Roma residents are completely missing.

The daily routine is most attached to Józsefváros and the neighbourhood among older people. They use services (health, retail etc.) nearly exclusively in Józsefváros, and typically in the close surroundings. There is also some specificity for this group. Many of them have hobby gardens or weekend houses near Budapest or at Lake Balaton, which is part of their weekly routine, especially among pensioners. They have also more Church related activities, they spend more time with friends and visit cultural events also more regularly.

The daily routine of people who belong to the group of migrants and minorities is also more strongly linked to certain parts of Józsefváros, most typically the area near the place of residence. They are less skilled, more often unemployed (especially the Roma) or employed by the district for temporary public works. Their daily routine or free time activity is also different from the other three groups because of cultural factors and traditions. For example, in the Roma society women traditionally do not look for permanent job, they are expected to look after the children and the husband, therefore, they often stay at home.

„How should I say? This is different in each Roma family. There are traditions and habits. Some husbands let the wife going out with girl-friend to shop or have a chat. Others say no, you must stay at home, you don’t meet others in the town. There are jealous husbands, unfortunately, you know what I mean?” (R44, female, 40 years, public worker, Hungarian-Roma).

To sum up, the daily routine of individuals is determined most significantly by age, household structure and other socio-economic characteristics (e.g. education, occupation, income). The neighbourhood, its functional (e.g. location of shops, schools) and physical patterns (e.g. green areas), or ethnic characteristics also play a role, though subordinated to the first group of factors.

Free time activities
The four major groups described above have substantial differences regarding their free time activities, too. Older people living in Józsefváros for a long time tend to spend their free time in a narrow geographical area, close to their home (e.g. senior club, market, Church). They built up also the widest network of friends in the neighbourhood, and most of them maintain strong relations with their neighbours at the house/block level. However, these ties have become looser during times, and most of them think back the ‘good old days’ with sentiments.

“If we go down to Vecsés [a village near Budapest] and my friends pack a lot of vegetables from their garden, the first thing I do is to visit Luca [one of the neighbours] and I give her everything that
she can cook from fresh materials. And this is the most obvious thing in life. [...] There are two other neighbours on the 3rd floor who are old residents. We used to have birthday parties, celebrated New Year's Eve together. If I baked a cake I gave them a bit to taste. But this is more or less over. "We have this kind of tight relationship only with Luca and her family" (R31, female, 58 years, secretary, Hungarian).

"...very interesting that we built the corridor on the first floor wider than in the upper floor, because in the inner court cars are parking, and we wanted to create place for people to sit down, have a chat and a cup of coffee. Unfortunately it did not happen. People do not socialise, they have somehow mistrust with each other" (R34, female, 61 years, stylist/designer, Hungarian).

The majority of young singles are newcomers in the district. They use public spaces, cultural or leisure institutions of Józsefváros for free time activities relatively rarely. The reasons behind are basically twofold. Firstly, this group has generally a lack of free time. Secondly, as they arrived to Józsefváros more recently their family, friendly as well as working relations link them to neighbourhoods outside the district. Their typical free time and leisure activity is visiting cafes and 'ruin bars' in the inner-city and most notable in neighbouring Erzsébetváros (7th District). Regarding leisure opportunities several respondents mentioned that Józsefváros has changed a lot for the last decade, partly due to the ongoing regeneration activities. There are a lot more attractive places (cafes, bars, clubs etc.) in the district that provide alternatives for young people than in the past. The growing diversity of free time opportunities was perceived positively by respondents. They also noted, that tourists and foreigners living in Budapest permanently are overrepresented in these fashionable places.

The free time activities of people living in families with children are very much determined by the need of their children. Parents adjust their free time schedule to the activities of their children let it be sport, entertainment or hobby. For free time activities, in addition to local parks and squares residents often use public spaces outside the district e.g. in neighbouring Ferencváros (Markusovszky square, Danube bank), in the 5th District (Károly Garden, Fővám square) or on the other side of the Danube, Gellért Hill in 11th District.

"Well we go to Rákóczi square in the district, the park near the new metro station was nicely renovated when the line was opened, and there is a small playground what the girls like very much. They also like the playground at Pápa square, but I am not very much fond of that, and I especially dislike the playground at Mátyás square [i.e. the centre of Roma quarter]. Then we go rather to the 9th District [Ferencváros] to the Fővám square, or to the Gellért Hill. In fact we use the square in our district quite rarely" (R19, female, 37 years, dispatcher, Hungarian).

"We often go to Károlyi Garden, partly because everybody from the kindergarten of my kids go there. They live nearby, so for them it is easy. We go there because we always find a mate from the kindergarten, or a couple of acquaintances whom we know, and it is easy to play together... We go to other playgrounds in the surrounding as well, and even to the 9th District, like... Markusovszky tér what we call 'cat square’" (R18, female, 36 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

5 Ruin bars are hotspots of Budapest night-life that have become famous attractions in global tourism recently (Lagosi et al., 2010).
For families with children outdoor activities in the Buda Hills (e.g. hiking) or on the countryside are also typical, especially over the week-ends.

On the basis of the interviews we can conclude that most of the residents seek free time opportunities also outside the district. The reasons are manifold, local public spaces often attract people with antisocial behaviour (drug addicts, homeless etc.). The available public spaces and parks often lack conveniences and they are not very much attractive for families with children, or elderly. Segregation plays also a role here, as public spaces in the centre of the district are used mostly by young Roma people, who are noisy and gather in bigger groups, therefore, non-Roma people living in the neighbourhood tend to go to other public spaces, sometimes outside the district limits.

5.3 The use of public space

The main question in this subchapter is how the diversity of Józsefváros is manifested in the use of public spaces in the district. Public spaces were often mentioned in the interviews because of recent local policies aimed at improving security and quality of public spaces (see Chapter 8 in detail). Public spaces were also often mentioned among the positive (e.g. new developments, improving security) or negative (e.g. homeless people, drug users in public spaces) aspects of the neighbourhood as well.

“It is negative that there are several junkies [drug users] who are Roma and non-Roma people as well around my residential area. It is irritating that the junkies regularly waiting for the dealers in front of the building when I return home. But I can mention positive things, too. There are Chinese afternoon curses available in the school located in my Colony for Chinese as well as non-Chinese pupils. It is fully accepted by locals. I can confess that it is very positive because the Chinese community could become more accepted” (R7, female, 33 years, bookkeeper, Hungarian).

Public spaces that were most often mentioned by respondents can be grouped into the following types: playgrounds, streets, squares, parks, and markets. Shopping malls were mentioned actually fewer than expected – although one of the latest extensive shopping mall developments in Budapest, the so-called Corvin Plaza is located in Józsefváros. On the other hand, the traditional market on Teleki square was more often mentioned as a place with not just shopping opportunities but significant social life as well.

“The market on Teleki square was renovated nicely very recently. Before that I did not go there at all. Instead I went to other markets further from my home because Teleki square was a complete mess. Now it is really a good place with a fantastic atmosphere. There are shops, coffee houses and sometimes complete bands playing music while people are eating, chatting, shopping” (R48, female, 28 years, student/trainee lawyer, Hungarian).

According to the interviewees there is no particular (i.e. particularly important) focal point of public spaces in Józsefváros, each neighbourhood has its own central place where people can gather and interact. Therefore, these public spaces mostly reflect the diversity of their vicinity, not the whole district. Based on the interviews playgrounds and parks (Orczy Garden being the most often cited example for the latter) seem to be the most often used and most preferred public spaces in Józsefváros.

In many cases public space is used only for access to work from home. In these cases they are sites of flows, and not intense interactions. If there are interactions in public spaces it is more
probable that they develop between people at similar stages of life cycle (e.g. parents with children, pensioners) or with similar lifestyle (e.g. joggers, skaters, dog owners).

“I would not say that I use them regularly. Of course there were cases when I sat on one of the banks on Rákóczi square, but I do not have a pet or something. But there are public spaces which are nice and it is a good feeling to go through them” (R3, female, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

The stage in life-cycle or the lifestyle of interviewees have direct influence on the use of public space, activities taking place there, and the level of satisfaction with available public spaces. For example, younger interviewees with children tend to be less satisfied with the quality and quantity of public spaces.

“The most common problem is the lack of clean places and green areas. […] There is not enough playgrounds: in Palota Quarter there is only one, in Gutenberg square” (R15, male, 37 years, joint representative of condominiums, Hungarian).

The most often mentioned activities regarding the use of public spaces are visiting playgrounds with children, walking the dog, jogging, visiting markets, having a drink with friends in the terraces of bars, restaurants. We can also note that recent renovation activities enhanced the use of public space because of the rising quality, cleanliness and security.

“In the last one or two years I saw a change in the quality of public spaces. Some of them have been renovated in the neighbourhood, new functions have been established and they have become more modern. The status of these places before the renovation was uninviting” (R10, male, 36 years, journalist, Hungarian).

There are three types of conflicts related to public spaces: (1) the issue of who are entitled (or expected) to use them (exclusionary behaviours and policies); (2) conflicts between different users and their activities; and (3) a gap between the needs and the quality and/or ‘quantity’ of available public spaces.

Conflicts regarding the use of public spaces were most often mentioned in the case of renewed playgrounds, parks and squares and they were related to homeless people, or – rarely – people from other neighbourhoods. Recently renewed playgrounds are often fenced and guarded to control access and especially to keep homeless people away.

“There are guards at the renewed playground at Mátyás square and Káhári square as well. I think the reason for this is to keep away drug addicts, homeless people and to prevent vandalism over night” (R28, female, 37 years, community organiser at an NGO, Hungarian-Jewish-Polish).

Drug users were mentioned in several interviews, often referring to the supposed (positive or negative) consequences of the recently cancelled drug addict support centres. Some interviewees saw those centres as the hubs of problems while others thought that the closing of centres made the situation worse.

“…until three months ago it had been quite usual that drug users shot themselves in front of our building. I stepped out from my home I saw a drug addict with a needle in his arm lying in front of the door. I just stepped over him, and I felt a bit ashamed how insensitive I am. Now the situation is better” (R26, female, 45 years, joint representative of a condominium, Hungarian).
“… [the shut of the centres] will not solve anything. Instead drug addicts will shot themselves in public spaces uncontrolled” (R32, male, 34 years, museologist/webpage designer, Hungarian).

Judgements on the recently installed CCTV system were rather contradictory. On the one hand, some people liked it, because they felt it strengthens security in the district.

“Well, the cameras are good things, since we all know that the population of the District is mainly Roma people and we all know the situation in Józsefváros” (R33, male, 37 years, musician, Hungarian-Roma).

On the other hand, some of the interviewees felt that the use of public space became too controlled:

“…there are these guarded super parks where I do not like to sit because it is not possible to have a beer or to do other kinds of stuff” (R32, male, 34 years, museologist/webpage designer, Hungarian).

The second type of conflicts often evolves related to dog walking and other uses of public spaces. Regulations are set where and when it is possible to walk dogs, but as some of the dog owners neglect the rules they disturb other users and cause conflicts.

“…this Köztársaság square, and when I moved here I tried to jogging around the square. I was able to do so about three times then I gave up when a pet dog attacked me and grabbed my pants. And its owner did not react at all” (R50, female, 35 years, researcher, Hungarian).

The gap between the needs of users and the quality of services manifested mostly in the lack of green spaces in the inner part of Józsefváros.

“Now, that Köztársaság square is renewed we often sit there in the summer […] a lot of youngsters visit this square and there is no public toilet. They renewed it spending more than a billion forints and there is no toilet” (R3, male, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

As the interviewees reflected the most important and most frequently used public spaces are markets, parks and playgrounds. Although diversity of Józsefváros is manifested in the spatial form and use of public spaces, this diversity can be seen among different places rather than within them. Vicinity has key role in the use of public spaces: people usually use places which are close to their homes. Furthermore, public spaces of Józsefváros do not function as ‘third places’ (Oldenburg and Brissett, 1982) for some groups (especially for elderly people); they do not participate in activities outside their home or work. Therefore, the fragmented nature of local society is reflected in the use of public spaces as well. Related to public space, diversity and multiculturalism have been mentioned mainly in relation to unusual (comparing to the ethnic Hungarian majority), ‘strange’ behaviour of people from various social groups (e.g. the Roma, immigrants).

5.4 The importance of associations

There is a wide range of civil as well as volunteer activities in Józsefváros. Some interviewees mentioned that community-orientated activities – including the participation in local associations – play an important role in their life. It can be noted, however, that most of the non-governmental movements are associated with neighbourhood developments (e.g. Palace, Corvin and Magdolna quarters), in several cases directly connected to publicly funded regeneration.
projects. These civic organisations have several diversity-related activities such as organising the multicultural event called Colourful Józsefváros – Building bridges among cultures in 2015.

We can specify a difference between the ‘old’ versus ‘new’ and ‘young’ versus ‘elderly’ residents related to their engagement in improvements of their neighbourhood. The ‘new’ and the ‘young’ (under 35 years old) inhabitants participate less intensively in non-governmental organisations and associations than the ‘long-term’ and ‘elderly’ citizens.

We can define bottom-up initiatives operating in close relationship with the District Municipality. Two respondents are members of the Association of Civilians for Palace Quarter which was established by local entrepreneurs (owners of restaurants and bars). Another two respondents were the founders of the Association for Teleki Square which has been engaged in the community planning process of public space developments in the framework of Magdolna Quarter Programme. As respondents claimed both grassroots NGOs play an important role in the local urban renewal processes and control as well as undertake residential events, cultural and community development activities. One of the respondents used to be a member of a Neighbourhood Association of Szigony Housing Estate:

“This has been launched as an association but now we undertake everything what enhance the development of our neighbourhood. We make campaign to clean the surrounding, organise community building actions, look after single projects. Thus, we do everything what is possible” (R22, male, 48 years, architect, Hungarian).

Some of the respondents mentioned that there are examples for community activities accomplished by different Churches. There is a long tradition of the Jewish community which started to come back to this area after the transition. One of the largest Islamic houses of worship is situated in a former residential block of Jewish traders in Józsefváros (Zsibárhoz). Two elderly respondents are members of the Calvinist congregation of Salé trom Street for a long time and they highlighted the charity activities of their church community. Another young interviewee is the leader of the local Lutheran congregation which focuses on the inclusion of local marginalised residents especially the Roma. They organise community building events in situ as well as education courses in the local Community Centre.

“I have chosen this district as a place of residence because I think my work is very much needed here. I mean that kind of service is needed what I can accomplish, because this is a deprived neighbourhood, and we can help. We can help with strengthening the community and we can create indeed a lively community” (R2, female, 30 years, Lutheran priest/pastor, Hungarian).

Several interviewees have close relationship with social issues (e.g. donation, fundraising, volunteering), sport and other free-time activities (e.g. motorsports, bridge, bottom football) as well as politics.

5.5 Conclusions

Due to its historically evolved spatial structure Józsefváros provides a great variety of public spaces and urban functions for its local residents and even people living outside the district. Due to recent regeneration activities the spectrum of free time opportunities has clearly increased in the district. Traditional public spaces (markets, parks, squares etc.) mix with new types of spaces (community gardens, shopping malls, ruin bars etc.) providing leisure opportunities for very wide spectrum of people. However, it can also be concluded that local people do not stick exclusively to local opportunities but they also use public spaces in the wider surrounding of Józsefváros. The central location and good transport connectivity of the district makes such places (e.g.
Danube bank, Gellért Hill) easily accessible. The richness of local leisure opportunities has clearly increased in the last decade due to regeneration activities which contributes to a higher appreciation of Józsefváros as place of residence, especially among young people.

6. Social cohesion

6.1 Introduction

Social cohesion has become a very popular term in social policy over the last few decades but the conceptualisation of the term is quite problematic. Maloutas and Malouta (2004) for example suggests that social cohesion itself refers to a state of ‘togetherness’ in a society but they also point out that the vague and fluid content of the notion gives ground for various interpretations. Regarding the constituents of social cohesion, an agreement can be observed on the significance of some elements, like social contacts and networks, interactions and participation (Chan et al., 2006; Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Tasan-Kok et al., 2013). As for public participation, it is important for a city that wants to be cohesive to take diversity into account, i.e. to acknowledge the coexistence of different social groups in the area and to grant them the opportunity to organise themselves and participate in the political arena (Cassiers and Kesteloot, 2012).

The opinion of social scientists about the connection between social cohesion and diversity are contradictory. Empirical evidence collected so far is not convincing, thus, it is quite difficult to unequivocally answer the question whether diversity fosters social cohesion or weakens it (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013; Van Kempen and Bolt, 2009). This disagreement is also true as far as the significance of neighbourhood – which is very important in our research – is concerned. While some studies demonstrate the continuing relevance of micro-scale social ties (e.g. Forrest and Kearns, 2001), others suggest that neighbourhoods have a limited role in reaching a cohesive society, particularly in socially mixed communities (e.g. Van Beckhoven and Van Kempen, 2003; Wissink and Hazelzet, 2012). Therefore, neighbourhood-level contacts always should be put into context and analysed with wider (e.g. city-level) social networks (Guest and Wierzbicki, 1999; Kearns and Forrest, 2000).

Regarding social cohesion in urban areas it is worth noting that post-socialist cities retain certain peculiarities. Firstly, in these cities during state-socialism the centrally planned, state-led allocation of housing led to the formation of highly diverse neighbourhoods (e.g. in large housing estates) composed by residents with very different demographic and socio-economic backgrounds. Secondly, after 1990, the appearance of market forces on the housing market triggered new processes of residential mobility. In inner-city districts (e.g. Józsefváros, our case-study area), with the intensifying privatisation higher-status residents left to peri-urban and suburban areas while several problems concentrated in these neighbourhoods: for example poverty, homelessness and crime with some elements of slum- or even ghetto-formation (Kovács, 1998). Later on, after the turn of the millennium, increasing upgrading coupled with gentrification led to a social mix without social ties in these areas (Szemző and Tosics, 2005; Tosics, 2005; 2006). In conclusion, both socialist and post-socialist housing and population mixing led to a decline of social networks in the inner-city neighbourhoods of Budapest, thus a relatively weak social cohesion can be expected in Józsefváros.

Taking into consideration the existing debates on the connections between social cohesion and diversity, two main research questions are addressed in this chapter: To what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion? Which elements foster social cohesion and which elements hinder the development of social cohesion in the area? In order to answer these questions, the following topics will be discussed in detail. In the first part of the chapter the importance of the different types of social networks (with e.g. family, friends,
neighbours) in the interviewees’ lives will be analysed. The second part of the chapter focuses on what kinds of bonds and mutual support relations have been developed between neighbours in the area.

6.2 Composition of interviewees’ egocentric networks

There is a great variety in the egocentric networks of the interviewees but at least three general remarks can be made on these relationships. Firstly, scale should be taken into account when discussing residents’ egocentric networks. For example regarding the social contacts of the respondents, the neighbourhood is less important compared to other scales (e.g. city/metropolitan). Nevertheless, neighbouring is still an important part of some inhabitants’ life. It seems, for instance, that in the cases of residents with a longer local history and lower socio-economic status neighbourhood-bound social networks are broader and stronger. Secondly, as the above example suggests, there are notable differences among social groups regarding their social networks. For newcomers and younger residents, relationships rooted in other spaces and spheres of life often outweigh neighbouring. Thirdly, various contextual factors of the case study area influence the features of egocentric networks as well. Budapest is one of the primary targets of domestic and foreign migrants in Hungary. In addition, Józsefváros has been the target of ongoing urban regeneration programmes and concomitant gentrification, and the district provides good opportunities for newcomers to settle down with its affordable housing stock (see Chapter 4). Besides these factors, the interviews shed light on the main types of the respondents’ relationships we should focus on – family, friends and neighbours – although the boundaries of these categories are sometimes fluid and flexible.

Networks of family and relatives

For a large part of the interviewees, family connections are still among the most important elements of their social networks. Family contributes to the well-being of the respondents in several ways (e.g. sense of belonging, material and non-material support, free-time activities). However, contacts between relatives are often weakened or at least transformed by increased socio-spatial mobility, and distance is a very important factor which affects the character of family networks.

“Well, basically it is the family and the grandparents. The parents of [husband’s name] and my parents, because if there is a problem with the kids – they are ill, for example – then we usually call [husband’s name]’s parents because they live only 60 kilometres away from us, while for my parents it is 240” (R19, female, 37 years, dispatcher, Hungarian).

For those who have strong family networks in the vicinity, the benefits of such links are more salient. Only a few respondents reported on relatives living in the same neighbourhood (mainly poorer and Roma people), and as one of our Roma respondents pointed out, spatial proximity cannot guarantee close family ties.

“There are eight of us as siblings. One of my younger sisters lives in Törökszentmiklós, all the others here in Budapest, in the neighbourhood. ... We rarely meet each other... The way I see it, as time passes brotherhood ties and solidarity are weakening” (R12, male, 55 years, security officer at Hungarian Railways, Roma).

Networks at the city or metropolitan level had greater importance for the interviewees. As one of the young newcomers, whose parents live in another district, explained:
“It is good we live here because my grandma for example resides at Deák Square and if my mom wants to send her something she can just leave it here and then I forward it” (R14, female, 29 years, teacher, Hungarian).

Nevertheless, bigger distance does not mean necessarily a reduction of family networks. Even some of the immigrant interviewees are successful in maintaining these networks. At the same time there are people living close to their relatives but with very weak family ties. What is clear from the interviews is that in the former case family networks are often used as valuable assets in the lives of the respondents.

Friends and acquaintances

With the weakening or restructuring of family ties, friendships and other voluntary relationships can become more and more important for urban residents, especially for in-migrants. In general, two types of relationships dominate the friendship networks of the interviewees: school and workplace. Regarding the former one, several respondents (mainly skilled, middle-class residents) pointed to the importance of former classmates and the relevance of those persons to their life. In-migrants from other cities have even kept several of their school-year friendships from their home places. As one of them emphasised:

“Since I come from the countryside, I don’t have a social network here. I mean those who have been growing up here from childhood, they have all their schoolmates and all the other people they have ever had contacts here in this city. If you are from the countryside, these contacts are rooted elsewhere” (R39, female, 26 years, graphic designer, Hungarian).

Place-bound networks can be very important for immigrants as well:

“We maintain contact with those who we know from Transylvania. ... It is interesting because relationships are normally established so that one lives at a place, meets others at the playground, kindergarten, school. This does not work for us since we are from abroad, we are from Transylvania. So among us who are from Transylvania, and live in different areas [of the city] since we could not move to the same neighbourhood, several relationships are still preserved” (R35, female, 53 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

Both white- and blue-collar workers talked about friendships with their colleagues. Colleagues of the respondents usually live scattered in the city and they are not concentrated in the neighbourhood. Some jobs, however, are strongly connected to the neighbourhood (e.g. public workers, joint representatives) and help the establishment of friendships and other links at this scale. According to the interviews, school-based networks usually foster cohesion between people with very similar demographic and socio-economic background but workplace relations are more complex. Some of the respondents pointed to the diversity among their colleagues:

“I would not call it friendship. Rather, I like some of these people’s company. They are also sympathetic and I enjoy it. I mean it is very good to be among people and I also like that they are very diverse...” (R18, female, 36 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

Others, however, suggested that differences between them and their colleagues sometimes caused them a sense of detachment or ‘out of place’.

“Well, sometimes we hang out together but otherwise I see that I have very good relationship with my colleagues and they are really good friends, but it is another age group. ... Among the six persons I
am the oldest one with my 45 years and I feel this age gap...” (R13, male, 45 years, mentor, Hungarian-Romanian).

Besides school and workplace other important sources of friendships were mentioned during the interviews. Organisations and institutions for example often get people with very different backgrounds together.

“For example, when I started the football programme with street-kids, eight or nine of them came – from different age groups, younger, older, boys, girls – to help...” (R5, male, 47 years, social worker/teacher, Hungarian).

Other civic and voluntary activities can also broaden the social networks of residents. Some of the respondents (all of them ethnic Hungarians with higher educational background, from various Christian churches) for instance achieve this by intensifying their participation in churches and religious activities while for others the voluntary neighbourhood watch is important in this respect.

“Here in this neighbourhood my social network is broad. It is connected to my workplace on the one hand, and to my voluntary neighbourhood guard service on the other. Therefore in the last one year I made a lot of social contacts, at the workplace and at the guards. I don’t know, it is more than one hundred people I have got known” (R27, male, 59 years, street cleaner/public worker, Hungarian).

Relationships with neighbours

Relationships with neighbours seem to be the least important in the egocentric networks of our interviewees. It is underpinned by the fact that many of them reported on very weak links with their neighbours and a low intensity of neighbouring activity. It is worth mentioning, however, that ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ are quite subjective terms and they have different meanings for different persons.

“I don’t know what they do. I have no idea because basically we say hello to each other but do not stop for a talk” (R19, female, 37 years, dispatcher, Hungarian).

A distinction can be made between long-term residents and newcomers: for the latter group increased mobility and lower level of place-attachment is a significant obstacle to more intense social contacts:

“Contacts with neighbours are less important because we are in a special situation since in the near past we had to move to new places almost every year. This was a significant barrier to make deeper relationships with neighbours...” (R10, male, 36 years, journalist, Hungarian).

Lifestyle can be another barrier, especially for young families and couples:

“...this daily routine with the kids does not make it possible [to make friendships]. In addition, I work between 6 am and 6 pm so I leave half past 5 in the morning and come home at half past 6 in the evening. After that I do not go anywhere. That is for sure” (R19, female, 37 years, dispatcher, Hungarian).

Children, nevertheless, can act as ‘catalysts’ for establishing social contacts at different scales (e.g. within a house) since they often create relations between grown-ups by befriending with other children and with their parents.
“My son is very talkative and when he meets someone he starts to speak about what happened to him. Therefore, people talk to us, without him they would not. ...as I am thinking about it, almost all of my connections in the house are due to my children” (R18, female, 36 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

It can be concluded that neighbouring contacts are less important in most of the respondents’ lives due to intense population turnover and mobility. Even so, examples can be found for stronger interpersonal links, especially among older residents in those areas of the district which have been less affected by gentrification.

6.3 Living together with neighbours: trust and mutual support

This subchapter analyses the social relations, forms of mutual trust and support in the neighbourhood. Main questions are: How is trust manifested among the residents of Józsefváros? From whom can local people expect help? What kinds of helps were mentioned by the interviewees? Who can count on the help from the neighbourhood, and who cannot? In other words: how much social bonds are embedded in the neighbourhood?

Trust and social cohesion in the neighbourhood

Answers on trust and support among respondents had a great variety: some of them had nobody to trust or ask for help, while others had numerous stronger or weaker social ties – improving their integration and providing more security (Granovetter, 1973). The experiences on bonding factors and support in their neighbourhood were also diverse: some interviewees (mostly newcomers) highlighted the lack of community spirit in their neighbourhood while others emphasised how cohesive their residential community is.

Generally, trust in neighbours does not mean a very important issue for the respondents (according to their answers to the question whether they trust their neighbours or not). In those buildings where the mix of residents is steady, the number of connections is higher and the level of trust is also higher. Although giving the key to one’s home is an important manifestation of trust for the interviewees, it does not assume automatically a strong relation: the interviewees give their keys to the neighbours whom they trust but usually they are not their most important friends.

“When there was a renovation at my neighbour they left their keys to me. They trusted me, so did other neighbours when they carried out renovations” (R12, male, 55 years, security officer at Hungarian Railways, Roma).

The first step towards establishing connections between newcomers and old inhabitants is whether they greet each other or not. It is a quite usual problem for long-term residents that newcomers do not greet them when they meet. For them, it indicates that newcomers do not want to develop any particular relation with them. Little chats among residents are the next level of relationship which can build trust and can be a starting point for supportive relationships.

“...this [help] starts when you talk with a lot of people so they know about your problem and can help to solve it” (R2, female, 30 years, Lutheran priest/pastor, Hungarian).

Elderly people tend to have more and stronger local connections – this observation is consistent with the findings of Guest and Wierzbicki (1999). There is a notable divide between old and new residents: usually the latter have very little connection, therefore, they cannot count on each
other. Since the newer inhabitants’ egocentric networks extend outside the boundaries of Józsefváros they usually give and get help outside their neighbourhood. The fluctuation of inhabitants hinders the development of connections, particularly in buildings where the ratio of students or other kinds of tenants is high.

Sources of help

In most cases, family ties seem to be the most important sources of help and support regardless of social class, ethnicity or age. The difference is in that if the interviewee could count on other sources of help than the family:

“My closest friends [would help me]. First, my family, and then I would expand the circle to my closest friends, logically” (R22, male, 48 years, architect, Hungarian).

Some of the most deprived interviewees have very fragile situation since they have no supportive connections.

“Q: Is there anyone who helps you with food or get things done? 
A: No, absolutely no one. We support ourselves” (R43, female, 38 years, public worker, Hungarian).

Neighbours usually help each other in minor issues – although some notable exceptions will be presented in the next section.

Forms of help

There are different forms of mutual help between neighbours varying from simple things to more time- (or money-) consuming forms of help. The simple forms of help include e.g. borrowing spices or tools for each other within the building. These forms of help are the most common, and they do not demand much trust or strong relationship. They are mostly based on vicinity and reciprocity – but can provide important steps towards stronger relations. Taking care of children and pets of neighbours or giving food each other implies a stronger and older relationship and is not as common as borrowing tools or spices. Giving food, for example, was most often mentioned in the more deprived neighbourhoods (e.g. among Roma people) but in some cases giving it was a return of a greater favour (e.g. help in legal cases).

“There is this Roma family in the apartment next to me. They usually bring us food because they always make so much that they cannot eat it. ... When we made more food than we can eat we give them some too. ... We do not ask for it they just bring it” (R3, male, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

The more time-consuming forms of help can be assistance in administrative affairs, for example reading and/or writing official documents, or giving help in legal issues. These relations occurred between well-educated and/or higher status residents and deprived ones.

“I knew a lot of people from the shop and whoever asked me, I helped them. I helped with administration, legal things, how to rent a place, where to go to get things done. There is my friend from Egypt. He opened a restaurant. ... The authorities wanted to set a fine on him. I went to a lawyer who helped” (R23, male, 65 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).
Several residents mentioned that they knew people in their neighbourhood who mind those who are vulnerable (e.g. elderly people, pregnant women, mothers with children, people with health problems etc.).

“There lived an old lady in one of the apartments and her neighbours often helped her with food, grocery shopping or with other housekeeping things” (R10, male, 36 years, journalist, Hungarian).

Giving work for money is also a kind of help. In these cases the basis of the relationship that someone wants to help but those who are in need probably would not accept money without work. These connections can contribute to appreciation of cultural diversity when the employed person is from another socio-cultural group:

“One of the neighbours cleans our apartment. It is not so clean, because her eyes are not so good anymore but we will not fire her. ... It is a kind of social benefaction. When my daughter was younger we used to hire baby sitters. All three baby sitters were Roma and my daughter said once: ‘I want to have a nice brown skin like yours’. Therefore, this diversity was always present in her life” (R4, female, 47 years, social worker, Hungarian).

Help can be manifested in protection against theft, violence or other threats (both from and outside the neighbourhood), what was again most observable in deprived neighbourhoods:

“...when we moved here we started to chat and she asked me: ‘which car is yours?’ I showed her and she said: ‘OK, then we will watch it’. ... Or there was a case when a violent salesman tried to fool me and when I said no, he did not let me close the door. My neighbour saw it and asked me: ‘Is everything fine?’ I said: ‘No’. And the man left” (R48, female, 28 years, student/trainee lawyer, Hungarian).

Immigrants (from other countries) have different egocentric networks than old residents, thus their supportive networks are also different; their networks are not based on residential location or vicinity but on their origin (source country or region). They live in different parts of the city but when one of them needs help the others offer them what she or he needs: money, shelter, assistance with administration etc. as the case of a female immigrant from Slovakia shows:

“If there is any information about job or rentable places or we are looking for roommates we inform each other. This is not a day-to-day relationship but when it is needed we are looking for each other” (R6, female, 36 years, chemical engineer, Hungarian).

We can conclude that although family ties are the most significant personal relations, similar lifestyle and stage in the life-cycle increase the chance of developing bonds and providing mutual help among residents. This observation highlights the importance of differentiation between social, cultural and age groups when analysing social ties (Forrest and Kearns, 2001), since solidarity and mutual help is more likely to work within groups than between the members of different social and cultural groups. The supporting networks of newcomers and old residents are quite separated from each other. This is similar to the experiences reported by Van Beckhoven and Van Kempen (2003): in most cases the residents mostly live along each other not together (parallel lives). On the one hand, trust and support are manifested on the scale of the house or block. On the other hand, the spatiality of the egocentric networks (i.e. friends and family) has a significant role in developing and maintaining supportive relationships and these cannot be connected to a particular scale or neighbourhood. Therefore, for most of the interviewees, Józsefváros is not a closed entity which withdraws from the relations from the other districts of
Budapest. It needs further analysis whether this is a sign of a weakening role of neighbourhood ties (Guest and Wierzbicki, 1999) or not.

6.4 Is the neighbourhood important for social cohesion?

The quality as well as the nature of relations among people is strongly influenced by the characteristics of the neighbourhood. According to the interviews there is a stronger social cohesion where the ‘old’ (i.e. long-term) residents are overrepresented as well as where traditional urban places (e.g. markets, shops, workshops, cafes and pubs) provide space for social interactions. As an elderly lady, who lives in the same neighbourhood for a long time, expressed: some residential areas in the district have a village-like milieu where inhabitants know each other and where they have daily connections:

“Eventually, the Somogyi Béla Street, the Gutenberg square, the Bródy Sándor Street in the Palotanegyed, these are like a large village. There are small shops, where people know everything about each other, although the number of that has started to decrease during the last years, this place is truly a large village” (R8, female, 66 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

There are good examples in Magdolna quarter of how neighbourhood-based urban renewal programmes that include community building measures can strengthen the social cohesion in the local community. Interactions between different social groups can be strongly affected by public initiatives as well as institutes. As an elderly lady mentioned, the relations of inhabitants were strongly damaged in recent decades but the residents of this neighbourhood got new inspiration for building social cohesion after the renovation of the local Market Hall and the neighbouring residential buildings as well as public spaces:

“This neighbourhood has a special attraction. The lifestyle of local families and residents is similar to a village. Most of the people have almost daily connections with each other due to the market. We meet often in the market, as well as in local shops. The renovation of Teleki square was accomplished some months ago, which resulted in new community places for appointments, where people can meet and get together in the free time” (R21, female, 63 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

We pointed out weaker social cohesion in neighbourhoods which have been subject to intensive transformations (regeneration) like the Corvin Quarter and other recently redeveloped residential areas where the population has changed drastically. The fluctuation of residents with different age and social status generates wider social differences as well as polarisation in local communities. It affects negatively the possibility of creating interactions among neighbours (horizontal connections) and among different social groups (vertical relations) as well:

“There are 14 apartments in our old building but only 9 of them are occupied. Half of the residents are elderly people and the rest are young, they are under 35 years old and settled in during the last years, the middle-aged people are missing in the house... I have just very limited relations with my neighbours. If I welcome somebody or ask them: “How are you?” - it means already a closer relationship!” (R11, male, 30 years, private entrepreneur: programmer/webpage designer, Hungarian).

There are several housing projects in Middle-Józsefváros where new infills were built in old slum areas. There are huge differences between the new housing communities of these real-estate developments and the deprived surrounding blocks. The so-called Orczy Building was investigated by Szalai (2012). This high quality residential park close to the Chinese Market was built between 2000 and 2006. It can be regarded as one of the most favoured residential areas of
well-to-do Asian immigrants working in the Market. According to the residents, the relationship between Hungarians and Vietnamese is neither hostile nor too close; they live in the same building but do not communicate with each other and they do not even know each other (Szalai, 2012). We figured out similar situation in other parts of the district in newly built housing blocks close to Népszínház Street. As a middle-aged interviewee confirmed the closed immigrant communities are highly concentrated in new-built buildings:

“The residential community is very diverse where I rent the current apartment with my girlfriend. It looks like some of them are Hungarians in the new-built housing block. There are several neighbours with other nationality such as Albanians, Africans, Chinese and others. The building has a small global community, where people were settled consciously from other nations. In spite of a wide-range of cultural background people are highly isolated that is why the building looks like a prison” (R13, male, 45 years, mentor, Hungarian-Romanian).

The relations with family members and relatives are very important for all groups, but in most cases the interviewees said that the members of their family, their relatives as well as friends live mainly in another district of Budapest or in the countryside. In this respect the neighbourhood does not play an important role in social cohesion. The network between family members as well as relatives is more important among the Roma and other ethnic groups. We can note that the establishment of external connections is obstructed by the strong internal relations of minority communities where the residences of immigrant groups are highly concentrated.

“Also the Gypsies have special customs such as the married ladies are usually not allowed to build friendships with others because it is forbidden by the husband. As in the last century it is not my cup of tea to get contact with other people. You have to stay at home and to do the homework, cooking, washing, cleaning and looking after the children” (R44, female, 40 years, public worker, Hungarian-Roma).

6.5 Conclusions

The research showed that regarding the social networks of residents, relations built upon family ties are the most important ones. Other connections based upon place of residence (neighbours), ethnicity, lifestyle, profession, or school are also relevant but somewhat subordinated to family connections. Those respondents who live in close proximity to family members or relatives have stronger feelings of safety. However, neighbourhood in family networks normally does not play any role (except for the Roma). Neighbourhood as spatial entity comes to the fore only when investigating the role of wider social networks set up with friends, neighbours and other people from the district.

Older people with longer permanent residency in the neighbourhood and with lower socio-economic status have broader and stronger place-bound social networks. At the same time, younger residents and those who are newcomers in the district have narrower social networks, which are more focused on schoolmates, hobby or lifestyle, and these connections are only rarely locally rooted, mostly they link them with other parts of Budapest.

The interrelation between neighbourhood diversity and social cohesion is clear. Those parts of Józsefváros which have not been affected by regeneration activities are more cohesive. This is true independently from socio-economic status. Networks between people in lower-class deprived neighbourhoods (Magdolna negyed, Orczy negyed) are generally stronger than in middle-class neighbourhoods (e.g. Palotanegyed, Tisztviselő telep). Self-help, social work and church activities play a greater role here, but in both cases social networks and personal connections are a lot more intense than in recently renewed neighbourhoods (Corvin negyed). Newcomers, typically gentrifiers (or pioneers), have the weakest locally bond networks.
Józsefváros as a quickly and constantly changing neighbourhood provides good opportunities for a growing social mix and coexistence of different socio-cultural and lifestyle groups. Recently developed functions can have contradictory effects on social cohesion; new high-quality public spaces and leisure opportunities could facilitate interaction among different residents of the neighbourhood. At the same time, the inflow of new residents, which is fostered by urban renewal, can weaken social cohesion in Józsefváros, according to our results. Therefore, future policies should focus on these contradictions and strengthen the positive effects of urban renewal while minimise the negative ones if possible.

7. Social mobility

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we analyse the role of the neighbourhood and social networks regarding the social mobility of local residents. The emphasis is on the labour market career of respondents and we try to explore how people can benefit from their neighbours to find a job. Furthermore, we investigate the role of neighbourhood and its reputation in social mobility with special attention to elements that foster social mobility and those which hinder it.

Analysing the role of social networks Granovetter (1973) found that especially weak interpersonal ties within the society are important for social mobility as they serve as bridges between different networks, which allow people to access resources they would otherwise not have. He argues: “When a man changes jobs, he is not only moving from one network of ties to another, but also establishing a link between these” (1973, p. 1373). In a similar vein Elliot (1999) examined the influence of neighbourhood poverty and social networks on the career of less-educated urban job seekers. He found that in the bottom segments of the US urban labour market the use of personal contacts served as a strategy of last resort, rather than as a means of leveraging oneself into better jobs. Only very few less-educated workers used weak ties, or acquaintances, to find jobs, regardless of their neighbourhood background. In this context our research provides a good opportunity to compare the results from the Budapest case-study area to earlier findings in this field.

In the subsequent sections first we look at the general characteristics of the job-career of our interviewees. Then we analyse the way how local residents found their jobs, with special attention to the role of neighbours and members of their social networks. After that we will try to answer the question if the neighbourhood has some positive or negative effects on social mobility. Finally, we make some general conclusions.

7.2 Current and previous jobs

There is a great variety of professional careers among the interviewed people (and their partners) since they constitute a very diverse group regarding their qualification, occupation and social background. Physical workers and intellectuals, private and public sector employees as well as entrepreneurs, students or those at the beginning of their careers and retirees can be found among them. Therefore, it is quite difficult to identify general trends in their social mobility histories. Nevertheless, different types of work trajectories could be distinguished during the interviews. Some of the respondents have had linear upward mobility, others could be characterised by radical changes or interruptions, and there were also residents who got stuck in a circle of relatively low-status jobs in their career.
Residents’ work trajectories tend to be influenced by several contextual and personal factors. Regarding the wider socio-economic context, post-socialist characteristics played an important role in the older residents’ lives. The change of regime and the economic restructuring in the early 1990s for example had a significant impact on their life. Firstly, after the long years of officially declared full employment during communism, the transition often meant a loss of their jobs, but at the same time the privatisation process created the possibility of becoming private entrepreneurs. Secondly, several unskilled respondents and under-paid public employees mentioned that they possess more than one job in order to make extra income and a reasonable living for their families.

“Then I completed a social pedagogy college and I became an official warden. So this is the social sector and in order to make ends meet I have another one, this real estate agent job. It is not possible to live only on one salary in the social sector” (R35, female, 53 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

Thirdly, the informal economy has a notable role in post-socialist counties. What is a Hungarian speciality, is that the boom in the informal sector started well before the transition (e.g. after the introduction of the New Economic Mechanism in 1968) and people got accustomed to it. The share of the informal economy is higher than average in big cities like Budapest, and especially in poverty ridden neighbourhoods like Józsefváros (Sik, 2002). Besides contextual ones, personal factors also have an impact on the interviewees’ careers. For example, in several cases the birth of a child leads to the temporary or permanent loss of the mother’s job, or at least requires the restructuring of everyday life.

After analysing the interviewees’ work trajectories we identified four major groups. The first and largest group contains those respondents who have linear career histories with unbroken upward mobility (regardless the pace of mobility). They have worked in the same job or in very similar jobs during their active years, and sometimes even in their old ages. Most of these people are long-term (20 or more years) Józsefváros residents but some newcomers can also be found among them. The second group consists of those who are in marginal labour market positions. They have also worked in similar types of jobs but the jobs they mentioned were mostly low-status ones. The majority of these residents have been living in Józsefváros for a long time. In general, they have low educational attainment, they are trapped at the lower levels of the local labour market. The proportion of Roma among them is quite high. Members of the third group depicted varied, sometimes hectic career trajectories, characterised by radical changes and interruptions. Their average length of residence in Józsefváros is substantially lower than we experienced at the latter groups. The fourth group is comprised of skilled, young adults who are still students in higher education and/or at the beginning of their careers, with good chances in the primary labour market and for upward mobility. It is worth noting, however, that there are some overlaps between these groups and some residents have career routes that are difficult to classify according to these categories.

7.3 Using neighbours and others to find a job

Our interviewees mentioned several techniques to make a living for themselves among which employment – both formal and informal, full- or part-time – has a primary importance. Many of them found their jobs through the classic way of advertising and open tendering. Nevertheless, for several residents their social contacts proved to be a considerable help to acquire a job. Various types of networks were mentioned: professional, personal or family, neighbours and casual relationships.

The respondents’ stories are very heterogeneous as far as the importance of the different networks and the results of using these personal contacts are concerned, but some generalisations
can also be made. Professional networks (i.e. education, work) for example have more relevance for highly skilled and better-educated people. Personal relationships seem to be more important for poorer persons and those with lower educational attainment. Nevertheless, the role of such contacts was also underscored by several higher status residents so a straightforward distinction cannot be made between the two groups.

Neighbouring and casual links only rarely help the interviewees to find a new job but such relationships do have some relevance. As a Roma inhabitant referred to the mutual help among local Gypsies:

“Sure, if there is a job here somewhere we call each other: do you have a job? Don’t you? Then they say that you can come to work here or there. Yes, we help this way” (R44, female, 40 years, public worker, Hungarian-Roma).

Respondents often referred to the potentials of the neighbourhood when talking about their work. Sometimes these contextual factors have higher influence on doing a particular job than finding a workplace. For example, casual relationships and place-specific knowledge can function as a valuable asset. For both lower- and higher-status respondents their social ties in the district can help doing their jobs. Social sector employees told several stories about how their good relationships with other residents ease their work. Another example was provided by a white-collar worker when she was asked about the advantages of her neighbourhood:

“Q: Do you feel that living in this neighbourhood helps or hinders you from taking advantage of important opportunities in life?
A: I think yes, or at least for me it helps. On the one hand, I work as a translator for magazines and radio channels. I translate for Swedish people and I have worked with German colleagues too. Therefore, I have got a pretty good insight into the life of the city. The 8th District is especially interesting from several aspects … and I have my personal contacts here. I mean I know local people or I just approach them and ask them for information, and they have seen me before so [they know] I belong to here, I am not totally outsider” (R16, female, 42 years, Consular Officer and Interpreter, Hungarian).

It can be concluded that professional and personal relationships play the largest part within social networks when the interviewees try to find a job but also neighbourhood and casual contacts are relevant in the respondents’ work trajectories. As we stated in the introduction of this chapter, these latter types of contacts rather act as a ‘last resort’ for poorer residents but as the above citations demonstrate, higher-status residents also use place-based weaker social ties in their professional life.

7.4 Neighbourhood reputation as an asset in upward social mobility?

The literature concerning influences on labour market careers in urban environments often emphasises the role of the neighbourhood especially in ethnically segregated areas (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Musterd et al., 2008). At the same time, the wider context (i.e. factors related to city, region, country) also seems to be important, since prosperous cities with intense global connections can offer better career opportunities. Neighbourhood effects can be manifested in the stigmatisation of residents on the labour market, the lack of resources in the neighbourhood, the attitudes and behaviour of people living in the neighbourhood and negative social ties (Hedberg and Tammaru, 2010).

According to the interviews, there is no significant connection between the reputation of the neighbourhood and the social mobility of people. Most of the residents do not feel that the
image of Józsefváros has an effect on their career chances or social status. Some interviewees even felt confused and perplexed regarding the question whether living in their neighbourhood helps or hinders them taking advantage of important opportunities or not:

“Well, I think the neighbourhood has not much connection with hindering to take opportunities and even less to take them. Honestly, I do not have any idea how a neighbourhood can help someone’s success” (R36, female, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

Generally, the city-wide reputation of Józsefváros is generally bad but it is changing because of the ongoing urban regeneration programmes, the mushrooming of new functions and changing population in the area. However, the image and its changes are spatially differentiated: the image of some of the quarters (e.g. Corvin Quarter, Teleki square) improved significantly while others’ have not changed and remained negative (e.g. Népszínház Street, Orczy Quarter):

“As far as I can see it is changing, getting nicer. I used to say that one street is new, while in the next one someone stabs you” (R6, female, 36 years, chemical engineer, Hungarian).

The reputation of the neighbourhood and its role was referred to by several questions in the interviews, e.g. the positive and negative aspects of the neighbourhood, changes of the neighbourhood, motivations for moving to the district, occupation and career path, government policies. Three types of effects can be distinguished in the interviews: positive, negative and neutral (or non-existing) ones. The connection between social mobility and real estate market seems to be the most often mentioned – both in positive and negative relation.

Positive effects

As mentioned above, the image of Józsefváros changed a lot in the last 10-15 years because of urban renewal programmes and upmarket real estate developments in some of the quarters. Therefore, several interviewees mentioned that Józsefváros became more attractive recently – but they did not mention that it had any effect on their chances in life.

It is interesting that some of the positive effects are somehow connected to the negative ones providing opportunities or activating people. One of the positive effects of the District's reputation is connected to its bad image: because Józsefváros is widely considered as an unsafe, deprived area with lots of problems, consequently the real estate prices are lower than in the neighbouring areas. This makes housing more affordable for those who move to Budapest from abroad or from other parts of Hungary – providing them good opportunities to enter the housing and labour market of the city and helping their chances of social mobility. Therefore, for many of the long-term residents or newcomers the primary reason for moving to Budapest and/or Józsefváros was education or work. This ‘springboard function’ is the most important positive effect of the neighbourhood on local social mobility:

“I wanted to live near to my workplace which is in the 9th District but the rent is much cheaper here. […] Both my husband and I came from Sopron but we moved to Budapest, because we both made our studies here, and then I stayed here and also my husband searched and found a job here. Jobs best fitting to his attainment only can be found in a big city, and Budapest is a place like that” (R2, female, 30 years, Lutheran priest/pastor, Hungarian).

Moving to Budapest enabled several interviewees to have (better) jobs, keeping or establishing new relationships, therefore, the low real estate prices caused partly by the bad image helped them to improve their social status, achieving their career goals. Furthermore, for those who
moved to Józsefváros from other parts of Hungary, the district offers more opportunities, helping intergenerational social mobility. According to one interviewee:

“… [for the success of my kids] the closeness of city centre is crucial. The good quality elementary schools are available, then maybe even better secondary schools” (R19, female, 37 years, dispatcher, Hungarian).

As we mentioned in the subchapter 7.2, the role of the informal economy in the case-study area is also relevant. Therefore, opportunities provided by informal economy are also traditionally important income sources in the most deprived parts of Józsefváros. As a Roma resident described her childhood:

“After school we went to the subway passage and tried to sell green pepper there. We lived from that for long-long years. … With my mom, my family” (R43, female, 38 years, public worker, Hungarian).

Negative effects
According to our respondents, negative effects of the neighbourhood on social mobility are not quite strong, however, a few interviewees (mostly those with lower socio-economic status) mentioned such examples. The most often mentioned negative effects of the neighbourhood’s reputation are manifested in chances on intergenerational social mobility and real estate prices.

According to previous research findings (e.g. Andersson, 2004), the neighbourhood can have a significant effect on education which is reflected in the opinion of our interviewees as well. One of the young residents emphasised that living in Józsefváros makes it harder to achieve important things in life, because of segregation, bad reputation of the district and because of the bad self-image of local people.

“In my opinion, to be successful needs more effort here than in the 2nd District, for example. If someone is successful here than he/she will be successful in life, for sure. Basically, the chances are slimmer here than in other neighbourhoods. […] In many cases our self-image and the outside image of Józsefváros is very bad” (R3, male, 23 years, student, Hungarian).

Furthermore, for the interviewees in the most deprived areas security and the lifestyles of neighbours (as possible models for children) are issues and they are afraid that their children would grow up in the neighbourhood – thus, they see moving out as an instrument for intragenerational social mobility.

“I am used to it but I am afraid for my children. I do not want them to get into bad company. […] I fear that if they grow up and we stay here…” (R44, female, 40 years, public worker, Hungarian-Roma).

“I have a son and a daughter and I don’t want them to become drug dealer or prostitute. Because that is what you see here” (R37, female, 38 years, kitchen assistant, Roma).

The reputation of certain neighbourhoods (e.g. the certain streets in Magdolna and Orczy Quarters) makes apartments hard (or impossible) to sell, therefore, local people often are trapped on the housing market.

“Why is it good to live here? I would not say that it is good. I mean in this neighbourhood, because there are several different quarters in the District. Although this is a nice building, the apartments
are unmarketable. There is a 130 m² apartment on the upper floor and the owners cannot sell it. 

[…] Or in Lajzsa and Diószegi streets: people see the neighbourhood and say ‘thank you’ and go away” (R17, male, 70 years, old-age pensioner, Roma).

The statements regarding education, lifestyle models and the future of children underpin the conclusions of previous researches (e.g. Ellen and Turner, 1997) which emphasise that neighbourhood environment may be more influential for those who have less social, cultural and economic resources. Since they cannot use other resources, they rely on the ones provided by their neighbourhood.

Finally, a lot of interviewees have not experienced any positive or negative effect of the neighbourhood’s reputation on their life – and as we mentioned at the beginning of this subchapter they do not think that a neighbourhood can have any effect on someone’s career or success in life.

“Q: Have you ever experienced positive or negative consequences of living in the 8th District? 
A: No, there were neither negative nor positive effects. 
Q: Even the bad reputation of the District has not affected you? 
A: No, absolutely not” (R47, female, 78 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

Available literature on the neighbourhood effects and social cohesion (e.g. Friedrichs et al., 2003; Hedberg and Tammaru, 2010; Pinkster, 2014) often suggest that neighbourhood can have negative effects on employment through the stigmatisation of job seekers from the area, however, our interviewees did not experience discrimination on the job market because of their neighbourhood.

7.5 Conclusions

The classic forms of job searching (e.g. advertisements, open tendering) were more typical in the labour market career of respondents in our neighbourhood, but social networks have also played important role – mainly for interviewees with lower education or social status. Within social networks professional and interpersonal ties played the greatest role in the labour market career. Family and friendship played a more important role in the job opportunities and social mobility of the most deprived group, the Roma. The neighbourhood itself, neighbours and other casual contacts have also had some relevance, though they only had a subordinated role in the work trajectories of respondents.

Our results also showed that personal connections and the availability of resources have a stronger effect on social mobility than the reputation of the neighbourhood – this statement is consistent with the general consensus in the literature which emphasises the importance of personal characteristics over neighbourhood effects (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

The neighbourhood has perhaps the greatest impact on the social mobility of people (Hungarians and foreigners) who settled recently in Budapest, because Józsefváros provided them an easy entry to the local housing (cheap dwellings) and labour market (diversity of jobs, informal activities etc.). This ‘springboard function’ was especially influential among less-educated, poorer people with less social and economic resources. The diversity of the district (housing, jobs, people, functions) helped different kinds of people to integrate in the urban society.
8. Perceptions of public policies and initiatives

8.1 Introduction

One of the key issues about public policies and initiatives is related to the management of co-existence of various social groups, values and cultures in the neighbourhood (Chaskin et al., 2012; Sandercock, 2000). In diverse neighbourhoods public initiatives can have significant effects on the strength and character of relations between various groups of people.

A key issue regarding local policies is whether they are tailored and implemented for the residents or with the residents. Are local people and associations (and their social capital) mobilised through a participatory politics or not (Garcia-Zamor, 2012)? The basic assumption of participatory development of communities is that marginalised people know best what their problems are and how to fix them (Castelloe and Watson, 2000; Castelloe et al., 2002). This is particularly important for the management of urban diversity, for example to avoid the reproduction of prejudices and exclusion. In this regard, the policies aimed at the (re)production of public spaces are crucial arenas of social interactions and significant sources of information on otherness (Sandercock and Kliger, 1998; Wiesemann, 2012). Therefore, the knowledge on development of these spaces and the involvement of locals in decision-making processes influence the cohesion of local society and the appreciation of diversity.

In this chapter we analyse the respondents’ views on existing policies and local initiatives in Józsefváros. In a cohesive society people are aware of local policies and initiatives that have an impact on their life, and they also try to influence such policies. The main research question to be answered in this chapter is: Do local residents in Józsefváros know about the aims of public policies and their possible outcome in their neighbourhood, and if they actively support these policies and initiatives or just the opposite?

8.2 Perception and evaluation of existing policies and initiatives: what do residents know?

Most of the interviewees had very limited knowledge about public policies and initiatives in Józsefváros. Based on the responses of residents it is not easy to deliver any robust statement, because many of them had no experience with policies and initiatives. It is quite surprising, because, on the one hand, most of the interviewees emphasised that the 8th district of Budapest had been radically transformed during the last ten years and, on the other hand, the local government maintains an intensive urban marketing and communication campaign.

In this respect, however, differences between long-term residents and newcomers (gentrifiers) became obvious, as well as between active and passive people shaping the perceptions of public policies and initiatives. Usually long-term residents have wider knowledge about local initiatives and they participate more intensively in civil as well as in political activities than newcomers. Several elderly interviewees belong to political parties as a member or an activist, something that shows close relationship with pre-transition era. Some of the interviewees have been involved in policy performances; most of the local civil movements are led by long-term residents (including some of the interviewees), couple of these NGOs aim at diversity-related issues (e.g. dancing in order to avoid the violence against women).

Most of the younger and short-term residents said that they did not hear about any initiative and they had also very limited information about the mentioned local programmes. As a 25 year old male interviewee (R30, private entrepreneur: agent of financial products, Hungarian) answered to the question whether he has any information on public initiatives: “No, not really, and I do not engage
in such matters, because I do not see the meaning of this activities”. The proportion of young people without political interest is extreme high (45%) in Hungary and it is a growing tendency according to a present survey on university and college students accomplished by the Active Youth In Hungary Research Group (2015).

We must also note that in general the civic activity of residents is relatively weak in Hungary. This weakness is caused by the low participation rates of people in public affairs. The disinterest of residents related to public affairs is a result of the official state ideology during state-socialism as well as the disappointment with the political and social transition after 1989-1990 which has resulted in large numbers of depoliticized people.

Based upon responses we can highlight that people were most interested in activities taking place in their own micro-residential environment such as the urban renewal activities, the interventions targeted public safety and the image of their neighbourhood (public spaces, public cleanliness, disturbing services, e.g. casino, bars). The shaping of perceptions of public policies and initiatives does not depend on the location of residents within Józsefváros.

The situation of public safety, especially drug abuse and the interventions against homeless people, were the most relevant topics for our interviewees. Regardless political orientation respondents seemed to support unequivocally the efforts of the district municipality to create ‘order’ in the district applying policy measures (e.g. CCTV system controlling public areas, strict local regulation about anti-social behaviour in public spaces).

“...according to the opinion of other people and based on what I see, I can say, that the public safety has been improved in the last period of time. I think that a good process started some years ago, for example the measures related to the drug taking, so I can perceive a better situation around Józsefváros than I experienced before...” (R33, male, 37 years, musician, Hungarian-Roma).

8.3 Policy priorities proposed by interviewees: what do residents want?

We can classify the needs and the suggestions of respondents according to the level of governance competences where the problems should or could be handled. We can distinguish national, city-wide and district-level priorities. However, in some cases it is hard to tie recommendations to distinct decision-making levels, since the interviewees did not mention any decision-making authority or level. They just highlighted the perceived problems and their suggestions for their management. Furthermore, the highlighted priorities were often connected to multiple scales (i.e. housing problems were mentioned related to both national and city level, social problems and poverty were mentioned regarding all three decision-making levels).

National recommendations

The fact that expectations towards the state in solving social or economic problems is traditionally strong in Hungary due to the legacy of the paternalistic state-socialist regime and the recent centralisation actions of the central government, equally affected the answers of our interviewees. Thus, residents quite often emphasised the need for the intervention of central government (!) or mentioned problems that affecting not only Józsefváros but have nationwide significance.

Most of the respondents (independently from their age, social status, ethnicity or gender) highlighted problems in connection with housing (empty apartments, shortage of social housing, substandard housing, foreclosures because of loans and unclear regulation). Therefore, based on the interviews, we could define the need for new housing programmes.
“Recently, housing problems are among the most significant ones. There are foreclosures almost every week and that is not good at all. People have huge loans on their homes” (R7, female, 33 years, bookkeeper, Hungarian).

Based on several responses we can highlight that improving social services are considered to be particularly important – especially the care of lonely and elderly people:

“I would say the case of community development since community provides support for the individual and loneliness can be a huge problem. ... There are a lot of elderly people here who have no family and social contacts or things to do” (R2, female, 30 years, Lutheran priest/pastor, Hungarian).

The growing inequalities within the society and growing concentration of disadvantaged people were also mentioned by many interviewees. Therefore, related suggestions were made by interviewees focusing mainly on better and more effective inclusion of marginalised groups (e.g. deprived people, immigrants, Roma people etc.) as well as decreasing poverty. In this respect, job creation, wage increase, education and training programmes were often mentioned:

“Poverty and unemployment are the most important problems. If there were more jobs there would not be so many homeless people. More jobs are needed and I think everyone should earn the minimum wage at least” (R42, male, 23 years, public worker, Hungarian).

“I think one of the most important sources of problems are Gypsies. It should be solved, not just talk about it. I think the key is their education. Yes, I guess the starting point should be education” (R13, male, 45 years, mentor, Hungarian-Romanian).

City-level recommendations

The city-level priorities recommended by our interviewees were mainly organised around the topics of wide-spread social problems, infrastructure, and decision-making. One of the most relevant conflicts within Józsefváros is the concentration of drug users. The majority of respondents suggested that it is important to pay more attention to drug prevention initiatives, and policing programmes.

“I think the most harmful problem is drug-use in the neighbourhood. It is quite usual that someone walks down the street and see a drug-addict just using some substance. That should be handled somehow but I have no idea, how” (R35, female, 53 years, real estate agent, Hungarian).

Homelessness and the use of public spaces were often mentioned together. Some interviewees from the social sphere or with higher educational background suggested that reintegration programmes for homeless people into the society should be initiated. Regarding public spaces some of the residents (both newcomers and elderly people) supported the measures which had a certain anti-diversity nature and could have a homogenising effect on public space (e.g. controlling and regulating who, how and when could use particular public spaces).

“I think that closing the squares in the evening is a good solution ... in my opinion our society is an adolescent one; you cannot give them anything because they cannot take care of it” (R39, female, 26 years, graphic designer, Hungarian).

However, a disagreement with these measurements was also present; mostly highly educated and female interviewees expressed this kind of opinion:
“Some people say that it is a wonderful thing that Népszínház Street was cleared from homeless people – it is not true and unnecessary. Homelessness will not disappear if you say: ‘stand up and go to the neighbouring districts. The problem will still exist’” (R48, female, 28 years, student/trainee lawyer, Hungarian).

Mainly elderly interviewees mentioned that improving or reorganising the public transport and the traffic infrastructure is important:

“...there was a meeting with one of the local politicians and I recommended him to reorganise the schedule of trolley buses and buses since there are huge gaps in their current schedule” (R47, female, 78 years, old-age pensioner, Hungarian).

Mostly well-educated interviewees emphasised their need to inspire bottom-up initiatives and reducing the top-down nature of decision-making processes. Furthermore, some well-educated interviewees mentioned that the level of transparency in decision-making should also be increased:

“I do not see any willingness in the political sphere or among professionals to include civil partners in developments. ... Thus there is no outside control on projects and developments” (R5, male, 47 years, social worker/teacher, Hungarian).

District-level recommendations

District-level suggestions were usually related to housing, the use of everyday spaces, daily activities of locals and in some cases existing social problems, and marginal groups as well. Many problems mentioned earlier (e.g. poverty, housing, decision-making mechanisms) were often connected to the district level as well. According to the interviewees, the re-use of publicly (or in some cases privately) owned vacant or underused properties would be important which was considered as a possible solution for housing problems.

“There are a lot of empty apartments owned by investors or the local government while several people lost their homes due to loans and unpaid bills. In the house where my mother lives, there are four empty flats. Why not rent them to those who are trying to make their life better?” (R40, female, 30 years, street cleaner/public worker, Hungarian).

The conditions of public spaces, community, sport and leisure facilities were also often mentioned by the interviewees. The cleanliness and safe use of public spaces seems to be particularly important and it was mentioned in almost every interview – regardless of the age, gender or social status of interviewees.

“I think the number of dustbins is very low on the streets. Furthermore, they are very small, and the garbage pours out from them. There should be more and bigger dustbins” (R6, female, 36 years, chemical engineer, Hungarian).

The need for more cultural events, programmes (e.g. annual local events, association of artists, cultural partnerships etc.) which have higher quality were also often indicated mainly by well-educated respondents;

“There should be programmes which are open and attractive for everyone. ... When I went to visit some local events I did not feel that they were for me but instead for some distinct group of locals. ...
There should be programmes which help locals to get together, to get familiar with each other’s’ culture” (R16, female, 42 years, Consular Officer and Interpreter, Hungarian).

However, there were no particular propositions regarding the ethnic, cultural diversity of the District.

8.4 Conclusions

Based on the interviews, we can conclude that local residents usually have little knowledge on local and city-wide initiatives. However, better educated people tend to know more about them as well as those who are affected by them. Therefore, better and more efficient information flows about developments seem to be inevitable to achieve a (more) participatory local development policy. The time spent in the District (i.e. the difference between newcomers and old residents) is also noticeable – newcomers have less knowledge on existing policies.

We can also conclude that public policies and initiatives targeted to improve the physical conditions of different neighbourhoods were the best known among residents. According to our results more attention should be paid on local public policies and initiatives to small-scale interventions focusing on social housing, community facilities and public safety.

Based on the responses we can say that the most important aspect for local residents was the quality of the public spaces, especially public safety, as well as the use of public areas. Diversity policies do not play an important role in the daily life of residents, and most of their suggestions are not concerned about diversity issues. Moreover, in the case of policies on public spaces residents often suggested measures which could have negative effects on diversity (e.g. regulating and homogenising behaviours and use of public space).
9. Conclusions

According to our research findings, even though the socio-cultural diversity of Józsefváros was perceived by local residents as an asset, it did not play a significant role in moving in the area. Key triggering factors of the district are its excellent location, easy accessibility and the value for money of local dwellings. The arrival of newcomers clearly contributes to the growing diversity of the area, improving the image and city-wide reputation of the district.

In general, diversity was understood very broadly by the residents ranging from the functional and architectural characteristics of the district to its social and cultural milieu. The latter was rarely perceived as the primary advantage or the main asset of the area. Nonetheless, local people think that the diversity of the district is continuously growing and contributes to a vibrant urban life, making the area more attractive for younger and better-off people and those with alternative lifestyles.

The dynamism of changes was especially well perceived by local people. The most significant social process described by respondents was: the arrival of young people and foreigners to the area partly linked to the gentrification and studentification process. This process resulted in a growing mix of people with very different demographic, socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Due to increasing heterogeneity in the local society there is a higher level of tolerance in Józsefváros towards almost any kind of difference than in other parts of Budapest.

The cultural, social and functional diversity of Józsefváros creates more chances for recreation and entertainment. The case-study area consists of very different built environments from the historic inner city-like Palota Quarter to the more sparsely built Tiszviselő Quarter or from the rapidly gentrifying Corvin Quarter to dilapidated areas under social urban rehabilitation like Magdolna Quarter. Every quarter has its own character, cultural life, and consumption and recreation opportunities – thus, Józsefváros as a whole can offer something attractive for almost everyone.

Nevertheless, the diversification that Józsefváros has currently witnessed is a contradictory process. Previous chapters demonstrated that even though the district creates good opportunities for both long-term residents and newcomers, this has some negative consequences and risks as well. Social cohesion, for example, can be strengthened by heterogenisation in the long run as the acknowledgment of diversity and social acceptance are increasing. However, as we could see, intense population turnover and weak local social ties also pose a threat to cohesion at the neighbourhood level. The social mobility of local residents is also fostered by the ‘springboard’ function of Józsefváros. At the same time, getting trapped in poor neighbourhoods and at the lower levels of the labour market is a real challenge, especially for unskilled people and those who could not adapt to new situations in economy and personal life. In-migration can also stimulate the economic performance of the area through positive changes like the appearance of new consumption groups, the renewal of the physical and economic environment, or the expansion of the local housing market. The exclusion and further marginalisation of some groups (e.g. the homeless, the poor, the Roma), however, is still a serious problem. The primary focus of this report lies not on economic performance, therefore, this question should be more deeply examined in the future.

How do residents profit from diversity?

- According to our results, local residents profit from the diversity of the neighbourhood mainly in an indirect way. Therefore, the diversity of Józsefváros is mainly an opportunity
than real asset. However, some aspects can be highlighted in which the beneficial nature of this diversity can be observed.

- The new residents of Józsefváros contribute to the improving reputation; from a poor area which is characterised by deviant behaviour and social problems, Józsefváros is moving towards the image of a dynamic neighbourhood with a rich cultural background which is attractive for newcomers. The changing image of the district decreases the chance of neighbourhood-based stigmatisation, moreover, it can positively influence social mobility and integration.

- The diversity has a two-fold connection with real estate markets. On the one hand, the relatively low prices in Józsefváros can contribute to the social mobility of individuals by enabling them to buy or rent an apartment near to better jobs – thus, improving their career chances (‘springboard function’). On the other hand, real estate prices are going up, because of the growing demand. This is related to the changing character, the increasing reputation of the district and the growing number of new residents. Increasing property prices can be beneficial for those residents who are planning to move away from their current apartment. However, it is worth mentioning that this can be a contradictory process, since growing real estate prices can foster gentrification (by inspiring local people to take advantage of it by selling their apartment and moving elsewhere) thus further weakening social ties.

- The diversity of lifestyles and cultures creates new forms of consumption and stimulates the local service sector. The mushrooming of call-shops and ‘ethnic restaurants’ or the appearance of new amenities suggests that diversification contributes positively to the economic performance of Józsefváros.

- The diversity of people can be beneficial from the point of view of social cohesion. Several examples demonstrate that interacting with people from different social, cultural, ethnic, lifestyle or age can raise the residents’ social awareness and tolerance level. This can be true in the mixing of children in kindergartens and schools in particular.

- The different social status of poor and better-off, newcomers and old residents, youngsters and elderly people, Hungarians and immigrants etc. offers chances to develop supportive relations. For example, local residents can help immigrants to solve problems and integrate into the mainstream society or better-off people can offer paid work for poorer people in their household.

- The socio-economic diversity of the case study area provides a wide range of opportunities for informal economic activities, partly organised through social networks. The share of informal economy in poverty ridden neighbourhoods like Józsefváros is above average and especially poorer people use these opportunities to earn additional income which increases their economic stability and enhances their social mobility.

What can policy makers learn from our research?

- Our research showed that the growing diversity of Józsefváros poses serious challenges towards policy makers. They should manage the different and sometimes conflicting needs of various social, cultural and age groups. Moreover, the diverse (and recently changing) architectural character of Józsefváros is also a challenge.

- The interviews showed that good-quality public spaces are important for social interaction, recreation, social life. Therefore, creating and keeping safe, clean, modernised and accessible public spaces should remain in the focus of local policies. In relation to public spaces it is important that different social, cultural, ethnic or lifestyle groups should have the chance to represent themselves, their values in public spaces – in other words, public space developments should not target the homogenisation of values and ideologies.
From the point of view of safety, decision-makers should solve the problems regarding drug use in the district. Drug use deteriorates the image of Józsefváros, strengthens the feeling of insecurity in the most affected neighbourhoods and the used needles thrown away cause danger at playgrounds. Based on the opinion of interviewees the assessment of recent drug policies (e.g. closing the centres helping for drug addicts) is controversial and their efficiency is questionable.

According to the interviews, Józsefváros can be considered as a ‘gateway’ to Budapest providing good opportunities to buy or rent the first apartment for different types of newcomers. As a consequence, the population of the district is ever changing with lots of new groups arriving there. Therefore, we think that the diverse nature of Józsefváros will remain characteristic in the future, too – and local politics have to sustain this situation by helping the integration of newcomers. Furthermore, decision-makers should mitigate the fragmentation of local society and isolation of certain social groups (e.g. elderly people, immigrants from abroad, deprived people).

Since our results show that almost every neighbourhood is a microcosm, local and city-wide politics should aim at encouraging mixing of cultures and lifestyles by providing more chances for interaction between them. This could help to prevent the ghettoisation of certain neighbourhoods and stigmatisation of their residents.

Although our results show that city effects seem to be more important than neighbourhood effects, deprived people seemed to be more exposed to the latter. Therefore, decision-makers should focus on providing mobility opportunities for those who are living in the most deprived neighbourhoods of Józsefváros (Orczy Garden being the most notable example). This could be manifested in education (e.g. struggle against school segregation) and employment programmes or the upgrading of the built environment.

In connection with the above mentioned recommendations, social rehabilitation programmes should be continued with the extension of the target areas (to Orczy Garden) and further development at the already renewed neighbourhoods (e.g. Magdolna Quarter).

According to our research, local residents have no sufficient information on local initiatives, development programmes – this is particularly the case for less-educated, poorer people. Therefore, policy makers should pay more attention to communicate these initiatives effectively which could in turn lead to an increasing level of participation and could be more beneficial for the target groups.

Even though large parts of the post-communist societies became depoliticised, we interviewed several pro-active people with progressive suggestions. It would be important to involve such people in local initiatives and policy-making and to reduce the dominance of the top-down decision-making process of local government putting more emphasis on bottom-up grassroots initiatives. A wider partnership as well as participative approach should be applied in the realisation of local development programmes, where the capacities of civil actors should be better utilised.

Several urban conflicts including the re-use of vacancies, maintenance of social housing, care of homeless people, or shortcomings of public transport demand the closer cooperation between City Hall of Budapest and Municipality of Józsefváros. For many interviewees the division of competences and tasks within the two-tier local government system between the City and district municipalities was unclear. There is a need to the more transparent operation of municipalities.

Last, but not least, decision-makers should focus more on deprived social groups because the effects of market forces can easily make them the losers of changes by displacing them from gentrifying areas and concentrating them in run-down neighbourhoods.
References


Bolt, G. and R. Van Kempen (2002), Moving up or moving down? Housing careers of Turks and Moroccans in Utrecht, the Netherlands. *Housing Studies*, 17 (3), pp. 401-422.


## Appendix: List of the interviewed persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Position in household</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Ethnic Group* / Country of origin</th>
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<td>1</td>
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* Based on self-identification.