

GATED COMMUNITIES IN LITHUANIA: TENDENCIES AND PECULIARITIES (A CASE OF VILNIUS AND ITS ENVIRONS)

Gintarė Pociūtė, Dovilė Krupickaitė

Vilnius University, Faculty of Natural Sciences, M. K. Čiurlionio 21/27, LT-03101 Vilnius

E-mail: gintare.pociute@gf.vu.lt, dovile.krupickaite@gf.vu.lt

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Abstract. The aim of the paper is preliminary analysis of specific features of gated communities' development in Lithuania (on the example of Vilnius and its environs). First part of the paper discusses the appearance of gated communities in Vilnius and its environs, inventories these communities and shows their main distinguishing features. The second part is devoted to the main features of gated communities in Lithuania and discussion of their possible development trends based on the interview data obtained in the gated communities.

References 12. Figs. 5. Tables 8. In English, summary in Lithuanian.

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Introduction

Gated communities are a relatively new phenomenon in Lithuania. The Soviet inheritance Turniškės as a gated community has ceased to exist yet blocks of flats, groups of living houses or even settlements with the territories marked as private appear in the environs of large cities with increasing frequency. This is a suggestive phenomenon which is widespread and analysed all over the world (Blankley, Snyder, 1997; Douglas, 2001; Low, 2004; Blandy, Dixon, 2006; Tucker, 1998; Handley, 2002; Coy, 2004, and others.)

The gated communities are defined as residential areas with restricted access in which normally public spaces are privatized. They are security developments with designated walls or fences (Blankley, Snyder, 1997). The status of these areas is legalized by documents (by tenancy or property right agreement). Self-determination of the residents to live in this kind of gated community (distinguished among other kinds of gated and restricted areas) is an important aspect of appearance of gated settlements. The appearance of territorially isolated communities is associated with social insecurity and with the demand of some (mainly privileged) social layers to create a safer living environment. Yet the increasing number of gated communities strengthens even more the sense of insecurity and social segregation (Handley, 2002), increases social disintegration and reduces the public spaces. It is true that there also exist positive examples of such communities when they are created as ecological and distinguished by specific and environmentally sustainable way of life.

The number of gated communities is especially rapidly increasing in the post-Soviet states. Lithuania is not an exception. The greatest number of gated communities exists in the environs of Vilnius yet they also are appearing in the coastal zone, Kaunas district, Šiauliai and Mažeikiai. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is almost neglected in Lithuania. Perhaps this is so due to the novelty of the phenomenon and absence of tradition to defend social interests or due to the attitude that it is prestigious and in vogue to live in such communities. Comprehensive researches of gated communities are lacking. There appear from time to time only survey or promotion publications in popular press.

Yet the rates of appearance of such communities and possible social implications force to analyse them seriously. Preliminary analysis of specific features of gated communities' development in Lithuania (on the example of Vilnius and its environs) is the aim of the present paper. First part of the paper discusses the appearance of gated communities in Vilnius and its environs, inventories these communities and shows their main distinguishing features. The second part is devoted to the main features of gated communities in Lithuania and discussion of their possible development trends based on the interview data obtained in the gated communities.

1. Gated Communities in Vilnius and in its Surroundings

Looking for gated communities in Vilnius and its surroundings two criteria were chosen distinguishing them among other settlements or communities. This had to be: 1) a block of flats, a few living houses or their group with designated fences restricting the access to the surrounding territory; 2) a territory watched by camera or security guard round-the-clock. The objects of research had to fulfil the both criteria.

Due to a small number of these communities and scanty information about them in Lithuania, their classification according to various social criteria, as is done in the countries where such communities are variable and numerous (they are classified according to social status of residents and lifestyles), is difficult. Differentiation according to quantitative criteria and external attributes is simpler. The gated communities usually are divided into vertical and horizontal types. The vertical gated communities are the ones living in fenced blocks of flats (with a surrounding territory of restricted access). They often develop prestigious parts of cities. The horizontal gated communities are traditional communities residing in fenced quarters of individual houses. These communities establish themselves in the natural environment farther from cities. They require considerably more space than the vertical ones.

At the beginning of 2007, 18 gated communities existed or were developing in Vilnius and its environs (Table 1). The first vertical gated community appeared in 1997 in the crossing of M. K. Čiurlionio and K. Donelaičio streets where the company "VP Group" built a horseshoe-shaped house. The first horizontal gated settlement of American model was built in Bendorėliai in 2001 (www.bendoreliai.lt). Notwithstanding that only the smaller part of the project was implemented (only two of six planned quarters were built and social infrastructure was not created; Fig. 1) the number of such communities has been increasing. Today, more than one such settlements are being built or planned to be built („Vakarinis Slėnis“, the second part of „Didieji Gulbinai“, etc.). It is obvious that the demand for such settlements is great. Often many houses are sold in advance though a settlement is not finished yet (e.g. only three houses of 41 were not sold at the beginning of 2007 in the unfinished settlement of Neris Loops). The great demand for houses in such settlements encourages the builders to orientate not only toward the wealthy (Liškauskaitė, 2004; Pocienė, 2005) but toward the middle class as well (e.g. the prices of square metre including the price of the plot of land in the „Vakarinis Slėnis“ correspond with the prices of the newly built flats of economic class; see: www.vakarinislenis.lt).

The exact number of settlements of the described type is not known because new projects are developed. On the other hand, the settlements projected as gated ones may not acquire this status. This mainly happens because the security guard turns out too expensive for residents, etc. Calculations also are complicated because the gated communities do not acquire any specific legal status. Most of the mentioned settlements are built in private plots of land the greater part of which is divided into individual premises or built up with blocks of flats. The remaining part of the plot is legalized as a communal property and the community is obliged to maintain the territory.

Table 1. Quantitative characteristics of gated communities in Vilnius and its environs.
1 lentelė. Teritoriškai uždarytų bendruomenių Vilniuje bei jo apylinkėse kiekybinės charakteristikos.

Horizontal / Horizontalaus tipo				
Name of Community <i>Gyvenvietės pavadinimas</i>	Actual Situation <i>Esama būklė</i>	Area / Plotas <i>(ha)</i>	Number of Houses <i>Namų skaičius</i>	Period of Construction <i>Statybų laikotarpis</i>
Bendorėliai	Habitable – under construction <i>Gyvenama – statoma</i>	43	74	Finisht / <i>Baigta</i> 2001 Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2006
Rasų Slėnis	Habitable – under construction <i>Gyvenama – statoma</i>	1,28	16	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2005
Neries Kilpų	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	10	33	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2005
Džiaugsmo quarter / <i>koartalas</i>	Habitable / <i>Gyvenama</i>	3,5	22	Finished / <i>Baigta</i> 2002
Plytinės gatvė (1)	Habitable / <i>Gyvenama</i>	1	7	Finisht / <i>Baigta</i> 2004
Plytinės gatvė (2)	Habitable / <i>Gyvenama</i>	2	9	Finished / <i>Baigta</i> 2004
Sakiškių Girelė	Habitable – under construction <i>Gyvenama – statoma</i>	3	19	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2005
Glitai (Svajonių Slėnis)	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	26	200	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2006
Žalių Kalnų	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	4,3	49	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2006
Laurai	Habitable – under construction <i>Gyvenama – statoma</i>	8	32	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2005

Vertical / Vertikalaus tipo				
Name of Community <i>Gyvenvietės pavadinimas</i>	Actual Situation <i>Esama būklė</i>	Number of Houses <i>Namų skaičius</i>	Number of Flats <i>Butų skaičius</i>	Period of Construction <i>Statybų laikotarpis</i>
Strazdelio namai	In reconstruction <i>Rekonstruojama</i>	4	163	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2005
Žvalgų quarter / <i>koartalas</i>	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	9	426	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2004
Taurakalnio Perlas	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	1	43	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2005
Latvių street / <i>gatvėje</i>	Habitable, but not all <i>Apygyvendinta ne visa</i>	3	38	Finished / <i>Baigta</i> 2005
Crossroads of M. K. Čiurlionio – K. Donelaičio streets	Habitable <i>Gyvenama</i>	1	50	Finished / <i>Baigta</i> 1997
M. K. Čiurlionio street / <i>gatvėje</i>	Habitable <i>Gyvenama</i>	1	23	Finished / <i>Baigta</i> 2005
Šaltinių namai	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	7 blocks of flats (multi-storey building) <i>Daugiabučiai,</i> 11 row houses <i>Kotedžų tipo</i>	240	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2006
Mikalojaus žiedas	Under construction <i>Statoma</i>	1	59	Started / <i>Pradėta</i> 2006

It should be mentioned that wantonly fenced settlements appear in Vilnius when owners of individual houses fence quarters and install video cameras for observation of the territory (e.g. quarters in Plytinė Street). This is an illegal „privatization“ of public spaces.

The vertical and horizontal gated communities radically differ in their internal structure and location with respect to the city centre. However, all of them have one common feature: these settlements usually are built in relatively attractive territories. Horizontal gated communities settle farther from cities (Fig. 2), near forests (Rasų Slėnis, Džiaugsmas and Žali Kalnai

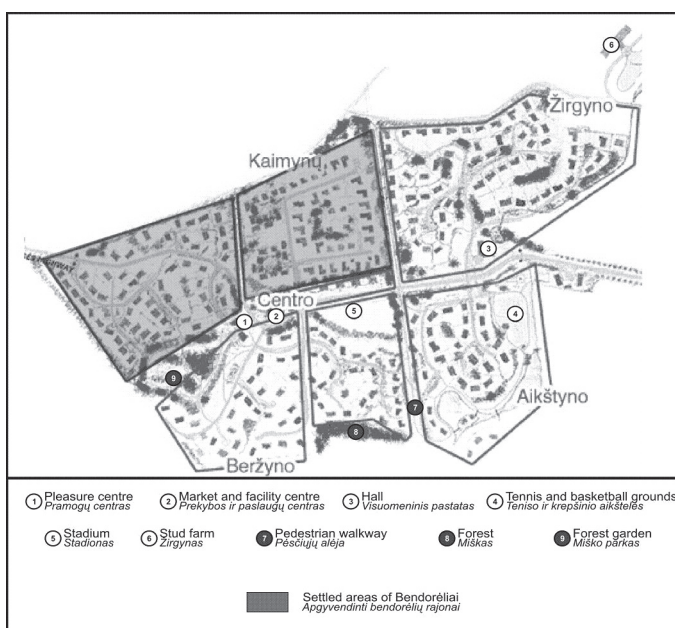


Fig. 1. Scheme of Bendorėliai settlement (source: www.bendoreliai.lt).
1 pav. Bendorėlių gyvenvietės schema (pagrindas: www.bendoreliai.lt).

settlements), not far from water bodies (Didieji Gulbinai, Neries Kilpos, etc. settlements) and in other little urbanized areas. Most of the vertical communities settle in prestigious parts of cities situated close to the city centres (Fig. 4): in the region of M. K. Čiurlionis Street, Žvėrynas and Old City quarters. True there are a few exceptions: the first gated community of Bendorėliai settled down in a little urbanized and rather attractive landscape yet today it has found itself in a zone of rapid urbanization. This is the territory where the project „Vakarinis Slėnis“ settlement is due to be built. The communally controlled infrastructure is an intrinsic feature of gated communities. Yet it differs considerably in vertical and horizontal types of gated communities. The engineering networks of urban vertical settlements are connected to city networks whereas horizontal communities communally control boreholes, water treatment equipment and such utilities as gas, central heating, etc. The leisure time services and services of social infrastructure also are supplied differently: sports club and bathhouse are first of all established (or planned to be established) in the vertical gated communities (Žvalgų Kvartalas, Mikalojaus Žiedas, Strazdelio Namai, etc.) whereas horizontal gated communities residing farther from cities and owning larger territories first of all plan to have playgrounds for children, sports grounds (tennis, basketball, etc.), recreation zones, shops, community houses, kindergartens and even elementary schools (true, so far only a kindergarten established on private and not communal initiative is operating in Bendorėliai). Due to the planned large number of residents, the Žvalgų Kvartalas quarter is distinguished for plans to have a kindergarten, elementary school and shops. It already has a coffee-house (www.big.lt, 2007).

Specific features of horizontal gated communities. These settlements are situated at different distances from the city centre (Fig. 2). The farthest settlement Svajonių Slėnis is situated 32 km and the settlement Neries Kilpos 20 km from Vilnius. The nearest settlement Rasų Slėnis is situated only 3 km from the Archicathedral. There is a tendency that settlements situated farther from the city occupy larger territories and include more houses (Table 1). The houses in the settlements closer to the city centre are built on smaller plots of land (e.g. 7–10 ares in the settlement Rasų Slėnis, see: Fig. 3). In farther settlements, the plots of land under houses may differ considerably (e.g. the offered plots of land in the

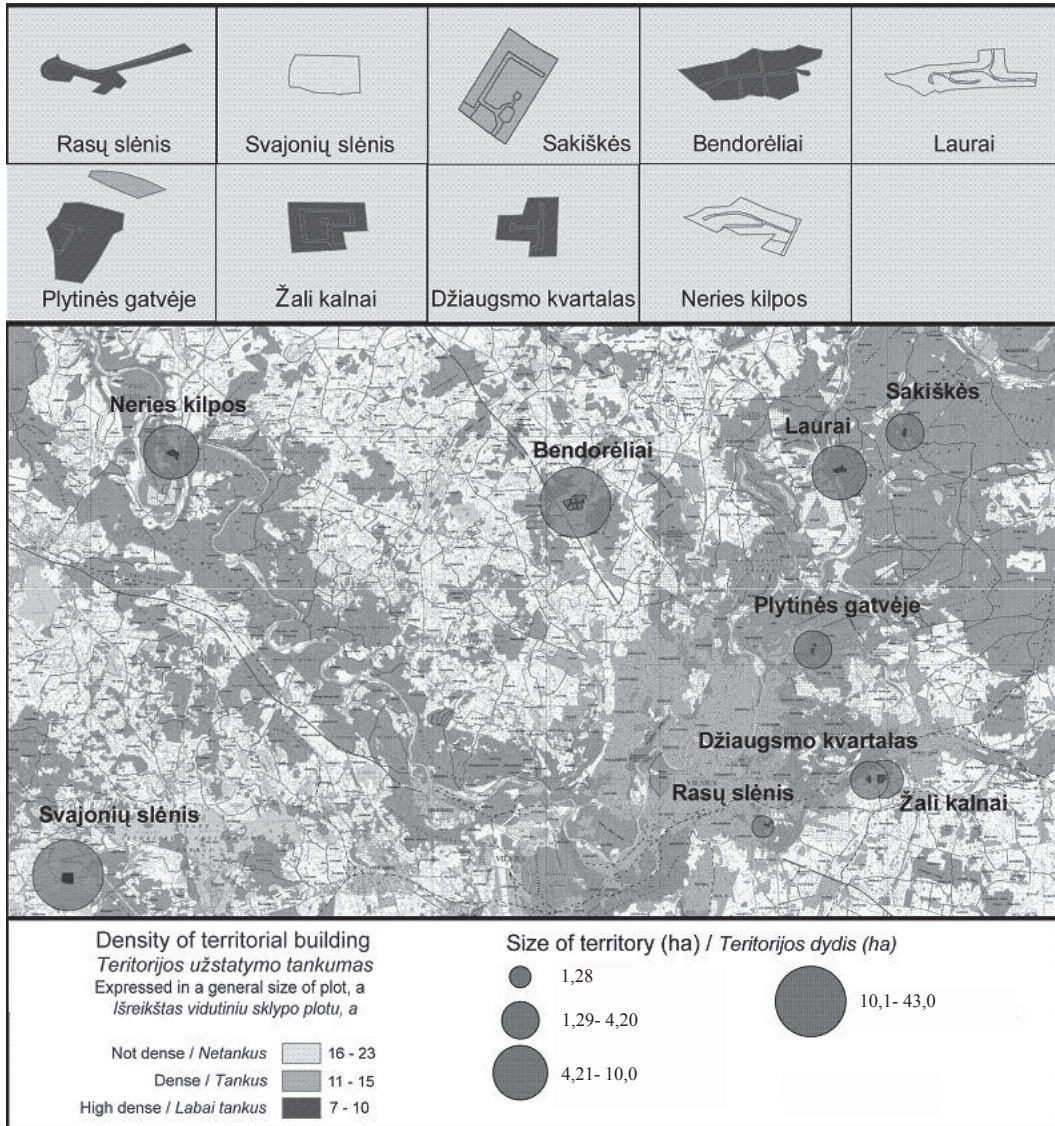


Fig. 2. Distribution of horizontal gated communities in Vilnius and its environs (cartographical source: Geographical Map of Lithuania at a scale 1:50 000, National Land Survey at the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania, 2001).

2 pav. Horizontalaus tipo teritoriškai uždarytų bendruomenių sklaida Vilniuje ir jo apylinkėse (pagrindas: Lietuvos geografinis žemėlapis 1:50 000, Nacionalinė žemės tarnyba prie Lietuvos Respublikos Žemės ūkio ministerijos, 2001).

Settlements Svajonių Slėnis vary from 6 to 28 ares). In architect G. Baranauskas' opinion, the life in gated communities is comfortable when the number of houses in a territory is limited. Bendorėliai is an overbuilt settlement with too small individual plots of land. Uncomfortable living conditions in the settlement Svajonių Slėnis will develop due to an excessive number of residents: it will be difficult to fulfil the functions of safety and privacy and to oblige the residents to obey the rules.

The spatial structure of all settlements is comparable: the larger ones are divided into quarters (Figs. 1–2) more or less regularly overbuilt. The plan structure is legible. In terms of architecture, the quarters may be of two types. In the first type of quarters, certain architectural requirements for houses are set or simply the houses are built according to a project. In the second type of quarters, the plots of land are sold only with



Fig. 3. Rasų Slėnis community.
3 pav. Rasų Slėnis.

the necessary infrastructure without prescription as to the type of living-house to be built in it (Balsys, 2005). The houses of most gated communities in the Vilnius environs were projected and even built beforehand or the future residents had a possibility to choose one of a few suggested house projects. Only the houses in the Laurai, Sakiškių Girelė and Plytinės Street settlements are built on the initiative of land plot owners who choose the architecture of living houses according to their requirements. The Laurai settlement stands out for high social position of its residents.

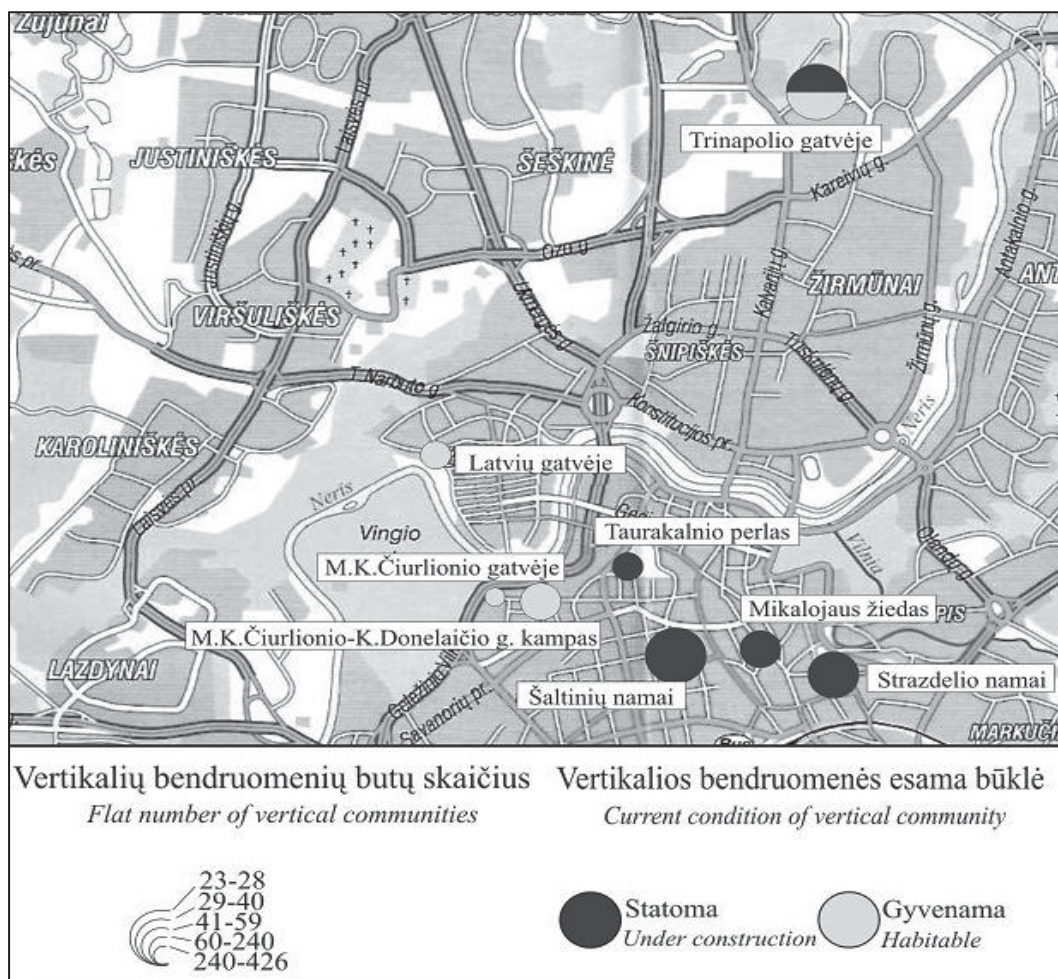


Fig. 4. Distribution of vertical gated communities in Vilnius (Cartographical source: Lithuanian Road Map at a scale 1:1000 000, City Schemes, 2005).

4 pav. Vertikalaus tipo teritoriškai uždarų gyvenviečių sklaida Vilniaus mieste (pagrindas: Lietuva 1:1000 000 kelių žemėlapis, miestų schemos, 2005).

Gated communities develop in different ways. In some of them, the residents are “selected” according to certain criteria seeking avoid conflicting interests and planning communal activities in advance. The Džiaugsmo Street community and the Žali Kalnai quarter created according to its model is especially conspicuous in this respect. As is maintained by one of the founders and residents of these gated communities architect G. Baranauskas, the search for sociality and wish to break away from the alienated city was the main motif for development of Džiaugsmo Street community. It turned out to be successful and the idea is further implemented in the Žalių Kalnų community.

Yet most of gated communities are created according to the same principle as the communities of blocks of flats. Not all new residents of gated communities are willing to cooperate and assume obligations. In some these communities there emerge difficulties of territorial administration. In order to avoid this, the builders often establish a community themselves and every newcomer becomes a member of the already established community.

Specific features of vertical gated communities. These communities are rather variable. Half of them (4 of 8) are represented by one gated and watched house; one quarter is composed of three fenced houses (Fig. 5) and one of four fenced houses. The remaining two quarters stand out for their size: the Žvalgai quarter includes even 9 blocks of flats (the quarter is not yet finished) and the Šaltiniai quarter includes 7 blocks of flats and 11 cottages. The Strazdelio Namai quarter is distinguished for that it is not newly built but reconstructed from the former printing-house quarter (the implementation of the projects has been recently terminated).

According to the number of flats, gated communities of this type are unevenly distributed (Table 1): it is either very high (from 163 to 426) or relatively low (from 38 to 59). There is no intermediate variant. Many flats are built in larger houses (Žvalgai quarter) and in larger areas (Šaltinių Namai community).

Most of communities in these houses are established in a traditional way for blocks of flats, i.e. the owners of flats negotiate terms of communal property administration. Yet the communities oriented toward residents of especially high social status are established purposefully, i.e. only the recommended persons (Strazdelio Namai, Mikalojaus Žiedas, etc. communities) or persons belonging to a certain group (the first clients and residents of the community in the crossing of M. K. Čiurlionis and K. Donelaitis streets were members of the Board of UAB “Vilniaus Prekyba” company; later, many of them moved to the Laurai gated community) may buy flats.



Fig. 5. Gated community in Latvių Street.
5 pav. Aptvertas kvartalas Latvių gatvėje.

2. Peculiarities of development of Gated Communities in Vilnius and in its environs

For deeper analysis of the formation and existence of gated communities and possible perspectives, the members of Bendorėliai, Džiaugsmo Kvartalas Quarter and Latvių and Čiurlionio streets communities were interviewed. Among the 53 respondents 25 were residents of vertical gated communities and 28 residents of horizontal gated communities.

In foreign countries, people choose gated communities for a few reasons: safety, prestige, privacy, and friendly neighbourhood. Safety is pointed out as the main reason (Talk of the Nation, 2003). In Lithuania, the main motif of choosing gated communities is privacy rather than safety (Table 2). This is especially important for those who move to horizontal gated settlements. In the vertical gated communities, safety is slightly more important than privacy. The third most important motif is an assumption that a residence in this type of community is a good investment. Also in vertical gated communities, prestige and good neighbourhood are no less important motifs. The willingness to invest in gated communities shows their good future perspectives. Yet the fact that vertical gated communities are chosen for prestige implies that they have better perspectives in cities. Horizontal gated communities designed for middle social layers have good perspectives in suburban areas.

More than 80% of respondents (86% from horizontal and 80% from vertical gated communities) obtaining their dwelling-places in gated communities planned to live in them for a long time what reflects a tendency of low mobility of Lithuanian population.

Table 2. Motifs of moving to gated communities (percentage of responses).

2 lentelė. Gyventojų kėlimosi į teritoriškai uždara bendruomenę motyvai (atsakymų pasiskirstymas procentais).

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
Security / <i>Saugumas</i>	21,9	31,2	25,9
Prestige / <i>Prestižas</i>	1,6	12,5	6,3
Privacy / <i>Privatumas</i>	40,6	27,1	34,8
Neighbourhood <i>Kaimynai</i>	12,5	14,6	13,4
Great Investment <i>Gera investicija</i>	18,7	14,6	16,9
Other / <i>Kita</i>	4,7	0,0	2,7
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 3. The level of completion of dwellings at the moment of buying (percentage of responses).

3 lentelė. Būsto baigtumas jį įsigyjant (atsakymų pasiskirstymas procentais).

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
Bought already built <i>Pirko jau pastatytą</i>	25,0	32,0	28,3
Bought from previous residents <i>Pirko iš buvusių gyventojų</i>	3,6	16,0	9,4
Was started to build <i>Buvo pradėta statyti</i>	50,0	32,0	41,5
Selected when there was known only a place <i>Rinkosi, kai buvo žinoma tik sklypo vieta</i>	21,4	20,0	20,8
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

The dwelling-places in gated communities were usually bought just at the start of building works or even earlier when only the location of the allotted plot of land was known (Table 3). This is in line with the recent general trend of buying dwelling-places before the completion of building works and shows the attractiveness of the discussed type of communities. As the gated communities are a relatively new phenomenon, only a small number of respondents have obtained their dwelling-places from former owners.

Before moving to gated communities, most of respondents (97.7%) lived in urban blocks of flats (Table 4).

Table 4. Dwelling-place before moving to gated community (percentage of responses).

4 lentelė. Gyvenamoji vieta prieš atsikeliant į teritoriškai uždarytą bendruomenę (atsakymų pasiskirstymas procentais).

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
In tenement house <i>Daugiabutyje</i>	74,1	69,6	72,0
In protected tenement house <i>Saugomame daugiabutyje</i>	3,7	4,3	4,0
In private house <i>Privačiame name</i>	22,2	26,1	24,0
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

The interrogation results show that gated communities are chosen by persons of higher social status: they have higher education than the country or Vilnius average (Table 5) and they often are businessmen or hired employees (Table 6). This is in line with other countries yet the age structure of residents (Table 7) reflects regional peculiarities because the greater part of residents is of middle employable rather than elderly age (e.g. the members of gated communities in the USA usually are older and richer than ordinary residents of urban and rural areas (Douglas, 2001)). In Lithuania, gated communities are a rather new phenomenon. They are mostly chosen by younger persons who became family men not long ago. On the other hand, only a small part of Lithuanian pensioners is sufficiently well-off to improve their living conditions. Moreover, it is obvious that life in horizontal gated communities is more attractive to younger people who have children (even 89.3% of respondents from horizontal gated communities pointed out that their households consisted of three and more persons) whereas a relatively higher number of older persons preferred the vertical gated communities (24% of households consisted of 1–2 persons).

Table 5. Education of respondents (percentage of responses).

5 lentelė. Respondentų išsilavinimas (atsakymų pasiskirstymas procentais).

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
High / <i>Aukštasis</i>	85,7	80,0	83,1
Further / <i>Aukštesnysis</i>	14,3	12,0	13,1
Secondary / <i>Vidurinis</i>	0,0	4,0	1,9
Professional / <i>Profesinis</i>	0,0	4,0	1,9
Other / <i>Kita</i>	0,0	0,0	0,0
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 6. Status of respondents (percentage of responses).**6 lentelė.** Respondentų statusas (atsakymų pasiskirstymas procentais).

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
Businessman / <i>Verlininkas</i>	32,1	20,0	26,4
Employed <i>Samdomas darbuotojas</i>	53,5	76,0	64,1
Student / <i>Studentas</i>	3,6	4,0	3,8
Pensionary / <i>Pensininkas</i>	3,6	0,0	1,9
Unemployed / <i>Bedarbis</i>	3,6	0,0	1,9
Other / <i>Kita</i>	3,6	0,0	1,9
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 7. Age of respondents (percentage of responses).**7 lentelė.** Respondentų amžius (atsakymų pasiskirstymas procentais).

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
18–30 yers / <i>m.</i>	10,7	28,0	18,9
31–45 yers / <i>m.</i>	67,9	32,0	50,9
46–65 yers / <i>m.</i>	17,8	36,0	26,4
Up to / <i>Virš 65 yers / m.</i>	3,6	4,0	3,8
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

Most of respondents (86%) were satisfied by their choice. There was not a single disappointed one. Partly satisfied respondents pointed out lack of safety and promised infrastructure (kindergarten, sports club, shop, coffee-house, etc.), the plots of land were too small for them and they would welcome more autonomy. This not only shows poor respect demonstrated by builders toward the future residents but also indicates lack of information about the specific features of life in gated communities: territorially gated communities exist as settlements with the infrastructure (living and recreational) comparable to the infrastructure of small towns. Moreover, residents of such settlements are expected to be constituent parts of community.

Life in gated communities one has to change his life habits (Table 8): only half of respondents stated that their life had not changed. Most of them were residents of vertical gated communities. The positive changes pointed out in horizontal gated communities were: safer traffic, safety of children spending their time in the yard, warmer relations

Table 8. Percentage of responses to the question “Have your living habits changed after moving to gated community?”.**8 lentelė.** Atsakymų į klausimą „Ar pasikeitė Jūsų gyvenimo ypatybės atsikėlus į aptvertą uždara bendruomenę?“ pasiskirstymas procentais.

	Horizontal communities <i>Horizontalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Vertical communities <i>Vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietėse</i>	Total <i>Iš viso</i>
Yes / <i>Taip</i>	25,0	24,0	24,5
No / <i>Ne</i>	25,0	44,0	33,9
Partially / <i>Iš dalies</i>	36,0	28,0	32,1
Some / <i>Šiek tiek</i>	14,0	4,0	9,5
Total / <i>Iš viso</i>	100,0	100,0	100,0

with neighbours, common activities maintaining the surrounding territory, more privacy and comfort in the own quarter, wider living spaces, more purposeful leisure time, better opportunities of spending leisure time, less trouble about public utilities, and higher quality of life. The residents discover new hobbies and can spare more time to things which had seemed unimportant. Poorer communication with the city was pointed out as the only negative thing. Respondents from vertical gated communities emphasized a stronger feeling of safety, more homely and cleaner yard, more understanding neighbours, and more privacy.

The given responses deny the dominant opinion that life in gated communities invites to even greater isolation (Fortress America, 1997): in Lithuania, the gated communities unite their residents and their quality of life improves.

Setha Low (Low, 2004) assumes that a false feeling of safety may develop in gated communities: the residents even tend to leave their doors unlocked and are encouraged to neglect their property (Handley, 2002). In Lithuania, 82% of respondents from horizontal and all respondents from vertical gated communities feel absolutely safe. The respondents not fully satisfied with the safety level pointed out the following measures for improvement of safety: stricter control of visitors, greater number of video cameras and centralized communication with the security post when out of community.

Though the existing rules would constrict the freedom of residents and permanent control of visitors would be troublesome even 82% of respondents from horizontal gated communities and 84% from vertical gated communities affirmed that the existing rules were not embarrassing. The rest pointed out that sometimes there occur inconveniences; especially when visitors come.

93% of respondents from horizontal and 88% respondents from vertical gated communities would choose them as residences anew. The dissatisfied with the life in horizontal gated communities clearly formulated the cause for choosing different residence: poor communication with the city.

Discussion and conclusions

Generalizing the obtained results it should be pointed out that the residents of the gated communities are satisfied with their choice and are not embarrassed by existing restrictions. In their opinion, the existing rules contribute to creation of safe environment distinguished by privacy and communality. It is obvious that the lack of the latter things in public spaces will increase the number of people inclined to isolate and gate themselves from the surrounding environment. The gated communities of horizontal type not only are more attractive to persons of the highest social status, who are able to ensure their own safety in other ways, but also to persons who can reach the same effect reducing the expenses, i.e. cooperating with other residents and living in small plots of land with a safe common territory in the neighbourhood. Besides, such communities are preferred by younger people raising children. Meanwhile, the gated communities of vertical type are more attractive to older people.

The Lithuanian gated communities have commonalities with and differences from analogous communities in other countries. They are comparable in fulfilled functions, motifs of choosing them as residences and territorial structure. On the other hand, they differ in age and social structure of residents because in other countries such communities are populated by persons of relatively higher social status and older age. The gated communities are considered more prestigious.

Broader generalizations about gated communities in Lithuania are yet premature because they are in the initial stage of formation and scarcely investigated. However, the three years of investigations of gated communities in Vilnius and its environs allow making presumptions about potential trends and perspectives of development of these communities.

The obtained data and analysis of experience of other countries show that the following factors should become the main stimuli for development of gated communities: market of immovable, financial capacity and social needs.

The expansion of the *market of immovable* should increase the diversity of gated communities. Recently, medium-size communities are almost absent in Lithuania (small or very large communities are dominant). Doubtless, the diversity of architectural styles, the infrastructure (living and recreational), the layout of settlements, and the level of their isolation will increase with expanding individual options.

The gated communities are inhabited by relatively wealthier persons. Thus, the increasing welfare of society will increase the *financial capacity* of the population to obtain more expensive residences.

The first gated communities were established in Lithuania following the West European and USA standards with little concern towards the actual *needs of the population*. In other countries, three types of communities are distinguished according to the needs of the population: lifestyle communities, prestigious communities and safety communities. Meanwhile, the residents of Lithuanian gated communities first of all emphasize the need for privacy and safety. This is achieved by restricted access to the living environment. On the other hand, in a safe society of strong communities, these requirements could be satisfied without complementary measures. Examples show that gated communities are most numerous in societies where people feel unsafe and where communality is declining due to urbanization (Latin America, USA, etc.). In the countries, where the population is more satisfied with the existing state of affairs, the number of gated communities is considerably smaller (West Europe). We may assume that a hypertrophied need for safety and privacy is a specific feature of transformed post-Soviet European countries. Yet fencing is not the way out in search of safety and privacy. It is more important to strengthen the safety and communality of society at large; not only of those who "live beyond the gate".

The perspective of prestige should be viewed differently. There will always be a certain group of persons with higher need for safety and high status environment. These requirements could be first of all met by prestigious vertical gated communities established in exclusive urban areas (old town, downtown, exclusive natural environment, areas close to the city centre, etc.).

Judging from the experience of other countries, the gated communities of Lithuania are likely to differentiate according to other requirements of the population: lifestyles, variety of services, etc. There should appear the so-called leisure time communities (united by common aim: recreation and entertainment), pensioners' places (the first one is being built in Birštonas), etc. We can also expect greater differentiation of communities according to the social status (even today, applicants are admitted to communities selectively).

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the rapidly increasing number of gated communities and their good future perspective the phenomenon should be clearly estimated as a negative one. Though fencing and other special measures ostensibly strengthen the feeling of safety the problem of safety of society at large is not excluded and becomes even more acute. Firstly, the existence of the ostensible safety measures alone increases tensions. Secondly, as it comes from research results in other countries, the members of gated communities reside in their fenced territories as if in luxurious strongholds and become indifferent to the society existing "beyond the gate" (Talk of the Nation, 2003), i.e. they dissociate from solution of common problems. The fencing also increases the social differentiation (either within or without prestigious communities). Sociality weakens (or is ostensible and artificially constructed in gated communities). Solution of city problems is bestowed on the weaker. As the former senior architect of Vilnius city maintains, these were the causes why the Vilnius municipality was sceptical with respect to gated communities. In order to stop the spread of this phenomenon it is necessary to strengthen social safety and support the communities.

Notwithstanding the negative aspects, the phenomenon of gated communities is rapidly spreading and, supposedly, will not be stopped in the nearest future due to the ever increasing social insecurity. The projects of gated communities in Lithuania attract the attention of increasing number of population. The public attitude towards them is positive and the number of gated communities is likely to increase in the future.

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Teritoriškai uždaros bendruomenės¹ Lietuvoje: tendencijos ir ypatybės (Vilniaus ir jo apylinkių pavyzdžiu)

Santrauka

Teritoriškai uždaros bendruomenės – tai sąlyginai naujas reiškinys Lietuvoje. Aplink didžiuosius miestus ir juose vis dažniau galima aptikti daugiabučius pastatus, gyvenamųjų pastatų grupes ar ištisas gyvenvietes, kurių artima teritorija neprieinama pašaliniais asmenims. Tai labai dviprasmiškai vertinamas reiškinys, paplitęs ir intensyviai tyrinėjamas daugelyje pasaulio valstybių. Lietuvoje nėra jokių išsamesnių šių bendruomenių tyrimų, tačiau jų kūrimosi tempai ir galimos pasekmės visuomenei, jos erdviųjų struktūrų kitimui verčia analizuoti jas rimčiau. Šio rašinio tikslas – atlikti pirminę teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių vystymosi Lietuvoje (Vilniaus miesto ir jo apylinkių pavyzdžiu) ypatybių analizę. Pirmoji straipsnio dalis skirta aptarti teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių Vilniaus mieste ir jo apylinkėse atsiradimą, inventorizuoti šias bendruomenes bei nustatyti pagrindinius jų bruožus. Kitoje dalyje, remiantis šių bendruomenių gyventojų apklausa, siekiama išskirti svarbiausius teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių Lietuvoje bruožus bei aptarti galimas vystymosi tendencijas.

Teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių gyventojai yra patenkinti savo pasirinkimu ir esami tokioms gyvenvietėms būdingi apribojimai jų netrikdo, netgi, priešingai, kuria saugumu, privatumu ir bendruomeniškumu išsiskiriančią aplinką. Viešojoje erdvėje trūkstant šių dalykų, vis daugiau gyventojų bus linkę užsidaryti, atsitverti nuo aplinkos. Horizontalaus tipo bendruomenės patrauklesnės ne tik paties aukščiausio statuso gyventojams. Be to, į tokias gyvenvietes pirmiausia keliasi jaunesni, auginantys vaikus asmenys. Tuo tarpu vertikalaus tipo gyvenvietės patrauklios ir vyresnio amžiaus asmenims.

Lietuvos teritoriškai uždaros gyvenvietės turi ir panašumų, ir skirtingumų, lyginant su analogiškoms užsienio gyvenvietėms: jos panašios savo atliekamomis funkcijomis, gyventojų kėlimosi motyvais, teritorijos zonavimu, o skiriasi savo gyventojų amžiaus ir socialine struktūra (jose apsigyvena santykinai žemesnio socialinio statuso ir jaunesni žmonės, pačių gyvenviečių mažesnis prestižas).

Tyrimo duomenys ir užsienio patirties analizė rodo, kad svarbiausiais tolesnės teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių raidos veiksniais turėtų tapti: 1) nekilnojamojo turto rinka, 2) gyventojų finansinės galimybės, 3) gyventojų reikmės.

Plečiantis *nekilnojamojo turto rinkai*, turėtų atsirasti didesnė teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių įvairovė. Pastaraisiais metais beveik nėra vidutinio dydžio gyvenviečių (vyrauja nedidelės arba labai didelės). Teritoriškai uždarose bendruomenėse kuriasi santykinai turtingesni gyventojai, tad, kylant visuomenės gerovei, didės ir žmonių *finansinės galimybės* įsigyti brangesnį būstą. Gyvenvietės turėtų būti statomos atsižvelgiant į įvairesnius *gyventojų poreikius*.

Lietuvoje siūlomais teritoriškai uždarų bendruomenių projektais vis labiau ima domėtis gyventojai, visuomenė juos vertina palankiai, taigi tikėtina, kad ateityje tokio pobūdžio teritorijų daugės. Norint sustabdyti šio reiškinio plitimą, reikėtų didinti visuomenės saugumą, stiprinti gyventojų bendruomenes.

¹Tai dar diskusinis angliško termino *gated communities* atitikmuo