

ADAPTATION OF FLATS IN CONCRETE SLAB BUILDINGS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. ISSUES, COSTS, REIMBURSEMENT OPTIONS, COMPARISONS

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Received: 12.11.2018; Revised: 20.02.2019; Accepted: 9.09.2019

Abstract

Poland is bound by law to ensure equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Architectural barriers in space can be considered a form of discrimination against disabled people. The purpose of the article is to argue that both the old pre-cast concrete slab apartments as well as the newer buildings (built after 1995) require adaptation in order to cater for the needs of the disabled. The article outlines the developments in design for people with disabilities, starting from the programme of “abolishing architectural barriers”, through “universal design” to “design for everyone”. The paper presents some qualitative studies, in which functional quality of flats was used as the main criterion for evaluation. Using comparative analysis, a list of redevelopment possibilities and approximate costs of such adaptations in flats was compiled. Apartments M3 (38–48m²) were selected for the purpose of the study. Existing projects were assessed and compared and appropriate improvements were suggested. Subsequently, approximate costs of the proposed adaptation measures were calculated, as well as the possibilities of reimbursement under the PFRON co-financing (including buildings constructed before January 1, 1995). Finally, the paper puts forward a few postulates regarding further development of the idea of design for everyone, a proposal to create an Accessibility Charter and the system of extra investments in the redevelopment of entrance areas of blocks of flats.

Keywords: Adaptations in flats; Bathroom; Disabled people; Multi-family housing; Flat accessibility charter.