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## **WARSAW 1965 vs. WARSAW 2005**

Geographically, Warsaw in 1965 was located in the same place as today city. But everything around has changed: the political system, the economy. Even the name of the country. So the dramatic changes within the city structure and city-scape are looking to be of minor importance.

### **THE TIME**

1965 was a sad year in Warsaw – time of the end of illusions connected with liberalization after October 1956. Poland was an important (in moscovian view) part of Comaecon and Warsaw Treaty. Brezhnev formule of “limited sovereignty” was in full existence. Social and intellectual liveliness died out. Marasmus was fulfilling economic and cultural life.

April 2005 was dominated by unnespectedly wide and strong impact of the death of Pope, whose visit in 1979 was under undoubtedly beginning of the birth of Solidarity movement and collapse of communism in Poland. Warsaw of 2005 is the capital of one of EU countries, the most liberal and flourishing city in Poland, ruled by right-side president within the country still governed by leftists, before polling to Parliament and new president election.

In 1965 migration to Warsaw was strongly limited, according to the official rule of “deglomeration”. In 2005 total net migration for was + 7272. In both cases the number of temporary or illegal inhabitants was over 100 thousand.

### **THE SITE**

The geographic site has not changed: on the belt of European plain – the favorite place of war games, that had an obvious influence for the cityscape. The city still lies over Vistula river. Western cliff of the river bank dominates the skyline. Nort-west of the city – Kampinoska forest, south of the town – Chojnowskie forest. Around – Mazowsze – traditionally poor region of Poland.

West-east connections: road and rails Berlin-Moscow are still not enough modernized, as well as N-S directions. Still worse are conditions of the diagonal traffic: to Wrocław, Szczecin, Suwałki and Rzeszów. The motorway network within Poland is still undeveloped. Its projects are preferring international transit (proposed crossing of main NS and WE motorways lies over 100 km west of the capital), apart from air connections, Poland’s capital and largest city is very badly connected with the outer world, rest of Europe.

## STATISTICS, SURFACE AND POPULATION

Surface of the city (without the river) increased from 430,47 km<sup>2</sup> in 1965 to 516,9 km<sup>2</sup> in 2005, population from 1 252 600 to 1 689 600 in the end of 2003. So the city is more densely inhabited. Density changed from 29,1 in 1965 to 32,7 inhabitants per hectare.

Number of females rose from 116 to 117 per 100 males, far larger increased rate of deaths per 1000 population: from 7,4 to 10,6 – opposite to live births diminishing from 9,6 to 7,6, that resulted with natural increase (or rather – decrease) from +2,2 to – 3,0 per 1000 population. The rate of marriages also decreased from 6,7 to 4,8 per 1000 population.

The rate of employment decreased too. In 1965 – there was 677 000 employed – 54% of total population, in 2003 – 698700 – 41,3%. Officially unemployment didn't exist in 1965, in 2005 unemployment rate in Warsaw was 6,3.

## ECONOMY

Not easy is to compare employment in different sections and sectors of economy – because of changed: statistic items.

In 2003 private sector – in contrary to 1960 – was much more important.

	<b>1965</b>	<b>2005</b>
employment in public sector	491 605 – 93%	279 264 – 40%
employment in private sector	36 244 – 7%	419 397 – 60%
total employment	528 001 – 100%	698 661 – 100%

Warsaw is no more city of industry, became in 2003 centre of business and services:

	<b>1965</b>	<b>2005</b>
employment in industry	207 300 – 30,6%	97 731 – 14%
employment in building (1960)	63 604 – 9,4%	39 491 – 5,6%
employment in trade (1960)	56 926 – 8,4%	114 190 – 16,3%

Investment – outlays increased from 9 392 mln zł (93,9 mln USD) in 1965 to 10444,7 mln zł (2 984,2 mln USD) in 2003.

## EDUCATION, CULTURE, HEALTH CARE, SAFETY

After 1990 rapidly developed sector of high education. Number of higher education institution increased from 13 (with 42459 students and 5467 teachers) in 1965/6 to 70 (with 296846 students and 12464 full-time teachers).

Increased from 25 to 54 number of museums, libraries (from 131 with 1769 thoms of wolumes) theatres (from 17 with 8556 seats to with 8130 seats). Decreased quantity of cinemas (from 67 with 30600 seats in year 1965 to 30 with 27978 seats in 2003). Its necessary to notice the rapid development of multicinemas in years 2003-2005 that changed image.

During 40 years increased number of hospitals (from 32 to 36) but decreased number of hospital beds (from 12467 and 9,9 per 1000 population to 10822 and 6,4 per 1000 population).

Dramatically enlarged rate of crimes: from 30154 crimes in 1965 (including 25 murders, 529 robberies, 3436 burglaries, 11904 property thefts) to 90743 ascertained crimes in 2003 (including 68 homicide, 5810 rebberies, 19513 burglaries, 32226 property thefts).

The level of motorization was also dynamically grooving – from 40268 personal car units in 1966 (31,7 per 1000 population – to 697700 (412,9 per 1000 population) in 2003.

Urban transport development was inadequate: from 884 trams, 110 trolleys, 1002 buses in 1965 to 860 trams, 0 trolleys., 1497 buses and 138 metro wagons (on 1 line) in 2003.

These data can illustrate ultraliberal transformation of town policies and practices: towards a city – business and commerce centre, with views for quick revenues rather than care for high culture and public health. Growing lack of sense of safety resulted with enormous physical activities: large fenced estates etc.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

In 1965 Warsaw had only nominal self-governing, with Capital and district “national councils” – without independent policy and budget. Estate and block committees were the lowest level of “ citizen governing”.

After 1989 transformation, structure of local administration changed three times. In 1990 seven totally independent communities (with own budgets) covered borders of the city. Union of communities tried inadequately to take care for common, general problems of the town. “Warsaw law” in 1994 established communal union of 11 communities: Central Community (within 1939 town boundaries) and 10 surrounding units. Paralelly functioned “governmental structure of authorities (voyvodship and “poviat”). Central Community was devided in 7 districts.

Total number of City, community and quarter councils members was 914 in year 1999.

Actual structure, dating from 2002, joined communities into one for whole the city, divided in quarters (without own policy and budget). One can argue, that the steering is easier (though not always – because of large centralization), but citizen participation and local governing returned almost to the level before 1990.

## **THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY STRUCTURE**

The centre of Warsaw is difficult for delimitation. The focal point – unnamed square-crossroads - Rondo Without Name – close to Central Railway Station and City Air Terminal – joints three quarters: Śródmieście, Wola, Ochota. The central zone in 1965 covered areas between Marszałkowska, Nowy Świat and Krucza Street, with belt along Jerozolimskie Ave and Chałubińskiego.

The middle of the city was moving traditionally. From mediaeval Curia Maior and Old Market square moved south – to Teatralny Square (City Hall) and Saski Square (Royal Palace). Beginning of XX th century crystallized the centre of business along Marszałkowska with focal point close to the Main Railway Station. In 1930-ties one can find tendencies for new centre around Piłsudski Quarter and St. Providence Temple.

Now there are several different central points: Old Market Square for tourists. Parade Square with Palace of Culture are nothing more than the highest building and disorder on the largest square (called in 1960s “the largest square in Europe”). The real centre moved west – towards UN Rondo, Central Railway Station and Wola district areas. The last evenement was caused by the most liberal policy of Wola authorities in 1990s.

So called “Functional Midtown” is kept within inner ring road, still open from the east.

Morphologically the midtown covers both: upper and lower terrace of the Vistula valley. The upper bank of the almost 20 m high cliff was always “piano nobile” of the city: location of the most magnificent authority palaces and churches.

## **THE CITY IDENTITY**

In 1960-ties city sociologist A. Wallis quoted opinion, that only 3% of Warsaw volume (Old City Royal Road and Łazienki Park) decides about the city identity and if future would be simple continuation – the result couldn't be encouraging.

These pessimistic statements in many places are confirmed. However decade of 1990-ies improved cityscape with old and new places of midtown.

Green is still the main value of the city. The green Warsaw is composed of park, green squares and promenades as well as “planning fallows”.

Green “wind wedges” always cut the city up to the centre – giving good climate as well as green connections with suburban forests. These wedges in last fifteen years were partially built up – legally or almost legally.

The decisive for landscape identity is role of the upper bank – Warsaw Cliff.

The Cliff in Warsaw is like seven hills of Rome.

The upper terrace is the stylobat for Midtown. Here was created city skyline – the sign of identity. Palace of Culture (PKiN), hated symbol of soviet domination, became also a source of hot discussions. “Palace of Culture complex” was born – an idea to fight with soviet symbol by covering its impact with similar height towers. In 1965 this complex already existed.

Competition for “Eastern side” in late 1950s was judged under this pression. However in this time started only construction of 70 m high towers. “PKiN complex” continued along decades, 100 m and 140 m high (as main part of PKiN) towers started to fulfill skyline around Palace. Now, after explosion of towers (each more strange and complicated), skyline is dense with different shapes.

Sometimes (like close to UN Rondo) casually located towers created quasi – composed complexes.

Last years started process of turning city towards the river. Two events were decisive: low bridge (really joining banks, not cutting off lower Powiśle terrace – like earlier passages) and new University Library – with large roof garden – one of the most original new places in the city.

Idea of Cliff Avenue (Aleja na Skarpie) still waits for future decisions, as well as National Park of Arts – along the upper terrace of the cliff. This Park could be comparable with Museums Uffer in Frankfurt, Museum Park in Rotterdam, Töölönpuisto in Helsinki – as important factor of the city identity.

## **GREAT AXES, SQUARES, STREETS AND HUGE BUILDINGS**

Axes, perpendicular to the cliff, are important factors of the city space structure.

The best known is Saxonian Axis – with Saxonian Garden and still unsolved Piłsudskiego Square (80 years old is history of competitions for this square). 40 years ago planning competition fixed today image of this part of the town - changed into enormous high-rise estate “Za Żelazną Bramą” designed with stron influence of Marseille Subproject (by Le Corbusier).

New Metropolitan Building (by Norman Foster) doesn't helped to solve the square.

King Stanisław Axis (Oś Stanisławowska) was once the larger than Louvre-Defense (and richer – joining two levels of the city with the view along the river). The axis was appreciated in Socrealism time, then only spoiled: by excavation of Łazienkowska Express Way and finally – barracks of the City Guard, cutting off the view for the river. The place waits – to cover the street canion and demolish barracks – to open one of the most beautiful views in Europe.

Principle of the open squares (like Piazza Campidoglio, Piazza San Marco or Place de la Concorde) was in force in city planning – after destroing in 1944. However in 1960 idea of midtown estates damaged the city. Blocks and even towers entered into

Teatralny, Grzybowski, Krasińskich squares. Last decade improved image of these squares by closing them: Teatralny with reconstructed City Hall, Krasińskich with Supreme Court colonnade, Trzech Krzyży – with Sheraton Hotel and Holland Park Building..

However – in the same time – small squares (close to Jasna street and Mokotowska/Piękna) were fulfilled with office buildings – creating the revenue for private investor and loss for the city space.

Surrounding of Palace of Culture is the place of unrealized hopes. After competition in 1992 (won by idea of circular boulevard) many years of studies, permanently growing density and height of buildings (again “PKiN complex” ...) ended with new project: height limited to 30 m, square, park and idea of public spaces and buildings: Museum of Modern Art and Concert Hall.

There are also in Midtown places – called “Rondo” – that could be squares (city interiors) but aspire only to be crossings.

In last twenty years gradual renaissance of the street one can observe, Idea of midtown estate spoiled in 1960s many places, sometimes irreversibly.

Midtown, boulevards – Aleja Jana Pawła II, Grzybowska Street, Świętokrzyska-Prosta-Kasprzaka streets – are examples of new metropolitan standards. Sometimes (Łucka street, Słomińskiego street) new high-rise (and high standard) housing is too dense – even for the views from the street...

Revitalization of streets – the most important (Marszałkowska, Nowy Świat, Krakowskie Przedmieście) is just finished (with facades and pavements) or just planned, as well as successfully made renovation of smaller ones as Lwowska, Koszykowa, Żąbkowska. However all those beautiful streets can die because of new great shopping malls, covering sold by railway authorities areas close to midtown stations: Wileński, Gdański – with the threat of building up also Główny. Lack of local plans for those areas is one of this treat reasons.

## **HOUSING**

Housing was always unsolved problem of the city (destroyed in almost 85% during the war).

After 1956, the initially more liberal economic policies of Władysław Gomułka were progressively replaced by “turning the screw” or “salami tactics”. The effect was a rapid reduction in political and economical liberties which reached a critical point by 1965.

The state budget crisis of the “late Gomułka period” coincided with a growing demand for housing. Standards and models were centrally determined and

prefabrication was seen as the solution to providing the quantity of flats required. The most successful projects were repeated but this led to a uniformity of design and stagnation in the design process.

For reasons of economy, so-called “economical plans” were adopted for constructing wide blocks with minimal facades, providing narrow rooms and kitchens without windows. These broad blocks were also long, and a corridor system using the minimum number of staircases and lifts was widely used. This system of giving access to flats on both sides created poor ventilation and sense of near total anonymity. Also for reasons of economy, only two heights were used; five storey blocks without a lift, and 11 stories to the limit of fire access. Large numbers of long, wide, eleven storey blocks with smelly corridors, dark kitchens and two meter wide bedrooms are an unfortunate legacy of this period, when standard 11 m<sup>2</sup> per person was obligatory maximum.

The future high-rise estates in Warsaw constructed in the 1960s depends on their standard and location:

Estate type	Optimistic scenario	Pessimistic scenario
Low standard and low image in suburban locations	Partial demolition to reduce density, or total renewal	Lack of funding results in a decline into slumaccom-modation housing the lowest income and poorest elderly, characterized by crime and deprivation. This is quite probable over the next 10 years.
Large slab technology estates	Demolition	Lack of finance and the growing need for massive rapairs leads to the risk of total disaster. A subsidized repair programme will be needed to avoid this.
Smaller housing estates of good quality	Refurbishment and modernization, retaining the stock as studio and other small flats. 1960's estates are returning to popularity,	Physical decay and decline in social standing

	the best examples are to be protected as part of Poland's national heritage.	
City centre housing estates	Refurbishment to create blocks of studio flats, student accommodation or blocks of offices with possible mixed use.	Decay and decline lead to the creation of midtown "islands" of crime and deprivation.

In 1966 in Warsaw had 363603 dwellings with 887946 rooms, average floor space 38,4 m2 per dwelling (average 2,09 rooms per dwelling and 1,37 persons per room). In 2003 there was 729889 dwellings with 2301611 rooms (average 3,15 rooms per dwelling, 0,73 persons per room), average floor space 55,8 m2 per dwelling, 12355 dwellings (with 899 900 m2 of floor space) was completed. It could be interesting to notice, that in 1963 13,9% rooms were completed for communal investor, 13,2% for cooperatives, 9,3% for state companies and only 2,3% private.

In 2003 for communal investor and state companies – 0,6%, 19,3% for cooperatives, private 25,8%, for sale or rent 53,3%. Social goals of housing almost disappeared, dwellings became spaces for hire / consumer articles.

Diversity of housing polarized – from popular standards to higher and luxury. Importance of ground rent caused growing density. Usually, popular housing is localized on city peripheries, luxury – close to the city parks (even annexing green areas). Poor social facilities (schools, kindergardens) is almost a rule for all standards of housing.

Housing of today is surely of higher standards, better detailed, better projected (though not always...).

Contemporain density is higher than in 1960-ies best estates (that are now often full of green).

After years returned large estates, some skillfully designed (Eko-Park, Wilanów West, Marina Mokotów) and landscaped (water axis in Wilanów, artificial pond in Marina Mokotów).

However majority of new estates is built as fenced and gated. The larger is estate – the larger it makes damage in continuity of city structure.

## **TRANSFORMATION AND TORN-UP CITY**

Warsaw structure was torn-up already by nature: with the river (beautiful, wild and wide) and cliff, then – by railway.

After 1965 new express roads cut network of secondary streets as well as historical axis, natural connections.

Industrial areas, developed after war, tore also the town compactness. After 1989 industry in Warsaw lost its importance - action of transformation for business parks and housing estates started. This activity can dramatically improve functioning and image of the city.

## **PLANS**

Warsaw authorities never liked physical plans – as local law, binding their decisions. In 1965 prospect plan for 1975 (with 1<sup>st</sup> stage for 1965) accepted in 1961, was in force. Plan for 1965 covered existing administrative borders, limiting population up to 1 200 000 (with prospects of 1 800 000). Monocentric belt system with radial bands of urbanization, kept deep penetration of open areas, with exhibition, sport and cultural facilities areas along the river. The first time appeared new housing areas: Ursynów-Natolin, Sadyba-Stegny, Goćław, Tarchomin, Jelonki as well as Cytadela (ancient fortress to be built-up with housing).

Local centers were planned as well as new industrials areas (close to Huta Warszawa, Grabów and Ursynów) – to concentrate dispersed factories. Outer ring road appeared in plan, new bridges, train lines and one line of metro (repeated after earlier plans).

General plan for 1985, prepared in 1965, was accepted in 1969 with troubles (idea of 600 000 town for 1980 was rejected by authorities, accepted limit of 1 550 000 for a 1985). Plan included the system of hierarchic service centers, zoning of development areas, system of natural, recreation and forest areas as well as ringroad system and two metro lines. Some of its goals weren't completed even up today.

Since the end of 2003 there is no general plan of Warsaw, 15% of city surface is covered by local detailed plans. Study of conditioning and land use directions for the whole city is just prepared – with motto of sustainable development. Three zones (midtown, town, suburban) and green zone were elaborated as well as eight functional zones: centres of city and quarters, service areas, industry and service, intensive housing, extensive housing, green, infrastructure, transport – with obligatory standards (height, intensity). Study proposed to build up almost all areas within city boundaries (excluding existing forests, parks, cemeteries). Three metro lines, closing of inner and outer ringroad, 5 new bridges – are planned. Study indicated also main areas of city development (keeping reserve for possible development up to 3 000 000 – according to observed and expected trends of increased. Sed migration. Unfortunately many of this areas is covering rests of “wind wedges”.

## CHALLENGES AND THREATS

Green areas, wild river, Cliff and historical spine of Royal Road, green housing estates, old and new squares – are the strong and original sides of Warsaw valuation – as well as dynamism of inhabitants and liberal authority policy towards investors. During last 40 years decreased green areas. Important squares were reconstructed in last decade. Social and economic dynamism was growing after 1989.

Weak aspects are: inadequate public transport, lack of ringroads as well as fact that the city is in many places torn up. Old housing estates, from 1960s and 1970s, are the troublesome legacy.

After fifty years of occupation and soviet supremacy reaction is obvious. Hating the plans, limits and rigors is understood.

Warsaw still have the chances, to be green city with wild river. The city could be sewn together – across an above of covered railway and road canions. Even the river could be crossed by semi-pedestrian low bridges, may be with small islands – just to stop walking for a moment.

Last fifteen years of analyzed forty showed exactly how important is liberty, possibility of participation and dynamism.

However lack of plans – lack of local law, legal limits for private dynamism, could result with physical and functional chaos as well as broken traffic, natural and climate connections.

Simple extrapolation of private motorization and poor public transport tendencies could end with paralysis of the town. Confirmation of building up green areas and “wind wedges” can cause dramatic changes in climat as well as in cityscape.

One have to explain to citizen, developers and authorities importance of natural and cultural city values.

Cassandric view of anarchic, completely built-up and paralyzed city is not impossible.

Warsaw of today is liberal (sometimes over liberal city). However the balance between public and private goals has to be kept.

Warsaw, in good years, was called “Paris of the East”. Optimism of Warsawians is high. They are expecting the moment, when Paris will be called “Warsaw of the West”.