

The short history of the SRO (Single Room Occupancy) House

SRO House is in the 15th district of Budapest, called Újpalota. This part of the city belongs to Budapest since 1950.

Újpalota was principally an agricultural area and there was a cemetery then. In the end of the '60-s, a huge council estate was started to build here.

Tibor Tenke, a young architect managed the building operations. He tried turning face to the modern style. The streets did not become as boring as it was usual in that time because there were 9 kind of houses in the area.

The structure of the streets are unusual as well. Tenke went back in the middle age and tried to reproduce a separate town from that times. There are two priority road crossing there and this crossing was planned to be the centre of the town. These two crossing roads divides the area into 4 sections. Tenke dreamed quite little houses, large squares and parks in the sections. He imagined that people will use these parks as real places for the community. He called these areas "neighborhood units".

The landscaping started in November 1968, the foundation stone was taken down in March 1969 and the first tenant moved here in 1971. The building operations finished in 1978. 15.400 flats were built for 60.000 people in this 10 years here.

The SRO House was the first building here. It was planned to be the hostel for the construction workers who were working here during the operations. The house was planned to be demolished when the building operations finished. Luckily this demolition did not happen.

The building was given an important role quite soon. It was possible to rent a temporal room here for people who have not got their own flat or could not rent a flat from the Municipality. Many young couples stayed here for a while who came to the Capitol from the country. There was a trend for intellectual pairs to live here for some years before they can find a solution for their housing problems.

In the end of the '80-s when politic changes started in Hungary, the problem of homelessness presented itself too. Social institutions started to work to help homeless people in the Capitol where the problem was the most serious.

BMSZKI was founded in 1993.

In these times poor homeless people with serious social problems moved in the SRO House, too.

BMSZKI has been running the SRO House since 1st of January 2010, earlier it belonged to the Local Government.