

Croatian Urban Fieldsite

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Location of the fieldsite

Travno belongs to New Zagreb, which was built from the 1950s on to create housing for the growing numbers of immigrants based on the proceeding industrialization. Travno was built in the 1970s according to an urbanistic plan which included already most facilities for every day life, like public nurseries and kindergartens, a home for the elderly, an elementary school and sport facilities, as well banks and shops. All residential buildings which have partly 20 floors, circle around a green park. Most flats have a size of 50-80m².

Profile of the inhabitants living in Travno

Today, Travno has about 12.000 inhabitants, who mainly belong to the middle class. While many of them received housing rights during socialism, in the privatisation process most inhabitants have bought off the flats they live in. Still, in the post-socialist period, the economic and social situation deteriorated for some people in Travno and social differences increased. The elderly generation lives mainly from pension payments, which are relatively low. Unemployment hits especially the middle aged population as well a young, less-educated people. Compared to socialist times, when many young families moved to Travno, the population has grown older now as children are grown up and partly moved out of the settlement, while elderly stayed. Many flats are therefore inhabited by an elderly couple or a single elderly person. However, many young people who have been brought up in Travno also founded a family here. They often founded their own household, but a small number of young married couples live with their parents (mostly of the husband, but partly also of the wife) in one household. This makes close co-operation between parents and children possible.



Primary school building located in the park of Travno



Playground in Travno



Drying of laundry on the balconies in Travno

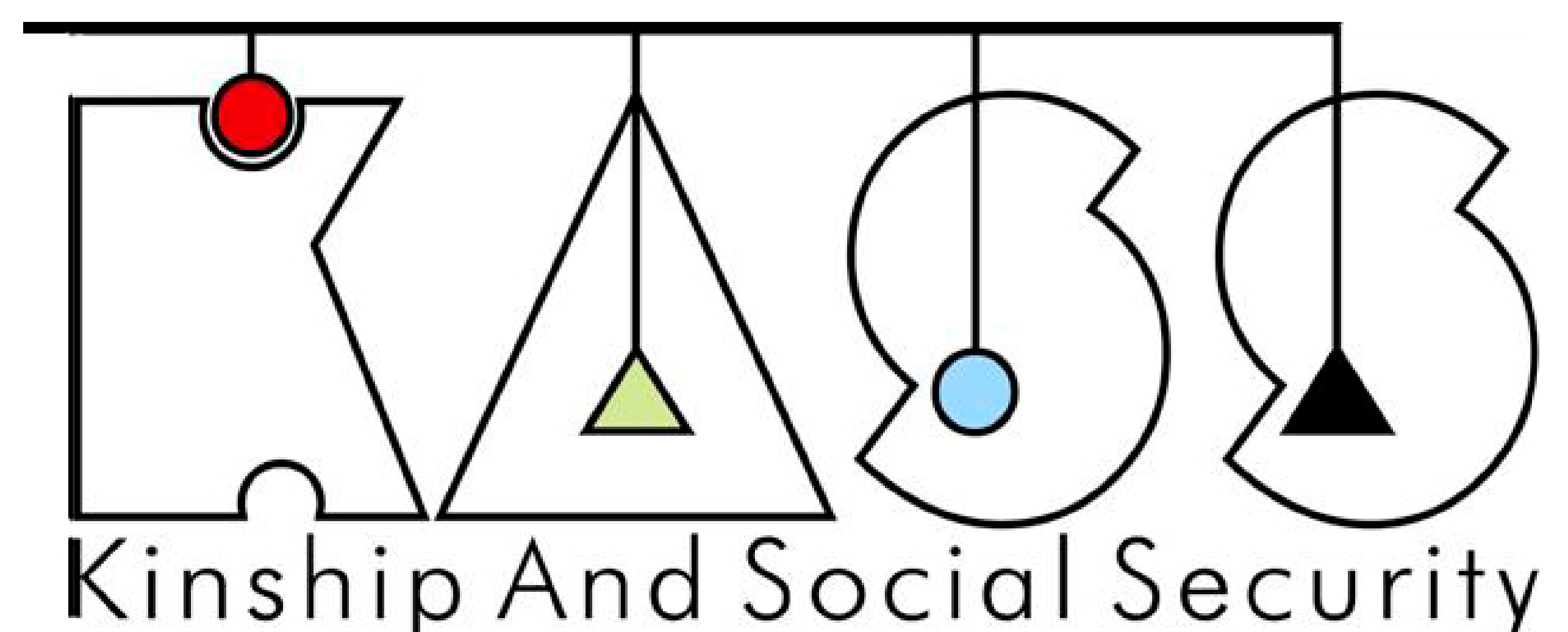


Patterns of assistance and economic roles

Help is mainly provided by the nuclear family and here especially from the elder generation to the younger. Parents try to provide housing for their children as soon as they want to set up an own family (and marry), pay for the wedding and take over the childcare. Grandparents enable young mothers to take up wage work. Due to the high practical importance of the parent and grandparent generation for the children, they often successfully transmit family values, including the value of marriage and having children. Children who can not rely on their parents out of economic, spatial or personal reasons have difficulties to create an own economic basis for living.

Because of the new demands on the young generation in professional life, many elderly do not want to be a burden to their children and restrain from being taken care by their children. Some prefer to go to the home for the elderly, others endure in their flats as long as possible.

While kinship relations are generally seen as important and connected with respect and emotional closeness, the wider kinship helps only occasionally. Wider kinship relations manifest themselves in joint festivals like weddings and funerals which have a mainly a symbolical meaning for the re-establishing of relations between relatives. However, not all people keep the tradition to celebrate large family gatherings and either save the costs for the festival for other investments or largely celebrate with friends.



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