



# WALKING WITH HOPE

## PUBLIC SPACES FOR WELLBEING

Programme and Book of Abstracts

*Ljubljana, Rijeka, Cres*  
*June 2025*

## Letter of Welcome

Welcome to Ljubljana, Rijeka and Cres, and welcome to AESOP Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures (TG PSUC) travelling conference!

The first event of AESOP's TG PSUC in the series "Urban Cultures, Public Space, and Hope" is taking place in late spring in three different locations and is a joint event of the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Polygon – Center for Cultural Research and Project Development and University of Rijeka – DELTALAB – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism.

For those new to our network, the AESOP TG PSUC serves as a vibrant platform for researchers, practitioners and policymakers to connect, exchange knowledge and promote critical dialogue surrounding the crucial role of public spaces in shaping everyday life and cultural identities. Our activities aim to advance understanding and innovation in this dynamic field.

This inaugural event marks the beginning of our new series, "Urban Cultures, Public Space, and Hope." The series seeks to explore the potential of thoughtfully designed and activated public spaces to cultivate positive social interactions, encourage diverse urban cultures and inspire a sense of optimism and possibility for the future of our living environments.

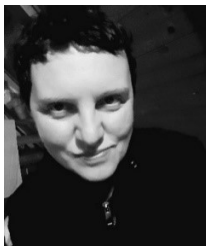
We are delighted to welcome you to this first gathering focusing on walkability, exploring its potential to generate hope through urban design and artistic approaches.

A warm welcome in anticipation of the great event!



**Matej Nikšič**

Senior Scientific Associate, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia



**Branka Cvjetičanin**

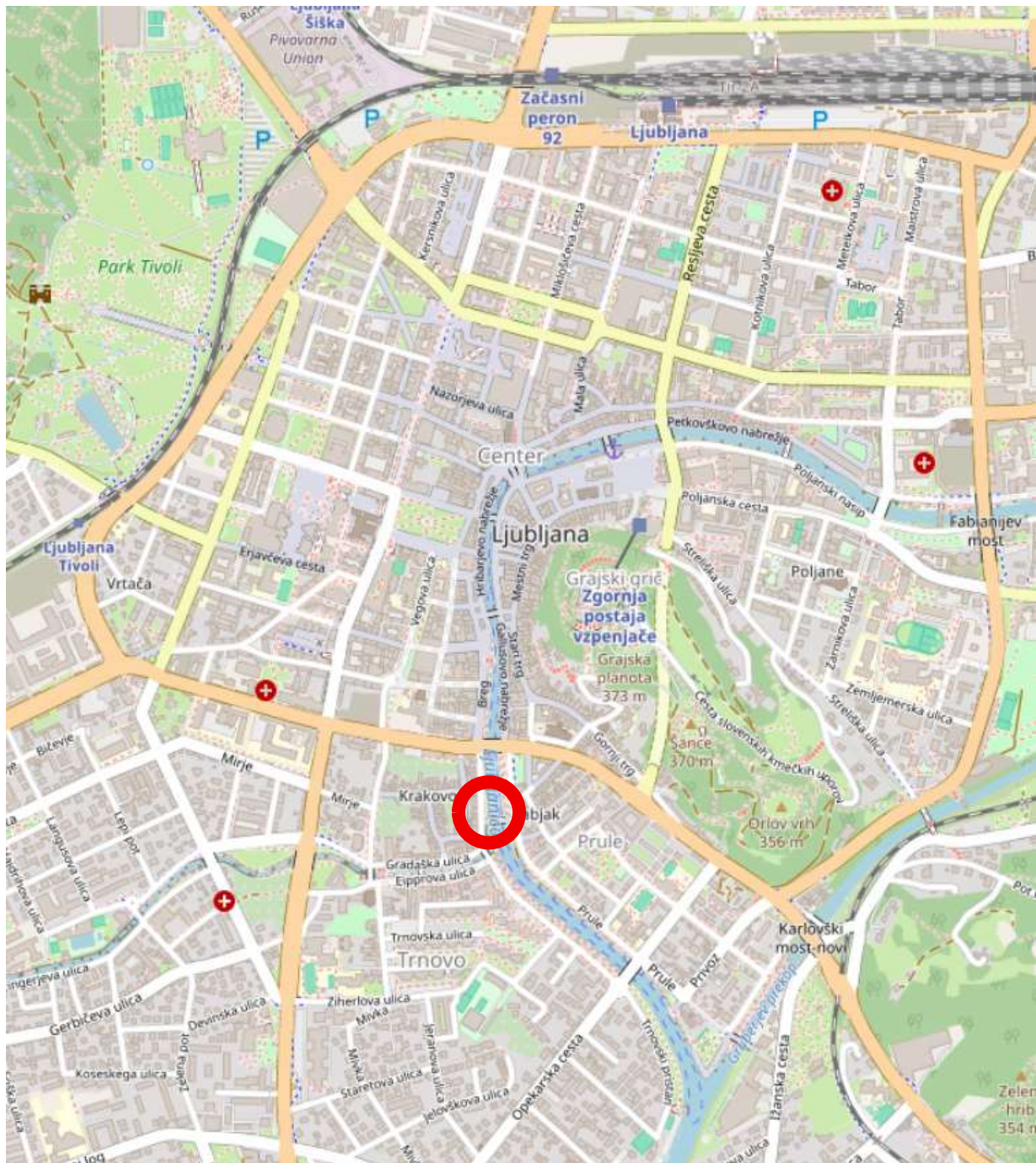
Artistic Director, Polygon - Centre for Cultural Research and Project Development



Conference Venue: Monday, June 16

UIRS – Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

Address: Trnovski pristan 2, Ljubljana, Slovenia

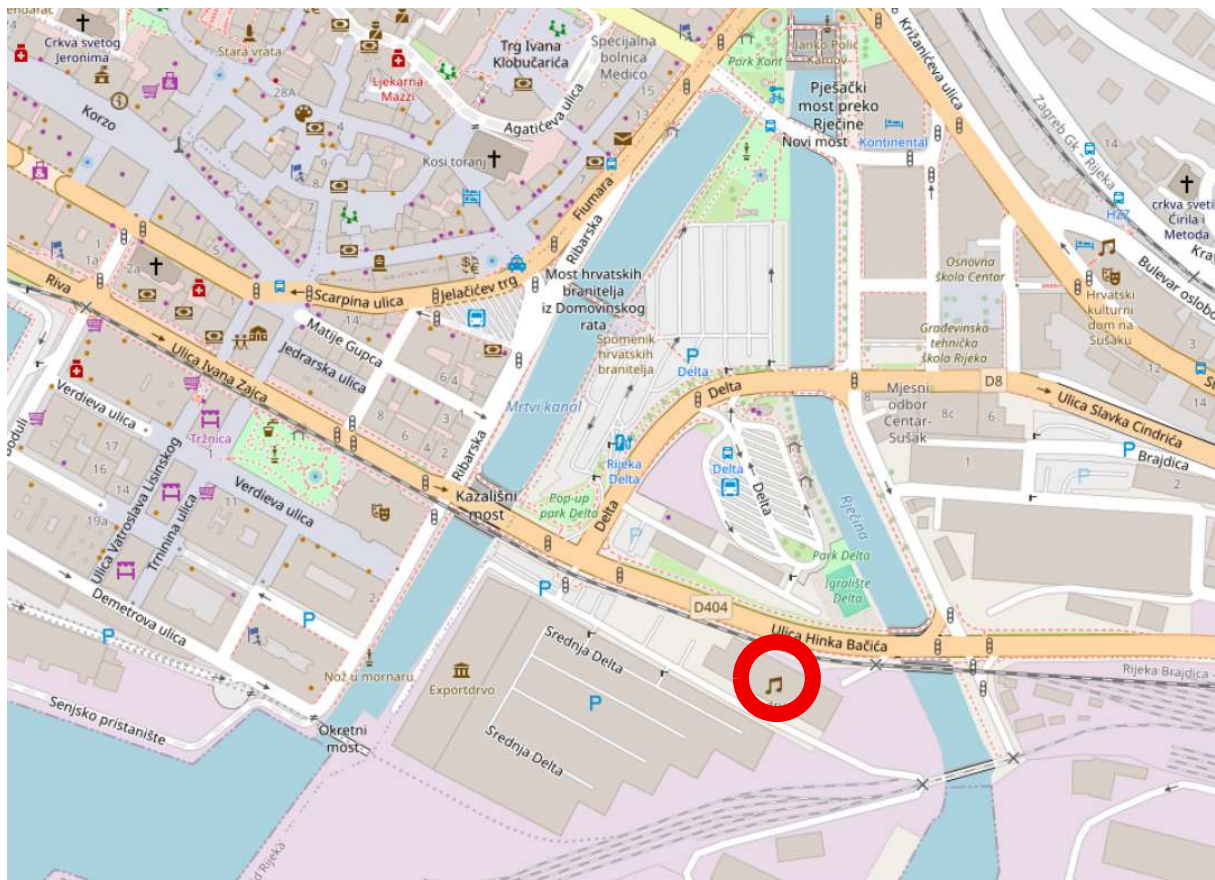


Please note that the entrance to the venue is from a thoroughfare parallel to the river. Once you enter the building, walk the stairway all the way to the top.

Conference Venue: Tuesday, June 17

## DELTALAB – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism

Address: Delta 5, Rijeka, Croatia



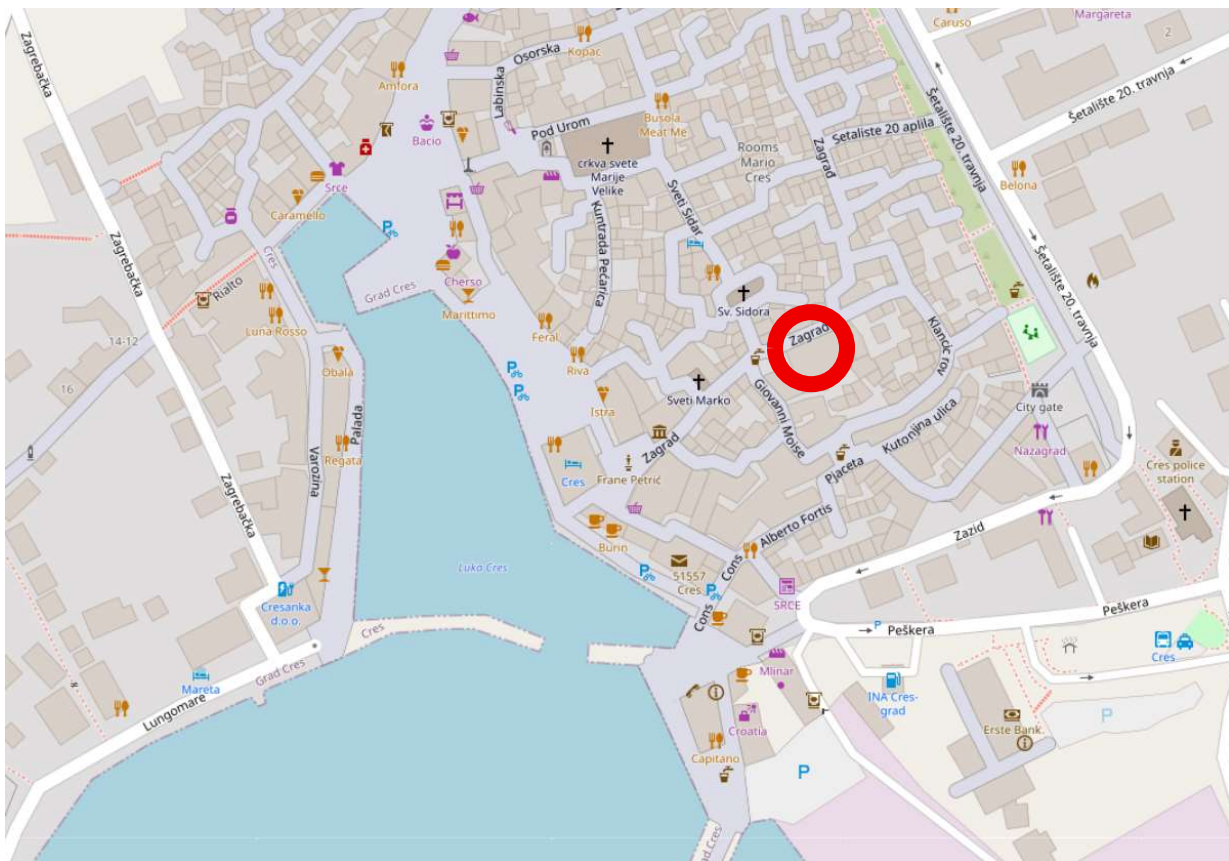
Please note that the entrance to the venue is from Exportdrvo parking, behind the IVEX building.



Conference Venue: Wednesday, June 18

## Palace Moise - UniRi

Address: Zagrad 6, Cres, Croatia



A hint, as old towns can be tricky - approaching from the sea-side, find the Museum of Cres and head uphill. Palace Moise is a short stroll to your right.

# Programme at a Glance

## Monday June 16

**Conference Venue: Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Trnovski pristan 2, Ljubljana**

8:30 – 9:00 **Registration and Morning Coffee** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
9:00 – 9:20 **Welcome by the Organisers** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
9:20 – 11:00 **Session 1** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
11:00 – 11:20 **Short Break** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
11:20 – 13:30 **Session 2** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
13:30 – 14:30 **Light Lunch** - Standing Buffet in the Library of UIRS (Ground Floor)  
14:30 – 15:45 **Session 3** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
15:45 – 16:00 **Short break** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
16:00 – 16:40 **Session 4** - Conference Room (Top Floor)  
16:40 – 17:00 **Concluding Remarks and Intro to Day 2** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

## Tuesday June 17

**Conference Venue: DeltaLab – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism, Delta 5, Rijeka, Croatia**

// Important notice for those departing with the organised transport from Ljubljana – Departure time is 8:00 sharp, we gather 10 minutes earlier at the Monday venue, i.e. Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Trnovski pristan 2 - be on time, transfer can not wait//

10:00 – 10:30 **Arrival + Morning Coffee** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)  
10:30 – 11:00 **Welcome by the Organisers** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)  
11:00 – 12:00 **Session 1** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)  
12:00 – 13:00 **Brunch** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)  
13:00 – 14:00 **Session 2** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)  
14:00 – 15:30 **Walking session** – Rijeka – IVEK + Molo longo  
15:30 – 16:30 **Free time**  
16:30 – 17:00 **Concluding Remarks and Intro to Day 3** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)  
17:00 – **Departure for Cres from DeltaLab parking lot, Delta 5, Rijeka**

// Important notice for those departing with the organised transport from Rijeka to Cres – Departure time is **17:00 sharp**, we gather 10 minutes earlier at the Delta 5, Rijeka, see detailed programme for further info. //

## Wednesday June 18

**Conference Venue: Palace Moise - UniRi, Zagrad 6, Cres, Croatia**

09:00 – 09:30 **Morning Coffee** - Palace Moise (Kitchen)  
09:30 – 09:45 **Welcome by the Organisers** - Palace Moise (Small Hall)  
09:45 – 11:30 **Session 1** - Palace Moise (Small Hall)  
11:00 – 12:00 **Brunch** - Palace Moise (Kitchen)  
12:00 – 14:30 **Session 2** - Walking session  
13:30 – 15:00 **Concluding Remarks** - Palace Moise (Small Hall)

## Thursday June 19

//Organised transport from Cres back to Ljubljana with the estimated arrival to Ljubljana at the lunchtime (exact arrival time depends on the traffic situation in the ferry harbour and on the highways)//

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*Day 1 moderation: UIRS, Days 2&3 moderation: Polygon. Days 1,2&3 Concluding remarks: AESOP TG PSUC.*

## **General Information**

### **Refreshment Breaks and Lunches**

Complimentary drinks and snacks will be available throughout the scheduled programme.

On Monday, June 16, a complimentary standing buffet lunch will be provided for all attendees.

On Tuesday, June 17, a brunch will be organized by the local team as part of the programme. A free-time slot is scheduled before departure to the ferry port, during which participants may arrange their own late lunch.

On Wednesday, June 18, the programme will conclude before lunchtime.

### **Connecting to Wi-Fi**

Free wi-fi is provided in the Conference Room of the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia; please refer to the wall stickers for the access information.

### **Photo Waiver**

As part of the archiving of the conference event, the organisers will take photos throughout the programme, and use the photos to document the event. This may also include short video tapes. We consider this documentation important and it provides evidence of our activities to members, partners and stakeholders, as well as to current and potential attendees like you. Some of these photos will therefore appear online and in print, and they may also occur on social media. Under the European Union law on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) you have the right to opt out of any photo or video tape. If this is the case, please let us know before the event to [bakalskipolina@gmail.com](mailto:bakalskipolina@gmail.com) and [mancag@uirs.si](mailto:mancag@uirs.si).

### **Conference Proceedings**

The Book of Abstracts is a collection of all contributions to the conference.

After the event, the organisers are committed to publishing full papers in the blind peer-reviewed scientific journal Urbani izziv (Urban Challenge - <https://urbani-izziv.uirs.si/en-us/>). If you have an interest in submitting a full paper, please contact us by the end of June 2025 to [mancag@uirs.si](mailto:mancag@uirs.si).

## **Certification**

Certificates of Presentation will be available for the presenting speakers. If you will need one, please send an email prior to the event to [mancag@uirs.si](mailto:mancag@uirs.si).

## **We're Here to Help!**

Should you encounter any difficulties or require support, please find our contact information below.

*Matej Nikšič, UIRS, Slovenia: [matej.niksic@uirs.si](mailto:matej.niksic@uirs.si), +386 (0)31 368 334*

*Branka Cvjetičanin, Polygon, Croatia: [branka.cvjeticanin@polygon.hr](mailto:branka.cvjeticanin@polygon.hr), +385 (0)91 612 6305*

*Manca Gjura Godec, UIRS, Slovenia: [mancag@uirs.si](mailto:mancag@uirs.si), +386 (0)40 829 484*



# Day by Day Detailed Programme

## Monday June 16

### Conference Venue:

**Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Trnovski pristan 2, Ljubljana**

**8:30-9:00 Registration and Morning Coffee** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

**9:00-9:20 Welcome by the Organisers** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

Matej Nikšič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

Branka Cvjetičanin, Polygon – Center for Cultural Research and Project Development

Chiara Belingardi and Mohamed Saleh, AESOP Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures

**9:20-11:00 Session 1** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

Tadej Žaucer, Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy of the Republic of Slovenia

Luka Mladenovič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

Nikola Bojić, University of Zagreb, Academy of Fine Arts

**11:00-11:20 Short Break** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

**11:20-13:30 Session 2** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

Franklin Gaspar, Faculty of Engineering of University of Porto

Valentina Gulin Zrnić, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb

Pavel Veljanoski, School of Architecture and Design, University American College Skopje

**13:30-14:30 Light Lunch** - Standing Buffet in the Library of UIRS (Ground Floor)

**14:30-15:45 Session 3** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

Milka Dokuzova, Civic Association for Inclusive Development of Cities and City Spaces Cities for Humanity Skopje

Neža Čebren Lipovec, University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities

Blaž Križnik, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts

**15:45-16:00 Short break** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

**16:00-16:40 Session 4** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

Mojca Sfiligoj, Pr' Lenart, Belo

Jakob Šubic, The Inner Peace Institute

Zvonka Simčič, Zavod CCC

16:40-17:00 **Concluding Remarks and Intro to Day 2** - Conference Room (Top Floor)

*Attendees are welcome to explore Ljubljana streets in the afternoon; please refer to the organising team for hints and tips on where to go.*

## Tuesday June 17

### Conference Venue:

**DeltaLab – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism, Delta 5, Rijeka, Croatia**

// Important notice for those departing with the organised transport from Ljubljana –

Departure time is 8:00 sharp, we gather 10 minutes earlier at the Monday venue, i.e. Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Trnovski pristan 2 - be on time, transfer can not wait//

10:00 – 10:30 **Arrival + Morning Coffee** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)

10:30 – 11:00 **Welcome by the Organisers** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)

Matej Nikšič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

Branka Cvjetičanin, Polygon – Center for Cultural Research and Project Development

Ida Križaj Leko, DELTALAB – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism

Chiara Belingardi and Mohamed Saleh, AESOP Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures

11:00 – 12:00 **Session 1** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)

Ida Križaj Leko, DELTALAB – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism

Chiara Belingardi, University of Florence and ISTC-CNR

Matej Nikšič and Nina Goršič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

12:00 – 13:00 – **Brunch** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)

13:00 – 14:00 **Session 2** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)

Mohamed Saleh, Independent Research

Marcell Mars & Miro Šarić

Sanja Bojanić, University of Rijeka, Academy of Applied Arts

14:00 – 15:30 **Walking session** – Rijeka – IVEX + Molo longo

IVEX - The Last Frontier

Delta - Mrtvi kanal - Molo Longo: Walkability of Port Infrastructure

15:30 – 16:30 **Free time** - *Attendees are welcome to explore Rijeka; please refer to the organising team for hints and tips on where to go.*

16:30 – 17:00 **Concluding Remarks and Intro to Day 3** - DeltaLab (Top Floor)

17:00 – **Departure for Cres from DeltaLab parking lot, Delta 5, Rijeka**

// Important notice for those departing with the organised transport from Rijeka to Cres – Departure time is **17:00 sharp**, we gather in DELTALAB at the Delta 5, Rijeka, be on time, transfer can not wait. Ferry from Valbiska to Merag has a departure at 18:15h (ferry tickets on the site; the whole duration of the transfer from Rijeka to the city of Cres: Rijeka to Valbiska (cca 50 min) + Ferry Valbiska to Merag (cca 25 min) + Merag to city of Cres (cca 30 min). Expected arrival to Cres at 19h. Please note that dinner arrangements for this evening are the individual responsibility of each participant. //

## Wednesday June 18

**Conference Venue:**

**Palace Moise – UniRi, Zagrad 6, Cres, Croatia**

09:00 – 09:30 **Morning Coffee** - Palace Moise - Kitchen

09:30 – 09:45 **Welcome by the Organisers** - Palace Moise - Small Hall

Matej Nikšič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

Branka Cvjetičanin, Polygon – Center for Cultural Research and Project Development

Chiara Belingardi and Mohamed Saleh, AESOP Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures

09:45 – 11:30 **Session 1** - Palace Moise - Small Hall

Branka Cvjetičanin, Polygon – Center for Cultural Research and Project Development

Inge Solis, Jadranka Blatt, Karmen Surdić Benven, Cres Neighbourhood Team

Marin Gregorović, Mayor of Cres

11:00 – 12:00 – **Brunch** - Palace Moise - Kitchen

12:00 – 14:30 **Session 2** - Walking session

Inge Solis, Cres City Museum

13:30 – 15:00 **Concluding Remarks** - Palace Moise - Small Hall

15:00 – 17:00 **Lunch** (at participants' own arrangement)

17:00 – 19:00 **AESOP TG internal meeting**

## **Thursday June 19**

//Organised transport from Cres back to Ljubljana with the estimated arrival to Ljubljana at lunchtime (exact arrival time depends on the traffic situation in the ferry harbour and on the highways)//



# Book of Abstracts

## Contents

Chiara Belingardi, Daniela Renzi, Marica Notte - **Walking to School with Friends to improve the Urban Environment**

Sanja Bojanić - **Sensory Dérives and Hope**

Nikola Bojić - **Sonic Topographies and Urban Futures**

Branka Cvjetičanin - **Pedestrian**

Neža Čebren Lipovec - **Walking through shared and contested memories - "The group memory walk"**

Milka Dokuzova - **Negotiating ethno-national differences through Skopje's Old Bazaar 'micropublic'**

Franklin Gaspar, Fernando Manuel Brandão Alves - **Where Wellbeing Meets Climate Planning: Applying the WIEH Walkability Index to Shape a Greener and Health-Oriented Urban Environment in Ljubljana**

Valentina Gulin Zrnić - **Walking ethnographies: cultural anthropological steps along Zagreb streets**

Ida Križaj Leko - **Error Harvest as a Concept of Hope: Case-study Ivex building in Rijeka**

Blaž Križnik - **Walkable Seoul: Reclaiming streets as communal space in deprived neighbourhoods**

Marcell Mars, Miro Šarić - **Stairs Catalog**

Luka Mladenovič - **Integrating Walking into Urban Planning: Obstacles from Policy to Practice in Slovenia**

Matej Nikšič, Nina Goršič - **Smoties – Participatory Design and Walkability as Tools for Meaningful Public Spaces in Small and Remote Places**

Mohamed Saleh - **Walking with Plural Values: Axiology and the Ethics of Hope in the Education of Progressive City-Making**

Mojca Sfiligoj - **Potovke - Ethnological dialogue through an interactive artistic experience**

Zvonka Simčič - **Slowing down and hope: The Slowness of Walking Shapes the Way We Experience**

Inge Solis - **Cres – Beginner's Guide to Petrić and Vernacular Architecture Protection**

Inge Solis, Karmen Surdić Benven, Jadranka Blatt – **Pedestrian Bridge Initiative**

Jakob Šubic - **The Art of Listening**

Pavel Veljanoski, Maksim Naumovski - **Walking as Scenography: Reclaiming Urban Pedagogy through Embodied Practices of Hope**

Tadej Žaucer - **Paths to address walking on national level in Slovenia**

*Abstracts and other materials appear as originally submitted by the authors.*

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**Chiara Belingardi**

University of Florence and ISTC-CNR



*Chiara Belingardi holds a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning and Design from the University of Florence. She is currently a research fellow at the Laboratory of the City of Children, where she also worked from 2015 to 2017. She teaches and coordinates the specialization course "Gender Cities: Methods and Techniques of Urban and Regional Planning and Design." (University of Florence, University of Trieste, University of Naples Federico II, Sapienza University of Rome, Bari Polytechnic, IRIS-CNR). She has served as a Social Inclusion Expert for the project "Support for the Preparation of New European Bauhaus (NEB) Project Investment Guidelines" and as a National Urban Consultant for the project "Gender Gap Reduction in Urban Projects in Bologna (Italy)". She is an active member of the core working group of the AESOP Public Space and Urban Culture (PSUC) thematic group.*

**Daniela Renzi**

*Psychologist and Family Psychotherapist, since 2003 she has been part of the research group for the international project "The City of Children" at the Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies of the National Research Council in Rome (<https://www.istc.cnr.it/>). Alongside promoting and implementing the project, she is also involved in its management, professional training, and scientific research. In particular, she studies the effects of the activities promoted by the project (Independent mobility and Participation) on children and the various social actors involved, with the aim of evaluating the project's impact on children and the community, as well as its ability to bring about concrete changes.*

**Marica Notte** <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1223-6802>



*After graduating with a Master's degree in Philosophy from the Sapienza University of Rome, I had some research experiences. In the last 6 years I am collaborating within the Psychology of Child Participation Laboratory 'La città delle bambine e dei bambini', where I am currently a research fellow. I'm focusing on study and promotion of participatory experiences and children's independent mobility. autonomous mobility. I also coordinate the cities of the Italian network of the project and organise meetings and webinars to promote the activities. In this last period we are working on a research on the use of devices by children and parents to investigate how much they impact on their autonomy and well-being. In addition, I collaborate as an author on a practical philosophy magazine 'La Chiave di Sofia' and an online magazine 'Nautilus, NavigAzioni tra locale e globale'*

## Walking to School with Friends to improve the Urban Environment

On 27 May 1991, the Italian Parliament ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). On the same day, the project "La Città delle Bambine e dei Bambini" (The City of Children) started in Fano, to put into practice the principles and commitments of the Convention.



In 1996, a laboratory was founded at the Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies in the Italian National Research Council to give scientific ground to the project.

Traditionally, children are considered unable to deal with the real adult world. The Laboratory aims to promote the idea of a 'competent child' who can fruitfully contribute to shaping his/her life environment with different ideas and approaches than adults do.

The Project's and Laboratory's founder is the pedagogue Francesco Tonucci. He observed the relationship between childhood and the city, which can be, at the same time, problematic and full of opportunities both for the children and the urban environment (Tonucci, 1996). The aim was to physically bring back children in public spaces and to let them have their autonomous experiences.

To promote a change in favour of children and their needs, the project directly addresses the mayors of the cities offering them four possible interventions: 'Children's Council' and 'Participatory Planning' (CRC, art. 12) 'We go to School alone' (CRC art. 27 and 31), and Free Play in public spaces, (CRC art. 31).

The latter, even if it is as central as the others, is more like a sensibilization initiative. The methodology for the other three experiences is described in manuals (Natalini, Tonucci, 2019; Tonucci et al., 2019; Belingardi et al., 2018).

The projects are realized in numerous cities, mainly in Europe and South America, that form an international network. Some of them have been part of the network for many years.

The proposal describes the three lines of interventions, focusing on 'We go to School alone'. Italian parents are not used to letting children walk alone in public spaces without the supervision of adults. This is particularly evident in the daily paths toward school, where many parents bring them by car. Among the factors of the loss of children's independent mobility, psychosocial causes are the most impactful (Notte, Renzi, 2022) as well as the parent's perception of risk and the estimation of child competence.

The result is damaging for the school's surroundings, dangerous as they are full of traffic and pollution, and for children. International research (Hillman, 1994; Lopes et al., 2014; among others) demonstrated that walking to school is a key element for the well-being of children, as they will be more concentrated and will have a more direct relation with the urban environment. The positive effects are even more if they walk alone or with other children, as it prepares the attention before classes and gives a sense of self-reliance and autonomy.



To support this autonomy and overcome the parent's fear, the city has to make some adjustments. The actions to realize the project are social (raising awareness) and architectonic (such as making pedestrian paths and crossings safe).

The work for supporting children's autonomy is continuous: many cities started but ended the experience after a few years.

The proposal aims to critically reflect on the project and experiences to describe what actions are key for supporting children's autonomy in public spaces.

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**Sanja Bojanić**

University of Rijeka, Academy of Applied Arts



*Sanja Bojanić is engaged in the philosophy of culture, focusing on contemporary gender, racial, and class issues that intensify social and affective inequalities. She completed her initial studies in philosophy, later earning an M.A. in Hypermedia Studies and a Ph.D. from the Centre d'Études féminines et d'étude de genre at the University of Paris 8. Her work spans interdisciplinary research involving experimental artistic practices, queer studies, and affect theory. Sanja's professional career has included positions at the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (Louvre, Paris), the Nouvel Observateur, and the Laboratory for Evaluation and Development of Digital Editing at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (Paris Nord, St. Denis). Prior to her current position as Executive Director of the Center for Advanced Studies Southeast Europe (CAS SEE) at the University of Rijeka, she taught at the Universities of Aberdeen and Paris 8. She teaches Semiotics, New Media Theories and Practices, and Visual Methodologies at the Academy of Applied Arts in Rijeka. Her extensive research projects have been supported by the EU Commission, the Volkswagen Foundation, UNESCO and others. She is the author of several books and over forty peer-reviewed papers, making significant contributions to her fields of study.*

**Sensory Dérives and Hope**

Hope understood semiotically, compels us toward a more thoughtful encounter with urban space, unsettling simplistic narratives of mobility and inviting innate, embodied interactions. Rather than seeing movement merely as functional transit, we begin to sense the city through tactile textures and olfactory nuances, uncovering layers of meaning in everyday gestures. Yet, this sensory celebration of walkability—illustrated by Gehl's (1987) optimistic public space visions or Whyte's (1980) intricate pedestrian studies—demands interrogation. Debord's (1955) incisive notion of the *dérive* reminds us that walking can never be purely aesthetic; it is inherently a critical practice that reveals, subverts and confronts urban structures of power and alienation. While evocative, the tactile warmth of sunlit benches or fleeting aromas of espresso praised by Careri (2006) and La Cecla (1993) are also entwined in ideological forces that shape experience and sometimes obscure underlying tensions. Calvino's poetic yet elusive cities (*Le città invisibili*, 1972), by aestheticising urban ephemerality, inadvertently soften our critical gaze toward realities needing active resistance rather than passive appreciation. Genuine, engaging urban semiotics must recognise the interplay between sensory enchantment and critical reflection, enabling walking to become a conscious act of reclaiming urban meaning.



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**Nikola Bojić**

University of Zagreb, Academy of Fine Arts



*Dr. Nikola Bojić explores the intersections of space, technology, and the future. He graduated in art history and museology from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb and completed his postgraduate master's degree at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD). His projects have been exhibited at Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, the Taipei Biennial, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, ZKM in Karlsruhe, the Venice Architecture Biennale, and the Milan Design Triennale. Nikola was a doctoral researcher at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb and a visiting lecturer at MIT's School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P/ACT), where he co-taught the course Advanced Studio in Production of Space. He has published several original scientific papers, the artist book *Excavations* and served as the editor of a thematic issue of *Život umjetnosti* dedicated to experimental cartography. His doctoral dissertation examines spatial planning in Croatia between 1955 and 1975 through the lens of Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. Currently, he is an affiliated researcher at MIT and an assistant professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb.*

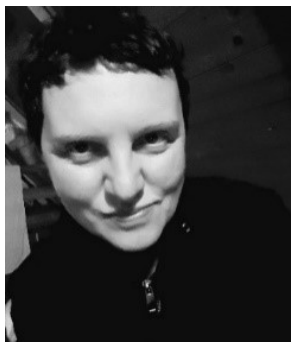
**Sonic Topographies and Urban Futures**

This lecture presents *Terra Effluviens*, a project that reimagines the city of Rijeka as a living, fluid ecosystem shaped by sound and time. Inspired by a rare 1971 study by Croatian architect and urban planner Branko Petrović, the project blends futurology, cybernetics, and contemporary sound mapping to create a sonic topography of the city. Through recordings from key urban locations, overlaid with speculative archival diagrams and models of an urban future, *Terra Effluviens* portrays the city as a hybrid organism where biological, technological, and social rhythms converge. Focusing on the intersections of urban space, sound, and ecological imagination, the lecture invites reflection on how cities can evolve into adaptive, multi-species environments in an era of radical uncertainty.

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**Branka Cvjetičanin**

Polygon, Center for Cultural Research and Project Development



*Branka Cvjetičanin - artist, curator, and producer. She operates in the sphere of contemporary artistic and cultural practices, with a focus on interdisciplinary visual arts and visual anthropology, as well as engaged art practice in rural, sub-urban, post-war, transitional and/or socially endangered areas and communities. In 1999, she initiated the Polygon OS platform supporting the idea of research-based art practice. Cvjetičanin is educated in the field of performing arts, site-specific theater direction and artistic production (MAPA Amsterdam, Oerol Festival, NL). She held research position and post-graduated at the Bauhaus Kollege Dessau - UN Urbanism (2005-06) and gained Women's Studies Diploma - Solar plexus – Artistic research on the topic of class isolation and gender aspects of Architecture and Urbanism (2016-17). Recently, she participated in the creation and implementation of the Rijeka 2020 ECoC program as Chief Artistic Director of Flagship 27 Neighborhoods (2017-21).*

*Awarded with several art awards and scholarships, the most recent: Erhard Busek Award 2022 – UNIRI, Center for Advanced Studies SEE, Erste Foundation, City of Rijeka, and prestigious artist residency programs: Rijeka Kamov residency, Watermill, USA; CalArts, USA, Edinburgh Festival, GB; Montalvo Art Center, USA; Arts Link USA. She is a member of HZSUa – Croatian Association of Independent Artists, HS AICA, A.R.E.A. network.*

## Pedestrian

From the Latin *pedester* (“to go on foot”), a pedestrian is a person who travels on foot. The term pedestrian, along with the terms walking, movement, are part of our everyday and lifelong understanding of space. Observing any city or space from the perspective of a pedestrian introduces us to an understanding of space and its elemental syntax, which determines our daily choreographies and the economy of the body. A pedestrian is everyone. The pedestrian's body is the unit of measurement for spatial determination. With our bodies, we enter and conquer spaces that grow into personal and collective narratives. Through the concept of the pedestrian and being a pedestrian, we learn the basics of spatial perception by deciphering the dialectic shaped by architecture. Over time, our body economizes spatial determinations and establishes personal routines and a spatial haiku. In the urban context, we support the introduction of pedestrian zones and the improvement of public city transport. The attached instructions are an invitation to write personal urban poetry.

Who shapes the narrative? Acceptance or rejection? Rebellion or pacification?

Cvjetičanin in her artistic practice, brings space, architecture, and the economy of the body into relation. She decodes predetermined spatial narratives in order to resist the influence by which space defines us. By attending Women's Studies, she further develops ideas on the topic of class isolation and the gendered aspects of architecture and urbanism. Through the presentation, you will gain insight into artistic-research practice and models of cognitive mapping of space that precede and are part of the process of conceptualizing critical artistic work. Starting from initial questions about the perception of space from the pedestrian's point of view, the question of optical perception as primary is raised —namely, whether this form of perceiving space holds true in the same way for other sensory systems.

“Pedestrians should be loved. Pedestrians make up the greater part of humanity. Moreover – its better part. Pedestrians created the world. They built cities, erected multi-story buildings, installed sewage systems and water supply, paved the streets, and lit them with electric lamps. They spread culture across the world, invented the printing press, discovered gunpowder, built bridges over rivers, deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphs, introduced the safety razor, abolished the slave trade, and discovered that one hundred and fourteen tasty, nutritious dishes can be made from soybeans. And when everything was done, when the native planet took on a relatively orderly appearance, motorists appeared. It should be noted that the automobile was also invented by pedestrians. But motorists somehow immediately forgot that.” — Ilf and Petrov, *The Little Golden Calf*, 1931



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**Neža Čebtron Lipovec**

*University of Primorska Faculty of Humanities, Department of Archaeology and Heritage*



*Neža Čebtron Lipovec is an art historian, specialised in architectural history and built heritage conservation, that works as researcher and lecturer at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska, UP FHŠ (Koper, Slovenia). Her main fields of research encompass post-WWII architecture and conservation and, over the last decade, mainly the participatory approaches and ethnographic methods in conservation in contested spaces, framed within the critical heritage studies. She has been involved in several national, international and cross-border projects; in 2021 she won the postdoctoral project on the "Potential of ethnographic methods for the conservation of built heritage in contested sites, the case of Northern Istria", financed by the Slovene research agency's ARIS; currently she is an active member of the core research group in the major interdisciplinary project "HEI-Transform: Heritage for Inclusive and Sustainable Transformation", also financed by ARIS. She is member of the management board of the New European Bauhaus Academy Pioneer Hub, held by the University of Primorska, and vice-chair of the UNESCO Chair on Interpretation and Education for Enhancing Integrated Heritage Approaches (held by the University of Primorska). She is coordinator of the Slovene -English BA programme Cultural Heritage at UP FHŠ.*



### **Walking through shared and contested memories - "The group memory walk"**

Heritage, taken as a process of significance assessment, represents a central element in collective memory of communities. Built heritage, furthermore, can represent an essential element in the ontological security of the single individual and the group. Identifying its meanings and significance, particularly of its layers and components, is thus a collective act and a social practice that has the potential to inform the decision-making process about interventions in its materiality. Walking and walkability as a research method has long been part also of the methodological repertoire for the built heritage conservation field, starting with Setha Low's proposal of the use of "transect walks" (Low 2002). Recently, several new walking techniques for heritage management purposes have been promoted through recent European research projects, which represents an important shift in the paradigm of heritage conservation, previously marked by a rather conventional materialistic orientation and authorised heritage discourse (Smith 2006). A particular challenge in introducing community-based and participatory approaches into the conservation practice is, however, represented by the built environment in historically contested spaces. For a such cases, a new method (or procedure) is being developed, called "group memory walk", which departs from the twin-concept of "group memory talk" (Čebren Lipovec 2023). Both derive from the concept of "memory talk" - "a discourse where social memories become lodged in places and people outside intentionally commemorative and ritual contexts, woven into the fabric of daily talk and gossip in all its variety, contradiction and everydayness" (Degnen 2005), that reveal profound way of relating to the surrounding physical and social world. Walking with community members of different generation and backgrounds through richly layered historic quarters can provide not only an in-depth understanding of the historical and social values of the site (later useful for conservation and/or management) but primarily offers a context where different views can be voiced, while a shared common ground is searched for. We will present this new potential method in all its phases, illustrated through two case-studies in the city of Koper (modernist neighbourhood, historic city centres) in the historically contested region of "slovene Istria", as well as the attempts to apply similar approaches in the Revitalb sites of the HEI-Transform project in the eastern regions of Slovenia.



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**Milka Dokuzova**

Researcher, Civic Association for Inclusive Development of Cities and City Spaces CITIES FOR HUMANITY Skopje, North Macedonia

*Milka Dokuzova is an architect and urban researcher from North Macedonia with over a decade of experience in teaching, research, and civic advocacy. She holds a Master of Philosophy in Architecture and Urban Studies from the University of Cambridge and a Master of Architecture from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. Her work focuses on inclusive urban development, participatory planning, and the politics of space in post-socialist contexts. She works at the intersection of design, data, and participation, aiming to democratise urban planning processes and promote more transparent decision-making. She is the co-founder of Cities for Humanity, a civic initiative promoting alternative, community-centred approaches to urban planning, and the creator of Skopje Passport, a digital platform for evaluating neighbourhood-level quality of life through the lens of the 15-minute city.*

**Negotiating ethno-national differences through Skopje's Old Bazaar 'micropublic'**

The development of the street structure and its transformation over the years have played a significant role in fostering a sense of community and collective wellbeing across ethno-national divides. It is along these streets that different ethnicities came together; streets that contained various businesses and shops owned by Macedonians, Turks, and Albanians, and where residents from all parts of the city, regardless of their ethnic background, would come to shop. While the importance of the Bazaar as a site of everyday multiculturalism is acknowledged, the role of spatial transformation in mediating interethnic tensions and promoting social resilience remains underexplored.

This paper examines this transformation by employing a qualitative, interpretative mixed-methods approach based on site and participant observations, mapping, and qualitative interviews. It explores the 'negotiation of space and bodies' (Amin, 2008) along the streets and squares of Skopje's Old Bazaar through Amin's (2002) notion of the 'micropublic', where everyday multiculturalism is enabled through recognition, mediation, and mutual adjustment to ethnic, religious, and cultural differences (Pullan et al., 2013). It suggests that the pre-existing local networks of civic engagement between communities at the Old Bazaar, as well as the transformation of the streets and the ways public spaces have been appropriated, have played a crucial role not only in managing tensions and conflicts but also in sustaining social wellbeing.

In doing so, this paper highlights how the Old Bazaar exemplifies the role of public space in fostering social resilience, offering a vital ground for everyday acts of coexistence, belonging, and mutual recognition. It draws attention to the subtle, often overlooked processes through which urban communities adapt, sustain connections across difference, and maintain a sense of hope and continuity amidst broader societal divisions.



Figure 1 – Bitpazarska Street. Author (2020)

Keywords: contested spaces, streets, social resilience, urban ethnography

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## Where Wellbeing Meets Climate Planning: Applying the WIEH Walkability Index to Shape a Greener and Health-Oriented Urban Environment in Ljubljana

Walkable public spaces shape not only how we move through cities, but also how we feel, connect with ourselves, and care for the environment. In urban contexts, individuals over the age of 65 and children under the age of 5 are identified as the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate stress. Due to their unique health characteristics, these age groups have a reduced ability to cope with climate stress, not only because of physiological factors but also due to their dependence on external assistance and health facilities.

Consequently, it is essential to include these vulnerable age groups in the perspective of climate adaptive design of walkable areas. When adapting public spaces to climate change, incorporating the needs of socially vulnerable groups into urban adaptation strategies not only addresses their specific needs but also enhances urban resilience for all citizens.

To address this, this study presents a detailed framework for an adapted application of the Walkability Index for Elderly Health (WIEH), by incorporating a new final step to identify the most suitable locations for implementing green and resting spaces along public pathways. Originally, the WIEH was designed to identify “Heart-Friendly Routes” for pedestrians. However, with a focus on areas under heat exposure, WIEH was adapted to identify and guide the implementation of green-resting areas that provides shade, comfort, and physiological relief during heat events. The methodology consists of the following steps: (i) Classifying the pedestrian network using the Index of Space Suitability for Walking (ISW); (ii) Integrating slopes (IS) by evaluating walking difficulty according to the inclination of the study area; (iii) Calculating and selecting Friendly Routes based on walkability suitability; and (iv) Identifying the best locations for green-resting areas to improve the resilience of city walkers.

Ljubljana is particularly vulnerable to heat. Surrounded by mountains, the geographical location of the Slovenian capital can restrict airflow, exacerbating local heating. The city has experienced significant urbanisation, increasing impermeable surfaces, and the average temperature has risen by 1.2°C in the last 18 years. On the other hand, the local population’s relationship with the landscape has historically influenced their patterns of behaviour, occupation, displacement, and orientation. The city also benefits from a system of urban public spaces with great significance to its inhabitants, including Tivoli City Park and the Ljubljana River.

In this context, can this approach meet the needs of Ljubljana's population, enhancing to urban heat resilience in walkable public areas? Is it possible to use existing walkable areas to create green-resting spaces, utilising public spaces to strengthen the connection between existing green areas? Finally, can a system of small-scale green-resting areas, implemented based on physiological and well-being metrics, reinforce citizens' perception of the relationship between well-being and urban green infrastructure?

By implementing this step-by-step framework, this work aims to demonstrate how the WIEH Index can improve walkability and climate resilience while addressing health impacts of urban heat stress. The identification of favorable locations for green-resting areas is expected to support urban decision-making and improve the green infrastructure of public spaces.

**Keywords:** Walkability Index, green infrastructure, Climate adaptation, health-oriented planning, Urban resilience.



When a city includes its most vulnerable social groups in planning strategies - especially the elderly population for climate planning - it tends to be inclusive for all citizens.



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**Valentina Gulin Zrnić**

Institut of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb



*Valentina Gulin Zrnić is a cultural anthropologist working as research advisor at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb and titular professor at the University of Zagreb. Her research interest is focused on urban anthropology, anthropology of the future, politics of space, public events, urban governance and post-socialist cities. She is the author of two award-winning books – Kvarovska spika: značenja grada i urbani lokalizmi u Novom Zagrebu [Talk of the neighborhood: meanings of the city and urban localisms in Novi Zagreb] (2009) and Grad kao susret: etnografije zagrebačkih trgova [City as encounter: ethnographies of Zagreb's squares] (2019, with N. Škrbić Alempijević) and co-editor of books dealing with urban gardening, artistic interventions in public space, interdisciplinary research of space and culture, Croatian everyday life, and the practice and ethics of contemporary field research. She is leading projects on urban futures ([www.citymaking.eu](http://www.citymaking.eu)) and collaborates in educational, artistic and civil society programs that focus on contemporary urban topics.*

### **Walking ethnographies: cultural anthropological steps along Zagreb streets**

Within the current cultural anthropological project on urban futures, walking and hope have been introduced into urban research both as conceptual frameworks and methodological approaches. Walking is not merely a habitual movement between two locations but it constitutes a way of knowing that creates spatialized, temporalized, cognitive, embodied, affective, contextualized, interactive and responsive experiences which construct our everyday life and subjectivities. Hope is one of many futural orientations, a specific teleoaffect of the „vernacular timespace“, and, much like walking, hope is always in motion, „a tendency, towards something“ (Bryant and Knight), as well as a method of living in indeterminacy (Miyazaki).

This presentation combines theoretical reflections with an emphasis on walking ethnographies as a research technique in cultural anthropology as well as in the broader fields of the humanities and social sciences. Walking as a method opens up new sets of questions and associations, evokes memories and generates new urban imaginaries. In walking ethnographies, there is a potential to capture many of the dimensions of human experience while „going along with“ (Ingold) and being in and through urban atmospheres (Pink and Sumartojo).

Presenting various examples, we will walk through the streets and squares of Zagreb immersed in a protest march and religious procession, among colorfully decorated festival streets, or along ruined post-earthquake streets while discussing aspects of affective capital, urban diversity, spatial justice and political subjectivity. This presentation draws upon a decade of doing walking ethnographies and is grounded in current research project „What kind of cities do we want? Contemporary transformations of urban visions, practices and ethics“ (NextGenerationEU) at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb ([www.citymaking.eu](http://www.citymaking.eu)).

Keywords: walking ethnography, hope, Zagreb, research methods



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**Ida Križaj Leko**

University of Rijeka, DeltaLab Urban Studies



*Doc. art. Ida Križaj Leko is an architect and Head of the interdisciplinary post-master's program Urban Studies at the University of Rijeka. Her work has been recognized both nationally and internationally. In 2018, she received a national architecture award for the coworking space RiHub, designed in collaboration with Ana Boljar. She was also the co-author, mentor, and project lead for the adaptive reuse of a building in Rijeka into My Place Under the Sun—a center for children and families living in poverty—which was nominated for the 2024 Mies van der Rohe Award.*

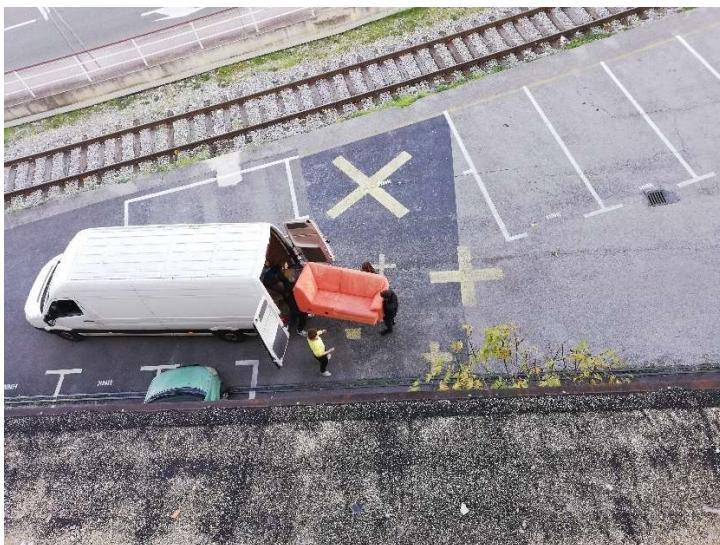
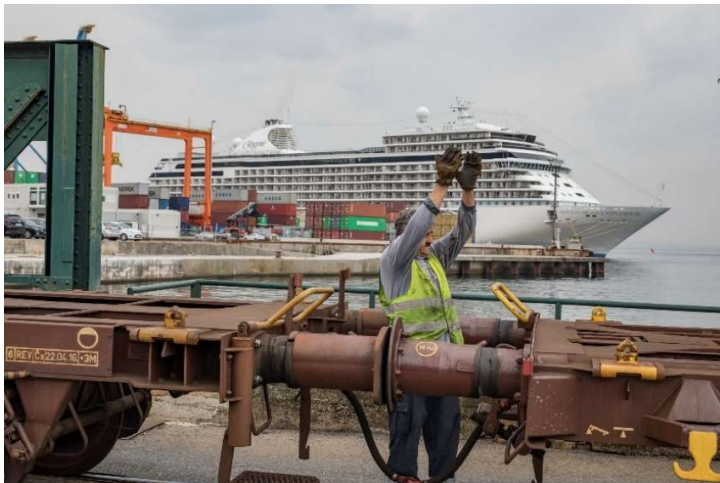
*In 2021, she represented Croatia as part of the authorial team at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. She is currently serving as the Curator of the Croatian Pavilion at the 19th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia (2025), which is currently ongoing.*

## Error Harvest as a Concept of Hope: Case-study Ivex building in Rijeka

Dr. art. Ida Križaj Leko presents her creative and scholarly work on the theme of error and its potential outcomes in the future. IVEX – The Final Frontier of Hope explores a specific site—namely, a building undergoing a transition from its original industrial function to becoming a hub for a community of creative individuals. It serves as a home to the independent cultural scene, a venue for diverse cultural programs, and an institutional extension of the University of Rijeka through the DeltaLab Center and the Urban Studies program. Additionally, the building accommodates the Croatian National Theatre Ivan pl. Zajc and numerous other temporary or occasional co-inhabitants.

From a research perspective, the IVEX building is approached as a case study of architecture as a collective organism. Simultaneously, the Urban Studies program is examined as an educational institution that has emerged and continues to exist within this framework of error and experimentation—evoking the origins of some of the most influential schools of architecture.

In its final implication, the Urban Studies program exists precisely because the IVEX building exists. As such, this work functions not only as a critical reflection but also as an act of advocacy, emphasizing the building as a collective entity. Can the position of error be sustained while still aspiring toward an exceptional outcome?



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**Blaž Križnik**

University of Ljubljana, Department of Asian Studies



*Blaž Križnik is Associate Professor at the Department of Asian Studies, University of Ljubljana. He is a former professor of Urban Sociology at the Graduate School of Urban Studies, Hanyang University. Blaž has also worked as a researcher at the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia in Barcelona, the Seoul Development Institute, the Seoul National University Asia Center, the Institute for Spatial Policies in Ljubljana and the Asia Research Institute in Singapore, and has been a visiting professor at the University of Seoul and Kwangwoon University. His research interests include comparative urban studies, urban social movements and Asian studies. Blaž is also co-editor of *Emerging Civic Urbanisms in Asia* (with Im Sik Cho and Jeffrey Hou).*

### **Walkable Seoul: Reclaiming streets as communal space in deprived neighbourhoods**

Seoul, the capital of South Korea, is known for its rapid urbanisation and dense living environment. After decades of seemingly endless economic growth and urban expansion, the city has faced a sustained economic slowdown that has challenged established market-driven urban development. In response, the previous Seoul Metropolitan Government introduced community building and urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods to address social inequalities and uneven urban development in the city. The shift in urban policy has had a significant impact on the social role of streets. Once reduced to the role of transport and parking, walkable streets became the centre of community building and urban regeneration in Seoul.

The study compares community building and urban regeneration in Seowon Maeul and Samdeok Maeul to better understand the changing social role of streets as communal space in deprived neighbourhoods. Urban regeneration in both neighbourhoods has transformed the streets into walkable and sociable places where children play, residents spend time together, flea markets and workshops take place, and community festivals are celebrated. Reclaiming the streets as a communal space has not only improved the quality of the living environment but has also strengthened social networks and shared identities in both neighbourhoods. As a best practice, community building and urban regeneration in Seowon Maeul and Samdeok Maeul also played a role in fostering social learning among stakeholders in the city.

Unfortunately, the current Seoul Metropolitan Government does not recognise the importance of walkable streets in sustaining communal life and shared identities in the city. Instead, it has returned to the market-driven urban development of the past. However, this study argues that Seoul's past urban policies deserve a closer look, as they highlight the importance of reclaiming streets as a communal space for successful community building and urban regeneration in deprived neighbourhoods. The study also shows that streets cannot be reclaimed as communal space without community engagement and partnerships between stakeholders. In this case, claiming ownership of streets as temporary, non-commodified and walkable communal space can be a powerful strategy that enables communities to collectively shape and reshape neighbourhoods and cities on their terms.

See also: Cho, Im Sik and Blaž Križnik. 2020. Sharing Seoul: Appropriating alleys as communal space through localized sharing practices. *Built Environment* 46(1), pp. 99–114. doi: 10.2148/benv.46.1.99



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**Marcell Mars, Miro Šarić**

*Miro Šarić is an advanced user of tools, while Marcell Mars is not. Marcell is an advanced Internet user, while Miro is not. Together, they count and catalog the stairs of Rijeka.*

**Stairs Catalog**

Faced with the historical responsibility of handling a vast amount of discrete units, librarians invented the index card catalog - a computing paper machine. It sorts, looks up, controls, stores, accounts, and computes<sup>[1]</sup>. Librarians produce knowledge. We count the stairs of Rijeka and catalog them. We climb up, go down, sit, and take in the view.

If we ever meet at the stairs, the one going down chats first, giving the climber a moment to catch their breath.

There are a lot of stairs, and we are not in a hurry.

[1]: Krajewski, Markus. 2011. Paper Machines : About Cards & Catalogs, 1548-1929. Translated by Peter Krapp. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.



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**Luka Mladenovič**

Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia



*Luka Mladenovič is a researcher working in the fields of sustainable mobility and urban planning. He is a member of the Transformative transport planning research group at the UIRS and an assistant professor at Faculty of Architecture, University in Ljubljana. After his graduation at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana he continued his study in the field of urban design at University College London, the Bartlett. His doctorate study was conducted at Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana on the topic of sustainable planning and development of high-density urban areas. Recent projects include Triple Access Planning for Uncertain Futures (DUT 2021-2024), Care4Climate (LIFE 2019-2026) and several national research projects related to integration of land use and transport planning. These projects were based around close collaboration with local and national governments.*

### **Integrating Walking into Urban Planning: Obstacles from Policy to Practice in Slovenia**

Walking has historically played a central role in daily mobility within cities and settlements. Urban layouts—ranging from compact medieval squares to early industrial neighbourhoods and modernist housing developments—were once designed with walkability as a fundamental principle. Despite this legacy, the share of trips made on foot has been steadily declining in recent decades.

This trend persists even though strategic spatial planning documents consistently advocate for walkable settlements that provide easy pedestrian access to key destinations. In contrast, transport planning documents tend to prioritize large-scale infrastructure such as motorways, railways, and long-distance cycling routes, with walking often mentioned only as a secondary mode of transport. This imbalance reflects a broader structural issue: walking, while central to sustainable mobility, remains undervalued in both policy and practice.

One of the most significant barriers to walking is the increased dispersal of settlements, especially in Slovenia, where recent decades have seen extensive development in suburban and rural hinterlands. This spatial dispersion has extended distances between homes, services, and employment centres, making walking a less practical option for daily needs. As a result, walking is now more dependent than ever on the coordinated integration of transport and spatial planning.

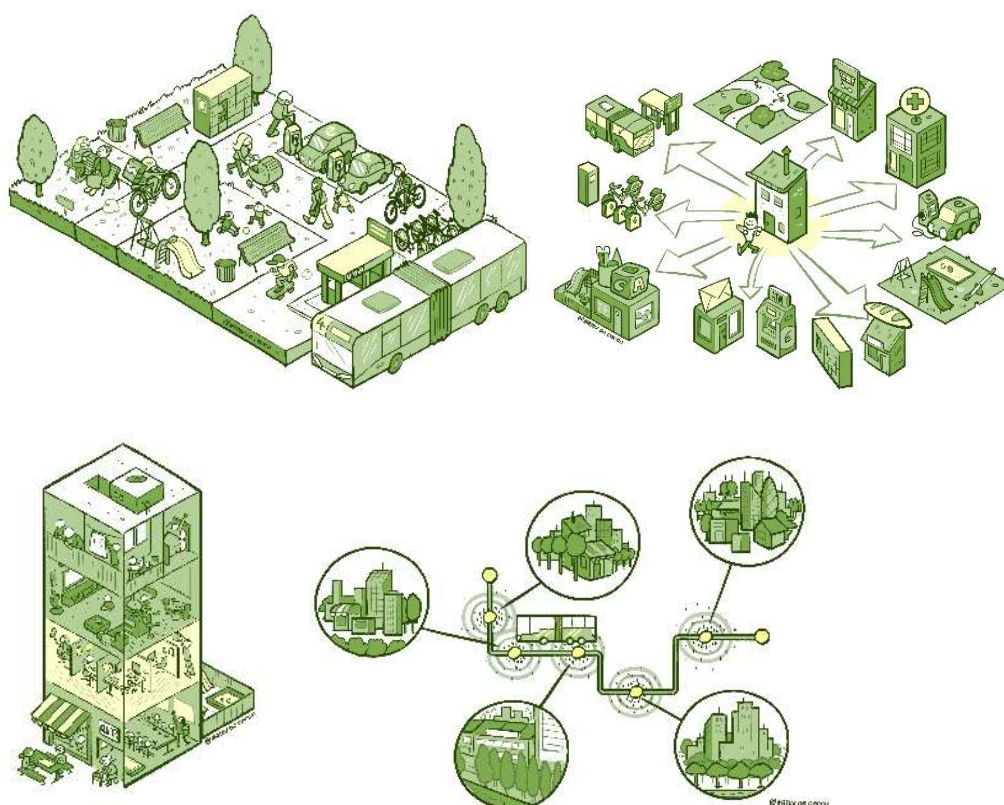
However, this integration is often lacking. Research and interviews with municipal planners and professionals in Slovenia reveal that spatial and transport planning are still largely conducted in isolation. While both sectors may share similar strategic goals—such as reducing car dependency and promoting sustainable mobility—these goals frequently break down at the implementation level. The resulting projects and measures are often uncoordinated, inconsistent, and occasionally even counterproductive.

A second, equally important challenge is the disconnect between strategic and implementation phases within planning processes themselves. Ideally, planning should flow logically from vision to goals to actionable measures. In practice, however, this continuum is frequently disrupted. While strategic documents have promoted pedestrian-friendly development for nearly three decades, implementation efforts have continued to focus on enhancing car accessibility. Walking and other sustainable modes are often treated as secondary considerations—if they are addressed at all.



In response to these challenges, Slovenia has begun reforming its planning framework. A key initiative involves linking established Municipal Spatial Plans with newer Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs), which offer a strategic framework for transport planning at the local level. Alongside regulatory updates, a range of guidelines and manuals are being developed to support municipalities in applying best practices and adopting planning principles successfully implemented in leading European cities.

These efforts aim to elevate walking as a core element of urban mobility and ensure that it is integrated more meaningfully into both spatial and transport planning processes. Although the transition is gradual, early signs of progress are already visible in redesigned public spaces and pedestrian-friendly improvements in Slovenian towns and cities.



PLEVNIK, Aljaž, MLADENVIČ, Luka, BALANT, Mojca, HUDOKLIN, Andraž, PIRY, Mojca (eds). *Udobna mesta: priporočila s primeri dobrih praks*. Ljubljana: Ministrstvo za naravne vire in prostor, Direktorat za prostor in graditev, 2023. 51 str., ilustr. ISBN 978-961-6276-56-6. Available at:

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**Matej Nikšič**

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*Matej Nikšič is an architect and urban designer, researcher at the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, and lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana. His work focuses on public space, urban regeneration and sustainable urban development. He combines research, consultancy and teaching to promote inclusive and human-centred cities, and has contributed to numerous interdisciplinary projects nationally and internationally.*

**Nina Goršič**

Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia



*Nina Goršič is an architect at the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia. Her work focuses on multidisciplinary applied research and projects, primarily in the areas of urban renewal, cultural heritage, participatory approaches in open urban public spaces, and accessibility for people with disabilities. Recently, she has been dedicated to the dissemination of know-how and to raising Slovenian standards in the design of inclusive public spaces and buildings.*

## Smoties – Participatory Design and Walkability as Tools for Meaningful Public Spaces in Small and Remote Places

The lecture presents transformative outcomes of the Smoties project, a European initiative under Creative Europe programme dedicated to revitalising small and remote communities through the power of co-creation of public spaces. Smoties follows the philosophy that the activation of local public spaces by employing participatory approaches and innovative design-led interventions can strengthen local communities and improve their lives. In doing so the project, among others, redefines walkability moving beyond its conventional understanding as mere physical mobility. It positions walkability as a comprehensive and essential framework for promoting more sustainable spatial design.

The presentation will begin with an overview of the Human Cities project, outlining its core aims, guiding mission and the people-centred approaches it has promoted through the 4-year experimentation in the concrete communities across Europe. Following this introduction, the presenters will showcase a diverse range of European case studies from various partnering countries, including Slovenia. These examples will illustrate the dynamic co-creation processes at the heart of Smoties, highlighting the collaborative synergy between local residents, researchers, urban designers and artists. The lecture will analyse selected case studies to demonstrate how participatory design serves as a trigger for community empowerment and bottom-up innovation. The presentation will highlight how often-overlooked remote places can offer replicable models for enabling vibrant and hopeful futures elsewhere.



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**Mohamed Saleh**

*Mohamed Saleh has recently received his PhD in Spatial Planning and Design from the University of Groningen. Parallel to working on this research, he had been lecturing on spatial planning and design at both the University of Groningen and Hanze University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands. Mohamed holds a Bachelor's in architecture and a Masters in sustainable urban design, both from the University of Alexandria, Egypt. Before moving to the Netherlands, he practiced in the fields of architectural and urban design for five years as a spatial designer within consultancy offices and projects in the Middle East. He was previously elected as a representative in the coordination and editorial teams of the AESOP and its Young Academics (YA) network. His research and action interests include livable public spaces, healthy urban transformations, inclusive governance systems, places of faith-based communities, living labs, urban politics and urban self-organization.*

**Walking with Plural Values: Axiology and the Ethics of Hope in the Education of Progressive City-Making**

*Co-authors:* Mohamed Saleh, Gert de Roo, and Ward Rauws

This paper assists spatial design educators in integrating progressive city-making thinking into their curriculum. It focuses on the ethical side of dealing with intersubjective values along the urban design processes in studio education. Two design phases for approaching this integration endeavor are highlighted, each with its problematic habits of thought that constrain students from ethically situating design in its context. We show why axiology is useful in advancing how spatial designs can be dialogically co-created with the users' pluralistic values for whom the design is intended. Axiology is concerned with collectively arriving at value-based choices to make meaning of what is observed. It supports an inclusive approach to design more attuned to the contested nature of the urban. The axiology lens encourages students to interpret spatial conditions not as fixed problems with technical solutions, but as open-ended, contested situations demanding reflective judgment and negotiation among overlapping, and often conflicting, values. To illustrate this pedagogical theorization we advance the concept of 'walking with plural values', understood as an embodied and situated attunement to latent urban tensions. Walkability becomes both a literal practice and a metaphor for ethical openness: a way of encountering space that resists reduction, embraces difference, and enlivens the students' hope that their designed alternatives make a genuine difference in recognizing users' values. We present a speculative scenario from a design studio focused on urban edges, those fuzzy, interstitial conditions where different cultures meet and urban order becomes blurred. Drawing on Richard Sennett's distinction between boundaries and borders, students are asked to observe and intervene in edge conditions that simultaneously separate and connect disparate urban cultures. Here, walking is deployed as a mode of axiological inquiry: students walk to observe, feel, and document the tensions among the plurality of values embedded in these spaces, using tools such as visual ethnography, design charrettes and co-creative dialogues to navigate diverse interpretations of publicness, transition, and (multi-)use. Urban edges, we argue, offer a powerful heuristic for teaching progressive thinking in spatial design education. These liminal spaces exemplify situations where order and self-organization coexist, where top-down planning meets bottom-up informal adaptation, and where progressive design can facilitate conditions of uncertainty rather than prescription. By encountering these spaces on foot, students learn to work with rather than resolve tensions, and to engage with public space as a site of value



negotiation rather than consensus or control. By equipping students with the conceptual language and experiential tools to design for plural, value-laden urban futures, this approach contributes to more inclusive, imaginative, and ethically robust modes of city-making. The paper concludes with: (1) suggestions for adopting the axiology lens to promote progressive city-making in the spatial design studio; (2) showing how axiological inquiry allows for reconsidering walkability as a catalyst for cultural vitality through genuinely embracing pluralism in students' habits in the studio; and (3) encouraging students to work with an action-oriented hope, not a naïve optimism, but a critically attuned openness to co-create with the users' value-rich possibilities latent in everyday urban life.

Keywords: pluralism, progressive city-making, axiology, dialogue, walkability, urban edges, spatial design education.



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**Mojca Sfiligoj**

Pr' Lenart, Belo



*Mojca Sfiligoj (1969, Ljubljana) je zaposlena na Ministrstvu za kulturo, kjer je delovala oz. deluje na področju varstva kulturne dediščine, evropskih zadev in mednarodnega sodelovanja v kulturi ter intermedijskih umetnosti. Po osnovni izobrazbi je industrijska oblikovalka, ki je diplomirala iz upravnih ved in magistrirala na področju medkulturnega menedžmenta. Dodatno se je usposabljala na področju sodobnih umetniških praks in na področju konservatorstva ter pridobila strokovni naziv konservatorka. Upravlja s kulturnim spomenikom v privatni lasti in izvaja raznovrsten kulturni program v lastni produkciji ali v sodelovanju z drugimi partnerji. Z izvedbo kratkih umetniških rezidenc ponuja umetnikom, raziskovalcem in kulturnim ustvarjalcem priložnost globljega razumevanja delovanja neodvisnih kulturnih prostorov izven urbanih središč, povezovanje in sodelovanje z lokalnimi skupnostmi, razvijanje projektov in pridobivanje novih perspektiv o sodobni kulturni produkciji.*

**Potovke - Ethnological dialogue through an interactive artistic experience**

In contemporary art, integration with other disciplines - especially the humanities and social sciences - is becoming an increasingly widespread practice. Among these, the link between art and ethnology has a special place, as it deals with cultural patterns, customs and collective memory, allowing for a multifaceted approach to heritage through artistic experience. In this context, the artwork POTOVKE, based on the reinterpretation of the historical figure of the travelling woman – potovka - is also part of this context, establishing a dialogue between the past and the present, between the artist and the participant, between the space and the moving object.

The work is based on the ethnological concept of the 'female traveller', which refers to a woman who in the past walked between places, carried news and information or carried out certain errands. This figure served as inspiration for the design of a contemporary art project in which art capsules travel around different heritage sites, which are part of a larger art project called House on the Hill, and are integrated into the public space and community experience. In doing so, the project not only documents cultural memory, but also activates and interrogates it through a contemporary visual language.

The central element of the project is the POTOVKE capsules - mobile carriers of artistic content created by invited artists. Each capsule contains a unique work of art, such as illustrations, poetry, computer graphics or conceptual art, and serves as a contemporary equivalent to the "message" carried by the potovka in the past. Capsules are not only aesthetic objects, but also storytellers, travelling between places and creating a dialogue between the past and the present.

The POTOVKE project goes beyond the traditional boundaries of exhibition spaces and exhibition practices by including an interactive component that turns the viewer into an active participant.

Visitors carry the art capsules from place to place, placing them in new locations and thus co-creating the meaning of the whole artwork. The trail becomes both a physical and symbolic axis linking the artworks, the cultural heritage sites and the personal experiences of the individuals. In this way, art is given movement and



heritage is given a new layer of meaning through contemporary artistic intervention. Walking between places is not just a logistical aspect of the project, but an artistic act in itself.

The aim of this paper is to present POTOVKE artwork with an analytical distance that allows us to understand its multilayered nature - as an artistic project, as an ethnological reinterpretation and as a participatory model. The paper focuses on the questions: how are ethnological elements transformed in the contemporary artistic language? How does interactivity influence the perception of art and heritage? And how can art be used as a means to establish a relationship between space, tradition and community?

Through this conception, the POTOVKE project not only builds a bridge between art and cultural heritage, but also between creators and audiences. It incorporates contemporary aesthetics, but at the same time maintains respect for traditions - and reinterprets them through interaction.

Keywords: contemporary art, ethnology, participatory art, relational aesthetics, walking



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**Zvonka Simčič**

Zavod CCC



*Zvonka T. Simčič is a Slovenian visual artist who explores the relationship between humans, space and social conditions in her works. Her creations, intertwined with personal experiences and social issues, are expressed through performances, spatial interventions, and socially engaged, holistic art installations. She places particular emphasis on researching the human experience within social and spatial frameworks, where space is not merely a backdrop but an active participant in the artistic process.*

*She is often present as a "living" actor/performer. Her works have been presented at numerous international exhibitions, festivals and projects. Since 2001, she has been leading the CCC Institute and is the main protagonist of the House on the Hill.*

*In addition to her studies at the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts, she also completed studies in spiritual development at the University of Ljubljana. She upgraded her knowledge with a two-year practice in spiritual guidance, and before that, also studied geomancy with Marko Pogačnik.*

### **Slowing down and hope: The Slowness of Walking Shapes the Way We Experience**

In the House on the Hill project, walking is not merely a means of movement, but a mode of being, perceiving and understanding. In the rural settings where the project takes place, a slower rhythm signifies a retreat from the urban rush, opening up possibilities for a more open, multi-sensory creativity rooted in the landscape, not as a backdrop, but as a co-creator in the process.

From the perspective of House on the Hill, the concept of slowing down in today's fast-paced world aligns with the "slow living" movement, which emphasises conscious experience of the moment and deeper connections with one's surroundings. In the spatial context, walking becomes a method of tactile geography, where moving through the landscape enables direct sensory perception and the establishment of physical and mental proximity to the environment. A slower pace not only transforms our relationship with space but also opens pathways to reflection, creative contemplation and more enduring memory traces, contrasting the alienation often brought by the speed of contemporary life.

The locations for House on the Hill are carefully chosen - reachable on foot, often necessarily so. The Polhograjski Dolomiti hills, where the exhibition is held at the end of summer across two locations (by the Church of St. Margaret in the village of Žlebe and at the Pr' Lenart Homestead in the village of Belo) offer curated destinations for hikers seeking an encounter with art. Walking thus becomes both a means of reading the landscape and a preparation for the experience the project offers, whether through viewing the exhibition

or participating in its interactive elements. These unique spaces may require not only hiking up a hill but also climbing a bell tower or entering a space of stillness, the depth of which is heightened after exertion or previous activity. Walking remains a constant part of the project, even if it is not always foregrounded. The awareness of embodiment that it awakens also carries into the artistic practice: we engage not as passive observers, but as active co-creators of space and relationships.

When an artwork awaits us along the way, the experience is imbued with the awareness of the path we have taken. The added value of such an intervention lies in its processuality - the artwork is not a fixed point in space, but a destination reached through our own effort and time. We enter the space of art with a sense of achievement, with heightened presence and openness to experience. It is not merely a viewing, but a co-creation of experience, where space is as vital a part of the artistic expression as the intervention itself.

These types of settings also enable artists themselves to slow down. A shift occurs in the creative process. Nature, with its calmness and rhythm, fosters a sense of presence, wonder, and respect for the space. It allows artists to connect with materials, light, sounds and spatial characteristics. This kind of spatial experience often flows into their work, leading to new artistic practices or further development of their existing approaches.

Equally important is contact with local residents—encounters, conversations and story exchanges provide insight into local traditions, wisdom and everyday life, which can inspire artistic processes and open new perspectives. We aim for artists to spend as much time as possible on-site, to truly sense the place - through walking, dialogue and dwelling.

The foundation of the project is tied to the theme of hope in connection with public space beyond the urban context. It is important to us that rural areas—often overlooked in urban discourses - enter into the conversation on accessibility and inclusion.

Through our contribution, we seek to co-create a reflection on how artistic practice and community engagement can create conditions for more human-oriented spaces. The interdisciplinary nature of the event Walking with Hope represents a unique opportunity for the exchange of knowledge, experience and methods, and also a chance to contribute our perspective—from a rural setting, which we understand as a significant and equally valuable field of inquiry.



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## Inge Solis



*My name is Inge Solis. I finished elementary school in Kaštel Kambelovac and high school in Split at the "Natko Nodilo" Cultural Center. I continued my studies in Zadar, where I graduated with a degree in art history and philosophy. For a time, I worked as a professor of art history, ethics, philosophy and logic. Since 2002, I have been on the island of Cres, where I am employed at the Cres Museum as a senior curator. I research the history of Cres and strive to highlight the cultural and environmental value of this island and town through exhibitions and catalogues. Among other things, I have focused on Cres's small churches, reliquaries, vernacular architecture, and also the island's neglected industrial heritage (the Linardić distillery in Martinšćica, the Plavica fish processing factory in Cres (in collaboration with SAZU Ljubljana)). With a project realised through EPK Rijeka and in collaboration with Japanese architects, we wanted to draw attention to the preservation and beauty of the Cres environment, while at the same time bringing it into the 21st century with a modern pedestrian bridge.*

## Jadranka Blatt



*I was born in Ogulin, where I finished high school. After completing my economics studies in 1975, I came to Cres with my husband, where I began my married life and working journey. I spent my 37-year working life in a bank, 32 of which were as a branch manager. Upon retiring, I became active in community work as deputy mayor, and in that capacity, also in the group for the revitalisation of the old town centre. Aware of the changes that the old part of town has experienced in the 50 years of my life, I wanted to make a personal contribution to raising awareness about the importance of preserving the old town center and giving significance to new content that would enrich and provide a new perspective and vision to this centuries-old beauty. The bridge would be an ideal project to halt these negative trends of depopulation and devastation of the old town centre!*

## Karmen Surdić Benvin



*My name is Karmen Surdić Benvin. I was born in Rijeka. I finished elementary school in Cres and a mathematics-focused high school in Rijeka. I continued my studies in Rijeka and earned a degree as a graduate economist, and later a university specialist for management in the public sector. I am employed by the Town of Cres as the head of the department for budget, finance and accounting, and I participate in the realisation of numerous EU projects as a financial manager. As a member of the Ženska klapa Teha (women's cappella group) and the Samo pozitivna (Only Positive) Sports and Recreation Club, I am involved in numerous organised gatherings and activities in the Cres local community.*

*Every child in Cres dreamed and still dreams of a bridge that will connect the "vela" (large) and "mala" (small) "purpurela" (breakwater/pier) at the entrance to Cres harbour. It was a special joy, but also a challenge, to participate in the team that, at least for a moment, made that dream almost a reality.*



## **Pedestrian bridge initiative**

The Pedestrian Bridge Initiative emerged as part of the 27 Neighbourhoods program within Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture, with Susjedstvo Cres (Cres Neighbourhood) focusing on the protection of vernacular architecture and addressing the challenges of contemporary life within this historic setting. Rooted in the unique spatial qualities of Cres—its kantuni (corners), dvori (courtyards), and kale (narrow streets)—the initiative fostered a dialogue between citizens and experts through community meetings, discussions, and conservation workshops.

At the heart of this initiative was the proposal for a pedestrian bridge to alleviate congestion in the Cres harbor, reflecting both a functional and symbolic gesture of connecting spaces and people. Developed in collaboration with EU Japan Fest and renowned Japanese architects Hideyuki Nakayama and Tetsuo Kondo, the project invited public participation in selecting the final design. Through a democratic voting process, the citizens of Cres chose Kondo's concept, highlighting the community's active role in shaping their urban environment. This presentation outlines the process of co-creation and international collaboration that defined the initiative, merging local heritage with forward-looking urban solutions.



Hideyuki's bridge proposal that was not accepted by citizens

## **Cres – Beginner's Guide to Petrić and Vernacular Architecture Protection**

Frane Petrić (1529–1597), also known by his Latinized name Franciscus Patricius, was a Renaissance philosopher whose work bridges Neoplatonic thought, humanist ideals, and early visions of social reform. This Beginner's Guide to Petrić introduces his philosophical legacy through the lens of *La città felice* (The Happy City, 1551), a utopian treatise that proposes a model for a just and harmonious urban society. In this work, Petrić envisions a city designed not merely for order or economy, but for the holistic well-being and moral development of its citizens. Rooted in Platonic philosophy and Renaissance humanism, *La città felice* offers one of the earliest reflections on how urban space, governance, and communal life can be intentionally structured to promote happiness and social cohesion. Petrić's insights remain strikingly relevant to modern discussions on urbanism, especially in their emphasis on equity, education, civic virtue, and the deep connection between city design and the common good.

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**Jakob Šubic**

The Inner Peace Institute, Topol 42, 1215 Medvode, Slovenia; email: subic.jaka@gmail.com



*The autor has experience in forestry, nature conservation and education. He is director of The Inner Peace instituttre. The main work is eksploring, practicing and spreading wisdom of living happilly and with less suffering, not just for ourselves but for the benefit of all.*

**The Art of Listening**

Listening to the sounds is an art. Some sounds we consider beneficial, some we take as unhealthy. As human being we have capacity to recognise awarednes of sounds, objects, phenomena,... And we also can recognize innate capacity of loving kindness and compassion - the inner drive to be happy and be free of suffering. And then, there is innate wisdom - the light that simply knows what is the best thing to do in each moment. When we walk with recognition of these qualities the world shows up as it is, without glasses of perception, mental construct. Pure perception. How can we recognize those three qualities will be teached by lecture and short practicies during three days.

Key words: awarednes, loving kindness, compassion, pure perception

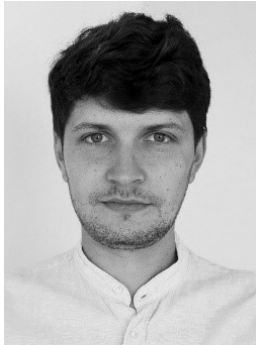




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**Pavel Veljanoski**

Assistant professor, School of Architecture and Design, University American College Skopje, Treta Makedonska Brigada 60, Skopje 1000



*Pavel Veljanoski holds a PhD in Regional Planning and Urban Geography and a Master of Architecture from Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the School of Architecture and Design at University American College Skopje, where he teaches urban planning and design. His research interests include urban transformation, regional observation, and GIS-based spatial analysis. In 2018, he received the Polish Embassy Award for his master's thesis "Landscape Infrastructure – Ecology as a Generative Tool", was a Thesaurus Poloniae fellow in Krakow, and completed the Erasmus+ "Possible" program in sustainable leadership. He co-authored the book *Palimpsest Prilep: Towers, Houses and Gardens* (2024). He was Assistant Coordinator for the Erasmus+ project ENABLE and a researcher in the Creative Europe project SPA:RE – Public Spaces Re:Claimed. In 2024, he served as Program Director of the Ohrid Summer School of Architecture and Design. He also collaborates on projects through the architectural studio k87a.*

**Maksim Naumovski**

Teaching assistant, School of Architecture and Design, University American College Skopje, Treta Makedonska Brigada 60, Skopje 1000



*Maksim Naumovski earned his architecture degree from the Faculty of Architecture at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje in 2009 and received his Master's in Architecture from the University American College Skopje (UACS) in 2013. From 2014 to 2016, he worked as a teaching assistant at the Technical University of Vienna and as a practicing architect at Bosshard & Luchsinger Architekten AG in Vienna. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje and serves as a teaching assistant at the School of Architecture and Design at UACS. His research interests include the composition of the built environment and landscape structures. He co-authored the book *Palimpsest Prilep: Towers, Houses and Gardens* (2024). He was Project Coordinator for the Erasmus+ project ENABLE and a researcher in the Creative Europe project SPA:RE – Public Spaces Re:Claimed. From 2018 to 2023, he was Program Director of the Ohrid Summer School of Architecture and Design.*

### **Walking as Scenography: Reclaiming Urban Pedagogy through Embodied Practices of Hope**

This contribution presents an innovative pedagogical methodology rooted in urban scenography as a means to reframe how we teach and experience public spaces. Drawing from the course “Architecture and Space” at the University American College Skopje in North Macedonia, this approach merges walking-based observation, critical cartography, and performative engagement to foster a deeper understanding of urban wellbeing and community identity. The course treats walking not just as a method of spatial analysis but as a civic and hopeful act—a way of inscribing new narratives into the urban fabric through embodied experience and interaction.

In contrast to conventional urban design curricula in the Western Balkans and across Europe, which often focus on technical precision and regulatory frameworks, this methodology emphasizes human-centered learning, direct engagement with public space, and interdisciplinary dialogue. Students are introduced to the performative qualities of cities through sensory mapping, psychogeographic exploration, and material analysis, and they interact with residents to uncover lived experiences and urban memories. The act of walking becomes both research and resistance—an active method for reclaiming spaces, contesting urban fragmentation, and envisioning inclusive futures.

The case study of Chair, a neighborhood in Skopje marked by dense informal development and the erosion of public space, offers a grounded example of this methodology in practice. Here, students investigated the historical dissonance between master plans and lived realities, uncovering how spatial neglect and socio-political erasure have impacted wellbeing and identity. Through walking, interviews, and 1:x scale site representations, they reinterpreted the fragmented urban landscape, proposing scenographic interventions that foreground the role of community narratives and emotional geographies in urban design.

This learning methodology is offering a distinct epistemological approach that bridges artistic and urbanist perspectives. It proposes walking as a scenographic act—one that reclaims agency, reveals spatial “errors”, and cultivates a deeper, more hopeful connection to public space. Moreover, it advocates for a pedagogical shift: from the classroom to the street, from passive observation to embodied transformation, and from design as product to design as process and dialogue.

By situating walking as both method and metaphor, this approach nurtures a new generation of urban thinkers who are attuned to the sensory, emotional, and civic dimensions of public space. It challenges the reduction of walkability to metrics of efficiency and instead reclaims it as a spatial practice of care, resistance, and imagination—essential for fostering wellbeing in contemporary urban environments.



Keywords: Urban scenography, Embodied pedagogy, Walking as method, Public space and wellbeing, Civic imagination

Methodological Framework and Key Findings of the Urban Scenography Pedagogy: Chair Neighborhood Case Study (2019–2022)

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**Tadej Žaucer**

Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy - Transport Policy Directorate, Transport Policy Division



*Tadej Žaucer (1972), architect by profession, Head of the Transport Policy Division at the Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy of Slovenia. He is national coordinator for walking and pedestrians. His professional interests include transport policy, sustainable mobility, spatial planning and sustainable urban development. Relation between mobility and public space, is at the very centre of his interests. His work at the ministry focus on walking and pedestrians, parking policy and integration of urban and transport planning.*

*Before joining the Ministry, he worked as architect on several larger projects, as assistant for spatial and urban planning at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering and in Institute for Spatial Policies, an NGO he co-founded. He successfully participated in several architectural and urban design competitions in the past.*

**Paths to address walking on national level in Slovenia**

In 2022, Slovenia adopted the national Comprehensive Transport Planning Act, which provides the legislative foundation for sustainable urban mobility planning. Within the broad domain of walking, the Act establishes a legal framework for the Ministry of the Environment, Climate, and Energy to operate in three key ways:

**Strategic Approach:** The Act provides a framework for "SUMP-style" comprehensive transport plans at the municipal, regional, and national levels. To date, 180 out of 212 municipalities have adopted or are in the process of preparing such plans, as well as all 12 regions. The national comprehensive transport plan is also under preparation. Walking policy is an obligatory part of all comprehensive transport plans, though the scope of actions at the national level differs significantly from those at the local or regional level.

**Hands-on Approach:** A practical approach is also essential. At the national level, co-funding is provided for walking infrastructure, which primarily means financing better public space. With financial support for improved solutions, we aim to elevate the quality of "normal" level infrastructure in municipalities as well. Through funding and obligatory use of guidelines with co-funded projects, we hope to gradually enhance walkability in towns and cities. Promoting best practices and supporting municipalities in implementing better projects is seen as the only viable path toward improving walking conditions overall.

**Integrated Approach:** It is crucial to understand that transport problems cannot be solved with transport solutions alone. A comprehensive, trans-sectoral approach is essential. Spatial planning plays a pivotal role in shaping the future transport system. Effective urban planning is even more critical for enhancing walkability at the local level than transport planning itself. Consequently, the Comprehensive Transport Planning Act provides the necessary legal basis for the Ministry to issue official sustainable mobility guidelines for urban planning. It also makes walkability and cycling network planning, and circulation planning mandatory components of municipal spatial plans.

Our experience shows that only coordinated and consistent work across all three levels will lead to gradual progress. While improvements may be hard to notice initially, once momentum is gained, it becomes difficult to reverse.

## **Become an AESOP TG PSUC Member**

Joining the AESOP Thematic Group on Public Spaces and Urban Cultures (TG PSUC) offers a valuable opportunity to connect with a diverse network of international researchers, practitioners and policymakers passionate about the vital role of public spaces in shaping our lives and living environments. As a member, you'll gain access to a vibrant platform for exchanging knowledge, fostering critical dialogue and staying informed about the latest research, innovative practices and policy developments.

To become a part of our community, we encourage you to visit the AESOP website (<https://www.aesop-planning.eu/>) and navigate to the Thematic Groups section, where you can find information about TG PSUC and subscribe to our mailing list to receive updates on events, calls for contributions and other news.

We warmly invite you to join us in advancing the understanding and innovation of public spaces!

To learn more about how to join AESOP's Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures (TG PSUC), please visit:

<https://aesop-planning.eu/thematic-groups/public-spaces-and-urban-cultures>



## URBAN PLANNING INSTITUTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

*Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (UIRS) is the leading national research institution in spatial planning, urban design and sustainable territorial development. Founded in 1955, UIRS combines research, expert analysis, and policy advisory work to address complex spatial challenges across all spatial scales. Its interdisciplinary team supports evidence-based planning and promotes inclusive, resilient and just spatial development. Through international collaboration and public engagement, UIRS helps shape Slovenia's spatial strategies and contributes to the European planning discourse.*

For more info: <https://www.urs.si/en-us/>

## POLYGON

Polygon – Centre for Research and Development in Culture is an art research platform that supports artistic research as both a practice and a process. Through collaboration, experimentation, and interdisciplinary exchange, it fosters new models of creation and engagement. Dedicated to cultural innovation, Polygon builds sustainable frameworks for artistic inquiry, shaping cultural understanding, influencing policy, and driving social transformation.

For more info: <http://www.polygon.hr/>

## DELTALAB

*DeltaLab – Center for Urban Transition, Architecture and Urbanism is a multidisciplinary platform established in 2018 at the University of Rijeka. It connects academia, culture, and practice through research, education and spatial production, with a focus on urban resilience and transformation. DeltaLab runs the interdisciplinary postgraduate program Urban Studies, curates international collaborations, and implements projects such as Žilavi Kampus and Sweet & Salt. Its activities span architecture, urbanism, new technologies and cultural production at local and international levels.*

For more info: <https://deltalab.hr/>

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