

What Kind of Cities Do We Want? Contemporary Transformations of Urban Visions, Practices, and Ethics (URBAN 2024–2027) www.citymaking.eu



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PROJECT TEAM

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During the second year of the project, the planned fieldwork was successfully completed, alongside additional research activities undertaken in response to the evolving dynamics of the project. Field research was conducted in the town of Hvar (energy transition, public spaces, local governance, and urban change) (Gulin Zrnić, Čapo), in Split (Čapo), Novska and Kutina (social innovation and urban entrepreneurship) (Čapo, Gulin Zrnić, Rubić), on Mt. Medvednica (leisure practices among urban populations) (Đurin), in San Diego (park use and management, and the use of digital tools for citizen mobilisation in placemaking) (Đurin), in Karlovac and Petrinja (historic city-centre revitalisation and post-earthquake reconstruction) (Tkalčić Simetić), in Ljubljana (activities related to climate-neutral cities) (Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić, Rubić, Đurin), and in the settlements of Bratuš and Krvavica near Makarska (local community needs in the context of spatial planning) (Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić). Research on archival materials (film and media collections) continued, together with the monitoring of current national and European policy documents concerning urban development strategies, and participation in professional conferences relevant to the project's research themes (e.g. Smart Cities, Meeting G2). Several thematic research strands were further expanded. Research on digital technologies and leisure in urban contexts broadened to include outdoor education and environmental awareness related to climate change and biodiversity. Migration research became more explicitly focused on return migrants and the forms of intangible capital through which they influence changing social practices and local (urban) development. Research on urban futures and visions of cities moved beyond document analysis towards participatory research with local communities in the context of spatial planning practices. Part of the fieldwork was carried out in collaboration with the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology at the University of Zadar (Karlovac), the civil society organisation *Pravo na grad* and the civic initiative *Društvo i prostor* (Bratuš and Krvavica), as well as within the framework of the bilateral project *Cities and Futures: Ethnological and Cultural Anthropological Research* (FUTURB) (MZOM 2025 - 2026), led by project team member Tihana Rubić. Since eligibility for this bilateral project required its thematic alignment with the ongoing URBAN project, joint study visits to the ZRC SAZU Research Centre in Ljubljana were organised and implemented.

Alongside empirical research, continuous scholarly work was undertaken throughout the reporting period. This included preparations for field research (all project members); doctoral dissertation writing (Tkalčić Simetić); preparation of university teaching on project-related themes and methodology (the graduate course *Urban*

Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Gulin Zrnić; invited lectures within other university courses by Gulin Zrnić and Tkalčić Simetić); development of university-level educational workshops (Gulin Zrnić); further conceptualisation of research on return migration to cities and local communities (Čapo); preparation of applications for competitive funding schemes (COST Action, Gulin Zrnić; Swiss–Croatian Cooperation Programme, Gulin Zrnić, Rubić and Tkalčić Simetić); preparation of conference presentations (Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić, Rubić); development of an optional educational programme on urban neighbourhoods for primary schools (Gulin Zrnić); writing a new chapter and editing a revised edition of an authored scholarly book (submitted for funding) (Gulin Zrnić); preparation of scientific and professional publications (articles, reviews, blog posts) on project-related topics (Čapo, Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić); supervision of three doctoral students and organisation of a doctoral workshop (Gulin Zrnić); collaboration in museum exhibition, drawing on project materials (Rubić); and peer reviewing of journal articles, books, research proposals, dissertation proposals, and doctoral theses (all project members). Professional development activities included webinars on communicating scientific results to diverse audiences (Gulin Zrnić, Rubić), crisis communication with vulnerable populations in disaster contexts (Tkalčić Simetić), and a short-term research mobility at ZRC SAZU in Ljubljana (Tkalčić Simetić). In addition, project members regularly attended webinars related to the URBACT programme (European Commission) and Horizon Europe Cluster 2 (Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society; New European Bauhaus) (Gulin Zrnić), in order to monitor forthcoming funding opportunities and training initiatives.

During the second project year, project members delivered three presentations at international scientific conferences (Gulin Zrnić, Rubić, Tkalčić Simetić), published eight scientific and professional publications (Čapo, Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić). PhD candidate Tkalčić Simetić completed her doctoral dissertation, submitted it for evaluation, and received a positive assessment from the doctoral committee at the University of Zadar; the dissertation defence is scheduled for January 2026.

As part of the project's public dissemination, four educational workshops (Gulin Zrnić), two public lectures (Rubić, Tkalčić Simetić), two media interviews (Gulin Zrnić), participation in two book launches (Rubić, Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić), and collaboration in the preparation of the exhibition *Z/zemlja*, which incorporates findings from project research (Rubić), were realised. A cooperation agreement was also concluded between the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research and the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb. The co-authored volume *Primjenjena antropologija (Applied Anthropology)* by Tihana Rubić (co-authored with Marijana Belaj), produced within the framework of the project, received the annual award of the Croatian Ethnological Society. Project members collaborated with civil society organisations in developing interdisciplinary programmes promoting citizen participation (Gulin Zrnić, Tkalčić Simetić, Rubić).

Project members participated in the preparation of collaborative applications for competitive funding schemes, including a COST Action proposal entitled *Resilient Town Centres and Urban Regeneration in the Digital Transition* (coordinated by the University of Lisbon) (Gulin Zrnić), and a proposal submitted to the Swiss–Croatian Cooperation Programme entitled *PARTICIPARE – Citizen Participation and Spatial Planning: Developing Qualitative Approaches, Youth Engagement, and Local Community Inclusion*, coordinated by the civil society organisation *Pravo na grad* (Gulin Zrnić, Rubić, Tkalčić Simetić).

Regular project meetings were held throughout the year, together with coordination meetings with colleagues from ZRC SAZU (Ljubljana, Slovenia) aimed at developing the international FUTURUS platform for research on urban futures, which also constitutes one of the project's institutional strategic objectives. An inter-project and inter-institutional cooperation agreement was concluded, the scope of collaboration was defined, and an activity plan for the following year was prepared. As part of the platform's further development, discussions were initiated with several early-career researchers employed at international higher education institutions and with a technology company interested in collaborating with the humanities in the development of socially relevant digital / AI tools. A project brochure was produced, and the project website (*citymaking.eu*), which serves as the main platform for disseminating URBAN project activities, was redesigned to incorporate the activities of the FUTURUS platform.

Conferences

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. 2025. Walking ethnographies: cultural anthropological steps along Zagreb streets. *Urban Cultures, Public Space, and Hope*, 16.-18. 06. 2025., Ljubljana-Rijeka-Cres, organisation by Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) + Urbanistički institut Republike Slovenije + Udruga Polygon – Centar za kulturna istraživanja i razvoj projekata + Sveučilište u Rijeci DELTALAB – Centar za urbanu tranziciju, arhitekturu i urbanizam.

Tkalčić Simetić, Mirna. 2025. Unwriting the Post-Earthquake City: A Street Art Intervention, *SIEF: Unwriting*, 3.-06. 06. 2025., Aberdeen.

Tihana Rubić (with Ivan Grkeš). An ethnologist's and art photographer's perspective of marginalised social groups in the interwar period: an insight into the photographic work of Milovan Gavazzi and Tošo Dabac, *SIEF: Unwriting*, 03. - 06. 06. 2025., online (Aberdeen).

Academic and professional articles

Čapo, Jasna. 2025. Otočne priče: *Susak 1- iseljeničke fešte*
<https://www.citymaking.eu/rezultati/futures-blog-otocne-price-susak-iseljenicke-feste/>

Čapo, Jasna. 2025. *Otočne priče: Susak 2 - privrženost Amerikanaca otoku*
<https://www.citymaking.eu/rezultati/futures-blog-otocne-price-susak-privrzenost-amerikanaca-otoku/>

Čapo, Jasna. 2025. *Otočne priče: Susak 3 - iseljeničke i lokalne vizije budućnosti*
<https://www.citymaking.eu/rezultati/futures-blog-otocne-price-susak-iseljenicke-i-lokalne-vizije-buducnosti/>

Čapo, Jasna. 2025. *Hoću lift, ali mogu li ga imati?*
<https://www.citymaking.eu/rezultati/futures-blog-gradovi-i-liftovi-vizije-i-stvarnost/>

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. 2025. Šetnja zagrebačkim trgovima // *Matica : mjesečna revija za hrvatske zajednice u svijetu* 5: str. 54-58

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. 2025. Humanisti u realnom sektoru ili o „čudnim poslovima“ etnologa i kulturnih antropologa // *Republika* (Zagreb), 81: str. 9-10; 92-98

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. 2025. Prikaz knjige *Primijenjena antropologija: potencijali i karijere* // *Etnološka tribina : godišnjak Hrvatskog etnološkog društva*, 55 (2025), 48; 215-217

Tkalčić Simetić, Mirna. 2025. „Čekajući obnovu. Heterokroničnost petrinjskih ruševina.“ U *Potreseni. Znanstvenohumanistički i umjetnički dosezi banijskog potresa*. Renata Jambrešić Kirin, Jelena Marković i Ines Prica, eds. Zagreb: IEF.

Professional training / Short-term mobility

Rubić Tihana and Valentina Gulin Zrnić. *Research Communication for Academics*. Instats, Institute for Statistical and Data Science, Melbourne, Marina Gorzig, webinar, 19. 08. 2025.

Tkalčić Simetić, Mirna. How can we reach people with vulnerabilities in disasters?: Crisis Communication and Engagement. Sonar Cities Webinar, 24. 11. 2025.

Tkalčić Simetić, Mirna. Training and short-term mobility, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 7.-15. 12. 2025.

Collaborations and applied science

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Saša Poljak Istenič, 2025. Workshop *Kakve gradove želimo?*, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 07. 03. 2025.

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Saša Poljak Istenič, 2025. Workshop *Living in a Future City*, Sveučilište u Ljubljani, Ljubljana, 20. 05. 2025.

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Saša Poljak Istenič. 2025. Workshop *Privatni kutak u javnom prostoru*, Etnografski muzej Zagreb, Zagreb, 10. 06. 2025.

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Saša Poljak Istenič, 2025. Workshop *Future Living in a Future City*, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 17. 11. 2025.

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. University course Urban anthropology, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Odsjek etnologija i kulturna antropologija

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Mirna Tkalčić Simetić. Cooperation with NGO Pravo na grad / Right to the City and civil initiative Društvo i prostor / Society and Space – models for civic participation in urban planning

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Mirna Tkalčić Simetić. Lecture – Cultural Anthropological Methodology, Bratuš, 09. 10. 2025.

Rubić, Tihana. Collaboration with project themes within the exhibiton „Z/zemlja“ (Ethnographic Museum Zagreb), opening 25. 11. 2025.

Tkalčić Simetić, Mirna. Guest lecturer within the course Terenske vježbe / Fieldwork exercise (Tomislav Augustinčić), Karlovac, 09. - 12. 5. 2025.

Popular dissemination

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina and Tihana Rubić. 2025. Book - launch Marijana Belaj & Tihana Rubić, *Primijenjena antropologija; Potencijali i karijere* (2024), Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 06. 03. 2025.

Tkalčić Simetić, Mirna. 2025. Book - launch *Potreseni* (2025), interview, Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku, 02. 12. 2025.

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. 2025. TV interview *Kod nas doma*, HRT 1, 19. 03. 2025.

Gulin Zrnić, Valentina. 2025. Newspaper interview, Obzor, *Večernji list*, 06. 09. 2025.

