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A VISION OF A FUTURE CITY: THE HORIZON 2050
A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

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BUDUĆNOST KOJA SE TEK NAZIRE

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The publication "A Vision of a Future City: THE HORIZON 2050" authored by project leader and editor-in-chief emeritus Prof. Dr. Tihomir Jukić from the Department of Urbanism, Spatial Planning and Landscape Architecture (KUPPPA) at the Faculty of Architecture, Zagreb University, was published in 2025 with the editorial collaboration of Kristina Perkov and Mateja Nosil Mešić.

This work presents the results of several years of research driven by the desire to better understand the dynamics of urban transformation – its causes, trajectories, and the possibilities for shaping desirable urban futures. It begins with a critique of unimaginative and fragmented approaches to contemporary urban challenges in today's unstable political, social, and economic circumstances at the city, state, and European levels.

The research highlights concepts and models relevant for future-oriented urban planning. By examining examples of good practice, long-term planning concepts in European cities, and influential documents and charters, the author aims to stimulate interdisciplinary dialogue that can support the development of visions for Zagreb and other Croatian cities.

The publication integrates the outcomes from the courses *Workshop 3 – Urbanism* and *Research Seminar*, conducted between 2016 and 2022. Therefore, a special value of the book stems from the contributions of forty students who, over several generations, participated in developing its content as part of their seminar and research projects under the mentorship of Prof. Jukić.

The publication created in collaboration with students testifies to the successful outcomes of teaching innovative courses, significantly marked by a research-based approach that has improved and modernised the teaching of urbanism. Through this approach, students critically examined European strategies and city development plans, learning how to select context-appropriate models based on the specific characteristics, needs, and heritage of each city, while also responding to global trends and challenges.

The research behind the publication was further supported by the scientific project *Sustainable Models of Regeneration in Contemporary Strategies of European Cities* (2023-2024), conducted at the Faculty of Architecture. Its objective – to understand urban processes and anticipate desirable development models – aligns with the core themes of the publication. Taken together, the findings from both teaching and scientific research underscore the importance of long-term, integrated, interdisciplinary, and inclusive planning.

The publication Horizon 2050 is conceived as a three-fold view of the city of the future, and can be approached on several levels:

– It opens an interdisciplinary perspective through a series of shorter essays by invited authors from fields ranging from urbanism and sociology to economics and technology, demonstrating that the city of the future should and must be viewed in a broader social and cultural context.

– It offers an overview of contemporary trends through a selection of current concepts and approaches to city planning, thereby serving as a valuable resource for students, researchers, and professionals. It presents examples of good practice from European cities that are already embodying forward-looking visions through strategic planning.

Thus, the publication extends beyond the academic sphere, becoming a tool for shaping public policies and encouraging a broader societal debate. It reminds us that planning the future city is not merely a technical task but a cultural and ethical responsibility – an expression of the kind of society we aspire to become. The book is intended for professionals, scholars, and students in architecture, urbanism, spatial planning, and landscape architects, as well as the wider public. It is structured into six methodologically coherent chapters:

The first chapter, *Good Cities / Better Life*, provides an introductory review by Prof. Jukić on the topic, motivation and objectives of the research, as well as the results achieved.

The second chapter, *Contemporary Tendencies of Cities*, analyses various conceptual approaches to strategic city planning that, by focusing on individual aspects of sustainability, strive to achieve healthier, greener, safer and more liveable cities.

The third chapter, *City & ...*, offers an overview of the most important urban functions through concepts of future development. It examines housing – with particular emphasis on affordable housing – followed by the economy, the role of public spaces and social standards, and the relationship between rural and urban space, tourism and leisure.

The fourth chapter, *The City – Charters, Declarations, Agendas*, reviews key documents that situate city planning within the context of climate change, demographic challenges, and economic transformation, providing essential principles for planning and managing cities.

The fifth chapter, *Visions of City Development by 2050*, analyses seventeen European cities and the concepts underpinning their development

The sixth chapter, The Desirable Future of Zagreb, presents guidelines for the city's future development, addressing both individual areas and thematic units.

Each chapter is accompanied by an Appendix – a contribution to the discussion of visions of the city by experts in various fields, including economics, sociology, philosophy, landscape and ecological sustainability, AI and city management, tourism, architecture, and urbanism. In this way, the publication underscores one of the fundamental premises of successful future-oriented urban planning: the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach.

Systematically collected, analysed, and commented research materials represent a significant contribution to methods of teaching urbanism, serve as an incentive for essential professional discussions, and provide an important starting point for future interdisciplinary approaches to scientific research on the phenomenon of the contemporary city.