

Special Session Proposal for the 65th ERSA Congress, under the theme “Global Challenges and Regional Responses in a Transition Era” to be held from 25th to 28th August 2026 at Sofia (Bulgaria). <https://ersa.eventsair.com/ersa2026/call-for-special-session>

General Theme: G22 Housing, Real Estate, Urban Renewal, Gentrification, Displacement, Urban Policy and Urban Transformation, Living Conditions, Built Environment

Title: *RETHINKING PUBLIC SPACE AND PLANNING STRATEGIES IN URBAN AND POST-SUBURBAN AREAS FOR REGENERATING LIVABLE ENVIRONMENTS.*

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The proposed Special Session focuses on regenerating public spaces in neighbourhoods of suburban/peripheral areas addressing the challenges of decarbonizing, liveability, ensuring sustainability and mobilising driving forces for social and territorial cohesion. At its core, the project employs a Local-Based Strategies (LBSs) catalogue that harmonises urban design, mobility frameworks and energy systems to rejuvenate these regions identified as post-suburban areas⁽¹⁾. These post-suburban areas as self-standing territories, vital to the sustainable urban ecosystem and no longer solely dependent on the central city. By rethinking peri-urban regions not as peripheral extensions but as integral components of a sustainable urban fabric, the Special Session aim to increment critical analysis of the way urban and suburban integrated planning should be approached. This ambition extends beyond the state of the art by: (i) leveraging emerging entropic urbanistic methodologies; (ii) explore the inherent disorder in suburban layouts to create flexible, adaptive solutions; and (iii) harnesses the unique spatial dynamics of these areas for efficient planning. Focusing on the public and common spaces⁽²⁾ and citizens to co-create participative process⁽³⁾, these efforts will serve to guide future interventions in redesigning the urban spaces based on the principle of proximity, which combines ecological, social and economic objectives into cohesive urban solutions and encourages interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure holistic and replicable outcomes to new approaches on spatial sciences, urban and territorial planning. The Special Session also aim to produce debate and research innovation on new interdisciplinary concepts in urbanism and robust evaluation frameworks by developing more inclusive, and aesthetically beautiful architecture⁽⁴⁾ and plans that integrate existing physical infrastructure with active mobility and energy systems, while improving liveable, adaptability, and environmentally quality in public peri-urban spaces.

References:

(1) Marques, C. A. (2019). Planeamento Cultural Urbano em Áreas Metropolitanas Revitalização dos espaços pós-suburbanos. Ed. Caleidoscópio. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30618/978-989-658-586-0>

(2) Report of the EU Member State Expert Group 2021 Towards a shared culture of architecture investing in a high-quality living environment for everyone.

(3) New Leipzig Charter- The transformative power of cities for the common good. Adopted at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Matters on 30 November 2020.

(4) Towards a Shared Culture of Architecture: Investing in a High-Quality Living Environment for Everyone. EU Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022.