

19-21 de Octubre 2022 | Granada

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON REGIONAL SCIENCE

*Challenges, policies and governance of the territories in the post-covid era*

*Desafíos, políticas y gobernanza de los territorios en la era post-covid*

XLVII REUNIÓN DE ESTUDIOS REGIONALES

XIV CONGRESO AACR



## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

### What attracts Bohemians to stay in a city? The case study of Ljubljana.

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**Subject area:** Turismo, cultura y patrimonio.

**Abstract:** (*minimum 1500 words*)

A worldwide structural transformation is occurring last decades. Industry and manufacturing are being relocated from Europe and USA, mainly to Asia. Deindustrialisation is having a great impact in cities, more specifically on districts with industrial sites. Many spaces in cities remain empty when industries are relocated or just closed. Thus, along the years arises the need of the revitalisation of those brown-fields or decayed urban areas.

Cities are changing and also their interests. Urban economic development shifts its focus from industrial recruitment to human capital development, including art and culture, (Curri, 2007; Stern et al., 2010). In this way, culture becomes an important economic sector which drives economic and social development in the cities and also promotes the revitalization of brown-field sites (Grodach, 2011).

On the one hand, creative industries have often proved an effective driving force of urban regeneration. A number of interesting transformations have been taking place in many cities, where cultural and creative industries have occupied and re-used old industrial grounds (Hutton, 2000; Pratt, 2009). The power of culture-based investment to transform previously abandoned areas and to inject new life into tired or conventional urban districts has been successful over the years.

On the other hand, artists and bohemians<sup>1</sup> have also become very important agents of revitalization of blighted neighbourhoods, transforming empty warehouses and industrial abandoned buildings into bohemian enclaves. This fact may occur to a greater extent when there is a noted lack of private developers or particularly in times of economic downturn. In this way, the artists and the art are considered a redevelopment tool, as well as a way to “brand” place (McCarthy, 2006; Currid, 2009; Evans, 2009). As Comunian et al. (2010) noticed, early gentrifiers may belong to low-income artists or bohemians, which enhance the attractiveness and aesthetics of certain districts.

There is a lot of research with relation to the factors that attract creative class and bohemians to specific areas (Alfken et al. (2015)). On this subject, there is clear evidence that creative people are attracted to those places more conducive to creative activity, with the adequate level of openness, tolerance, talent and technology, as Florida (2002a) pointed out. The combination of the built environment, with the appropriate amenities, and the natural environment; as well as the diversity of different nationalities, religions, and sexual orientations; along with the effervescence of the street life, arts, cultural activities and music are some of the main determinants that draw creative people to certain places.

Economists and social scientists have paid also attention both to the location decisions of cultural and creative industries (Lazzaretti et al., 2008; Chapain et al., 2013; Grodach et al., 2014) and to the location decisions of creative people, more concretely bohemians, (Kozina and Bole, 2017a). Furthermore, a vast literature studied which can be the impacts of settlement of bohemians in a city. This settlement will not have an immediate direct impact in the city, but it is an ongoing and dynamic process. It may bring many spill-over effects and amenities to the local economy, like second-hand bookstores or vintage clothing stores; it can be used in tourism development and local branding; or, from another perspective, it can create gentrification. But, as the most important point, the settlement of bohemians in a city can create a more committed and open city, with strong values of tolerance, respect and equality.

The atmosphere created in a city makes the difference and, as Florida said: ‘some cities fail to grow because they are not sufficiently tolerant and open, characteristics that are advantageous in the recruitment and retention of creative individuals and bohemians’

In this way, we are trying to go a step further, by giving more prominence to the Artistic part of the Creative class – bohemians – and by attempting to find out what are the real characteristics that push bohemians to stay in a specific location. Are the tolerance and the openness the most valued factors to live in a city and the ones that retain them there? Or, are there other factors that are also important to them?

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<sup>1</sup> When we speak of Bohemians, we refer to the more ‘artistic’ part of the ‘creative class’.

## **Why Ljubljana?**

Cities have long been cauldrons of creativity and they have been the drivers for concentrating of human creativity. From Ancient Greece, with Athens, to present-day Europe, with London, Paris or Berlin, passing through San Francisco and Toronto. This concept is not new but, in recent decades, creativity has become the main driving force in the development and growth of the cities. As Florida pointed out, an attractive place doesn't have to be a big city, but it does have to be cosmopolitan.

The vast majority of the studies about the contemporary discourse on creativity and the field of culture as one of the most proactive pillars of the society were mostly aimed at North America and Western Europe. However, few studies have been done on countries in the periphery or outskirts of Europe.

According to the Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region (RDA LUR), Ljubljana is a city with a great knowledge and creative potential. More than 500,000 people live in the region and they are highly educated, creative, innovative and enterprising, and create the highest added value per employee in Slovenia.

In 2010, the Municipality of Ljubljana participated in the Central European project 'A Second Chance: From Industrial Use to Creative Impulse', joining the cities of Nuremberg (former AEG factory), Leipzig (HALLE 14 of the former Cotton Spinning Mill), Venice (the Arsenale), and Krakow (the tram depot in the St Lawrence district). The project aimed to develop innovative strategies and concepts to upgrade the former industrial site into a key cultural hub in the city (Tovarna Rog). Since then, public institutions and the private sector have been working together to innovative methods and strategies that transform former industrial space in cultural centres, developing a heritage and landmarked former industrial sites.

Cerar (2013) argued that the 'Creative Cities Project' promotes the potential of the creative industries as regional development factors producing jobs and profits. Creative Cities combines the narrative of creative economy with that of urban regeneration, a concept based on renewal with added emphasis on social and economic issues.

Kozina and Bole (2017a) found that bohemians represented around 1.2% of the total population of the city of Ljubljana, in 2011; and, from 2000 to 2011, the number of bohemians increased in the city by 31.9%, being able to compare Ljubljana with other cities in Northern and Western Europe. This comparability can be done as well with the concentration of the creative class and creative industries in Ljubljana, being comparable to similarly-sized cities in Northern and Western Europe (Kozina and Bole, 2017b). Kozina and Bole (2017b) also argued that changes in the historic city centre of Ljubljana were happening, but they were still going hand-in-hand with cultural production and gentrification was not very noticeable. In fact, Ley (2003) described gentrification as a process whereby cultural production is replaced by cultural economies.

For these reasons, we are interested in Ljubljana and we carry out a survey in order to find out what are the factors that attract bohemians to live in Ljubljana and retain them to the city. By knowing their preferences, we can design appropriate public policies to stimulate their recruitment and retention.

This survey is aimed at bohemians in Ljubljana and these are classified as follows:

- 2451 - Authors Journalists and other Writers
- 2452 - Sculptors, Painters and related Artists
- 2453 - Composers, Musicians and Singers
- 2454 - Choreographers and Dancers
- 2455 - Film, Stage and related Actors and Directors
- 3131 - Photographers and Image and Sound Recording Equipment Operators
- 3471 - Decorators and Commercial Designers
- 3472 - Radio, Television and other Announcers
- 3473 - Street, Night-club and related Musicians, Singers and Dancers
- 3474 - Clowns, Magicians, Acrobats and related Associate Professionals
- 5210 - Fashion and other Models
- 7331 - Handicraft Workers in Wood and related Materials
- 7332 - Handicraft Workers in Textile, Leather and related Materials

**Keywords:** *Bohemians, culture, gentrification, public policies.*

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