

## Roundtable Agenda

Networking event- 5922721621160568

### Urban Transformation in Socialist and Post-Socialist Countries in Response to the Pandemic: Lessons Learned

JUNE 28, 2022, 14:30 – 16:00 NE80

International Congress Centre (MCK), Katowice, Poland

Free Webinar Registration:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_AnyuTw5gTISp1kITiUb5A](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AnyuTw5gTISp1kITiUb5A)

Free Onsite Registration:

<https://www.unevents.org/Home/Register>

- **EVENT ORGANIZERS:**

Dr. **Huhua Cao** is currently a cross-appointed professor between the Department of Geography and the School of International Development & Global Studies at the University of Ottawa in Canada. He specializes in urban studies, particularly on topics related to city, population, mobility and environment, from an international perspective with the use of advanced geospatial and statistical analysis. Professor Cao has directed various national and international transdisciplinary research and training projects that have received the important external funding from Canada, European Union, China, and Cameroon. He has also written numerous books, articles, chapters and reports while collaborating with academics, professionals, and politicians all over the world. Since 2015, as the founding co-president, Dr. Cao has led a joint initiative with UN-Habitat: The International Conference on Canadian, Chinese and African Sustainable Urbanization (ICCCASU). ICCCASU is an international think-tank for exchange and cooperation on issues relating to sustainable urban development, focusing on Canada, China and Africa.

Dr. **Cezar Morar** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning. He is interested in and have broad experience with sustainable development and reuse of potentially contaminated and abandoned sites, or “brownfields” as these sites are common to many countries in Europe and North America. Dr. Morar publishes frequently on the topic of tourism, brownfields, planning and sustainable development. He had the opportunity to work on a number of diverse international research and development projects in Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia, Canada, United States. Dr. Morar serves as a subject matter expert to evaluate project proposals submitted for funding under various programs financed by the European Union. In 2019

Dr. Morar conducted research at the University of Illinois at Chicago, under the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program.

Mr. **Allan Cain** (O.C.) is the founding director of Development Workshop Angola, and an adjunct research professor at Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism at Carleton University in Canada. He is an architect, specialist in project management, participatory planning, sustainable urban development and water & sanitation. He has lived and worked in Africa for the last 35 years and has acquired a deep understanding of the local environment and development initiatives. Mr. Cain was awarded an Order of Canada in 2004 for his work in international development and contribution to peacebuilding in Angola. He has also won several other awards for his work in international development. He has worked as a consultant and lead research projects for the World Bank, UN-Habitat, the European Union and other international organizations. Mr. Cain has lectured at the universities in Canada, China, Angola, Norway, USA, South Africa and UK. He is a member of the advisory board for Environment & Urbanism Journal of the International Institute for Environment & Development (IIED) and on the boards of several other development institutions. His articles and papers have been published widely in international journals.

- **MASTER OF CEREMONIES:**

Dr. **Claude Meutchehe Ngomsi** is the Regional Adviser in charge of Central Africa Region, Mauritania, Guinea and Madagascar as Programme Management Officer at the Regional Office for Africa at UN-Habitat since January 2020. He previously served as Human Settlements Officer in charge of Francophone countries in Africa (November 2015-December 2019). He has more 20 years of experience in international urban development, housing, and crime and conflict prevention. He led the formulation of the Rwanda National Urbanisation Policy between 2013 and 2015, and the modernization of the Ouagadougou Municipal Police by establishing the Urban Safety Observatory in Ouagadougou, in Burkina Faso (2010 to 2013). He holds a Ph.D. in Urban Geography and Crime Prevention (University of Yaoundé I) and a master's in Human Geography.

Dr. **Hong Wang** is an associate professor at the School of Economics at Shanghai University in China. She mainly focuses on the research of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development. She has supervised numerous national and international postgraduate students from Poland, Brazil, Uganda, Ganna, Norway, Finland, etc. In 2018, her Polish postgraduate student, Mikolaj Wozniak, won the second prize in the Excellent Graduation Thesis Competition co-sponsored by the Poland-China Business Council.

- **GUEST SPEAKERS:**

**Rong Yang**

Inter-regional Advisor  
Regional Programmes Division  
UN-Habitat

Mr. Rong Yang is the inter-regional advisor of Regional Programmes Division at UN-Habitat based at its Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, and involving in UN-Habitat project cycle management in the Division since 2016. He is also the focal point of UN-Habitat with Government of China and in charge of coordinating the general matters of cooperation with China including World Cities Day Celebration, International conference and training focusing on knowledge exchange regarding sustainable urbanization, cooperation project development and implementation with Chinese partners, collaboration based on Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and South-South Cooperation Assistant Fund etc. From 2008 to 2016, Mr. Rong Yang used to work as Director-General of Center of Science & Technology and Industrialization, and Director-General of Department of Building Energy Efficiency and Science & Technology in the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MOHURD) of China, was mainly focusing on promoting development of green building, building energy efficiency, smart city, advanced building technology application and related international cooperation in China. From 2001 to 2003, he used to be the Deputy Permanent Representative of China Mission to UN-Habitat.

**Ilies Alexandru**

Faculty of Geography  
University of Oradea  
Oradea, Romania

Professor Ilies Alexandru is the Dean of the Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport at the University of Oradea. The findings of his research on Political Geography were presented at numerous international conferences abroad and in Romania. He has organized or co-organized several international conferences and sessions in Romania and Poland. He published more than 10 books and monographs, as well as more than 100 articles published in national and international peer-reviewed scientific journals. Since 2005, Dr. Alexandru has nominated as a full professor at the University of Gdansk, Poland. He is currently member of several scientific and evaluating commissions at Romanian Ministries and abroad. In 2009 he was awarded the price of the Hungarian Academy for Science, and the price of the Romanian Academy for Science in 2016.

**Olivier Dehoorne**

Professor  
Université des Antilles  
French-Martinique

Dr. Olivier Dehoorne is a professor at the University of Antilles and an associate professor at Laval University in Canada. He is also the editor of the journal “Etudes Caribéennes” and the assistant director of the University of Antilles Press. He is responsible for the new master's program in regional development studies in Guadeloupe campus. Within the framework of this international master's studies program, students will learn the issues of urban planning and development, as well as the fight against poverty in the various countries of the Caribbean. For the past twenty years, Dr. Dehoorne has been providing expertise on these urban issues in various Caribbean islands.

- **MODERATORS:**

**Cezar Morar**

Associate Professor  
Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning  
Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport  
University of Oradea  
Romania

Dr. Cezar Morar is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning. He is interested in and have broad experience with sustainable development and reuse of potentially contaminated and abandoned sites, or “brownfields” as these sites are common to many countries in Europe and North America. Dr. Morar publishes frequently on the topic of tourism, brownfields, planning and sustainable development. He had the opportunity to work on a number of diverse international research and development projects in Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia, Canada, United States. Dr. Morar serves as a subject matter expert to evaluate project proposals submitted for funding under various programs financed by the European Union. In 2019 Dr. Morar conducted research at the University of Illinois at Chicago, under the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program.

**Benjamin Gianni**

Associate Professor  
Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, Canada

Benjamin Gianni is an Associate Professor in the Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism at Carleton University where he heads the Urbanism program. Mr. Gianni received a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and an M. Arch. from Yale University. He served as Director of the School of Architecture at Carleton University from 1992-2000 and Director of the School of Information Technology from 2003-2006. Professor Gianni's research interests focus on the areas of housing and urban development. Of particular interest are 1) public housing constructed in the decades following WWII in Europe and North America, and its redevelopment from the 1990s onward, 2) urbanization, suburbanization and the study of large-scale housing ensembles in contemporary China, questioning the legacy of modernism and its transposition to different cultural and temporal contexts, and 3) the redevelopment of informal settlements in China, India and Africa, using design as a form of research to explore adaptable, culturally resonant and market-friendly approaches to redevelopment.

- **ROUNDTABLE SPEAKERS:**

### **The Management of COVID-19 in Cities in Socialist and Post-Socialist Countries**

#### **John Zacharias**

Chair Professor  
Peking University  
Beijing, China

The move from strict socialism to a market orientation, the promotion of entrepreneurship and the embrace of a globalized flow of people and goods, has had consequences on the management of the pandemic. The new reliance on individual agency is consistent with directives to take personal measures to combat the spread of the virus, while the relationship with collective measures remains unclear. Are lockdowns a suspension of the process leading to more personal autonomy while waiting for the crisis to end, or evidence of a new division of responsibilities and action between government and the governed? Public health has not been a priority of governments in the shift to the market model. Draconian measures to curb infections and prevent health systems from being overwhelmed could be seen as a last resort in those countries. Will the anticipated return to a globalized market mean a return to "business as usual," or will governments persist in their new-found *raison d'être* of protecting public health?

**Bio:** Dr. John Zacharias is currently Chair Professor at Peking University where he runs the Laboratory on Urban Process Modelling and Applications. He is interested in people environment relations, with a focus on urban planning, transport planning and urban design. How people respond to the planned and designed environment is studied using observation, remote sensing, and participation of sample populations in surveys and experiments. Prior to his appointment at Peking University in 2012 he was long-time Director of the Urban Studies Programme and the

Urban Planning Programme, housed in the Department of Geography, Planning and Environment, where he also served as Chair for several years.

### **Post-covid small vs large: on the specific resilience of the smaller towns in Poland**

#### **Ewa Korcelli-Olejniczak**

Associate Professor  
Polish Academy of Sciences  
Warsaw, Poland

It can be assumed that the covid-19 pandemic of 2020-2020 will have caused both short- and long-term effects that transformed cities worldwide, their location, heritage, or size notwithstanding. In that sense, the phenomenon is universal and pertains both to the global cities of the North and small towns in double-periphery settings. While no urban characteristic has allowed for immunity of the systems, there is some evidence of the relation between size and urban form on one side and a specific resilience observed in the social and economic dimensions. In the light of an inquiry in selected small towns of North-Eastern Poland (research initially carried out in 2019 and recently revisited - May 2022), the effects of covid on local businesses were in most cases of a non-permanent character. This is ascribed primarily to their relative population growth, related to temporary returns of exurbanites - students and professionals from larger cities working from hometowns. Additionally, in locations characterized by rich natural amenities and touristic functions, the latter was supported by a minor permanent migration of city dwellers and, subsequently, new housing investments.

**Bio:** Ewa Korcelli-Olejniczak holds an MA in Applied Linguistics (University of Warsaw) and a Ph.D. in Human Geography (IGSO PAS). Since her Habilitation in 2013, she works as Associate Professor at the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization and conducts courses for students at the Pedagogical Department of the University of Warsaw. In her research, Ewa Korcelli-Olejniczak represents an interdisciplinary approach that encompasses a wide range of urban and regional studies. Her interests include both empirical and theoretical studies of metropolitan regions, functional relations between urban and rural areas, and intra-urban issues related to social diversity and social participation.

### **City form as a factor in relation to governance and urban culture after COVID-19 pandemic**

#### **Aleksandar Valjarević**

Associate Professor  
Department of Geospatial and Environmental Science  
Faculty of Geography  
University of Belgrade  
Belgrade, Serbia

The city of Belgrade is capital of Serbia. This city with more than 1,700,000 citizens has suburbs with specific infrastructure. According to change through the time and different political systems this city is can be divided on different parts with the different urban culture. The seven municipalities have four types of urban culture. Four municipalities have continuous urban culture, five have mix of urban and rural, six typical rural and two have modern urban culture. The last COVID-19 pandemic in the city of Belgrade produced changes and new face of urban culture. Now the dividing may be different analyzed and viewed. With the help of historical documents, GIS and numerical analysis the new relation of governance and urban culture was demystified.

**Bio:** Ph.D. **Aleksandar Valjarević**, is an associate professor at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Geography, Serbia. Ph.D. Aleksandar Valjarević also wrote three books and one monograph. Ph.D. Aleksandar Valjarević has more than 55 papers in the Journals from the SCI list.

### **Challenges of European Green Deal on urban green transition under post COVID-19 context**

#### **Gyula Nagy**

Associate Professor  
University of Szeged  
Szeged, Hungary

The extreme weather events, the recent COVID pandemic and the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war highlighted a long-known fact, Europe needs to change in several ways. The European Green Deal promotes green transition for countries to reach more sustainable living circumstances, to use greener energy, to start a transition pathway. Due to the countries' different socioeconomic and ecologic circumstances their transition position and process is different, some of them very advanced, some of them very burdened. Despite all the difficulties one thing is for sure, transition must be legitimate and empowered by the citizens. Participation must play key role in this process. In the post socialist countries, the pandemic made the level of participation even lower, which makes the transition even more complicated. The presentation introduces the challenges and planned intervention in 11 European pilot areas within an EU founded project called PHOENIX to rise citizen voices to reach a smoother transition.

**Bio:** Gyula NAGY has an MSc in Geography and a Ph.D. in Geosciences. He is an assistant lecturer at the University of Szeged, Hungary since 2012. His research focuses on environmental justice, urban development processes. Recently he is working on a H2020 project named PHOENIX which aims to rise citizens' voice in the EU through deliberative democratic tools in selected pilot areas.

### **Transformational Facets of Planning and Development in Face of the Pandemic: Insights from Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia**

#### **Kh Md Nahiduzzaman**

Associate Professor

Faculty of Applied Science,  
University of British Columbia (UBC)  
Okanagan, Canada

Although variable, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia went through somewhat positive transformations during the pandemic. Since the start of the post-social era, Laos has experienced rapid development, with high rates of urbanization and a lack of provision of basic services. Aiming to accelerate economic growth, the country has focused on infrastructure projects at the expense of basic amenities. Urban planning before, during, and after the pandemic remained “reactive,” adjusting zoning and regulatory frameworks in response to the evolving situations. In contrast with the socialistic era, bottom-up planning approaches, e.g., citizen participation and grassroots initiatives, played significant roles in containing the virus in Vietnam. Cambodia’s economy was kept alive with “tourist-centered” policies. The tourist industry was actively engaged in fighting the pandemic through stringent COVID-19 protocols. Although imposed by the central government, policies and protocols were quickly adopted by citizens and tourists. Such effective “partnership” is poised to have a positive impact on planning, development, and urbanization in the post-pandemic era.

**Bio:** Prior to joining the University of British Columbia Okanagan, Dr. **Nahiduzzaman** held faculty positions at the Department of City and Regional Planning in KFUPM (Saudi Arabia) and at the Department of Urban Planning and the Environment in the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden). His research interests are urban resilience, transformational planning, and environmental studies.