

News about participation at the EURA 2026 Conference

One of our Working Group 4 members (Innovation through creative and circular technologies), Jovana Stefanovic, Junior Research Assistant at the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Architecture, participated in the prestigious annual conference of the European Urban Research Association (EURA 2026: Rethinking the ungovernable) held at the Università Iuav di Venezia.

At the conference, Jovana presented a paper titled "The Adaptive Reuse of Fear: Transforming Civil Protective Structures into Contemporary Urban Hubs through Circular and Creative Practices," which she co-authored with Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Stupar (University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture). The presentation took place on Friday, June 19th, 2026, within the Risk and Hazard Management track, specifically under session 5.4, Adaptive frontiers: multi-hazard, conflict and the reuse of risk landscapes. The session was chaired by Vittore Negretto and Mattia Bertin.

This participation fostered deep academic engagement, particularly with colleagues from Kyiv, Helsinki, and Prague, who are working on related themes of urban resilience, adaptive frontiers, and the structural sustainability of cities.

This valuable experience was supported by the Young Researcher and Innovator Conference Grant through the COST Action CA23117 (CIRCUL'ARTS). Such support is of immense importance for early-career researchers, as it significantly enhances their academic visibility and enables them to actively participate in the most significant international events in their field of research.

The Adaptive Reuse of Fear: Transforming Civil Protective Structures into Contemporary Urban Hubs through Circular and Creative Practices

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Abstract

Observing global dynamics, the contemporary urban life is characterized by a persistent undercurrent of fear and anxiety. This tension has been intensified in recent decades by ecological, political, and economic crises, which have emerged as central societal challenges. Accelerated mobility, changing political landscapes, disaster resilience, rapid demographic and climate change, all further complicate urban life contributing to a pervasive sense of uncertainty. In response to these challenges, civil protective structures were designed to safeguard the population and maintain operational readiness against a broad spectrum of potential hazards.

In recent years, during the non-crisis conditions, the spaces once emblematic of fear are increasingly being transformed into *urban hubs*, accommodating extensive recreational, cultural, and even commercial facilities. Previously used for emergency purposes only, these spaces have now become vibrant meeting points and an integral part of everyday city life. Some of them are subject to municipal regulations mandating rapid reconversion to shelter use within 72 hours, whereas others facilitate informal, community-driven cultural initiatives operating independently of institutional oversight. By highlighting this evolving phenomenon, the paper aims to explore the potential of civil protective structures (including subterranean sites, shelters, and bunkers) to be transformed into vibrant urban hubs that actively contribute to more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban environments, with minimal spatial interventions.

The methodology consists of a multiple case study examining successful adaptive reuse examples of civil protective structures in European cities, including, but not limited to, Belgrade, Sofia, Berlin, and Helsinki. The cases are selected according to the presence of low-tech, creative, and circular strategies that facilitate the reactivation of these spaces with minimal intervention. Further analysis includes a critical review and focuses on identifying, examining, and correlating the primary protective function of these structures with the types of ongoing activities, the current users of the spaces, and usage patterns. The goal of the paper is to identify recurring patterns, key conditions, and strategies that support the adaptive reuse of civil protective structures, examining how these spaces evolve from emergency shelters into multifunctional centers that thrive as the hubs of social and cultural interaction.

Keywords: *civil protective structures, adaptive reuse, creative and circular practices*

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Original function</i>	<i>Current function</i>
1.	Bahnhof Bunker	Gothenburg	Civil defence shelter	Data Centre
2.	Bunker Club	Sofia	Community bunker	Rave venue
3.	Clapham South	London	Civil defence shelter	Hydroponic underground farm, part of London Transport Museum and archival storage
4.	Folimanka Shelter	Prague	Secret Cold War-era civil defence bunker	Historical exhibition and tourist attraction
5.	Hakaniemi	Helsinki	Dual-use civil defence shelter / bomb shelter	Sports courts and indoor playground for kids
6.	Itäkeskus	Helsinki	Civil defence shelter	Underground swimming pool and recreational facility
7.	KC Živa	Belgrade	Civil atomic shelter	Alternative cultural center
8.	Kryt Denis	Brno	Never-used large-scale civil defence shelter	Historical and educational tourist attraction
9.	Luuppi	Helsinki	Civil defence shelter	Indoor skatepark and youth centre
10.	Pionen	Stockholm	Cold War-era civil defence bunker	Data Centre
11.	Shooting Club New Belgrade	Belgrade	Community bunker	Closed shooting range
12.	Tunel Grič	Zagreb	WWII bomb shelter and transport link	Pedestrian zone and venue for cultural events
13.	Ulpiana Art Center	Prihstina	Community bunker	Cultural space for art exhibitions, community events, and creative workshops
14.	Uspenski Bomb Shelter	Helsinki	WWII civilian bomb shelter	Advanced data centre (edge computing)
15.	5L	Sofia	Community bunker	Speakeasy bar
16.	10-Z Bunker	Brno	Socialist-era nuclear shelter for military and civil defence	Historical hostel, museum, and cultural venue

Table 1. List of identified reused civil protective structures (source: Authors, 2026).

Name		T1. Activity type	T2. Predominant user profiles	
1.	Bahnhof Bunker	Technological	Professionals	Bahnhof Data Center Employees
2.	Bunker Club	Nightlife	Youth, Subcultural Communities	Youth, party-goers, alternative music enthusiasts, and subcultural groups
3.	Clapham South	Utility, Tourism	Professionals, Tourists, General Public	Zero Carbon Farms Employees; General public and tourists
4.	Folimanka Shelter	Tourism	Tourists	Students, school groups, educators, researchers, tourists
5.	Hakaniemi	Leisure	Locals	Local residents, especially families with young children; athletes
6.	Itäkeskus	Leisure	Locals	Local residents; athletes
7.	KC Živa	Cultural, Nightlife	Youth, Subcultural Communities	Grassroots independent artists, underground musicians, youth
8.	Kryt Denis	Tourism	Tourists	Students, school groups, educators, researchers, tourists
9.	Luuppi	Leisure	Youth, Subcultural Communities	Teenagers, local youth, skateboarders, inline skaters
10.	Pionen	Technological	Professionals	Bahnhof Data Center Employees
11.	Shooting Club New Belgrade	Leisure	Professionals, Athletes	Specialised Hobbyists and professionals
12.	Tunel Grič	Tourism, Cultural	Tourists, General Public	N/A
13.	Ulpiana Art Center	Cultural	Youth, Subcultural Communities	Local grassroots artists, young creative professionals, civil society activists, and youth
14.	Uspenski Bomb Shelter	Technological	Professionals	Tech Professionals and corporate Clients
15.	5L	Commercial, Nightlife	Hybrid (Youth, General Public, Tourists)	Cocktail enthusiasts, nightlife crowds, and tourists seeking hidden or alternative hospitality experiences
16.	10-Z Bunker	Commercial, Tourism, Culture	Hybrid (Tourists, Youth, General Public)	Budget travellers, tourists, and local citizens

Table 2. Cross-analysis of contemporary activity types (T1) and predominant user profiles (T2) across selected civil protective structures (source: Authors, 2026).

Name		T3. Technical complexity	T4. Main contribution to sustainability		
			Social	Economic	Environmental
1.	Bahnhof Bunker	High		✓	✓
2.	Bunker Club	Low-Medium	✓	✓	
3.	Clapham South	High		✓	✓
4.	Folimanka Shelter	Low	✓		
5.	Hakaniemi	Medium	✓		
6.	Itäkeskus	High	✓		
7.	KC Živa	Low	✓		
8.	Kryt Denis	Low	✓		
9.	Luuppi	Medium	✓		
10.	Pionen	High		✓	✓
11.	Shooting Club New Belgrade	Low-Medium	✓	✓	
12.	Tunel Grič	Low	✓		✓
13.	Ulpiana Art Center	Low-Medium	✓		
14.	Uspenski Bomb Shelter	High		✓	✓
15.	5L	Low-Medium		✓	
16.	10-Z Bunker	Low	✓	✓	

Table 3. Cross-analysis of technical complexity (T3) and sustainability dimensions (T4) across selected civil protective structures (source: Authors, 2026).