

## Spatial identity

Recently, the issue of spatial identity and site-specific architectural typology - which, at least in Slovenia, has been neglected for decades - has been increasingly placed at the forefront. It seems that both experts and the general public have finally begun to appreciate the quality of space, which is disappearing due to generic development and redevelopment, especially in the countryside and peri-urban areas.

The June issue of *Urbani izziv* features two articles focusing on the identity of rural areas. The article discussing the development of mountain resorts analyses examples in which the construction of large complexes and structures introduced significant changes to the natural mountainous landscape. It establishes that spatial planning is often unable to effectively define the conditions for ambitiously conceived projects and limit pressures from neoliberal capital. The second article explores landscape identity, an integral part of which is rural settlements. Along with natural elements, these have the greatest impact on the character of a landscape and the distinctiveness of a region.

Understanding the differences between urban and rural settlements is key to guiding their development. New construction in rural settlements that fails to consider the architecture and settlement forms characteristic of the area is too often reflected in rows of new houses that are not built in dialogue with the natural environment and seem out of place in the rural landscape.

Our double perspective on space is interesting in this context: we tend to admire traditional villages and historical city centres when we travel abroad as tourists, whereas in our own living environments we often uncritically agree with various changes and the loss of the traditional form of settlements because we perceive them as development and improving our living standards. When we build or renovate our own properties, the impact that our own house will have on the character of the entire settlement is of secondary importance to us. Many would like to have a modern house in the countryside, but if houses like that are built there en masse, the countryside we admired is lost.