

## The 19th World Conference of Historical Cities “Youth Drawing Contest” Exhibition



# WORLD HISTORICAL CITIES



Himeji Castle

### 135 Member Cities

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Tunis

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Chengdu / Chiang Mai / Dujiangyan / Gongju /  
Gyeongju / Hanoi / Hariharapurgadhi / Harion /  
Himeji / Hue / Kaesong / Kamakura /  
Kanazawa / Kathmandu / Kurunegala /  
Kyoto / Lahore / Masuda / Matsue / Nanjing /  
Nara / Shankharapur / Sunkoshi / Suwon /  
Taichung / Tainan / Ulaanbaatar / Varanasi /  
Vigan / Vyas / Wuxi / Xi'an / Yangon /  
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Córdoba / Corinth / Dublin / Edinburgh /  
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Kyiv / Lisbon / Ljubljana / Lutsk / Lviv / Minsk /  
Montpellier / Mtskheta / Nicosia / Niš /  
Norwich / Odesa / Paris / Prague / Riga /  
Rome / Santiago de Compostela / Sarajevo /  
Sheki / Shusha / South East Region of Malta /  
Strasbourg / Tashkent / Termez / The Hague /  
Veliko Tarnovo / Venice / Vienna / Vladimir /  
Zagreb

#### LATIN AMERICA

Cartagena / Cuenca / Cusco / Guadalajara /  
Mexico City

#### MIDDLE EAST

Ankara / Ardabil / Baghdad / Bursa / Hebron /  
Isfahan / Istanbul / Jerusalem / Kashan /  
Kong / Konya / Mashhad / Masouleh /  
Nayshabur / Osmangazi / Şanlıurfa /  
Selçuklu / Semnan / Shiraz / Tabriz / Tehran /  
Yazd

#### NORTH AMERICA

Boston / Montreal / Quebec

#### PACIFIC

Ballarat / Melbourne / Norwood Payneham  
and St Peters / Whanganui

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## Keynote Speech

### “Rearrangement + Pedestrianization of Public Spaces – Catalysts of Urban Renewal”

#### Introduction

Ljubljana has been formed in a series of declines and revivals, serving as the intersection of Roman, Germanic, and Slavic culture and history. Prof. Janez Koželj introduced some initiatives taken by the City of Ljubljana from 2006 for 16 years to renovate and revitalize important structures and public spaces.

#### Ljubljana before 2006: Decay and A Sense of Crisis

In the social transition, Ljubljana was faced with serious issues such as decline of industries, doughnut effect, outflow of the citizens to the suburbs.

#### Urban Revitalization Strategy: Rearrangement and Pedestrianization of Public Spaces

To tackle the challenges, the City of Ljubljana developed the following urban renewal strategies based on rearrangement and pedestrianization of public spaces.

1. Preservation and Revitalization of Historic Districts
2. Rearrangement of Public Spaces
3. Transformation of Transportation Policies

#### Summary

The City of Ljubljana used the rearrangement of public spaces and infrastructure as catalysts for the systematic renewal of surrounding historic buildings. Integration of urban planning, landscape design, and transportation planning has revitalized the city, which demonstrates that rearrangement and pedestrianization of public spaces are important drives for urban revitalization. Thanks to the initiatives, Ljubljana achieved remarkable results in a short period of time and its urban design including the works of Jože Plečnik was inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage list in 2021.

IV. Car Banning: Before - After



**Speaker**  
**Prof. Janez Koželj**

**Architect and former  
Deputy Mayor of Ljubljana**



See the presentation slides.

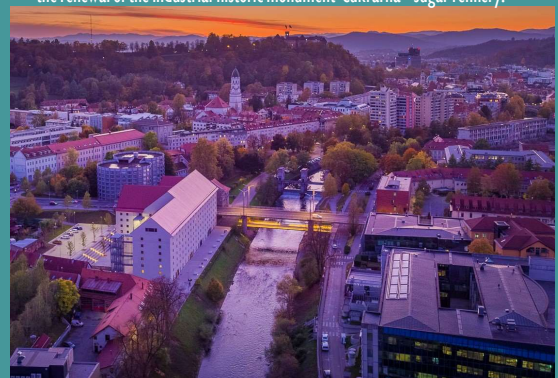
I. New Infrastructure: Rent-A-Bike



II. Rearranging : New Paving + Furnishing



III. Only the breakthrough of a road over the new bridge has triggered the renewal of the industrial historic monument Čukrarna - sugar refinery.





# Expert Meeting

## “Sustainable Mobility as a Safeguard against the Deterioration of Cultural Heritage”

### Overview

There were discussions on challenges and solutions in preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable urban development in Ljubljana. In particular, the experts raised a question how the conflict between increasing the number of tourists and improving the quality of life of the residents should be resolved in the redevelopment of the city center, harmonizing modern public spaces with the works of Jože Plečnik, who has gained attention again in the recent years.

### Main Discussions

#### Preservation and Utilization of Works of Jože Plečnik:

Historical and cultural structures have been successfully highlighted by integrating them with modern public spaces.

#### Sustainable Mobility:

The City of Ljubljana has implemented sustainable mobility policies such as expansion of pedestrian zones and promotion of the use of bicycles. Especially, the pedestrian zone along the River Ljubljanica has brought changes to the citizens in behavior and lifestyles. It was indicated that the pedestrian zones would be expanded around the city in the future connecting them to public spaces such as landscapes and parks.

#### Enhancing Public Services:

There introduced some practices to maintain the life of the residents, prevent population outflow, and increase population through provision of public housing, traffic control, decentralization of public spaces, and establishment of new campuses in cooperation with the university.

#### International Cooperation and Funding:

In cooperation with other European cities, Ljubljana promotes information exchange and cooperation on preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable urban development. In terms of funding, municipal budgets are used in addition to subsidies from the national government and the EU.



**Asst. Prof. Rok Žnidaršič,**  
**Deputy Mayor of Ljubljana**

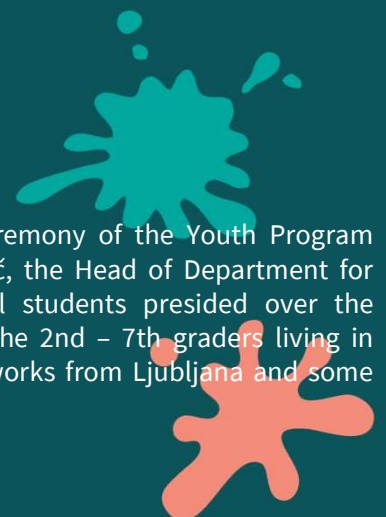


**Matevž Čelik Vidmar,**  
**State Secretary at Ministry**  
**of Culture**  
**of the Republic of Slovenia**

## Youth Program

### - Opening Ceremony -

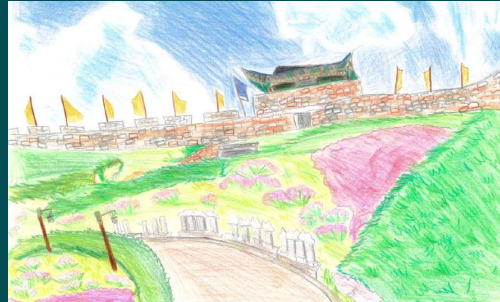
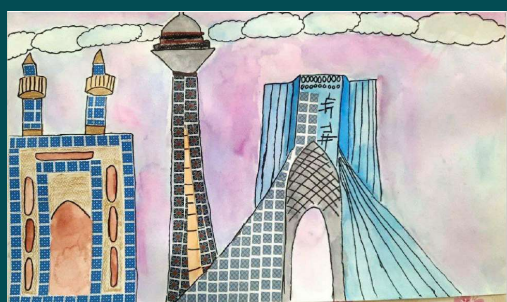
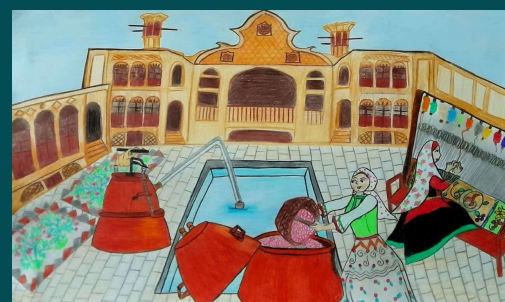
On the second day of the conference, the opening ceremony of the Youth Program “Youth Drawing Contest” took place and Mateja Demšič, the Head of Department for Culture, City of Ljubljana and two elementary school students presided over the ceremony. In addition to the conference participants, the 2nd – 7th graders living in Ljubljana attended the ceremony, where the excellent works from Ljubljana and some member cities were presented with commemorative gifts.





# Youth Program - Youth Drawing Contest -

The World Conference of Historical Cities organizes youth programs with the aim of promoting mutual understanding and cultural exchanges among children, who will play a role to pass down traditions and history to the future, by drawing their interests to their own culture and the world. The 19th World Conference called for works painted by children aged 7-15 living in the member cities under the theme of “Preserving Our Past, Imagining Our Future.” At the Center Rog, the conference venue, 10 representative works and 20 works from children living in Ljubljana were exhibited during the conference.



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1. “Masouleh Future” , Diana Noiree (8), Masouleh (Iran)
2. “Sichuan Style”, Zhen Linyun (11), Chengdu (China)
3. “Kyo in the Future”, Kotomi Sakurazawa (7), Kyoto (Japan)
4. “Twelve Sisters Array”, Wang Yu-Chen (12), Tainan (Chinese Taipei)
5. “Traces of Time”, Pu YiXin (14), Xi’an (China)
6. “Kashan at a glance”, Hasti Faatehi (15), Kashan (Iran)
7. “Raising Stones”, Yekta Behniafar (10), Tehran (Iran)
8. “Gongsanseong Fortress”, Kang Ju-eun (14), Gongju (South Korea)
9. “Preserving the heritage of the past and drawing the future” Mehrana Jafari (10), Shiraz (Iran)
10. “I Love Dujiangyan - My Hometown”, Yang Xiaomeng (12), Dujiangyan (China)





### Overview

Himeji, situated in the southwest of Hyogo prefecture, Japan, with the population of around 520,000, is located approximately two hours by bus from Kansai International Airport, the western gateway to Japan.

In the city center, Himeji Castle with over 400-year history majestically stands. While the major area of the city was burnt down during the World War II, the Castle was miraculously spared from the destruction. In recognition of its cultural value, it was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993 for the first time in Japan.

### Strengths

Himeji Castle has remained almost perfectly intact since it was originally built. The primary concern when preserving the wooden architecture is the risk of fire damage. To hand over this heritage to the future generation, the city is taking the comprehensive disaster management measures emphasizing both structural and non-structural aspects.

In addition, in order to become “a sustainable and resilient city,” Himeji City proactively tackles the promotion of SDGs, declaring to be “Zero Carbon City” with the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.



### Charms

Surrounded both by the beautiful sea and mountains, Himeji has been called “Land of Abundant Harvest” from the ancient time, and its assets such as food culture nurtured in the rich natural environment, numerous cultural properties and festivals, traditional crafts and local industries are nicely passed down to the present. Himeji is a place where you can fully experience Japanese culture and history.

**The City of Himeji looks forward to welcoming all of you in 2026.**



Learn more about



Himeji Castle



MICE in Himeji



## Message from the Mayor of Isfahan, the Host City of the 21st World Conference in 2027



We are deeply pleased and honoured that our beautiful Isfahan was selected to host the 21st World Conference. Isfahan, long celebrated as "Half of the World," has served as the capital of three great Iranian dynasties. The legacy of its illustrious history is reflected in the city's unparalleled heritage districts and historic monuments, including three UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the Jame Mosque of Isfahan, Naqsh-e Jahan Square, and Chehel Sotoun Palace.

The people of Isfahan are most importantly renowned for their artistic spirit, masterful craftsmanship and refined taste, the qualities that have brought to the city two distinguished international titles: "UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art" and "World Craft City."

This unique historical, cultural and artistic wealth has consistently positioned Isfahan as one of Iran's premier tourist destinations, drawing both national and international attention.

While these accolades have brought great prestige to our city, they have also placed us with significant responsibilities. For this reason, in recent decades, the urban management of Isfahan, a major industrial hub of the country as well, has dedicated its utmost efforts to advance the sustainable development of this metropolis. Our aim is to harmonize progress with the challenges posed by climate change, ensuring enhanced liveability for our citizens and safeguarding our invaluable heritage for future generations. It is with this spirit that we have adopted the motto "My Isfahan, the City of Life" as the guiding principle of our endeavours.

A recent milestone was the establishment of the "Assembly of Iran's Historical Cities," an initiative spearheaded by Isfahan which seeks to create a network among the country's historical cities, in order to foster knowledge exchange and deeper collaboration in preserving the nation's historical legacy.

We view the upcoming conference as a valuable platform for sharing experiences between historical cities in Iran and across the globe and firmly believe that only through collective action in addressing shared challenges can we build a sustainable and resilient future for our world.

We eagerly look forward to welcoming you all to the historic and enchanting city of Isfahan, the Pearl of Persia.

**Ali Ghasemzadeh**  
Mayor of Isfahan



**The League of Historical Cities Secretariat**

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