

## Spatial Analysis of Second Homes in the Municipality of Piran

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This paper examines the phenomenon of second homes in the municipality of Piran and analyses their role and position in the area. Since the 1970s, intense construction of second home units has been one of the main causes of the transformation in the morphology of several settlements in the municipality. The author spatially analyses the registered second homes in the area and presents selected characteristics of this type of housing stock (location, age and intensity of the phenomenon) on detailed scale maps. The analysed data were obtained from the statistical censuses, the Real Estate Registry of the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia, and the Municipality of Piran.

*Keywords:* Slovenia, second homes, the municipality of Piran, spatial distribution, regional origins of the owners of second homes

### Introduction

Residing in second homes or weekend houses can be considered to be one of the most popular forms of recreation among the diverse leisure-time activities in Slovenia. While second homes can be found in almost all municipalities across the Slovene territory, such buildings are densely distributed across areas that, due to their particular landscape and recreational features, are particularly attractive for tourism. They first began appearing in Bled, which had already begun evolving into a major tourist and health resort at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and where, as stated by Matjaž Jeršič (1968, p. 54), individual visitors from abroad started building villas in the vicinity of Lake Bled for occasional (mostly summer) stays. In addition to Bled, wealthier individuals also built their second homes by Lake Bohinj; prior to World War II, the presence of such buildings in other parts of Slovenia was negligible.

More widespread construction of second homes started in the 1950s, when this form of spending leisure time became popular in mountain, spa and other tourist destinations. The 1960s were marked by a vigorous expansion of the construction of this type of buildings, as this was when the tendency to build or purchase second homes spread from the most popular tourist destinations into rural areas, with the distance of the second home from the place of residence usually not exceeding that of a daily commute. In the 1970s, there was an increase in the number of individuals who not only wished to use their leisure time for engaging in recreational activities but who also wished to make use of the time spent in their second homes for working their gardens, vineyards or orchards, and this in turn led to an increase in the number of second homes being constructed in the winegrowing areas of the Pannonian and Dinaric regions (Gosar, 1987). A similar development could also

be observed in holiday facilities in the Mediterranean part of the country, which is dominated by a milder climate as well as a high degree of landscape diversity, mainly reflected in its contact between the land and the sea, its hilly hinterland and its unspoiled cultural and architectural heritage.

According to the Register-Based Census of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (hereafter referred to as the SORS) for the year 2011, there was a total of 1,042 second homes registered in the municipality of Piran, which accounts for five per cent of all registered second homes in Slovenia. As a result, the municipality of Piran ranks first among all Slovene municipalities in the number of this type of residence (followed by the municipalities of Bohinj and Kranjska Gora). According to the Census, a total of 10,678 dwellings were recorded in the municipality of Piran, which means that the proportion of second homes accounts for 9.8 per cent of the entire housing stock of the municipality. In this regard, the municipality of Piran ranks sixth in the country, following the municipalities of Bohinj, Kranjska Gora, Bovec, Kostel and Jezersko (the latter two have a substantially smaller housing stock than the other municipalities mentioned) (SORS, 2011). Since the 1950s, second homes have had a significant influence on the settlement and landscape patterns of the municipality of Piran. They occur in a variety of building types, which are presented in greater detail in the following chapters.

### Methodological Explanations

In this study, we used data obtained from SORS, the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia (hereafter referred to as the SMA) and the Municipality of Piran. The data obtained from SORS, on the basis of which we illustrate the numerical quantity of the phenomenon in question, are drawn from censuses conducted between 1971 and 2011. We analysed the information obtained from the SMA Real-Estate Registry and, on the basis of the results, hereby present the spatial distribution of second homes in selected settlements within the municipality of Piran. Furthermore, we obtained records from the Municipality of Piran on the number of payers of the flat-rate tourist tax, i.e. on the owners and co-owners of second homes, based on which we

present an analysis of these individuals' regional origins in the final part of the study.

The Real Estate Register of the SMA was established upon the completion of the Housing Census in 2006 and 2007; it also includes data from the Land Registry and the Building Cadastre. For the purposes of this study, the data acquired from the Real Estate Register were processed according to a number of criteria, with the essential information being whether or not a particular building or its part in the municipality of Piran was being used for leisure (as a second home). From the units found meeting this condition, we further excluded those residences that were not used exclusively for private purposes (among these were mostly rented dwellings, i.e. market-rented, company-rented, and non-profit rented dwellings). As a result, in October 2013, we determined that a total of 1,405 units in the municipality of Piran were used for holiday purposes by their owners. The number of these dwellings is only tentative, because at the time of the census and its subsequent updates, there were instances of the owners either not specifying the actual intended use of the dwelling or misstating this information. This number (1,405) can be compared to the number of second homes as determined from the records of the municipal administration of Piran, which in July 2014 recorded a total of 2,506 flat-rate tourist-tax payers (i.e. owners or co-owners of second home units, whereby it should be noted that an individual second home may be owned by several owners) (Godnič, 2014), or from the Building and Housing Census of 2011, which recorded a total of 1,042 such dwellings (SORS, 2011a).

The Statistical Office completed this census not by collecting data on the ground in the form of statements of owners and tenants, but by using administrative sources and integrating the data obtained from the Central Population Register of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia, the Building Cadastre and the Real Estate Register of the SMA and the Land Registry, managed by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia. In interpreting the data from the 2011 Census, and in possible comparisons with the previous census carried out in 2002, it should be noted that certain differences may exist on account of the use of different data collection or data acquisition methods (SURS, 2011b).

The difference in the number of second homes between the Registry-Based Census of 2011 (a total of 1,042 units) and the Real Estate Register of 2013 (a total of 1,405 units) can (to a certain extent) be explained by the fact that the Statistical Office eliminated all those second homes for which it had been determined, with the assistance of the Central Population Register managed by the Ministry of the Interior, that a permanent residence was registered at that address (SORS, 2011b). Despite these numerical differences, it can be estimated that the data from the Real Estate Register ensure a high level of representativeness and reflect to a great extent the actual number of second homes, particularly in the areas of greatest congestion, i.e. in the towns of Piran, Portorož and Lucija. The Real Estate Register is regularly updated and improved; these procedures have gained further momentum with the announcement of the introduction of a new real estate property tax. It should be noted that all the data discussed in this paper are merely official estimates obtained on the basis of the censuses completed by the Statistical Office and the current data of the Surveying and Mapping Authority, and we can therefore assume that the number of second homes in individual settlements within the municipality could be even higher.

### **Geographical Debates on Second Homes in the Municipality of Piran**

Due to its favourable climatic conditions, its proximity to the Adriatic Sea and well-preserved cultural landscape, the Mediterranean-type landscape is an area that has been traditionally attractive to owners of second homes. It is, therefore, not surprising that, according to the SORS Census of 2011, the municipality of Piran recorded the highest number of such buildings (in absolute terms) in the country. Despite this fact, this phenomenon has to date remained relatively unexplored, both in the wider area of the Slovene Istria and in the municipality of Piran specifically. When reviewing geographical and other literature, there seems to be a noticeable lack of studies that would shed light on this issue in a comprehensive manner. Although various geographical surveys have dealt with second homes within the region in a marginal context (they are briefly presented below), none has offered more than somewhat general and thematically limited results.

A 1968 study by Jeršič entitled *Sekundarna počitniška bivališča v Sloveniji in Zahodni Istri* [Secondary holiday residences in Slovenia and western Istria] should be mentioned here as the first exhaustive study on this issue in Slovenia, providing general estimates on the number of such dwellings in this part of the former Yugoslavia (Jeršič, 1968). Second homes in the wider area of the Notranjska and Primorska Regions (Inner Carniola and the Slovene Littoral) were also studied by Anton Gosar (1987b), but the results of this study pertaining to the Slovene Littoral only relate to the area of Kras and Brkini (i.e. the territory of the former municipalities of Sežana, Ilirska Bistrica and Postojna). One of the few studies focusing on selected settlements within the municipality of Piran and also partly touching upon the issue of second homes is Jeršič's 1990 paper entitled *Turistična transformacija Portoroža* [Transformation of Portorož through tourism]. It contains, *inter alia*, cartographic images of the settlement of Portorož across different time periods (the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the interwar period and the year 1989); the map showing settlement in 1989 also identifies the residential areas with a tourist offers of private rooms, apartments and holiday homes. The author concludes that, compared to other tourist destinations along the western coast of Istria, the number of second homes in Portorož owned by non-residents is relatively small and highlights the fact that in the settlement there are no neighbourhoods or districts in which this form of housing would dominate. He estimates that in 1989 the share of the housing stock intended for holiday rentals and for non-residents' second homes in Portorož amounted to more than 28 per cent (but does not provide any detailed individual assessments for holiday rentals and second homes/holiday apartments respectively). He sees the reasons for the low number of second homes in this area as a consequence of the following factors: 1) urban regulations or spatial plans that had not envisaged such districts for holiday use, 2) the market offer of cheaper land and building plots in other parts of Istria, and 3) a deterioration in the quality of the sea in this part of the Gulf of Trieste (Jeršič, 1990, pp. 224–228).

Another study addressing the problem of second homes in the area in question is that by Igor Jurinčič, which is aimed primarily at evaluating the tourism-carrying capacity of Slovene Istria (2009,

p. 67). The author notes that the development of second homes was most intense in the 1970s and 1980s, and that they were often built on the most attractive tourist sites, either directly on the coast or in natural parks. He further notes that this type of building was often built illegally just before the proclamation of protected natural areas (or prior to the adoption of tighter measures of control). He mentions that in 1995, within the framework of its spatial planning conditions for the rehabilitation of degraded areas, the municipality of Piran recorded a total of 380 illegal constructions (not all of which were second homes), of which 250 could be legalized, while 130 were scheduled for demolition. Jurinčič sees the primary cause of illegal constructions in a lack of supply of suitable land plots and highlights the need to curb this phenomenon, which he believes could be achieved by designating smaller areas specifically for the construction of second-home settlements. He also raises the problem of unplanned construction of such buildings, especially those of larger proportions or those located in exposed positions, in the middle of farmland and in protected natural areas, without access to public utilities. He proposes an identification of areas where the construction of such facilities would be possible as a measure to promote sustainable tourism outside the most attractive tourist are-

as that need to be preserved for the tourism industry and for public use (Jurinčič, 2009, p. 114).

### The Development and Spatial Analysis of Second Homes in the Municipality of Piran

In this section, we present the growth in the quantity of second homes in individual settlements within the municipality of Piran over the last four decades, as is apparent from the censuses conducted by the Statistical Office (Table 1). Over this period, the number of such buildings has increased by 273.5 index points at the municipal level, with the rapidest growth occurring in the 1970s. Throughout the census years, the numerical increase in this type of dwellings was most significant in the three settlements located directly by the sea: Portorož, Piran and Lucija, while such units remained scarce in the hinterland. In the period between 1971 and 2011, the growth index of second homes was highest in Lucija (1,643 index points), a settlement which had evolved from an agricultural and salt-producing village and merged in the 1970s into a conurbation with the nearby Portorož. According to the Register-Based Census of 2011, the latter recorded the highest number of second homes in the municipality (a total of 349), with the most noticeable numerical increase recorded precisely in the period between the last two census years (2002 and

Table 1 The Number of Second Homes in Selected Settlements within the Municipality of Piran

Settlement	1971	Index Value	1981	Index 1981/1971	1991	Index 1991/1981	2002	Index 2002/1991	2011	Index 2011/2002	Index 2011/1971
Lucija	14	100.0	233	1664.3	288	123.6	372	129.2	230	61.8	1642.9
Parecag	3	100.0	8	266.7	19	237.5	10	52.6	7	70.0	233.3
Piran	160	100.0	230	143.8	259	112.6	370	142.9	320	86.5	200.0
Portorož	145	100.0	195	134.5	227	116.4	216	95.2	349	161.6	240.7
Seča	9	100.0	41	455.6	39	95.1	39	100.0	47	120.5	522.2
Sečovelje	2	100.0	1	50.0	10	1000.0	2	20.0	6	300.0	300.0
Strunjan	40	100.0	65	162.5	43	66.2	49	114.0	72	146.9	180.0
Other*	8	100.0	5	62.5	6	120.0	7	116.7	11	157.1	137.5
TOTAL	381	100.0	778	204.2	891	114.5	1065	119.5	1042	97.8	273.5

Source: SORS, 1971; 1981; 1991; 2002; 2011a.

\* Combined under this category are the values for the following settlements: Dragonja, Nova Vas nad Dragonjo, Padna and Raven/Sveti Peter.

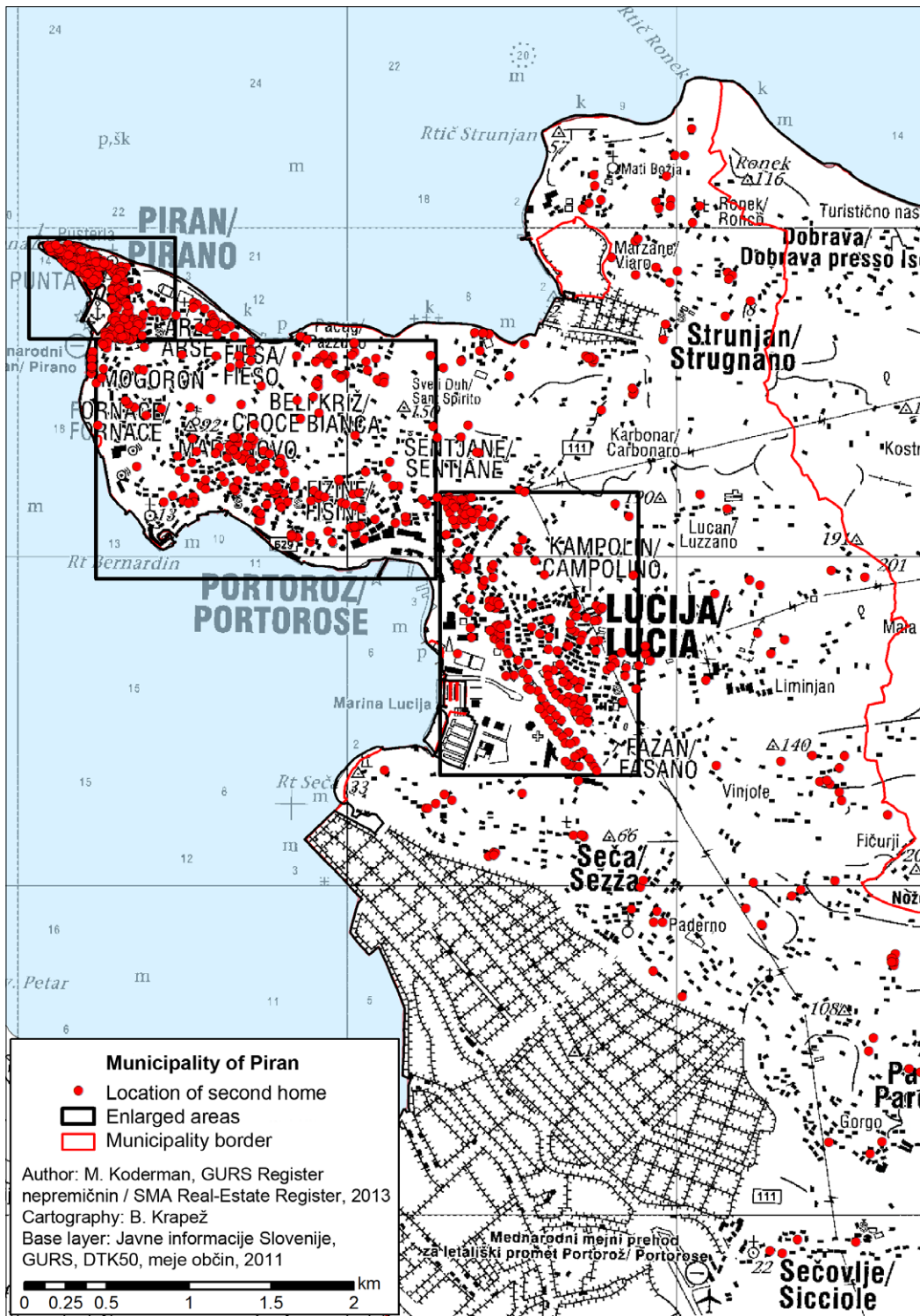


Figure 1 Spatial Distribution of Second Homes in the Municipality of Piran in 2013

2011). From the very outset of the statistical monitoring of second homes, a high numerical representation of such dwellings was also recorded in the town of Piran.

Although in 2011 second homes were present in all eleven settlements of the municipality of Piran, they were rather unevenly distributed in number across individual settlements (SORS, 2011). This can be seen in Figure 1, which is based on data obtained from the Real Estate Register from 2013 (SMA, 2013). Second-home units and apartments are present mainly along the narrow coastal strip of the municipality and, due to their large quantity, represent an important architectural element of the municipality. There are four second-home settlement types to be distinguished: 1) Apartments in older urban buildings within the old town of Piran; 2) apartments in multi-dwelling apartment blocks in Lucija, and 3) detached houses or villas, built on the flysch hillocks rising above the hotel buildings in the heart of Portorož (Beli Križ, Martinovo, Šentjane) and in the hinterland settlements (Seča, Parecag and Sečovlje). This breakdown is based on Jeršič's study (1987, pp. 66-67), which, in addition to the previously mentioned settlement types, also specifies 4) distinct neighbourhoods made up of second homes built in areas systematically designated for this type of construction. It should be added that no such functional areas can be found in the municipality of Piran, although in the early 1960s two tourist settlements were built for this purpose in Lucija and Strunjan according to plans by Edo Mihevc, which, however, lost their original purpose in the process of privatization (the second-home housing units in Strunjan became part of the Terme Krka Talaso Strunjan hotel complex, while in Lucija these units were reconstructed and redesigned for permanent settlement) (Teržan, 2011).

The newer forms of settlement may also include 5) apartment villas purpose-built for holiday use, most commonly constructed in the form of multi-dwelling buildings with luxury apartments. Construction of apartment villas often provokes a negative response on the part of local residents, as such housing often relies on contemporary design, which deviates from the traditional architecture of the area and can thus be perceived as a foreign body in the cultural landscape. In the municipality of Piran, a similar divergence of views occurred regarding the construction

of Villa Artes (located above Kopraska Cesta), which the local residents referred to as "Močerad" (Salamander) due to its outer appearance (Ručna, 2005).

Apartment villas are built in larger numbers in attractive locations; in the municipality of Piran, they are built primarily on panoramic terraces rising above the centre of Portorož; examples of such buildings are also the apartment building named "Feral" (located above Belokriška Cesta – Figure 3) and Villa Valeta (in Lucan). Due to the acceleration in construction activity in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and the presence of several unsold buildings, the real estate market has become saturated, resulting in many newly constructed buildings remaining unsold. Consequently, some of these dwellings have been, at least temporarily, placed on the market for lease.

### The Town Centre of Piran

The historical centre of the town of Piran is protected as a cultural and urban monument and, as such, it is necessary to follow its existing architectural characteristics in the planning and management of the city and to maintain its design, which emphasizes the visibility of the centre in keeping with the surrounding landscape (Kočevar & Plazar Mlakar, 2006). The town itself is in the process of a physical, economic and symbolic transformation, in which an important role is assumed by demographic trends: as a result of the continued decrease in permanent residents, the old town is gradually becoming deserted. This is mainly due to the fact that this population perceives other places within the three municipalities of the Littoral, which are more easily accessible to transport and offer the majority of jobs in the region, as places offering a higher quality of life. Moreover, the existing population of the settlement also has an unfavourable age structure with an aging index of 163, which indicates that for every 100 persons under the age of 15, the settlement is home to a total of 163 people aged over 65 (in 2013, the Slovene average totalled 118 (SORS, 2014a)). In addition to these trends, the municipality of Piran (and the old town as its integral part) is also the municipality most visited by tourists, generating over 1.3 million overnight stays per year (SORS, 2014b).

Thus, as a rule, from September until May, the inhabitants of the old town are faced with oversized general supply facilities, the owners of which reduce

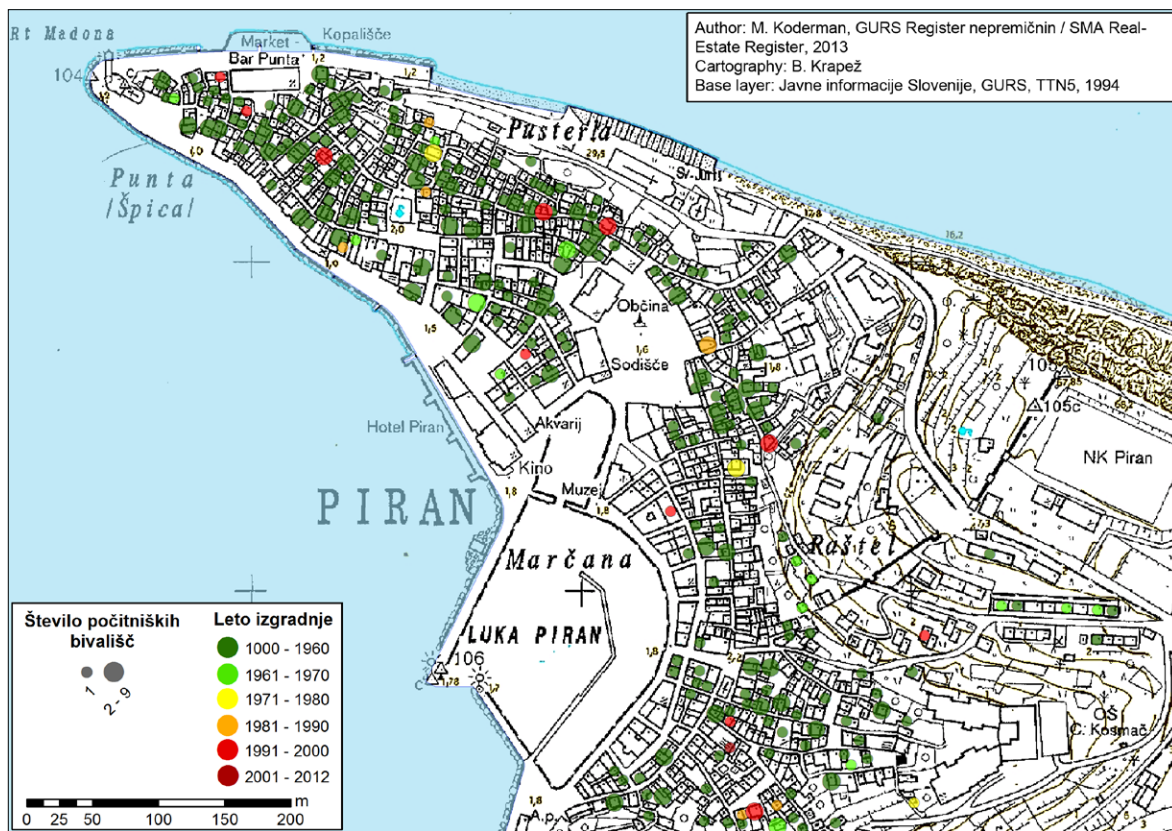


Figure 2 Spatial Distribution of Second Homes in the Town Of Piran in 2013.

their hours of business or even temporary close down due to the lower volume of trade, while during the summer season residents find it difficult to cope with crowded streets and roads, a lack of parking spaces in garages and long queues in stores (the same is also true for refuse collection, and burdens on public sewage and water supply systems ).

During the summer months, the number of temporary residents in the city (in addition to the tourists in the traditional sense of the word) is also significantly affected by numerous individuals who have arranged their second homes in the centre of Piran. According to the last Registry-Based Census by SORS, such dwellings represent a total of 11.3 per cent of all dwellings in the entire housing stock of the settlement (SORS, 2014c) and, as is also evident from Figure 2, are mainly located in buildings built earlier than 1960 (depicted in dark green). In line with the historical urban design of the city, which does not allow for any major construction works in the core of

the town, the majority of the housing stock is based on two- to three-storey buildings, which have in recent decades often undergone interior renovation and refurbishment into multi-dwelling buildings. The sale of such units has brought in higher earnings in comparison to the sale of the entire building and has mainly been intended for holiday use. As is evident from the analysis of the data obtained from the Real Estate Register, shown as maps in Figure 2, individual buildings of the old town most often contain one or two second-home apartments.

According to the available statistical data, the growth index of second homes in the old town core of Piran was highest in the 1970s and 1990s, while in the previous decade, as evident from the latest census data shown in Table 1, their numbers have begun to stagnate or even decline. In the past, the intended use of the buildings in the town core was also analysed by the competent officials at the Municipality of Piran, who compared the census data from the

mid-1970s with those from the census completed in 2006. The first land use analysis was conducted in 1975 as part of the project "Asanacijski načrt mesta Piran" [Sanitation plan for the town of Piran], which was an attempt to create a framework for a comprehensive protection, regulation and revitalization of the town centre. The situation was re-analysed in 2006, when (as a result of adopting new strategic spatial planning acts) there emerged the need to update the existing data and to compare the situation regarding the intended use of buildings with that from 1975. This analysis showed that Piran was undeniably in the process of being transformed into a holiday town, as the share of residential areas was being reduced at the expense of the areas taken up by second homes. The aforementioned studies also observed the surface area (in square meters) within individual buildings within the town centre intended for second homes and found that over the previous three decades the latter had increased by a total of more than 37,000 square meters (from 10,294 to 47,774 square meters), i.e. by 464 index points (Kočevar & Plazar Mlakar, 2006).

Verification of the current situation is difficult and, consequently, there are considerable discrepancies in the presentation of the number of second homes in this area. As mentioned earlier, the Statistical Office estimated the proportion of second homes within the entire housing stock of the city centre to be 11.3 per cent, whereas according to informal estimates, these kinds of dwellings account for one third of all the buildings in the old core of the town (Kalc Furlanič, 2011; Šuligoj, 2012). These discrepancies can be partly attributed to the fact that, due to various circumstances, the owners of second homes decide to declare their permanent residence at their secondary residence; however, in light of the current economic situation, we can conclude that the number of this type of dwelling is no longer increasing at the same rate as in the past.

### **Portorož and Lucija**

The initial stages of the early settlement of Portorož, which is currently the most visited summer tourist centre of the country, date back to Roman times, when individual seaside maritime villas were built in the most attractive locations along the coast of the Istrian bays between Debeli Rtič and Sečovlje (Stokin

& Zanier, 2011 p. 13). They were used as second homes by wealthier individuals, which aptly demonstrates that the phenomenon of spending (leisure) time in second homes has a tradition dating back to antiquity (Coppock, 1977, p. 4; Holloway & Taylor, 2006, p. 23).

The tourism-based development of Portorož, in the sense of modern tourism, began in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when this area witnessed an expansion of what was initially spa and wellness tourism, and later coastal tourism. With the construction of the Palace Hotel in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Portorož began attracting a growing number of visitors, who had, in turn, a significant impact on the urban development of the place. According to Jeršič (1990, p. 221), it was in this period that the distinctive shape of the settlement began forming, one that has been preserved to this day – the old coastal trail became not only the main road but also offered the main location for tourist activities along its length. Along with a growing number of tourists, there was an increase in the need for greater accommodation capacities, with individual wealthier visitors opting to build their second homes or villas in this area.

As can be seen from Figure 3, the greatest number of second homes in Portorož was built between 1960 and 1970, especially along the coastal belt behind the hotel complexes. The location of most of the dwellings built later tended to recede onto the panoramic terraces above the centre of Portorož. Due to the attractive natural and cultural attributes of the area, the price of coastal plots of land rose sharply over the decades, but according to statistical data (Table 1), it was in the previous decade that Portorož has witnessed the highest numerical increase in second homes. While the newer form of holiday settlement (i.e. apartment villas, which in the municipality of Piran occur mainly in Portorož) has already been highlighted in this paper, in recent years there has also been a noticeable decrease in the number of single-dwelling buildings built exclusively for holiday purposes.

The tourism-based development of Portorož has had a substantial impact on the nearby Lucija, which has evolved from a dispersed agricultural and salt-producing settlement into a tourist destination recording a significant number of second home units. Compared to Portorož, a large number of sec-



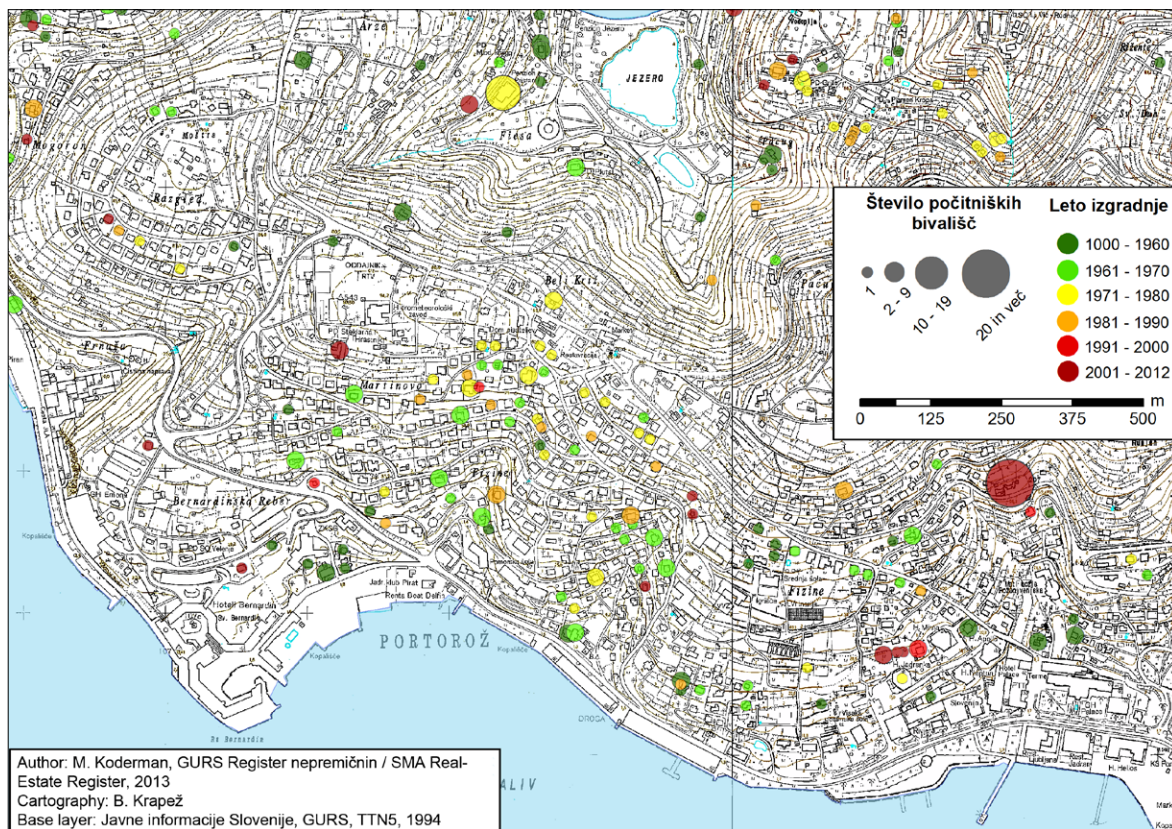


Figure 3 Spatial Distribution of Second Homes in the Settlement of Portorož in 2013

ond homes in Lucija are located in multi-dwelling buildings built mostly in the 1970s and 1980s (Figure 4). During this period, Lucija evolved from a village with only a few second homes into one of the areas most populated with this type of dwellings in the municipality of Piran (Table 1). The prevalence of holiday accommodation has had a significant impact on the quality of life of permanent residents as they are faced with problems similar to those described for the Piran town centre; in addition, in some multi-dwelling apartment blocks, the temporary residents outnumber the permanent residents and consequently the latter end up paying higher heating costs in winter (Šuligoj, 2012). Over the previous decade, only a few units intended for private holiday use have been built in Lucija; according to the Statistical Office census data, between 2002 and 2011 the number of second homes even decreased by more than 100 units. It is difficult to precisely determine a single main cause for such a decline, but we could speculate

that the reasons might lie in the different methodologies of both censuses.

The three areas of the municipality of Piran in question (Piran, Portorož and Lucija) contain nearly 90 per cent of all second homes in the municipality. In the previous decade, a deviation can be detected from the construction of such units in the three settlements, as it is now, more so than in the past, also taking place in other areas of the municipality, especially those near the sea (e.g. in Strunjan and Seča), while in the hinterland of the municipality such dwellings remain relatively modestly represented.

**Regional Origins of Second-Home Owners**

Our analysis of the regional origins of the owners and co-owners of second homes in the municipality of Piran was based on the records kept by the municipal administration of the payers of the flat-rate tourist tax. In 2004, a decree was adopted on the tourist tax in the municipality of Piran (*Odlok o turis-*

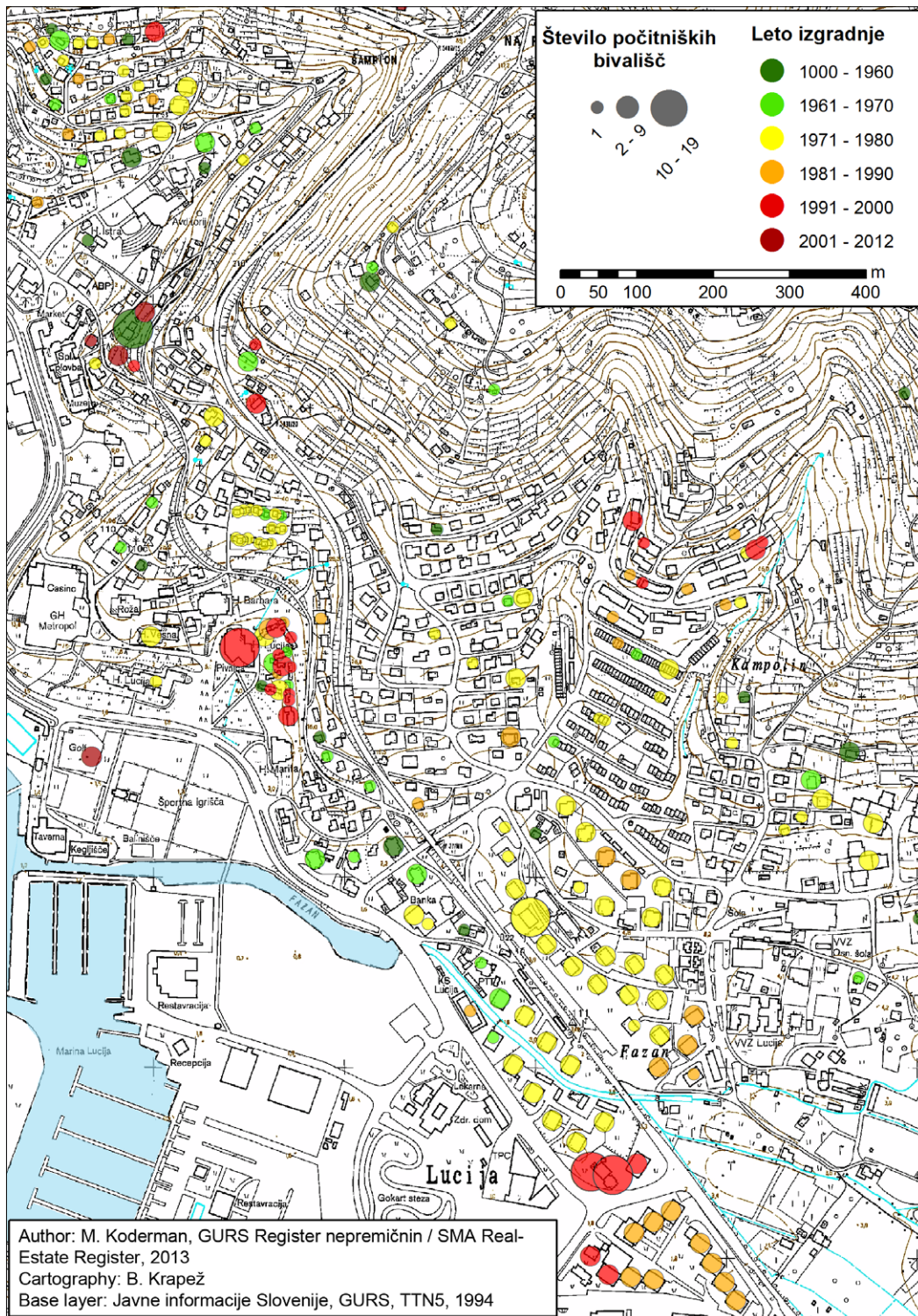


Figure 4 Spatial Distribution of Second Homes in the Settlement of Lucija in 2013

*tični taksi v Občini Piran*, 2004), which entered into force in 2005 and, among other things, required the owners of second homes to pay a flat rate tourist tax (the amount depends on the surface area of the unit). After creating a database of the owners of second homes, which was based on the data regarding persons liable to pay a compensation for the use of construction land to the Tax Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, the first notice regarding the payment of the flat-rate tourist tax were sent to the owners or co-owners of second homes in 2006. Since then, the records of the payers of the flat-rate tourist tax have been regularly updated and in July 2014, when we obtained these records from the municipal administration, they included a register comprising a total of 2,506 owners and co-owners of second homes (of whom 2,265 were Slovene citizens and 241 were from other countries). In order to understand this data, attention should be drawn to the fact that these are records of both owners and co-owners, which means that a single second home unit may be owned by one, two or even several owners (to whom the municipality then sends a notice regarding the payment of a flat-rate tourist tax according to their proportionate share of ownership) (Godnič, 2014). Due to personal data protection, we only obtained a list of the places of the primary residence of owners and co-owners of second homes from the municipality, but not their full addresses.

According to the records of the municipal administration, the greatest share of owners and co-owners of second homes come from the municipality of Ljubljana: 42.1 per cent of all owners and co-owners. As many as 54.4 per cent of all second homes owners and co-owners had their primary residence registered in places within the entire Central Slovenia Statistical Region. A total of 7 per cent of all owners and co-owners came from the Drava Statistical Region, followed in equal shares (5.9 per cent) by the owners and co-owners from the Coastal-Karst and Gorenjska Statistical Regions. The owners and co-owners of second home units registered as permanent residents of the remaining eight statistical regions totalled only 17 per cent. All in all, the flat-rate tourist-tax payers from Slovenia were residents of 420 different towns and villages within the country (Godnič, 2014).

It should also be noted that despite the significant impact of the settlement areas of Ljubljana and central Slovenia, the Municipality of Piran shows a relatively high degree of heterogeneity in the ownership of second homes in terms of the regional origins of their owners. This is evident from the associated comparative analyses carried out in the municipalities of Bohinj and Kranjska Gora, which follow the municipality of Piran by the number of second homes (according to the Census of 2011). Thus, in 2012, for example, the share of all owners and co-owners of second homes in the municipality of Bohinj with a permanent residence in the area of Ljubljana amounted to 53.4 per cent, while two thirds (66.7 per cent) of all owners and co-owners of second homes in the municipality had a primary residence in the Central Slovenia Statistical Region (Koderman & Salmič, 2013). In the municipality of Kranjska Gora, the structure of regional ownership in 2011 was slightly more homogenous: a total of 61 per cent of all owners and co-owners of second homes came from the area of Ljubljana and as many as 77.4 per cent came from the Central Slovenia Statistical Region (Salmič & Koderman, 2013).

Most of the owners and co-owners of second homes in the municipality of Piran whose permanent residence was registered abroad (a total of 241, or 9.6 per cent) came from Italy (2.9 per cent), Austria (1.9 per cent) and Germany (1.2 per cent). They were followed by second-home owners from the Czech Republic and Sweden (the respective share for each country amounting to 0.4 per cent), the United States, Great Britain and Croatia (the share for each country amounting to 0.3 per cent) and eleven other countries (Godnič, 2014). For the purpose of comparison, the proportion of the owners and co-owners with permanent residence as evidenced by the municipalities of Kranjska Gora and Bohinj amounted to 5 per cent (Salmič & Koderman, 2013) and 4.7 per cent (Koderman & Salmič, 2013), respectively. The records of the flat-rate tourist-tax payers in the municipality of Piran show no people with a permanent residence registered in the Russian Federation, the citizens of which often appear in the media in the role of investors into tourism activities in Slovenia (which, at the same time, does not imply that they are not owners of real estate in this municipality).

## Conclusion

This paper has presented selected aspects of second homes in the municipality of Piran, examining in particular on their spatial development, the intensity of settlement and the regional origins of their owners. The cartographic images define their spatial distribution, with particular emphasis placed on areas with the greatest number of second homes: the town centre of Piran, Portorož and Lucija. In these areas, we also analysed the history and intensity of the phenomenon by individual buildings. The data presented show the extent of this type of dwelling in the municipality, which in certain places led to the transformation of the cultural landscape decades ago as they established themselves as integral elements of it.

Some of the current issues related to second homes (e.g. unplanned and illegal construction, lack of connection to public utilities, a disregard for traditional architectural styles, construction of such units on agricultural land, their impact on the socio-cultural relations between the locals and second-home owners, etc.), have been deliberately dealt with only superficially, as their in-depth discussion is well beyond the scope of this article. We could add, in a critical sense, that a more detailed breakdown of this multi-faceted and complex issue would require a broader empirical study examining the aforementioned topics and further evaluating the data recorded in the censuses and the SMA Real Estate Register, as well as the data obtained from the records on the payers of the flat-rate tourist tax.

It can be concluded that the further development of holiday houses and apartments in the municipality of Piran requires a systematic and long-term approach in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Unsupervised construction of new units or renovation and expansion of existing constructions for holiday use, which is in practice often associated with the profitable interests of investors and other capital owners, can cause permanent and irreparable damage to the ecological, physiognomic, cultural and social environment of this picturesque coastal region of Slovenia.

## Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to the professional associates of the Office of the Environment and Spatial Planning and the Office for the Economy and Tourism of the

Municipality of Piran for enabling the analysis of the data on the payers of the flat-rate tourist tax for the purposes of this research.

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