

IUP 2009/ 2010

Training Programme - Integrated Urban Planning



PODGORICA-CITY OF NEW URBAN MOBILITY

Establishing a strategic framework for defining a Study for ecological and environmental friendly models of urban transport in Podgorica, with the emphasis on cycling

Participant: Zorica Tomanovic, M.Sc., Architect

Country: Montenegro

Integrated Urban Planning - REPORT

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF PARTICIPANT



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01. INTRODUCTION - ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project name:

PODGORICA-CITY OF NEW URBAN MOBILITY

Establishing a strategic framework for defining a Study for ecological and environmental friendly models of urban transport in Podgorica, with the emphasis on cycling

Facilitator: Sixten Larsson

01.1. Context

Country: Montenegro

Capital city: Podgorica

Podgorica is the official, commercial and cultural centre of Montenegro. Podgorica is situated in the south part of the northern mild zone in the country. It lies in a mainly flat area on averagely 44.5 m of height above the sea level. Thanks to geographic position

Podgorica has grown into a capital city, with political, administrative and economic weight.

Area of Podgorica: 1.441 sq. km

Population: about 170.000 citizens

Climate: Mediterranean - summers are dry, long and extremely warm, and the winters are mild, with rainfalls. The average yearly temperature is 16, 4 C° with over 260 days without rainfalls. In the summer the temperatures reach the 40 degrees. Over 135 days in a year the air temperature is above 25 C°.



Picture 1. Position of Podgorica in Montenegro



Picture 2. Modern architecture in Podgorica

Architecture and landscape: The town itself is known for the spacious and nicely arranged green areas and parks. A major advance in the architecture of Podgorica began in the late 1990s and, since then, the face of the city has changed rapidly. Residential and business construction are proceeding rapidly, incorporating contemporary glass-and-steel architectural trends. In an effort to create a recognizable and modern state capital, city officials are routing significant investments in city's infrastructure. The city also has gained entirely new squares and monuments. Podgorica is not only the administrative centre of Montenegro, but also its main economic engine. Most of Montenegro's industrial, financial and commercial base is found in Podgorica.

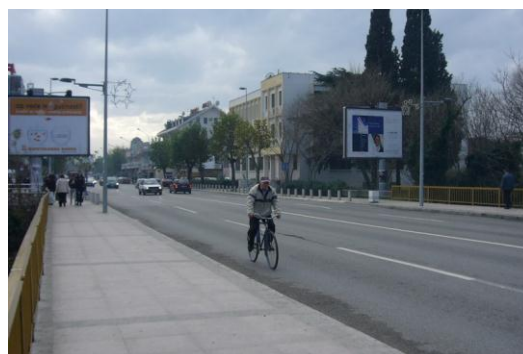
Public transport in Podgorica consists of private cars, bus lines and taxi vehicles. The taxicab service is well-organised. Over 20 companies operate over 800 vehicles. These boast a high level of service, including new cars, same car model for the entire company, drivers in uniforms and GPS-tracked vehicles.

01.2. Recognized issues

The city has never had a network of cycling paths/routes, which would contribute greatly to improving and upgrading environmental conditions in the city, and also contributing indirectly to improving the health of its citizens.



Picture 3. Huge number of private cars



Picture 4. Lack of cycle paths in the city

The recognized problems are:

- a public transport system which consists primarily of private cars, taxi vehicles and buses as means of public transport which worsen environmental conditions in the city and impair the health of its citizens;
- only a small number of inhabitants of Podgorica use bicycles as means of transport. Even when they do use bicycles they are endangered because there are no specially designed cycling paths in the city;
- insufficient commitment of the state and the city government organs to solve the problem;
- lack of awareness among the citizens of the importance of preserving a healthy urban environment and the importance of environmentally friendly public transport modes.

01.3. Objectives analysis

Main goal: Developing sustainable, diversified and environmentally friendly public transport models in Podgorica.

Project Purpose: Reduction of traffic inconvenience in Podgorica by introducing cycling as a model of public transportation.

Specific Objectives:

- a) Increased citizens' awareness about the importance of introducing sustainable transport models;
- b) Defining the Study of Sustainable Models of Urban Transport in Podgorica, with emphasis on cycling.

02. PROCESS

02.1. Phase I – one month Training program in Sweden

During my participation in the **Phase I** of the Training program “Integrated Urban Planning” (IUP 09), my project idea was analysed and the methodology developed in order to advance the project.

In that process we used LFA methodology (The Logical Framework Approach) and it was my first time to use it, because in the official planning institutions in Montenegro LFA has not been used so far. I think that this method is very useful for different types of projects. At the end of the first phase in Sweden the "problem tree", the main objectives, potential participants in the project and expected results in the short and long term were defined, as well as all activities that had to be implemented from October 2009 till June 2010. The potential risks for failure of the project were also discussed and after that the strategy for overcoming potential risks was suggested.

Since Stockholm already has a developed network of bicycle paths, and having in mind that bicycles are largely used for everyday transportation, staying in Sweden gave me an instant opportunity for understanding many advantages and disadvantages of using bicycles as a mean of public transport. Sharing experiences with colleagues from other countries, who had dealt with similar issues, allowed me to look at the problem from different aspects, and in addition to pay attention to the context, in which I wanted to develop the project. Faizan Jawed, a colleague from India, who already had much more experience in this field, helped me in finding interesting materials and useful contacts on the Internet. The exchange of ideas and experiences with colleagues and mentors was very important for me and my future work on the project. Thanks to the IUP program I achieved remarkable success in the implementation of activities of the project that followed after my return to Montenegro.



Picture 5. Cycling infrastructure in Sweden



Picture 6. All generations of cyclist in Sweden

The training program greatly helped me to understand the meaning of the term **integration** and to improve my knowledge of integrated urban planning. For me, particularly new and important topics were: *Public participation in Planning, Modern Planning Theories, Gender Equality and Planning, Strategic Environmental Assessment in Land use Planning, Urbanisation and Slums, Access to Sustainable Housing, GIS.*

With the presentations I had the opportunity to see many concrete and interesting examples from practice that our presenters provided. We commented on them independently or through group work.



Picture 7. Lecture in Karlskrona



Picture 8. Study visit in Stockholm

I gained new knowledge from different areas that are also important for my work, such as: *the ability to prepare project presentations, writing reports, preparing exhibitions, the characteristic of learning organization, team work etc.* I can conclude that all that I mentioned significantly helped my professional development in the area of integrated urban planning.

Extra curriculum activities and study visits in Karlskrona and Stockholm were extremely well thought and very well organized. Those visits allowed me to learn about the culture of living in Sweden and especially about some of its specific characteristics.

02.2. Interim phase – work in home country from October to December 2009

After first phase of IUP 2009/2010 and returning in Podgorica, the activities to identify the possibilities for project funding were initiated. The initial contacts and meetings with various stakeholders were held. First meetings included presentations of the project idea and the training within IUP 2009/2010 held in Sweden. A special attention in these meetings was given to the mobilization of the stakeholders to identify most appropriate and acceptable solutions for their acceptance and support of the future development and the implementation of the project. Stakeholders that were involved in this phase were:

- Office for Sustainable Development, Government of Montenegro;
- Two non-governmental organisations - EXPEDITIO, Centre for Sustainable Spatial Development, and Green Home (that had already implemented several promotional activities aimed at cycling in Podgorica);
- GTZ – Montenegro-German organisation for technical help and cooperation (now it is transformed to GIZ-German organisation for International cooperation);
- Office of UNDP Podgorica (United Nations Development Program-Podgorica).

On 26 November 2009, a consultative group meeting was organized for all stakeholders that were previously approached individually. During the meeting an agreement was reached about the importance of launching this initiative and reaffirmed the readiness to provide various kinds of support for the implementation, but only if the approval from Municipality of Podgorica was ensured. It was decided that the Office for Sustainable Development should send a formal letter to the Major of Podgorica in order to invite him to attend the final presentation of the idea as well as other stakeholders.



Picture 9. Final meeting with all stakeholders



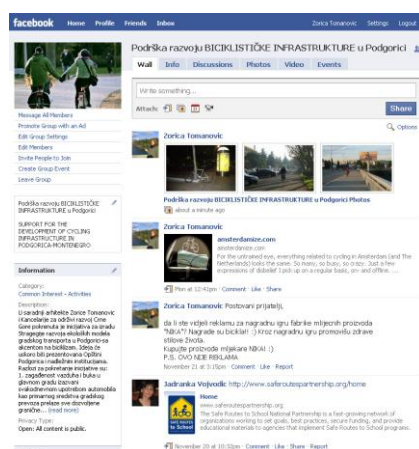
Picture 10. Presentation for Municipality representatives and stakeholders

The final presentation was held on 16 December 2009 in the premises of the Office for Sustainable Development. The presentation was attended by the representatives of the Municipality of Podgorica (Department for Ecology, Department for Traffic, Department for Spatial Planning and Development), the representatives of UNDP Podgorica, GTZ - Montenegro, the Embassy of the Republic of Germany, NGO EXPEDITIO and some citizens. The presentation was successful and that was confirmed by all participants. The idea was supported by the representatives of the Municipality of Podgorica that attended the meeting.

During October and November 2009, two major activities were conducted in order to get citizens' feedback and involve them in the project development process. They were the following:

- Launching and administering the Facebook group for the support to the project (http://www.facebook.com/posted.php?id=167506141537&share_id=249876452836&comments=1). Due to the lack of any financial means for funding the activities in this phase of the project, through a popular web site Facebook the group was launched in order to mobilise the support for the idea of developing the cycling infrastructure in Podgorica. The posted feedback, reactions, suggestions and contributions allowed for more in-depth understanding of the citizens' opinions. The group became lively and my friends and I are constantly uploading, reviewing and updating the Group web site with new information and interesting links related to cycling. Through the Facebook and e-mail the support was received from the USA Ambassador in Podgorica H.E. Roderick Mur and Mr Nicola Bertolini – Head of Operations, Delegation of EU in Montenegro.

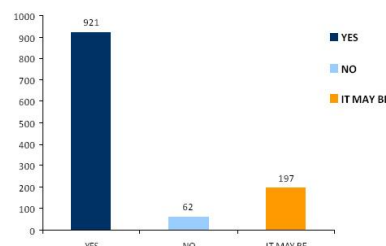
- Survey. The questionnaire had six short questions and was distributed via e-mail and personally in printed form. The survey was implemented with the participation of the members of the Facebook group, as well as volunteers of the NGO JUVENTAS and NGO Youth Forum (Forum mladih), representatives of the American Corner in Podgorica and the Office for Sustainable Development etc. The survey lasted for 20 days during November 2009 and 1,185 completed questionnaires were collected. The large response from the citizens and positive results of the survey were the biggest surprise for me, but also the strongest motivating energy during the process of implementation of the planned activities. I have to say that my special thanks are given to my friends Jadranka and Ana Vojvodic who helped me in summarizing the survey results and translation of different documents.



Picture 11. Facebook page

Results of questionnaire

Question No 4.
Do you think that the bicycle, as a model of transport in the city and its surroundings, could have a significant place?



Picture 12. One of the results of the Survey

Within the implementation of the mentioned activities contact was made with:

- Slovenian company OIKOS-Sustainable development, d.o.o. (<http://www.oikos.si/en/montenegro>) which has experience in the drafting of the similar studies in the area of spatial planning and development and also has an office in Podgorica;
- NGO Green Action (Zelena akcija)-Zagreb, Croatia (<http://www.zelena-akcija.hr>), which is active for quite some time with similar initiatives;
- Several Letters of support arrived from Copenhagen, South Africa, Croatia

The media expressed interest in reporting about the project implementation through press articles and TV coverage.

At the end the conclusion can be that most of the planned activities were implemented and with great enthusiasm and support of citizens and stakeholders, good conditions for reaching a final agreement for the study development were created. At the end of this phase I still was waiting for the final answer from the Municipality of Podgorica.

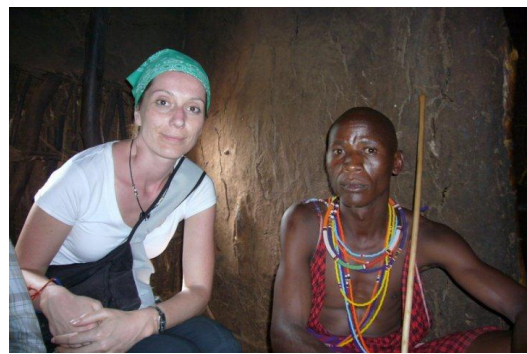
02.3. Phase II – Study trip to Kenya

For the second phase of IUP Training program that was organized as a study tour to Kenya, I prepared a final report as well as an exhibition in which I presented all activities that were conducted from October 2009 to January 2010. The lessons related to these issues that we got in Sweden were very useful for this phase of the project.

After the presentation of the project and the results achieved, along with my mentors and my colleagues I planned some activities in order to continue the project despite the completion of the training program. I exchanged the gained experiences with colleagues that were working on similar issues (Kenya, India). Other presentations of my colleagues also had exceptional quality and showed their success of their projects, which also said a lot about the quality of the IUP Training Program.



Picture 13. Kibera slum in Nairobi



Picture 14. Meeting with traditional Masai tribe

My stay in Kenya was very important for several reasons:

- It was a unique opportunity for me to travel to Africa, because I am not sure if I could ever do it by myself;
- The study visits to institutions that control urban planning have provided me the opportunity to compare the similarities and differences in planning processes in developing countries;
- In Nairobi I had the opportunity to see one of the largest informal settlements (slum) in the world on the spot. I could realize that it is a problem for the country and for planning, but I could also see how the Government of Kenya (different Ministries) handled it;
- The activities that were organized outside the mandatory program enabled me to experience a part of beautiful and exotic nature of the African continent, to meet a particular culture and thus enrich my life experience. Since I love traveling, I hope I will have another chance to visit Africa and also some of my colleagues from the IUP Training Program.

02.4. Further activities related to the project work

After finishing IUP Training Program I continued with certain activities in terms of the project:

- I promoted the idea among the citizens in Podgorica, especially young people who attend elementary and secondary education through:
 - a public presentation in the American corner in the Cultural Center Budo Tomovic, Podgorica;
 - a presentation for volunteers from NGO Juventas in Podgorica;
 - a presentation at the summer school entitled "The planet is in your hands." The Summer school was held in July 2011 under the auspices of the GIZ-ASE Montenegro (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit). The presentations were very well received and the idea is supported by pupils. They see cycling as their best chance (using a bicycle rather than some other forms of transport) for contribution to the healthy environment.



Picture 15. Presentation at the Summer School



Picture 16. Presentation for volunteers

- In the cooperation among Office of Sustainable Development and GIZ-ASE Montenegro the idea of opening the Solar bike station near the city centre was realized. This took place in 2010. The two aims of this project are the promotion of the idea for better use of renewable resources in Montenegro, but also the promotion of the environmental transport models in the city, with emphasis on cycling. After the opening ceremony the promotional bike ride through the city was held, and about 200 cyclists participated in it. The Solar bike station has three bicycles that are available to all citizens-for renting, driving, and then returning to the station. Bicycles are charged with the help of solar panels mounted on the roof of the station construction. In this manner GIZ-ASE Montenegro and Office for Sustainable Development gave its support and contribution to the idea that I have been promoting;



Picture 17. Conference Velo City 2010



Picture 18. Solar bike station in Podgorica

- Thanks to the financial support from GIZ-ASE Montenegro I participated in the great global conference dedicated to the development of cycling as a means of urban transport, which was held in Copenhagen in June 2010 (Velo City 2010). Visiting that Conference enabled me to establish some contacts with people from Europe and all-of the World who were dealing with this topic. It also was an opportunity to see different experiences related to development of cycling infrastructure in contemporary cities that are coming from developed countries. Copenhagen-city of cyclists is an impressive example of a city, which is fully turned to ecological models of urban transport, and the city, which uses various interesting and inspiring ways for continuously developing a cycling culture as a way of life;
- the idea was promoted several times in short interviews on the television and print media;
- Since September 2010 I was engaged in part-time job funded by GIZ-ASE Montenegro and related to the project named Energy Tour. This project lasts two years and involves visiting all primary schools in Montenegro with the aim to provide additional knowledge about environmental protection and energy efficiency to the students of the eighth and the ninth grade. I always promote cycling through lectures and practical work and students always accept the idea very well;
- the contact with new NGO "Green Action" from Podgorica, which promotes cycling, has been established this year. In June 2011 members of that NGO have organized a protest bike route through the capital city. The aim of that bike ride was to represent the growing number of cyclists that are really in great danger in their situation due to the current conditions prevailing in the daily traffic in Podgorica, in particular the lack of specific cycle paths. During the coming months I will consider new options for further action related to the project in cooperation with mentioned NGO "Green Action" and the NGO "Nik Bike" from Niksic, which is also dedicated to promoting bicycling in that city.



Picture 19. Cooperation with NGO EXPEDITIO-Kotor



Picture 20. Interview for local TV Station

The only negative experience in the whole process is that we still have not received a final positive response from the Municipality of Podgorica. I received the information that the final decision depends only on the mayor, but he never responded to this issue. There was no representative of the Montenegrin state institutions at the opening of Solar bike station, which was really depressing. In the new Study of Transport that has been made this year, and that is an integral part of the new Spatial Plan of Podgorica, cycling as a model of urban transportation didn't get so much attention. It can be concluded that generally there is lack of political will in Municipality of Podgorica, as well as in whole Montenegro to address and solve this problem. Furthermore, the current local government in Podgorica does not want to commit itself to the idea of introducing the ecological models of city transport in the capital. Moreover, the mayor of Podgorica asked the Office for Sustainable Development to pay an annual fee of 8,000 Euros for the two parking spaces for cars, which have been occupied by the Solar bike station. In this situation I am forced to think that I have to try to realize my idea in the cooperation with some other municipality.

02.5. Other activities that promoted Integrated Urban Planning and Sustainable Development

In cooperation with NGO EXPEDITIO – Centre for Sustainable Development, Kotor, one project has been designed and named ***My City-My Home (Moj grad moj dom)***. The project aims at promoting the principles of sustainable planning through producing a serial of short TV programmes. I was a part of the team of five people who were responsible for preparing scripts for 35 short educational and affirmative TV programmes, which aim at raising awareness among the citizens of Montenegro of the principles of sustainable development concerning living in towns. The programmes are re-broadcast three times a week on ATLAS TV, and then placed on YouTube. Under this program, two shows were devoted to urban transport.

Through the other scripts and TV programs we have promoted the following topics:

- Bicycles in towns,
- Town for pedestrians,
- Green town,
- Sustainable town,
- Town and advertisements,

- Town adapted to climate changes,
- Town for recreation,
- Health in towns,
- Towns as a playground,
- Creative public spaces,
- Town and gender equality,
- Public transport,
- Town adapted to blind persons and persons with poor vision,
- Town and tourism,
- Energy efficient building
- Cultural heritage and landscape

For the preparation of scripts for some of programmes I have used material collected from IUP programme. I believe that through media we can have some influence on citizens and improve their knowledge about integrated planning and sustainable development. The first TV program, which was dedicated to cycling in cities, can be seen on the link below:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZMoTkNjkJk>

Some of these articles were expanded and published later in the publication “Benefit Living” as a result of the same project in which NGO EXPEDITIO participated.

0.3. RESULTS

In accordance with the two sets of goals that were previously presented in the paragraph 01.3., I can point out the following results of the project implementation have been archived until now:

- certain influence was already made towards awareness among citizens to start thinking about the idea of using the bicycle as the means of city transport. I can especially emphasize the generation of young people that are completing the primary or attending the secondary schools and who have been given special attention, and this also should be seen as a success;
- an important result is also Facebook group named “Support to the idea of developing environmental friendly models of urban transport in Podgorica, with emphasis on cycling” through which I managed to get the first feedback from citizens. The group is still active and has about 1,250 members.
- the survey about this topic that was conducted for the first time in Podgorica,
- numerous contacts with different companies, NGOs and other institutions that could support the implementation of the project in the latter stages are established;
- solar bike station is constructed and located in front of state building, near the city centre. In a visible way this station promotes the idea of using renewable natural resources in Montenegro and also cycling as an ecological model of city transport.

04. CONCLUSIONS

I have only positive impressions about the Training Program Integrated Urban Planning that I attended in 2009/2010. After the regular faculty of architecture my interests were oriented toward sustainable development and its impact on planning, and to energy efficiency in space planning and buildings. The Training Program was an excellent upgrade of the acquired knowledge. Many of the topics that I listened to during the training were still insufficiently known by me, or I didn't pay sufficiently attention on that during my work in practice. The training had a lot of influence on my attitudes and thinking regarding space planning in modern cities. Thanks to the visits to Sweden and Kenya, due to the very good speakers and presentations, I find that I have significantly enriched my professional experience.



Picture 21. Different cultures together in Sweden



Picture 22. Group work

The project that I developed during the program also brought me a lot of new knowledge. I acquired specific experience in working with stakeholders and other entities. Thanks to the project I had, for the first time, the opportunity to work with the volunteers and citizens and foreign organizations operating in Montenegro. A very interesting idea of using the Facebook as a medium, through which it is possible to get feedback from citizens was a breakthrough. The initiative was commended from many citizens. Today, many of my friends use Facebook for similar purposes.

Having in mind that there were no financial means for funding the activities, everything that was achieved in this project could be considered a large success. With the support of large number of citizens as well as the great enthusiasm present from the very beginning, good conditions for reaching a final agreement for the study development were created. At the end only the final response for the Municipality was negative, but I hope that it would be changed in the future.

The participation in this program also enabled the exchange of knowledge with other participants from different countries of the world, which also contributed to the development of my personal attitudes and experiences in the area of integrated urban planning. I gained many new friends around the world, whom I am still in touch with. At a conference in Copenhagen, I met with a colleague from India Faizan Jawed. In July this year my colleagues from South Africa and Albania (Alize Le Roux, Christina Cimbidhi and Valentina Zotkaj) visited me and my country.



Picture 23. Participants in IUP 09/10



Picture 24. Friendly people and warm welcome

A special appreciation and gratitude I reserve for my mentor Mr Sixten Larsson, whose kindness, patients and readiness to provide all kinds of support for the project were without boundaries.

I feel a great gratitude also to all those friendly people from Sweden and Kenya that I met during the program. They made a great effort to give us a warm and friendly welcome, to allow us a pleasant stay and to provide all those necessary conditions for our work.