



**ECOSOC • Integration Segment (27–29 May, 2014)**  
**SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION**

**BUILDING  
THE FUTURE**  
**we WANT**

## **REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

# **Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment**

## **2014 ECOSOC Integration Segment: Sustainable Urbanization**

- **What has been the experience of your country in using urbanization as a tool for the integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development?**

The City of Belgrade has completed a number of plans and strategies based on the principles of sustainable development in recent years. The Development Strategy for the City of Belgrade addressed the issues of planning, sustainability and development of the city, which will set the system of responsibilities for the implementation of strategic priorities by 2016. The Strategy provides basic guidelines for long-term and concrete plans, programs and projects of the City.

Regional Spatial Plan General defined a vision of the future development, aimed at providing the city of Belgrade a better positioning at the level of metropolitan cities and capitals in the region, in accordance with principles of sustainability, competitiveness, accessibility and identity improvement. The Plan determines spatial organization, guidelines, policies and conditions for protection, regulation and development, optimal use of general resources, values and potentials of the area, in accordance with regional environment. Main development principles are:

- sustainability (economic, social and environmental)
- competitiveness
- cohesion
- accessibility
- identity

The new Master Plan for the City of Belgrade 2021 has defined strategies and goals for future urban development of the city:

- inner city development/Belgrade as the compact city
- city development through large scale projects
- rational land use, protection of forest and agricultural land
- sensible assessment of existing physical potentials
- sustainable planning of transport and infrastructure network
- integration of various uses and amenities/mixed use developments
- protection and development of green areas

Strategic assessments and EIA reports are integral parts of all spatial and urban plans proposing future development, transportation systems and facilities and infrastructure corridors plans, transformation of industrial complexes, sports and recreational centers, protected heritage areas, protected cultural and historical sites and protected natural sites. All the assessments are done in accordance with the regulations on environmental protection.

A number of different studies and special research projects completed in recent years for the city of Belgrade offer solid base for sustainable urbanization:

- Study of Public Spaces in Old Belgrade
- Social Housing Study
- Study on Highrise Buildings
- Study on Protection, Development and Rehabilitation of Loess Bluffs
- Belgrade Green Regulation Project
- Belgrade Waterfront Study-Phase 1
- Belgrade Waterfront Study-Phase 2: Natural Core of Belgrade
- Study of Belgrade metro system general concept – I phase: In 2012 Egis Rail made the General concept of Belgrade metro system

- **What kinds of investments have been made in your cities to make them hubs of sustainability?**

A number of investments in the sectors of industry, agriculture, social housing, renewable sources and infrastructure have been made in the last decade in the Serbian cities. They also triggered broader development and made significant contribution to strengthening local communities and economies including opportunities for local businesses, education and social welfare (FIAT Automotive Plant in Kragujevac, NIS co-generation plants, social housing developments in Belgrade, Kragujevac, Cacak, Nis etc.). The most successful investments in terms of sustainable development were the ones that optimised the use of previously developed land and vacant or underused buildings, such as former military and industrial compounds. The Belgrade Action plan for Romani relocation is successfully being realized. It is being done by Belgrade Land Development Agency in cooperation with UNOPS (relocation of 12 families to Orlovsko settlement and 15 families to location Jabučki rit). The Agency currently displaces squatter settlements near the access road to bridge over the Sava River (24 families to Orlovsko settlement and 27 families to location Jabučki rit).

- **How have you addressed specific urbanization challenges in an integrated way?**

Refurbishing and legalization of unplanned settlements and developments (mainly in the housing domain), are processes that have been ongoing since the late 90's. The urgent need for introduction of adequate infrastructure and street network, as well as public and commercial facilities (schools, kindergartens, health clinics, retail and services) after the houses were built, certainly made urban planning in these cases a genuine challenge. Integration of social and environmental components was feasible in most cases, but economic sustainability of proposed developments was not achieved (higher costs of acquiring land for public uses, costs of infrastructure etc.).

City of Belgrade financed the Study on Highrise Buildings in 2010, which introduced a special type of analysis of the sustainability of the project and development involving highrise construction. The Study defined general and specific criteria and requirements for economic, environmental and social sustainability (climate change factors, accessibility, public spaces, green areas, energy efficiency, use of sustainable building materials, sustainable solutions in infrastructure and use of renewable energy sources etc.), that every highrise development must meet before the project and permitting phase.

The important question in this context is development of sewer facilities for rainwater and wastewater. It is shown in General project of water channeling in the Belgrade area and also in some Regulatory plans. Belgrade has 5 (4 +1) sewer systems with network that covers 75% of consumption of sewage waste water and 60% of the area with sewage and stormwater primarily in compact urban areas, while the metropolitan area and the suburbs mainly don't have developed systems. For each of the systems the appropriate wastewater treatment facility is planned but not one has been built. 29 flows into the Sava and the Danube is registered as well as series of uncontrolled effluences into smaller water courses and watering channels. As a solution, small plants for wastewater treatment in suburban settlements has been designed (one in Zuce village, and 2 more plants are supposed to be built in Pinosava and Beli Potok). At the same time the construction works of the City main sewer are in progress and preparation for construction of waste water treatment plant.

A number of plans and development projects for the City of Belgrade, involving sustainable urbanization is currently underway: projects for new tangent and ring road, construction of the new bypass road, district heating projects involving co-generation plants, local waste management plan and the Green Regulation Project for development, preservation and improvement of parks and green areas in the city.

In order to improve the transport infrastructure and environmental aspects of Belgrade, the feasibility study and conceptual design of bike lanes have been made considering how to connect Belgrade with European corridors (European track number 6, which connects the English Channel and the Black Sea, 588km through Serbia and the track number 11, which connects the North Sea with Athens, 592km through Serbia) and also the bike lanes that connect Belgrade major attractions and recreational areas, both in the city and outskirts. 52.7 km of bike lanes have been developed and reconstructed in New Belgrade. In this way not only recreational aspect of bicycling is covered, but it also serves as important means of transportation (to work, school, etc.).

- **What kinds of institutional structures are in place in your country for effective governance, policy-making and planning for sustainable urbanization?**

Institutional structures for governance and planning in the City of Belgrade are different parts of the city government, public enterprises and utility companies:

- City Government: Secretariat for Urban Planning and Construction, Secretariat for Environmental Protection, Secretariat for Housing and Communal Affairs, Secretariat for Transportation, Secretariat for Economy, Secretariat for Agriculture, Secretariat for Social Welfare, Secretariat for Education, Secretariat for Culture, Investment and Housing Agency etc.
- Urban Planning Institute, Land Management Agency, public utility companies, social welfare and health care administration etc.

- **What are some innovations and partnerships that demonstrate the power of urbanization in the integration of three dimensions of sustainable development in your country?**

Established partnerships between companies promoting corporate social responsibility, various agencies or funds, and local communities and cities on different projects or investments, proved they can contribute to sustainable economic, social and environmental development in many ways (Beočin Business Park, partners LAFARGE and local municipality; Sustainable Local Development Projects, partners USAID and various municipalities; SMART Sustainable Mobility Plan, partners UNDP, PARQUEXPO and Land Management Agency; Strategies for Integrated Urban Development, partners GIZ and cities of Niš, Užice i Kragujevac; European Green City Index 2009, SIEMENS AG).