Mobility and Public Space Plan in Vitoria-Gasteiz

Region	**Europe and Central Asia**
Sustainable Development Goals	**Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

Summary

The main objective of the Sustainable Mobility and Public Space Plan in Vitoria-Gasteiz is to achieve a practical outline of city mobility to minimize the dysfunctions caused by the high use of motorized modes, especially the private car. At the same time, the Plan seeks a transformation of the public space in which non-motorized modes recover their space, while seeking a improvement of quality of life.

Background and Objective

SITUATION BEFORE THE INITIATIVE BEGAN The urban mobility in Vitoria-Gasteiz (235,661 inhabitants in 2009) had two major dysfunctions: the modal split (37% for a private vehicle vs. 8% for public transport) and the distribution of road public space (64% for a private vehicle vs. 36 % for pedestrian). Accordingly, the previous situation had a growing urban decay, excessive energy consumption,air pollution, noise and an increasing sedentary life of the population. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES The Plan's priorities have been established jointly by the Vitoria-Gasteiz Council (implementation and citizens participation) and the Agency for Urban Ecology of Barcelona (theoretical framework and technical development). In order of importance, the priorities have been: to change the current modal split by promoting alternatives to car transport (cycling, walking and public transport); the maximum possible recovery of public space, currently allocated to the motor vehicle; to restore its role as a social space for citizens; the application of the superblocks model to provide a comprehensive solution to the organization of mobility networks and to improve the quality of public space; the incorporation of citizens' participation and finally,the consensus among both the technical areas involved and the political parties. FORMULATION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES Reorganize mobility networks from a new urban cell called superblock. The strategy classifies the roads in a core network for the road traffic (perimeter of the superblock) and pedestrian-priority streets (inside the superblock). To discourage car use, the public transport offer has been improved and the surface parking has been reorganized. The strategy consists of a new network that will allow faster journeys through travel journey changes and intermodal transport with tram and bicycle. Moreover, it is planned to consolidate the continuity of bike and urban trails networks, by expanding and integrating them into the Green Belt of Vitoria-Gasteiz. The implementation was carried out by consensus reached through the citizen's participation process. MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES Besides the economic contribution of funds of the City Council, the contributions of financial resources from the Government of Spain (€ 26 million between 2009-10), the Basque Government (€ 208,000 between 2007-2009) and the European CIVITAS program (€2.2 million between 2009-2012) have also allowed additional actions to materialize. For the materialization and implementation of the Plan, along with human resources departments and municipal agencies involved, the City Council has been technically supported by several consulting and external companies, as well as by the civic and social groups' involvement. Noteworthy in this respect is the social nature of the Plan, including over thirty briefings and participative workshops, as well as the unselfish collaboration of over a hundred volunteers, who provided support in the streets informing citizens about the extent, scope and operation of the new public transport network. In parallel, the educational program of Agenda 21 for Schools is to involve the students in this new model of sustainable mobility, involving over 20,000students from thirty schools during 2009.

Actions and Implementation

The Mobility and Public Spaces Plan in Vitoria-Gasteiz is the work carried out jointly by the technical services of Vitoria-Gasteiz Council and the Urban Ecology Agency of Barcelona, and they both keep informed about the citizens' participation process for the development of a new mobility model for the city. The approach to implementing the plan was multidisciplinary and participatory,seeking the involvement of different municipal departments and citizens' organizations, among which the following can be highlighted: The municipal departments: Urbanism,Technology Management and Citizen Care, Local Police, Citizens' Participation,Environment, Economic Development and the Office of Strategic Plan. The Municipal autonomous corporations and agencies: •Environmental Studies Center (CEA) •Ensanche XXI • Vitoria Urban Transport Company (TUVISA) Social agents: •Bus transportation professionals groups. •Reduced mobility groups. •Sectoral Council of Environment •Economic agents •Traders associations •Professional associations. •Neighborhood Associations •Council of the Agenda 21 for Schools The sample of existing awareness of the participatory process is embodied in the Citizen's Pact for Sustainable Mobility.The pact aims to establish a consensus between the public administration and civil society to define the new model of sustainable mobility for the city,finally developed in the Mobility and Public Space Plan in Vitoria-Gasteiz. The high level of citizen participation in this Plan has served to strengthen the collective sense of citizenship. There has been an involvement of different stakeholders in the city of Vitoria-

Gasteiz,leading to Citizen's Pact for Sustainable Mobility, which enabled to draw a common scenario overcoming the conflicts of interest and adjusting the Plan to the requirements of citizenship. The Basque Country University has also had a strong involvement in the campaign of personalized information with the volunteers, putting all its efforts in the transmission of the philosophy of the Mobility Plan towards the citizens.

Outcomes and Impacts

Public transportation should assume a significantly higher percentage of journeys,starting from 7-8%. The new bus and tram network has increased to 43.5% in the number of journeys, which are 491,649 journeys more. The bike network has been expanded to make it the fastest, most comfortable and safest of the means of transport, through the implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan. The number of circulating vehicles has been reduced by the superblocks model combined with a parking fare system that taxes the use of public space by private vehicles, under the framework of the Parking Master Plan. Also six park and ride carparks have been allocated with a capacity of 5,500 cars, located at the entrance of the city and connected by public transport. The implementation outline of the Plan is summarized in the table below: Outline of implementation of the Mobility and Public Space Plan in Vitoria-Gasteiz

Sustainability and Scalability

In the last decades of XXth century, Vitoria-Gasteiz has been characterized by a balanced growth tied to a quality planning and a concern for the environment, with projects like the new tram and the burying of railwaylines, the Green Belt and Greenways Plan. Following this line, the current Mobility and Public Space Plan consisted of: - The diagnosis of the current scenario of mobility and habitability of public space, defining the allocation of public space and green spaces in the city and analyze the mobility networks. - The analysis of different scenarios considering the future implications of the city and specifying future scenarios for each mobility network. - The establishment of a model of urban mobility more sustainable and a public space more habitable, including aspects related to: · Reorganization of mobility networks. · The impact on the atmosphere. · The displacement of people. · The occupation of public space,activities and level of comfort. - The definition of a mobility networks new configuration involving less consumption of resources and energy. - The urban transformation proposals were classified into several areas: · Superblock: free 70% of space now occupied by vehicles. · Urban Green Corridor Zabalgana-Salburúa. · Streets: draft sections of basic network and permeability analysis of pedestrian and bicycle network. · Analysis of permeability and public space distribution on urban streets which adaptation to the new model of mobility requires intervention. - The development of indicators needed for the Plan managers to make decisions to increase the quality city of public space. The implementation and development of the phases of the mobility plan will: • Reduce greenhouse gases by cutting down private vehicle use. • Reduce air pollution and noise. • Increase the quality of urban public space and quality of life for its citizens. The future projected in the Mobility and Public Space Plan points inevitably to a change in the mobility model, with a modal split towards alternative modes of city public transport, cycling and walking, in order to reach a model as sustainable as possible.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

The mobility model of big cities is at the root of many of the dysfunctions that occur in urban systems. Its resolution is not easy, since it means rethinking our model from a systemic approach. The public space, which is now dominated by private vehicle, has always had a prominent role in the current model of thecity. Similarly, public space is a basic requirement of welfare and social cohesion as it promotes the relationship and contact, the true function of the city. The existence of significant dysfunctions, currently present in most of cities, expresses the need for a model of mobility that transcends time and adapts to the particularities of every city, being applicable to both small and large scale. In that sense, the Sustainable Mobility and Public Space Plan in Vitoria-Gasteiz has been a pioneer in applying the conceptual, instrumental and organizational model of a new compact and complex city. For the philosophy behind the project and its multiplier potential, the model of orthogonal mobility network of the superblocks is approved or implemented in Spanish cities of different types, asin Barcelona, Viladecans and El Prat (Catalonia) or in A Coruña and Ferrol(Galicia). The Mobility Plan of Vitoria-Gasteiz goes beyond the implementation of the superblocks, as fits within a participatory process where all social,economic and political changes have reached a strong consensus. The design of the superblock as new urban cell with adaptive characteristics(approximately 400 meters per side for the motorized flows and inner part released for other uses), is universal and transcends the experience of Vitoria-Gasteiz. The union of superblocks gives rise to a network of basic ways, not only for private vehicles, but to formalize for each mode of transport a particular and segregated network. It is important to highlight that implementation of the model does not require the city to change radically. It is not referred to do demolitions and systematically open new spaces, but to apply the simple idea of urban recycling. RELATED POLICIES The implementation of the Plan is generating policy adjustments, such as the regulation of parking, or those related to circulation and cyclist mobility, currently under review and revision. The city faces now also the revising of its Urban General Plan, whose previous studies already incorporate a strategic vision of the Sustainable Mobility and Public Space Plan, and it would be desirable to assume this as main element of urban policy in the 21st Century Vitoria-Gasteiz. In fact, the City Strategy Master Plan sets out the challenge of urban mobility management and consolidation framed in a new model of public space, compact, efficient and socially cohesive, able to maintain and even improve urban habitability as one its main axis.

Innovative Initiative

After the process undertaken we have learned to: 1. Planning an integrated mobilityand public space with sustainability criteria. 2. Define a new urban cell, the superblock, for the private vehicles and public transport motorization. The superblocks transcend and replace the traditional block, which remains suitable for travelling by foot and bicycle. 3. Design and implement public transportation networks able to assume the mobility model based on superblocks,achieving a uniform and equal service and replacing the existing radial networks, which promote the centre to the detriment of the suburbs. 4. Improve the quality of public space, releasing the cars from the superblocks inside. It reduces air pollution, noise, accidents and multiply the public space potential uses,recovered for economic exchange, relaxing, party,playing, staying, etc. 5. Extrapolate the superblockmodel: currently it is being developed in other cities, with the necessary adjustments to fit into the local urban fabric, which has meant that every city can be transmitter and receiver of knowledge. 6. To implement the Mobility Plan by developing dynamic and parallel processes of communication and participation: First, by involving all citizens and stakeholders in the participation process. The information flow was not only vertical (from City Council to Citizens), but also introduced a communication citizen-to-citizen, contributing to the socialization of the Plan. The volunteer campaign developed to inform about the changes in thenetwork is oriented to this end. The results were more than 27,000 people informed on the streets by 101 volunteers, during 3 weeks of campaigning. Second,we learned to state a consensus position between all political groups, getting unanimous approval of a Plan that, besides the political consensus, required the coordination of technical areas that usually operate separately.