



SARAJEVO

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

KEY FEATURES OF THE CITY

Demographic Facts

- about 70.000 inhabitants in the City
- about 440.000 citizens in the Canton
- about 170.000 tourists in the Canton

Urban Figures

- dynamic spatial genesis of linear-radial city center
- “open” urban structure
- sedimentared polyvalent architecture

Heritage

- Registered heritage: “Sarajevo. unique symbol of universal multicultural, continual open city”
- Inscription: World Heritage Tentative List
- Date of submission: 1997

EXISTING GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS

Development and Management Plans

- Sarajevo Canton Development Strategy until 2015 (1999)
- Urban Plan of the City of Sarajevo for Urban Area of Sarajevo for the period from 1986 to 2015 (1999)
- Canton Environmental Action Plan (2006)
- Spatial Plan of Sarajevo Canton

Responsible Authorities

- Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
- FBiH Sarajevo Canton Planning Institute

Legislation for the protection and management

- Law on Construction Land

MAIN ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

- demographic development and the challenge of displacement
- spatial and infrastructural development for a more efficient use of land

KEY ASPECTS OF THE CULTURE-BASED REGENERATION STRATEGIES

- aesthetic transformation
- functional transformation

OUTCOMES AND LESSON LEARNT

- symbolic value of reconstruction and the preservation of identity
- fostering diversity and a new image of the city



8.14 Sarajevo

Sarajevo, ex- Yugoslavian city and current capital of the State and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stretches along the Miljacka River in the heart of Southeastern Europe and the Balkans, surrounded by the Dinaric Alps and nestled within the greater Sarajevo valley. Sarajevo represents the paradigm of a fragmented city made of overlapped layers of history, where the possibility of reconstruction of a collective memory” — and its inclusion in urban space — is an important and controversial issue. The several transitions experienced by the city, together with its recent transformations — also related to the European Youth Olympic Festival that it will be hosting in 2017 — make it an outstanding example in the relationship between regeneration and remembrance.



8.14.1 Key features of the city

Sarajevo Canton — declared the European Region in 2006 — stands in a very peculiar position, located in the area where East and West, North and South meet, and where the overlapped layers of tangible and intangible heritage reveal a stratified contest of urban and cultural diversity.

Sarajevo's urban structure reflects the historically diverse urban growth, produced under the Ottoman rule, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the state-socialist period (Martín-Díaz, 2014: 307).

The three-and-a-half year siege destroyed large part of the urban structure at the beginning of the 1990s. Following the war, it is estimated that nearly 60% of the housing stock was destroyed (Black, 2001: 178), buildings in the old city centre were targeted and razed to the ground for their cultural value and significance (Coward, 2006; Herscher, 2008), so now Sarajevo has been undergoing post-war reconstruction, and is the fastest growing city in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Demographic facts

With a population of about 370.000 inhabitants inside the city, Sarajevo is the largest city of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Sarajevo Canton occupies an area of almost 1277.3 km² and represents the metropolitan area of the country's capital city, with a population of nearly 440.000 citizens. More than 170.000 tourists visited Sarajevo Canton, which makes more than the 50% of total number of tourists in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Urban figures

The linear development of contemporary Sarajevo finds its current configuration in the urban growth of the Fifties and the development of the Seventies, based on the split of the most populated part of the city into two separate municipalities: Novo Sarajevo and Novi Grad. Alongside with those expansion processes, the city has witnessed the simultaneous emergence of some issues concerning the spread of illegal building and the necessity to entrust the expanding urban fabric a new peculiar trend.

Sarajevo is a monocentric city for what concerns the distribution of urban facilities, but the punctuated urban development makes it a linear system. Particularly, the discontinuous fabric of Novi Grad with the old main market area of Bascarsija is the result of a functional



zoning that have imposed a strict distinction between industrial areas and housing developments without a adequate urban central places. The de-industrialization of the contemporary Sarajevo — and its aim to become a culture led urban system — have shown the instability of this fixed settlement leading to the purpose of becoming a polycentric city.

This transition from a monocentric structure to a policentric system is related to the city character of “openness” and the dynamic spatial genesis of linear-radial city center, where sedimentared polyvalent architecture and urban strata overlap in a complex and pluralistic interweaving of tangible and intangible heritage.

Since the war ended in 1995, post-war challenges were a priority for both local and international actors, both in terms of physical reconstruction of the city and the building of symbolic projects. At the same time, the management of the return of the refugees lead new forms of suburbanization, deeply affecting the urban structure of the city and Canton.

Heritage

The city of Sarajevo — described as a “unique symbol of universal multicultural” and a “continual open city” — was submitted to be inscribed in the UNESCO Tentative List in 1997. In the criterion of selection of the city for the WHL, both the unique and universal character of the city as “living tradition” and its interpretation as the place of “preservation of varieties”



represent the intangible counterpart of the value of its “sedimented polyvalent architecture”.

The diversity of tangible and intangible heritage — interweaving physical elements and phenomena, ranging from the “transposals of architectural riverbanks facade and blocks, vertical dividing of structures” to the “dynamic spatial genesis of linear-radial city center in urbomorphological, structural, functional, artistic and ethnic-cultural sense” — constitutes the authentic character of “openness” to be preserved.

8.14.2 Existing governance mechanisms

Sarajevo Canton is arranged with nine municipalities which represent the units of the local self-governance, and the City of Sarajevo is composed of four municipalities: Stari Grad, Centar, Novo Sarajevo and Stari Grad.

Development and management plans

Strategic development commitment in Sarajevo Canton is characterized by an holistic approach, considered in social, economic, environmental and spatial terms. Four main orientation documents constitute the basic orientation documents, meant as direct instruments for development.

Sarajevo Canton Development Strategy until 2015 (1999) determines the vision of the city as European metropolis, meant as the symbol of east-west connection. The strategy addresses development sectors and specific goals oriented towards sustainable transformation and aimed at strengthening the economic basis, towards the fostering of a comfortable living environment and a profitable business framework.

Urban Plan of the City of Sarajevo for Urban Area of Sarajevo for the period from **1986 to 2015** (1999) specifically defines the objects of urban arrangement, which include the strengthening of the existing settlement structure, the establishment of a more balanced distribution of functions and inhabitation, the improvement of living conditions.

Canton Environmental Action Plan (2006) addresses environmental issues, priorities and specific actions, on the basis of an general assessment of the Canton conditions in the field.

Spatial Plan of Sarajevo Canton for the period from 2003 to 2023 orientates the drafting of spatial development documents and implementation plans on the basis of an integrated GIS, aiming at determining the key strands of development in an overall perspective.

Responsible authorities

There are three layers of authority in Sarajevo: the municipalities, the City and the Canton. According to the "Protocol on the Organization of Sarajevo", the **City Government** is entrusted with most of the municipalities responsibilities, including housing issues. Furthermore, the City will assume some of the executive functions currently performed by the **Sarajevo Canton**, that has assumed an expanded role during and after the war.

According to this framework, in the Cantonal structure a central role for regeneration processes is held by the **Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning**. and by the **FBiH**

Sarajevo Canton Planning Institute, that prepares and coordinates the realization of cantonal development strategies and policies for Sarajevo canton.

On the other hand, a fundamental support is provided by the banks, particularly the **European bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)**, and the **World Bank (WB)**, also through the cooperation with the European Community.

Most of the new projects have been developed by **private investors, both local and international**. International investors mainly came from Austria and Islamic countries, but also from Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

Legislation for the protection and management

Since 2003 — through the enactment of the **Law on Construction Land** by the OHR — the privatization of land (OHR, 2003) has allowed the development of new urban projects in the central area of the Sarajevo Vally, and particularly the socialist municipalities of Novi Grad and Novo Sarajevo.

8.14.3 Main issues to be addressed

Site of ‘global’ geopolitical events, shaped in its current image by fragmented histories linked to the war damage of the nineties, Sarajevo has been mostly rebuilt by fast intervention.

However, some main threats to urban conservation and regeneration in the city and Canton can be identify in two main strands of development, synthesizable in terms of demographic, sustainability-oriented and economic changes.

Firstly, as for the **demographic development and the challenge of displacement**, it should be taken into account that in BiH the population has decreased from 4.37 million before the conflict to 3.89 million in 2013. Therefore — together with the issues related to the size of the metropolitan area of Sarajevo as a capital — a key aspect can be assessed in the presence of internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups, including; minorities as Serbs, Croats and Jews; a wide number of refugees; a high rate of unemployed (35.7%).

The second segment of regeneration concerns **spatial and infrastructural development for a more efficient use of land**. According to this issue, the preservation of cultural heritage gains a fundamental role as well as the protection natural resources, in order to balance the spatial capacities for urban and rural development and develop a polycentric system.

8.14.4 Key aspects of the culture-based regeneration strategies

From the early 2000s onwards, the restructuring policies pursued by the international actors — aimed at establishing a self-sustainable economy in the place of the aid dependent system — lead to a new phase of urban renewal. Like other post-socialist cities, the functional and aesthetic change has been one of the key aspects of the regeneration strategies for the city, together with the emergence of private developers as key urban actors.

Liberalization policies have resulted in new urban projects which deeply affected the structure of the four central municipalities of the city of Sarajevo. Since the beginning of the 21st century, more that 60 urban projects have been realized (Sarajevo Construction, 2014), acting on a double level: **aesthetic transformation** and **functional transformation** are

bonded together in view of **fostering diversity and a new image of the city**, at the same time **preserving symbolic values**.

For what concerns symbolic projects, the role of “aesthetic” transformation for a new image has deeply affected the structure of traditional neighborhoods, implying densification, rising diversity and also globalization.

According to this goal, already in the 90s the European Commission launched the programme “Europe for Sarajevo”, allocating funding to “restart the local economy, reconcile ethnic groups, create jobs for disadvantaged groups, and work to the benefit of the local population” (EC, 1996). The main areas of support provided by the Commission — together with the rehabilitation of housing and infrastructure, fostering of the education sector, waste and water management — **preservation and renovation of civil and cultural landmarks**.

Further intervention in the field is supported by the banks, and particularly by the World Bank in terms of reconstruction of the **greatest symbol bridges ethnic divides** (2007), thus directly addressing **post-conflict rebuilding**, conflict prevention, participation and civic engagement, and social protection and risk management.

It is about a set of controversial projects — such as the widespread of mosques funded by Saudi Arabia, Turkey or Malaysia — that however worked in the direction of a profound reformulation of the city’s identity.

For what concerns the functional transformation, office buildings represent the majority of new developments, followed by commercial projects and also multi-family housing. Though most of these new projects have been funded by private investors, some schools and sport structures have been supported by public money.

Another strand of transformation in Sarajevo refers to urban transport sector and infrastructural development. In 2009, some fundamental changes have been triggered by the World Bank, particularly addressing “waste water” issues. Then, in 2015, European bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has launched the Sarajevo Urban Roads Development Project for municipal and environmental infrastructure. At the same time, EIB is providing finance in particular to projects in the sectors of energy, transport and environmental protection, as well as to small and medium-sized enterprises through partner financing institutions operating in the country.

8.14.5 Outcomes and lessons learnt

The case study of Sarajevo is helpful to understand how the urban regeneration is performed in post-war contexts. What emerges from the changes in the urban structure of the capital of Bosnia through redevelopment processes is the transition from the priority assigned to physical reconstruction in the first period after the war ended in 1995, to a second period of policies aimed at triggering a new and more comprehensive urban regeneration able to involve symbolic values but also functional transformation. As a result, two main outcomes can be identified in terms of challenges for the cities which have to “come to terms with the past”, readable as the needed balance between **symbolic value of reconstruction and the preservation of identity** — on the one hand — as supported by the idea that the process of reconstruction of heritage is more a social phenomenon rather than a physical one (Higuera, 2013), and **fostering diversity and a new image of the city** — on the other hand — as the expression of the direct and practical needs of the population (Calame and Pašić).

8.14.6 Perspectives for the future

In the reinvented strategic development of Sarajevo, some great challenges for the future of the Canton as a regional and European metropolis concern:

- fostering the integrative role of the Sarajevo Canton in the framework of the overall development of the country, both in urban terms and in a wider perspective of the socio-economic conditions;
- leading a continuous policy addressing heritage protection in urban areas (together with environmental protection in rural areas);
- strengthening the connection at both sub-regional scale and European scale, by improving on the one hand the physical network of infrastructures and on the other hand — in terms of intangible values — the attracting role of the city and Canton under a cultural, educational, and also economic point of views, while preserving and integrating it with the current existing capacities of the area;
- balancing the level of wellbeing by addressing social issues, growth, employment, economy.

By the point of view of the orientation and management documents, the ongoing process of amendment of the Spatial Plan of Sarajevo Canton represents one of the strategic issues to be addressed, also including the definition of an overall strategy of development and the drafting of a new urban plan and a strategy aimed at facing social inclusion.