

From: PCM - Project Complaint Mechanism
Sent: 10 May 2016 15:57
To: PCM - Project Complaint Mechanism
Subject: New Project Complaint

Project Complaint to PCM

Date/Time

10/05/2016 14:56

Name/Organisation

Udruženje građana "Pravo na grad" (Right to the city - Belgrade)

Address

[REDACTED]

Country

SERBIA

Phone number

[REDACTED]

Email

[REDACTED]

Is there a representative making this Complaint on behalf of the Complainant?

No

If yes, please provide the Name and Contact information of the Representative

n/a

Are you requesting that this Complaint be kept confidential?

No

If yes, please explain why you are requesting confidentiality

n/a

Please provide the name or a description of the EBRD Project at issue.

42809 - Belgrade Public Transport and Traffic Infrastructure

Please describe the harm that has been caused or might be caused by the Project.

Realization of this Project will have a negative effect on the city of Belgrade and its citizens in terms of accessibility, mobility and ecological conditions.

The proposed solution is putting the pedestrians in a highly subordinated position while facilitating the use of cars, which is contrary to modern day policies.

Although it is aiming to improve the conditions of the city infrastructure and resolve the traffic problems in the Belgrade city center, we believe that the Project, implemented in the announced way, will not resolve this issues and will, in fact, worsen the situation.

The public was not given a chance to express the opinion about the proposed solution in the official town planning procedure.

Detailed description:

The plan, approved by the authorities of the City of Belgrade, will allow the complete removal of any pedestrian crossing from the Slavija square, ignoring the fact that this square is being used by 70 - 80 thousands of pedestrians on a daily basis. Pedestrians will in turn be pointed to a 1 km long detour as an only solution for crossing from one side of the Square to another. This distance is almost 7 times longer than present day distance (the Slavija square radius measures 100m).

The act of removing pedestrian crossings from the Slavija square was publicly criticized by many respectable

experts, claiming that the proposed solutions will have an extremely negative effect on pedestrians while not solving the traffic congestion issues. The critiques were also accentuating the fact that the worldwide positive practice sees the cities being reclaimed by pedestrians, with special efforts being invested in the expansion of ecological means of transportation. This Project is offering something completely opposite. Relocating the pedestrian traffic with the aim of allowing the faster motor-traffic flow, as proved by the world wide experience, brings only a temporary solutions to the traffic congestion problems. Falsely perceived as a more accessible, it will attract even more cars in the near future.

(<http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/beograd.74.html:597972-Kilometar-peske-okolo-Slavije>)

Have you contacted the EBRD to try to resolve the harm caused or expected to be caused by the Project?

No

If yes, please list when the contact was made, how and with whom

n/a

Please also describe any response you may have received

n/a

Have you contacted the Project Sponsor to try to resolve the harm caused or expected to be caused by the Project?

No

If yes, please list when the contact was made, how and with whom

n/a

Please also describe any response you may have received.

n/a

If you have not contacted the EBRD and/or Project Sponsor to try to resolve the harm or expected harm, please explain why.

The approved Project was not part of the public debate as it was product of the decisions made during the closed session of the official town planning procedure. The version put out for public hearing and commenting was proposing to solve the pedestrian circulation through the construction of underground passageways. Previously, underground passageways were the mandatory element of the public architecture competition organized by the City of Belgrade in 2012 (<http://www.superprostor.com/rezultati-konkursa-za-slaviju/3900>). The public saw this solution as non modern and expensive. As a result, the decision was made to give up on underground passageways, but hold on to all the other elements of the Project. Citizens of Belgrade were informed about these facts through the media reports. (<http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/beograd.74.html:535598-Slavija-bez-podzemnih-prolaza>) This new solution was not put for public to consultations, although repeating of that process is allowed and encouraged by Serbian urban planning legislation for all the situations that include the major changes in the previously exhibited plans. In this process, the pedestrians were treated as a collateral damage and not as (at least) an equal partaker of the city life.

If you believe the EBRD may have failed to comply with its own policies, please describe which EBRD policies.

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Please describe any other complaints you may have made to try to address the issue(s) at question (for example, court cases or complaints to other bodies).

The final form of the Project was not open for the Belgrade citizens to show their opinion and was never part of the public debate. As explained in the step 2 of this form, the version of the Project presented to the citizens through the official town planning procedure was proposing a very different solution for the circulation of pedestrians, than the one that was presented as final. In turn, City of Belgrade officials chose not to repeat the process and ask for its citizens to participate in this Project of great importance, although this possibility is in accordance with Serbian laws and regulations.

Are you seeking a Compliance Review where the PCM would determine whether the EBRD has failed to comply with its Relevant Policies?

No

Are you seeking a Problem-solving Initiative where the PCM would help you to resolve a dispute or problem with the Project?

Yes

What results do you hope to achieve by submitting this Complaint to the PCM?

Putting the pedestrian crossings back on the square would be a first step towards the expected positive outcome of the Complaint. In succession, we hope that EBRD will not support this undemocratic and environmentally hostile project and in turn help mediate its course towards more sustainable solutions that will respect the future of the city of Belgrade and all of its citizens. We believe that the Project needs to be revisioned, this time putting the accent on accessibility and sustainability. The solution for the Slavija square traffic should be found considering wider perspective and should be in accordance with modern city policies hence facilitating the flow of pedestrians, cyclists and public transportation systems. This approach should allow for all the actors to be involved in the decision making process, since many of them have already showed (<http://www.imamoplan.com/projekti/slavija-bez-sina/>).