

Dickhaut, W., Giannousopoulou, M., Krüger, A., Nepravishta, F., Veleshnja, J., Stefani, I.(Eds.)

# Resource Efficient and Climate Responsive Planning : New Northern Boulevard and River Development in Tirana and Oberbillwerder Urban Development in Hamburg Hamburg and Tirana Narratives



## IMPRINT

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**Resource Efficient and Climate Responsive Planning:  
New Northern Boulevard and River Development, Tirana  
and Oberbillwerder Urban Development, Hamburg**

Hamburg and Tirana Narratives

# Introduction

This publication provides a first glimpse of two different urban development projects in Tirana and Hamburg, which are planned to occur or partly already implemented in Tirana, under different cultural, geographic, socio-economic and path dependent conditions, through the visual and oral narratives of residents, workers and visitors. These narratives try to capture how urban development and, in the case of Tirana, also river restoration is planned to take place. They also reflect upon the historical development of each area, highlight considerations and/or neglect for environmentally sound, climate adaptive and resource efficient planning. Furthermore, pinpoint current challenges and opportunities and discuss about opportunities for public participation in the planning process. The featured photos and interviews show two characteristically different urban realities. In Tirana the focus is on the development of the new Northern Boulevard and Tirana river redevelopment. Whereas in Hamburg the focus is on the Oberbillwerder, a new urban district project.

The first urban development area, as presented in this publication, is located in the Bergerdorf district at the east part of Hamburg and to the north of the S-Bahn Allermöhe. The Oberbillwerder project is going to be the second largest construction project after the HafenCity area. The new district stretches over green fields and agricultural land. This project comes as a response to the increasing demand for housing in Hamburg and an attempt to find available space for further expansion and development while staying in proximity to the city center. The masterplan for the development of the district has been approved in 2019 and the project is now in its detailed planning phase, with the scheduled start of realization in the mid-2020. The Oberbillwerder adopts a modern sustainability and environmental awareness approach, and could be a model for a livable, energetic and sustainable urban development that considers efficiency of resources and adaptation to climate change. Oberbillwerder new district boasts for an innovative mobility concept that offers a wide range of modal share and resource efficient and environmentally friendly mobility options while at the same time connecting the new district with the surrounding existing neighborhoods. Another key aspect of the district is the balance between high density and abundance of public green and open spaces for social interaction and leisure activities. The project also foresees a good social mix through a balanced mixture of different building typologies, ownership systems and diverse uses of the urban space.

The second urban development area, that is presented and investigated in this publication is the development of resource efficient and climate responsive planning strategies for the new Northern Boulevard and river development in Tirana. A major urban expansion project that aims to extend the growing city outwards while improving the local living conditions. The city suffers extreme differences between the center and the periphery in terms of urban, economic, and social structure. The rapid growth over the last 30 years of the post-socialist era and the lack of regulatory plans has led to the increase of an informal urban expansion in the city periphery. The current ecological situation of the urban Tirana River demonstrates waterways and aquifers, poor waste management, contaminated land, deforestation, and sporadic urbanization. Tirana city is currently in a process of constant transformation of its territory, particularly in the suburb areas. This transformation has marginalized those parts of the city and so far, has not been supported by any urban studies or critical analysis. The possible transformations of the Tirana riverside, crossed by the extension of the main boulevard was presented in an international competition organized by the municipality of Tirana. The project was awarded later to a planning and design firm that worked on a

development concept under the vision Tirana 2030. In this plan, the 1.6 km long avenue is designed to be the main route around which the new master-plan of Tirana will take place. The Boulevard ends at the Tirana River, whose recovery project will mainly concern protection of the banks, water regulation and will affect two large green areas around the river. This project has seen to be the catalyst for the transformation of the area to the north from Tirana city center. Although the planning meant to connect the urban formal and informal forms of this area, the already built roadway extension has caused the demolition of the former central train station, and the expropriation of residential properties. The project's idea is oriented towards the concept of Open Space Design. The existing green spaces are intensified, and local green spaces are interconnected with multiple others, meant to create parks where the local's pride in ownership is provided by the cultural use of the space. However, the broader climate and social resilience aspects are not considered in the proposed master-plan. A more responsible approach to the environment, resources and society is needed. In particular, the potential of adapting climate responsive measures to address weather extremes such floods and heatwaves, the sustainable use of local resources and promoting circularity, waste management and efficient mobility concepts, and restoration of ecological systems. Other aspect is how to tackle the existing informality in the area considering integration and regeneration strategies rather than expropriation or displacement. The regeneration of the Tirana River waterfront is seen as a potential for future urban transformations and attraction to investments, employment, industries, publicity. The visual and oral narratives invite the reader to view these two different urban development solutions from the perspectives of the people who live in or around and/or frequent these urban sites themselves. They showcase the different challenges inherent within each urban reality, but also hint at opportunities for their sustainable (re-)development.

### **Oberbillwerder:**

The interviewed residents and visitors of the Oberbillwerder neighborhood and surrounding areas highlight the abundance of green areas, a fine mixture of uses and facilities as well as good accessibility and a family friendly atmosphere. Reflecting about the new development, they express the hope for improved living conditions and integration of new functions, expect new employment opportunities and appreciate the implementation of energy efficient technologies in the new neighborhood. Although the interviewees admit the need for new housing projects, some of them share the concerns about the environmental impact of the new development and potential gentrification of the adjacent areas. Furthermore, the current residents wish to be more included through participation processes and have their say in the planning of the new neighborhood.

### **Northern Boulevard and area next to Tirana river:**

The interviews taken in and around the new Northern Boulevard project pinpoint the strengths, challenges and opportunities that exist in the area. Pollution caused by solid waste dumped in the environment and untreated wastewater discharged to the Lana River leads to nuisance, risks human and environmental health, and decreases livability. In addition, lack of public open spaces significantly reduces the interaction of residents, who traditionally highly value a good community. Infrastructure such as roads and electricity supply require an upgrade, as roads are partially unpaved and over-head hanging electricity lines are a potential hazard and visual destruction. Nevertheless, residents made this area their home, and fear to lose their informally constructed houses. The informal settlements need to be refurbished to be able to offer all the areas and services needed for the standards of a livable neighborhood, taking advantage of the resources found on the site.

# Hyrje

Ky botim ofron një vështrim të shpejtë të dy projekteve të ndryshme të zhvillimit urban, në Tiranë dhe Hamburg, të cilat janë projektuar ose pjesërisht po zbatohen tashmë në Tiranë, në kushte të ndryshme kulturore, gjeografike, social-ekonomike dhe historike në rrjedhën e kohës, të rrëfyera përmes imazheve dhe fjalës së kalimtarëve, banorëve, punëtorëve dhe vizitorëve. Këto rrëfime përpiquen të pasqyrojnë mënyrën sesi planifikohet zhvillimi urban, dhe në rastin e Tiranës, edhe rehabilitimi i lumit. Ata gjithashtu reflektojnë mbi zhvillimin historik të secilës zonë, theksojnë konsideratat dhe/ose neglizhencën për planifikimin strategjik të burimeve të ndryshme, identifikojnë sfidat dhe mundësitë aktuale dhe hapin diskutimin mbi mundësinë për pjesëmarrje në vendimmarrje si dhe efikasitetin e masave të zbatuara. Fotot dhe intervistat e paraqitura tregojnë ndryshimet karakteristike të dy realiteteve urbane. Në Tiranë fokusi është në zhvillimin e Bulevardit të ri Verior dhe rehabilitimi i lumit të Tiranës. Ndërsa në Hamburg fokusi është te Oberbillwerder, projekti i një lagjeje të re urbane.

Zona e parë, që paraqitet në këtë botim, ndodhet në Bergerdorf, në pjesën lindore të Hamburgut dhe në veri të S-Bahn Allermöhe. Projekti Oberbillwerder do të jetë projekti i dytë më i madh i ndërtimit pas projektit të HafenCityt. Lagja e re do të shtrihet mbi fusha të gjelbra dhe tokë bujqësore. Ky projekt vjen si përgjigje ndaj rritjes së kërkesës për banesa në Hamburg dhe një përpjekje për të gjetur hapësira për zhvillim në afërsi me qendrën e qytetit. Masterplani është miratuar në vitin 2019 dhe tashmë projekti është në fazën e projektimit të detajuar, ndërsa fillimi i zbatimit është planifikuar në mesin e vitit 2020. Projekti i Oberbillwerder ka një qasje moderne të qëndrueshmërisë dhe ndërgjegjësimit mjedisor dhe mund konsiderohet një model për një zhvillim urban të jetueshëm, energjik dhe të qëndrueshëm që merr parasysh efikasitetin e burimeve dhe përshtatjen ndaj ndryshimeve klimatike. Distrikti i ri Oberbillwerder ofron një koncept inovativ për mobilitetin, duke ofruar një gamë të gjerë opsionesh transporti publik, që përdorin burimet me efikasitet dhe janë miqësore me mjedisin, dhe në të njëjtën kohë e lidhin zhvillimin ri me lagjet ekzistuese përreth. Një tjetër aspekt kyç i projektit është ekuilibri midis densitetit të lartë dhe bollëkut të hapësirave të hapura publike dhe të gjelbra që përdoren për ndërveprim social dhe aktivitete të kohës së lirë. Projekti gjithashtu parashikon hapësira multifunkionale përmes një përzierjeje të ekuilibruar të tipologjive të ndryshme të ndërtesave, sistemeve të pronësisë dhe përdorimeve të ndryshme të hapësirës urbane.

Zona e dytë që prezantohet dhe hulumtohet në këtë botim është planifikimi strategjik i zhvillimit të Bulevardit verior të Tiranës, duke përdorur burimet me efikasitet dhe duke u përshtatur ndaj ndryshimeve klimatike, si dhe rehabilitimin e lumit të Tiranës. Ky është një projekt i madh i zgjerimit urban që synon të zgjerojë një qytet që është në rritje, duke përmirësuar kushtet lokale të jetesës. Në Tiranë ka dallime të theksuara midis qendrës dhe periferisë në aspektin e strukturës urbane, ekonomike dhe sociale. Rritja e shpejtë gjatë 30 viteve të fundit gjatë periudhës postsocialiste dhe mungesa e planeve rregulluese ka çuar në rritjen e zgjerimit informal urban në periferi të qytetit. Situata aktuale ekologjike e lumit urban të Tiranës tregon menaxhim të dobët të mbetjeve, hapsirë të kontaminuar, shpyllëzim dhe urbanizim sporadik. Qyteti i Tiranës është aktualisht në një proces transformimi të vazhdueshëm të territorit të tij, veçanërisht në zonat periferike. Ky transformim ka marginalizuar këto zona të qytetit dhe deri më tani nuk është mbështetur nga ndonjë studim urban apo analizë kritike.

Bashkia e Tiranës organizoi një konkurs ndërkombëtar për këtë zonë. Projekti më pas ishte



pjesë e një koncept zhvillimi nën vizionin Tirana 2030. Në këtë plan, bulevardi 1.6 km e gjatë është planifikuar të jetë aksi kryesor. Bulevardi përfundon në lumin e Tiranës, projekti i rehabilitimit të të cilit do të ketë të bëjë kryesisht me sistemimin e shtratit, filtrimin e ujit dhe do të ketë dy zona të gjelbra të mëdha përreth tij. Ky projekt shihet si katalizatori për transformimin e zonës në veri të Tiranës, duke filluar me zgjerimin e bulevardit drejt lumit të Tiranës dhe unazën e re të qytetit. Zgjatimi i bulevardit ka shkaktuar prishjen e ish-stacionit qendror të trenit dhe shpronësimin e mjaft banesave. Ideja e projektit është e orientuar drejt konceptit të Dizajnit të Hapësirës së Hapur. Hapësirat e gjelbra ekzistuese janë intensifkuar në synim e krijimit të parqeve të ndërlidhura. Megjithatë, aspektet të adaptimit klimaterik dhe qëndrueshmërisë sociale nuk merren parasysh në masterplanin e propozuar. Nevojitet një qasje më e përgjegjshme ndaj mjedisit, burimeve dhe shoqërisë, në veçanti të masave reaguese ndaj ndryshimeve klimaterike si përmbytjet dhe valët e të nxehtit, të përdorimit të qëndrueshëm të burimeve lokale dhe promovimin e qarkullimit të materialeve, menaxhimit të mbetjeve, transportit efikas, si dhe të restaurimit të sistemeve ekologjike. Një aspekt tjetër është ai i trajtimit të informalitetit ekzistues në zonë duke marrë parasysh strategjitë e integritimit dhe rigjenerimit dhe jo shpronësimin ose zhvendosjen. Rigjenerimi i shtratit të lumit të Tiranës është një nga çështjet më kryesore të zhvillimit të qytetit. Ai shihet si një potencial për transformime urbane në të ardhmen dhe tërheqje për investime, punësim, industri, publicitet, duke u fokusuar në një rast studimi të veçantë: një strukturë e vetë-bërë ku njerëzit përpiqen të krijojnë modelin e tyre të jetesës në mjedisin natyror të Tiranës.

Rrëfimet vizuale dhe të rrëfyera e ftojnë lexuesin t'i shohë këto dy zgjidhje të ndryshme strehimi nga këndvështrimi i njerëzve të cilët jetojnë dhe/ose frekuentojnë këto zona urbane. Ato shfaqin sfida të ndryshme të secilit realitet urban, por gjithashtu, sugjerojnë mundësi për zhvillimin e tyre të qëndrueshëm.

### **Oberbillwerder:**

Banorët dhe vizitorët e intervistuar të Oberbillwerder dhe zonave përreth theksojnë bollëkun e hapsirave të gjelbra, multifunksionalitetin dhe aksesueshmërinë, si dhe atmosferën familjare. Duke reflektuar për zhvillimin e ri, ata shprehin shpresën për përmirësimin e kushteve të jetesës dhe integrimin e funksioneve të reja, presin mundësi të reja punësimi dhe vlerësojnë zbatimin e teknologjive për efikasitetin energjetik në lagjen e re. Megjithëse të intervistuarit pranojnë nevojën për ndërtime të reja banimi, disa prej tyre ndajnë shqetësimet për ndikimin mjedisor të zhvillimit të ri dhe gendrifkimit të mundshme të zonave ngjitur. Për më tepër, banorët aktualë dëshirojnë të përfshihen më shumë përmes proceseve të pjesëmarrjes dhe të thonë fjalën e tyre në planifikimin e lagjes së re.

### **Bulevardi Verior dhe zona pranë lumit të Tiranës:**

Intervistat e marra përreth zones së projektit të Bulevardit të ri Verior tregojnë pikat e forta, sfidat dhe mundësitë që ekzistojnë në zonë. Ndotja e shkaktuar nga mbetjet e ngurta të hedhura në mjedis dhe ujërat e zeza të patrajtura që derdhen në lumin e Tiranës rrezikon shëndetin e njerëzve dhe të mjedisit. Gjithashtu, mungesa e hapësirave të hapura publike redukton ndjeshëm ndërveprimin e banorëve, të cilët tradicionalisht vlerësojnë shumë komunitetin. Infrastruktura kërkon përmirësim, pasi rrugët janë pjesërisht të paasfaltuara dhe linjat e energjisë elektrike të varura nga lart janë një rrezik potencial. Megjithatë, banorët që e kanë bërë këtë zonë shtëpinë e tyre, kanë frikë të humbasin banesat edhe pse të ndërtuara joformalisht. Vendbanimet informale duhet të rinovohen në mënyrë që të mund të ofrojnë të gjitha shërbimet e nevojshme për standardet e një lagjeje të jetueshme, duke përfutur nga burimet që gjenden përreth.







## Hamburg Narratives

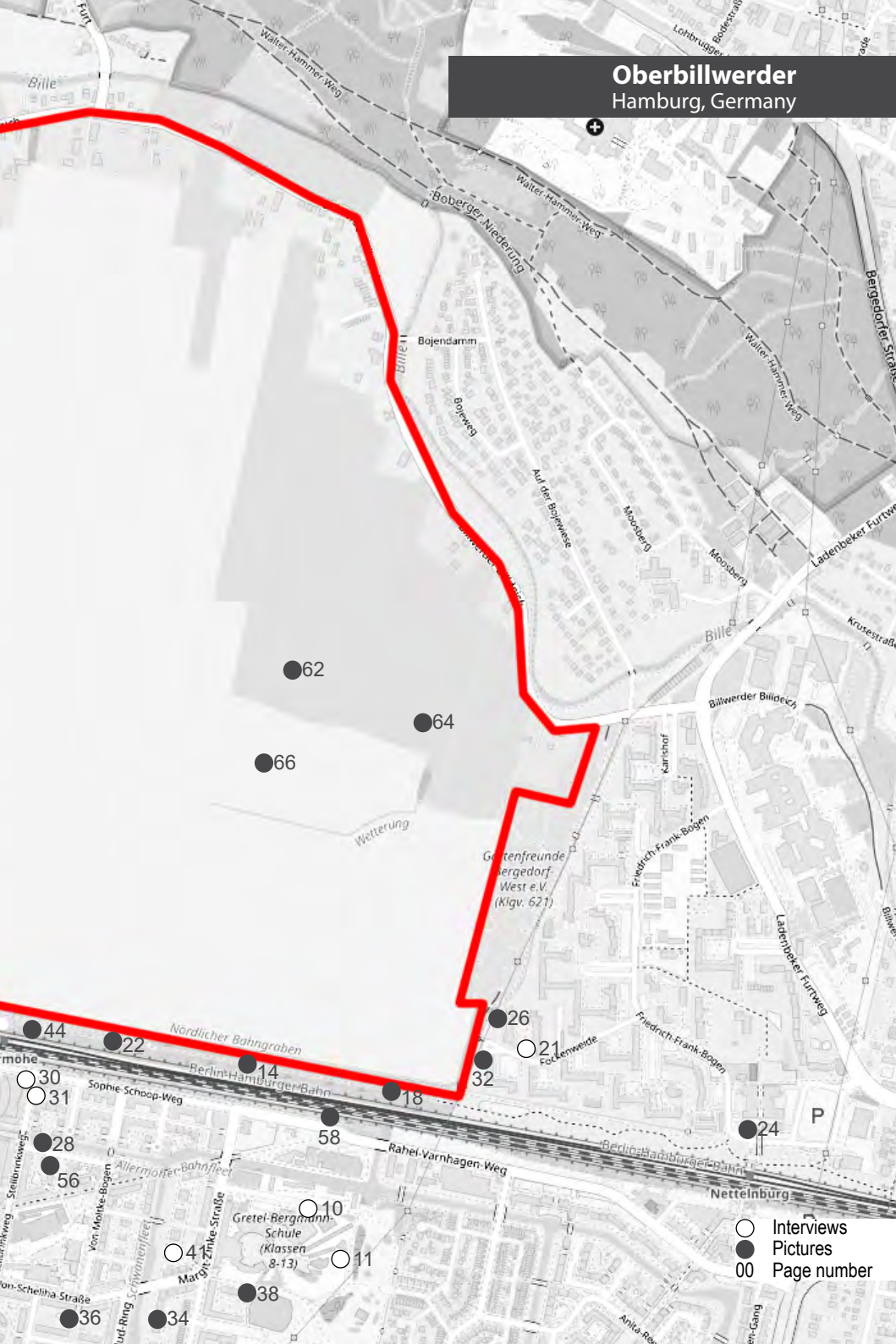
Residents, visitors and workers were interviewed about the new development strategies and resource efficient planning of the Oberbillwerder project and its current challenges and opportunities. The interviews serve as inspiration for their corresponding photographic narratives.



Source: [openstreetmap.org](https://openstreetmap.org) (10.10.2022). Oberbillwerder, Hamburg, Germany. 53.5016, 10.1576



**Oberbillwerder**  
Hamburg, Germany





*“Pay less if you  
conserve energy,  
waste energy - your  
pocket suffers.”*

Anibal

37

Music Instructor

Fleetplatz

*See p. 12 - 15*

Mr. Perez is a graduate music student and instrumentalist who lives in Hamburg about 30 minutes away from his place of work. He has been working with the district music school at Allermöhe for over 5 years by now. On the question if he was aware of the pending new development, he stated that at first glance it seems to be of a great advantage for everyone. He also stressed out the fact that he works with children, and he imagines that children in the neighborhood will benefit, since there are many children-friendly infrastructures planned in Oberbillwerder. He hopes that the commence of the entire area will improve the quality of life and he will become new employment opportunities.

However, Mr. Perez complained about

the lack of sufficient street lights at some areas, which causes visibility issues on some routes, especially during the winter. When being informed about the planned renewable forms of energy in the Oberbillwerder project, he seemed to be delighted and viewed this as a huge step towards better energy infrastructure.

Mr. Perez also emphasized that, in his opinion, Germany as a country should be energy sufficient by now in order to be independent of energy imports. The share of renewable energy has to increase up to 100%.

He pulled the curtain down with innovative suggestions of energy production from the excretory of the ducks roaming around in the district.



Victoria  
16  
Student  
Fleetplatz

See p. 16 - 19

Victoria is a student living in Germany for the last 16 years. She shares an apartment with 3 people. She finds that Allermöhe area which is next to the Oberbillwerder project site does not have good reputation in comparison to other areas of Hamburg. She finds that the infrastructure of the neighbourhood is adequate but waste disposal should be better addressed. She adds that other than waste disposal some areas within the neighbourhood have inadequate street lighting, which makes her feel unsafe particularly during the winter time.

Her neighborhood and generally the area is very green. The area has a good number of parks, schools and playgrounds and offers a good balance of

*“I think solar systems are very clever, one can save money and the environment.”*

uses and places for recreational activities. With regards to mobility, the majority of the residents in the area commute by bike or E-Scooter. E-Scooter mobility is easily accessible. Public transport is accessible within 10 minutes. She needs approximately 30 minutes to reach her work by commuting with public transport. One of the main challenges that she identifies is the lack of public health care in close proximity. If needed, it takes 30 minutes by car to reach the closest hospital.

The increasing electricity prices concerns her the most. Due to her busy daily schedule she relies exclusively on appliances for her daily needs at home, for example she uses exclusively the dishwasher.































*“There are all kinds of people here, but all living together well & peacefully.”*

Mr. Burhan Gafouri

46

Caregiver (elderly)

Saga Housing Allermöhe, Hamburg

*See p. 22 - 25*

Burhan is a 46 years old immigrant from Afghanistan who has lived in Allermöhe since 2015. Overall, he and his wife are satisfied by the living quality in the neighbourhood and he referred to the reasonable population density, good air quality and low traffic. Their only concern is commuting from Allermöhe with the S-Bahn which often has problems. In such circumstances, they would prefer to use the bus instead, which takes at least an hour to get to the city centre.

“There are all kinds of people here, but all living together well & peacefully”, - he said. However, despite the domination of young aged residents, he believes that it is not very attractive for the young people because there's not enough entertainment facilities.

Regarding the resource efficiency, Burhan

mentioned that he was not aware of any waste sorting procedures nor has he seen any photovoltaics cells on existing buildings' roofs or rainwater harvesting structures. He also added that the municipality leases the residents pieces of lands of around 200-300 metres at low cost. These gardens have to be maintained & irrigated in exchange of using them for local festivals and ceremonies. Finally, he spoke about how the construction of the new urban development project could affect his life in Allermöhe. Although he has never heard about the project before, he was mainly concerned that the house rents might increase drastically in the surrounding area after such an attractive project has been built nearby.





Ms. Mitra Vishkahi

55

Student, Florist

Fockenweide 37, 21033, Hamburg

*See p. 26 - 29*

*“people should  
always look forward  
to new and upcoming  
things and beauties”*

Mitra Vishkahi is a school student and a part-time florist. She came to Germany in 2015 and before moving to Hamburg, she lived in a small town near Berlin. Now, she lives at the end of Nettelburg street and has been living here for almost 3 years. It's very hard for her to find a place to live in Hamburg and she added that, even now, if she wants to change, it is very difficult for her to find a new one. Currently, she lives in a rental apartment and she complains about the high house rent. As a mode of getting her way around the city, Ms. Vishkahi always depends on public transport. The basic facilities like supermarkets and recreational facilities are quite far away from her home. She walks a long distance to catch the S-Bahn, which is the only available mass public transport in the vicinity.

Ms. Vishkahi appreciates and encourages new and updated ideas and their implementation. She is optimistic that the upcoming changes with the 'Oberbillwereder' development can definitely have a positive impact in the area.

She points out that the empty agricultural land on the edge of the settlement is having a negative impact because of the people drinking and shouting during the weekend. The residents feel often unsafe passing by these open spaces. Consideration and integration of sustainable features like green roofs, PV modules, etc. is not common among the residents. Common dwellers of the settlements are unsure about the waste and wastewater management systems.

































*“One effect of  
gentrification is  
marginalization.”*

Haroon Butt  
18  
Apprentice  
Fleetplatz Allermöhe

*See p. 32 - 35*

Haroon Butt explained that his family moved to Germany when he was young and has maintained residence in the neighborhood since their arrival. Haroon has recently started an apprenticeship in Hamburg but has remained in his family home in the neighborhood. He remarks on his childhood experiences in the area, where he recalls a lot of greenery and places for children to play outside. Although Haroon is fond of his neighborhood, he admitted that it does not come without its challenges. He described Oberbillwerder as a social hotspot, or a socially disadvantaged residential area affected by low income and unemployment.

Haroon feels torn about the new project in Oberbillwerder. Although he

trusts that the development will clean up the neighborhood and reduce the amount of (perceived) crime in the area, he is apprehensive about what new housing, combined with increasing costs of living, will mean for other lifelong residents. “Hamburg is already becoming more expensive ... what do you say to immigrants and other people who don’t have a lot of money?”, - asks Haroon. He disclosed that his family did not have a lot of money but they were able to manage living there. Now he doesn’t see it so optimistic that families like his will be able to make it work in the future, particularly single-parent families.

Despite his concerns, Haroon thinks that Oberbillwerder will, overall, see many improvements in the future.





Martina Löhr  
43  
Sales  
Fleetplatz Allermöhe

*See p. 36 - 39*

*“It would be better  
if they upgrade our  
apartments first.”*

In a cafe at the S-Bahn station, Allermöhe, Martina Löhr, and her friends gather regularly. They live in the surrounding neighborhood with their families. “I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else,” she says. Although they love their home, the apartments are old and outdated, especially the bathrooms and kitchens. Martina explained that if they want to renew something, they must do it themselves. “I don’t know much about sustainability,” she confesses, “but it would make sense to use less energy.”

Martina is very skeptical of the new development. While she understands why the city is building new apartments, she is worried that the former green spaces and current residents will be overlooked for new buildings and inhabitants.

“I understand [their intentions], but there must be justice. We also live here,” exclaims Martina. Another concern is that the new energy-efficient buildings will be expensive and provide limited opportunities for residents of lower social classes to move into them. Though 30% of the housing will be designated social housing provided by SAGA, this is of no help to Martina. “I have also registered with SAGA to change apartments,” Martina explained, “do you know how long I have been on the waiting list?”. That the development of the area will bring change to Allermöhe is clear.

Martina and her friends, however, just hope that they will still get a table at their usual cafe, and maybe one of the newer and nicer apartments, too.





























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*“ALLERMÖHE IST  
SCHÖN”// “We need  
housing for young  
people”*

Jutta Beetz  
84 years old  
Retired  
Court-Bär-Weg Street

*See p. 42 - 45*

Jutta Beetz has lived in the neighborhood for nearly 25 years. She says the best thing about the neighborhood is that she knows everyone and has neighbors to help with groceries and daily necessities. Ms. Beetz also belongs to a church community where she's gotten to know most of the people and sees many of them on the street daily. The first thought that come to her mind when asked about "Oberbillwerder" is that it's great! She is excited that there will be new housing for young people. Jutta isn't too concerned that the new Oberbillwerder development might affect her current living situation because of her age. She says she is content with all the green areas and walking paths that remain in the area and hopes there won't be too much change. In the beginning of the

project development she felt included in the process, but felt less included when the first construction sites popped up in Allermöhe. Afterwards she felt a bit disconnected, but she thinks that the new houses have been well integrated. Now she feels that there are more participation processes happening again. Jutta says, she wouldn't like to live in Oberbillwerder because to her nothing is better than Allermöhe. Ms. Beetz used to live in Mümmelmannsberg, but her house was too big and she had to move out. She then contacted a housing association (Bille) and moved to Allermöhe in 1997. She was one of the first residents in the area. She explains that the pastor was one of the key persons to build up the community in Allermöhe at that time and helped to integrate the youth.





Helene Krumm  
20 years old  
Student  
Karl-Rüther-Stieg Street

*See p. 46 - 49*

## *Oberbillwerder is future oriented” // “Missing cafe places and bars in Allermöhe.”*

The first thing that comes to Ms. Krumm's mind when she hears “Oberbillwerder” is the new University campus. It gives the impression that it (Oberbillwerder) is “future oriented.” She states that the new Oberbillwerder development will not really affect her current and future living situation because she will move out in 3 weeks. She didn't feel included in the participation process of the project, but also says she's not engaged in the neighborhood and feels like she could have been more involved. However, she also didn't notice any participation meetings or promotion to be a part of the process. What she really enjoys the most about the neighborhood is that there is a high percentage of green areas and the proximity to the lake, but I didn't like the fact that it is primarily residential

with no bars or cafes, etc. Ms. Krumm lives in Allermöhe because she is a resident in the student dorms. She is originally from Wiesbaden, but recently moved to Hamburg and thought it was a good idea to move to Allermöhe. All in all, she says she could picture herself living in Oberbillwerder.

Critical voices:\*

- The presence of farmers is gradually declining due to the lack of the leasable farmland around. They feel bad for them since they might have leased the land from the city for many generations.
- Part of the “Oberbillwerder” Project area borders the nature protection area.
- Some did not feel included in the participation process.
- They afraid of a more crowded neighborhood.

\*We heard some critical voices when we asked for the interviews, but no one was willing to take a photo and or sign the Uni sheet. But since these are interesting opinions, we included them as critical voices.

































*“Giving up a car is not an option for me.”*

Andrej Krasov  
35  
Banker  
Fleetplatz

*See p. 52 - 55*

Andrej Krasov is 35 years old and has lived and worked as a banker in the Allermöhe district of Hamburg since 2009. Andrej Krasov describes the district as very family-oriented and believes that Allermöhe offers a good infrastructure in terms of medical care and shopping facilities. At the same time, however, he also draws attention to the fact that the lack of affordable housing is a major problem for the district and puts a strain on it.

Andrej Krasov has ambivalent feelings about the new “Oberbillwerder” building project. On the one hand, he is happy about the new living space, the improvement of the local supply and that “life is emerging”. On the other hand, he expresses criticism about the

destruction of green areas and the sealing of land previously used for agriculture; he is skeptical that sufficient compensatory areas will be created. When asked whether he considers the concept of an almost car-free urban neighborhood to be realistic, he says: “It is possible to live without the car but is out of the question for me for reasons of convenience and the high utilization of public transport.”

Andrej Krasov hopes the project will increase the quality of life and provide more places to linger in the neighborhood.





Ms. Gebele  
64  
Pensioner  
Käte-Latzke-Weg

See p. 56 - 59

*“Green spaces should  
be incorporated into  
the planning.”*

Ms. Gebele is a resident in Allermöhe and has lived there for 25 years, which makes her an expert of this district. She describes the change over the past 30 years as positive. She particularly likes the diverse mix of residents and the green spaces, such as the “Grüne Mitte” park, which invites people to go for a walk. For the Oberbillwerder project, Ms. Gebele would also like to see, in addition to the preservation of the many green spaces, especially a low-rise building typology. Since Ms. Gebele has been retired since July 2022, she would currently like to see an expansion of the recreational offerings. She particularly likes the “KulturA” community center in Allermöhe, which is a social meeting place that offers various activities, such as drinking coffee together.

Given the shortage of housing, she considers the development of new apartments in the new district a great opportunity. With a sufficient number of facilities such as retail and medical centers, she sees no risks. Although there was the opportunity to be part of the planning process as a citizen, she was not able to participate due to time constraints. When asked if she considers a low-car urban neighborhood in Oberbillwerder to be realistic, she replies that the public transport connections are very good and that residents do not need a car.























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*“Such projects come at the cost of nature, but a lot of families needs houses to live.”*

Christine Tsolodimos

50

Music Teacher

Fleetpl. 3-1, Hamburg

*See p. 62 - 65*

Every week, fifty-year-old Christine comes to the Allermöhe neighbourhood to teach music. She herself lives two stops away from Allermöhe. She admires the neighbourhood and believes that the area has all the necessary facilities including educational institutes, hospitals, parks, etc. She also expressed her desire to live in this neighbourhood. She is well-aware of the Oberbillwerder urban development project. With respect to the ecological aspects of the project, she agrees that such projects come at the cost of nature, but she also recognizes that the area needs more housing projects.

She finds the neighbourhood to be very liveable and would like to move there because everything is within 10 minutes of walking distance. She reserved for

participating in forums for resident hearings because she does not currently reside in this area, but she is aware that concerns about the project's ecological impact were raised before COVID-19 hit the country.

One of the major concerns she expressed was the lack of bike lanes in the neighbourhood compared to other parts of Hamburg. With respect to the infrastructure available to disabled people, she stated that the authorities are building and enhancing both new and existing facilities.





Nina Drosk  
33  
Housewife  
Stellbrinkweg 2, Hamburg

*See p. 66 - 69*

Nina, a mother of two, lived in Allermöhe for three of her five years in Hamburg, she has since moved to Leipzig but continues to own property here and occasionally visits. She believes that it is a vibrant neighbourhood and an ideal place for families. She also finds the neighbourhood to be very liveable, with everything accessible within a short walk. She is well acquainted with the ongoing urban development project 'Oberbillwerder' in the neighbourhood and believes this project will link the two sides of the neighbourhood together, preventing them from functioning separately and providing better transportation options. She likes the project as well because it will bring together people from diverse backgrounds and ages, eventually

*"This project bring together people from diverse backgrounds and ages."*

bringing more life to the neighbourhood. As a mother of two children, she also values the abundance of kindergartens, schools, and playgrounds in the neighbourhood, but she would like to have one big playground on a neighbourhood scale where children and mothers can meet and hang around. She also thinks the area is fully accessible for people with disabilities and has the right infrastructure.

Being far from the city center and having few visitors on a regular basis was one of the downsides she encountered while living in this neighbourhood, but she is optimistic that these kinds of projects in the neighbourhood will attract more tourists.



































# New Boulevard

Tirana, Albania



- Interviews
- Pictures
- 00 Page number







## Tirana Narratives

Residents, visitors and workers from the new Northern Boulevard and Tirana river in Tirana, Albania were also interviewed about this new urban expansion project and its current challenges and opportunities. Once again, the interviews serve as inspiration for their corresponding photographic narratives.



*“Continuous water and electricity supply is a basic right for every human.”*

Selman

23

Student

Filip Jano street

*See p. 76 - 79*

Selman is a resident in the new Northern boulevard and has been living in the area for the last 22 years. He lives in an apartment with his family. In the past 10 years, the neighborhood has done many new improvements like building of new infrastructure, construction of new roads, bike lanes etc. At the same time, the new infrastructure is built with poor workmanship, as a result damages are visible just after the few years of the construction.

Apart from the infrastructure, he states that the neighborhood still lacks proper space for different sports activities and recreational areas for the communities, especially for the kids. Mostly, private cars are used for commuting from home to work and travelling to other places in

the area because of the low frequency of the public transport. He commutes from home to work, University and other places mostly by bus and by walking.

He is well aware that clean water is one of the essential commodities of life but continuous availability of water is still one of the challenges in the neighborhood. The neighborhood possesses enough educational institutes in the surroundings of the area which can be reached within a short travel time. However, he finds the new neighborhood is very densely planned with very few green spaces and parks.





Drita  
63  
Civil engineer  
Jordan Misja street

*See p. 80 - 83*

*“New development improves economy and life standard for communities.”*

Drita is a visitor to the new Northern Boulevard and not a permanent resident of Tirana. Despite that, she regularly visits Tirana during the year and stays for long periods of time. She describes the development of the boulevard as an ambitious project and a contemporary intervention that envisions a better future for the city. Her life is positively influenced by this project. However, she feels that information about the development is missing. She believes that one of the major hindrances for further urban development is that people have fear for change. Drita is open to contribute to the decision making for the development of the area, both as a professional and resident. Nevertheless, according to her some focus should be given on improving the financial status and standard and

quality of life of residents in Tirana in general. Her apartment is well connected to the public infrastructure and she has never experienced problems with water or electricity. She has good accessibility to public transport which she daily uses.

Drita finally thinks that the area fulfills all conditions for good residential life. There is a good diversity of facilities and in close proximity, all within 20-minutes walking distance. The area is equipped with schools, a university, health care services, administrative offices etc. What the area lacks is green spaces, parks, and spaces dedicated for kids. She hopes that the new Boulevard development project will dedicate space to implement these facilities.

































*“I heard them say  
that all the houses  
will have the same  
fate”*

Ukë Neza

70

Pensioner

Papa Nikola, 1001 Tirana

*See p. 86 - 89*

Ukë Neza is 70 years old, has lived and worked in the area for 30 years. His shop and house are 38 metres away from each other. He was extremely frustrated over the authorities' actions towards the existing inhabitants. He thinks that the government has socially excluded some people through removing their houses to make more space for the rich people in prime locations. As for the compensation, he overheard some authority figure mentioning that everyone would be given the same flat, no matter the size of their houses. They will just offer 18,000 leke which is not enough even for buying the smallest apartment in Tirana. He has to commute daily by bike because the roads are not paved. “The riverbanks were restored and rehabilitated 5-6 years ago; they moved some stones, planted

some trees and that is it”, - he said when talking about the river, in addition to the non-feasible investments already carried out by the government. One of these investments is the canal which was opened to intercept overflowed water at flood times. Ukë also complained about the deteriorated sanitary condition of the place where there's an illegal dump not further than 100 metres away from where he works.

Finally he said that maybe he has not yet been affected, but his sister was. Her house was destroyed and she is now living with him. He is planning to immigrate to Germany following his son. “I can tell you, my 17 grandparents and ancestors, all of whom have been Albanian, today I don't feel like one”.





Bilbil  
65  
Pensioner  
Don Bosko, Tirana

*See p. 90 - 93*

*“If they were wealthy enough, they would take down their own houses themselves.”*

Bilbil is a 65 years old man who is retired at the moment. He lives in the area of Don Bosko which is ten minutes away through a path between the buildings. By the time of the interview, he was taking a walk with his cousin in search of an apartment for his wife and children in this area, close to the new development project area. He believes that prices are low considering that there are many villas with nice views which a new perspective to living. He dreams of his grandchildren playing in a decent playground or his wife walking in a beautiful park surrounded by high quality facilities.

On the other side, he claims that many others are not happy with the project because they believe the government is not trustworthy and their current living conditions are not promising. The plans

of reallocating the people living in the area and compensating them by providing other housing options are not clear. “If they were wealthy enough, they would take down their own houses themselves,” he said, describing how others feel towards their current living conditions. There are towers and there are houses that are poorly constructed and nothing in between.

Finally, he expressed his hope for a new perspective for the future as this is everything he has got at the moment.

































*“I hope that this project will focus on green spaces as it is currently lacking”*

Era Curbaxhi  
30  
Lawyer  
Rruga Filip Jano

*See p. 96 - 99*

Era Cyrbaxhiu moved to the Northern Boulevard district 10 months ago. She explained that she was drawn to the area because of its proximity to the city center and the potential she believes the community now has thanks to the development plans. Era is not only a new resident but also a new mother and is excited for the opportunities she will be able to provide her son by raising him near the North Boulevard. In the limited time that she has lived here, Era has been able to see the transformation of the area and learn more about plans for future development. She is optimistic about the project and thinks the payoffs are worth waiting for the construction to continue, particularly the green building methods that the developers have advertised.

As a lawyer, Era was fortunate enough to have secured the funding needed to purchase her own apartment, cementing her residence in the area. However, she acknowledges that the rising cost of living in the neighborhoods surrounding the boulevard, coupled with the construction of more expensive apartments, is a major concern. She is also wary about the loss of green space as construction progresses but hopes that the project's focus will include more parks and trees. Aside from the construction, she mentioned that there are a lot of cars and heavy traffic in the area, making it unsafe for children to go out and play unsupervised. While she is still excited about her decision to move to the area, she wishes to see somewhere safe and quiet built where she can play with her son.





Liljana Dimo  
70  
Retired Teacher  
Northern Boulevard

*See p. 100 - 103*

Liljana Dimo, and her husband Nikolai, are retired teachers living in the Northern Boulevard district. They bought their apartment 16 years ago and have since enjoyed daily strolls around the area. Liljana and Nikolai are looking forward to the development of the boulevard as they will now be provided with many recreational options nearby. "We use the boulevard for our walks since the lake is so far away," she explains. She pointed out that a park will be built nearby and expressed how excited the two are for this to come to fruition.

Liljana expressed enthusiasm for the development project by describing all of the benefits she and her husband believe the community will receive from the expansion. They are of the opinion

*"It would be ideal if they construct quality buildings so we can save energy"*

that the buildings, recreational spaces, mobility, traffic, and options of things to do will all be improved. "Everything that will be built is in favor of the community," she divulged, "for adults, children, all generations."

Regarding the impact of the project on the environment, they admit that they don't think many precautions will be taken. Liljana thinks that the country already lacks quality green spaces and environmental regulations, but really hopes that this aspect is taken into consideration. As for the Tirana River, it is imperative that there are investments made in waste disposal as the water is polluted and emits an unpleasant smell, making it difficult to walk nearby.





























*“I am hopeful the boulevard will bring more people and opportunities.”*

Kol Muça

32

Café Owner, Football Coach

New Blvd Tirana

*See p. 20 - 23*

Kol is the owner of a family owned café on the new boulevard. His family migrated to Tirana 30 years ago to an existing single-family home that was surrounded by agriculture fields and no roads. He notes that his family didn't bother with any renovations to the house because they knew the possibility of it getting demolished. The house was built 80 years ago from mud bricks and is still well preserved.

When the construction first started, a portion (90 m<sup>2</sup>) of his property was demolished to make room for the boulevard. His family then moved to a nearby apartment complex and the house was turned into the café in a group work. When asked if his family received compensation from the city, he replied that he prefers not to say and follows

with: “You know how the politics work around here.”

Kol says that when the project initially started, many of the residents were unhappy to be displaced and inconvenienced by the construction. It was very hard for him and his family to accept all the changes in the area. He then moved to Frankfurt for two years to work as a trainer and support the family. Afterwards, he returned to open the café because he is hopeful that the boulevard will bring in more people and business opportunities.

Many of the materials used in the café are recycled. He found scrap wood that he made into tables, palettes used for seating, and tires for planting. Also the paintings and writings on the walls are all done by his sister.





Vitore Gjoka  
68  
Tailor  
New Blvd Tirana

*See p. 24 - 27*

*“I take a walk  
everyday to see the  
progress on the  
construction work”*

Vitore Gashi is a 68-year-old lady who lives alone at the start of the new build boulevard in a five-story multi-family home that was built during the communist era. She talked a lot about her children-two sons and a daughter- who emigrated to America and the Netherlands. Her kids are well educated and have well-paid jobs; she gets monthly payments from them. Ms. Gjoka has lived in the area for over 50 years and has seen a lot of changes and development, especially in the last few years. She regularly walks down the boulevard, checking on the building sites and takes care of common areas. The new development area around makes her excited and she regularly checks if the construction is progressing. Due to the investments and the extension of the

boulevard, she can now take walks in a clean and well-organized environment where pedestrians, bicycles, and cars have their own lanes. She appreciates that the previous informal area with individual housing has been cleaned up and transformed. Her hope is that the development continues, but she also wishes that residents would get their own space on the riverside. The careful integration of the surrounding neighborhood is very important to her, as is the maintenance of public spaces and having enough parking opportunities for everyone. In conclusion, she expressed her hope that her children would return, imagining a future together. She told us that she would never move or want to live in another area, regardless of the better living conditions in other facilities.

















SHËTITORJA DHE KO







TIRANA

BULEVARDIT

BULEVARDIT



1957











*“Let the towers be made like in other countries of the world.”*

Fatbardha Kasoruho  
70 years old  
Retiree teacher  
Street Asim Vokshi

*See p. 116 - 119*

Fatbardha has lived in the area her entire life and has seen the changes up close. She says that the area is very quiet, family friendly and with accessible facilities within the community. She goes for walks in the Boulevard during the morning and in the evening, and uses her bike to travel around the city. When asked about the roads and parking in the area she states that the roads are almost all paved and in good condition. While referring to parkings, she states that even though the underground lots have solved a lot of issues, there are still informal parkings within the neighborhoods due to the rising of the private car ownerships, thus, leading to the occupation of public spaces and the local roads. She has heard about the new plan and sees it as an opportunity to make

something beautiful that benefits the people and the city. Tirana will take an European view with the new high rise-buildings, public spaces and the reconstruction of the railway which she remembers with nostalgia and considers it a valuable asset for the city. Moreover, she would like to have more covered public spaces established according to age groups of the habitants of the area so everyone can interact despite changing wheather conditions. In a general overview, she was curious and excited about the new development, talking about the towers as a topic with varying opinions among the people. She states that they are part of growth and globalization of the city, and they should be built like in other modern cities of the world.





Bujar Durmishi  
57 years old  
Private merchant  
Resident of the area by the river

*See p. 120 - 123*

*“This entire area lives  
as if it is not in its own  
home, tomorrow they  
can tell us to leave.”*

Bujar has been a resident of the area since he migrated from city of Kukes in 1999, in hopes to provide a better lifestyle for his family.

There has been significant changes in the area especially in the last three years due to the demolition of the informal houses for the extension of the New Boulevard. *“There is no safety, the area is destroyed, inner roads are unpaved and broken water pipes create mud ponds along them”,* he says.

When asked about the demolitions, he sadly tells the story how one day, early in the morning the place was filled with police officers and suddenly they found themselves evicted with tear gas by which their children were poisoned and hospitalized for 10 days after. It was heartbreaking for them and their family

to be treated that kind of way, to see the demolishing of about 40 families and in the end to not have even a compensation. They got fined 5million lekë for damage, even though he claims they have paid all the taxes, water and electricity bills regularly, and some of the houses there were in legalization process, but unfortunately the court has declared them disqualified.

He states that all the people in this area and in his neighborhood live with fear as if their houses don't belong to them, like they are foreign and at any time the police officers might come and throw them in the streets. The only thing that Bujar and his family wish for is to live peacefully and feel safe. They hope the area develops but without damaging the people that already live there.





















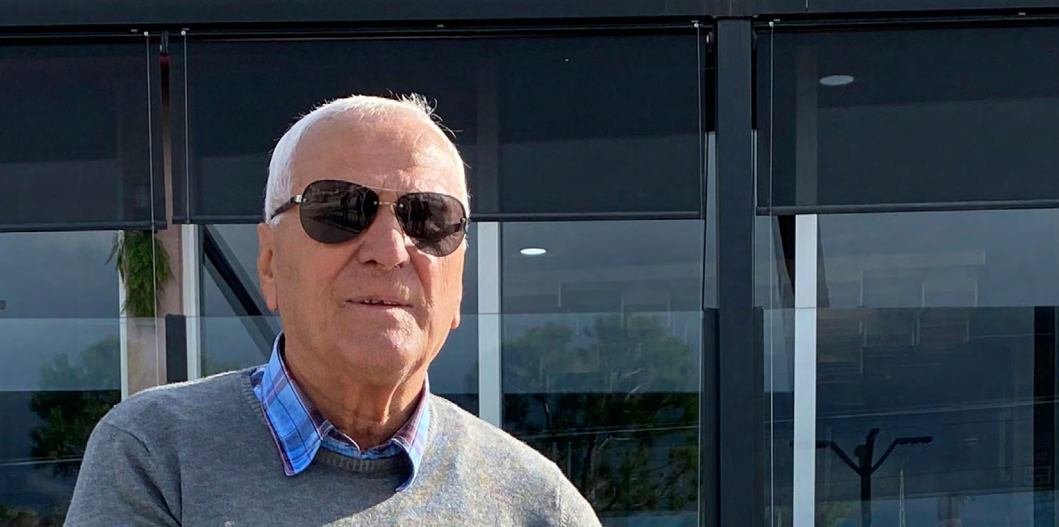












*“Tirana is a small city; people should walk and bike instead of relying on cars.”*

Myrteza  
70 years  
Retired  
Retired

See p. 126 - 129

Myrteza is a 70-year-old retired truck driver. He worked as a driver for 43 years. He gets very little pension from the state. His preferred mode of commute is biking and walking. He lives about 8 km away from the new Northern boulevard. He and his friend visit the boulevard every day, either by bike or by foot. Myrteza believes that this new boulevard is beautiful and wide compared to other streets in the city. His primary reason to visit this boulevard and this neighbourhood is to have some peaceful time.

He thinks that Albania is not a modern country, therefore it doesn't have modern infrastructure. People here have only one mode transportation that is bus, the city doesn't have trams and trains like developed cities. And travelling by taxi is

unaffordable to most. He suggests, since the city is small and walkable, people should walk and bike instead of relying on cars and buses.

When asked about New Northern Boulevard Project, he expressed positive remarks. He also likes the idea of tall buildings along the boulevard since it reminds him of Manhattan. He further added that these projects are necessary and welcomed.

Tirana is growing very fast and projects like these are very crucial for the city's future, he remarks.





Ana  
26 years  
Cashier in a Toy store  
Tirana

*See p. 130 - 133*

*“It’s a nightmare to reach the facilities and services in times of emergency.”*

Ana, mother of one year old works as a cashier in a Toy store. Her place of residence is very near to Boulevard. She uses the boulevard to get to her work. But occasionally she also stops and have coffee. She chooses to walk instead of taking public transportation because of the inadequate infrastructure and the frequent bus delays. When asked to rate the public transportation in Tirana on a scale of 1 to 10, she rated zero. She believes it’s a nightmare to reach the facilities and services in times of emergency. She added, its better to walk to the hospitals rather than taking public transport.

For means of transportation, she uses her bike, but she doesn’t feel much safe in other parts of the city. She also feels confident while biking around

this extension of boulevard because of assigned bike lanes and walking paths which are missing in the other parts of the city. About the New Northern Boulevard, she expressed that she uses this area for walking and biking. Especially, when the weather is good, she takes out the baby and roam around the area.

She doesn’t use electric scooter so she cannot comment on its safety and efficiency. As a household, her family owns a car, but she feels unsafe on the roads because of the crazy traffic in the city and the broken roads.

She also gave her opinion on the availability of the parking areas in the city, which she asserted are very limited and the privately owned parking spaces are not affordable for everyone.































## Trigger Exhibition

A trigger, is that which sets something off. In this case, the direction of the project. The Hamburg and Tirana Groups were asked to create an image that represented a 'Trigger' that conveyed the results and impressions of the presentation inputs, the interviews, group discussions and site analysis of the New Northern Boulevard and River Development in Tirana and Oberbillwerder Urban Development in Hamburg. The images were voted on by the members of this workshop and the winning images are printed as front and back cover of this publication. All other images are presented on the following pages (134-137)



Adela Qorri,  
Burak Bek,  
Carolin Schlüter,  
Ekin Dincer,  
Elda Hida,  
Elida Marques Dreer,  
Kira Gottschalk,  
Ornela Mema





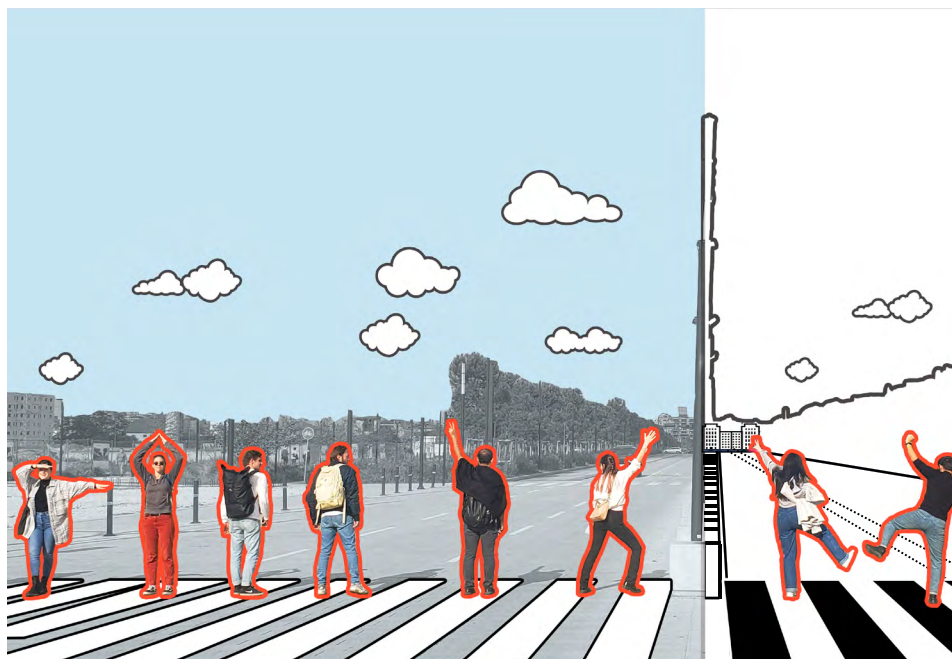
Bardha Krasniqi, Emmanuel Obiri-Yeboah, Helena Klefti, Klea Dautaj, Palakkumar Pandya, Sylvain Zimmerger



Anna Willmann, Dorian Rexhmati, Elaheh Neshati, Endrion Elezi, Kejdi Hoxha, Lasse Peters, Pablo Hinojosa



Albi Berdellima, Andres Isaza Archer, Anna McCoy, Fioralba Gega, Merle Petersen, Natalia Valenzuela Paez, Sara Bregu



Alesia Zeneli, Ana Rrushi, Armand Troci, Hamideh Nikseresht, Matin Akbari, Misbah Ali, Rejda Kokona, Reza Rezagholi





Ebitta Joy, Israq Rafid, Lamia Haddad, Mohamed Elmasry, Roaldo Hoti, Samira Shokouhi, Shpat Mulliqi

# Mbyllja

Këto rrëfime verbale dhe vizuale ofrojnë një pasqyrë të dy projekteve të ndryshme të zhvillimit urban nga këndvështrimi i atyre që frekuentojnë dhe/ose jetojnë në to. Studentët do t'i përdorin këto gjetje në punën e tyre të mëtejshme në kuadrin e projektit për të zhvilluar koncepte innovative dhe kontekstuale për të mbështetur planifikimin me efikasitet të burimeve në zhvillimin e Bulevardit të ri Verior dhe rehabilitimi e lumit të Tiranës. Për më tepër, shpresojmë që këto trregime të arrijnë në vëmendjen e planifikueseve dhe vendimmarrësve të cilët janë të përfshirë në zhvillimin e këtyre zonave aktualisht dhe në të ardhmen.



## Closing

The oral and visual narratives provide insight into two different urban developments from the perspectives of those who frequent and/or live in them. The students will utilize these findings for their further project work to develop innovative contextually appropriate concepts to support the resource efficient planning of the new Northern Boulevard and Tirana river redevelopment. Furthermore, we hope these narratives reach the planners and decision makers who are involved with their current and future development.







This publication was developed as part of a workshop, which took place the second and third week of November 2022, as part of the collaboration between the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, of the Polytechnic University of Tirana and Resource Efficiency in Architecture and Planning Master Program, of the HafenCity University of Hamburg. The workshop is funded by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) under the program "East-West Dialogue: University Dialogue with the West Balkans 2022". The first part of the workshop took place in Hamburg, Germany and the second in Tirana, Albania. This publication marks the completion of two years of fruitful cooperation, academic exchange and dialogue between the HafenCity University and the Polytechnic University of Tirana.

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