

**COUNTRY** Bulgaria  
**CASE STUDY CODE** Bulgaria\_Good Practice\_O.09\_03

**MAIN INFORMATION**

**Title**

**Location**

**Responsible Authority**

**Link**

**Keywords**



**IDENTIFICATION**

<b>Type</b>	Case (plan, program, project etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Stakeholders involved</b>	Public institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Method / Tool	<input type="checkbox"/>		Private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Organisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Civil society organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Legal framework	<input type="checkbox"/>		Knowledge institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Public or grassroots movements	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Policy field</b>	Urban planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Timeline</b>	Other <input type="text" value="experts"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>		Start date	<input type="text" value="2020"/>
	Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>		End date	<input type="text"/>
	Other <input type="text" value="Living spaces"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		On going	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				Completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Spatial level</b>	National	<input type="checkbox"/>	Limited	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Regional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Repeated overtime	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

**CONTENT AND RESULTS**



### **Purpose and context**

Varna Spaces was launched with the idea to include civil society in urban planning. The first initiative of the group was to create a catalogue with cultural spaces in Varna based on the concept of revitalization of these spaces and it was supported by the “Culture” Fund of Varna Municipality. This project inspired the team to start working on the general idea of improved the public spaces in Varna.

Other interesting initiatives followed suit such as turning the promenade along Varna’s Sea Garden into a walking area, including mobilizing large-scale civic support and demonstrations in this regards; “Activate Space” – were young people suggested their ideas on the redesigning neglected public spaces in Varna; “Where Ohrid meets Burov” – aimed at the rehabilitation and turning a-200-meter stretch of a street into Varna’s historical centre into a pedestrian area with the support of many volunteers, citizens, local businesses, and the Varna District Administration; “Reconnect the City” - a competition for a conceptual design, work plan and implementation of a drawing on asphalt in connection with the implementation of an international project implemented simultaneously in 19 European cities and supported by the Asphalt Art Initiative of Bloomberg Philanthropies. The competition was aimed at artists with experience in "street art" and is carried out in two stages - conceptual concept and working plan, followed by the execution of the drawing on asphalt. The laureates were selected by a jury including renowned architects, painters, road engineers, Varna' Chief Architect and Deputy Mayor. The best ideas were painted at the Sevastopol Square in the centre of Varna; A series of open civic discussion fora entitled “Varna Urban Planning, “Varna Coast” and “Varna’s Cultural Heritage” to generate ideas how Varna can become a more beautiful and convenient city for everyone.

### **Problems and challenges**

The links between the urban spaces sometimes refer to links between the public institutions that manage them. Often people on decision-making positions cannot find common ground and that is why it is important to improve the inter-institutional and interpersonal dialogue.

Organizing, supporting and funding entities

Varna Spaces is a grassroots initiative that relies on volunteering engagement and project-based funding, if the case.

### **Organizing, Supporting and Funding Entities**

### **Process (including participant recruitment & selection) and Interaction/Participation (including methods/tools) used**

Varna Spaces originates from the local community and has been driven by individuals who strive to improve the living environment in their town and region. The initiatives emerged organically, without significant involvement or direction from larger organizations or authorities. It is characterized by bottom-up approach, open volunteer participation and consensus-based decision-making.



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The participation process occurs via campaign and even launch, as well as through active communication with the local and regional administrations in Varna. The team submits open letters to the institutions, elaborates and disseminate on-line videos to mobilize public support, organizes thematic happenings and public feasts, appear in media interviews and publish expert articles, etc.

In 2024 Varna Spaces initiated the establishment of a Consultative Council for Urban Development and Planning/Urban Planning and Urban Environment at the Municipality of Varna.

### **Outcomes, Effects and Lessons Learned**

Varna Spaces is a voluntary initiative through with substantial civic knowledge was pooled together. Its experience indicates that the citizens of Varna crave events that are dedicated to the improvement of the urban environment. The participants in the open civic discussion fora were very interested in what the experts had to say, and the questions they asked were very adequate. The meetings passed in a very friendly and calm tone, with understanding of the problems and willingness to solve them.

### **Bibliography**

Facebook Profile - <https://www.facebook.com/VarnaSpaces>

“Urban Spaces for Culture” Catalogue - [https://issuu.com/varnaspaces/docs/varnaspaces\\_web-last?fbclid=IwAR0B6CCFNbw5u34URlZPaYsMRteW9cPQiSYynzN6YqUz6IG011vh3My9IA0\\_aem\\_AR7oFamyl7p7WmseHqfsj\\_bzg0mrGcit\\_ORhliA35jjpyVI5Rv4l1lPRiXhIKlYyB43LXzBsi1\\_5U2WkioX2OQ-](https://issuu.com/varnaspaces/docs/varnaspaces_web-last?fbclid=IwAR0B6CCFNbw5u34URlZPaYsMRteW9cPQiSYynzN6YqUz6IG011vh3My9IA0_aem_AR7oFamyl7p7WmseHqfsj_bzg0mrGcit_ORhliA35jjpyVI5Rv4l1lPRiXhIKlYyB43LXzBsi1_5U2WkioX2OQ-)

#### **Media Publications:**

[https://bnr.bg/varna/post/101962724/savetat-kam-kmeta-ot-eksperti-shte-tarsi-reshenia-za-razvitie-na-gradskatasreda?fbclid=IwAR2l63HJ9VvFiSq0Tiq5uggbRs8EQ8ScfjP3zqE0qhuzmPEYODYqvFZEMI\\_aem\\_AR5x5XpC\\_wxvIGwiRXPV6VlcaYuqhA1GcPx4oklbVEdi5K3gMcn2ZKfaQlM-hanYgQWXqRGYqkwrDsNncHJm-6dq](https://bnr.bg/varna/post/101962724/savetat-kam-kmeta-ot-eksperti-shte-tarsi-reshenia-za-razvitie-na-gradskatasreda?fbclid=IwAR2l63HJ9VvFiSq0Tiq5uggbRs8EQ8ScfjP3zqE0qhuzmPEYODYqvFZEMI_aem_AR5x5XpC_wxvIGwiRXPV6VlcaYuqhA1GcPx4oklbVEdi5K3gMcn2ZKfaQlM-hanYgQWXqRGYqkwrDsNncHJm-6dq)  
<https://www.namrb.org/bg/obshtinite-dnes/varna-e-edin-ot-19-te-evropeyski-grada-initsiativata-reconnect-the-city>

<https://stroinfo.com/varna-spaces-za-morskata-stolica/>

<https://bnr.bg/varna/post/101934353/sdrujenie-varnaspaces-na-dve-godini>



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