

# Summary

## 'Smart City' Symposium at UBT College



UBT – Center for Urban Studies,  
April, 2019

## Summary of 'Smart City' Symposium, held on 05.04.2019 at UBT Innovative Campus

The issue of smart cities has already become a global topic, but for the first time in Kosovo, a symposium with such a theme was organized by UBT College.

Participants in this symposium were professors from Austria, mayors and urban affairs directors of various municipalities, as well as professors and students of the Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Planning of UBT.



The Rector of UBT, prof. Dr. Edmond Hajrizi, pointing out the importance of implementing ideas on Smart Cities, said that UBT for this purpose, has established its Center for Urban Studies, a center for urban research. "In this period, planning our cities in order to have an impact on the quality of life of citizens is to a high importance, so the focus of our center, as well as this symposium is stakeholders that have an impact on the implementation of the proposals and solutions" he said.

After introductory speeches, the symposium continued with workshops attended by students and professors, divided into groups.

The "Designing Smart Cities and Education Management" workshop was held by the Rector of UBT, prof. Dr. Edmond Hajrizi, who focused on technology transforming and convergence as functions that need to interact with each other to succeed.

The "Smart Planning" workshop was held by Thomas Dillinger, lecturer at TU Wien, who, in addition to the theoretical knowledge, provided a practical example from Ebreichsdorof, a small Austrian city, as a model for building Smart Cities.

The "Smart Living" workshop was held by the well-known Albanian expert working in Austria, Skender Kosumi, who focused on the idea of increasing the quality of life in cities based on technology and simplicity, as well as providing maximum flexibility in residential areas.

IEEE International Forum Researcher Hartmunt Dumke, who led the "Smart Energy Planning" workshop, focused on energy-efficient utilization and planning

## The Round Table

At the round table held after the relevant presentations / workshops, questions were asked and ways, approaches and strategies were thought on how to deal with the issue of the Smart Cities, as a very less handled but very necessary issue for all cities and societies of the era of information and digitization.



At this round table, the UBT rector Prof.Dr. Edmond Hajrizi, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Planning at UBT, Dr. Lulzim Beqiri, Can.Dr. Skender Kosumi (co-initiator and symposium coordinator), the head of UBT-Center for Urban Studies Shqiprim Ahmeti, Thomas Dillinger and Hartmut Dumke of the Institute for Spatial Planning of the TU Wien and professors and experts from Kosovo and Switzerland such as Michael Locher and Christopher Pannett also participated, among others.

UBT's Rector Prof.Dr. Edmond Hajrizi stressed that UBT's reputation at the country level and beyond, the infrastructure built up to date as well as all the human resources that the university relies to have pushed the institution to take initiatives and update issues of great importance which unfortunately continue to remain untreated till now. Initiating the topic of Smart Cities is just one of those untreated topics. It was also emphasized that, in order to focus on urban issues and to give them deserved attention and dedication, UBT has established the Center for Spatial Planning namely UBT - Center for Urban Studies, work of which will be based on interdisciplinarity including areas such as: urban planning, architecture, design, engineering, computer science, social sciences and economics etc. Interdisciplinary approach will help us to focus on the complex nature of urban problems and to provide research and applications that strengthen our cities to provide citizens with a more livable urban environment and a higher quality of life.

He also added that UBT is focused on turning its innovative campus into a smart campus as a miniature for Smart Area.

Thomas Dillinger and Hartmut Dumke from the Institute for Spatial Planning at the University of Vienna emphasized the need of cooperation with municipalities and institutions willing to work, to research and then develop strategies for smart cities in Kosovo. The strategies should be based on best practices around the world, and this should constitute an important part of the

analysis phase. In this context, students should be considered/treated as a very important human asset.

They have also proposed to handle up to 5 middle sized cities as pilot projects, sharing this as a lesson from their experiences of work done in Austria. The Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Planning at UBT, Dr. Lulzim Beqiri agreed, adding that the selection of 2-3 cities / municipalities to conduct study visits would be of a great interest. It was also stressed that the treatment of small cities / municipalities is quite difficult, mainly due to the lack of human and financial capacities that characterize them. It is claimed that the city treatments should be based on the problems they face and on the topics they are most in need and interest.

Relating to Pristina's traffic problem, the need for creative, inclusive solutions and the need to improve public transport was highlighted. Here it should be emphasized the need for a full integration of transport planning with urban development planning.

Adapting the curriculum to the real need for addressing the issue of Smart City was another important issue discussed in this round table.