

Havana, Cuba

Partner country

Status of the project: ongoing technical assistance



Basic Information

Urban area: 728 km²

Population: 2,140,423 | Growth rate: 0.16%

GDP per capita: USD 8,821

Modal Share

Formal public transport: 19.4%

Walking: 57.3%

Cycling: 1%

Private cars: 9.7%

Private motorbikes or 2-wheelers: 1.6%

Taxis: 6.3%

Moto taxis and Freight vehicles: 3.3%

National GHG emissions per capita: 3.74 (tCO₂eq)

Exposure to climate change: HIGH

Country Capital City

Context

Havana, the Cuban capital, occupies 728,26 km² (0.7% of the national area). Its 15 municipalities are home to 2.13 million inhabitants, almost 20% of the country's population. The municipalities Centro Habana, Habana Vieja, Cerro, Plaza de la Revolución and Diez de Octubre are the most densely populated. Centro Habana stands out notably with a gross population density of around 41,000 inhabitants/km² while the net density in the residential areas of the city is only 18,000 inhabitants/km² approximately.

Havana is a city with a polycentric structure. Its growth has preserved the oldest fabrics of some neighbourhoods. The axes that linked the oldest nucleus with the periphery were the basis for the growth from the founding heart to the west, southwest, south, and southeast, which defined a tree-like pattern for the communication routes.

The bay, the fundamental reason for the final location of the city, conditioned a slower pace in the expansion of the city towards the east. The construction of the tunnel of the bay in 1958 allowed for the beginning of the development in this direction. These aspects determined the current structure of the transportation system, which follows a territorial model with a central zone, an intermediate zone and a peripheral zone. Despite the development beyond the central zone, the main concentrations of jobs, the cultural/recreational infrastructure and tourism are in a narrow strip close to the sea, which conditions current mobility patterns, where even today the tunnel is presented as insufficient in terms of mobility.

The city has a public transit system and already has an existing transport master plan or similar document. In Havana, public bus transportation (or "guaguas") is basically organised into two categories: a fleet of "articulated" buses with greater capacity for main routes; and "conventional" buses, for approximately 100 secondary routes.

Both the secondary and main routes are operated by the Havana Provincial Transportation Company, which operates 17 main routes and 104 secondary routes, and has 17 bus terminals for their operations. There are also bus services between Havana and other provinces (Viazul, Transtur, Transgaviota, in CUC, National Buses in CUP).

The Ministry of Transportation (MITRANS) has the responsibility to organise the transportation sector in Cuba and the General Directorate of Provincial Transportation of Havana (DGTPH) has the responsibility to organise the transportation sector in Havana. The General Directorate of Provincial Transport of Havana (DGTPH), the local counterpart, has the mandate and responsibility to finance mass public transport infrastructure. It does not have the authority to borrow from international finance sources. Systems and procedures are partially in place to monitor, evaluate and report on urban transport.

Despite being a polycentric city, the main metropolitan functions and the largest number of jobs are only concentrated in the so-called central areas of Havana. The remaining sub-centres have weakened, limiting their ability to offer service and employment to the population. This forces an important part of the population that lives far away from the centre to commute daily to access basic services (schools, hospitals, shops, etc.). The poor conditions of the existing urban mass transport imply that citizens consume excessive time just for their transportation.

One of the most prominent challenges in 2021 was to carry out the sampling and city visit activities under the context of COVID 19, as quarantines imposed by the local government prolonged the consultants' time on the island and reduced the capacity of the participatory events. However, the main objective of producing a high-quality document in line with Cuba's urban mobility policy and strengthening the capacities of local experts and other stakeholders is being met.

The technical assistance contributes to institutional strengthening by adopting an integrated approach, building capacity and offering dedicated trainings.

Support from the Partnership

Technical Assistance: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) and pilot project

Funded by: European Commission

Funding amount: EUR 700,000

Implemented by: AFD through the EUROCLIMA+ Program

Local counterpart: General Directorate of Provincial Transport of Havana (DGTPH)

Supported activities:

- Development of a SUMP for the city of Havana
- Definition and preparation of a Pilot Project of sustainable mobility in the city. The project consists in improving public spaces in the Eje de Galeano to guarantee pedestrian flux and accessibility
- Definition and preparation of a project to improve mobility on the 10 de Octubre corridor, Havana

Status of implementation

Project start: 2021 Q1

Expected project completion: 2022 Q2

Completed outputs:

- Diagnosis and evaluation: inventory and analysis of the current situation
- Vision and strategic goals

Next expected outputs

- Action plan
- Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Plan

Core impact indicators baselines

Indicator	Baseline - 2013
Total annual transport-related GHG emissions (Mt CO₂eq)	1,723 Mt CO ₂ eq
Annual transport related GHG emissions per capita (kg CO₂eq)	805 kg CO ₂ eq / capita
Air pollution Mean urban air pollution of particulate matter (in µg PM2.5) at road-based monitoring stations	3.1 µg/m ³ of PM2.5
Road safety Annual traffic fatalities in the urban area, per 100,000 inhabitants	3.56 fatalities / 100,000 hab
Affordability of public transport Percentage of disposable household income spent on public transport for the second quintile household income group	7%

Highlights

Prioritizing pedestrians in the Galeano corridor can become a flagship project for the further development of sustainable mobility in Havana

In Havana, 70% of all trips take place by bus and on foot. Therefore, the transformation of the pedestrian-heavy Eje de Galeano will be an example of a pro-sustainable urban mobility transformation with an impact on the improvement of the urban environment, and a great impulse for the reception of the SUMP. This pilot project expects to decrease the pollution load, increase pedestrian safety on the axis, improve accessibility to the public space, social resources and cultural facilities.

Participatory processes have taken place in the framework of the SUMP formulation

In March, the consultancy firm delivered the preliminary report and the participatory approach, communication and visibility plan. In April, Forum 1 was held with the objective of "Identifying the main challenges of the city of Havana in terms of mobility and transport and analysing the perception of the different focus groups on current and future mobility, identifying the main shortcomings and needs to be solved". This event was attended by more than 150 people, allowing the collection of data in the city that generated a mobility diagnosis in Havana. Possible mobility scenarios for the city are being formulated.

The COVID-19 has proposed additional challenges for the project execution

Adapt to the challenges presented by the island in the face of virtuality, scheduling workshops with more time for better participation. Likewise, increase the channels for disseminating SUMP events and news, so that the population is involved in the process. Consider the quarantines defined by the local government, to have more time available during the visit to Havana.