Date: 20 June 2024

Times: 10am New York time – 16h Venice

REGISTER HERE

https://undp.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WBc7TrGGSRSgRVw91XohFg

The topic

Moving around the city has enormous implications for citizens and visitors. Public transport is key to going to work every day, taking children to school, or going shopping. Urban mobility needs to take special account for those who need it the most, accessibility is especially important for the elderly, mothers with prawns, people with disabilities. The affordability of transport can make a real difference for low-income sectors of the population, students, and commuters. Finally, public transport can also make a difference in the environmental impact of buses or rail. Many cities are now looking at their whole urban transport systems, to make them not only more efficient, but also more affordable, accessible, and environmentally sustainable.

Not many cities have waterways that allow them to use water as a means of public transportation, but many others do and are maybe losing a resource to move people around the city by ferry or other type of water transportation through their rivers or coastlines. In this webinar, we want to learn more about two cities that are successfully moving people via water: Venice in Italy and New York in the United States.
The cities

**Venice** is a city conformed by a series of 118 islands, some of them connected amongst them with bridges, some of them uniquely connected by ferry boat (locally called “vaporetti”). In addition to the main city, the vaporetti also serve some of the 62 populated islands such Murano, Burano, Torcello, Lido or Giudecca. The city comprises an area of 415 square kilometers, with the historical district occupying only 7.6).

Venice only transportation option is by boat, there are no possibilities for cars to access the city beyond its main connection with the rest of the land, the Piazzale Roma where buses can deposit people, or the train station that also connects directly to the city. Beyond this point, there is only walking, private boats, or vaporetti.

AVM, Azienda Veneziana della Mobilità is the public company running the water buses or vaporetti. It is participated 100% by the Venice City Council but it operates as a private company subjected to private law, with some exceptions applying due to its character as provider of essential services.

With a social capital of 85.5-million-euro, AVM ended the 2022 budget with a superavit of 139.000 euro, which is not the case for many city transportation companies, that are often in deficit and heavily subsidized by the city or the state. AVM affects an average of 145 million transfers per year. This includes the local population of Venice City area (260.000 with only 50.000 residing in the historic city center) as well as the 11 million tourists that visit Venice each year.

**New York** presents a different scale all together, with a population of 8.4 million, and 56.7 million visitors per year, the challenges and scale of solutions are very different from Venice. But several questions are also very similar. New York is also a series of islands (around 40 aside of Manhattan). The city is divided into 5 boroughs are covers an area of 790 square kilometers.

Several companies cover transportation via water in New York, including the connections with the neighbor state of New Jersey (Waterways), the Staten Island Ferry and others. Main urban ferries are operated by NYC ferry, a service operated by Hornblower, a private company selected by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) through public competition. Between August 2023 and July 2023, NYC Ferry moved 6.6 riders, experiencing an increment of 17% from the previous year and exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

We are aware that these two cities are unique in their own contexts, with a disproportionate weight of the number of tourists that visit the city. They are also unique cities in their condition of islands and special places in the global imaginarium, but nevertheless, we considered that their experience could be interesting for other cities thinking of improving their water transportation systems or even think about establishing new ones taking advantage of the extraordinary
resource that is a river or a coastline, not only in terms of transportation, but also in quality of life.

**The questions**

What questions do we want to address in this webinar?

- What are the main challenges to take into consideration when moving people by water in your city?
- What considerations do you prioritize in terms of accessibility of the ferries? For example, regarding people with mobility problems or mothers with little children.
- Is your ferry transportation environmentally sustainable? What are you doing to improve the impact on the waterways?
- Many cities run public transportation system under a deficit, it is very difficult to maintain certain lines that have little number of users but need to be reached by public transport. How are you facing this problem?
- How do you deal with the different types of users, especially the different needs between residents and tourists?
- Finally, what your recommendation be to another city who is thinking of expanding their urban transport via water?

**The SDG local solutions series**

Organized by UNDP in the framework of its work with cities and local governments, this series of webinars want to generate a conversation between cities and their partners to highlight local solutions to implement Agenda 2030.

The event will have two moments: (i) the first half hour will be to know first-hand the experiences of each of the cities; (ii) followed by a space for discussion and questions from the participants, and finally with a (iii) closed session between the speakers to discuss under “Chatham House rules” without public. The lessons learnt will be shared globally through UNDPs SDG Local Action networks, webpage [www.sdglocalaction.org/solutions](http://www.sdglocalaction.org/solutions) and our YouTube Channel [https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCHQj9xR35cPm-uYhLU2RoPA](https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCHQj9xR35cPm-uYhLU2RoPA)
The speakers

Franny Civitano is the NYC Ferry Deputy Director and Senior Vice President at the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). Franny has worked in the ferry transportation industry in New York City for the past 13 years. As part of Franny’s current portfolio, she oversees NYC Ferry’s policy, planning, and special projects group for NYCEDC. Franny has been involved in launching each new landing and route in the NYC Ferry system since 2017. Most recently, she managed the NYC Ferry operator contract re-procurement, which went into effect in October 2023. Before coming to NYCEDC, Franny worked for the private ferry operators who operated both the East River Ferry and NYC Ferry and focused on community outreach, marketing, customer service, and the hiring and training of crews. One of Franny’s favorite experiences working with NYC Ferry thus far has been managing the most recent vessel naming contest where second graders were asked to propose names for NYC Ferry boats, some examples include Cyclone Shark and Tooth Ferry.

Giovanni Seno is the Director General, AVM group, Venice, Italy. He graduated in Engineering from Padova University and has an extensive experience in management of both public and private firms.

In 1987 he joined IBM Italy. In 1997 he became General Manager of Siomatica SpA. In 2000 he was appointed Managing Director of the Océ Italia Group and at the same time joined the Strategic Board of Océ N.V. in the Netherlands. In 2009 he became General Manager of SIAV SpA, of which he became Vice President in 2011. At the beginning of the same year, he founded D&F Consulting and in July he was appointed President of ASM SpA, the Mobility Services Company of the Municipality of Venice. The company later became AVM SpA (Azienda Veneziana della Mobilità) and took on the role of holding company for all the public and private mobility companies of the Municipality of Venice (AVM, ACTV, PMV, VeLa). Since 2012 he has been at the helm of the AVM Group as Managing Director and General Manager (3100 employees and over 300 million euros in turnover) and is responsible for public transport services, private mobility and the management of major public events in the Metropolitan City of Venice. In February 2012 he was also one of the founders of FastNet, the first private incubator of business networks. Among other positions held in the past are: Director of ITSI SpA, Director of NSI SpA, Director of ASSO IT, Member of the Board of ASSINFORM, Member of the Technical Committee "International Affairs" of Confindustria, Administrator of SIAV EAST EUROPE (Bucharest), Director of the Casino of Venice, Elective Member of the General Council of Confindustria Venezia & Rovigo.

The moderator

Michele Candotti is Chief of Staff and Director of the Executive Office of the United Nations Development Programme from 1st September 2017. Michele is an Agricultural and Rural Development professional, with over 30 years of international experience gained in the UN, in international multilateral institutions and
international non-governmental organizations, from field-level rural development project operations to public policy processes and organizational management. He was the Director of the Policy and Programme Division of UNEP. He joined UNEP in 2010 as Principal Advisor to the Executive Director and Head of the Office for Policy and Inter-Agency Affairs. In 2011, he was appointed UNEP's Chief of the Executive Office and Principal Policy Adviser to the Executive Director. Previously, he served as Director-General of the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Italy for a decade. He began his professional career in 1984 as a Research Officer at a Regional Centre for Agriculture Research in Italy and in 1986 joined the European Commission, first as a Junior Professional Officer in Zambia, and then through several assignments, from Programme Management (as Coordinator of the European Commission's Microprojects Programme in Zambia), to coordination of the EDF Country Programmes in Zambia and Kenya, where he was responsible for the liaison between the European Commission and the Governments of Zambia and Kenya.

AGENDA

Presentation of the initiative: "Local solutions for local SDG action", translation, recording, use of chat, etc. And introduction of the moderator by Diana Lopez Caramazana, Advisor, cities and local governments, UNDP.

Moderator's introduction to the session by Michele Candotti, UNDP Chief of Staff.

Venice experience, followed by a question from New York to Venice

New York City experience, followed by a question from Venice to New York

Conversation between the 2 cities

Questions and answers from the audience

Closing and conclusions by the Moderator