

Participatory planning in mining areas – research outline of MINIPART project

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MINIPART - Improving participation in spatial planning of mining areas 2024/2027

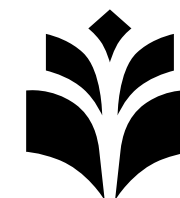
Project partners:



ИНСТИТУТ ЗА АРХИТЕКТУРУ И УРБАНИЗАМ СРБИЈЕ
Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia



External collaborators:



UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND

Supported by:



Science Fund
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Research outline of MINIPART project

Problem:

Development in large-scale mineral extraction regions impacts local community and environment, mostly negative:

- forced resettlement,
- loss of agricultural land,
- construction of boom towns and company settlements,
- endangered indigenous rights,
- impoverishment,
- human rights abuse,
- forced and child labour,
- endangered health,
- gender dimension,
- endangered physical cultural resources,
- workforce migration.

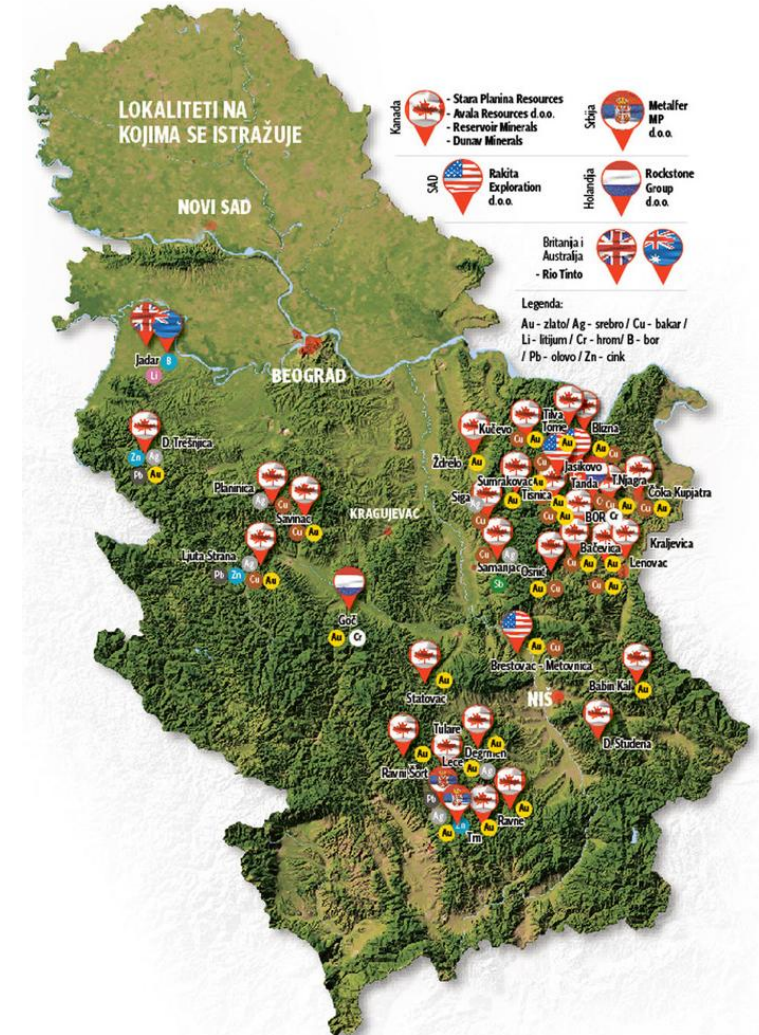


Source: Jankovic, M., 2022, *Vreme*

Research outline of MINIPART project

Problem in Serbia:

- Opposition of communities & experts against mining in Serbia intensified since 2000s
- International Mining Companies (mining rent, privatization of state companies, CRO & SLO, environment protection)
- Local population's opinion often neglected → protests and riots
- reason: missing adequate prior information
i.e. **participation in decision making?**



MINIPART Objectives

IDENTIFY THE MOST APPROPRIATE PARTICIPATION METHODS, TAILORED TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN MINING AREAS.



Source: Beta/Milan Obradović/MO

- (1) Compile comprehensive **repository** of examples of participatory planning in mining areas www.minipart.rs
- (2) **Engage all stakeholders** (citizens, mining industry, government, NGOs, environmentalists) actively in the identification of the best participatory methods through **interviews, surveys, and focus groups**.
- (3) Address the specific needs of **vulnerable groups** (women, ethnic minorities, rural populations, persons with disabilities, elderly, youth)
- (4) **Develop new or adapted approaches** for meaningful and inclusive community participation in mining planning and development.
- (5) **Disseminate** results to: national and local government, NGOs, citizens in Serbia & abroad, academia, professionals, and the general public.

MINIPART project methodology

- Participatory methods can be identified and developed only through collaboration with end users (citizens, business, GOs & NGOs)
- Exploratory study: qualitative + quantitative research methods
- Focus: Bor and Majdanpek mining area (high challenges, civic activism)

I phase: selecting participatory methods by desktop analysis (reviewing literature, projects, reports).

Discussions with external collaborators. Study visit to the Tara mine in Ireland.



MINIPART project methodology (2)

- **II phase:** assessing the knowledge and attitudes of urban and rural communities in the Bor-Majdanpek mining area
- July/August 2024: sample of 300 respondents (total population of 60,000) surveyed to identify the most relevant aspects of participation that motivate or enable their involvement in the planning process.
- SPSS software - used to analyze the survey data.



MINIPART project methodology (3)



- **III phase:** in-depth interviews with key stakeholders who influence the selection of participation methods in decision-making.
(ministries for spatial planning, mining & environmental protection, local governments of Bor and Majdanpek, public institutions involved in urban and spatial planning, national spatial planning bodies, national and local NGOs. – **ongoing** –
- **IV phase:** focus group discussions. Workshop in Bor: representatives from Govt., NGO, business/industry, civil sector.
 - testing selected participatory methods –
- **E-participation application**
- **Layman report**



MINIPART dissemination strategy

- www.minipart.rs a bilingual website (Serbian and English)
- (inter)national conferences
- High impact international scientific journals
- international monograph
- **Layman report** with recommendations
- **Open Data**
- RAUMPLAN repository
(<http://raumplan.iaus.ac.rs>)



Preliminary findings

There is a need to enhance institutional transparency and communication to strengthen public participation in decision-making processes related to mining areas.

Formal participatory methods should not be used exclusively, but accompanied with additional ones (i.e. informal) depending on the specific situation, to provide a shift from manipulation to delegated power.

