



EUROCITIES FLASH

an information service for EUROCITIES members

2016 - an urban year



Here we are at the end of 2015. It's been a busy and successful year in terms of achieving the goals we had set in 2014. We are well on the way to being fully recognised by the EU institutions as the major urban voice on the EU urban agenda and in other areas where we have shown that engaging cities will

deliver concrete and positive results. For this I would like to thank all EUROCITIES members and partners and acknowledge the important work of my entire team. A special thank you goes to Vanda Knowles, who has contributed so much to what EUROCITIES has achieved so far.

We are about to move into a very important year, one that will see us celebrate 'EUROCITIES' 30th anniversary. The year will bring many opportunities for political dialogue at EU level and practical exchanges on urban challenges. We will participate in the Dutch presidency's roadmap towards the establishment of an EU urban agenda, hopefully culminating in a new and meaningful pact for cities; we will have high level events to deliver on our declaration on work; and full network mobilisation and political debate on smart cities. We intend to consolidate our work on refugees and migrants and provide formal input on the current and future EU Structural and Investment Funds. We will contribute to maintaining the political momentum on climate action from COP 21 in Paris, namely through our work on the new Covenant of mayors on climate. And many more key initiatives will make 2016 a very special year.

I am not sure that the six city leaders that founded EUROCITIES could have imagined the powerful venture they launched back in 1986. What I do know is that I am grateful to them and to all the others who recognised the potential and worked together to turn it into a strong network. This calls for celebration throughout the next year. To kick this off, I invite you to join us for our 30th anniversary cocktail reception in Brussels on 22 February.

Until then, I wish us all a relaxing holiday break and a year full of peace and serenity!

Anna Lisa Boni

Anna Lisa Boni
EUROCITIES secretary general

Johanna Rolland at COP 21

The 21st Conference of Parties (COP 21) in Paris concluded on 11 December a unanimous agreement to limit global warming to well below 2°C with the aim of pursuing a 1.5°C target in the long run. The agreement also puts in place a mechanism to review national commitments every five years. Local and subnational actors are recognised for their important efforts to address climate change.

Johanna Rolland, EUROCITIES president and mayor of Nantes, represented our network at several sessions alongside the negotiations.

Speaking at the Lima Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) Cities and Regions Focus event on the morning of 8 December, Johanna Rolland announced that Nantes will host a major climate change summit, entitled 'Climate Chance', on 28-29 September 2016. The intention for this summit is to become a regular event for all non-state actors involved in taking up the chance to fight against climate change.

She said: "Major European cities have made climate change a priority, and the work doesn't stop at COP 21. In Nantes we're hosting an international climate summit next September to keep the momentum going."

Johanna Rolland spoke later on the same day at the Covenant of Mayors World Tour, which was an opportunity to discuss how to build on the success of the Covenant of Mayors initiative on climate mitigation and adaptation beyond Europe.

EUROCITIES hosted two thematic sessions to highlight the role of major cities in addressing climate change at local level. Our sessions were held at the TAP (Transformative Actions Program) Cities and Regions Pavilion. This was co-hosted by the cities of Paris and Bristol and by ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, a global network committed to a sustainable future. (Please see p.3 for more details).

Johanna Rolland opened our session on smart city solutions on 8 December by reiterating our message that 'there can be no smart cities without smart citizens'.



More information: <http://bit.ly/1M2P1tL>
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HIGHLIGHTS

Innovation & social clauses in public procurement



We hosted a seminar in Brussels on 12-13 November focusing on the public procurement of innovation, pre-commercial procurement and social clauses in public procurement.

At the seminar, European Commission representatives presented information on the new 2014 procurement directives; and city experts from Amsterdam, Eindhoven, London, Munich, Preston, Oslo and Stockholm gave practical examples. The first part of the seminar indicated increasing support from the EU institutions for pre-commercial procurement and the procurement of innovation in terms of funding, training, toolkits, helpdesk and legal assistance.

In a series of group discussions, city representatives shared their experiences and gathered ideas about how innovative and socially responsible procurement is carried out in other cities.

The discussion themes included:

- using social clauses in public procurement to increase the labour market participation of vulnerable groups and to strategically develop local skills
- using social clauses to procure ethically

- using social clauses not only to promote labour market inclusion but to create added social value for the local community e.g. by providing ICT courses to older people

- the role of corporate social responsibility policies in public procurement

- monitoring contracts and ensuring compliance with social clauses

The seminar concluded with a debate between André Sobczak, councillor at Nantes Metropole, and Paola Zanetti, European Commission deputy head of unit for public procurement strategy.

One of the main talking points was the difference between the legal interpretations of the provisions of the 2014 directives and what is actually practical and useful for city administrations.

André Sobczak highlighted the importance of the strategic use of public procurement by cities to influence the local labour market and goods and services markets. He said: "We need to take risk in the interpretation of the directives to pursue responsible procurement." He suggested that the EU could support cities by developing guidelines and providing training on social clauses in procurement.

The panellists agreed that an open dialogue and collaboration between cities and the European Commission would be helpful: it would allow cities' perspectives on procurement to inform the EU policy making process, and it would also give cities the opportunity to clarify various legal provisions in the directives.

We are planning to organise a mutual learning event on public procurement next year.

Photo © Feuille d'Erable
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Call for Urban Innovative Actions now open!

The European Commission has launched its new Urban Innovation Actions call, worth €80 million. The call will focus on the following four topics: energy transition; urban poverty (with a focus on deprived urban neighbourhoods); inclusion of migrants and refugees; and jobs and skills in the local economy. Four information sessions will take place around Europe in January and February 2016. We are also hosting a webinar on the call on 14 January. Please visit the link below for more information.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1TPG7FN>
Anja de Cunto: anja.decunto@eurocities.eu

EUROCITIES high level roundtable on work

Brussels | 22 February 2016

We are hosting a high level roundtable on work on 22 February 2016 as a step towards implementing our declaration on work, launched in February this year. Our aim is to establish a structured partnership with the European Commission on employment, thereby ensuring strong involvement from cities in the European political agenda on jobs, growth and investment.

The roundtable will be an opportunity to present the policy analysis we have carried out in the months since the launch of our declaration on work.

We will present recommendations to the EU institutions on how to improve the employment situation in Europe.

We will be showcasing some specific actions being carried out in our member cities to successfully improve local employment policies. We will also raise some concerns and make proposals for future actions required at local, national and European level.

The roundtable will comprise three sessions:

- A dialogue with Commissioner Thyssen, responsible for employment, social affairs, skills and labour mobility, and representatives from the Dutch and Slovak EU presidencies. This will focus on: long term unemployment, youth unemployment, inclusive labour market, skills, and social clauses in public procurement.

- A dialogue with Commissioner Bieńkowska, responsible for internal market, industry, entrepreneurship and SMEs. This will look at: economic development, SMEs and entrepreneurship, public services, investment, innovation, and procurement.

- A dialogue with other potential institutional partners and the wider stakeholder community, including trade unions, and business associations and organisations.

The discussions will build on the work carried out by our various forums and working groups throughout the year. The event is open to EUROCITIES politicians by invitation.

✉ Silvia Ganzerla: silvia.ganzerla@eurocities.eu

HIGHLIGHTS

EUROCITIES sessions at COP 21



We hosted two sessions in the Cities and Regions Pavilion at COP 21 in Paris, on 5 and 8 December. We used our first session to highlight the opportunities that climate action can bring employment, social inclusion and a better quality of life in our cities. Speakers explored how climate action can help maximise job creation for both high and low skilled workers. They also looked at ways to ensure that the transition to a low carbon economy also provides an opportunity to reduce poverty and social exclusion.

For example, cities can help create new employment opportunities within the local economy, including jobs for less skilled workers, by promoting investment in climate adaptation measures, local renewable energy production and local energy efficiency. Providing

targeted support for innovative local SMEs can also help generate sustainable economic growth and jobs.

The session was moderated by Anna Lisa Boni, EUROCITIES secretary general. The panel featured: Ashok Sridharan, mayor of Bonn; Anneli Hulthén, mayor of Gothenburg; Tony Lloyd, interim mayor of Greater Manchester; Pierfrancesco Maran, deputy mayor of Milan; Thomas Quero, councillor in Nantes, representing the EUROCITIES president; Juan Espadas, mayor of Seville; and Katarina Luhr, deputy mayor of Stockholm.

In a second session on 8 December, we looked at smart city solutions for energy efficiency and climate change in the context of our Green Digital Charter (GDC). Speakers discussed what becoming a smart city means to them, and how this contributes to achieving their greenhouse gas emissions targets. They also discussed how initiatives such as the GDC supports cities' efforts to become smarter, and shared ideas on the kind of support they would need to scale up their efforts and deliver better results.

Johanna Rolland, mayor of Nantes and EUROCITIES president, opened the session, which was moderated by Nikolaos Kontinakis and Michael Klinkenberg from the EUROCITIES secretariat. Also on the panel were: George Ferguson, mayor of Bristol; Milan Obradovic, deputy mayor of Malmo; and Jaroslaw Jozwiak, deputy mayor of Warsaw.

Photo © ICLEI

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EUROCITIES partners Urban Future Global Conference

Graz | 2-3 March 2016

More than 1,500 participants from over 300 cities and 50 different countries are expected at the next Urban Future Global Conference in Graz on 2-3 March 2016. The conference is aimed at people working on sustainability issues in cities, and will cover four main topics: mobility; urban living and planning; communication; and resources.

EUROCITIES will be represented at the event by: Nicola Vathauer, communications director, who will speak about public participation as a social trend; and Nikolaos Kontinakis, project coordinator, who will speak about smart city indicators.

Find out how other cities from around the world have made their cities more sustainable, and learn from their successes and mistakes.

EUROCITIES members are entitled to a discounted conference rate of €90, as city representatives.

Please visit the conference website below to register.

Urban Future: www.urban-future.at/en

✉ Nicola Vathauer: nicola.vathauer@eurocities.eu

30 years of EUROCITIES - call for contributions & cocktail reception

To celebrate the 30th anniversary of EUROCITIES, we have launched an open call for young professionals to contribute their visions of an urban future. Successful contributions will be compiled in an edited volume. We welcome submissions from people aged 25 to 35 who fit into any of these categories: researchers, journalists, architects and urbanists, opinion leaders, and novelists. They should have at least three years of professional experience in their field. Contributions can be up to 2,500 words in English and should be submitted by 1 March 2016. Please feel free to share our call, available at the link below, with your contacts.

We are hosting a cocktail reception on 22 February at the BIP in Brussels, to celebrate 30 years of EUROCITIES!

For information on the call: ✉ Soraya Zanardo: soraya.zanardo@eurocities.eu

For information on the cocktail: ✉ Ciara Drohan: ciara.drohan@eurocities.eu

Staff news

■ Vicente Garcia Claver

Vicente joins us as projects finance assistant. Vicente is an economist, experienced at working in EU project finance and audit. He has worked in EU project financial management in public and private organisations in both Brussels and Spain. Vicente comes from Extramadura in Spain, and enjoys living in Brussels and meeting people from many different nationalities. He speaks Spanish, English and French.

✉ Vicente Garcia Claver: vicente.garcia@eurocities.eu



■ Vanda Knowles

Vanda Knowles, policy director, leaves EUROCITIES at the end of this year.

Vanda leaves after almost 11 years at EUROCITIES. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Vanda for all her work and her valuable contributions to the network.

SEISMIC conference on public space

The SEISMIC project organised a two day conference in Brussels, looking at new concepts of public space on 24-25 November. This was a chance to discuss everything, from whether Europe needs common standards for public space, to whether public ownership is the best guarantee of public access.

Participants were from the 10 countries participating in SEISMIC, and included urban planners, researchers, public participation specialists, urban gardeners, and social enterprise managers.

Day one started with a keynote speech from Pietro Garau, an architect, planner and researcher at the University of Rome. Curator of the 2015 Public Space Biennale in Rome, Pietro Garau presided over the creation of the Charter of Public Space, which presents public space as a universal human right. He said: "We still think of public space as belonging to all."

The event also included four site visits around Brussels. Delegates travelled to: the recently pedestrianised section of Boulevard Anspach; the large private Tour & Taxis development on a disused railway station in the canal district; a vacant and virtually wild area near the EU quarter being used for temporary projects such as community gardening; and a former abattoir building converted into a market and a community venue, in an area of new migrants.



A common lesson from the site visits was the importance of public participation in the planning of public places. This was particularly well demonstrated by the communications issues experienced during the ambitious pedestrianisation project, as well as the challenges of communications between the Tour & Taxis developer and the neighbouring Molenbeek district residents.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1PVlyVx>
✉ Soraya Zanardo: soraya.zanardo@eurocities.eu

Latest news on the EU urban agenda

Our WG EU urban agenda met on 23 November in Brussels for an update on the latest developments and a discussion on the next steps. The group looked at the outcomes of workshops organised by DG REGIO in September, and a meeting of the Urban Development Group (UDG) in October, which identified 12 priority themes for an urban agenda. These include: jobs and skills in the local economy; circular economy; air quality; and the integration of refugees and migrants.

During the various meetings earlier this year, the Commission and the Netherlands also outlined their ideas for partnerships that connect member states, relevant parts of the Commission and cities as a key delivery mechanism for an urban agenda.

Olivier Baudelet from DG REGIO joined our meeting for a more detailed discussion on those partnerships. He explained that our network and members are expected to make a substantial contribution based on our work and expertise.

Four pilot partnerships are gradually getting started:

- Air quality partnership, led by the Netherlands. A first meeting took place in the Hague on 11 December. London, chair of our air quality WG, and Utrecht, environment forum chair, both participated together with Helsinki, invited by their national ministry to join.

- Housing, led by Slovakia with support from the Netherlands. A first meeting takes place in Geneva on 16 December, which Vienna, chair of our housing WG will attend.

- Urban poverty partnership, led by Belgium and France. A first meeting will take place in Paris on 20 January 2015. Leipzig, social affairs forum chairs and Barcelona, forum vice-chair, are likely to participate.

- Integration of migrants and refugees partnership, most likely to be led by Amsterdam, with a number of other cities interested in participating. First meeting tbc.

We will keep members informed about the partnerships and opportunities to join as they continue to develop.

Olivier Baudelet also gave an update on innovative actions, stating that the main purpose of this programme is to test new approaches in cities to tackle specific challenges. The first call is expected before the end of the year.

The WG will meet again on 18 January to prepare for events under the Dutch EU presidency, notably the launch of the Amsterdam Pact on an EU urban agenda on 30 May 2016 (see article below).

We are working with the Dutch presidency and the Commission and will contribute to the finalisation of the pact text early next year.

✉ Dorthe Nielsen: dorthe.nielsen@eurocities.eu

Meetings with the incoming Dutch EU Presidency



The Netherlands takes over the EU presidency from Luxembourg on 1 January 2016. Anna Lisa Boni, EURO CITIES secretary general, and Dorthe Nielsen, senior policy advisor, met senior officials from the Dutch ministries of economic affairs, social affairs and employment, environment and infrastructure, and interior, on 19 November. The meetings, which we organised with the help of Amsterdam, focused on the urban dimension of the presidency's priorities and on identifying collaboration opportunities in areas such as cohesion policy, air quality, circular economy, smart mobility, employment and the refugee situation.

The Netherlands will launch the Amsterdam Pact on the urban agenda at an informal Council meeting of ministers in charge of urban policy on 30 May (see article above). A city makers summit for citizens and community groups will take place alongside the informal Council meeting, together with a high level meeting of the Committee of the Regions.

The Dutch EU presidency's broader priorities will be to create a union that: focuses on the essentials (including competitiveness, climate, freedom and safety); creates growth and jobs through innovation; and actively involves citizens and civil society organisations in policy making.

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World Cities Culture Report 2015

The 4th World Cities Culture Report was published in November 2015. It highlights the opportunities and challenges for global cities and explores how culture can be used to address them.

The report presents the cultural profiles of the 31 world cities involved in the initiative, which was launched in 2012 by Boris Johnson, mayor of London.

The report identifies five themes and trends where culture can make a significant contribution towards urban sustainable development.

The five themes identified in the report are:

- The continuing growth of world cities: cities are important hubs of innovation and connectivity. Urban growth brings diversity, new ideas and inspiration in cities. This diversity offers a great economic, social and, above all, cultural opportunity.
- Cultural vibrancy and city success go hand in hand: culture can transform our cities into exciting and dynamic places in which to live and do business. Some cities are already considering the importance of promoting culture as part of their economic soft power in global markets.
- Is all growth good? Economic growth and globalisation can challenge cities' cultural profiles and their originality. Increasingly, issues such as city homogenisation, gentrification, and a lack of space for the informal cultural scene, need to be considered.



■ Culture helps tackle world cities' challenges: the report highlights how cities can use culture to cope with the challenge of diversity. Some see a diverse population as an asset to enrich the city, while others see it as a threat to unity.

■ Culture is the golden thread of urban policy: the report highlights the need for culture to be considered as part of all urban policy areas, and not just something that stands alone. It also addresses the need to develop new models of support for culture, involving different government departments, businesses and people.

Report: <http://bit.ly/1MUwnFt>

Council conclusions on development cooperation & intercultural dialogue

Ministers in charge of culture from the 28 member states met on 23-24 November and adopted conclusions on:

■ Culture in EU external relations

The conclusions examine how culture can reinforce development cooperation policies, by building stronger links with partner countries based on trust, mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue. Ministers called for improved coordination in order to create a strategic and pan-European approach, and ensure that culture is integrated consistently and coherently in the EU's external relations and international cooperation and development policies.

■ Integrating migrants and refugees through intercultural dialogue

The conclusions reinforce the priority given to intercultural dialogue by the Council Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018), in its guidelines for cultural cooperation between member states. A series of meetings between experts is proposed, to assess intercultural dialogue policies and good practices, particularly those that focus on using culture and the arts to help migrants and refugees to integrate. A handbook of best practices will be prepared.

These conclusions are part of a broader strategy that the European Council called for in October 2015 in order to address the migration and refugee crisis.

✉ Julie Hervé: julie.herve@eurocities.eu



Save the dates: culture forum activities in 2016

Our next culture forum will take place on 16-18 March 2016 in 's-Hertogenbosch and Eindhoven (pictured), two municipalities of Brabantstad in The Netherlands. It will focus on the connections between leisure, entertainment, science and art.

The autumn forum will take place in Oulu, Finland (date to be confirmed).

Our creative industries working group will meet alongside our economic development forum in Netwerkstad Twente, The Netherlands, on 11-13 April 2016.

✉ Julie Hervé: julie.herve@eurocities.eu

ERDF programmes move to implementation



On 3 December, the European Commission adopted the final European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) investment for jobs and growth programme for the 2014-2020 period: the Campania regional programme. This officially marks the beginning of the implementation phase of the new programming period.

The Commission will maintain a dialogue with the managing authorities during the implementation phase. Corina Crețu, regional policy commissioner, said: "Now it is up to the regions and cities to implement the programmes on time, select quality projects and ensure an efficient and strategic use of the funds on the ground."

The expected results of these programmes, and their contribution to the EU's growth and jobs objectives, the EU Investment Plan, and the Commission's priorities, over the next decade, will be detailed in a communication, 'Investing in jobs and growth – maximising the contribution of the European Structural and Investment Funds'. This is due to be issued on 14 December. It will also include the outcomes of the negotiations with all member states on the Partnership Agreements and programmes, and the main challenges in each country.

Our WG cohesion policy has been following the negotiations closely, and will continue to monitor and analyse how the programmes are implemented. In particular, the WG will look at new instruments such as ITIs (Integrated Territorial Investments), other financial instruments, and how to better link the ERDF and the European Social Fund (ESF). The group's next meeting will be on 28 January in Brussels.

The Commission has also published an Action Plan on Public Procurement, comprising initiatives designed to help member states improve the performance of both administrations and beneficiaries in applying public procurement for EU structural funds over the 2014-2020 programming period.

Photo © European Commission
ERDF programmes: <http://bit.ly/1R9YrKu>
Action Plan on Public Procurement: <http://bit.ly/1RDZ2oA>
Marie Ranty: marie.ranty@eurocities.eu

2016 European semester begins

On 26 November, the European Commission published a package launching the EU annual cycle of economic governance. This sets out general economic and social priorities for the EU, and gives policy guidance to member states for the following year. These priorities will have an impact on national policies and will therefore shape the overall framework in which cities can develop actions. While policy challenges and responses vary between countries, there are some overarching themes. To strengthen recovery and foster convergence, the Commission recommends building on the three main pillars identified last year: re-launching investment, pursuing structural reforms, and responsible fiscal policies.

This package uses the latest data from the Commission's Autumn Economic Forecast. It also reflects the new approach to the European semester, set out in the Commission's recent communication on steps towards completing Economic and Monetary Union. This

includes a stronger emphasis on employment and social issues and on the Euro area dimension. One element of the package is the 2016 Annual Growth Survey (AGS), which focuses on common challenges faced by member states. The Commission has chosen to maintain the economic and social priorities of the 2015 Annual Growth Survey: investment, structural reforms and fiscal responsibility. These priorities will be updated for 2016, taking into account progress made and new challenges. The Annual Growth Survey 2016 is accompanied by the Commission's draft Joint Employment Report. This analyses the employment and social situation in Europe, and policy responses by member states. The report shows that substantial structural reforms do pay off. It also analyses the potential for improving the employment and social performance of the EU as a whole.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1Yxf1H0>

Innovative power of cities and value creation

Netwerkstad Twente | 11-13 April 2016

Our economic development forum (EDF) will meet on 11-13 April 2016 in Zagreb to discuss the power of cities to innovate, and to create value through innovation.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1Yxf1H0>

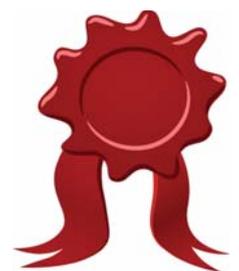
Seal of Excellence initiative to support investment

The 'Seal of Excellence' is a European Commission initiative to support companies and organisations looking for funding opportunities. It is an important first step in a longer term process of improving connections between the Horizon 2020 programme and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). It will help innovative companies access and enhance the knowledge economy in their regions, thus contributing to the implementation of smart specialisation strategies. Currently, only SMEs applying for the Horizon 2020 SME instrument are eligible for the seal, and not cities directly.

Every year, thousands of organisations in the EU apply to the Horizon 2020 Programme.

In an evaluation process carried out by international independent experts, applications are assessed according to three criteria:

excellence, impact, and the quality and efficiency of implementation. The evaluation identifies those proposals that are above the eligibility threshold and those that are below this threshold. Only some of the eligible, above-threshold proposals receive funding, depending on the available Horizon 2020 budget. A Seal of Excellence certificate will be awarded to those above-threshold applicants that are not granted funding. A holder of the certificate can then approach alternative funding sources (regional, national, private or public), including the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), and present the certificate to show their proposal has been assessed as high quality.



More information: <http://bit.ly/1lRQzn>
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New Circular Economy Package

The European Commission published its new Circular Economy package on 2 December. The Commission withdrew its former proposal in February this year, promising a new and 'more ambitious' package by the end of the year.

Key elements on waste in the new package are:

- a common EU target for recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2030
- a common EU target for recycling 75% of packaging waste by 2030
- a binding landfill target to reduce landfill to a maximum of 10% of all waste by 2030
- a ban on landfilling of separately collected waste
- promotion of economic instruments to discourage landfilling
- new definitions and harmonised calculation methods for recycling rates throughout the EU
- measures to promote re-use and stimulate industrial symbiosis
- incentives for producers to put greener products on the market and support recovery and recycling schemes.



We will continue to push for a supportive framework for cities to achieve waste targets, including improved product policies. Our events on 28 and 29 January (see below) will be the first milestone in this work.

Circular Economy Package: <http://bit.ly/1LNCKKF>
EUROCITIES statements: <http://bit.ly/1WVYZJp> & <http://bit.ly/1KsYpXy>
✉ Michael Klinkenberg: michael.klinkenberg@eurocities.eu

Ghent & Manchester sign the New Covenant of Mayors

Ghent, EUROCITIES vice president, was the first city to sign the New Integrated Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in November, ahead of COP 21. Greater Manchester is expected to sign by the end of this year. Signatories of the new initiative endorse an ambitious vision for 2050 made up of: decarbonised territories; more resilient cities and towns; and secure, sustainable and affordable energy services for all. By signing up, cities pledge to reduce their carbon emissions by at least 40% and take a joint approach for climate change mitigation and adaptation by 2030. Signatories are required to develop a

Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) on the basis of their existing Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs) or climate plans. Methodological support will be available to help cities develop their plans. To secure long term political support, this new commitment must be ratified by a municipal council resolution, even for existing Covenant of Mayors or Mayors Adapt signatories.

More information: bit.ly/1xKk5fM
✉ Claire Baffert: claire.baffert@eurocities.eu

Territorial impact assessment workshop on energy efficiency of buildings

We participated in a pilot Urban Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) workshop on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) on 11 November, as part of our cooperation with European Commission DG REGIO on an EU urban agenda. The results of the workshop will feed into the review of the directive. The 11 cities involved provided feedback on local and national implementation of the directive,

including environmental, economic, and social aspects. We are integrating the results into our statement on the EPBD review, due to be published in the coming days.

More information: bit.ly/1lupXvB
✉ Michael Klinkenberg: michael.klinkenberg@eurocities.eu

WG waste meeting & conference Brussels | 28-29 January 2016

We are co-organising a conference on separate waste collection, together with the European Commission and Municipal Waste Europe, in Brussels on 29 January.

The 29 January conference will address separate waste collection with: Karmenu Vella, European commissioner for environment; Simona Bonafè, European Parliament rapporteur on the waste targets review; and Francesco Pigliaru from the Committee of the Regions. Our members Milan, Manchester, Gothenburg, Ljubljana, and Tallinn will present their good practices; and the co-chairs of our WG waste, Håkon Jentoft and Günther Langer, will participate in a panel debate on implementing waste policies and legislation.

The day before, our WG waste will meet in Brussels to discuss our advocacy work on the Circular Economy Package and the revision of the Waste Framework Directive. Members will also exchange best practices on reuse and repair actions.

Registration: <http://bit.ly/1PuMUXn>
✉ Michael Klinkenberg: michael.klinkenberg@eurocities.eu

Air quality: RDE tests & emissions from medium combustion plants

The Council on 10 November adopted technical specifications on real driving emissions (RDE) tests to measure car pollutant emissions. These tests are due to be introduced from 1 January 2016 for monitoring purposes, and from September 2017 for new models. Back in October, member states and the Commission also agreed on which 'conformity factors' should be applied to allow for technical margins of error. MEPs are concerned that the proposed rules are too weak. The Parliament's environment committee is scheduled to vote on 14 December, followed by a plenary vote in early 2016. If the Parliament votes in favour of the proposals, they are adopted.

Also on 10 November, the Council adopted a new directive setting emissions limits for pollutants from new and existing medium combustion plants between 1 and 50 MW. The limits apply to nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide and dust, with monitoring rules for carbon monoxide.

More information on RDE: bit.ly/1PLN8sV
More information on emissions from medium combustion plants: bit.ly/1I3WLLI
✉ Michael Klinkenberg: michael.klinkenberg@eurocities.eu

Our latest smart cities activities



The six action clusters of the European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities (EIP SCC) met in Brussels on 10 November. The aim was to finalise the planning of how to implement key action cluster initiatives by setting targets and a clear way forward.

The morning was dedicated to the different action cluster meetings; and in the afternoon the main results and decisions were presented in order to plan the work for the clusters next year. There are two main

events already lined up for 2016. Firstly, a conference on 'Transport for smart cities: scaling up innovation in Europe', with Violeta Bulc, transport commissioner. This will focus on how successful innovative transport concepts can be scaled up from pilot projects to replication, and how these can contribute to job creation and growth at local level. Second is the EIP SCC 2016 General Assembly on 24 May in Eindhoven, during the Dutch EU presidency.

We are closely following the work of the EIP SCC and the work of the action clusters to ensure the interests of cities are properly reflected.

During the Smart Cities Expo in Barcelona on 17-19 November, we shared a stand with the EIP SCC Marketplace to present our Green Digital Charter. The event attracted over 10,000 visitors.

Anna Lisa Boni, EUROCIITIES secretary general, then spoke at the Urban Futures Congress in Berlin on 25-26 November on a panel entitled 'Strategies and guidelines for urban futures – urban alliances'. The conference focused on sustainable urban development and smart cities of tomorrow.

EIP action clusters: <https://eu-smartcities.eu/action-clusters>
Smart City Expo: www.smartcityexpo.com
Urban Futures Congress: www.urban-futures.de/en.html

KSF winter meeting in Brussels

Brussels | 19-20 January 2016

At the autumn 2015 knowledge society forum (KSF) in Rome, members identified a number of challenges faced by cities when managing and developing their digital agendas. The forthcoming winter KSF in Brussels on 19-20 January will be an opportunity to follow up on these challenges, and to plan the forum's objectives and the organisation of work for the coming years.

A draft agenda and practical information for the Brussels meeting will be sent to all KSF members just before the Christmas break.

✉ Federica Bordelot: federica.bordelot@eurocities.eu

European Commission public consultations on digital topics

As part of the Digital Single Market Strategy, the European Commission recently opened a number of public consultations that are relevant for EUROCIITIES members. You can find a list of all the consultations currently open at the link below.

We are already contributing to two consultations on telecoms issues, which has allowed us to develop our forthcoming statement on broadband. We are also contributing to a more general consultation on ICT standards. This looks at a wide range of standards, including those used for intelligent transport systems and smart energy efficiency; and it gives us the opportunity to highlight the role of cities in the standardisation process, with a cross-sectoral position on standards. The latest consultation is on defining the priorities and needs for the next e-Government Action Plan 2016-2020. We strongly encourage you to reply individually to the questions, as well as sending us a copy of your responses, so that we can analyse these, and possibly use them to develop a position on e-government. The deadline for this consultation is 22 January. Finally, a consultation on public-private partnership for cyber security is expected to be launched later this month. We will keep you informed of the latest developments.

List of consultations: <http://bit.ly/1lvt3Yi>
✉ Federica Bordelot: federica.bordelot@eurocities.eu

Gothenburg signs Green Digital Charter



In a ceremony held on 5 November during EUROCIITIES 2015 Copenhagen/Malmö, Anneli Hulthén, mayor and chairman of the Gothenburg City Executive, signed our Green Digital Charter (GDC) on behalf of her city. Gothenburg becomes the 49th city to sign the charter, demonstrating the city's long standing commitment to sustainability.

Gothenburg is a sustainable and smart city, with a fully integrated approach to managing city energy flows. The city is well on its way to becoming a low carbon economy. Gothenburg is aiming to become a leader in environmental and urban development and one of the world's most progressive cities in terms of addressing climate and environmental problems. The Green Digital Charter is one of the city's many efforts to reduce carbon emission in line with its ambitious Climate Programme and Digital Development Programme.

Gothenburg plans to continue to exchange knowledge and experiences with other GDC signatory cities and EUROCIITIES members.

More information: <http://bit.ly/1O7pKAg>
Gothenburg Climate Programme: <http://bit.ly/1Nv931i>
Digital Development Programme: <http://bit.ly/1l1ems7L>
✉ Anja de Cunto: anja.decunto@eurocities.eu

OPTICITIES tutorial – latest on urban ITS

Lyon | 10 March 2016

OPTICITIES is a major European intelligent transport systems (ITS) project led by Grand Lyon and involving Birmingham, Gothenburg, Madrid, Turin and Wrocław. The project involves developing and testing innovative ITS tools and services. Following a first successful tutorial session at the ITS World Conference in October in Bordeaux, OPTICITIES and its partner cities will organise four additional tutorial sessions in the first half of 2016. These aim to ensure a broad uptake of the project results across Europe.

The next tutorial session will be held in Lyon on 10 March 2016 in combination with site visits and live demonstrations. The programme will address the following ITS solutions being developed as part of OPTICITIES:

- new traffic prediction tool for Lyon Metropole's Traffic Management Centre
- multimodal travel planner
- real time car pooling
- seamless service continuity between smartphones and in-car navigation systems



- road data creation - urban network mapping

More details about the session will be available in early January. The session is open to urban practitioners, ITS experts, operators and suppliers. Future tutorial sessions will be organised in Madrid (13-14 April), Gothenburg (18-20 May) and Birmingham (9-10 June).

✉ Peter Staelens: peter.staelens@eurocities.eu

European Conference on Mobility Management 2016

Athens | 1-3 June 2016



The 20th edition of the European Conference on Mobility Management, ECOMM 2016, on 1-3 June in Athens, will focus on 'Smart solutions for people and cities'. The call for presentations is open until 16 December. Please visit the website link below to apply.

ECOMM 2016: www.ecomm2016.eu
 Call for presentations: <http://bit.ly/1Oq4eeG>
 ✉ Melanie Leroy: melanie.leroy@eurocities.eu

Parliament adopts sustainable urban mobility report

MEPs adopted an own-initiative report on sustainable urban mobility in plenary on 2 December (483 votes in favour, 82 against and 37 abstentions). Their vote confirms the text that had already been adopted by the European Parliament's transport committee on 10 November. The main parties in the Parliament supported the report almost in its entirety, except for an amendment calling for less favourable taxation regimes in member states to phase out fossil fuels, which was rejected. The aim of this report was to feed into the negotiations at COP21 in Paris, to ensure a focus on urban mobility and energy efficiency in transport.

Adopted text: <http://bit.ly/1QhFQvR>
 More information: <http://bit.ly/1Lh64Zr>
 EUROCIITES statement on sustainable urban mobility and the EU transport strategy: <http://bit.ly/1FZqkz0>
 ✉ Vanessa Holve: vanessa.holve@eurocities.eu

Outgoing & incoming EU presidencies: transport priorities & achievements

Luxembourg will end its EU presidency at the end of this year, having for the most part achieved the priorities it set for transport. On the 4th Railway Package, the Council reached agreement on railway market opening and governance in October, and adopted three legislative acts part of the technical pillar in December.

Cycling has also been top of Luxembourg's transport agenda. At an informal Council meeting on 7 October, transport ministers adopted a 'Declaration on cycling as a climate friendly transport mode', which includes an action plan calling on institutions and all levels of governments to take effective measures to promote sustainable mobility. Local authorities are encouraged to include cycling in urban, local or regional projects, both as an effective transport mode and as a recreational activity, and 'to draw on national and international best practices, co-funding opportunities and guidelines by working with national and European focal points for cycling and with other stakeholders'.

The Netherlands takes over the presidency of the EU in January 2016. Their main priorities for transport will include the finalisation of the 4th Railway Package and a specific focus on smart mobility, as well as aviation and port policies. A formal transport Council meeting is scheduled for June, and a joint informal transport and environment ministerial meeting will be held on 14-15 April in Amsterdam. EU ministers, Commissioners Bulc, Vella and Cañete, MEPs, and stakeholders, will gather to discuss smart and green solutions for mobility. Another event during the Dutch presidency will be a conference on Intelligent Transport Systems on 15 April 2016. More details on the events and priorities of the Dutch EU presidency will be published in the coming weeks.



Photo of François Bausch, minister for sustainable development and infrastructure (Luxembourg) arriving at informal Council on 7 October © eu2015.lu.eu / Julien Warnand
 Luxembourg EU presidency: <http://bit.ly/1QeEBYU>
 Council of the EU: <http://bit.ly/1PqraE>
 ✉ Vanessa Holve: vanessa.holve@eurocities.eu

Anna Lisa Boni focuses on refugees in Council

Our secretary general, Anna Lisa Boni, represented EUROCIITIES at an informal meeting of EU ministers for urban policy, in Luxembourg on 27 November, organised by the Luxembourg EU presidency.

One of the main debates at the meeting was on the urban challenges of the current migrant and refugee situation. We worked with the presidency team in advance of the meeting to contribute to a background paper for the debate. Ministers discussed the challenges in cities, how the EU can better coordinate actions to support cities, and how best to include the issue within the EU urban agenda, which is expected to be launched during the forthcoming Dutch EU presidency.



Anna Lisa Boni gave a short statement on the role of cities in welcoming refugees and asylum seekers. She stressed the urgency of recognising cities as crucial partners in the refugee crisis, and the need to provide cities with direct financial support from the EU for urgent reception and integration measures.

Photo © eu2015lu.eu/Jean-Christophe Verhaegen
✉ Thomas Jezequel: thomas.jezequel@eurocities.eu

WG education in Ghent

Our WG education met in Ghent on 18-21 November to discuss the issue of parental involvement to prevent early school leaving. There were 25 participants from 13 different cities at the meeting. They were welcomed at Ghent city hall by Elke Decruynaere, deputy mayor for education, childhood and youth, who presented Ghent's vision as a child-friendly and youth-friendly city.

Members were then introduced to the institutional context in Ghent, before going into more depth on the issue of parental involvement. Ghent tackles this issue at all levels, from kindergarten through to secondary education.

The main focus of the study visit was to look at Ghent's innovative use of intercultural mediators. This began as a pilot project which started in 2011, and is now an established and funded practice. It was introduced in response to the sudden arrival of intra-EU migrants, mainly from Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria, 60% to 95% of whom were Roma people; and it is proving extremely successful. The mediator scheme is designed to bridge the cultural gap between home and school in order to encourage greater parental involvement and thus prevent early school leaving. A lack of involvement from parents can often be linked to a low level of education, a different language spoken at home, high

expectations of the school due to poor self confidence, and a personal background of negative school experiences.

By using intercultural mediators, hired within the target communities, schools aim to address social exclusion and develop strategies that promote equal opportunities. The mediators support the teachers and the school in order to involve parents and communities in activities and communications about the school and their children's education.

Three parallel study visits took place at two elementary schools, De Toverberg and Nieuwenbosch, and one secondary school, Onze Lieve Vrouw Instituut Gent. Working group members were able to conduct in-depth interviews with school directors, teachers and mediators. They then gave their feedback and recommendations during a working group plenary session.

Karin Asplund from Gothenburg was elected as chair of the working group, supported by Arjan van Daal from The Hague as vice chair.

The working group will meet again in Leipzig in April 2016.

✉ Thomas Jezequel: thomas.jezequel@eurocities.eu

Conference on integration of marginalised communities

Over 100 experts from across Europe met in Brussels on 8-9 December to discuss how to provide support at local level for the most deprived people. The conference, organised by the European Commission, was an opportunity to discuss the challenges and practical tools to promote Roma inclusion.

EUROCIITIES members Dortmund, Ghent, Gothenburg, Oslo and Utrecht presented their approaches. The Commission and Council of Europe announced the forthcoming launch of a programme to support transnational cooperation of local authorities in the field of Roma inclusion. This is a welcome development resulting from a broad consultation in which our Roma taskforce had participated.

✉ Ana Feder: ana.feder@eurocities.eu

Innovation for age-friendly environments



The AFE-INNOVNET thematic network on innovation for age-friendly environments launched a Covenant on Demographic Change on 7 December. Through the covenant, local, regional and national authorities, civil society organisations, universities, and businesses will commit to cooperate and implement evidence-based solutions that support active and healthy ageing. Anne Berit Rafoss from the city of Oslo, chair of our working group on urban ageing, addressed the closing panel of a conference held on 8-9 December on age-friendly environments. She stressed the role of EUROCIITIES and our working group in providing the local perspective to the process of achieving an age-friendly Europe.

✉ Ana Feder: ana.feder@eurocities.eu

EUROCITIES politicians on COP 21



“The challenge ahead of us is huge, but we see climate action as a chance to create new jobs and improve social cohesion, support innovation, and help households and businesses save money.”

Johanna Rolland

mayor of Nantes and president of EURO CITIES



“Cities need to innovate to adapt to our changing climate. In Genoa, we are exploring ways of using ICT for this purpose, including smart sensors and systems.”

Emanuele Piazza

deputy mayor of Genoa and chair of EURO CITIES Economic Development Forum



“As cities we are constantly exploring the economic and social opportunities climate action offers, like supporting innovative SMEs to create new and sustainable jobs.”

Karin Wanngård
mayor of Stockholm



“Becoming smarter cities will help us save resources and reduce emissions. Citizens need to be part of the process, contributing as ‘smart citizens’ to ensure that solutions match the needs on the ground.”

Daniël Termont

mayor of Ghent and EURO CITIES vice president



“Climate action is an opportunity to improve social inclusion in our cities, through new jobs and access to affordable, sustainable energy and mobility.”

Anneli Hulthén
mayor of Gothenburg



“Bristol, the UK’s first European Green Capital, is showing the way by reducing emissions, improving lives and creating new jobs through investment in simple low carbon actions.”

George Ferguson

mayor of Bristol



“Energy efficiency is a key tool for us in Birmingham – to reduce energy poverty, and to provide new jobs.”

Lisa Trickett

cabinet member for sustainability, Birmingham City Council and chair of EURO CITIES Mobility Forum



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FEBRUARY 2016

EUROPEAN CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONFERENCE BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Is the new package the right fit for Europe?
<http://bit.ly/1NHkEk1>

1-3

MARCH 2016

IT-TRANS KARLSRUHE, GERMANY

IT solutions for public transport
www.it-trans.org

16-17

MARCH 2016

THE CONNECTED CITY SUMMIT LONDON, UK

IoT and the city for smart, connected cities
<http://bit.ly/1Ox6Ozv>

FEBRUARY

MARCH

22

FEBRUARY
2016

30 YEARS OF EUROCITIES BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Cocktail reception
More information to follow soon

2-3

MARCH 2016

URBAN FUTURE GLOBAL CONFERENCE GRAZ, AUSTRIA

Save the world, change cities, know how!
www.urbanfuture.at

More events at: www.eurocities.eu

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EUROCITIES Flash is published
by EUROCITIES Brussels office.

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