

Press release

For immediate release

Countdown to ICLEI European Convention is on as impressive programme takes shape

Freiburg, Germany, 19 August 2011 - European cities and EU member states and institutions are just one month away getting an answer as to how they can effectively cooperate in tackling Europe's current crises. The ICLEI European Convention 2011 runs from 12-14 September in Brussels, and will provide an insight into what is needed for a targeted implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The Convention offers more than 20 plenary and parallel sessions and includes over 80 speakers, focusing on the transition needed to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive cities.

Thus far, local governments have had little influence on the National Reform Programmes, the first implementation step on the national level. Nor have they been allocated sufficient funding to implement the Europe 2020 Strategy, even though many of the commitments will need to be accomplished at the local level. Several high-profile speakers will interact with each other and the audience to address this issue.

Mercedes Bresso, President of the Committee of the Regions has joined a line-up, which includes European Commissioner for the Environment Janez Potočnik. These high level speakers will be part of a panel discussion on whether the Europe 2020 Strategy and the overall policy objectives for the EU and its Member States are sufficiently sustainable to guarantee a secure foundation for this and future generations. The Mayors Session (attendance by invitation only), will gather local leaders from across the continent to prepare political messages calling for the recognition of local governments in the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy, following the Dunkerque 2010 Local Sustainability Declaration.

Representing the views of the Polish EU Presidency, Joanna Maćkowiak-Pandera, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of the Environment will speak at the closing plenary, where she will respond to these messages. Representatives from each European Green Capital city will also be present, providing a fantastic opportunity to learn from the achievements and innovative practices of ICLEI members Hamburg, Nantes, Stockholm, and Vitoria-Gasteiz among others. The Hamburg Train of Ideas will also have rolled into Brussels and will welcome participants on board to explore its exhibition on best practice urban sustainability projects from both Hamburg and cities all over Europe.

Word count: 355

All members of the press are welcome to attend the ICLEI European Convention free of charge. For more information and to receive accreditation visit the event's [Press Corner](#) and follow ICLEI Europe on [Twitter](#).

Background:

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments and national and regional local government organisations. ICLEI currently has over 1,200 members worldwide and 200 in Europe. Founded in 1990, ICLEI provides technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level.

The Convention is supported by the Brussels Capital Region, Hamburg European Green Capital 2011 and the Metropolitan Council of Dunkerque and in cooperation with ICLEI member representation offices in Brussels.

Europe 2020 is the EU's growth strategy, made up of three pillars – smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth. The EU has set five ambitious targets based on these pillars, relating to employment, innovation, education, social/inclusion and climate/energy, all to be reached by the year 2020.

More information:

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