

ICLEI in Europe News



July 2015

ICLEI
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

www.iclei-europe.org

Dear Members, Partners and Friends of ICLEI,

We are pleased to send you the latest news on ICLEI in Europe and our partners for urban sustainability!

You can also read these news articles and find more information on the topics at www.iclei-europe.org.

Don't hesitate to send your news and information to information.services@iclei.org.

1. Member news
2. ICLEI praises Pope Francis' 'timely' call for action on climate change
3. Registration for European Mobility Week 2015 now open
4. Nominees selected for Procurement of Innovation Award
5. City networks issue open letter in response to energy company proposals
6. Sustainability certification schemes and frameworks evaluated in new report
7. Decision support tool for urban storm water management launched
8. Essen announced as European Green Capital 2017
9. Event news
10. Events calendar

1. ICLEI Member News

Torres Vedras wins inaugural European Green Leaf award



ICLEI member Torres Vedras (Portugal) is one of two cities to win the first European Green Leaf (EGL) award, a new European Commission initiative to recognise urban areas committed to green growth with between 50,000 and 100,000 inhabitants. The awards were presented at a ceremony held in ICLEI member Bristol (UK), in which Essen (Germany) was announced as the 2017 European Green Capital.

Torres Vedras was congratulated for its mobility strategy and efforts to reduce biodiversity loss, as well as its attention to water management. Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: "Environmentally sound mobility is just as important in small cities as it is in big ones. Torres Vedras has shown how good planning can lead to quick clean movement of people around their town." The Spanish city of Mollet des Valles also won an EGL 2015 award. Each year, an EGL will be presented to a maximum of three cities.

For more information, visit the [European Green Capital's website](#).

Image copyright: [Torres Vedras](#) (Wikimedia Commons) by "Luislana", licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#)

Dublin releases plans to remove cars from city centre

Dublin City Council (Ireland) and Ireland's National Transport Authority have released plans that will see vehicle access to the city centre restricted and streets re-designed for walking, cycling and public transport use. The new measures include a ban on cars in parts of the city and the closure of car parks, as well as the extension of pedestrian zones and the development of a bus rapid transit service from the city centre to the suburbs.

Car traffic will also be diverted out of the city centre and into peripheral streets. Some €150 million will be spent from now until 2023 to achieve this aim, accompanied by infrastructure improvements such as resurfacing roads, communications campaigns to increase cycling and walking, and the further development of real-time passenger information at public transport stops.



Through the measures, the Irish capital aims to increase the prevalence of low-emission modes of transport, improve ambient air quality, and make the city centre safer and more pleasant.

For more information, visit herald.ie.

Image copyright: [College Green Dublin](#) (photo on Flickr) by "William Murphy", licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

ICLEI members commended for taking impressive action to reduce CO2 emissions



The Guardian Newspaper has praised ICLEI members Copenhagen (Denmark), Växjö (Sweden), and Bristol (UK) for "leading the way" in cutting CO2 emissions and progressing towards clean energy. The cities, which have made faster progress than their national level counterparts in reducing emissions, are held up as inspirational examples of how committed local level governance can have a significant impact on improving sustainability.

The involvement of 6000 cities in the [Covenant of Mayors](#) (CoM), a movement of local and regional authorities who commit to go beyond the EU climate target of a 20 percent reduction in CO2 emissions by 2020, is cited as proof of cities' willingness to enact innovative and effective measures.

Copenhagen is praised as the clean energy leader in Europe, with 4.5 tonnes less CO2 emissions per capita on a yearly basis than the EU average. The city's district heating and cooling system is a major factor in its impressive environmental performance. Växjö's ambition to go fossil-fuel free by 2030 is mentioned, as is its extensive use of sustainable biomass for power. Bristol, the current European Green Capital, uses 20 percent less power per person than the English average, and is planning to establish a municipally owned energy company in line with the Scandinavian model.

For more information, visit the Guardian.

Image copyright: [Dawn Ascension](#) (photo on Flickr) by "Sam-Cat", licensed under [CC BY-ND 2.0](#)

2. ICLEI praises Pope Francis' 'timely' call for action on climate change

ICLEI has welcomed the Pope's encyclical on climate change, titled [Laudato Si'](#), as a "timely, ambitious, and comprehensive message" that complements global efforts to achieve a meaningful climate agreement in Paris (France) in December of this year.

In a prepared statement, ICLEI writes that the encyclical demonstrates the valuable leadership Pope Francis has in fighting climate change and promoting sustainable development, and encourages global leaders of other faith-based organisations to be inspired by the action of Pope Francis.



The statement begins: "Recalling that existing bottom-up contributions by national governments are far below the level of ambition needed to prevent the global climate change crisis, ICLEI notes that the encyclical complements the global efforts to unite all actors of society in an inclusive and ambitious new global climate regime to be finalised at the Paris Climate Conference in December 2015, where every single contribution on mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change should be incentivised, acknowledged and accounted for."

To read ICLEI's statement in full, visit the [ICLEI website](#).

3. Registration for European Mobility Week 2015 now open

Cities and towns across Europe and further afield can now register their participation in European Mobility Week (EMW) 2015. This year will be celebrated under the theme of multimodality, as represented by the call to action "Choose. Change. Combine." Last year's EMW saw citizens from 2013 cities in 44 countries explore the benefits of embracing sustainable mobility.



The online registration system has been completely overhauled, making it easier to confirm participation. Cities registering for the first time will be asked to "sign up", and will be required to provide information on their city and relevant local government contact details. All participating cities and towns will be displayed on the [EMW Cities page](#).

For more information, visit the [European Mobility Week website](#).

Image copyright: [Children test their cycling skills \(photo on Flickr\)](#) by "City of Ljubljana"; licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

4. Nominees selected for Procurement of Innovation Award

The [PPI Platform](#) consortium has announced the nominations for the 2015 edition of the Public Procurement of Innovation Award. The prestigious award recognises the very best innovation procurement in Europe. Now in its second year, the accolade highlights successful public procurement practices that have been used to purchase innovative, effective and efficient products, services or works. The nominees come from across Europe, with Austrian, Dutch, Swedish, Polish, Spanish, and Italian contracting authorities represented.



The nominees are:

- Federal Procurement Agency Austria
- CAK healthcare and elderly care agency, The Netherlands
- Stockholm County Council, Sweden
- Kuyavian-Pomeranian Province, Poland
- Galician Public Health Service, Spain
- Consip, Italian Central Purchasing Body
- Rijkswaterstaat, The Netherlands
- Municipality Achtkarspelen, together with Municipality Tytsjerksteradiel, The Netherlands

In September, a jury comprised of respected experts will announce the finalists. The winner will be revealed at an award ceremony to be held in November of this year, and will receive a trophy for innovation procurement excellence together with the title "European Innovation Procurement of the Year".

For more information, visit the [PPI award page](#).

Image copyright: [Image \(iStock\)](#) by "Elnur"

5. City networks issue open letter in response to energy company proposals



Five leading international city networks including ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, whom together represent almost all of Europe's cities, have issued an open letter challenging the proposal by six multinational energy companies that the scaling up of gas can act as a solution to climate issues. The open letter, also aimed at the UN, argues that a wider view should be taken, and that local and regional governments should be empowered to embrace renewable energy in a range of ways.

"Although we support the idea of a well-functioning carbon market, we believe the world's energy would be best used if we stopped focusing on one supposedly salutary source of power, technology or market enabler," states the letter. It goes on to say that the energy transition is already underway, and that local governments are leading the way by creating new production and consumption systems that incorporate a large mix of distributed, sustainable and decentralised energy sources.

The letter stresses that cities are the areas in which climate solutions have the greatest impact, reminding UN negotiators, who will convene in Paris (France) later this year at [COP 21](#) to develop an international climate agreement, that "while the UN climate negotiations have struggled to make progress for years, cities have taken action [...] As they can take decisions at the right scale and speed, cities are living laboratories of the energy transition."

To view the letter in full, [click here](#).

Image copyright: [Windmills in the sea \(Dreamstime.com\)](#) by "Zentilia"

6. Sustainability certification schemes and frameworks evaluated in new report

A report comparing international sustainability indicators, standards and certification schemes has been produced by the University of Westminster. Titled *Tomorrow's City Today: An International Comparison of Eco-City Frameworks*, researchers found that the breadth of frameworks currently on offer allows for cities in different contexts to make monitored progress, and argue that standardisation may not be as helpful as first assumed.



The authors go as far as to say that the complexity of implementing sustainability initiatives "raises the possibility that a universal standard would in fact have very little value". Conversely, however, the authors warn against an unlimited 'pick and mix' approach, which may lead to less demanding frameworks. The authors also predict that particular schemes will come to dominate specialist niches, with those proven to translate concepts into action favoured.

One idea proposed in the document is that international standardisation could be used to promote innovation and high ambition levels, and that individual frameworks could be assessed against certain aspects of international standards, such as on global issues like climate change, while retaining their local specifics. In terms of political governance, transparency is cited as a topic that requires more attention as sustainability certification schemes progress.

To view the document, [click here](#).

Image copyright: [Marathon runners \(Dreamstime.com\)](#)

7. Decision support tool for urban storm water management launched



A new decision support tool for urban storm water management has been released, allowing users to compare the advantages and disadvantages of various drainage scenarios. The tool was developed by the Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain) in cooperation with the University of Abertay Dundee (UK) in the framework of the E2STORMED project.

Local government project partners Zagreb (Croatia), the municipalities of Benaguasil (Spain), Pisa (Italy), Hersonissos (Greece), and Cetinje (Montenegro) as well as the Local Councils' Association of Malta, successfully piloted the software in selected areas in their communities. The tool is [available for download](#) on the project's website in six languages: English, Spanish, Italian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Greek.

For more information, visit the [E2STORMED website](#).

Image copyright: (ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability) by "Alice Reif"

8. Essen announced as European Green Capital 2017

Essen (Germany) has won the European Green Capital Award for 2017. The award was presented by Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, at a ceremony on 18 June 2015 in Bristol (UK), the city that currently holds the title. Essen was singled out for its exemplary practices in protecting and enhancing nature and biodiversity and its efforts to reduce water consumption.



Commissioner Vella said: "It gives me great pleasure to present Essen with the European Green Capital Award for 2017. Essen has used the lessons from its industrial past to build an environmentally sound future. They have applied the principle of working with nature and reaped spectacular results. We have a great deal to learn from Essen's green infrastructure and indeed from its ambitious plans for the future."

Areas that particularly caught the jury's attention included Essen's impressive water management system, based on a sound knowledge of water-related problems and an open-minded approach to innovation. Among these were multifunctional green areas which are used for rainwater management, flood prevention and groundwater recharge.

For more information, visit the [European Green Capital website](#).

Image copyright: [Images/European Green Capital](#)

9. Event News

CIVITAS Forum 2015

The CIVITAS Forum 2015 will take place from 7 - 9 October in the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana under the theme of 'Sharing the City'. Ways in which cities can achieve a higher standard of living through embracing different transport modes will be discussed by delegates from across the continent, as well as methods to achieve a more sustainable model of public transport.

European Commissioner for Transport, Violeta Bulc and Vice President of the European Commission in charge of Energy Union, Maroš Šefčovič will open this year's Forum, along with the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Jankovič. The event will look at topics such as developments in electric mobility, bike sharing schemes, multimodality and travel planning; effective mobility management; and ICT solutions for a more accessible city.

Success stories, valuable lessons, and best practices will be shared in smaller sessions, while networking opportunities and social events will give participants the opportunity to meet colleagues in the field. Site visits include touring Ljubljana by foot, cycling through architectural attractions, examining the city's successes in public transport, and learning about the revival of the city's Roman past.

For more information, visit the [CIVITAS website](#).

10. Event Calendar

[CO-POWER at Community Energy Fortnight 2015](#)
16 - 17 September 2015 - Klagenfurt (Austria)

[CEMOBIL final conference](#)
16 - 17 September 2015 - Klagenfurt (Austria)

[CIVITAS Forum Conference 2015](#)
7 - 9 October 2015 - Ljubljana (Slovenia)

[IEEE PES Smart Grids for Smart Cities International Forum](#)
11 - 13 October 2015 - Bologna (Italy)

[Cities and regions investing in the Energy Union](#)
14 October 2015 - Brussels (Belgium)

[ICLEI European Membership Assembly](#)
15 October 2015 - Brussels (Belgium)

[Procura+ seminar](#)
11 November 2015 - Barcelona (Spain)

[8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns](#)
27 - 29 April 2016 - Bilbao, Basque Country (Spain)

Feedback? Questions? Let us know! If you have any further questions, would like to give feedback on ICLEI's work in Europe or would like to be taken off this mailing list, contact us at: information.services@iclei.org

The ICLEI in Europe newsletter is produced by the European Secretariat of ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability. Copies are available on request. Editor: Sean Carroll.

Comments and questions are welcome - please write to Sean Carroll at information.services@iclei.org, Leopoldring 3, 79098 Freiburg, Germany, Tel: +49-761/36 89 2-0, www.iclei-europe.org.

ICLEI is a membership organisation of local governments and their associations. To date more than 1,000 municipalities and municipal associations of all sizes from around the world have made a unique commitment to sustainable development by joining ICLEI. They support the work of ICLEI through their membership fees as well as through their experience and creativity in the development and implementation of projects and campaigns to address the globe's biggest problems. Within the organisation they are part of a network of peers that can profit from each other's knowledge. For membership information please have a look at our website or contact: membership.services@iclei.org.

Copyright 2015 ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH, Freiburg, Germany. All rights reserved.