



**8TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON
SUSTAINABLE CITIES & TOWNS**

BASQUE COUNTRY | BILBAO | 27 - 29 APRIL 2016

basquecountry2016.eu

#Basque2016

The 8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns to discuss the future of local sustainability

- **The 8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns, the flagship European conference on local sustainable development, will take place from 27-29 April in Bilbao, Basque Country.**
- **Over 1,000 representatives from local and regional governments, European and international institutions, multilateral organisations, members of the research community, private sector and civil society will take part in the event.**

The 8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns – “Transformative Action: the potential for Europe”, taking place from 27-29 of April in Bilbao, Basque Country, will focus on the pressing need for action by local governments to change unsustainable pathways and shape Europe’s future. Following the UN Summit Meeting for adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the COP21 Paris Climate Summit, this conference will be the flagship event in Europe in 2016 for discussion and experience exchange on local sustainability.

Freiburg, 15 January 2016.- The three-day conference will be a platform for local leaders to express ideas, experiences and expectations related to urban development, as well as to analyse the key role of cooperation between local governments, the private sector, civil society and the business sector in order to implement comprehensive measures. The conference programme aims to inform and involve local governments on European and international policy tools for sustainable development, and explore how these tools can support and encourage local initiatives.

Plenary, subplenary and interactive breakout sessions will cover a wide range of topics, such as smart cities and big data, procurement of innovation, climate and resilience, circular economy and citizen-powered energy transition.

Arab Hoballah, Director, Chief of Sustainable Lifestyles, Cities and Industry, UNEP, and Daniele Violetti, Chief of Staff, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, are amongst the speakers. Thomas Kastrup-Larsen, Mayor of the City of Aalborg; Zoran Janković, Mayor of the City of Ljubljana, and Célia Blauel, Deputy Mayor of the City of Paris, will also come on stage to share with the audience what their cities are doing to move towards sustainable development.



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“Europe is about to face a fundamental transformation, and cities will be key players in this process,” says Stefan Kuhn, Deputy Regional Director of the ICLEI European Secretariat. “Framed by new, recently adopted international agreements such as the Paris Climate consensus and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, local policies on energy, social inclusion, value capturing and other key issues will change. At the 8th ECSCCT, taking place in the Basque Country just one month before the adoption of the EU Urban Agenda, cities will outline Transformative Actions to drive the change.”

The Euskalduna Palace (Bilbao) will host the 8th European Conference on Sustainable Towns & Cities, co-organised by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the Basque Government, Bizkaia County Council and Bilbao City Council, with the involvement of Udalsarea 21 - Basque Network of Municipalities for Sustainability, and the support of Araba County Council, Gipuzkoa County Council, Donostia/San Sebastián City Council and Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council.

The Basque commitment to urban sustainability

The Basque Country reflects the capacity of European cities to transform, having changed from being focused on industry to embracing a modern service-based economy. Its newly-adopted Environmental Programme for 2020 shows a firm commitment to improving the environment and aligns with current European and international strategies on job creation, enhancing standards of living, and building a low-carbon economy.

The 8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns will build on the legacy of the previous conferences in Aalborg (Denmark, 1994 and 2004), Lisbon (Portugal, 1996), Hannover (Germany, 2000), Seville (Spain, 2007), Dunkerque (France, 2010), and Geneva (Switzerland, 2013). Over 1,000 representatives from local and regional governments, European and international institutions, multilateral organisations, members of the research community, private sector and civil society are expected to take part in the event.

For further information: www.basquecountry2016.eu

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