



10TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE CITIES & TOWNS



Workshops

Aalborg, Denmark | October 1-3 2024

Workshops

Round 1, day 1: Tuesday 1 October | 14:00-15:30

1.1 Local energy transitions & the building stock:
how to turn a roadblock into a driving force

1.2 Circle of Impact: Cities
leveraging the Circular Economy for sustainable urban development

1.3 How to create resilience through inclusive food systems

1.4 Financing and investment solutions for climate resilience

1.5 Unfolding plausible futures:
towards a nature positive economy

1.6 Traffic and sustainable cities: changing priorities in the era of electric cars?

1.7 Climate city contracts and investments plans as instruments for Climate Action Financing

Round 2, day 2: Wednesday 2 October | 11:00-12:30

2.1 Bridging digital divides for inclusive and resilient urban environments

2.2 Local, regional and national governments together for climate neutral cities

2.3 Empower youth, transform tomorrow:
unleash the power of youth for climate action

2.4 Driving change together:
the power of city-business collaboration to accelerate urban sustainability transitions

2.5 Multifunctional land use:
the need for holistic solutions to the climate change and biodiversity crises

2.6 The role of the LGD in the recovery of Ukrainian cities and towns

Round 3, day 2: Wednesday 2 October | 14:00-15:30

3.1 Renovating public heritage buildings:
the tension between nice and necessary

3.2 The Future of Heating & Cooling in Cities

3.3 Urban Nature:
from Plan to Action

3.4 Powering renewable energy solutions through circular strategies

3.5 Better together:
local governments and communities collaborating for just, resilient cities

3.6 Urban Decision Odyssey:
navigating dilemma lanes with One Health



1.1 Local energy transitions & the building stock: how to turn a roadblock into a driving force

Buildings are an integral part of the unique identity of our cities, but an estimated 75% of existing buildings are energy inefficient, making the building stock responsible for 36% of energy-related EU emissions. As such, buildings are a major roadblock not only for achieving energy resilience and climate-neutrality, but also for advancing an affordable and just local transition.

The major pressure points for the building stock transition are clear: provide more affordable, climate resilient housing, whilst also decreasing land densification and construction waste. But how? A circular approach to buildings and urban planning, and Plus-Energy-Buildings (PEBs) and districts (PEDs) solutions play a significant role for the transition towards a sustainable building stock.

This session will look at the potential of PEB/PED solutions from new, mixed-use buildings to the refurbishment of historical buildings, to improve local social cohesion and reduce waste and emissions. Speakers will provide concrete insights into rethinking the use of urban space, building policy and technology and will discuss concrete pathways to move from roadblock to driving force.

Speakers: Ingrid Kaltenecker (Joanneum Research, AT), Steffen Lervad Thomsen (City of Aalborg, DK)

1.2 Circle of Impact: cities leveraging the Circular Economy for sustainable urban development

Shifting to a circular model to support sustainable urban development has been high on many cities' agendas for years. Based on the insights collected in the Circular Cities Declaration report 2024, which showcases the progress of 54 European cities encompassing over 16 million inhabitants, we can now unveil the transformative power of circular economy strategies aimed at reducing the consumption of resources.

We invite you to engage in dynamic “discussion islands” where you can dive deep into cities' pioneering circular initiatives, discover the multitude of benefits that the transition brings, navigate the challenges inherent in the transition and chart pathways to overcome them, and learn how the circular economy can help mitigate climate change and regenerate nature in urban landscapes.

As we reflect on the pivotal role of advocacy, we will uncover strategies to amplify the voice of circularity on regional, national, and international platforms.

From practical implementations to impactful recommendations, discover how cities are leveraging circularity to combat climate change, regenerate nature, and foster resilience.

Speaker: Aitor Zulueta (City of Vitoria-Gasteiz)

1.3 How to create resilience through inclusive food systems

Dive into an engaging (food) market, where stalls will offer you the opportunity to immerse yourself in different food environments and adopt a variety of perspectives on food system transformation - all without losing sight of the important aspect of inclusivity.

Like any lively market, this one also thrives on variety, only this time it's not about fruit, vegetables or dairy: our market offers stimuli for discussion, inspiration, perspectives from local to global and key actions as well as policy recommendations that cities can take away to improve their food environments.

From culture and governance to diversity and fair trade - there's something for everyone! The currency? Your input, learning experiences and questions!

Speakers: Hannah Bolz and Frida Brett-Smith (City of Mannheim), Zoe Heuschkel (City of Cologne), Dan Kristian Kristensen (City of Aarhus), Víctor Tenez Ybern + Jose Luis Haro (Metropolitan Area of Barcelona)

1.4 Financing and investment solutions for climate resilience

To become more resilient, we need to transform European cities and regions structurally. Investments in climate adaptation can help build resilience and generate long-term financial benefits. However, pre-conditions for financing climate resilience must be better understood and secured across the continent. Multi-level and multi-stakeholder coordination is key to channel relevant financing towards a just and resilient transition.

However, a lack of collaboration between public authorities and financial investment entities and limited incentives for the private sector, and many climate adaptation benefits remain difficult to monetise.

This session will bring together experts in climate adaptation finance, regional transformation, and shared governance to identify concrete actions and next steps that can support cities and regions in creating an enabling environment for financial investments, to accelerate the resilient and just transition.

Speakers: Konstantinos Dellis (AUEB), Thomas Koetz (Climate-KIC)

1.5 Unfolding plausible futures: towards a nature positive economy

Engage with cities in a transformative journey towards a Nature Positive Economy (NPE). This interactive session explores its socio-economic potential, challenges, and opportunities, and promotes a shared understanding of its transversal role in a regenerative future. NPE aims to prioritise ecosystem regeneration and human well-being by placing nature at the heart of all economic and social activities, the concept of NPE and how to measure it at an early stage.

The discussion will cover possible futures and potential opportunities for integration into policy frameworks at different levels.

Together, we will create dynamic visions on the topic to explore how NPE relates to multi-level governance, city futures and local implementation strategies, while aligning actions with global initiatives.

1.6 Traffic and sustainable cities: changing priorities in the era of electric cars?

Thirty years ago, at the very first European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns, the cities gathered together, committed to reducing the unnecessary use of motorised vehicles.

Today, as e-vehicles are beginning to replace combustion engines, we ask what that reality means for our approach to sustainable mobility in cities, towns and regions.

Join this session to discuss the evolving priorities in urban planning and contribute your ideas on what advancing sustainable mobility should entail.

1.7 Climate city contracts and investments plans as instruments for Climate Action Financing

Through the Net Zero Cities programme, Mission Cities are at the forefront of decarbonisation efforts across Europe – driving change as trailblazers for climate action. The challenge is substantial, the path is not always clear, but one by one cities have led the way with the development of their Climate Commitments and Climate Action Plans to achieve emission reductions.

Alongside the development of ambitious projects and transitions comes the realisation that cities cannot fund the process on their own.

Climate Investment Plans were developed to identify what is possible with municipal funding. Where there are funding gaps, external support from grants, public funding, and private capital must plug these gaps.

2.1 Bridging digital divides for inclusive and resilient urban environments

Join us to explore the complex interplay between citizen-powered data ecosystems and digital technologies. How can their integration enhance inclusivity and resilience in urban environments?

Gain insights into the role of data-driven approaches in addressing climate-related challenges and advancing equitable urban development through cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Explore practical tools and resources like Earth Observation, low-cost remote sensors, Digital Twins and dataspaces to drive sustainability efforts within your community. By emphasising cross-sectoral cooperation and innovative solutions, we will illuminate digital pathways toward a more resilient and equitable urban future.

Speakers: Marcel Duffhuis (City of Utrecht), Martin Brynskov and Karl-Filip Coenegrachts (OASC)

2.2 Local, regional and national governments together for climate neutral cities

Local governments are at the forefront of the fight against climate change, but there is only so much they can do on their own. Without joint action with national and regional governments, cities will struggle to accelerate their climate action. There is an increasing momentum for stronger multi-level collaboration at the UN level through initiatives like the Coalition for High Ambition on Multilevel Partnerships, and the EU level through various initiatives.

One example is the National Platforms approach from the EU Mission on 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities, which aims to mobilise all governance levels for integrated climate action.

Learn from cities and platform facilitators from across Europe how national platforms work in their countries, discover UN and EU initiatives, and join a roundtable brainstorm on how these can better interact with one another.

Speaker: Tue Damsø (CONCITO), Sandrine Dixson-Declève (Club of Rome), Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh (Mayor of Malmö), Philippe Froissard (DG RTD)

2.3 Empower youth, transform tomorrow: unleash the power of youth for climate action

Are you ready to unleash the power of youth in tackling climate challenges? Let's flip the script on traditional engagement methods. Discover cutting-edge tools and processes straight from the playbook of European cities and stakeholders. From nature-based solutions and biodiversity to sustainable food systems and energy innovations, we're sharing our experience to overcoming barriers and igniting change. We'll equip local authorities with the tools to tap into youth energy and creativity, while empowering youth to make their voices heard.

Led by experts and enthusiastic young voices, we break down barriers between governments and youth, fostering inclusivity and shared governance for a cohesive transition! Picture yourself in the shoes of a passionate local councillor or a spirited young resident, sharing your experiences and innovative ideas for engaging youth in decision-making and climate action.

Your voice will shape ICLEI Europe's initiatives in the field and pave the way for truly inclusive youth engagement materials.

Speakers: Serkan Yucel (Turkish Ministry of Youth and Sport), Claudia Misteli (The Nature of Cities)

2.4 Driving change together: the power of city-business collaboration to accelerate urban sustainability transitions

Leading local governments and businesses in Europe are showcasing great environmental stewardship in setting ambitious, science-based environmental targets to contribute to the transition to a climate neutral Europe by 2050.

Within this framework, flagship EU initiatives such as the Intelligent Cities Challenge and the EU Mission for Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities identify city-business collaboration as a key governance approach to mobilise the resources needed to achieve the green transition at the local level.

Discover how this collaboration can be facilitated through strategic governance approaches such as Local Green Deals, as well as steered towards achieving common goals to feed into multilevel governance processes to enable truly transformative action. We'll discuss opportunities and challenges in implementing EU policy frameworks (such as the EU Green Deal) through collaborative approaches and advocate for sustained and improved support in the process.

Speakers: Agnes Schönfelder (City of Mannheim)

2.5 Urban Decision Odyssey: navigating dilemma lanes with One Health

Get ready to embark on a wild ride, because – we're turning urban planning debates into an epic quest. What's healthcare got to do with nature, climate change and mobility? Why should urban planners and decision makers care? Imagine scenarios where one decision in urban planning leads to a domino effect of unforeseen consequences, both good and bad. How do we navigate such dilemmas?

We're gamifying the serious questions to tease out the best arguments for and against urban decisions that impact us all. Gear up for an adventure where every decision counts, and navigate the lanes of urban dilemmas with style, knowledge, and a whole lot of One Health discussions!

The concept of One Health advocates for a holistic approach towards the health of humans, animals and the environment and highlights the interconnections amongst them. By integrating One Health principles in urban planning, cities can better prevent disease outbreaks, improve air and water quality, promote biodiversity, enhance food security, and build resilience to climate change. This ensures healthier and more sustainable urban environments, benefiting all inhabitants and nurturing a balanced ecosystem.

2.6 The role of the LGD in the recovery of Ukrainian cities and towns

Since 2020, Ukraine has been working towards implementing the European Green Deal. Ukrainian cities have long been engaged in the process of aligning with and localising the Deal's objectives to put sustainable development at the core of their decision-making processes, and ICLEI Europe has been working closely with 19 of them to support their efforts.

Starting from their priorities for long-term recovery and finding sustainable financing solutions, we will bring you into the multilayered discussion on how to guide the Local Green Deal implementation approach and strengthen existing decentralisation and self-governance efforts in Ukraine.

Ultimately, we aim to support the shift from the current siloed investments and ad-hoc humanitarian led funding towards a strategic and demand-led climate neutral and locally driven approach.

2.7 Multifunctional land use: the need for holistic solutions to the climate change and biodiversity crises

Floods, rising temperatures and the loss of biodiversity in coastal areas call for new approaches to spatial planning, allowing municipalities to designate and establish areas for multifunctional land use. Limited resources and limited space create an urgent need to develop strategies and solutions that combine CO₂-emissions reduction with increasing space for nature and enhancing biodiversity. But the two crises are often explored separately, and national and EU financing mechanisms often do not, or insufficiently, allow for the combination of the two goals of climate change mitigation and biodiversity preservation in the same projects.

Multifunctional land use mitigates this battle for space. Through synergies in selected areas, you can get both more biodiversity, and less climate impact and nitrogen emissions and greater local value for the same money. Explore the requirements and right frameworks needed for local governments to plan, designate and establish areas for multifunctional land use and on the dilemmas, challenges, and opportunities they face. What can municipalities do in interaction with the state, business, and civil society? Because no one can solve the double crisis alone, and neither the climate nor the nature crisis can be solved in isolation.

3.1 Renovating public heritage buildings: the tension between nice and necessary

Join us to explore design solutions, local capacities, and regulatory frameworks to highlight real-life examples of how user and societal considerations influence retrofit planning, reuse of resources, including topics like aesthetics, memories, and visions of heritage buildings.

It will include voices of experts working on post-industrial heritage, and the integration of the New European Bauhaus frameworks in renovation efforts in cities.

Speaker: Henriette Thuen (Danish Industry, Desire Project)

3.2 The Future of Heating & Cooling in Cities

Heating and cooling play a key role in the decarbonisation of European cities as they account for half of the energy consumed in Europe, and 75% of it still comes from fossil fuels, despite the climate crisis and energy security risks. In response, local authorities are moving forward with their strategic heating and cooling plans that will help them reach climate neutrality in the next few decades. Innovative partnerships, digital tools and integrated finance are key aspects to ensure a systematic, effective and affordable rollout of sustainable thermal systems.

This interactive session for an interactive future will bring together cities, utilities and academia to provide insights and inspiration for political as well as practical decision-making processes, reflect on fast-track decarbonisation by 2030, cooling concepts, governance strategies and digital helpers to keep you on track with your ambition.

Speaker: Peter Sorknæs (Aalborg University)

3.3 Urban Nature: from Plan to Action

Urban Nature Plans (UNPs), a core component of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, play a key role in climate change adaptation and urban resilience. Rising temperatures and extreme weather events are already a reality, and there is a pressing need for tools and processes that can mitigate the worst outcomes. UNPs provide a systematic approach for cities to incorporate urban nature into planning and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services, for the benefit of all.

Join an interactive exercise and work with real city examples whereby you will review the draft UNP checklists and apply the steps to the example city context. Your feedback will be integrated into the final version of the checklist, which will ultimately be published on the EC Urban Nature Platform.

Discover how cities can shape innovative and effective strategies that go beyond traditional urban planning documents, fostering sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban environments.

Speakers: Manuel António Ferrinho Semedo (Porto Municipality), Hannah Bolz (City of Mannheim), Celeste Rouberol (Paris Ville), Manuela Alvares (Matosinhos)

3.4 Powering renewable energy solutions through circular strategies

Europe must transition towards sustainable energy production and sharply increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to deliver on the Paris Agreement. Ambitious policies have been proposed, including the EU Rooftop Strategy, requiring PVs on all new public and commercial buildings by 2026. But what happens to PV panels when their lifespan is over?

At the same time, energy storage is critical to make renewable energy reliable for large scale deployment, and storage capacity needs to triple by 2030 and increase tenfold by 2050. But how do we secure a sustainable and just value chain of the materials needed to build them?

Circular strategies address both ends of the value chain: materials needed to produce these technologies as well as the waste that is produced. Explore the crossroads between renewable energy and a circular economy and discuss the strategies cities are employing to facilitate this transition.

3.5 Better together: local governments and communities collaborating for just, resilient cities

The local level is a flashpoint, where policy agendas intersect with peoples' lives. To reach climate targets set at Global, European and National level, we need everyone on board, and we need to translate those goals into something tangible and understandable for citizens, integrating environmental sustainability and social justice. Cities, with consistent policy measures and leadership, can act as a transformative force and as enablers of cooperation with local communities and individuals.

Explore the potential of the collaboration between municipalities and citizens and Community-led initiatives (CLIs) to co-create democratic solutions for more sustainable, resilient and just cities, and to delve deeply into a range of tools aimed at facilitating local government – CLI collaboration.

Speakers: Magnus Kolind Mathiassen (City of Aalborg), Ida Vad Svenningsen (City of Aalborg), Christopher Sadlowski (City of Dortmund), Sabrina Dekker (Climate Action Director, Dublin), Sofia Strid (Researcher, Orebo University), Ludwig Bengtsson Sonesson (City of Malmö)



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Any remaining questions?

Contact us at: aalborg2024@iclei.org