



Press Release

Rotterdam, 1 December 2016

450 EUROPEAN URBAN TRANSPORT STAKEHOLDERS DISCUSSING INNOVATION IN ROTTERDAM

At yesterday's Annual General Assembly, the city of Rotterdam was unanimously re-elected to be the president of the Polis network for a second term in 2017. This morning, Rotterdam Vice-Mayor and Polis President Pex Langenberg opened the 2016 Annual Polis Conference, hosted by his city. In the opening plenary session, cities demonstrated their commitment towards new and clean modes of transport to address the severe air pollution challenges they face.

Rotterdam has been promoting sustainable transport for many years, both locally and through cooperation across borders. Outstanding initiatives include the city's ambitious plan for zero emission urban logistics by 2020, Rotterdam's electromobility and charging infrastructure strategy, and its ITS activities.

At the General Assembly, the London European Partnership for Transport and the Dutch city region of Arnhem-Nijmegen were elected to join the Management Committee of Polis.

Vice-Mayor Pex Langenberg, as re-elected president and host, opened the Annual Polis Conference "Innovation in Transport for Sustainable Cities and Regions" during the plenary session this morning, which focused on "The air we breathe: How to tackle the air quality challenge?". Joined by Madrid and Paris, the three cities discussed the challenge of severe transport related air pollution with representatives of the car industry and the European Commission.

The panellists acknowledged that global efforts to lower emissions cannot be limited to CO2 reduction. The cities called for nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and other emissions harmful to citizens' health to be addressed in an integrated way and committed to take further action to clean fleets and reduce emissions. "In Paris, road traffic represents the main source of harmful emissions. The best way to improve air quality is to massively increase cycling and walking: It is a policy that leads to healthier citizens", said **Christophe Najdovski, Deputy Mayor for Transport of the city of Paris**. This was also reflected in the voting feedback of the audience.

European Commission Deputy Director-General for Environment, Joanna Drake, acknowledged that the EC can play a stronger role: "Cities can't do it alone. To date the Commission has carried out infringement procedures towards Member States failing to meet air quality levels. But we have to do more and work on integrated planning that can lever real change."

"The WHO estimates that only one person in ten worldwide breathes air in conformity with WHO recommendations" said **Polis Secretary General Karen Vancluysen**. Additionally, Diesel Gate revealed significant uncertainty regarding cars' actual emission levels. **Wim Kleijn, Nissan**, stated: "We need to find a solution together for emission measurements." Using an online live voting tool,



conference delegates called for an independent European agency to undertake emission tests for vehicles.

Today and tomorrow, the Polis Conference gathers 450 urban mobility professionals from across Europe in Rotterdam. The event represents an important annual highlight for urban mobility professionals and provides an opportunity for cities and regions to showcase their transport achievements to an international audience, and for the wider transport community to engage with representatives of local and regional authorities on innovative transport solutions. <end>

More information:

- Polis Policy Paper: DECARBONISING TRANSPORT THE PERSPECTIVE OF EUROPEAN REGIONS AND CITIES can be found [here](#).
- For twitter users: the hashtag is #polis16.
- More information incl. the conference programme: <http://www.polisnetwork.eu/2016conference>

Contact:

Dagmar Köhler
Polis Communication Manager
Rue du Trône 98, 1050 Brussels, Belgium
dkoehler@polisnetwork.eu
www.polisnetwork.eu

Notes to editors:

Polis is a network of European cities and regions working together to develop innovative technologies and policies for local transport.

Our aim is to improve local transport through integrated strategies that address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of transport. To this end, Polis supports the exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge between European local and regional authorities.

In Polis, decision makers are provided with the necessary information and tools for making sustainable mobility a reality. Within the Political Group of Polis, they formulate recommendations to the European institutions.

Polis members meet regularly in working groups organised around four thematic pillars:

- Environment and Health in Transport
- Mobility and Traffic Efficiency
- Transport Safety and Security
- Social and Economic Aspects of Transport

Polis has a permanent secretariat located in Brussels.

www.polisnetwork.eu