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Dresden welcomes over 200 international mobility experts to POLIS annual conference

This year's annual conference of the European network POLIS is to be held at the MESSE DRESDEN exhibition centre on 25 and 26 November 2010. Over 200 participants, including guests from Britain, France, Sweden, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Russia and other European countries, are expected to attend the international conference: Specialists for mobility, urban and regional transportation, traffic management, goods traffic and road safety from politics, authorities, transport providers, universities and industry. The POLIS network unites some 70 cities and regions, local public transport corporations, transport and mobility authorities and research institutes from 17 European countries in cooperation aimed at the development of better traffic and transport solutions. The City of Dresden has been a member since 2004 and is serving as president of the POLIS network this year.

Mayor Helma Orosz is especially pleased with the high numbers of registrations for the European conference: "An increasing proportion of the European population is living in our towns and cities. The question of urban mobility is thus gaining ever greater significance – for the citizens, for politics and for city administrations. Our cities need efficient transport systems which satisfy the needs of both the local citizens and the economy. Such challenges cannot be solved by an isolated individual, but only through the common efforts and ideas of both public and private lobby representatives – together and in conjunction with the mobilisation of European resources and innovation potential. For the future of our cities, it is becoming ever more important, therefore, to collaborate at European level. The network POLIS places experienced and committed partners at our side. It is thus a great pleasure to be able to welcome so many interested participants to the annual conference."

One focus of the 2010 annual conference will lie on the challenges of financing urban and regional mobility in times of empty coffers. The speakers will be analysing the situation in various countries, including a look across the Atlantic to the USA. Several initiatives addressing the more efficient organisation of freight transport are to be presented, showing how congestion can be avoided and air quality improved in our cities. Traffic planning and traffic policies geared to improving the quality of urban life and reducing the negative impact on climate are further topics to be discussed by the

conference participants. The POLIS conference will furthermore provide an excellent insight into innovative technologies for efficient and ecological mobility for people of all age groups. Overall, the planned forums reflect the full diversity of the European plan of action on urban mobility.

Traffic and mobility experts from the European Commission and the European Investment Bank will be reporting on their activities in the field of urban and regional mobility, and on how the cities are supported in their attainment of European environmental and competitive targets. Dresden itself is also to be well represented at the conference, namely by delegates of the Dresden University of Technology, research institutes, the Dresden Transport Corporation DVB, the Upper Elbe Transport Network VVO, the City Administration and numerous planning and engineering offices.

The conference agenda includes several important contributions from Dresden experts: At the opening of the conference, Prof. Gerd-Axel Ahrens from the Dresden University of Technology will be giving a presentation on mobility in German towns and cities. Wolfgang Steinert from the traffic development department within the City Planning Office will be speaking on the barrier-free city for all – mobility planning for disabled citizens in Dresden. Multimodal traffic management systems, transport quality and tramway energy efficiency are themes of a presentation by Christian Gassel, whereas Dr. Jens Schade, likewise from the Dresden University of Technology, concerns himself with necessities and problems surrounding the introduction of road use charges from the perspective of European cities. DVB director Hans-Jürgen Credé will be reviewing the development of the Dresden tram system as the backbone of local public transport, and Michael Hubschneider from PTV AG will be reporting on the implementation of truck routing in navigation systems, which was developed for Dresden within the framework of the European project ViaRegiaPlus. In a total of twelve parallel sessions, the assembled experts will then be able to exchange views on these and many other subjects.

An accompanying exhibition will be flanking the annual conference. In this context, the Dresden Fraunhofer Institute for Transportation and Infrastructure Systems will be presenting its “AutoTram”, a combination of bus and tram. Further exhibitors are the Dresden Transport Corporation DVB, the Upper Elbe Transport Network VVO, the Saxon Energy Agency SAENA, the Dresden public utility company DREWAG, the Association of German Transport Companies VDV, urban furniture manufacturer ORION Stadtmöblierung GmbH, TÜV Nord Mobilität GmbH & Co. KG, the Dutch company VIA, the Innovalia Association from Spain, and rail vehicle technology specialists Lex und Hesse GmbH, Bombardier and Hannig und Kahl GmbH. In addition, there are stands devoted to the networks and initiatives POLIS, CIVITAS and NICHES+.

At the end of the conference, the participants are to be given an opportunity to experience Dresden innovations for the fields of traffic and mobility at first hand. The programme includes visits to the traffic management control centre and a driving simulator for rail vehicles at the Dresden University of Technology, the Volkswagen "Transparent Factory" and its “CarGoTram”, and a bus tour under the

heading “New solutions for streets with tram lines”, which will be ending at the DVB operations centre.

Note for journalists:

You are cordially invited to attend the conference. On the first day, Thursday, 25 November, between 1.00 and 2.00 p.m., there will be opportunities for interviews with Mayor Helma Orosz, the executive director of the POLIS network Sylvain Haon and further political representatives from Göteborg, Hamburg and Madrid. Place: Exhibition Centre MESSE DRESDEN, Messering 6, BÖRSE Conference Centre.

You are kindly asked to register at europa@dresden.de by 22 November, specifying your full name, the name of your medium or client, and your interview requests, where appropriate.

Conference timetable: see enclosed programme

Opening: Thursday, 25 November 2010, 9.00 to 11.00 a.m.

Welcome

Opening address given by Mayor Helma Orosz, president of POLIS

Words of greeting from Bernd Sablotny, head of the transport department at the Saxon State Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour

Presentation by Prof. Gerd-Axel Ahrens, Dresden University of Technology: Mobility in German towns and cities

Opening plenary: The future of urban and regional mobility

Chair: Dr. Marc Wolfram (Leibniz Institute of Ecological and Regional Development, Dresden)

Dirk Engels, TRITEL: Sustainable urban mobility policy: trends in cities across Europe

Dr. Stephan Hugo Winters, State Secretary for Transport, Hamburg: Vision for the future of mobility in Hamburg

Franz Soeldner, European Commission, Directorate General for Mobility and Transport (MOVE): The European Union and urban and local mobility – Current developments