

PRESS RELEASE

## Polis Conference 2019 kicks off with record number of participants Micromobility discussion paper released

**BRUSSELS, 27 November 2019 – Today kicks off the 2019 edition of its annual conference, “Innovation in Transport for Sustainable Cities and Regions” with a record number of 650 participants. The conference also marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the network.**

During the opening plenary session on the trends that are shaping the city of tomorrow, a new [discussion paper on micromobility](#) was released. **Karen Vancluysen, Polis Secretary General**, said: “With this paper, we are taking the long view on short trips. It brings together the issues that emerged in the numerous conversations we had with our members and the industry over the past year. This is a paper to continue the discussion on a hot topic, to feed and frame that discussion, to help focus and further the dialogue in a solutions-driven way.”

**Henrik Hololei**, Director-General for Mobility and Transport at the European Commission opened the conference with an institutional welcome address, in which he presented the Commission's ongoing commitment in working with local authorities towards the goal of climate neutral, safe, and smart cities. Mr Hololei also stressed that cities and regions are major drivers for bringing about the much-needed change in the mobility and transport sector.

**David Zipper**, Visiting Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Taubman Center for State and Local Government, delivered a keynote speech on the risks of basing urban mobility policies on the fear of missing out on the latest technological innovations. He said: “Measures such as providing protected bus shelters, traffic calming, safe cycling infrastructure and reliable transit might not get the headlines, but they really matter for getting the basics right in a mobility network.”

**Lot van Hooijdonk**, Deputy mayor, City of Utrecht, said: “We should keep in mind that we design cities for people. Human-focused design is something cities should be proud of. Cycling is an innovation of the nineteenth century, but it seems to be made for the twenty-first century. In an age of urban innovation, the increased use of bikes can enable a healthy growth of our cities.”

**Miguel Gaspar**, Deputy Mayor, City of Lisbon, said: “If we are to meet our climate and sustainable development goals, a joint action in the urban mobility sector is crucial. In the city of the future, co-governance between public and private actors will be instrumental. We believe the best way to learn is to engage in an ongoing dialogue with all mobility stakeholders.”

Ahead of the conference, Polis members Emmen and Helmond launched the **Small and Medium-Sized Cities Ambassadors Initiative**, aimed at strengthening the cooperation between small and medium-sized cities. “We believe that this initiative can help to promote



the accomplishments and innovations of small and medium-sized cities and position them as excellent living labs for innovation towards the outside world,” said Polis Secretary General Karen Vancluysen.

During the Polis Annual General Assembly that took place on the day before the conference, Polis members elected the **City of Gothenburg** as the new President of Polis. Polis members Bilbao, London European Partnership for Transport (LEPT) and Transport for Greater Manchester were elected as new members of the Polis Management Committee.

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## Note to editors

Polis is the leading European network of cities and regions on urban transport innovation. European local and regional authorities work together within Polis to promote sustainable mobility and exchange good practice in the deployment of innovative transport solutions.

The Polis Annual Conference 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.