

PRESS RELEASE

CITIES AND REGIONS HOLD KEYS FOR GREEN DEAL SUCCESS

BRUSSELS and ARNHEM NIJMEGEN, 3 December 2020 – On the morning of the last day of the POLIS 2020 Conference, political representatives of leading European cities and regions convened for the Urban Green-Deal Makers Summit, where they engaged in a dialogue with high-level representatives from the European Commission. The plenary session, “Green Dealing for Green Healing”, drew the conference to a close.

At the Summit, local and regional authorities presented how they can contribute to the success of the European Green Deal. The Urban Green Deal-Makers Pledge sets out cities’ and regions’ commitment to accelerate the shift to sustainable urban mobility and to become frontrunners for the European Union’s climate goals.

The [Urban Green-Deal Makers Pledge](#), signed by a first group of eighteen local and regional authorities during this morning’s Summit, includes commitments to road safety, accessibility and fairness of transport services, local regulations, and public-private partnerships, among other areas of local action.

Also at the Summit, the Dutch Minister Stientje van Veldhoven launched a [guidance document on zero-emission zones for freight](#), co-authored by members of POLIS, the Transport Decarbonisation Alliance and C40 Cities.

Karen Vancluysen, POLIS Secretary General, said: “Our members are the first responders to health and social crises, and the early adopters of transport innovations. They must manage complexity and develop multimodal and integrated solutions, every day. Our cities and regions are at the front line – and we need the active cooperation and support from all levels of government.”

Harriët Tiemens, Deputy Mayor for Mobility, City of Nijmegen, Chair Mobility, Arnhem Nijmegen City Region, and co-host of the POLIS Conference 2020, said: “As the Green Metropolitan Region Arnhem Nijmegen, we are proud to launch the Urban Green-Deal Makers Pledge with POLIS. We explicitly state the local contribution to sustainable mobility in the EU Green Deal. Only together with Member States and the European Commission, we will reach sustainable mobility for all.”

Stientje van Veldhoven, Dutch Minister for the Environment, said: “In The Netherlands we have more bicycles than people and more and more people drive electric cars. Our next step is implementing zero emission zones for freight in about 30 cities by 2025. More zero emission vehicles on the road means clean air, less greenhouse gases and more healthy cities.”

Diederik Samsom, Head of Cabinet of Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans, said: “The European Green Deal will not succeed without the climate leadership of our cities. That makes the POLIS mobility pledge of different cities, from

more bike lanes to clean city buses, so extremely important. Europe will back that ambition up with a European roadmap for cities' sustainable mobility plans and unleash more European funding opportunities. Like that, local climate action becomes European climate action."

European Transport Commissioner Adina Vălean, setting the scene for the closing plenary, said: "Connecting and greening mobility must be the new licence for the transport sector to grow, and to deliver the mobility of today and of tomorrow. We need all transport modes to be sustainable. We cannot turn our ambitions into reality without cities and sustainable urban mobility."

The debate that followed further highlighted the ambitions of cities through concrete solutions, and the need for cooperation between the public and private sector, as well as different levels of government.

David Belliard, Deputy Mayor for Mobility and Transformation of urban space, City of Paris, said: "We think the reallocation of space is also a matter of social justice. Today, only around 10% of trips in our city are made by car, yet 50% of public space is occupied by cars. We want more nature, more green space, more space for children playgrounds responding to people's needs and wishes."

Mohamed Ridouani, Mayor of Leuven, said: "It has never been more important to invest in high-quality and sustainable public services and mobility for all. And the only way to get things done is by structurally collaborating and connecting the different layers in our society. In Leuven, we innovate for the better, for and with all".

Matthew Baldwin, Coordinator for Road Safety and Sustainable Mobility and Deputy Director-General, DG MOVE, European Commission, said: "Cities are innovating every day, shaping our future streets. COVID has accelerated that trend. But we know what we have to do to deliver climate neutral mobility in our cities - so let's get on with it, and use the new sources of funding such as the EU Resilience and Recovery Facility."

Anabel Diaz Calderon, Regional General Manager for EMEA, Uber, said: "This is the time to act. We all share the ambition to accelerate the transition to more sustainable mobility. The pandemic has been a hit in terms of health and economic emergency, but cities are now looking greener and less crowded with cars."

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Note to editors

POLIS is the leading European network of cities and regions on urban transport innovation. 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.

The POLIS Conference 2020, a four-day fully digital event, was co-hosted by the Arnhem Nijmegen City Region and the Province of Gelderland. Over 900 people attended the conference.

In 2021, the Annual POLIS Conference will take place in [Gothenburg, Sweden](#), on 1-2 December 2021.

Contact

Francesco Ripa, Communications Manager, fripa@polisnetwork.eu