



**8TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON
SUSTAINABLE CITIES & TOWNS**

BASQUE COUNTRY | BILBAO | 27 - 29 APRIL 2016

basquecountry2016.eu

CONFERENCE REPORT

8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns

TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION: THE POTENTIAL FOR EUROPE

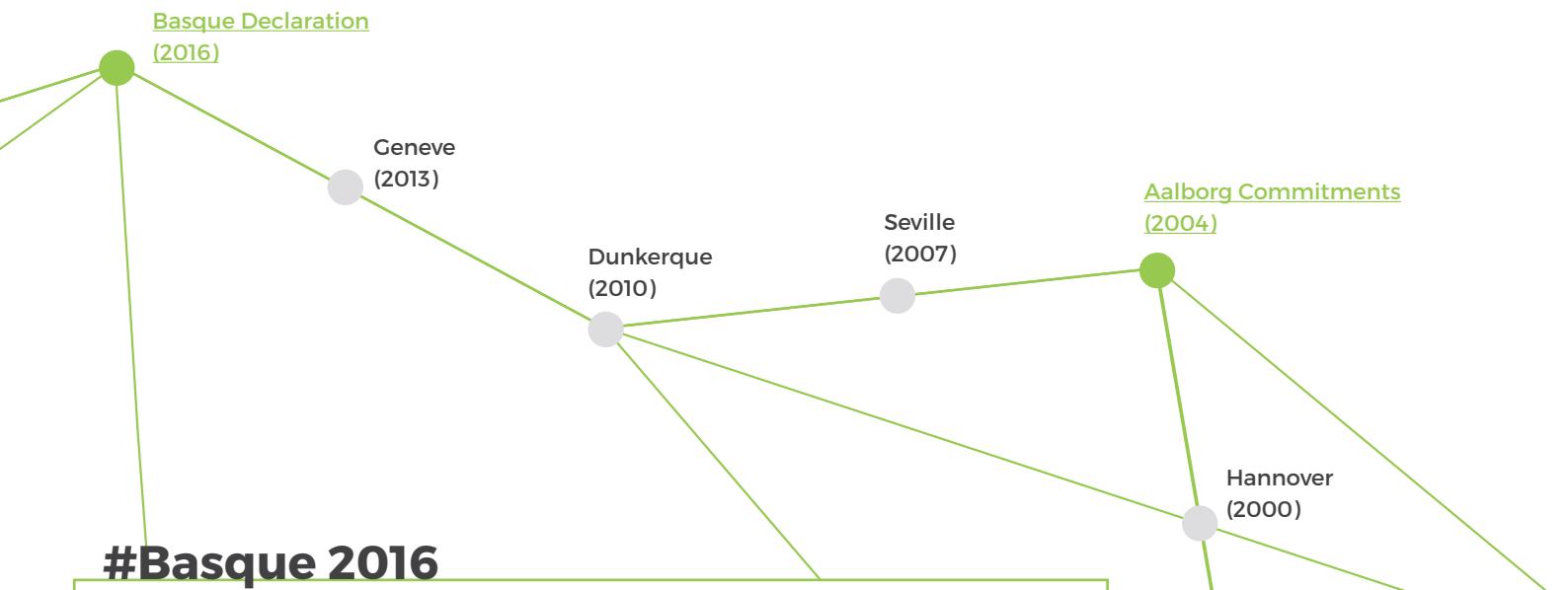
27-29 April 2016, Basque Country, Bilbao



What was #Basque2016?

The **European Conference Series on Sustainable Cities & Towns** is the biggest conference on urban sustainable development in Europe. Its mission is to support the exchange of experience between cities, collect information on the activities undertaken at the local level and serve as interface between the European Union and other relevant international institutions and the local sustainability movement. It has played a key role in defining what a sustainable European city should look like and in setting out a process for making this vision a reality through the [Aalborg Charter](#), the [Aalborg Commitments](#) and the newly adopted [Basque Declaration](#).

The conference series gathers every three years policy makers and practitioners from local and regional governments, representatives of European and international institutions, members of the research community, business leaders and civil society.



The [8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns \(#Basque2016\)](#) took place in the Basque Country, 27-29 April 2016. Under the title 'Transformative action: the potential for Europe', the eighth edition explored the need for action by local governments to change unsustainable pathways and shape Europe's future. More than 100 experts on urban sustainability scrutinised the current urban policies on a European and international level, such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the EU Urban Agenda. From a bottom up approach, participants had the opportunity to learn how strategies and solutions for sustainable urban development can be combined with new economic approaches and social innovation to generate local value, employment and to improve economic resilience.

Why the Basque Country?

The Basque Country is an example of success that other cities and regions can learn from. It's a model of sustainable growth and social development that reflects the capacity of European regions to transform from an industrial into a modern, service-based economy. It's a country which has learned to counteract a hard geographic setting with limited natural resources, with an economy based on knowledge and innovation.

Its newly adopted [Environmental Programme for 2020](#) shows a firm commitment to improving the environment and aligns with current European and international strategies, aiming to contribute to wellbeing, job creation, as well as to develop an embracing and low carbon economy.

The Basque Country has made great progress in the environmental area in recent years thanks to the efforts of the general public, companies, civil society and the authorities. Given the dependency on the resources and the priorities set by the European Union, the Basque Country has established six main environmental challenges noted for their high degree of complexity, uncertainty and their interdependent nature: protecting its natural capital as a source of wellbeing and quality of life, combining climate change and energy models; public health and its interdependence with the environment; fostering a circular economy and a competitive territory; education that prioritises commitment to future generations; and governance based on co-responsibility.

The Environmental Framework Programme of the Basque Country for 2020 is a roadmap to a new stage setting the course and coordinating the actions in the environmental field for the coming years.

#Basque 2016

was organised by

[ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability](#)
[Basque Government](#)
[Bizkaia County Council](#)
[Bilbao City Council](#)

with the involvement of

[Udalsarea 21 - Basque Network of Municipalities for Sustainability](#)

and the support of

[Araba County Council](#)
[Gipuzkoa County Council](#)
[Donostia/San Sebastián City Council](#)
[Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council](#)



#Basque2016 Outcomes

Governance frameworks of transformative actions and the needs of cities

Mayors Session
50+
participants

A productive city – a valuable city as centre of economic growth

Youth Forum: Transformative Actions through new generations

Reviving the European Spirit from the local level

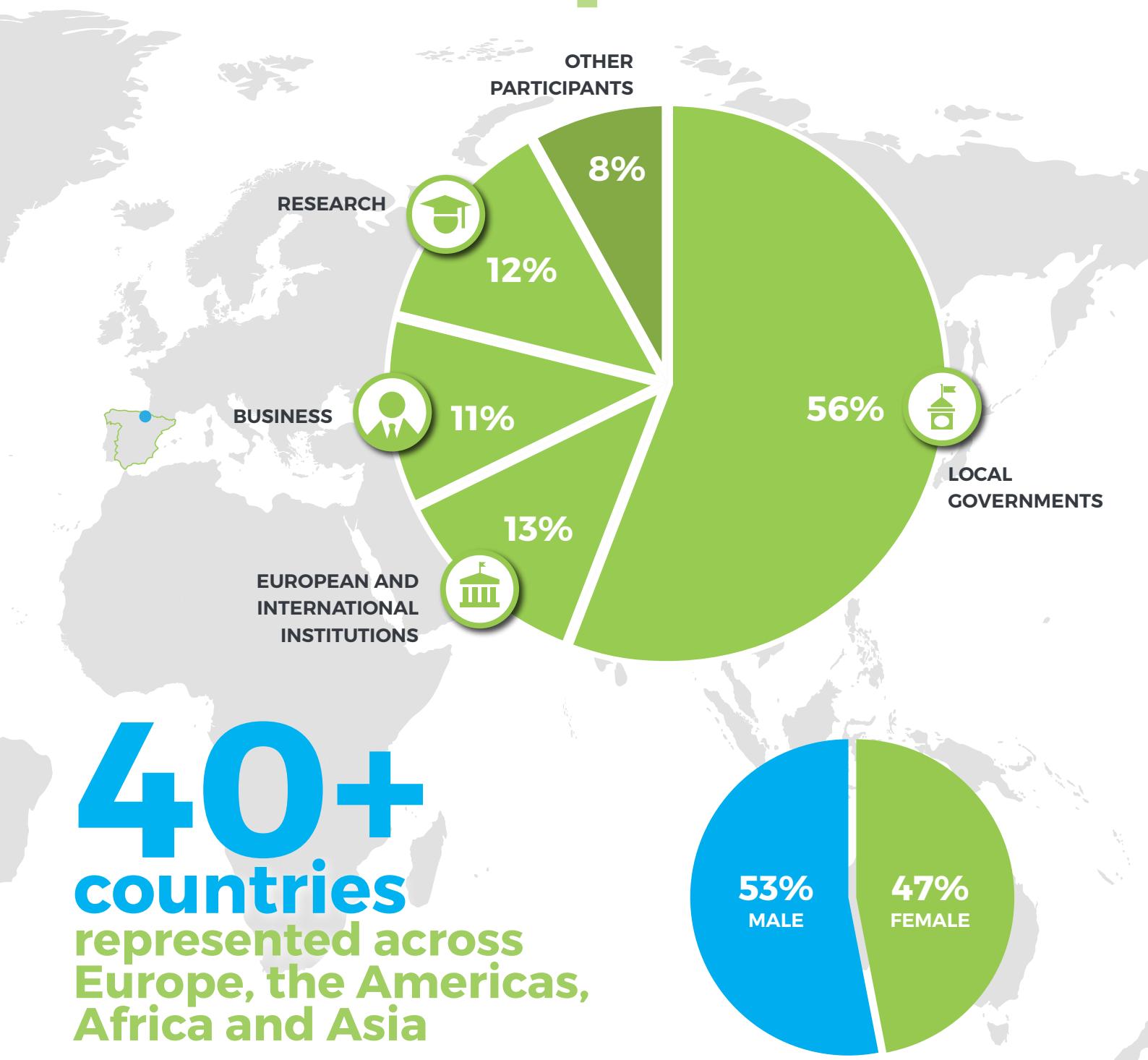
**THE
BASQUE DECLARATION**

“ We need to shift from measuring economic output to social outcomes, such as health, happiness, and social inclusivity. We have to get away from an urban economy model based on privatisation and the selling of land. We need experts that do not see themselves solely as land managers, but rather people who manage a social and economic system that produces social benefits. ”



Wolfgang Teubner
Regional Director for Europe
ICLEI – Local Governments
for Sustainability

+850 attendees
+200 speakers



Press Play: Debating Urban Sustainability



Click on the boxes below to watch interviews of a few of our featured speakers and hear more about their perspectives on urban sustainability.

How will the UN SDGs, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the EU Urban Agenda affect cities?



Hans Bruyninckx
Executive Director
European Environment Agency

How will the UN SDGs, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the EU Urban Agenda affect cities?



Arab Hoballah
Chief of Sustainable Lifestyles,
Cities and Industry, United
Nations Environment
Programme (UNEP)

What topics related to sustainable development is the City of Paris working on?



Célia Blauel
Deputy Mayor
City of Paris, France

What do you mean by "urban productivity" and how does this relate to the established urban agendas?



Jeb Brugmann
Founder, ICLEI – Local
Governments for Sustainability,
Managing Partner, The Next
Practice Ltd.



How do the UN SDGs, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the EU Urban Agenda relate to one another?



Daniele Violetti
Chief of Staff, United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change (UNFCCC)

What topics related to sustainable development is the City of Aalborg working on?



Thomas Kastrup-Larsen
Mayor
City of Aalborg, Denmark

What topics related to sustainable development is the City of Tirana working on?



Erion Veliaj
Mayor
City of Tirana, Albania

#Basque2016 Quotable Quotes



“

"The best people to convince politicians [about making cities healthier] are the inhabitants. It's about being aware of the knowledge we actually have."

Torgeir Esig Soerensen, Head of Parks and Streets Department, City of Stavanger, Norway



"We should embrace that refugees one day will be consumers, a value for the economic growth."

João Afonso, Municipal Councillor of Social Rights, City of Lisbon, Portugal



"Public and private collaboration is not the only tool for innovation. A citizen perspective is needed."

Janet Sanz, Deputy Mayor for Environment, Urban Planning and Mobility, City of Barcelona
Vice President of Environment Area, Barcelona Metropolitan Area, Spain



"The Sustainable Development Goals could provide a new moment for better management of water resources in Europe."

Pavel Misiga, Head of Unit, DG Environment, European Commission



"To address the various challenges our cities are facing we need to stop working in silos and start thinking in new ways."

Eleni Myrivili, City councilor appointed for the Urban Sustainability Portfolio and Chief Resilience Officer, City of Athens, Greece



"Citizens care about broken down wind turbines if they are investors."

Markus Lewe, Mayor, City of Münster, Germany

#Basque2016: A Platform for Knowledge, Networking and Innovative Solutions

7

Plenary
Sessions

11

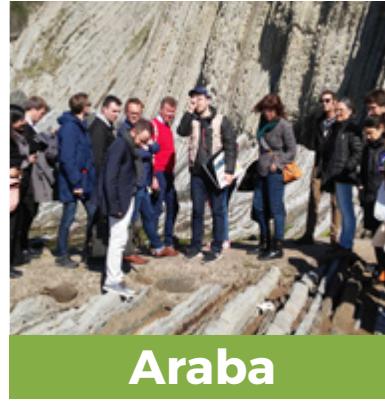
Breakout
Sessions

9

Mobile
Workshops

1

Mayors
Session



19 TOPICS

UN Sustainable Development Goals



Paris Climate Agreement



EU Urban Agenda



Financing for the Civic Economy



Public Procurement of Innovation



Standards for Sustainable Cities



Smart Cities and Big Data



Social Innovation and New Governance



Climate and Resilience



Migration and Integration



Innovative Mobility Solutions



Efficient Energy Solutions for Buildings



Health in All



Regional Food Strategies



Culture as a Catalyst



Circular Economy



Citizen-Power in Energy Transition



Nature-Based Solutions



Urban Water Agenda



Innovation Market

+50 projects and initiatives presented through Speed Presentations, Roundtable Dialogues and a Poster Exhibition



Exhibition Area



A Cultural Experience



For more photos and details about the events held during #Basque2016, check out the conference website:

basquecountry2016.eu

Trending topic thanks to all Participants and Influencers



#Basque2016

Ania Rok
@aniarok

Basque country a big part of @ICLEI's 20yrs of sustainable #procurement story!
@ihobEJGV @sppglobal #Basque2016

Folgen

Maria PR
@Mariosges

@MonZimmer : we need a fiscal strength and direct acces to finances (New Urban Agenda)
#Basque2016 #iamBasque2016 @ihobEJGV
@sustain_cities

Folgen

EUROCITIES network
@EUROCITIESnet

Partnerships between regulators & housing developers & user alliances result in value added settlements. #Basque2016
@jebbrugmann /NV

Folgen

Simina Lazar
@siminaz

Damien Careme: how Dunkerque supported the arrival of refugees on its territory
#Basque2016 @sustain_cities @URBACT

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Oihane Garcia
@Oihana

"We built the European Union full of rules, we need more urban friendly policies" Nicolaas Beets #basque2016

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Clara Grimes
@claracgrimes

Hans Bruyninckx: We need to move from looking at cities as sources of problems to laboratories of change #Basque2016

Folgen



EU Green Capital
@EU_GreenCapital

"We need more EU legislation on air quality" says @Celia_Blauel Deputy Mayor of Paris
#Basque2016 @sustain_cities

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JuanGustavo Garcia
@JuanGustavoGarcia

#SustainableMobility in @EUSmartCities explained by DG MOVE Henriette van Eijl.
@sustain_cities #Basque2016

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EU Green Capital
@EU_GreenCapital

#Tirana recruiting children as ambassadors for mentality change on #mobility for days without cars @sustain_cities

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Markku Markula
@markku_markula

Sustainable, inclusive and smart cities are the future. For this, we need new urban governance #Basque2016 @ICLEI

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Celia Blauel
@celia_blauel

Ouverture de la 8e conférence des villes durables #Bilbao. Mot d'ordre : construire un avenir durable pour toutes!

Folgen

Wouter Florizoone
@wouterflorizoone

This is undeniably a strong conference start: Basque youth forum representatives set the agenda #Basque2016

Folgen



New Generations at #Basque2016



Youth Forum

The Basque Agenda 21 School Programme, with approximately 90,000 students on board, shared its perspectives and expectations of local authorities in Europe throughout the 3-day conference programme.

Young Ambassadors

This year's event had the honour to count on the support of local young people who guided participants through the conference, as well as informed them about the country's activities in the field of urban sustainable development. This cooperation was facilitated by the [Novia Salcedo Foundation](#), a platform that aims to support young people in the process of professional and social integration in a changing world. To achieve this, from a vocation of anticipation and collaboration, the Foundation invents, creates and provides social value, developing lines of thought and creative processes of transformation towards new modes of value exchange between individuals, companies organisations and public institutions.



#Basque2016 Youth Ambassadors

What's Next?



The Basque Declaration: New Pathways for European Cities and Towns

The **Basque Declaration** was acclaimed by local and regional leaders on the first day of the conference. It highlights the necessity and desire of local leaders to think outside the box and find innovative ways to economically and socially engage with civil society in order to meet pressing challenges.

The Basque Declaration outlines new pathways for European Cities and Towns to create productive, sustainable and resilient cities for a liveable and inclusive Europe. A total of 15 pathways across three categories – socio-cultural transformation, socio-economic transformation and technological transformation – are at the heart of the document.

**How can the
Basque Declaration
support cities
in taking action
towards sustainable
development?**



Markku Markula
President, Committee of the Regions

Now it's your turn!

**Endorse the Basque Declaration
and help build a more liveable and
inclusive Europe!**

If your city, organisation, or you as a citizen are interested in endorsing the Basque Declaration, [click here](#).

We hope that many of you will add your voices and your efforts as we look towards the next European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns!

**Watch the final
conference video here!**



Organisers



Co-Organisers



Arabako Foru Aldundia
Diputación Foral de Álava



Gipuzkoako Foru Aldundia
Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa



Donostiaiko Udala
Ayuntamiento de San Sebastián



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#BasqueDeclaration