



**8<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON  
SUSTAINABLE CITIES & TOWNS**

**BASQUE COUNTRY | BILBAO | 27 - 29 APRIL 2016**

[basquecountry2016.eu](http://basquecountry2016.eu)

## CONFERENCE REPORT

### **8<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns**

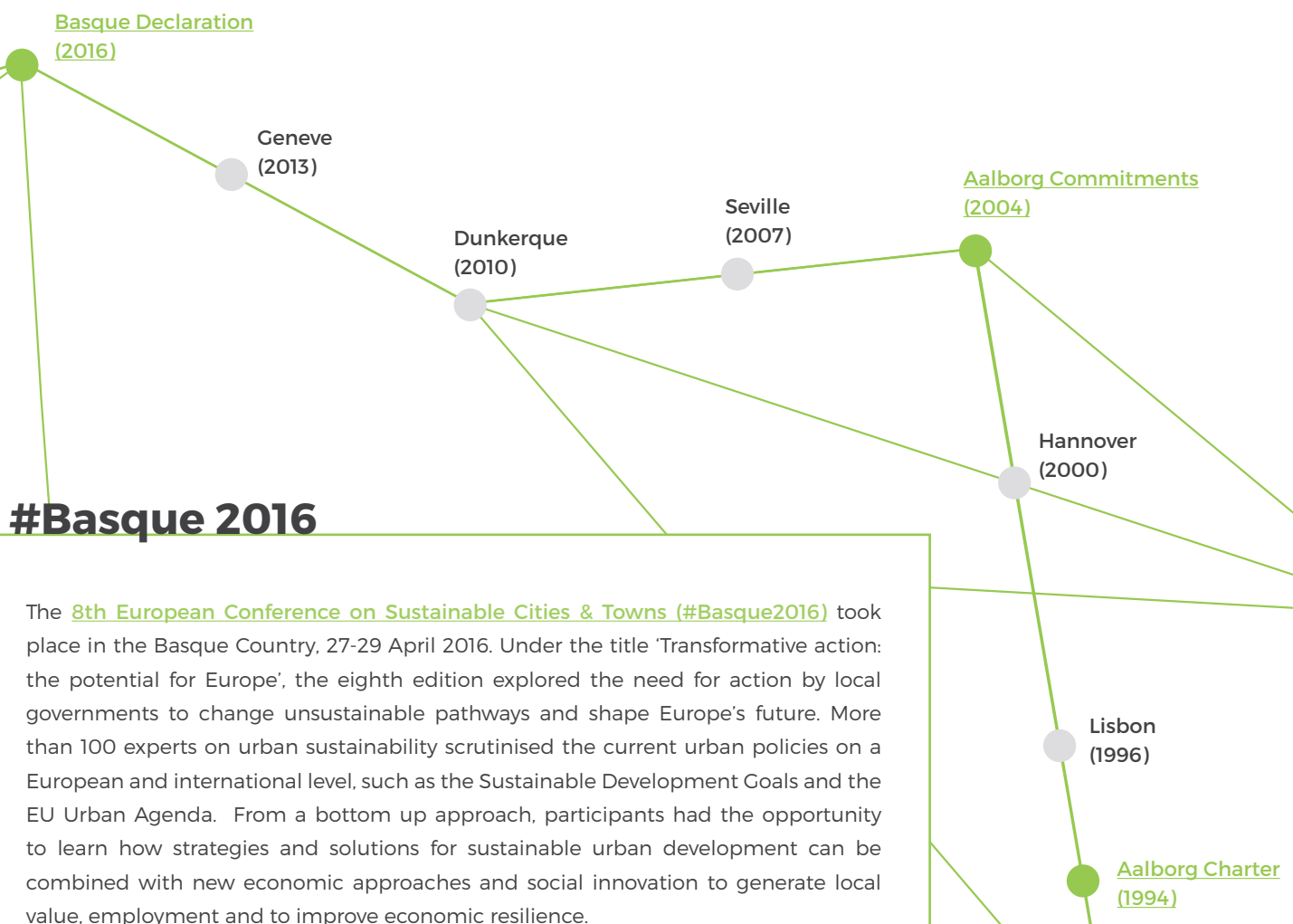
TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION: THE POTENTIAL FOR EUROPE

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.



# 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

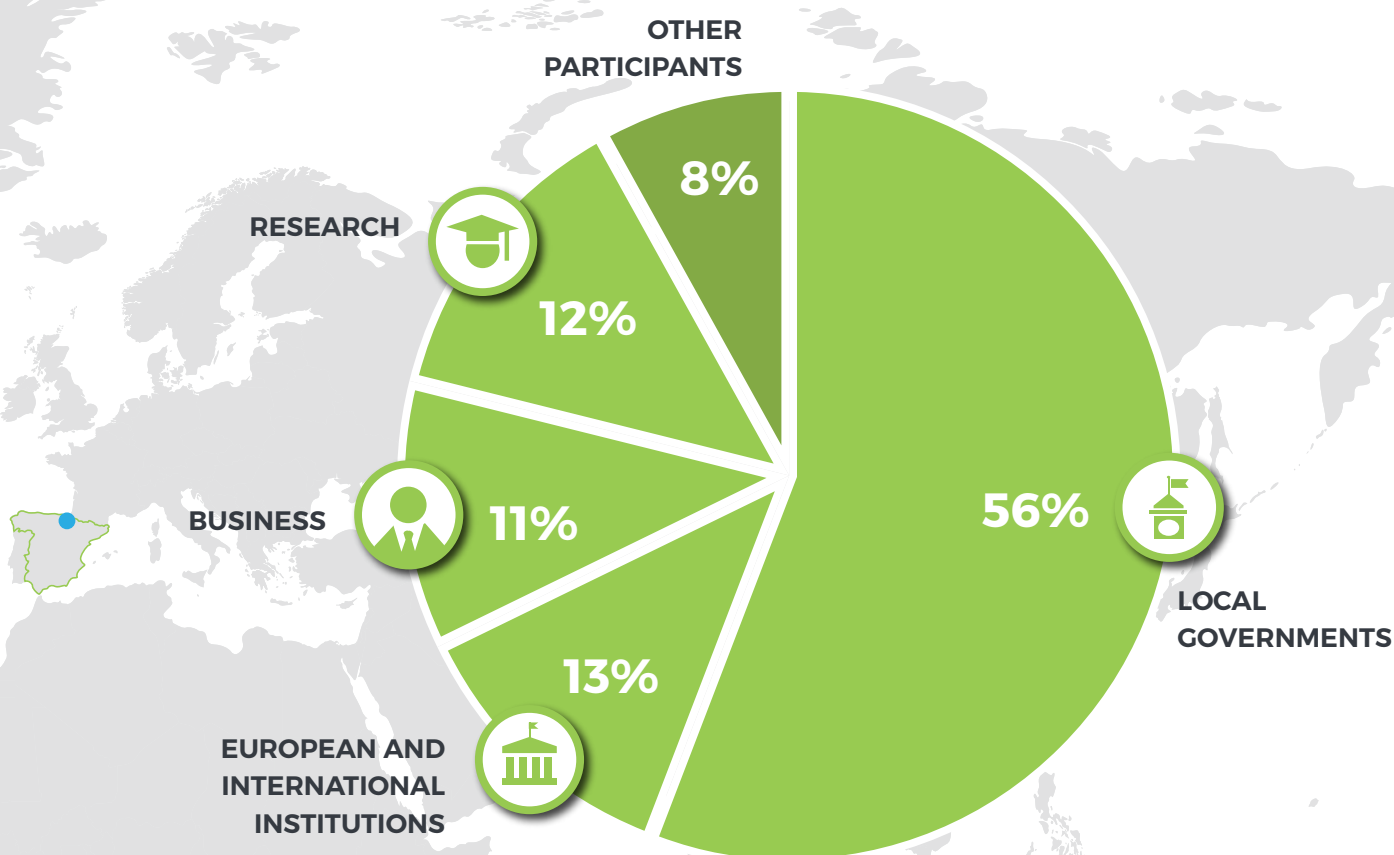
THE  
**BASQUE**  
DECLARATION

“ 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**. ”

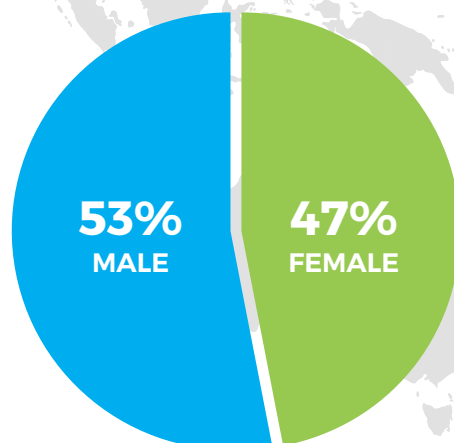


Wolfgang Teubner  
Regional Director for Europe  
ICLEI – Local Governments  
for Sustainability

**+850 attendees**  
**+200 speakers**



**40+**  
**countries**  
represented across  
Europe, the Americas,  
Africa and Asia





# 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**



**Gipuzkoa**



**Araba**



**Bizkaia**





# 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](http://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

**Maria PR** @MariasPR  
@MonZimmer : we need a fiscal strength and direct acces to finances (New Urban Agenda)  
#Basque2016 #iamBasque2016 @ihobEJGV @sustain\_cities

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

**Simina Lazar** @SiminaLazar  
Damien Careme: how Dunkerque supported the arrival of refugees on its territory  
#Basque2016 @sustain\_cities @URBACT



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



**Clara Grimes** @ClaraGrimes  
Hans Bruyninckx: We need to move from looking at cities as sources of problems to laboratories of change #Basque2016



**EU Green Capital** @EU\_GreenCapital  
"We need more EU legislation on air quality" says @Celia\_Blaue Deputy Mayor of Paris  
#Basque2016 @sustain\_cities



**JuanCristobal Garcia** @JuanCristobalGarcia  
#SustainableMobility in @EUSmartCities explained by DG Move Henriette van Ejil.  
@sustain\_cities #Basque2016



**EU Green Capital** @EU\_GreenCapital  
#Tirana recruiting children as ambassadors for mentality change on #mobility for days without cars @sustain\_cities



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



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



**Wouter Florizoone** @WouterFlorizoone  
This is undeniably a strong conference start : Basque youth forum representatives set the agenda #Basque2016



## 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



Donostiako Udala  
Ayuntamiento de San Sebastián



## Partners



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**#BasqueDeclaration**