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ManagingUrbanEurope-25
sustainable future for cities
For immediate release

25 European cities and regions provides a model for local and regional sustainability in EU27

Managing sustainable cities and regions in EU27

“I am convinced that the Managing Urban Europe-25 integrated management system is a very good tool that can help towns, cities and regions to tackle the increasing impact of human activities on the urban environment.” said Berlin’s Senator for Health, Environment and Consumer Protection Katrin Lompscher at the *BerlinForum: Managing a Sustainable Future for Cities and Regions*, held 12.-13. February 2008.

About 150 participants and key persons responsible for the urban issue from 25 European countries gathered in Berlin’s Max-Taut-Aula to present and discuss an integrated management approach, including representatives from Local Governments, Regional Authorities, National Governments, European Commission and EU Parliament.

During three years, 25 European cities and regions have cooperated to develop an integrated management approach for local and regional sustainability in the project Managing Urban Europe-25. The approach is a response to the EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (2006) and the EU Leipzig Charta on Sustainable Cities (2007). The *BerlinForum* served as discussion platform for a variety of issues around urban integrated management for a sustainable future of cities & regions - from climate change to equity, from the EU Lisbon Strategy for Growth to the Aalborg Commitments.

Tool to meet Cities and Regions’ future challenges

Integrated management is to meet the environmental and sustainability challenges of urban areas in Europe such as poor air quality, high levels of traffic and congestion, urban sprawl, greenhouse gas emissions, waste and waste water. It is also a tool to meet further sustainability dimensions i.e. social and economic.

As today more than 80% of EU’s population lives in urban areas, their quality of life is directly influenced by the state of the urban environment. With the rapid rate of urbanization it is assumed that more than half of the world’s urban areas expected in 2030 does not even exist yet. Efficient management is needed to make these future urban areas sustainable from day 1. A sustainable development of urban Europe requires an efficient

integrated management that support both existing and future urban areas.

Commitment for a sustainable urban future

At the *BerlinForum*, 25 European cities and regions issued a statement declaring a commitment to continue their pathway with integrated sustainable management practices. They also agreed to meet in five years time in Leeds (UK) for a follow-up forum.

Involvement needed at all levels

The cities and regions declared that they are committed to continue their journey towards sustainability but that they need national governments to support their efforts by liaising local authorities nation-wide, and by providing a platform for exchange of solutions, ideas, experience. They also encourage the EU Institutions to enforce the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment through innovative legislation including consistent budgetary allocations to cities and local communities. A direct dialogue with the European Commission is needed to build a more sustainable future.

Launch of supporting tools

As the project draws to an end, the 25 project forerunner cities and regions are now ready to share their experience and motivate their peers to follow them on the path to sustainability. A manual “Integrated Management – towards local and regional sustainability” has been launched in 9 languages. In-depth guidance and more city cases on how to work with the model will also be found on www.localmanagement.eu

Further information

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MUE-25 is co-funded by European Commission, DG Environment under the Community framework for co-operation to promote sustainable urban development. Presentations at the conference to be found soon on www.mue25.net

Cities and regions in MUE-25 include Ancona, Balatonfüred, Kaunas, Lahti, Leeds, Lewes District Council, Ludwigsburg, Oslo, Riga, Siauliai, Province of Siena, Siófok, Stockholm, Turku, Växjö, LBDCA, Berlin-Lichtenberg, Wiesbaden, Würzburg, Paderborn, Neu-Ulm, Tübingen, Donaueschingen, Ascha, County and City of Nordhausen. Further partners: Union of the Baltic Cities- Commission on Environment, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, Lake Constance Foundation, UNEP/Grid-Arendal, ACR+, Energie-Cites, ASSURRE, University of West of England.