

Gro H. Brundtland, former Norwegian Prime Minister, to deliver keynote speech in upcoming Velo-city Conference in Seville

Author of the Brundtland Report, a worldwide 'benchmark' in sustainability issues and current UN Special Envoy for Climate Change emphasizes the urgent need for international political focus and policies to advance sustainable mobility.

Seville, February 2, 2011 – Health, Education, Economy / Employment and Investment Efficiency are the four main themes of the Velo-city 2011 conference.

The 17th Velo-city Conference, as an international encounter between governmental policy-makers, urban and traffic planners, the industry and many other authorities is the platform to discuss the use of the bicycle as a means of transportation and takes place in Seville, Spain in March, 2011.



Gro Harlem Brundtland, former prime Minister of Norway, will be the most prominent keynote speaker at the opening session of Velo-city 2011 in Seville. She will provide the conference with a strategic viewpoint, firmly based on her experiences as a physician and international politician.

The Norwegian Social democratic politician, diplomat, and physician is a renowned international leader in sustainable development and public health. During her years in government, Gro H. Brundtland was Minister of the Environment and subsequently thrice-elected Prime Minister. She also chaired the United Nations Development and Environment Commission when it published "Our Common Future", better known as the Brundtland Report. She is in favour of "working locally to obtain global results" and established a new approach to the connection between social, economic and environmental policies.

She first coined the term sustainable development and laid the foundation for the Río de Janeiro Conference in 1992.

The term sustainability stems from the forestry sector and is about 250 years old. Originally, the Norwegian word for 'sustainability' meant that only as much wood was allowed to be cut as would grow again. Gro Harlem Brundtland re-discovered and successfully popularized this term. "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (World Commission on Environment and Development – Brundtland Commission, 1987) At that time, sustainability was a niche concept. Today every major public company and organization refers to their 'social responsibility' and 'commitment to sustainability' on a daily basis.

120 speakers selected from 30 countries in the conference programme

Velo-city 2011 will highlight the future challenges facing cities in terms of urban mobility. How cycling as a means of transport is beneficial for cities and its urban population. Master of ceremonies, Guillermo (Gil) Peñalosa, Executive Manager of the Canadian non-profit organisation "8-80 Cities" (<http://www.8-80cities.org/>) and former Commissioner for Parks, Sport and Recreation in Bogotá will lead the conference.

A total of 50 sub-plenary presentations, 25 questions-and-answers workshops and 50 round tables can be found in the conference programme. Some of the confirmed plenary speakers are:

- **Francesca Racioppi**. Coordinator of the World Health Organisation's Health and Transport Programme.
- **Enrique Jacoby**. Regional Advisor to the Pan American Health Organisation's Nutrition Unit. Founder of the cycle track movement in Latin America.
- **Francesco Tonucci**. Education researcher. Inventor of the "Children's City" concept and promoter of the associated project.
- **Lynn Sloman**. Consultant for "Transport for quality of life". Author of the book entitled "CAR SICK: solutions for our car-addicted culture".
- **Pilar Vega**. Consultant and expert in sustainable, non-motorised mobility, she has been involved in numerous projects throughout Spain.
- **Eva Willumsen**. Expert consultant on cost-benefit assessments for cycling-based mobility projects.
- **Patrick Kayemba**. Expert in non-motorised mobility projects in African countries. He belongs to the FABIO NGO.

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For more information on Gro Brundtland and the plenary speakers please go to: <http://www.who.int/dg/brundtland/bruntland/en/index.html> and <http://www.velo-city2011.com/eng/plenaristas.php>

About Velo-city

The Velo-city conference series is the premier international cycling planning conference series in the world, organized by the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and select host cities.

Velo-city conferences serve as a global communications and information platform and target to influence decision makers, and improve the planning and provision of infrastructure for the daily use of the bicycle in an urban environment.

The conferences traditionally involve experts, representatives of associations, institutions, policy-makers and social agents, universities and companies.

More information www.ecf.com

Velo-city 2011 Seville – The Cycle of Life

The city of Seville, which was just awarded a UN-Habitat Best Practice Award, has been chosen to host the 2011 edition of Velo-city as a result of its successful establishment of a complete system of cycling infrastructures.

Velo-city 2011 expects to welcome more than 1,000 visitors from all over the world who – during the three-day conference – will highlight cycling as a means of urban sustainable transport. The conference will look into a breadth of subjects on Health, Education, Efficiency of public investment, Economic impact and employment.

Out of the more than 250 submissions that were received from 27 countries, 120 entries will be selected, to be presented and discussed in plenary and sub-plenary sessions, workshops and round table sessions. An exhibition related to urban cycling will supplement and compliment the conference.

The conference slogan, “The Cycle of Life”, refers to the bicycle as a part of everyday life and a source of health for people of any age, contributing to more inhabitable cities and urban regions.

This year's Velo-city Conference will take place in Seville from March 23–25, 2011.
The official languages during the conference will be Spanish and English.

For more information and registration: www.velo-city2011.com
Media registration is open until March 4th, 2011.

For a selection of images and logos go to
http://www.velo-city2011.com/eng/informacion_interes.php or
<http://sevillacyclechic.blogspot.com/>

Feel free to contact us for further information or images.

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