

Ms. Ingvild Gundersen Little presented, as rapporteur, the findings of the second roundtable from the Day of cities. This roundtable covered smart tools for road safety and sustainable urban mobility; planning sustainable infrastructure and cities for the future; and developing policy instruments to improve the efficiency of urban services.

Building on the opening statements of the Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety focusing on road safety in the urban environment, mayors in the first session highlighted a number of smart activities that had been developed to support transport solutions focused on facilitating electro mobility (also through car sharing initiatives), stimulating public transport and encouraging active mobility through cycling (including bike sharing schemes) and walking. Traffic interventions including efforts to increase safety and manage vehicle movements are central to efficient solutions aimed at minimising car use. For these solutions to be effective though it is essential that infrastructure and service decisions are consulted effectively, that policy decisions are made with a passenger centric focus and finally that there is an integrated approach to policy development across local, regional and national policy and strategy documents and plans. Tools such as those developed at ECE through the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme can help cities address transport challenges.

In the second session on planning sustainable infrastructure and cities for the future, issues relating to overcrowding and traffic congestion in historic city centers coupled with sprawl of the surrounding urban areas were cited. The city mayors highlighted their cities' strategies, action plans and innovative measures to address these issues and improve the quality of life of their residents. At the core of these initiatives were sustainable transportation and improving connectivity, including through the upgrading and expansion of pedestrian and cycling routes, the establishment of priority bus lanes and investments in public transport and smart technologies, with the aim of reducing traffic, pollution and carbon emissions in the cities. In order to make these investments in infrastructure viable, the mayors recognized the need to set limits on the sprawl of cities (i.e. "urban boundaries"). Furthermore, they emphasized that engaging the citizens in the planning process and facilitating dialogue between the relevant stakeholders is key to ensuring the viability and sustainability of infrastructure projects.

Session three focused on developing policy instruments to improve the efficiency of urban services. Speakers highlighted how inclusions of all layers of society – from childhood – and all stakeholders - including NGOs and private sector – are essentials. Innovation has an important role for instance in sustainable mobility and industry-driven solutions for sustainable growth could be used for the population. Innovation and ICTs can also be used in the form of interactive maps to involve citizens in urban planning. Such models can be used for urban developments to include environmental hazards. Digitalization is also a means to include public participation and involve citizens in the use of services, as utilities. This needs a wide internet coverage. Master plans can also be a means of framing policies at city level. This allows to identify priorities for instance how to develop the city, including recovering abandoned industrial areas and updating transport infrastructures for a liveable and environmentally-friendly cities.