



PRESS RELEASE

Institute for Sustainable Development National Conference 2012

Sustainable Mobility in Malta: Transport Research in Practice

The Institute for Sustainable Development organized its first national conference entitled Sustainable Mobility in Malta: Transport Research in Practice on the 30th November 2012 at SmartCity Malta. The conference aimed at i) showcasing some of the interdisciplinary research which is undertaken in the field of transport ii) raising awareness of the importance and applicability of research in this important area of study, and iii) bringing together main stakeholders from Government and Industry to discuss potential areas of collaboration with University faculty and students.

The Conference included two international keynote speakers. Prof. Stephen Ison from Loughborough University (UK) presented the international experience of road pricing, following also on Malta's introduction of the Controlled Vehicular Access (CVA) system in Valletta in 2007. The second speaker, Prof. Cathy Macharis from the Brussels Free University (Belgium) spoke about the future of electric mobility, a subject which is also very topical in Malta.

A list of speakers then presented their research in various areas of transport. The first topic was related to technology where four speakers presented various methods of how technology supports transport infrastructures. In the second topic, related to policy and passenger transport, three speakers presented their research in the areas of air and public transport, and the performance of Park and Ride systems as a tool for demand management. Under the third topic which dealt with green transport, two speakers presented the impact of transport on air quality and the projects which are currently underway in view of the much awaited phenomena of e-mobility.

The conference also hosted Dr Christoph Demuth who presented the platform CONNECTBALTICA as a best practice framework which Malta and the Mediterranean Region could emulate for promoting collaboration and sharing of ideas in the area of transport.

The conference also hosted a good number of posters presenting transport related research being carried out mostly by post graduate students at the University of Malta. Topics varied from Green Travel Planning, to elderly, child and youth mobility, air pollution, modelling and transport software technologies, and sustainability.

The long list of participants showed a strong interest in this area, with participants coming from various Government departments, a varied mix of industry players and students that are particularly interested in pursuing their studies and careers in this sector.

The Institute is looking at such events as opportunities to further bridge the gap between University research and industry and also to contribute more effectively to sustainable development by pursuing collaboration and research in areas which are part of the critical infrastructure of the islands and that play a key role in their future (sustainable) growth.

Such events, the Institute Director insisted, are a window on what really happens at the University of Malta and how university research can contribute to society. It is therefore a mission of the Institute to continue organizing such events in the future.

Speaking about this conference, SmartCity Malta country director, Suleiman Al Riyami said “This event turned out to be a great success. The agenda was very compelling and many important issues were addressed and a variety of intriguing insights were shared.” Mr Al Riyami added, “SmartCity Malta as a whole is designed in such a way as to promote a sustainable way of life. Our car park, for example, has implemented solar photovoltaic powered LED lights that achieve 100% energy savings and special reserved parking bays for low-emission, fuel-efficient vehicles which are all located closest to the buildings entrances. It is a pleasure to see the Institute for Sustainable Development sharing the same vision and commitment as SmartCity Malta by actively promoting and encouraging sustainable living in Malta.”

The conference main sponsor was SmartCity Malta. Other sponsors of the event included the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications, Transport Malta, ARRIVA, GeoSYS Ltd, TRAFFIKO Intelligent Transportation, KeyGroup BT Signaal, Mitsubishi MiEV, Touring Club Malta, The Chartered Institute for Transport and Logistics Malta, the Malta Council for Science and Technology, Pedal Power and Kamra tal-Periti

The conference proceedings will be published online after the conference. For further information please visit the conference website on www.um.edu.mt/isd/isdconference

Communications & Alumni Relations Office
30.11.2012