
PRESS RELEASE

Next year's World Urban Forum in Katowice, Poland, to focus on the future of cities

Katowice, Poland and Nairobi, Kenya, 12 May 2021 - The World Urban Forum (WUF), the premier global meeting on urban issues, will be held in the Polish city of Katowice from 26-30 June 2022. This will be the first ever WUF to be hosted in Eastern Europe.

The Forum is being co-organized by Poland's Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, the Municipal Office of Katowice and convened by the United Nations agency promoting sustainable urbanization, UN-Habitat.

This will be the eleventh World Urban Forum (WUF11) and will welcome policy makers, mayors, academics, business people, community leaders and urban planners among the thousands of participants.

"I am looking forward to working closely with Poland and the city of Katowice, to host the 11th session of the World Urban Forum," said Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

"WUF11 is an opportunity for Poland to demonstrate to the world community its own commitment to achieving a sustainable urban future. Katowice is a wonderful example of urban regeneration, and I hope we can build on these examples and leadership to share a wide range of global experience in 2022, creating inclusive, prosperous cities with opportunities for all."

"The organisation of the World Urban Forum is one of the top priorities of the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy which is, among others, in charge of the National Urban Policy," said Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak, Vice-Minister of Development Funds and Regional Policy and Governmental Plenipotentiary for the organisation of WUF 11.

Katowice hosted the UN Climate Change Conference (COP24) in 2018 and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in December 2021. The decision to hold WUF 11 in Katowice was announced in May 2019.

"Hosting WUF 11 underlines the importance of Katowice as the site of visible and significant socio-economic transformation and as a welcoming host of all events. This is a great honour for Poland and a vote of confidence from our partners in the United Nations," emphasized Marcin Krupa, the Mayor of Katowice.

The theme of WUF 11 will be **“Transforming Our Cities for a Better Urban Future”**, raising important questions about the future of cities, including what form they should take and the kind of cities needed to support the future of humanity. Experience from the global pandemic and its consequences, as well as the challenges of climate change, will inform the programme and preparations.

The Polish organisers are involving youth in the Forum and a dedicated Youth Council was established in December 2020 composed of school students with passion for urban issues. The Council’s tasks include the development and implementation of initiatives related to preparations for WUF 11. The youth will organise competitions, debates and interviews on key challenges surrounding urban policy and the opportunities that the sustainable cities offer young people.

At WUF 11, the Action Plan for Cities, a catalogue of action transforming cities in Poland into green, accessible, and productive places, will be presented. This will include promoting zero carbon transport and energy, greening cities and activities to design accessible public places, including green areas and compact cities. More than 40 Polish cities have already expressed an interest in taking part in this project.

The World Urban Forum is held every two years with the most recent WUF hosted by Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, in February 2020.

More details are available at <https://wuf11.katowice.eu/> and www.unhabitat.org

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