



Kutaisi Fourth International Forum

Beyond the Horizon: Empowering Second-Tier, Medium-Size, and Small-Size Cities

**June 20-21, 2024
Kutaisi, Georgia**



Hosted by:
City of Kutaisi

Organized by:



Kutaisi City Municipality



Management and Development
Solutions Hub (MDSH)

Co-organizer:



Ministry of Regional Development & Infrastructure of Georgia

Supported by:



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის
The European Union for Georgia

Partners:



Background

Since its inception in 2019, the Kutaisi International Forum (KIF) has served as a dynamic platform for empowering second-tier, medium-sized, and small-sized cities (StMSCs) to achieve sustainable development. Established through a powerful collaboration between the Kutaisi City Municipality, the European Union's, and USAID's initiatives, KIF has since garnered steadfast support from the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia and the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia.

KIF transcends mere words. It thrives on action. We envision a vibrant platform where diverse stakeholders—public officials, civil society leaders, academics, and businesses—can engage in open dialogue, share best practices, and co-create solutions for sustainable urban development in StMSCs. Through collaboration, knowledge exchange, and strategic partnerships, KIF ignites positive change and fosters a brighter future for these growing urban centers.

The success of the first three KIF editions stands as a testament to this collaborative approach. KIF1 focused on spurring local economic growth in Kutaisi, attracting diverse participants and showcasing the city's hidden potential. KIF2 navigated the complexities of a post-pandemic world, offering valuable insights and strategies for urban resilience. KIF3 touched on the challenge of integrated transformation for sustainable development. This edition delved into key areas for improvement, exploring ways to enhance public services, empower local businesses and authorities, and promote active citizen participation. Through collaborative discussions and workshops, KIF 3 laid the groundwork for positive change and fostered a collective vision for the future.

Building upon its legacy of collaborative problem-solving, the Kutaisi International Forum (KIF) returns for its fourth edition, focusing on a theme of critical importance: Bridging the gap between StMSCs and the opportunities presented by the New Urban Agenda and European Union accession. Together, we will explore innovative strategies, forge new partnerships, and translate ideas into action, empowering StMSCs to thrive in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities.

Join us in Kutaisi as we embark on this exciting journey – a journey towards a brighter future for all StMSCs, built on collaboration, innovation, and collective action.

Working Languages

The forum will be conducted in **Georgian and English**, with simultaneous translation provided throughout the event, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all participants.

Participants:

The forum welcomes representatives from StMSCs worldwide, as well as businesses, national and regional governments, experts, academics, civil society organizations, and international organizations. Participation in the KIF 4th is **free of charge**. However, **registration is mandatory** for both remote and physical participants to ensure optimal organization and resource allocation. Registration is possible here: <https://bit.ly/KIF4> Please note that registration does not guarantee automatic consent to participate. Due to limited space, the organizers will send confirmation and further instructions to selected participants after the registration.

4th Kutaisi International Forum Agenda

KIF4 Quick Guide:

Sessions:

<i>Day 1, Thursday, 20 June 2024</i>		<i>Day 2, Friday, 21 June 2024</i>	
09:30-10:00	Participants' Check-in & Welcome Coffee		
10:00-10:30	<i>Welcome Remarks</i>	10:00-11:30	Unleashing the Cultural Power of Cities
10:30-11:30	Keynote Session: Multi-National Outlook on Opportunities for Non-Capital Cities		
11:30-12:00	<i>Coffee Pause and Networking Opportunity</i>		
12:00-13:30	Future-Ready Cities	12:00-13:30	Optimizing Project Management in Future-Ready Cities
13:30-14:30	<i>Networking Lunch</i>		
14:30-16:00	Rethinking Municipal Services in the Era of Artificial Intelligence	14:30-16:00	Thinking Cities' Green Solutions
16:00-16:30	<i>Coffee Pause and Networking Opportunity</i>		
16:30-18:00	Reimagining Health's Role in Cities Transformation	16:30-17:30	Forum Closing - From Dialogue to Action: Distilling Insights, Shaping Tomorrow

KIF4 In-Depth: Complete Agenda and Speaker Details

Day 1, Thursday, 20 June 2024.

09:30-10:00 Participants' Check-in & Welcome Coffee

10:00-10:30 The Forum's Opening and Welcome Remarks

Mr. Ioseb Khakhaleishvili – *Mayor of Kutaisi City Municipality*

Mr. Zaza Lominadze – *Chairman of the Health and Social Issues Committee, Parliament of Georgia*

Mr. Irakli Shengelia – *Chairman of Council, Kutaisi City Municipality*

Mr. Zviad Shalamberidze – *State Trustee in Imereti Region*

Ms. Mzia Giorgobiani – *Deputy Minister of Regional development and Infrastructure of Georgia*

10:30-11:30 Keynote Session: Empowering Second-Tier, Medium, and Small-Sized Cities: A Multi-National Outlook on Opportunities

Speakers:

Ms. Mzia Giorgobiani – *Deputy Minister of Regional development and Infrastructure of Georgia.*

Mr. Radim Sršeň – *Deputy Minister for Regional Development/Mayor/LAG president/Member of the European Committee of the Regions, Czech Republic*

Mr. Konrad Wojnarowski – *Undersecretary of the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, Republic of Poland*

Mr. Ovidiu-Vasile Cimpean – *State Secretary at the Ministry of European Investments and Projects, Romania*

Session Moderator:

Dr. Martin Grisel – *Director of European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN)*

11:30-12:00 *Coffee Pause and Networking Opportunity*

12:00-13:30 Future-Ready Cities

The session "Future-Ready Cities" serves as a session where city leaders, policymakers, and key stakeholders converge to explore the transformative activities undertaken by cities in alignment with the principles outlined in the New Urban Agenda. It provides a platform for an in-depth examination of the strategic pathways cities are pursuing to adapt, innovate, and prosper in the face of evolving urban challenges and opportunities. Through insightful discussions and knowledge sharing, participants delve into the multifaceted dimensions of urban transformation, including innovative policy frameworks, collaborative governance models, technological advancements, capacity-building initiatives, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. By

fostering dialogue and the exchange of best practices, the session aims to catalyze collective action and inspire cities to adopt forward-thinking approaches in their quest to become resilient, inclusive, and future-ready urban centres.

Speakers:

Dr. Martin Grisel – *Director of European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN)*

Dr. Karol Janas – *Head of Urban Policy Observatory at the Institute of Urban and Regional Development, Republic of Poland*

Mr. Adrian Răulea – *Programme Director of Cluj Metropolitan Area Association, Romania*

Mr. Jacek Wozniak – *Advisor in the Association of Polish Cities, Republic of Poland*

Mr. Thibault Charlet – *M4EG Programme Manager, Digital and Local Economic Development, DG NEAR, EC (TBC)*

Session Moderator:

Mr. Ioseb Khakhaleishvili – *Mayor of Kutaisi City Municipality*

13:30-14:30

Networking Lunch

14:30-16:00

Rethinking Municipal Services in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

This session delves into the evolution of municipal services in response to emerging challenges and opportunities in urban environments. It explores how municipalities can optimize resource allocation and leverage new technologies, including artificial intelligence, to enhance service delivery. Beyond traditional services like waste management and transportation, the discussion encompasses innovative approaches to urban greening, circular economy initiatives, and the integration of sustainable practices across various service sectors. Participants will exchange insights on fostering sustainability, resilience, and efficiency in municipal operations, thereby contributing to the broader goal of sustainable urban development.

Speakers:

Mr. Nick Thijs – *Senior Advisor, Team Leader Service Delivery and Digital Government, OECD/SIGMA (Remotely)*

Mr. Stan Abma – *Project Manager at VNG International, Netherlands*

Mr. Paco-Ernest Ulman – *Architect & Urban Planner at Spatial Planning and Design Department of Strategic Planning Services, Tallinn Strategic Management Office of Tallin Office, Estonia*

Dr. Anatoli Beifert – *Head of EU4Culture Project*

Mr. Jens Bley – *Lead of UrbanTestbeds.JR, an Interreg Baltic Sea Region project, on behalf of the HafenCity University Hamburg, Germany (Remotely)*

Session Moderator:

Mr. Giorgi Bobghiashvili – *Service Delivery & e-Governance Expert at USAID Local Governance Program*

16:00-16:30

Coffee Pause and Networking Opportunity

16:30-18:00

Reimagining Health's Role in Cities Transformation

This session explores the critical role of health in driving positive urban transformation. We emphasize the importance of integrating health priorities, such as workforce wellness, preventive care, and accessible health systems, into urban development to address the challenges and leverage the opportunities presented by rapid, often unplanned, urbanization. Through a collaborative dialogue among city leaders, health professionals, businesses, and community organizations, we aim to explore multi-sectoral strategies and partnerships that foster economic growth, enhance social well-being, and build community resilience. This session aims to guide us toward creating sustainable, inclusive urban environments that prioritize the health and well-being of all, especially the vulnerable, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Speakers:

Dr. Kira Fortune – *Regional Advisor, WHO European Healthy Cities Network*

Ms. Irina Javakhadze – *Deputy Head of policy Department, Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Defense of Georgia*

Dr. Téa E. Collins – *Lead, Global NCD Platform, World Health Organization (Remotely)*

Mr. Kakha Gvinianidze – *National Professional Officer World Health Organization, Country Office Georgia*

Ms. Eva Kalova – *Regional cooperation, Strategic planning department, Strategic development and cooperation department, Brno City Municipality, Czech Republic*

Ms. Miriam Weber – *Senior Policy advisor, Healthy City Coordinator, Municipality of Utrecht, Netherlands*

Session Moderator:

Ms. Tamar Dakhundaridze – *Deputy Mayor of Kutaisi City Municipality*

Day 2, Friday, 21 June 2024

10:00-11:30 Unleashing the Cultural Power of Cities

This session explores how StMSCs can strategically utilize cultural policies and activities to enhance their competitiveness on the global stage. By harnessing the power of culture as a driver of economic growth, social cohesion, and quality of life, cities can position themselves as vibrant and attractive destinations for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. Through interactive discussions and case studies, participants will delve into innovative approaches to cultural policy development, creative programming, and community engagement, examining how cities can leverage their unique cultural assets to differentiate themselves in the global marketplace. The session will also address the challenges and opportunities facing cities in maximizing the impact of cultural initiatives, emphasizing the importance of collaboration, innovation, and sustainability in building thriving cultural ecosystems that contribute to urban competitiveness.

Speakers:

Mr. Damjan Zorc – *Coordinator, Ljubljana UNESCO City of Literature, Slovenia*

Ms. Elżbieta Foltyniak – *Head of Kraków UNESCO City of Literature, Republic of Poland*

Mr. Kjartan Már Ómarsson – *Director of the City of Literature, within the Department of Culture and Sports at the Reykjavik Municipality, Iceland*

Ms. Krista Ojasaar – *Board member, Estonian Literary Society, Tartu, Estonia*

Session Moderator:

Ms. Hannah Trevarthen – *Director of Nottingham City of Literature, UK*

11:30-12:00

Coffee Pause and Networking Opportunity

12:00-13:30

Optimizing Project Management in Future-Ready Cities

This session provides a platform for city leaders, professionals, and key stakeholders to delve into the critical role of effective and collaborative project management in shaping the future readiness of cities. During this session, participants will have the opportunity to examine and share innovative approaches and best practices for harmonizing the implementation and monitoring of different projects, as well as the creation and integration of project management units/PMOs within a municipality. The discussion will cover vital aspects such as enhancing inter-departmental coordination, improving project oversight and reporting, and refining process efficiencies to boost project outcomes. This interactive platform will not only provide insights into successful PMO operations but also explore ways to adapt these practices to meet the unique needs of different cities.

Speakers:

Ms. Iwona Matuszczak-Szulc – *Director of the City Development and Foreign Relations Department, Municipality of Poznan, Republic of Poland*

Mr. Maciej Fijalkowski – *Director of the Bureau of European Projects and Development Policy, Warsaw City, Republic of Poland*

Mr. Eren Özdemir – *Co-Founder of Future Agile, Republic of Türkiye*

Mrs. Karolína Kopecká – *Head of strategy and external financing department, Department of Investments and Strategic Development, Municipal District of Silesian Ostrava, Czech Republic*

Session Moderator:

Ms. Lela Machaidze – *PMP, MBA, BRMP, PMI-ACP*

13:30-14:30

Networking Lunch

14:30-16:00

Thinking Cities' Green Solutions

This session convenes city leaders, professionals, and experts to explore innovative approaches to green solutions in cities. By embracing decentralized solutions and leveraging renewable resources, cities can enhance their resilience and sustainability. Through collaborative dialogues, interactive discussions, and real-world examples, participants will gain insights into building cities capable of thinking and future-proofing against challenges. This session convenes leading practitioners and sustainability experts from pioneering cities and networks. They will present case studies showcasing transformative green solutions implemented within their urban landscapes. The session will delve into the demonstrably positive impact of these solutions on urban sustainability, resilience, and quality of life.

Speakers:

Mrs. Claire Roumet – *Strategic partnerships, EU Policy & Overall Coordination, Energy Cities (Remotely)*

Mr. Mario Rajn – *Mayor of Krizevci, Vice President of the Energy Cities, Croatia (Remotely)*

Mr. Andres Jaadla – *Member of European Committee of Region (CoR), CORLEP member*

Mr. Mariusz Wozniak – *Chairman of the National Institute of Energetical Efficiency (KIEE) Board, Republic of Poland*

Session Moderator:

Mr. George Abulashvili – *Country Expert for Georgia, Covenant of Mayors East (CoM East)*

16:00-16:30

Coffee Pause and Networking Opportunity

16:30-17:30

Forum Closing - From Dialogue to Action: Distilling Insights, Shaping Tomorrow

Session Moderator:

Mr. Ioseb Khakhaleishvili – *Mayor of Kutaisi City Municipality*

Ms. Mzia Giorgobiani – *Deputy Minister of Regional development and Infrastructure of Georgia*