

## THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LOCAL POLITICS IN EUROPE



### **Town Chief, City Boss or Loco President? Comparing a Strengthened Local Political Leadership across Europe**

**Het Pand, Onderbergen 1, Ghent, BELGIUM, 14 and 15 March 2008**

The Centre for Local Politics (Department of Political Science) of Ghent University and the Centre d'étude de la vie politique (Cevipol) of the Université Libre de Bruxelles are pleased to invite you to their third conference on local politics in Europe.

#### **TOPIC**

In many European countries, local political leadership is in transformation. The latter is often seen as a response to the emergence of local governance, entailing the proliferation of governing institutions (multi-level) and the development of new networks and policy initiatives (multi-actor). The complexity and fragmentation that stem from these shifts evoke dilemmas of coordination and accountability. As a cure, strengthening local political leadership is often turned to. Leaders are expected to pull the frameworks of local decision-making together, act as entrepreneurs in an increasingly competitive environment and function as figureheads of the municipality.

While in some countries roles transformed within the existing frameworks, others have deliberately sought an institutional redefinition of their local leadership. In search for a 'symbolic synthesizer', many have individualized the selection of leadership positions and concentrated executive powers in their hands. Often, but not exclusively these are coinciding and concentrating in the office of mayor. Today, local leadership is predominantly expected to be both visionary (providing strategic direction to the policy-agenda) as well as integrative (creating and mobilizing networks) including both authoritative as well as empowering style aspects.

It is to the impact of these transformations that this conference turns in focusing on the following subtopics:

- The acquisition of local political leadership (e.g. recruitment and career, electioneering)
- The performance of local political leadership (e.g. tasks and key-roles, style and conduct and relations with other decision-makers)
- The consequences of local political leadership (e.g. for policies, politics and polities)

The papers of this conference will be published in an edited volume by Vanden Broele (Brugge) and Nomos (Baden-Baden) in 2008

## **PROGRAM**

**Friday 14 March 2008 [Zaal Rector Vermeylen]**

### **Introduction**

- 9h00 – 9h20                    Registration
- 9h20 – 9h30                    Welcome  
Herwig Reynaert (Ghent University, Belgium)
- 9h30 - 10h00                    Comparing local political leadership transformation  
Kristof Steyvers (Ghent University, Belgium)

### **Strengthened local political leadership: the acquisition**

*Chair: Tony Valcke (Ghent University, Belgium)*

- 10h00 – 10h20                    Colin Copus (University of Birmingham, UK)  
English Council Leaders and Elected Mayors: Political Leadership in Local Government That Is Neither Government nor Local
- 10h20 – 10h40                    Annick Magnier (University of Florence, Italy)  
Did Local Government Reforms Sustain Mayoral Entrepreneurship?
- 10h40 – 11h10                    coffee break
- 11h10 – 11h30                    Adrian Campbell (University of Birmingham, UK)  
Local Political Leadership in Eastern and Central Europe
- 11h30 – 11h50                    Fethi Acikel (University of Ankara, Turkey)  
Mayors, MPs and Oligarchs in Turkey: The Patterns of Transition from Local Politics to National Politics and Vice Versa
- 11h50 – 12h30                    questions and discussion

### **Lunch**

- 12h30 – 14h00                    Sandwich lunch

## **Strengthened local political leadership: the performance**

***Chair: Koenraad De Ceuninck (Ghent University, Belgium)***

- 14h00 – 14h20            Hellmut Wollmann (Humboldt University, Berlin)  
Reforms in Local Leadership: A Comparative European Perspective
- 14h20 – 14h40            Linze Schaap (Tilburg University, the Netherlands)  
‘De Burgemeester’: Netherlands’ Mayoral Leadership in Consensual Democracy and Collegial Policy-making
- 14h40 – 15h00            questions and discussion
- 15h00 – 15h30            coffee break
- 15h30 – 15h50            Malgorzata Erikson and David Karlsson (Göteborg University, Sweden)  
Does the Hierarchical Position of a Local Political Leader Affect Policy Priorities?
- 15h50 – 16h10            Michèle Breuillard and Stéphane Guérard (Lille University, France)  
Local Leaders’ Strengthened Powers, a Franco-English Comparison
- 16h10 – 16h30            Tony Valcke and Jean-Benoit Pilet (Ghent University and Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)  
Belgian Mayors and Governors. Leadership in a Changing Multilevel Context
- 16h30 – 17h00            questions and discussion

## **Reception**

- 17h00 – 18h00            reception at the conference venue

**Saturday 15 March 2008 [Zaal Rector Blancquaert]**

**Strengthened local political leadership: the consequences**

*Chair: Colin Copus (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom)*

- 10h00 – 10h20            Nirmala Rao (Goldsmiths University London, UK)  
                                 Transforming Local Political Leadership in Britain
- 10h20 – 10h40            Jacob Aars (Stein Rokkan Centre, Norway)  
                                 Immune to Reform? The Nordic Mayor
- 10h40 – 11h00            questions and discussion
- 11h00 – 11h30            coffee break
- 11h30 – 11h50            Ivan Koprivic (University of Zagreb, Croatia)  
                                 Directly Elected Mayors on the Territory of Former Yugoslavia: Between  
                                 Authoritarian Local Political Top Bosses and Citizen-Oriented Local Managers
- 11h50 – 12h10            Gilles Pinson (University Jean Monnet de Saint-Etienne, France)  
                                 Comparing Local Leadership in Urban Projects: France, Italy and the UK
- 12h10 – 12h30            Clemente Navarro and Maria Rosa Herrera (Pablo de Olavide University, Spain)  
                                 Local Political Opportunities Structure. A ‘Mediating Filter’ Between Local  
                                 Groups and Local Political Leaders
- 12h30 – 13h00            questions and discussion
- 13h00 – 13h15            Conclusions  
                                 Pascal Delwit (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)

## **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

### **Conference venue**

Het Pand  
Onderbergen 1  
9000 Gent  
BELGIUM  
+ 32 9 264 83 05  
<http://www.ugent.be/en/facilities/pand> (for directions)

### **Registration**

Registration can be made by filling in the registration card attached to this announcement. Please send back the registration card by e-mail, fax or post before 10 March to:

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Registration is also possible via the website [www.editions.vandenbroele.be](http://www.editions.vandenbroele.be) (formations).

The following types of registration are possible:

- Subscribes to the conference and receives the conference book [175 euros]
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  - Subscribes to the conference only [10 euros]

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For any additional information concerning this conference, please contact a member of the organization committee of the conference: Herwig Reynaert, Pascal Delwit, Kristof Steyvers and Jean-Benoit Pilet.

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