

Abstract Template

Hugh Coughlan

Organisation : Dublin City Council

Short description:

Dublin City Council is the largest Local Authority In Ireland. It serves a population of 506,211 (2006 Census) and covers an area measuring 11,761 hectares. It employs in approximately 6,600 staff to deliver over 500 individual services. The City Council's vision is to create a creative and sustainable city and it has identified six key themes of Economic Development, Social Cohesion, Culture, Recreation and Amenity, Urban Form, Ease of Movement & Environmental Sustainability to aid an integrated and sustainable approach to the development of the city.

Dublin has been selected as European City of Sport for 2010 and European City of Science for 2012.

Presentation title: Consumers are key to path to a sustainable future

Executive Summary of your Abstract:

It is clear that we will need rigorous plans, policies and legislative instruments as part of our path to a more sustainable society but even more importantly the role of the consumer will be crucial. It is fair to say that in general we have made great strides over the last number of years particularly around the areas of recycling and the consumer has played a key role. So what elements have worked and how can we translate and enhance that going forward to encourage the consumer to make further changes.

Abstract:

This presentation will brief the audience on the experiences of Dublin over the last number of years in communicating key messages in the areas of reducing, reusing and recycling waste which has helped in the increasing of recycling rates from a level of less than 5% to over 40% in less than 10 years and how these approaches can be adapted and improved to assist in changing behaviours of consumers to attain a more sustainable environment in the future.

The challenges cannot be underestimated especially given that in 2008 we produced on average 525kg per person (EU 27) of waste per year with some countries even reaching levels of 802kg. Of those figures on average only 40% was recycled with again wide variations across member states. In addition given that Sustainable Consumption has been on the policy agenda for a number of years it is noteworthy that there has been no consistent effort to really engage with the general population and that if anything the messages have been somewhat mixed and have led to an element of confusion. In this modern world where the consumer is constantly bombarded through a mass of different media we must ensure that however complex the issue is it must still be broken down in simple and easy to understand key messages that can be understood and followed.



Résumé: Hugh Coughlan is an Administrative Officer with Dublin City Council. He has been working in Local Government for the last 19 years and has specialised in areas such as Housing & Corporate Services. He is currently assigned to the Administration & Policy Unit of the City Councils Environment & Engineering Department with a particular focus on Litter, Recycling & Education/Awareness.

Recommended reading: eurostat.org, wrap.org, Europe's Environment the Fourth Assessment & Sustainable Handbook both available at eea.europa.eu