

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Holistic Amsterdam

**134 participants from 26 countries and 57 different cities joined the ECM Autumn Meeting in Amsterdam from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November 2009.**

This time, the core of the ECM meeting - the seminar - dealt with the topic "The Holistic Marketing Concept: How Cities Change Into Regions". The morning seminar programme offered a valuable theoretical overview on city-region co-operation in different countries thanks to such speakers as Prof. Dr. Pieter Tordoir (University of Amsterdam), Brian Maher (Fáilte Ireland), Dr. Associate Prof. Chunlei Wang (Shanghai Normal University), Hans Luiten (Amsterdam Metropolitan Area), Olivier Ponti (Amsterdam Tourism & Convention Board) and Amandine Chapuis (University of Paris, Panthéon, Sorbonne).

In the afternoon, participants were able to join one of the two breakout sessions that were offered, working with specific cases of regional co-operation, focusing particularly on strategy, measurement of visitor value, financing models and use of external funding. During each breakout session, four case studies were presented, followed by a group discussion. The delegates were therefore able to learn from the experience and concrete examples of several European destinations – Amsterdam, Genoa, Gent, Lisbon, Oslo, Vienna and West Sweden.

In addition to the scheduled events, a one-and-a-half-hour networking reception took place at the end of the seminar so that the participants and the speakers could discuss the findings of the day together in an informal atmosphere.

Friday was dedicated, as usual, to various topic-specific workshops and "Knowledge Group" presentations. Among the most appreciated and breath-taking was a presentation called "Augmented Reality Used for Tourism" made by Eddie Fillia, Office du Tourisme et des Congrès de Nice.

The "Technical visits" that took place on Saturday 28th November managed to put into practice the holistic leitmotif of the ECM Autumn Meeting. Amsterdam Tourism & Convention Board provided a unique experience, a true insider's view of the city of Amsterdam from different angles. Delegates had the opportunity to peep backstage at new tourist areas which are providing an extension to the city centre, look at "cross-overs of regions and cities", learn how to handle sex and drugs in a city or have a taste of the cultural aspect of Amsterdam.

Dieter Hardt-Stremayr, ECM President and Managing Director of Graz Tourist Office, commented: "Amsterdam Tourism & Convention Board - Stefan Diender, Hans Dominicus, Marc Horsmans and their team - did a great job preparing a meeting whose form and educational content were perfectly matched. The ECM meeting in Amsterdam was another step forward in our efforts ever to improve the format of our meetings so that they fully correspond to our members' needs and expectations."



Dieter Hardt-Stremayr and Hans Dominicus

The next ECM meeting will be hosted by the city of Turku, Finland, from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2010 and will focus on sustainable tourism.

*\*ECM (European Cities Marketing) is the leading European association of City Tourism Offices and Convention Bureaus. Its network comprises more than 125 members from more than 100 major cities in 32 countries. Its aim is to strengthen city tourism by providing sales and marketing possibilities, communicating information, sharing knowledge, educating and working together on an operational level.*

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