

Report from the 90th ICMA Conference

Between October 16 and 22, 2004, San Diego hosted the 90th annual conference of the ICMA (International City/County Management Association), which associates city managers (and assistant managers), as well as county managers, who represent US state government institutions. The conference took place with the participation of associated members and guests from 22 countries. In total, 3875 managers participated in the conference. In the Conference participated Director of the Local Government Development Centre representing also the Association of City Managers of Slovakia.

The key slogan of the conference this year was „Catching the Next Wave” – or preparing for upcoming challenges in the service to citizens. The entire programme was devoted to the effort to change the management style of city managers, to the ways of reaching organisations' maximal performance, to newest trends in financial management, regeneration of city centres, regeneration and economic development, new opportunities to utilise facilities left behind by the army, to using state-of-the-art technology, crisis management, and the preparedness of the civil defence, all aimed at the synergy of all government elements.

As a part of the Conference we also took part in the first meeting of the Committee for International Development (attached is the list of participants), which was formed from its predecessor, the Task Force (I have been the member of Task Force since 2000). As a reaction to our presentation, the Committee repeatedly extended their gratitude to the Local Government Development Centre and the APUMS for the preparation and coordination of the first meeting of the Task Force for International Development in April this year in Bratislava. Members of the Committee, representing city managers' associations from USA, Mexico, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Holland, Austria, Czech Republic and Slovakia took part in this meeting. We also received gratitude for the preparation and organisation of the study tour, in which 15 city managers and their partners (22 participants) took part in April this year. This group represented the states of Michigan, Oregon, Illinois, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Washington, California, Missouri, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Ohio, Florida, Texas and Arizona. The fact that we contributed towards spreading the good name of the Slovak local government amongst such a wide audience, and that our US colleagues have it in high regard and all of them are interested in continuing the newly created or existing contacts was a satisfaction for the hard work we put into the events.

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