



**EUROPEAN  
GREEN CAPITAL**



*An initiative of the  
European Commission*

*Green cities – fit for life*



**WILL YOUR CITY  
BE THE EUROPEAN  
GREEN CAPITAL  
IN 2014?**

# GREEN CITIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



I have been really impressed with the huge effort and commitment made by cities across the EU to improve their environment and make it more sustainable for future generations. Hamburg, the European Green Capital of 2011, is proof that economic growth and environmental protection can live together in one city. Vitoria-Gasteiz will be the title holder in 2012 and, following them, Nantes in 2013. Now I am pleased to be able to announce the launch of the next call for applications for selecting Europe's Green Capital in 2014.

The European Green Capital Award is part of the Commission's focus on the urban environment, and is intended to showcase achievements and innovations. It recognises and rewards local efforts to improve the environment, the economy and the quality of life of growing urban populations. It is also there to act as a platform for exchange of ideas and opportunities. We want people and cities to learn from one another and come up with solutions to city problems.

I am looking forward to new applications from all over Europe - applications which will show how cities can be sustainability role models, and strike a balance between economic growth, environmental protection and quality of life.

I know the European Green Capital Award will continue to grow in the years to come. My hope is that it will help us turn our urban centres into more environmentally sustainable, healthy and attractive places to live and work.



*Janez Potočnik*  
European Commissioner for the Environment

# MAKE YOUR CITY FIT FOR LIFE



The race for the 2014 European Green Capital title has begun! Clean air, parks, pollution-free environments, high quality urban living and sustainable ideas are all aspects of what makes a European Green Capital “Fit for life”. Each year a European city is appointed the European Green Capital by a panel of environmental experts and a jury. In 2010 Stockholm was the first ever European city to hold the title. Hamburg is the 2011 European Green Capital; Vitoria-Gasteiz will follow in 2012 and Nantes in 2013.

The award is given to a European city that has demonstrated a well-established record of achieving high environmental standards and is committed to ongoing and ambitious goals for future environmental improvement and sustainable development. The European Green Capital should also be able to act as a role model to inspire other cities and promote best practices to other European cities.

## **Race for environmental recognition**

The idea of a European Green Capital was originally conceived at a meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, held in May 2006, on the initiative of the former City Mayor, Mr. Jüri Ratas. Now, for the fifth European Green Capital designation in 2014, cities from all over Europe are getting ready to take part in the race for environmental recognition.



## **Objectives - Cities as role models**

Urban areas are the source of many of today's environmental challenges – not surprisingly, since four out of five Europeans live in towns and cities. Local governments and authorities can provide the commitment and innovation needed to tackle and resolve many of these problems.

Consequently, the aim of the initiative is to recognise and reward local efforts to improve the environment, the economy and the quality of life in cities. The Award is given each year to a city, not necessarily a capital, which is leading the way in environmentally friendly urban living and which can thus act as a role-model to inspire other cities. Cities differ enormously and sharing concrete examples of what a European Green Capital can look like is essential if further progress is to be made.

# HAMBURG

## EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2011



BSU/W. Huppertz

### Train of Ideas

#### **Hamburg — a big city with big ambitions**

Hamburg is home to 4.3 million inhabitants in the metropolitan region, 1.8 million of them in the city centre. As a major industrial centre, Hamburg confronts all the environmental challenges that face other European cities. The city implements all aspects of European environmental policy, ranging from climate protection and improving air quality to water management and nature conservation. The environmental problems experienced in cities such as Hamburg are multifaceted, as is the potential available to solve them.

Wise use of natural resources, coupled with an innovative policy for 'Responsible Growth', has helped to make the city an example of environmental best practice. It has set itself ambitious targets for future development: for example, cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 40% by 2020 and 80% by 2050, compared with the more modest EU target of 20% by 2020.

A significant partnership programme, called 'Enterprise for Resource Protection', has already completed about 1,000 projects. The aim is to encourage voluntary investment in increasing energy and resource efficiency in enterprises. For each €1 invested by local government, participating companies contribute €10. This has generated total private investment of €146 million matched by municipal support of €15 million. In total, the enterprises currently save 134,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions each year.

The Hamburg ECO-Partnership, a joint venture between local government and the commercial sector, encourages companies to go beyond statutory requirements to take additional eco-friendly measures.



## Hamburg's green facts and figures

- 4,700 hectares of woodland – more today than 100 years ago.
- Public parks, recreation areas and woodlands make up 16.8% of the municipal region. Every week, 1 million people use them for leisure and recreation. 89% of the population lives within 300m of a park.
- 11,657km of bus routes, with 10,426 stops.
- 656 million passengers used public transport in 2009.
- 99% of residents have access to public transport within 300m of their homes.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions cut by 15% (1990-2006).
- 200,000 low-energy lamps in 400 public buildings save €3.4 million per year.



Energy Hill Georgswerder Höhe

www.mediaserver.hamburg.de/R.Hegeler

Hamburg is impressively green in comparison to most cities of similar size, with over 16.7% of the urban area given over to forests, recreation and green spaces. Water covers a further 8%, contributing significantly to the city's recreational opportunities. Waterfront terraces and walkways offer pleasant open-air environments for residents, while the River Elbe ferry lines serve the needs of both commuters and visitors.

The objective of the city's landscape planning policy is to link parks, leisure and sports areas, playgrounds and even cemeteries, to make

it possible for people to travel from the city centre to the outskirts, on foot or by bicycle, without coming into contact with traffic. The green network is also key to the 'connectivity' of wildlife habitats – enabling animals and other species to move freely from one place to another.

The city has launched a 'Train of Ideas' which is travelling around Europe in 2011 spreading Hamburg's environmental experience and good practice to 18 cities.

# EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2012: VITORIA-GASTEIZ



## **Green outside and green inside**

Vitoria-Gasteiz has a population of about 240,000 people and is the capital of the Álava province and of the autonomous community of the Basque Country in northern Spain. All of the population has access to green space within 300 metres, with the area of green space in the city doubling since 1974. Vitoria-Gasteiz is comprised of three concentric circles, with the city itself at its centre. The "Green Belt", a semi-natural green area partially reclaimed from degraded areas surrounds the centre and brings nature into the city. The third circle is dominated by forestry and mountains.

Numerous tangible measures are in place to protect biodiversity and ecosystems, such as monitoring of flora and fauna, reducing habitat fragmentation wherever possible and measures to reduce light pollution. There are also educational and participation projects in place for the public, such as community gardens.

The city is very compact with 81% of the population living within 1,500 metres of the centre. The city builds on this potential and focuses on keeping services within short walking distance. Only 37% of journeys in the city are by car, with the majority of people walking; public transport is prioritised with the introduction of a tram system in 2008 and improved bus services.



All quality monitoring is well established; air pollution indicators are below the limit value and there has been a downward trend over the last 3-5 years. One of the overarching goals of the city is to reduce domestic water consumption to below 100 litres per capita per day, and this has already kick-started with a steady decrease from 1999-2009.

# EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2013: NANTES



## **A sustainable city**

Situated on the Loire River, close to the Atlantic coast, Nantes is France's sixth largest city with a metropolitan area of some 800,000 inhabitants. Over the past ten years, Nantes has developed a sustainable transport policy with a focus on public transport and bicycles. Development within the city centre is planned to minimise car transport and facilitate pedestrians. Nantes was the first city in France to successfully re-introduce electric tramways. This effort will continue in the coming years with planned investments being made in new tramways, high quality bus services and bicycle infrastructure.

Nantes' ambitious transport policy has resulted in the reduction of air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions; all air pollution indicators are below limit values.

100% of Nantes' population lives within 300 metres of green spaces. A tree charter and a countryside charter are in place and

biodiversity is a concern in green area management. There is monitoring of birds, participation of the municipality in scientific research on ecosystems, a survey on light pollution and specific measures on public lighting.

Nantes has a well functioning integrated waste management system with a separate collection recycling system (35%) and energy recovery by incineration (54%) with minimal landfill (11%). No biodegradable waste is sent to landfill.

Average water consumption in Nantes showed a continuous dropping trend from 139 litres per capita per day in 2004 to 120 litres in 2008, in spite of the large increase in population over the last decade. This reduction in use is attributed to a targeted water price policy and action plans to detect leaks, renewal of the water supply network and improvement of water metering.





# APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM CITIES TO BECOME EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2014



## Healthy urban living

The European Green Capital Award is given to a city that has improved its urban living environment as a whole through concrete activities such as:

- Co-operation and partnership between authorities, citizens, business and other stakeholders aimed at developing and improving urban living conditions
- Implementation of sustainable mobility solutions
- Introduction and expansion of parks and recreational areas
- A modern approach to waste management
- Innovative solutions to noise pollution
- An integrated approach to urban management ensuring positive long-term effects.

**The competition to become European Green Capital 2014 is open from 14th June 2011 and the closing date is 14th October 2011.**

## Who can apply?

- The European Green Capital Award is open to EU Member States, Candidate Countries (Turkey, FYROM, Croatia, Montenegro and Iceland) and European Economic Area countries.
- All cities from the countries listed above which have more than 200,000 inhabitants can apply for the award (in countries where there is no city with more than 200,000 inhabitants, the largest city is eligible to apply.)
- In this context, a 'city' is understood to be an urban area, excluding metropolitan areas, larger urban zones and conurbations, and is understood as an administrative unit governed by a city council or another form of democratically elected body.
- Past winners may not apply for a period of ten years after they held the European Green Capital title.

## How to apply

- Applications can be made online at [www.europeangreencapital.eu](http://www.europeangreencapital.eu).
- Read more about terms and conditions at [www.europeangreencapital.eu](http://www.europeangreencapital.eu)

# KEY DATES IN 2011/2012



## **Tuesday 14th June 2011**

Launch of call for applications to be the European Green Capital 2014

## **Friday 14th October 2011**

Deadline for eligible cities to submit their application via the online application system at [www.europeangreencapital.eu](http://www.europeangreencapital.eu)

## **November 2011 - March 2012**

Expert panel evaluation of all applications including clarifications where needed

## **April 2012**

Preparation of shortlisted cities

## **May 2012**

Presentation of shortlisted cities to the Jury

## **June 2012**

Announcement of 2014 winner at special awards ceremony



# SELECTION PROCESS



The selection of a city to be awarded the European Green Capital for 2014 will be assessed on the basis of twelve indicator areas:

- Local contribution to global climate change
- Local transport
- Green urban areas incorporating sustainable land use
- Nature and biodiversity
- Quality of local ambient air
- Noise pollution
- Waste production and management
- Water consumption
- Waste water treatment
- Eco innovation and sustainable employment
- Environmental management of the local authority
- Energy performance

## **Information to be provided by the applicant cities**

The information requested, in relation to the 12 indicator areas, is based on the EMS principles: plan, do, check and act.

Present details of the original and/or most recent Action Plan, including any relevant disadvantages or constraints resulting from historical and/or geographical factors which may have influenced this indicator area negatively.

Present details of those targets achieved or not, to date (within the last 5 – 10 years). Provide a review of how both situations occurred and lessons learned.

Present plans to meet or revise key targets for the future and proposed approach to achieve these.

## **Two-tier evaluation process**

A panel of internationally acknowledged experts will assess the information supplied by each city. This will include qualitative evaluations and a peer review of each application based on the 12 indicator areas. Following these evaluations, 3-4 cities will be shortlisted for the 2014 title.

The shortlisted cities will be invited to present their action plans and communication strategies to the Jury. Following these meetings, the Jury will deliberate further and the European Green Capital 2014 will be announced at an award ceremony in June 2012.

**Read more about the application procedure, evaluation process and regulations on the campaign website, [www.europeangreencapital.eu](http://www.europeangreencapital.eu)**



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### Green Capital Secretariat

The application process and the work of the evaluation panel and the jury are facilitated by the Green Capital Secretariat, currently run by RPS Group, an environmental and communications consultancy based in Ireland. The secretariat also assists with PR activities related to the award scheme through the European Green Capital Award website, Facebook and Twitter pages, and through various communication channels such as brochures and press releases.



Publications Office



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