



Jury Report

European Green Capital Award

2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE ROLE OF THE JURY

The Jury's role is to select the winner of the European Green Capital Award, which rewards cities that are leading the way with environmentally friendly urban living, on the basis of the technical assessment work and proposals provided by an Expert Panel together with the information provided as part of the Jury Assessment.

1.2 JURY MEMBERS

The Jury is composed of representatives from key European and international organisations in the environmental field and is chaired by the European Commission (Directorate-General for the Environment). Jury members cover a wide range of expertise and have in-depth knowledge of the issues involved. The Jury for the European Green Capital Award of 2017 includes the following organisations and their representatives:

- European Commission: Karl Falkenberg, Director-General, DG Environment
- European Parliament: Giovanni La Via, Chairman of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
- Committee of the Regions: Ilmar Reepalu, Municipal Commissioner of the City of Malmö, Sweden
- European Environment Agency: Katja Rosenbohm, Head of Communications
- ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability: Stefan Kuhn, Deputy Regional Director for Europe
- Covenant of Mayors Office: Frédéric Boyer, Head of Office
- European Environmental Bureau: Dr. Mikael Karlsson, President

1.3 EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL AWARD 2017 – JURY ASSESSMENT

The Jury received the Technical Assessment Report, as prepared by the Expert Panel in April 2015. The Jury considered this report and noted the technical comments and proposals as presented by the Expert Panel. The Jury expressed its appreciation of the excellent work carried out by the Expert Panel.

On the 17th June 2015, the four finalist cities presented their vision, action plans and communication strategies to the Jury. The Jury assessed these cities based on the following evaluation criteria:

- 1) Overall commitment, vision and enthusiasm as conveyed through the presentation.
- 2) Capacity to act as a role model to inspire other cities, promote best practices and spread the EGC model further – bearing in mind city size and location.
- 3) Communication actions including:
 - Citizen communication to date in relation to the 12 environmental indicators, effectiveness via changes in citizen behaviour, lessons learned and proposed modifications for the future.
 - The extent of the city's local partnering to gain maximum social and economic leverage.
 - Outline of the city's EGC communications strategy should it win.

2. JURY FINDINGS

2.1 'S-HERTOGENBOSCH

's-Hertogenbosch strives to develop both sustainable and economic solutions within the city. The jury commended the strong partnership approach between the city council and industries operating within their municipality. This has led to the development of the innovative 'Spark Centre' which focuses on open innovation in the built environment.

The 's-Hertogenbosch tagline 'Sustainable by nature' is evident in a number of different initiatives including the integration of natural wetlands and allowing for natural succession to occur.

2.2 NIJMEGEN

The jury were impressed by the engaging nature of the Nijmegen presentation. The 'Sustainable Relay' campaign represents the never ending relay of sustainability. This unique initiative demonstrates the commitment the city has towards citizen engagement and raising awareness of their participation in the competition and sustainability.

Nijmegen with a tag line 'Nijmegen forever' ensures that every policy field clearly shows their contribution to sustainability.

The jury were impressed by the Nijmegen 'urban lab' which facilitates and supports synergies amongst stakeholders within the municipality. Their approach to using pilot schemes as a learning tool is to be commended.

2.3 UMEÅ

Umeå is a growing city, with aspirations of increasing their population from 120,000 inhabitants to 200,000 inhabitants by 2050. The challenges faced by the cold climatic conditions make Umeå an interesting European example with many innovations which are transferrable.

The jury appreciated the Umeå approach to the compact city. This approach is based on ensuring the trust of the citizens is obtained and the city can guarantee that quality of green areas and public space will not be compromised in the densification of the city.

Umeå understands the importance of working with pilot projects to evaluate and effect change. An example of this demonstrated by the city is the 'Green Parking Pay Off' scheme. This project incentivises property developers to allocate up to 40% less parking spaces within developments and encourage soft mobility such as car sharing, walking and public transport.

2.4 ESSEN

Essen demonstrates an impressive environmental performance across the 12 indicator areas. Essen is a city that has embraced transformation from a heavy industrial past to become a cleaner greener city. The jury was particularly impressed by how Essen has replaced old industries with new green jobs which have greater potential for the future.

Essen has many examples of transformation embedded within the city which include the ESSEN.New Ways to Water. This exemplary initiative has transformed the River Ruhr and returned it to the citizens of Essen. The Jury also recognised their inter-communal cooperation and the significant contribution which the city makes to the wider metropolitan Ruhr area. Essen demonstrated a strong vision for the future which is firmly based on the ethos 'ESSEntials –changing the way we act'. Behavioural change and citizen engagement are central to the Essen strategy.

In 2014 Essen proved its resilience through its response to Storm ELA. This successful response was due to the adaptation measures put in place along with a comprehensive catastrophe management plan.

Great strides have been made during this transformation to date. However work is still ongoing and ambitious targets have been set with dedicated infrastructure put in place to tackle areas that remain a challenge for the city. The Jury believes that Essen will act as a strong role model for other cities undergoing transformation.

3. JURY CONCLUSION

The Jury would like to commend all cities shortlisted for the 2017 European Green Capital Award for their demonstrated excellence in a number of the environmental indicators assessed.

Concluding its deliberations, the Jury decided to award the title of European Green Capital for 2017 to Essen.

Note: The unsuccessful cities are listed in alphabetical order.