



NEWS RELEASE

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Ten Years Going Green: 28 European towns and cities racing for European Green Capital Award 2020 and European Green Leaf Award 2019

28 towns and cities from across 21 European countries are officially competing to win the 2020 European Green Capital and 2019 European Green Leaf Awards. This is the highest number of countries entering the competition in the history of the two initiatives. With the 2020 title, the European Green Capital Award will be celebrating 10 years, as it first started in 2010, with Stockholm as a winner.

For the European Green Capital Award, the following cities are racing for the title: Aberdeen (United Kingdom), Budapest (Hungary), Bursa (Turkey), Ghent (Belgium), Guimarães (Portugal), Lahti (Finland), Lisbon (Portugal), Ostrava (Czech Republic), Prato (Italy), Reykjavik (Iceland), Seville (Spain), Tallinn (Estonia), Wrocław (Poland).

For the European Green Leaf Award, the following cities are in: Avignon (France), Nagyőrös (Hungary), Serres (Greece), Joensuu (Finland), Horst aan de Maas (Netherlands), Gabrovo (Bulgaria), Mechelen (Belgium), Pärnu (Estonia), Strovolos (Cyprus), Cornellà de Llobregat (Spain), Taurage (Lithuania), Delitzsch (Germany), Valmiera (Latvia), Santarém (Portugal), Roman (Romania).

Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, **Karmenu Vella** reflects on this year's applications:

"This is a very special year as the European Green Capital celebrates its 10th Anniversary. Over the last decade the initiative has become a badge of honour for cities and towns. It helps them showcase and even accelerate their environmental progress. Cities are on the frontline of efforts to establish a greener future. The story over the last 10 years shows that becoming a European Green Capital or European Green Leaf Award winner means constantly pushing that frontline forward. Good luck – and thank you – to all those competing this year".

For the first time ever, to celebrate the 10th year of the initiative, there is a financial incentive for the winners. The European Green Capital 2020 Award winner will receive €350,000 while each of the European Green Leaf 2019 Award winners will receive €75,000 to jump start their environmental programme for the year¹.

A panel of twelve independent, internationally acknowledged experts will now commence their technical assessment of each application. The shortlisted cities will be announced next April (2018) and will present their case to an international jury. In June, one city will be

¹ Subject to the approval of the EU 2018 Budget and approval by the College of the 2018 Financing Decision for the EU LIFE Programme.



awarded European Green Capital 2020 and up to two smaller cities or towns could be awarded European Green Leaf 2019.

In May 2018 the European Commission will be also launching another major event focusing on green cities. The next edition of the [EU Green Week](#) will explore ways in which the EU is helping cities to become better places to live and work.

MAPS OF ALL ENTRANTS – EGCA AND EGLA



Background

The European Green Capital (EGCA) and European Green Leaf Awards (EGLA) recognise cities and towns that are raising the bar in urban environmental practices. To date, ten cities have been awarded the title of European Green Capital since its launch in 2010. Stockholm, Sweden won the inaugural title, followed by Hamburg, Germany in 2011, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain in 2012, Nantes, France in 2013, Copenhagen, Denmark in 2014, Bristol, UK in 2015 and Ljubljana, Slovenia in 2016. This year, Essen, Germany holds the title for 2017, who will then pass the baton onto Nijmegen in the Netherlands in 2018 and then Oslo, Norway in 2019.

The European Green Leaf Award is for smaller European cities and towns of between 20,000 and up to 100,000 citizens to recognise and promote the efforts they have made towards better environmental management and outcomes. The European Green Leaf inaugural 2015 Award winners were both Mollet del Vallès, Spain and Torres Vedras, Portugal. The city of Galway in Ireland holds the title for European Green Leaf 2017. In 2018, Leuven, Belgium and Växjö, Sweden will hold the title.

For more information:

Websites: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital>
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/europeangreenleaf/>
Twitter: [@EU_GreenCapital](https://twitter.com/EU_GreenCapital)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward
EU Policy on Urban Environment: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/index_en.htm