



EUROPEAN
GREEN CAPITAL

An initiative of the
European Commission



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Further Information on the
European Green Capital Award for Media

Green cities - fit for life



European Green Capital Award – an initiative of the European Commission

Green cities - fit for life

What is the European Green Capital Award?

The European Green Capital Award promotes and rewards the efforts of cities that are committed to improving the urban environment.

The award is given every year to a city that:

- has a consistent record of achieving high environmental standards;
- is committed to ongoing and ambitious goals for further environmental improvement and sustainable development; and
- can act as a role model to inspire other cities and promote best practices across Europe.

The European Green Capital Award was launched by the European Commission in 2008, with the first city awarded the European Green Capital title in 2010.

How is the winning city selected?

The Award is open to any city with over 100,000 inhabitants in the EU Member States, Candidate Countries and Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Applicant cities are assessed on the basis of twelve environmental indicators:

- Climate change: mitigation and adaptation
- Local transport
- Green urban areas incorporating sustainable land use
- Nature and biodiversity
- Ambient air quality
- Quality of the acoustic environment
- Waste production and management
- Water management

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- Waste water treatment
 - Eco innovation and sustainable employment
 - Energy performance
 - Integrated environmental management

Initially, the applications are assessed by an independent panel of internationally acknowledged Experts who propose a shortlist of finalist cities.

The shortlisted cities are then invited to present their action plans and communication strategies to the Jury who then determines the winner. The Jury is made up of high level representatives from the European Commission, European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, European Environment Agency, ICLEI, European Environmental Bureau, and the Covenant of Mayors Office.

Tell me more about the previous winners...

2010 Stockholm, Sweden

Stockholm was chosen for its "holistic vision", combining growth with sustainable urban development.

All of Stockholm's trains and city buses run on renewable fuels, the city has an integrated waste system, and there are extensive green spaces contributing to better air quality, reducing noise, and enhancing biodiversity.

In its winning year, Stockholm launched a new Professional Study Visits Programme to strengthen networks with other European cities, organisations and research centres.

2011 Hamburg, Germany

Hamburg impressed the Jury with their reductions in carbon emissions. The CO2 emissions in the city have reduced by about 15% per capita compared to 1990, saving approximately 46,000 MWh a year - a huge achievement for a big city.

Hamburg also understands that the economy and ecology go hand in hand. This philosophy is reflected in the way the Port of Hamburg has developed over the past few years, for example by making more efficient use of the harbour basins to prevent geographical expansion.

In its winning year, Hamburg launched the "Train of Ideas" – a train with seven carriages, each looking at a different aspect of life in a green city. Hamburg presented its own best practices, as well as examples from other cities, allowing visitors across Europe to learn how cities can become more sustainable places. 70,000 visitors in 18 cities across 13 countries visited the Train of Ideas in 2011.



2012 Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain

Vitoria-Gasteiz stood out for its flagship Green Belt project, a semi-natural green area partially reclaimed from degraded areas, which surrounds the city centre. Overall, the city has a high proportion of green public areas, ensuring that the entire population lives within 300m of an open green space.

Vitoria-Gasteiz is also making major progress in urban water management through controlling leaks and technological improvements, as well as boosting public awareness. Between 2001 and 2009, water consumption per capita fell by 20%.

In its winning year Vitoria-Gasteiz secured external funding for new environmental projects including 250,000 more trees in the Green Belt and flood prevention works. In addition, several action plans were reinvigorated, including those aimed at improving public awareness of waste and reducing noise and light pollution.

2013 Nantes, France

Nantes impressed the Jury with its sustainable transport policy. Nantes was the first city in France to successfully re-introduce electric tramways, and investments in tramways (as well as bus services and bicycle infrastructure) are set to continue over the coming years.

The policy, together with an ambitious climate plan, has also reduced CO2 emissions to 4.77 tonnes per capita.

In its winning year Nantes brought together some of the world's experts on sustainability and environmental practices, by hosting a number of key conferences including Ecocity World Summit.

Nantes also used its winning year to spark wider citizen interest and involvement in sustainability issues. Its 'flying greenhouse' travelling exhibition, the 'Aéroflorale', captivated people's imagination in cities across Europe.

2014 Copenhagen, Denmark

Copenhagen intends to be carbon-neutral by 2025, through increasing the share of renewable energy in the city's district heating and by making it the world's best city for cyclists, among other initiatives. It plans to have 50% of people cycling to their place of work or education in 2015.

In its winning year, Copenhagen will emphasise the importance of finding shared solutions to environmental challenges, hence their tagline: 'Sharing Copenhagen'. They will invite cities of the world, international and local businesses, knowledge institutions, and citizens, to join in the conversation, during a packed series of events across 5 themes: The Good City Life of the Future, Resources & Sustainable Lifestyle, The Blue and Green City, Green Mobility and Climate and Green Transformation.

Copenhagen will also establish a new city network, for cities that have been shortlisted for the European



Green Capital Award. This network will enable the most progressive green cities in Europe to share knowledge and drive the urban environmental agenda forward together.

2015 Bristol, United Kingdom

Bristol impressed the Jury with its investment plans for energy. The city has committed a budget of €300m for energy efficiency and renewable energy by 2020. Bristol also demonstrated 4.7% growth in the green economy in 2012 and has the ambition of becoming a European hub for low-carbon industry.

Bristol's tagline 'Laboratory for Change' is based on innovation, learning and leadership. Social media and the innovation lab, via live lab conferences, will be used to make Bristol available to Europe, and the world, while reducing or removing any carbon footprint.

What are the benefits of being a European Green Capital?

There is no financial prize for winning the European Green Capital Award, however previous European Green Capitals have reported:

- **Increases in tourism** – the number of tourists visiting Vitoria-Gasteiz increased by 3.3% compared with the previous year
- **Positive international media coverage** – Hamburg's international media reports had a reach of over 41.6 million people
- **Improved international profiles, networking and new alliances** - Stockholm received 120 delegations to their study visits programme and participated in almost 80 other international events related to the award
- **Sponsorship and commitment for environmental projects** – Vitoria-Gasteiz raised € 2,650,600 in sponsorship for environmental projects and signed an agreement with the Basque Water Agency to curb flooding in the city
- **Pride among citizens and citizen engagement** – in Nantes, 100,000 people attended the European Green Capital public events, and a citizen project saw 51 families volunteering to monitor their waste for 3 months
- **Momentum to continue improving environmental sustainability** – 400 young people attended Hamburg's Environmental Youth Summit to discuss the city's future environmental issues, including energy and climate protection, sustainable consumption, resource conservation and urban development
- **The European Green Capital Network** - a network of finalist cities created to share the knowledge and experience of the most progressive green cities in Europe.



How can I find out more?

For more information visit the European Green Capital Award homepage:

www.europeangreencapital.eu

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward

Follow us on Twitter: [@EU_GreenCapital](https://twitter.com/EU_GreenCapital)

Join our LinkedIn Group: [European Green Capital Award](#)

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Or contact the Award Secretariat:

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To find out more about the winning cities, visit:

Stockholm European Green Capital homepage:

www.international.stockholm.se/Politics-and-organisation/European-Green-Capital

Hamburg European Green Capital homepage:

www.hamburggreencapital.eu

Vitoria-Gasteiz European Green Capital homepage:

www.vitoria-gasteiz.org/we001/was/we001Action.do?idioma=es&accionWe001=ficha&accion=greenCapital

Nantes European Green Capital homepage:

www.nantesgreencapital.fr/fr

Copenhagen European Green Capital homepage:

www.sharingcopenhagen.dk/

Bristol European Green Capital homepage:

www.bristolgreencapital.org/european-green-capital-award



Key Facts:

- Today, more than two thirds of Europeans live in towns and cities.
- Urban areas concentrate most of the environmental challenges facing our society, but also bring together commitment and innovation to resolve them.
- The European Green Capital Award promotes and rewards the efforts of cities that are committed to improving the urban environment.
- Every year since 2010, one European city has been selected as the European Green Capital.
- The winning cities so far are: Stockholm 2010, Hamburg 2011, Vitoria-Gasteiz 2012, Nantes 2013, Copenhagen 2014 and Bristol 2015.
- All of Stockholm's trains and city buses run on renewable fuels.
- In 2010 Stockholm hosted a Professional Study Visits Programme on themes such as waste management, urban planning, climate change and sustainable transport.
- Hamburg has reduced its CO2 emissions by about 15% per capita compared to 1990, saving approximately 46,000 MWh a year.
- In 2011 Hamburg's 'Train of Ideas' showcased sustainable urban solutions in 18 European cities including Warsaw, Malmö, Copenhagen, Brussels, Vienna, Barcelona and Marseille.
- Vitoria-Gasteiz's flagship Green Belt project has contributed to the doubling of the amount of green space in the city since 1974.
- In 2012 Vitoria-Gasteiz secured external funding for 250,000 more trees in their Green Belt.
- Nantes was the first city in France to successfully re-introduce electric tramways.
- In 2013 Nantes was also the first European city to host the Ecocity World Summit for sustainable cities.
- Copenhagen intends to be carbon-neutral by 2025, by increasing the share of renewable energy in the city's district heating, among other initiatives.

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- In 2014 Copenhagen's tagline is 'Sharing Copenhagen'. The programme of events will encourage green solutions to be shared at local, national, European and global levels.
 - Bristol demonstrated 4.7% growth in the green economy in 2012 and plans to become a European hub for low-carbon industry.
 - Bristol's 2015 'Laboratory for Change' model is based on innovation, learning and leadership and has great potential to act as a role model for the UK, Europe and the world.
 - European Green Capitals host a number of events and activities during their winning year, to engage citizens and other European cities on urban environmental issues.
 - For the 2016 title, the award was opened up to cities with over 100,000 inhabitants (it was previously only open to those with 200,000 inhabitants and above).
 - In 2014, a network of finalist cities was set up, the European Green Capital Network, to share the knowledge and experience of the most progressive green cities in Europe.
 - Previous European Green Capitals have reported increases in tourism, a greater sense of pride among their citizens, and international media coverage and investments in environmental projects worth millions of Euros.