



NEWS RELEASE

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Finalists announced for European Green Capital 2019 and European Green Leaf 2018 Awards

Ghent (Belgium), Lahti (Finland), Lisbon (Portugal), Oslo (Norway) and Tallinn (Estonia) are the five finalists shortlisted for the European Green Capital Award (EGCA) 2019. For the European Green Leaf (EGL) Award 2018 for smaller cities, the finalists are **Leuven (Belgium), Ludwigsburg (Germany) and Växjö (Sweden)**.

Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries,, said: *"I would like to congratulate the finalists of the European Green Capital 2019 and European Green Leaf 2018 Awards. This year the competition was fierce, with the record number of applicants for both awards. The best part about this shortlist is that the nominees are literally from the four corners of Europe. North, south, east and western cities are represented. This is a sure sign that the European Green Capital Awards idea has truly taken root. The diversity of experiences that these nominees bring show that there are many and varied paths to becoming a modern Green city."*

Over two thirds of Europeans now live in urban areas, presenting cities across Europe with problems related to energy consumption, pollution, waste management, housing, unemployment, transport, and water conservation. By showcasing the achievements of European cities in tackling these issues, the EGC and EGL Awards aim to lead by example and inspire others to take action.

The shortlisted cities will now have to convince the Jury of their overall commitment to ongoing environmental improvement and sustainable development, their capacity to act as a role model, and their strategy for communicating with the public. This year's winners will be announced at an award ceremony on 2 June 2017 in Essen, Germany, the current European Green Capital.

Background

The title of European Green Capital is awarded every year to a European city with a population of over 100 000 for its commitment to environmental, social and economic sustainability. To date, nine cities have been awarded the title of European Green Capital since its inception in 2010. Stockholm, Sweden won the inaugural title, followed by Hamburg, Germany (2011); Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain (2012); Nantes, France (2013); Copenhagen, Denmark (2014); Bristol, UK (2015); Ljubljana, Slovenia (2016); Essen, Germany (2017); and Nijmegen, Netherlands (2018).

The EGCA was established to address many of the challenges faced by European cities today. The Award recognises efforts to make cities more environmentally friendly and demonstrate a commitment to public engagement and local economic development.

Following the success of the ECGA, the European Green Leaf Award was launched in 2015 to give smaller cities (20 000 – 100 000 inhabitants), recognition for their achievements in sustainability. The EGL places a particular focus on creating employment and green growth. Three cities have been awarded the title so far: Mollet del Vallès in Spain, Torres Vedras in Portugal, and the current European Green Leaf city, Galway, Ireland.

For more information

Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward

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

LinkedIn: [European Green Capital Award](https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-green-capital-award)

EU policy on Urban Environment: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/index_en.htm