



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
PRESS RELEASE

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Shortlisted cities for European Green Capital 2018 & European Green Leaf 2017 announced; next application cycle launched

Today the European Commission has announced the finalist cities to advance to the next stage of the European Green Capital 2018 and 2017 European Green Leaf competitions:

For European Green Capital:

's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands
Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Umeå, Sweden

For European Green Leaf:

Cornellà de Llobregat (Spain)
Galway (Ireland)
Mikkeli (Finland)

EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu **Vella** said:

"I am very happy to announce the shortlisted cities for the European Green Capital Award 2018 and Green Leaf Award 2017. Each year the quality of applications grows and it is encouraging to have previously shortlisted cities reapplying and learning from the process. They can become real role models for a sustainable future, showing us how we can make cities better places to live. The next step for nominated cities will be very exciting. But in this race, it really is the taking part that counts".

The six shortlisted cities will now go forward to the next stage which involves presenting their future vision to the Jury. Shortlisted cities will need to highlight their innovations and activities for citizens, and show how they would act as a role model and promote best practices in other European cities. The winners will be announced on 22 June 2016 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, Europe's current Green Capital.

Also new this year, EU Green Week, the biggest annual occasion to debate European environment policy, will open in the current Green Capital, Ljubljana. From 30 May to 3 June, events and activities across Europe will focus on the many facets of green investment,

with stops in Ljubljana, Brussels, Vienna and beyond. The first thematic day in Ljubljana will focus on "Investing for greener cities", looking at how we can make cities better places to live.

Today the Commission has also launched the search for the 2019 European Green Capital and 2018 European Green Leaf Awards. The application forms, as well as details on how to register, are available at: www.europeangreencapital.eu

To help potential applicants understand the process and to encourage them to apply, the Commission is organising workshops. For the 2019 European Green Capital competition, an **applicant workshop** will take place on 1 July 2016 in Brussels. For the 2018 European Green Leaf competitors, an online applicants' workshop will take place in June.

Background

The European Green Capital Award (EGCA) is given each year to a European city with an established record of high environmental standards, which is committed to future sustainable development. Cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants can apply. Since 2010, the cities of Stockholm (2010), Hamburg (2011), Vitoria-Gasteiz (2012), Nantes (2013), Copenhagen (2014), Bristol (2015) and Ljubljana (2016) were recognised as European Green Capitals, acting as role models to inspire and promote best practices in urban sustainable development. In addition, since 2015, towns and cities with a population between 20 000 and 100 000 can apply for the European Green Leaf Award. The title recognises towns and cities that demonstrate a strong environmental record, with a particular emphasis on efforts that engage citizens' in environmental awareness, generate green growth and new jobs. Both competitions are open to EU Member States, EU Candidate Countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

For more information:

Website: www.europeangreencapital.eu

Facebook: www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward

Twitter: @EU_GreenCapital

European Green Capital secretariat: info@europeangreencapital.eu, phone: +32 2 663 30 47

EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2018 FINALISTS

's-Hertogenbosch (The Netherlands)

's-Hertogenbosch lies at the intersection between Amsterdam, Antwerp, Breda and Tilburg. With over 150 000 inhabitants, the municipality uses smart planning to reduce the environmental impact of new building developments, restricts traffic in the inner city and encourages the use of electric vehicles by developing charging infrastructure. The city is also making sure that municipal property will be carbon-neutral by 2020.

Nijmegen (The Netherlands)

Nijmegen sits on the river Waal, between hills, polders and forests. It is a student city with more than 170 000 inhabitants. Building a sustainable living environment ranks very high on the municipal agenda: health and innovation are priorities. The city, which recognises the logic of moving towards a circular economy, will capitalise on renewable energy with a new energy efficient district connected to a residual heat network. The local energy cooperative is planning to build four wind turbines.

Umeå (Sweden)

Umeå is located in northern Sweden with a growing population of 120 000 inhabitants. It is an international centre for research and education. The city, which held the title of 2014 European Capital of Culture, has invested in green infrastructure such as a municipal co-generation energy system, and in the co-owned hydro-electric power plant and clean water supply. The city council believes that with a growing population, Umeå's success relies on social, ecological and economic sustainability.

EUROPEAN GREEN LEAF 2017 FINALISTS

Cornellà de Llobregat (Spain)

Cornellà de Llobregat is a city of around 86 000 inhabitants located inside the metropolitan area of Barcelona. Confronted some years ago with the side-effects of heavy traffic and a lack of green areas, the city decided to implement various environmental projects. Among them is 'Cornella Nature', a plan to enhance the balance of the city and the local area by establishing designated green zones within and around the city.

Galway (Ireland)

Galway is a harbour city on the west coast of the Republic of Ireland with 75 000 inhabitants. In 2015, the city launched its vision for 2025 'Towards a Cultural Sustainable Strategy for Galway'. Galway's ambition is to become a role model in economic sustainability, environmental responsibility, safeguarding cultural heritage, artistic innovation, community participation and social inclusion.

Mikkeli (Finland)

Mikkeli is located in Eastern Finland, 240 kilometres from Helsinki, with a population of approximately 55 000 people. The city aims to promote a healthy and ecologically sustainable urban environment by focusing on four key dimensions: preservation of pure water; promotion of renewable energy sources, namely bioenergy; integration of clean technology in waste management; and systematic implementation of digital solutions.