

Participation rules and registration

Eligibility criteria

- The submitting body must be a government authority of a city of over 50,000 inhabitants in one of the EU Member States. In Member States with less than two such cities, urban areas composed of two or more towns may also participate if their combined population exceeds 50,000 inhabitants;
- Applications are to be submitted preferably in English, but French and German will be accepted;
- Applications must be made by completing and submitting the online application form by the deadline of 8 September 2016, midnight (Brussels time).

Evaluation criteria

1. Scope of the actions

- The applicant shall provide a description of actions, policies and initiatives - whether already implemented or at the planning stage - in all four key areas of accessibility:

-the built environment and public spaces;

-transportation and related infrastructures;

-information and communication, including information and communication technologies (ICT);

-public facilities and services.

- The successful applicant is expected to demonstrate a coherent approach to accessibility across all four areas, and an ambitious vision for the future in tackling accessibility in the city.

2. Ownership, level of commitment

- Applicants should outline the structures or framework set up in the city's administration to implement accessibility actions;
- The applications should demonstrate that the actions implemented or planned are part of a coherent strategy or policy framework, rather than just ad hoc projects;
- The accessibility strategy should be mainstreamed in the city's policies and its regulations;
- A policy statement/commitment on accessibility at high level of responsibility should be visible;
- Information about appropriate resources (staff, budget, etc...) allocated to implement these policies should be provided;
- Considerations of cost of accessibility should be combined with an assessment of the expected benefits.

3. Impact

- The city's policies/initiatives should have a demonstrable positive impact on the everyday life of persons with disabilities, and on the quality of life in the city in general;
- Examples should be provided of initiatives initially targeting persons with disabilities, explaining how they benefit wider parts of the population, when relevant;
- The applicants should include qualitative and quantitative data to support claims of success and provide concrete examples;
- Planned initiatives and policies will be considered for their coherence and potential impact.

4. Quality and sustainability of results

- Applicants will need to explain what structures, mechanisms and processes have been put in place to ensure the quality and sustainability of the results achieved;
- The quality of results is defined in terms of improvements made to the level of accessibility and advancing compliance with standards and legislation;
- Delivering sustainable results requires continuous efforts, secure resources and the establishment of a sound structure; evaluation and monitoring mechanisms (for regular checking, the notification and repairing of problems, the handling of complaints, etc.) are essential to evaluate success.

5. Involvement of persons with disabilities and relevant partners

- Active and clear involvement of persons with disabilities, their representative organizations, and accessibility experts should be demonstrated in both the planning, implementation and maintenance of city's policies and initiatives aimed at increased accessibility;
- The applicants should also outline how they raise awareness around accessibility, and whether and how they disseminate, exchange and share experience and good practice with other cities at local, regional, national and/or European level.

Selection process

The selection takes place in two phases, with a) a **pre-selection at the national level** followed by b) a **final selection at the European level**.

a) The National Juries select a maximum of three cities in the Member State (called national candidates).

b) Out of the national candidates that were pre-selected, the European Jury selects the **winners of the first, second and third price**.

In addition, two cities will be selected to receive a **special mention**, namely 1) access to work and 2) accessible smart cities. The access to work special mention will reward efforts undertaken by cities to ensure that public employment services and initiatives by the private sector facilitate the access to work and they make information on jobs accessible to people with disabilities. Your city can also present initiatives with private or public sector bodies which work to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities in particular

through improvement of accessibility, for example, in workplaces or in transport to ensure that every part of the journey from home to the workplace is accessible. The accessible smart cities special mention will recognize efforts by cities to ensure that they become smart in an inclusive manner, in particular ensuring that their technologies, user interfaces, and related services are accessible for people with disabilities following a Design for all approach.

The European Jury makes its decision based on a **standard set of evaluation criteria** to ensure consistency, transparency and equity in the process.

The criteria used and their weight are specified in the table below. The applicants who at the national level do not obtain at least 60 points cannot be admitted to the European level of the competition.

Criterion	Maximum no. of points
1. Scope of the actions	20
2. Ownership, level of commitment	20
3. Impact	20
4. Quality and sustainability of results	20
5. Involvement of persons with disabilities and relevant partners	20
TOTAL	100