

NANTES

winner 2013



EUROPEAN
GREEN CAPITAL

An initiative of the
European Commission



Green cities - fit for life



MESSAGE FROM NANTES



Following Stockholm, Hamburg and Vitoria-Gasteiz, Nantes is the European Union's Green Capital for 2013. This distinction rewards all our efforts in favour of the environment and rational development. It is also an incentive to mobilise our forces to take a new leap forward: involving public and private players, associations, and above all the citizens of Nantes themselves, who have made this progress possible and are also the chief beneficiaries.

This European recognition shows that the 'Nantaise' route towards long-term development - realised collectively and founded on good quality public services, social cohesion, and valuing natural assets - is also a useful example for others. It is possible to choose optimism rather than doing nothing. We must innovate, act, and decide together on our common future. To that end, we must:

Take the lead: to enable all citizens to get involved in this exceptional year, be aware of the issues, express their aspirations, contribute to a broad debate and achieve progress for our metropolis, from now to 2030. Our city has to grow, and it is up to us to decide how.

Contribute: for many years now, Nantes has been committed to action to safeguard biodiversity and combat climate change. In

2013, Nantes will host major events like the Ecocity World Summit and the World Forum on Human Rights: crossroads for ideas and initiatives that will generate forward-looking policies and activities capable of building sustainable cities.

Be influential: we want to share our experiences, our successes and our quality of life with other European cities: coordinated transport networks (Tramway, Navibus, Busway, Chronobus), air quality, waste management and recycling, urban planning, our Climate Plan, protection of biodiversity, water quality. It is through working together that we will build tomorrow's cities.

*Gilles Retière
Mayor of Rezé
President of Greater Nantes*

*Patrick Rimbert
Mayor of Nantes*



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The Rings (Les Anneaux) by Daniel Buren is a work of art within a richly historical setting, which today forms part of an ambitious urban development scheme.

NANTES AT A GLANCE

Nantes is located on the confluence of the Loire, Erdre and Sèvre rivers, 55km from France's Atlantic coast, and forms the core of the urban area of Greater Nantes.

Nantes can trace its roots back to pre-Roman times. From the 19th century onwards, it became an important industrial base. Together with the downstream coastal town of Saint-Nazaire, it was the largest port in France – a major trading centre, especially across the Atlantic. The river is still accessible to ocean-going ships. In 1975, Nantes was home to some 60,000 industrial workers – many of them in the shipbuilding sector.

With the closure of the shipyards in the late 1980s, Nantes faced a difficult social climate tinged with disappointment and despondency. Believing culture to be essential to social cohesion, Nantes made it the central and cross-cutting focus of all its plans.

Nantes: facts and figures

- France's sixth largest city with a metropolitan population of some 600,000 inhabitants
- France's third most attractive city for employment
- Urban area of 534.9 km²
- 24 municipalities
- Temperate climate with cool winters and mild summers
- Predicted growth to 700,000 by 2030

This approach entailed confronting the past and consciously relating it to the future. Planners linked the city's heritage to their development project: converting the shipyard into public places, attracting new, high-tech industries, making culture and art a hallmark



©Christian Komig

A view over the city centre from the Brittany Tower

of the city, and adopting a long-term plan for environmentally friendly, sustainable development. The arrival of the fast 'TGV' train, putting Nantes just two hours from Paris, helped the city's renaissance. Nantes was transformed into the "green wonder of western France", with a steady rate of carefully managed growth.

Nantes' green facts and figures

- Everyone lives within 300 metres of a green area in the city
- 57 metres² of green space per person
- 100,000 trees in the city
- 15% of daily travels are made using public transport
- Winner of the Civitas Award in 2009
- An ambitious Climate Action Plan to reduce CO₂ emissions by 30% per capita by 2020 in three sectors: residential, transport and tertiary (baseline 2003)
- 60% of land area is either agricultural or a natural or official green area
- Four Natura 2000 sites and 33 natural zones of floral, faunal or ecological interest

2013 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Nantes is planning a full year of activities throughout 2013, including the presence of state representatives at one highlight of the year, plus international conferences, themed weeks, workshops and visits.

- The fifth World Forum on Human Rights entitled 'Sustainable Development / Human Rights: a common struggle?' takes place in Europe, in Nantes, on 22-25 May 2013.
- The 10th Ecocity Conference will, for the first time be held in the EU, in Nantes on 25-27 September 2013. This important event brings together highly motivated, experienced and effective decision-makers from around the globe to discuss the key actions cities and citizens can take to rebuild the human environment in harmony with living systems.
- In 2013, Nantes will host the third world meeting of Mexico's pact-signing cities in the Ecocity Builders movement.
- As a striking symbol of Nantes' green creativity, the Aéroflorale II plant expedition (expedition végétale, created by François Delarozière) will be a European centrepiece of the city's year as Green Capital. With its crew of scientists and explorers, the giant craft is host to biological experiments and discoveries. This mobile exhibition will help to spread the Green Capital message as it embarks on a tour of European cities.



©Patrick Garçon

The 'expedition végétale' created by François Delarozière will amaze visitors around Europe

What impressed the experts

Nantes gained its highest marks from the European Green Capital Award judges for its local contribution to combating climate change. The city also secured good scores on nature and biodiversity, air quality, noise reduction and waste production and management criteria.

The judges praised its "pioneering transport achievements" over the last 10 years, including the new tram system, quality bus schemes, bike rental and car-sharing facilities.

The experts found a very high awareness of the problems associated with urban sprawl, with moves to increase population density and protect virgin land from development.

WHAT MAKES NANTES SPECIAL



The Loire, France's longest river, crosses Nantes, and connects the city to the Atlantic port of Saint-Nazaire. Through the years, it has played a fundamental role in the city's history and evolution, and in forging its character.

Nantes is a dynamic, forward-looking city, in which greening the environment is one important element of a policy approach focused on improving the overall quality of life for residents. This principle underlies all city decision-making.

The social and cultural aspects of urban living are as important as the built and natural environment, and local authorities have adopted a progressive, integrated strategy, with 2013 as the next important milestone on the journey.

Above all, policy-making is based on citizen and stakeholder involvement. At every step of the way, the people of Nantes are consulted, in order to generate a collective spirit, and to empower them to feel they can make a difference in improving their urban environment and living standards.

Public services for social cohesion and sustainable development

In Nantes, 25% of accommodation is social housing. A high density of public services and utilities, including good quality transport, energy and waste management, enables the population to live more sustainably, whatever their income.

Services are designed to encourage social solidarity – with communal family gardens, collective composting and community heating systems using renewable energy. Environmental protection, improving air and water quality and safeguarding green spaces, increases the enjoyment of life for all.



©Christian Kong

Nantes has adopted a long-term plan for environmentally friendly, sustainable development

Dynamic growth

Housing policy is coordinated with transport policy. An ambitious transport network already allows 15% of commuters to use public transport daily.

To tackle the urban-sprawl challenge more efficiently, Nantes designed a common urban planning framework for Nantes/Saint-Nazaire, called 'Scot' (Schéma de cohérence territoriale) which set out a plan of settlement for business zones, housing zones and infrastructure, while protecting agricultural lands and natural spaces, especially the Loire estuary and other green and blue corridors.

These integrated policies have effectively reduced urban sprawl. Compared with the 1990s, the take-up of land for urban residential and mixed spaces (housing, facilities, etc) shows a fall of 22%, whereas the construction of housing units increased during the same period from an average of 4,981 per year in 1999-2004, to 6,212. Thanks to these policies, Nantes has preserved more than 15,000 hectares of natural and farmland spaces.



©Roberto Giarrandè

Local people work together to implement Nantes' green policies



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The Manny building is a landmark of the creative quarter, embodying two essential aspects of modern society: creativity and eco-responsibility

Greater Nantes' climate action plan

Greater Nantes' council unanimously adopted the territorial Climate Action Plan in 2007. The objective is to go beyond the EU's energy and climate package and the Covenant of Mayors' targets, to cut emissions by 30% per capita by 2020 (baseline 2003) for three sectors: residential, transport and tertiary. It also comprises adaptation measures to limit the threat of damage from climate change.

- The Climate Action Plan aims to align public policies and spending with climate-friendly principles. Climate counsellors give advice on how to save energy in the private residential sector.
- New eco-building techniques help to save resources, and the development of heating networks using biomass is under way.
- Partners in France's emerging offshore wind-farm market are also based in Nantes.
- The Climate Action Plan, together with an ambitious transport policy, have improved air quality in the city, bringing all pollution indicators - NO₂, PM10 and ozone - down below limit values, and reducing CO₂ output to 4.77 tonnes per capita in 2009.
- Nantes and Saint-Nazaire are currently cooperating on three major research programmes on alternative energy sources, focusing on marine hybrid propulsion, generating energy from household waste (PREVER), and harnessing wave power (SEAREV).

A city on the move

Transport is playing a vital role in Nantes' commitments to lowering carbon dioxide emissions and facilitating a better quality of life for its citizens.

Nantes was the first French city to successfully reintroduce electric tramways. Closed in 1958, the Tramway network re-opened in 1985 and today covers 42km - making it one of the longest in France - and facilitates some 65 million passenger journeys a year. Nantes' inhabitants make some 2 million journeys a day - 15% of them by public transport. So to encourage more of its citizens to leave the car at home, Nantes is progressively introducing new, high-quality public transport infrastructure.

Launched in 2006, the Busway uses dedicated bus lanes and has right-of-way over other traffic at junctions - thus it combines the speed of a dedicated tramline with the lower cost of a bus system. With 15 stations spread over 7km, the Busway carries over 25,000 passengers a day and complements the 72 standard bus routes that link the municipalities of Greater Nantes.

Chronobus is a next-generation public transport system which builds on the Busway concept with structural alterations such as road widening



The Eric Tabarly bridge, opened in 2011, is named after the round-the-world sailor, born in Nantes

and roundabouts that will guarantee rapid journey times between the city centre and its surrounding suburbs. With four lines launched in 2012 and a further six planned, the Chronobus will carry some 100,000 passengers a day and more than double the size of Nantes' transport network.



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A standard price for water, agreed through negotiations with the three major providers, is evidence of equality and solidarity between all the inhabitants of Greater Nantes

Waste

Greater Nantes has a well-functioning waste management system, with only 11% of rubbish going to landfill - none of it biodegradable. Household waste production has fallen over the last 10 years or so. Recycling accounts for 35% of municipal waste disposal, and energy is recovered from incineration plants. Greater Nantes also takes part in national waste-prevention and recycling projects.

Water

Water consumption in Greater Nantes has been falling per capita through a targeted water-pricing policy and awareness campaigns. The city has action plans for the detection of leaks and for upgrading the water supply network and water metering. It benefits from an ample water supply from the River Loire, and so it has focused efforts on improving quality and expanding water-protection zones to supply drinking water.



©Patrick Garçon

Farmlands are protected against urban encroachment, and farmers get help to find land and investment

Green spaces for greener lifestyles

Located on the Loire, Erdre and Sèvre rivers and close to the Atlantic seaboard, Nantes is blessed with a variety of natural environments, such as wetlands and forests, which extend into the city itself.

The number of green and blue spaces has grown over the last decade. Some 15% of the city area is made up of 99 formal gardens, parks and squares which are integral to the city's lifestyle and host a variety of horticultural and social events throughout the year. From these green spaces, 250km of waterways link the city to the countryside, hosting flora and fauna ranging from the most common to the very rare. Management plans ensure the preservation of wetlands and special areas like the four Natura 2000 sites.

A ring of forests

The 'Urban Forests' project protects three woodland sites from building development, while at the same time extending them, through land purchases and cooperation with existing owners. By managing these diverse woodland sites - for example by reforestation and ecosystem preservation - the project is opening ecological corridors inwards to the city to offer its citizens wooded green spaces close by for leisure and adventure.

Suburban agriculture

As a metropolitan region, Greater Nantes sees agriculture as essential to striking the right balance between urban growth and the need to preserve natural spaces. In this, it is helped by the diversity and productivity of regional agriculture which includes, among other sectors, cattle rearing, dairy production, market gardening and, of course, the vines that produce Muscadet wine. Greater Nantes has 330 farms, providing 1,400 jobs. Nantes actively brings abandoned farmland in suburban areas of the city back into use by helping potential farmers and cooperatives find the finance and land they need to set up as agricultural producers.

Nantes' nature in numbers

- More than 250km of rivers and 210km of riverside walks
- 27km² of water
- 47 protected plants
- 127 rare or threatened plants
- 19 protected animals
- 15 rare or threatened animals
- 4 IBAs (Important Bird Areas)
- 33 ZNIEFFs (Natural Areas of Ecological, Faunistic and Floristic Interest)
- 4 Natura 2000 areas

Business and tourism

From heavy industry to high-tech

Manufacturing now makes up only 11% of jobs in Nantes, with aviation and agri-food among the biggest employers. To compensate, the city has developed greener jobs in research and new technologies, with early investment in citizens' access to online services - now being upgraded.

As part of the 'Investment for the Future' government-backed spending programme (Grand Emprunt), Greater Nantes is joining forces with other economic partners to take part in major strategic projects. The Jules Verne IRT (Technological Research Institute) is working to make Nantes a world benchmark in advanced technology for complex structures and composite materials, particularly in terms of green processes and recycling by-products and composite waste.

There are also ambitious projects in the innovative marine bio-resources and renewable energy sectors, adding to a significant energy infrastructure network.

Greater Nantes is the biggest funder of the Atlanpole partnership, supporting young enterprises in the field of sustainable development and green technology.

Green Passport

To encourage eco-tourism in particular, Nantes is a partner in the 'Green Passport', a tool for promoting hotels, inns, campsites and restaurants that pursue sustainable practices. The authorities are working with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as well as the region/department of Loire-Atlantique and local bodies, including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other stakeholders. The partners sign a charter committing themselves to the principles of sustainable tourism.

Look again

Estuaire is an artistic adventure uniting landscape, art and the River Loire, around Nantes and Saint-Nazaire. It was designed to offer a fresh perspective on the natural environment. From 2007 to 2012, works of contemporary art were placed along the 60km stretch of water between the two cities. Some of them are now permanent features of the landscape.



©Valéry Jorjerey

The Peage Sauvage observatory at the heart of the Little Amazon nature reserve is an impressive wooden sculpture, built for the Estuaire 2012 contemporary art project



Brownfield sites have been transformed into recreational areas

An island of vision for the city

Nantes is developing old industrial sites in the city centre using state-of-the-art principles for a sustainable urban ecology, which combines energy-efficient housing with green spaces and leisure facilities to accommodate its growing population.

The île de Nantes is an island on the River Loire, at the core of the city. Originally the western end was home to the port and shipyards, but these activities have moved further downriver to the mouth of the Loire, leaving behind an industrial brownfield site available for new and innovative sustainable and environmentally friendly uses.

Today, an ambitious urban sustainable development project is under way to create an 'eco-quarter' on the island, including housing, gardens, leisure spaces, shops and workshops.

The project aims to provide around 1 million m² of additional living space, including some 7,500 new housing units for 15,000 to 20,000 people – thus doubling the current population of the island.

Public awareness

Greater Nantes is a partner in the 'Families for Positive Energy' competition in the Pays de la Loire, showing how households can work together to reduce their carbon footprint through practical, measurable and sociable activities. The principle is simple: teams made up of a dozen families get together to represent their neighbourhood and confront the challenge of cutting their domestic energy use – including heating, hot water and household appliances – as much as possible. Each team pledges to consume at least 8% less energy than the previous winter – in line with the Kyoto Protocol targets. What matters is working and making progress together. By the end of the 2011-2012 competition, the seven participating teams had reduced their energy consumption by about 20%.

In 2011, Greater Nantes also launched a new citizens' initiative to cut waste. It invited volunteer households, including single people, families with children and pensioners, to take part in a three-month trial aimed at exploring ways to reduce domestic rubbish. Since January 2012, 90% of Nantes citizens are able to sort their rubbish at home and get it collected from the doorstep. In 2013, 100% of Nantes' citizens will benefit from the service.

The 'Soft Mobility Plan' (Plan de déplacements doux), adopted in December 2009 with a budget of €40 million, aims to double the proportion of city bicycle journeys by 2015. Nantes tries to encourage its citizens to adopt more environmentally friendly modes of travel through informing and advising them on different options to suit their needs, for example during the annual European Mobility Week.

Learning to live in an environmentally sustainable way is easier when it starts young. So Greater Nantes uses a range of initiatives to reach its citizens early and encourage green living. The Exhibition Centre (Centre des Expositions) is at the core of these efforts, offering a range of

teaching resources and activities for students from primary schools.

'My life, my town, my planet' is a programme based around six themes – each of them related in turn to the global context, the local setting, and the life of the individual child. The aim is to demonstrate the link between what is happening to the planet and to the place where they live, and their everyday behaviour.

Greater Nantes runs additional programmes, enabling students to visit a water treatment plant, waste disposal unit, or photovoltaic energy centre.

COPENHAGEN: EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2014

Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, with a population of 541,989, will be European Green Capital in 2014. The city's Green Business Model is an example of sustainable economic development, tackling environmental, economic and social concerns, with good potential for

replication across other cities. Copenhagen has placed public-private partnerships at the core of its approach to eco-innovation and sustainable employment and it works with companies, universities and organisations in dedicated forums to develop and implement green growth.



Copenhagen

Copenhagen European Green Capital 2014



A 'collective art work' at the opening of the Fabrique cultural and artistic centre in September 2011



www.europeangreencapital.eu

European Green Capital Secretariat

The application process and the work of the expert panel and the jury are facilitated by the European Green Capital Secretariat, currently run by RPS Group, an environmental & communications consultancy based in Ireland. The secretariat also assists with PR activities related to the award scheme through the European Green Capital Award website, Facebook and Twitter pages, and through various communication channels such as brochures and press releases.



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