



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Environment: 7 cities apply for European Green Capital Award 2018 and 10 cities for European Green Leaf 2016

A total of 17 European cities have announced their candidacy for the 2018 European Green Capital and the 2016 European Green Leaf Awards. The following cities have entered the competition:

For European Green Capital 2018:

Arad, Romania
Ghent, Belgium
Nijmegen, The Netherlands
's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands
Tallinn, Estonia
Umeå, Sweden
Warsaw, Poland

For European Green Leaf 2016:

Aosta, Italy
Cornellà de Llobregat, Spain
Galway, Ireland
Kardzhali, Bulgaria
La Roche-sur-Yon, France
Mikkeli, Finland
Orbassano, Italy
San Miniato, Italy
Serres, Greece
Strovolos, Cyprus

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

"Two-thirds of Europeans live in towns and cities. Their health and well-being depends on how well city authorities address environmental challenges. The European Green Capital and European Green Leaf Awards recognise these remarkable efforts of environmentally-friendly cities. I am delighted to see cities from across the EU coming forward to show their progress towards a greener future. The winners to date are role models and inspire other cities to make their urban spaces sustainable and ultimately more enjoyable places in which to live, work and play."

The **European Green Capital Award**, now in its ninth year, pays tribute to European cities where innovation has taken hold; it recognises cutting-edge, environmentally-

friendly urban living. European Green Capital Award winners set higher standards in sustainable urban development, listening to what their citizens want and pioneering innovative solutions to attract investment.

An expert panel will assess each entry on the basis of 12 indicators covering climate change mitigation and adaptation; local transport; green urban areas incorporating sustainable land use; ambient air quality; nature and biodiversity; quality of the acoustic environment; waste production and management; water management; waste-water treatment; eco-innovation and sustainable employment; energy performance and integrated environmental management.

2016 marks the second round of the **European Green Leaf Award**, which seeks to recognise the progress made by Europe's smaller cities towards innovative green solutions. Much is being done by local authorities and citizens to improve their environment and many others can learn from the best practices they have developed.

Green Leaf applications will be assessed on the basis of six criteria, including climate change and energy performance, mobility, biodiversity and land use, quality of air and the acoustic environment, waste management and green economy, water and wastewater management. Following the technical evaluation, a number of cities will be shortlisted for the EGCA 2018 and for the EGL 2016 titles.

In June 2016, the shortlisted cities will be invited to present their proposals to the Jury. The Jury will evaluate their commitment to continuous environmental improvement, the level of ambition of their future goals, their communication activities in favour of citizens, and the extent to which they would be able to act as a role model and promote their best practices. In addition to being an inspiration to others, the winning city will benefit from an increased profile, enhancing their city's reputation as a desirable place to visit, work, play and live.

The winners of both competitions will be announced at an Award Ceremony in June 2016 in Ljubljana, the 2016 European Green Capital.

Background

To date, eight 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 in 2011, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain in 2012, Nantes, France in 2013 and Copenhagen, Denmark in 2014. The current holder for 2015 is Bristol, UK. Ljubljana, Slovenia will hold the title for 2016 and will pass it to Essen, Germany for 2017.

As for Green Leaf, the joint winners of the 2015 Award were Mollet del Vallès, Spain and Torres Vedras, Portugal.

The Jury comprises representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the European Environment Agency, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the Covenant of Mayors Office and the European Environmental Bureau.

Europe is now an essentially urban society, with more than two thirds of European citizens living in towns and cities. Many of the environmental challenges facing European society originate from urban areas but it is also these urban areas that bring together the commitment, determination and innovation needed to resolve them.

For more information:

Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital>,
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/europeangreenleaf/index.html>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward

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