



## PRESS RELEASE

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### European Green Capital 2021 and European Green Leaf 2020 Awards: Competing towns and cities revealed

21 towns and cities from across 14 European countries are competing for the 2021 European Green Capital and 2020 European Green Leaf Awards. This competition cycle attracted a high number of cities from all over the EU, in particular from Southern and Eastern European countries, as well as a total of 13 first time applicants.

The European Green Capital and European Green Leaf Awards were created to recognise and reward the achievements of pioneering cities in their efforts to improve the local environment and quality of life. Despite the numerous environmental problems faced by most cities today, European cities are standard-setters in urban sustainability and often pioneer innovative solutions to combat these environmental challenges.

The following nine cities are competing for the **European Green Capital 2021 Award**: Budapest (Hungary); Cagliari (Italy); Dijon (France); Lahti (Finland); Lille (France); Skopje (Macedonia); Strasbourg (France); Tirana (Albania); and Västerås (Sweden).





12 cities are in the running for the **European Green Leaf 2020 Award**, as follows: Avignon (France); Kaposvár (Hungary); Lappeenranta (Finland); Limerick (Ireland); Mairena del Alcor (Spain); Mechelen (Belgium); Oliveira do Hospital (Portugal); Svishtov (Bulgaria); Szentes (Hungary); Valmiera (Latvia); Viana do Castelo (Portugal); and Vranje (Serbia).



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

*"I am very pleased to see that the European Green Capital and European Green Leaf Awards have attracted so many new towns and cities this year. These cities are working hard to be better places for their citizens to live, work and grow old. I have no doubt that all applicants are outstanding and we can celebrate these remarkable efforts and achievements. Being named Green Capital or Green Leaf is about being the best of the best."*

### **Next steps**

A panel of twelve independent, internationally recognised experts will now begin a technical assessment of each application to select a shortlist of cities for both awards. This expert panel will assess the European Green Capital applications on the basis of 12 environmental indicators: climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, sustainable urban mobility, sustainable land use, nature and biodiversity, air quality, noise, waste, water, green growth and eco-innovation, energy performance, and governance. For the European Green Leaf Award, the expert panel will assess the applications based on six environmental topic areas; climate change and energy performance; sustainable urban mobility; nature,



biodiversity and sustainable land use; air quality and noise; waste and circular economy; and water.

The finalists for both awards will be announced in April 2019 and will then be invited to present their case to an international jury. The jury will evaluate the cities' commitment to sustainable urban development, their capacity to act as a role model to other cities and their strategy for communicating and engaging with their citizens. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in June in Oslo, the 2019 European Green Capital.

## **Background**

Today, most cities face a common set of core environmental problems, including poor air quality, traffic congestion, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, floods and storms, and inappropriate waste and energy management.

The European Green Capital and European Green Leaf Awards recognise towns and cities that are raising the bar in urban environmental practices. Since its launch in 2010, eleven cities have been awarded the title of European Green Capital. The European Green Leaf Award was launched in 2015, and is given to smaller European towns and cities, of between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants. Seven cities have been granted this award since its launch.

*For more information on previous winners of both awards, see here:*

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/europeangreenleaf/egl-winning-cities/>

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/winning-cities/>

## **For more information:**

Websites: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital>  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/europeangreenleaf/>

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

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanGreenCapitalAward)

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](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/urban/index_en.htm)