



European Green Leaf Award 2022

Guidance Note

May 2020

www.ec.europa.eu/europeangreenleaf

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	SELECTION PROCESS.....	1
2.1	FORMAT OF THE APPLICATION	1
2.1.1	Word Count and Limitations	2
2.1.2	Captioning and Aligning Graphics/Images/Tables	7
2.2	TRANSLATION	10
2.3	NEXT STEPS	11
3	HINTS AND TIPS: HOW TO COMPLETE A HIGH QUALITY APPLICATION.....	12
4	THE APPLICATION FORM: OVERVIEW.....	14
4.1	DECLARATIONS.....	14
4.2	SECTION A: CITY INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT.....	14
4.3	SECTION B: TOPIC AREAS	14
4.4	SECTION C: GOOD PRACTICES.....	16
5	TOPIC AREAS.....	17
5.1	NATURE, BIODIVERSITY, SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND SOIL	17
5.2	AIR QUALITY AND NOISE	20
5.3	WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY	23
5.4	WATER	25
5.5	CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY PERFORMANCE.....	27
5.6	SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY	31

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 - Graphic/Image where there is no addition to Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021).....	5
Figure 2.2 - Graphic/Image where there is no addition to Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021).....	5
Figure 2.3 - A text based infographic where there is no addition to the Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021)	6
Figure 2.4 - A text based infographic where there is no addition to the Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021)	6
Figure 2.5 - Grouped Images on a Theme that may be counted as a Single Image.....	7
Figure 2.6 - Caption Drop-down Menu	8
Figure 2.7 - Caption Description Pop-up Menu	8
Figure 2.8 - Example of Incorrect Image Placement - Overlapping Text	9
Figure 2.9 - Example of Correct Text Wrapping.....	9
Figure 5.1 - The European Green Deal.....	27

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 - Sample of Table Format to be used in the ECLA Application Form.....	3
Table 2.2 - Sample of acceptable Table where there would be no addition to the Word Count.....	3
Table 2.3 - Sample of Table with Excessive Text.....	4

1 INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Note should be read in conjunction with the Application Form for the European Green Leaf Award 2022. The Application Form can be downloaded in English from the application portal. The full application shall be written in one of the official languages of the European Union. However, submission of the Application Form in English is encouraged for the smooth and timely running of the assessment of the applications.

The Mayoral Declaration (Annex 6 to the Rules of Contest governing the European Green Leaf Award 2022 competition) is available in English and must be completed, dated, signed, stamped, scanned and submitted in English. The signatory should be authorised by national law to legally represent the city.

The Declaration on Honour (Annex 10 to the Rules of Contest governing the European Green Leaf Award 2022 competition) is available in English and must be completed, dated, signed, scanned and submitted in English.

The application process investigates a set of indicators, which are grouped together as six topic areas.

2 SELECTION PROCESS

2.1 FORMAT OF THE APPLICATION

For an application to be valid, all s and sub-sections in the application form must be completed. Applications must comply with the formal requirements set out in the Rules of Contest governing the European Green Leaf Award 2022 competition. Applicants will only be assessed on the content of the application form. Each section of the application form must be completed and shall adhere to the stated word and graphic/image/table limits outlined for each section. Please see guidelines with regards word count and limitations in **Section 2.1.1**. Incomplete application forms will not be assessed i.e. applications with missing topic areas or missing sections within a topic area which are not justified by the applicant. In the event that a question cannot be answered, reasons shall be given in the corresponding section of the application form.

Applicants are required to submit their response within the application form in the areas indicated by italic text in square brackets *[EXAMPLE]*. Original text in the application form should not be deleted. The format of the template of the application form must be adhered to.

All application forms must be submitted in a single word document (.doc or .docx), which should not exceed 20MB in size, and uploaded via the online application registration portal. Application forms sent by email, fax or post cannot be validated.

Applications which do not follow the requirements set out in Section 3 of the Rules of Contest at pre-selection stage shall not be examined further.

2.1.1 Word Count and Limitations

The original text of the application form and text within 'Benchmarking Data' tables for Topic Areas 2, 3 and 4 **will not** be included in the word count.

All word limits must be **strictly** adhered to. Any words above the specified limits **will not be taken in to account** and may leave applicant's responses incomplete. Applicants must complete the 'Word Count Check' provided at the end of the Application Form to verify that their word count is within the acceptable limits. This word count includes a check of:

- Words in graphics/images/tables;
- Words in the body of text;
- Total number of words (words in graphics/images/tables and words in the body of text).

Applicants should also complete the 'Application Form Checklist' provided at the end of the Application Form to review and ensure they have completed all sections of their form prior to submission of their application.

Graphics/Images/Tables Word Limits:

Text within the body of graphics/images/tables must be submitted in an editable format (for purposes of the word count and translation, where applicable). Text included in the captions and heading (titles) of graphics/images/tables will not be included in the word count. These shall not exceed more than 20 words.

Screenshots or images of websites/leaflets/posters which illustrate an item but are not intended to be read will not be counted towards the topic area word count, but will be included in the count of permitted graphics/images/tables per topic area.

Information essential to understanding a graphic/image/table (i.e. headings/titles/legends/text in columns/place names/numbers) will not be included in the word count, as these are relevant and essential to understand the information within. All other text included in graphics/images/tables will be included in the word count.

Please see below for a sample tables (Tables 2.1 - 2.3) and sample graphics (Figures 2.1 - 2.5).

Table 2.1 - Sample of Table Format to be used in the EGLA Application Form

Building Type	Potential area for roof gardens or Urban agriculture		Additional areas for extensive green roofs or habitats for biodiversity	
	No. of roofs	Total m ²	No. of roofs	Total m ²
Industrial buildings	21	21	21	21
Office and retail	32	32	32	32
Schools	43	43	43	43
Hospitals and care homes	54	54	54	54
Residential buildings	65	65	65	65
Mixed use buildings	76	76	76	76
Other buildings	87	87	87	87
Total	378	378	378	378

Table 2.2 - Sample of acceptable Table where there would be no addition to the Word Count

Main Identified [1] Climate Change Hazards and Challenges in Lahti	Action, Project Name	Partners	Lahti City Consortium Staff Allocation	Year	Estimated Cost (€) and Funding Source	Monitoring and Performance Evaluation Scheme
City Floods	City centre vulnerability assessment	Lahti School of Applied Sciences (LUAS), City of Lahti	1	2014	10 000 LUAS, student thesis	Assessment, did not contain monitoring
Eutrophication	Large-scale investment and R&D project <i>Hybrid Solutions for Urban Storm Water</i>	City of Lahti, University of Helsinki, Smart & Clean Foundation, LADEC, City of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa	2	2017-2020	Circa 2 M€ Finnish Government 2017-2018. Applications will be sent to several other funding sources	Monitoring (quantity and quality of storm water) is part of the project
Heat Waves and Health Risks	District cooling system analysed for new residential areas	City of Lahti, Lahti Energy, private companies	1	2012-	Planning costs, 10 000 €	No investments made.
	Good network of street trees (<i>Tilia vulgaris</i>) Circa 3 000 trees in the centre of Lahti and 10 000 overall (Fig. B4)	City of Lahti, private companies	1	1900-	Maintenance 150 000 €/a.	Maintenance is monitored

All information provided in this table is essential in order to understand the information featured in the table and would not be included in the word count (Lahti Application EGCA 2021).

Table 2.3 - Sample of Table with Excessive Text

1. Circle based
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residual waste from households shall be reduced by a minimum of 30% per capita by 2025, compared to 2015-level. 2. Food waste from households shall be reduced by 30% by 2025. 3. A minimum of 60 % of food waste from households shall be collected and recycled by 2025. 4. A minimum of 60 % of plastic waste from households shall be recycled by 2025. 5. The municipal waste-to-energy plants shall have an energy recovery rate of minimum 95% by 2025. 6. Oslo shall be one of the cities with the most cost efficient waste management systems in Norway, by 2025.
7. Health, environment and climate
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>All hazardous waste and electric and electronic waste</u> shall be collected and treated safely. 2. The waste management in Oslo shall be climate neutral by 2025. 3. The number of illegal dumpsites shall be halved by 2025, compared to 2017-level. 4. A minimum of 50% of the household waste shall be collected by underground and automatic waste systems by 2030.
5. The City of Oslo
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residual waste from the City shall be reduced by a minimum of 30% by 2025, compared to 2015-level. 2. There shall be recycling bins in all larger parks and public spaces by 2025. 3. Residual waste from enterprises shall be reduced to a maximum of 30% by 2025. 4. By 2020 a minimum of 70% (by weight) of construction and demolition waste shall be prepared for re-use, recycled or undergo other material recovery. 5. Regional solutions for waste management shall be established by 2025.
6. Inhabitants
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By 2025, 95% of the inhabitants will have confidence that the waste resources are properly utilized. 2. By 2025, 80% of the inhabitants shall experience that it is easy to sort waste and recycle in Oslo. 3. By 2025, 90% of the inhabitants shall know about facilities where they can deliver materials and items for reuse.

This is an example of a table which would be considered to have a high word count, and this text would all be counted in the topic area word count (Oslo Application EGCA 2019).

A picture is worth a thousand words! It is highly recommended to make efficient use of the graphic/image/table allowance in order to optimise the application. The clever use of graphics/images/tables including infographics can reduce the amount of text required to describe a particular aspect of the application.

Using before and after pictures to illustrate the implementation or effect of specific projects can be very useful and a good way to visually highlight the change resulting from a project.

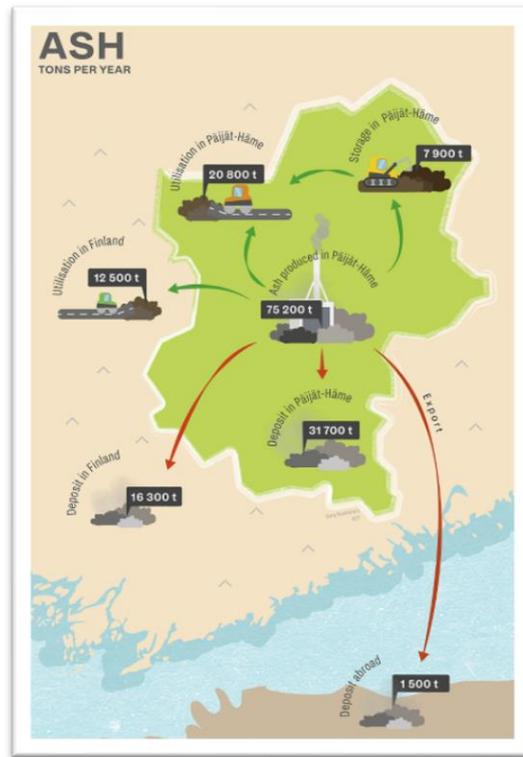


Figure 2.1 - Graphic/Image where there is no addition to Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021)

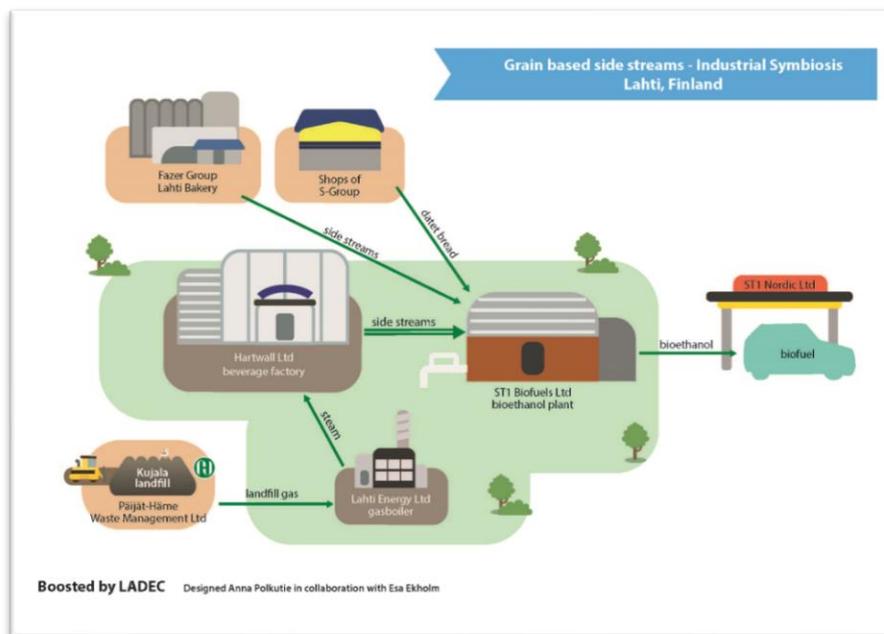


Figure 2.2 - Graphic/Image where there is no addition to Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021)

Figures 2.1 & 2.2 illustrate two sample 'Graphics/Images' where all text is necessary to understand the information within. The labels of each 'place' and 'process' are necessary to understand the diagram.



Figure 2.3 - A text based infographic where there is no addition to the Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021)

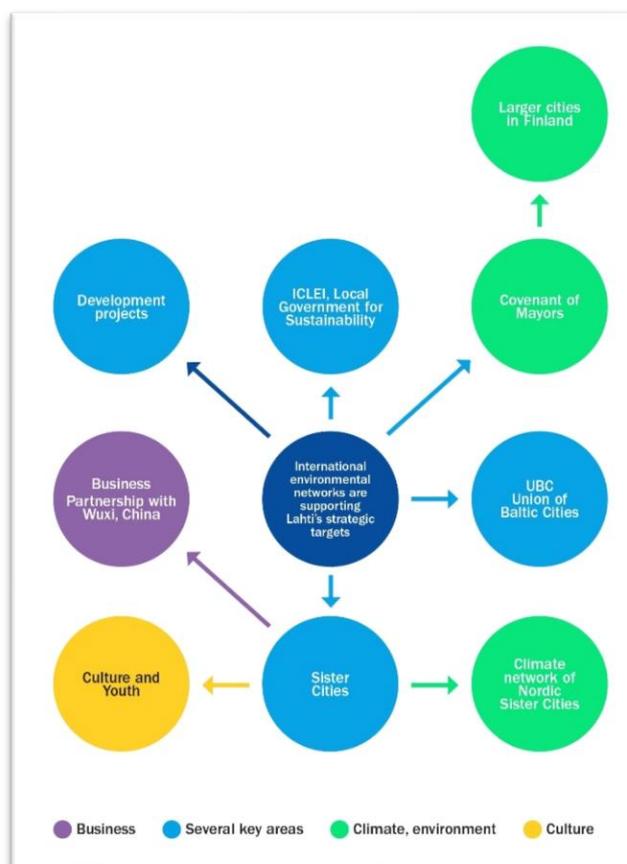


Figure 2.4 - A text based infographic where there is no addition to the Word Count (Lahti EGCA 2021)

Figures 2.3 & 2.4 illustrate text based 'Graphics/Images' where the information consists of concise descriptions of projects, titles or relationships where all text is necessary to understand the information within and would not be included in the word count.

All limits for numbers of graphics/images/tables must be adhered to. Images which consist of multiple jpegs combining to form one image/subject may be accepted if they are addressing a common theme. If the grouped images are not deemed to address a common theme, these will be considered as separate individual images which may result in exceedances of the limit. Figure 2.5 below shows an example of where multiple jpegs are accepted as one image (taken from the City of Leuven's winning application for EGLA 2018).

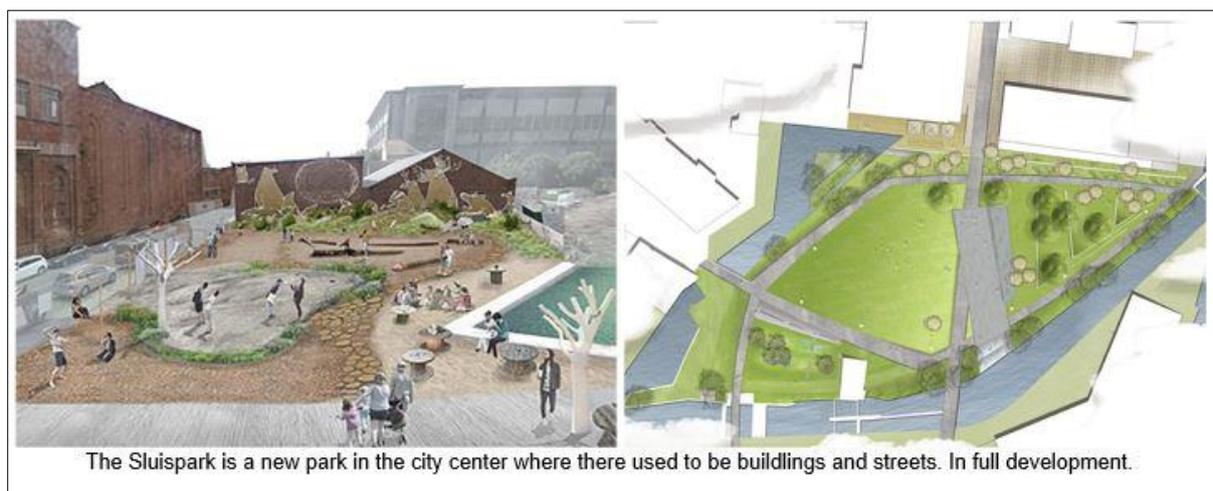


Figure 2.5 - Grouped Images on a Theme that may be counted as a Single Image

All graphs, tables, images and graphics should be included within the application form itself. Appendices will not be accepted.

2.1.2 Captioning and Aligning Graphics/Images/Tables

In order to ensure that the application is transmitted in a legible format, graphics/images/tables should be inserted using the wrap text functions 'In Line with Text', 'Square' or 'Top and Bottom' and captioned using the caption function. Using other functions may cause graphics/images/tables to interfere with the format of the application form and not appear on the template, leaving submissions incomplete. Applicants are advised to test that the format of their application is retained after upload to the applicant portal.

How to Caption Graphics/Images/Tables:

1. After inserting a graphic/image/table, right click on the inserted item to show the pop-up menu displayed below:



Figure 2.6 - Caption Drop-down Menu

2. Clicking on the 'Insert Caption' button will bring up the pop-up box below:

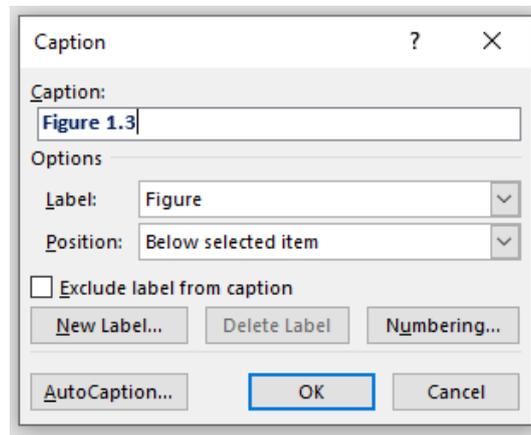


Figure 2.7 - Caption Description Pop-up Menu

3. In this window, the 'Caption' can be filled in appropriately and the caption (figure or table) number assigned.

Correct Graphic/Image/Table Alignment:

1. To prevent inserted items from moving around or blocking text (as below) please use the wrap text function:



Figure 2.8 - Example of Incorrect Image Placement - Overlapping Text

2. To ensure correct placement of an image, select an option within the 'Wrap text' menu in the Format toolbar (as below). Do not use any options from the 'Position' menu as the images are not held in place and may move after submission:

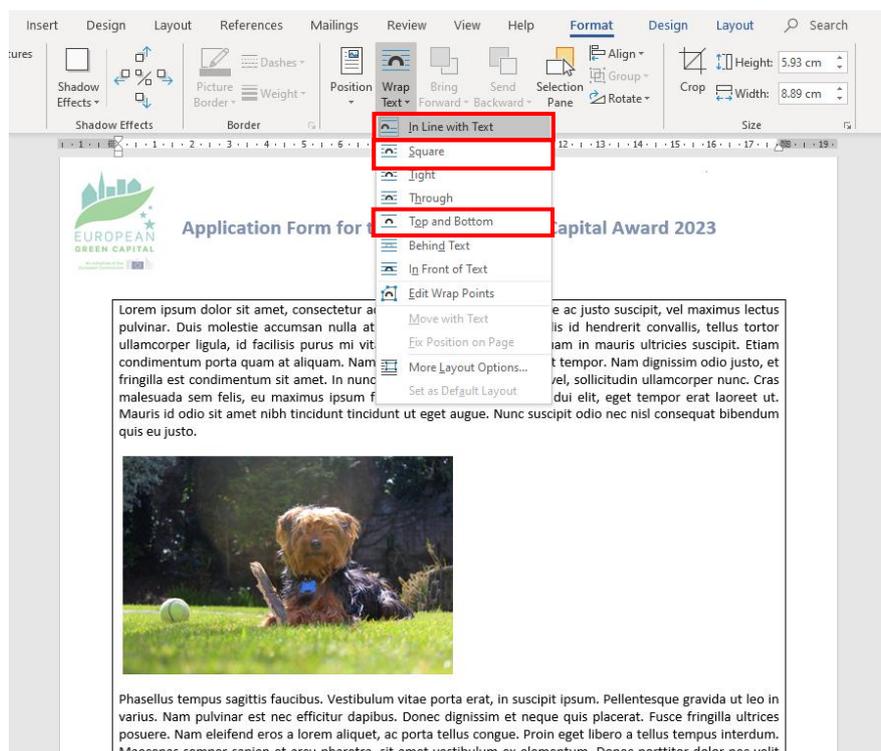


Figure 2.9 - Example of Correct Text Wrapping

Further Guidance

The completed official EGLA application form must be submitted as one individual file. The EGLA Application Form file must be a **word document** and labelled correctly e.g. City Name_EGLA 2022_Application Form.

If you have any queries on the application form, please do not hesitate to contact the European Green Leaf Award Secretariat who can field procedural questions or refer technical questions to the expert panel on behalf of a city.

Please note that all queries should be directed to the Secretariat. Cities are not permitted to liaise directly with the expert panel.

The Secretariat can be contacted via email at info@europeangreenleaf.eu or by telephone at +353 87 361 90 39 for any queries.

The deadline for receipt of applications is at **23:59 CET (GMT +1) on the 28 October 2020**.

Please note, that no technical support will be available past 18:00 CET (GMT + 1) on the closing date.

Please make sure that the application form is complete (as detailed above) by the time of submission.

Upon submission of the application form, the EGLA Secretariat will confirm receipt of the city application. Applications will be checked and validated for official admission to the competition. All valid applications will be issued to the Expert Panel for technical assessment.

2.2 TRANSLATION

The technical assessment process is conducted in English. The full application shall be written in one of the official languages of the European Union. However, submission of the application form in English is encouraged for the smooth and timely running of the assessment of the applications.

If an application is submitted in a city's native language, the word count will be examined based on the original application, i.e. before it is translated into English. The word count shall be strictly adhered to regardless of the language in which the application is submitted.

It should be noted that the European Green Leaf Award is conducted in the English language. It is advised that a native English speaker is consulted during the application process and/or before the application is submitted.

It shall be noted that the jury meetings are held in English. Cities selected as finalists for the award and invited to the jury meeting shall present in English. The winning city(s) shall accept their award in English. Communication with the winning city(s) shall be conducted in English.

2.3 NEXT STEPS

- **Expert evaluation:** A panel of twelve experts (two per topic area) will co-evaluate each application based on its own merit. They will rank applicants, and provide detailed comments on the applicants' environmental performance for each topic area. The rankings will be discussed in the framework of an expert meeting and experts will then select a shortlist of finalist cities.

Please note that ALL topic areas (Section B) in the Application Form must be fully completed. Section B **only** is used in the evaluation/ranking process. Within each Topic Area, sub-section a carries 70% of the weight while sub-section b carries a weighting of 30%.

It is also important to address both topics covered within each topic area (i.e. for Climate Change (mitigation and adaptation) and Energy Performance) equally in the response.

- **Reporting:** Each city will receive an individual Technical Assessment Report which will include rankings and expert comments for each topic area. A Synopsis Technical Assessment Report containing rankings and comments for finalist cities only will be made public and published on the EGLA website. Furthermore, a series of Good Practice Factsheets will be prepared and published, as appropriate. These factsheets may include good practices from finalist and non-shortlisted cities, based on the information provided in the application forms and any additional information requested by the EGLA Secretariat.
- **Jury evaluation:** Finalist cities will be asked to attend the EGLA Jury Meeting where they are invited to present their bid for the 2022 EGL Award. Members of the Jury will also have the opportunity to ask the Finalist Cities questions, as necessary. The high-level jury will decide on the winner(s) and the Jurys decision shall be final. The Winner(s) will be announced during an Awards Ceremony in 2021. A Jury Report, as well as the application form of winning cities, will be published on the EGCA/EGLA website.

3 HINTS AND TIPS: HOW TO COMPLETE A HIGH QUALITY APPLICATION

- Provide clear objectives, i.e. clearly meet the requirements asked for in the application form;
- Establish context, i.e. use the introduction wisely, giving context to the city, providing an overall description and vision of the city, remit and support of the city council;
- Show commitment, i.e. progress measured with reports, public opinion surveys, driving national regulations and models;
- Show certainty, for example, by providing information on financially sustainable activities and dedicated budgets;
- Show cohesion, how different themes and topic areas are integrated, e.g., climate, ecology, environment. This can be done by making cross-references between different sections, sub-sections and topic areas;
- Show future ambitions, i.e. target dates such as 2025, 2030, 2050 etc.;
- Always provide the information asked for or give a reason why it is not available (and provide in the section within which it was asked);
- Where the topic area covers two aspects, for example with Air Quality & Noise, it is important that each aspect, air and noise in this case, is addressed equally in the response. Failure to address both areas will result in a lower ranking;
- Demonstrate innovative actions that the city has taken or plans to take;
- Focus on the most relevant information. Before starting to write the application think about its ideal structure and content. A concise and well formulated response will enable cities to take full advantage of the word limit;
- Make full use of graphics, a picture is worth a thousand words;
- Consider timelines and the time that may be required to complete the application. Gathering the relevant data and information for the application can take a considerable amount of time. Allow plenty of time (several months) to prepare the application and have the application reviewed by someone who is not directly involved in the process;
- Nominate one team member to have document control, with contributors providing information to that person;
- Applications should be reviewed and proofread before submitting;
- In advance of preparing an application, it is recommended that applicants look at the following:

Past EGLA winning city applications, highlighting what made a high-ranking technical application.

- [EGLA Winning Cities](#)

Historical EGLA Technical Assessment Report's will allow applicants to see what reoccurring themes are mentioned by experts in their feedback and allow the applicant to address these particular concerns.

- [EGLA Publications](#)

Together, these documents can help a city to understand what is expected from a winning city application and hopefully answer any questions that applicants may have.

4 THE APPLICATION FORM: OVERVIEW

4.1 DECLARATIONS

In order to submit a complete application form, the following must be adhered to:

The **Mayoral Declaration** (Annex 6 of the Rules of Contest) must be signed by the Mayor or highest ranking City Representative^[1] and stamped with the official city seal, scanned and uploaded to the portal. Please ensure the Mayoral Declaration document is labelled correctly e.g. City Name_Mayoral Declaration_EGLA 2022.

The **Declaration on Honour** on exclusion criteria and selection criteria (Annex 10 of the Rules of Contest) must also be completed, dated, signed, scanned, submitted in English, and uploaded to the portal. Please ensure the Declaration on Honour document is labelled correctly e.g. City Name_Declaration on Honour_EGLA 2022.

Both Declarations must be submitted with the **fully completed application form**. It is not necessary to send the original documents by post.

An application form will be considered invalid if it is not accompanied by a completed, signed and stamped Mayoral Declaration, and completed and signed Declaration on Honour.

4.2 SECTION A: CITY INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The Introduction section of the application form provides the Expert Panel and Jury Members with valuable insights into the history and background of the city and the challenges faced. Although this section is not included as part of the ranking process, it is the first thing the Expert Panel reads and shapes the impression the Expert forms of the city and the application presented at a very early stage in the process. This section is highly relevant and provides essential background information.

Please note that although Sections A (Introduction) and C (Good Practices) for each city are for additional information only and will not be used to technically evaluate and rank cities, they must still be completed in full. Note that if certain text is included in Section A and/or C but not in Section B, it will not be counted in the technical assessment. Therefore, if the information is relevant to the technical assessment it must also be included or at the least referred to in Section B by way of a cross-reference.

4.3 SECTION B: TOPIC AREAS

Section B will be used in the evaluation process to rank cities. The 2022 EGL Award Application Form has two sub-sections per topic area:

^[1] Signatory must be authorised by national law to legally represent the city

(a) Current Situation and Strategic Approach

Describe the current situation, e.g. the relevant infrastructure and systems that are in place and the relevant state of play with respect to environmental performance for each topic area. The aim of this section is to clarify how the present situation has been achieved. Information on any relevant disadvantages or constraints resulting from historical, geographical and/or socio-economic factors which may have influenced this category may be included and/or by cross-reference to Section A: City Introduction and Context. Please describe evolutions that have taken place over the last five to ten years. Comment on which measures have been most effective. Such information should be supported by the relevant figures.

Provide an overview of the city's overall strategic approach to the topic area. Describe the city's future plans, key objectives and targets. Where plans or programmes have been developed at a level above the city level, i.e. regional or national level, it is important to provide information on such plans or programmes and how they impact the city and/or are implemented at the city level.

(b) Citizen Participation and Public Awareness

Please mention any public awareness raising, citizen engagement or stakeholder participation undertaken in the city. Mention the target audience and benefits of the initiative. If a participation action concerns more than one topic area, for example, mobility and air quality, mention it in all relevant topic areas or by means of a cross-reference. Examples may include events or activities such as:

- Public Awareness: awareness raising activities including advertising and media, campaigns and events, citizen science initiatives;
- Stakeholder/Citizens Participation: public consultation, schools education, citizen science initiatives, open dialogue, stakeholder groups/forums, working groups, implementation partnerships, joint ventures with local businesses etc.

Note: The experts' ranking will be based on the information provided within sub-sections, a and b, within Section B. A word limit for **sub-section a** is set at **600 words** and a word limit of **300 words** is set for **sub-section b**. These word limits must not be exceeded in the application submitted.

Please note that ALL topic areas in the Application Form must be fully completed. For the purposes of the Technical Assessment please note that within each Topic Area in Section B *sub-section a Current Situation and Strategic Approach* carries 70% of the weight and *sub-section b Citizen Participation and Public Awareness* carries 30% of the weight.

Where there are multiple topics in a heading it is important to address all topics covered within each Topic Area equally in the response (i.e. for Nature/Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Use/Soil; Air Quality and Noise; Waste and Circular Economy; Climate Change (mitigation and adaptation) and Energy Performance).

A limit of six graphics/images/tables (which may include tables, graphs, screenshots, photos and graphics) is set for each topic area section overall. The use of graphics/images/tables within each topic area is at the discretion of the applicant i.e. there is no limit per sub-section rather an overall limit.

4.4 SECTION C: GOOD PRACTICES

Good practices will be used solely for information purposes and will not be considered as part of the technical ranking but must be completed. However, this section is very useful for the Expert Panel as it provides a good overview of the initiatives that the city considers to be exemplary.

Good practices submitted may be used to produce Good Practice Factsheets, which will be drafted and promoted by the EGLA Secretariat. EGLA applicant cities must propose a minimum of one and a maximum of three good practices. For each good practice, please provide a detailed description, and explain why these good practices have selected. Identify target groups as well as relevant stakeholder groups with whom collaboration has been established.

5 TOPIC AREAS

5.1 NATURE, BIODIVERSITY, SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND SOIL

This topic area deals with nature/biodiversity and sustainable land use/soil. Both elements are assessed equally and so the response should provide suitable evidence for both.

The technical assessment for biodiversity is designed to explore how much information each city holds on its natural spaces and biodiversity, how well it protects, monitors and manages these assets, what plans it has for future management and how it is engaging with its citizens and stakeholders in improving biodiversity. The city should describe what it has achieved to date, is doing now and what plans it has for the future. A good application will include maps of habitats and sites; biodiversity trend data; policy, strategy, initiatives and projects that conserve existing habitats and species whilst trying to increase and improve biodiversity; and examples of citizen engagement in nature projects.

Applicant cities will be aware of the EU 2020 and 2030¹ Biodiversity Strategy² that specifically mentions the European Green Capital and Green Leaf initiatives, and especially the targets on improving the status of all species and habitats protected under EU nature legislation, and the idea that ‘ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems’. The links between biodiversity action and climate change mitigation and adaptation should also be clearly recognised and understood by the city. Biodiversity may be enhanced by increasing the size of natural areas or improving management. Conservation actions taken in compliance with the EU Nature Directives for the Natura 2000 sites and their protected habitats and species should be noted and it should be mentioned whether they are part of more comprehensive management plans. Those degraded ecosystems in and around the city (not necessarily protected areas) that have potential for restoration, should also be highlighted in accordance with the Nature Restoration Plan of the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy. Applicants should make reference to the city’s use, if any, of Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) planning tools and measures to achieve the objectives of nature legislation.

Applicants should make reference to plans or projects to support the conservation of wild pollinating insects, contributing to the EU Pollinators Initiative³. Article 12 of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive 128/2009 and other legislation concerning water quality is also relevant. Appropriate action on invasive species should also be in line with EC Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive non-native species.

The technical assessment of sustainable land use has three focal points:

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/actions-being-taken-eu/EU-biodiversity-strategy-2030_en

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-annex-eu-biodiversity-strategy-2030_en.pdf

³ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/pollinators/index_en.htm

- Improving the living environment using green infrastructure and green urban areas;
- Limiting urban sprawl and creating an urban environment suitable for a sustainable lifestyle;
- Limiting, mitigating or compensating soil sealing, preferably with nature based solutions.

Green urban areas and green infrastructure⁴ (Communication on Green Infrastructure (COM (2013) 249)) can be more beneficial to society than merely serving aesthetics and recreation⁵. Green infrastructure can be defined as a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of benefits to the urban citizen. It incorporates green spaces, like parks, sports facilities and gardens, but also takes cognisance of green rooftops, vertical gardens, high-quality business parks and public spaces, biodiversity-rich communal gardens, green belts and metropolitan park systems and sustainable urban drainage systems.

The benefits of green urban areas or green infrastructure are very diverse, and include improving the living environment by providing adaptation to the effects of extreme weather (heat, storm water), purification of air and water or noise reduction. In addition, green areas provide benefits for public health by offering space for physical activity, peaceful places or stress reduction or social interaction. The design of green urban areas depends on what needs the areas have to meet.

A good application on this indicator describes what benefits of green areas are adding to the livability of the city and makes clear that the green urban areas really meet the needs of the citizens.

Urban sprawl and the spread of low-density settlements is one of the main threats to sustainable territorial development. By 2020, 80% of Europe's population is likely to live in urban and peri-urban areas. Urban design inspired by a sustainable land use concept is contributing to good living conditions for city dwellers and at the same time reducing the environmental impact of the urban fabric. This is usually best achieved through strategic urban planning following a more integrated approach to land management. Measures like short distances to services and facilities reduce the transport demand and promote walking and cycling; multi-apartment houses save energy for heating, cooling, reduce infrastructural needs and investments in green infrastructure meet the demand for spaces for recreational activities.

Information should be provided on new developments and where they are located. For example, what is the relative proportion of greenfields, natural and semi-natural areas, and brownfield sites, where has the construction of new buildings and/or commercial and industrial areas taken place? What do these new developments mean for densification in the inner-city or urban cores?

Soil sealing means the permanent covering of an area of land and its soil by impermeable artificial material (e.g. asphalt and concrete), for example through buildings and roads. Green sites, including

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/docs/green_infrastructure_broc.pdf

⁵ Reading tip: Commission Staff Working Document (SWD(2019) 193 final): Guidance on a strategic framework for further supporting the deployment of EU-level green and blue infrastructure (https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/pdf/SWD_2019_193_F1_STAFF_WORKING_PAPER_EN_V4_P1_1024680.PDF)

those parts of settlement areas not covered by an impervious surface like gardens or sites covered by permeable surfaces should be excluded from the sealed surface area. If this information is not available, please make an estimate of what portion of the residential areas is sealed and what parts are permeable surfaces and use this factor in the calculations.

The Guidelines on best practice to limit, mitigate or compensate soil sealing (SWD(2012) 101 final/2) collect examples of policies, legislation, funding schemes, local planning tools, information campaigns and many other best practices implemented throughout the EU. Another reference is the [EU brochure on soil sealing \(Hard surfaces, hidden costs\)](#)⁶.

Brownfield sites are derelict and underused or even abandoned former industrial or commercial sites, which may have real or perceived (soil) contamination problems. Bringing them to beneficial use, thus saving precious greenfield sites from development, normally requires co-ordinated intervention on the part of owners, local authorities and citizens living in the neighbourhood.

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/pdf/SoilSealing-Brochure_en.pdf

5.2 AIR QUALITY AND NOISE

Indicators for air quality are described in Directive 2008/50/EC of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe.

The target and limit values in this directive are set to protect human health and the environment. Member States and their competent authorities should take action in order to comply with the limit and target values. These include the following:

- The limit value for the annual mean of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) is 40 µg/m³;
- The limit value for the daily mean particulate matter PM₁₀ is 50 µg/m³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times during a year;
- The limit value for the annual mean of PM₁₀ is 40 µg/m³;
- The target value for particulate matter PM_{2.5} is 25 µg/m³;
- The hourly limit value for NO₂ of 200 µg/m³ is not to be exceeded more than 18 times during a year.

Regarding the present situation, for all air quality data presented, specify the type of sampling point (e.g. traffic, urban background, regional background).

Applicants must complete the Benchmarking Data tables for Air Quality and Noise in Section 2a. Applicants should provide the most recent data available for their city. If city data is not available, please provide a brief explanation and use regional or national data. If no data is available, please state this and indicate the reason why.

For the annual concentrations of NO₂, PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ provide a quantitative assessment of the contribution from local sources and from long-range transport for these pollutants as a percentage. For example, of the annual mean of NO₂ at traffic measurement stations about 75% originates from local sources and 25% from long-range transport. The contribution from long-range transport should ideally be determined as originating from outside the administrative boundaries of the city. The purpose of this assessment is to estimate how much of observed concentrations can be managed by the city government. If available, provide information on the spatial variation in air pollutant concentrations (maps) and the trends in the annual mean concentrations during the past five to ten years.

Regarding noise, the Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC) is a basic instrument to identify noise pollution levels and to trigger the necessary action both at Member State and at EU level. The Environmental Noise Directive (END) covers the noise, to which humans are exposed to, particularly in built-up areas, near schools, hospitals and other noise-sensitive buildings, like residential buildings, and in noise-sensitive areas, like public parks or other quiet areas in an agglomeration, and in quiet areas in open country. It is based on systematic and periodic assessment and planning to reduce noise exposure.

Since END's strategic noise mapping is not mandatory for cities with less than 100,000 inhabitants, many of EGLA applicants do not have a noise map. However, the END still shows the roadmap, and noise management requires a diagnosis of the problem. Therefore, regarding the present situation, the available data on noise exposure should be provided.

Where available, sound exposure data and acoustic information/data for the previous five to ten years should be included to show trends. Information on existing or planned quiet areas, or sound-improved areas, should also be included. Recommendations and advice concerning quiet areas shall be found in the '*Good practice guide on quiet areas*' - EEA Technical Report No 4/2014.

The city must provide clear information on the policies, municipal, national and/or regional, concerning the reduction of air and noise pollution and the improvement of the acoustic environment as well as the protection of environments with good acoustic quality within the municipal territory.

Detail the city's strategies for the management of the air quality and noise, involving stakeholders and the local population, report on informational, educational, awareness raising campaigns, participation, engagement and citizen science initiatives performed and planned regarding air quality, sound and noise issues.

Describe the measures implemented over the last 5 to 10 years to improve air quality and noise and underline whether these measures are part of an overall and long-term air quality action plan and noise action plan.

Provide information on the costs undertaken and on the budgets envisaged for future measures. Details must be given on air pollution and noise abatement measures both already adopted and envisaged for the future, and on air quality management and urban soundscape management considering the protection of existing zones with good acoustic quality and the definition, implementation and preservation of quiet or sound-improved areas.

- Noise and air quality maps, acoustic zoning and on action plans, including plans to preserve areas where the acoustic environment is good;
- Comment on which measures regarding air and noise have been most effective;
- Explain how the implemented measures have influenced the present situation;
- Refer to stakeholder involvement and communication with the population, including where and how citizen science initiatives were deployed or taken up.

The short and long-term objectives for air quality and noise, and the proposed approach for their achievement, must be described in detail together with assigned budgets.

- Emphasise to what extent plans are consolidated by commitments, budget allocations, and monitoring and performance evaluation schemes, and describe their expected impact in terms of future pollutant concentrations in ambient air;

- Indicate long-term objectives and aims regarding air quality;
- Indicate the target reduction in the share of population exposed to noise values of L_{den} above 55 dB(A) and above 65 dB(A) and in the share of population exposed to noise values of L_n above 45 dB(A) and 55 dB(A);
- Refer to stakeholder involvement, consultations, and actions to manage and preserve urban and open country quiet areas, and actions concerning sound-improved areas (holistic/qualitative approaches to the acoustic environment, e. g. soundscape design approaches).

5.3 WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The following guidance is provided to support applicants in preparing their response to Topic Area 3:

3a - Current Situation and Strategic Approach

- a. Applicants must complete the Benchmarking Data table in part a of section 3a. Applicants should provide the most recent data available for their city. If city data is not available, please provide a brief explanation and use regional or national data. If no data is available, please state this and indicate the reason why.
- b. In responding to this question applicants are asked to provide a concise but clear summary of the city's approach to the management of waste. The focus should be primarily on household waste. Applicants should describe waste prevention and collection systems including the development of the waste system, the types of treatment infrastructure in place, the materials treated. The progress made in terms of collection systems, recycling, and diverting waste away from landfill and/or incineration should also be included. Cities are encouraged to use waste data in the form of tables or charts to support the responses. Any data submitted should be clear and complement the qualitative response.

Moving towards a circular economy is a fundamental transformation in our approach to materials and consumption. It involves everyone in society, institutions, businesses, and industry. All cities have a responsibility to support the transformation to a more sustainable and circular economy. Applicants should provide examples underway which demonstrate a commitment to the circular economy. Measures such as waste prevention, material reuse, repair, the sharing economy, green public procurement, and industrial symbiosis which the city is engaged in are suggested and in the response one or more such measures should be described.

- c. In responding to this part of the question the applicant's response should include details of the waste management plans, programmes or strategies in place for the city. Where the applicant is part of regional or national waste plans, programmes or strategies it is important to provide information on these and how they impact on the city and/or are implemented at city level.

In the response, please demonstrate that the waste plan for the city contains progressive objectives and targets to improve the future management of wastes. State if circular economy measures form part of the waste plan? If so, describe how the city is planning the transformation to a circular economy and the strategic measures planned or underway. If relevant provide a brief statement as to how the waste plan relates to other city plans.

3b - Citizen Participation and Public Awareness

In this response the applicant should include detail of relevant citizen engagement or public

awareness activities undertaken in the city which are improving the management of waste and the transition to a circular economy. The response should provide examples of public awareness activities and citizen participation activities (such as public forums, citizen science initiatives, stakeholder programmes etc.). It is suggested that applicants focus on activities which are primarily targeted at household waste. Where possible connect activities to the current approach to waste management outlined in section 3a. Examples referenced in the response should describe the type of campaign, the target audience and the actual or potential benefits realised or expected. The use of images to support the response in this section is recommended.

General Notes

When answering the questions provide responses to all parts;

- Waste data provided should primarily relate to household waste. Household waste is defined as all waste generated by a household including residual, recyclable materials (e.g. paper, plastics, glass etc.), bulky and green waste;
- In demonstrating the progress the city has made the city may wish to refer to the management of other waste streams, such as municipal waste or construction and demolition. If referring to other waste streams make sure this distinction is clear in the presentation of data;
- If the city is part of a regional (or national level) system for the purposes of waste planning and/or waste data provide details of the wider system and identify any national data used. It is important to demonstrate how the city interacts within the region/nationally in terms of implementing and progressing the waste management system;
- When providing details of separately collected wastes, include details of the types of waste collected, the types of collection systems (e.g. drop off points, civic amenity, kerbside, other initiatives) and the extent of coverage; and
- When describing the treatment of wastes managed by the city provide brief detail of infrastructure managed by the city and details of those wastes treated elsewhere.

Useful References:

- Glossary of Key Waste Management Terms in keeping with European Commission Definitions: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Category:Environment_glossary
- Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC), as amended: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/>
- Waste Prevention: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/prevention/index.htm>
- Circular Economy: <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/>
- Waste Management Planning: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/plans/index.htm>

5.4 WATER

The Fitness Check of EU water law⁷ established that the legislation is still largely fit for purpose. However, implementation efforts of Member States, investment in water and integrating water policy objectives in other policies (agriculture, transport, industry, and also spatial planning) should be improved. All actors should do their part: the European Commission, Member States, water industry, agriculture, regional governments and also cities.

Current Situation and Strategic Approach

Applicants should provide relevant information in the context of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD)⁸ and related legislation (Groundwater, Environmental Quality Standards), the Floods Directive, the Drinking Water Directive (DWD)⁹ and its proposed recast¹⁰, and the Bathing Water Directive (BWD)¹¹, which regulate waste water management, the quality of drinking water, and the quality of bathing water. Information on any relevant disadvantages or constraints resulting from historical, geographical and/or socio-economic factors which may have influenced this category may be included and/or by cross-reference to Section A: City Introduction and Context.

Applicants must complete the requested Benchmarking Data table at the beginning of Section 4a. Applicants should provide the most recent data available for their city. If city data is not available, please provide a brief explanation and use regional or national data. If no data is available, please state this and indicate the reason why.

Explain the proportion (%) of population not connected to waste water collecting systems, including an explanation of the type of waste water treatment applied to this fraction (reference to individual or other appropriate systems). Please describe the ecological status of water bodies in the city, such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD) status and measures taken or intended to improve it if necessary.

Please describe if the city has a water and/or waste water management plan, including targets (if any) concerning per capita, water consumption, water losses, waste water collection and treatment, improvement of water bodies receiving the city waste water, water reuse, sludge management, rainwater management and adaptation to climate change. When describing plans to improve water and waste water management define the priorities and set targets, and emphasise to what extent plans are consolidated by commitments, budget allocations, and monitoring and performance evaluation schemes.

⁷ Available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/fitness_check_of_the_eu_water_legislation/index_en.htm

⁸ Directive 91/271/EEC

⁹ Directive 98/83/EC

¹⁰ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1583491875802&uri=CONSIL:ST_6060_2020_REV_1

¹¹ Directive 2006/7/EC

For any already existing bathing site(s) identified in accordance with the Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC), present its current status in the classification as well as challenges faced (if any) and management measures

Citizen Participation and Public Awareness

Describe how citizens are encouraged to be actively involved in water and waste water management in practice. Mention if any communication strategies to promote more rational water use have been put in place. Mention improvements as regards access to and promotion of tap water. Make clear the extent and level of success of actions for citizen participation and public awareness (for example duration, number of persons reached).

5.5 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY PERFORMANCE

The European Green Deal (EGD), adopted in December 2019, is a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use.

The European Green Deal is an integral part of the Commission's strategy to implement the United Nation's 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals¹².

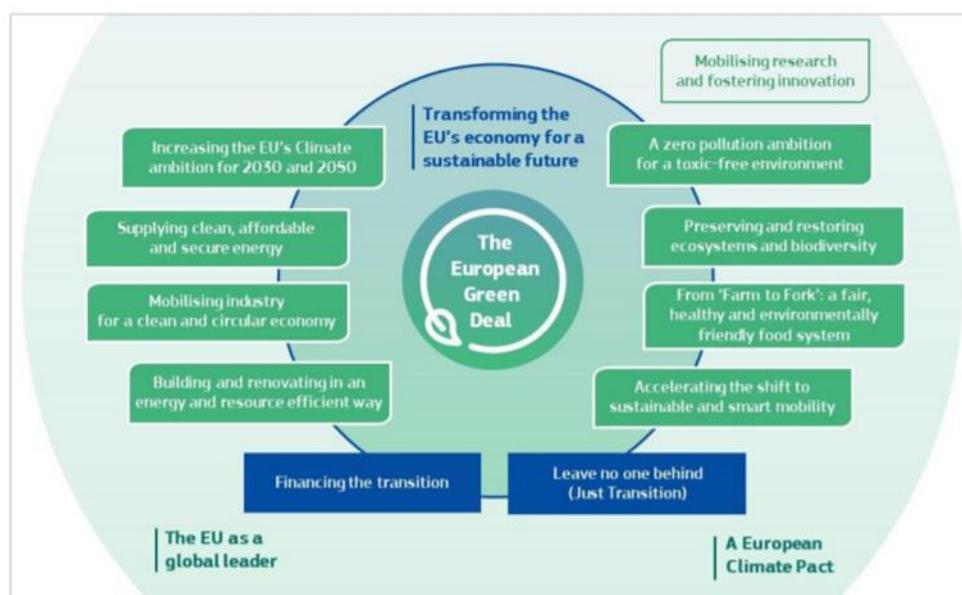


Figure 5.1 - The European Green Deal

The Commission's proposal for the first European Climate Law aims to write into law the goal set out in the European Green Deal for Europe's economy and society to become climate-neutral by 2050¹³.

With the European Climate Law, the Commission proposes a legally binding target of net zero GHG emissions by 2050. The Climate Law includes measures to keep track of progress and adjust actions accordingly based on existing systems such as the governance process for Member States' National Energy and Climate Plans, regular reports by the European Environment Agency, and the latest scientific evidence on climate change and its impacts. Progress will be reviewed every five years, in line with the global stocktake exercise under the Paris Agreement.

These new targets also played an important part in the Commission's preparations for its long-term vision for a climate neutral Europe by 2050¹⁴, published on 28 November 2018.

¹² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eu-climate-action/law_en

¹⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy-and-energy-union/2050-long-term-strategy>

The EU has set itself targets for reducing its GHG emissions progressively up to 2050, set in the 2020 climate and energy package and the 2030 climate and energy framework, and in 2010 with the Climate Law, that will see emissions reaching net-Zero by 2050, with strict intermediate targets.

The Clean Energy for All European legislative package¹⁵ updated key pieces of EU energy legislation to meet the upgraded 2030 climate and energy headline targets as adopted by EU leaders in 2018-2019. The new key targets for the year 2030; at least 40% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990), at least 32% share for renewable energy and at least 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency. It is also aligned to the EU long-term perspective of achieving climate neutrality by 2050, as set out in the European Green Deal, the Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050, the Energy Roadmap 2050 and the Transport White Paper.

Whether or not national governments have established legal requirements or targets for local authorities on climate change and energy performance, applicants should demonstrate awareness of the contribution of their city to implementation of these EU targets, highlighting strategies and measures which contribute to meeting both national obligations and their own objectives as a city with a vision of a low-carbon future. Also, the participation in eventual multilevel dialogues as per the Governance regulation should be indicated.

When reporting on the specific Topic Area in Section 5a, please outline the city's overall approach to improve Climate Change and Energy Performance, including:

Data and Inventories:

- Outline inventories/data availability/statistics/budgets/innovative financing;
- Identify the main sources of data by sector, distinguishing between national and local information sources. If available, data should demonstrate past developments (past 5-10 years);
- Describe past trends arising from the data presented and quantify future estimated reductions in Greenhouse Gases (GHG) and measures.

Approach to Objectives and Targets:

- Outline principles that have shaped plans and programmes. Describe the city's commitment and overall approach to improve Energy Performance;
- Outline relevant infrastructure and systems and the state of play in terms of environmental performance;
- Demonstrate past developments from the past 5-10 years that inform the present situation and comment on which measures have been most effective;
- Describe existing future targets/strategies/plans/objectives (short and/or mid-term) and also long-term objectives if available;

¹⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/energy-strategy/clean-energy-all-europeans_en

- Strategy/plans/objectives refer to city plans or strategies, which are currently being implemented, such as a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) through the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy;
- Comment on budget allocation, future ambitions, innovative actions, and the contribution of the city to Directives.

Impact:

- Outline the impact and outcomes of past measures from the past 5-10 years. Describe budgets or innovative forms of financing influencing key outcomes;
- Comment on impact(s) experienced and how this influences and informs future plans and projects;
- Comment on effective strategies, measures, systematic planning, future strategies, plans, targets and their impact at city level;
- Highlight the proposed impacts of future projects/measures and the expected benefits.

Adaptation:

- Since cities have a key role not only in mitigation of climate change but also in managing its impacts, applicants are also asked to describe their approach to the EU's Adaptation Strategy. This point should include the works performed to identify and improve the adaptive capacity of the city;
- Describe the city's approach to adaptation strategy, include measures to improve adaptive capacity;
- Describe the city's strategy and approach to green infrastructure.

If data or figures are not available at a local level, please state this in the application.

Where possible please include the following information:

- Specific measures such as Green Infrastructure (GI) solutions and nature based solutions. These solutions can form part of an overall climate strategy to help cities adapt to or mitigate the adverse effects of climate change (see for example the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change);
- Describe regional or national plans and how they are implemented at the city/municipal level;
- Mention relevant awards for energy achievements and climate action;
- Mention actions to promote energy demand response.

Applicants are advised to take account of EU policy to mainstream climate adaptation across all policy sectors and may find it useful to refer to specific initiatives for cities such as the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.

When reporting on the specific indicators in Section 5b:

- Try to make clear the extent and level of success of actions for stakeholders, citizen engagement, citizen participation and public awareness (for example duration, number of persons reached), and discuss methodologies for citizen or civic engagement and measurement and monitoring of engagement;
- Outline measures and their target audience, and the quantifiable benefits.

5.6 SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY

The responsibility for sustainable urban mobility policies lies primarily with local, regional and national authorities. Nevertheless, there are key European strategies that applicant cities should take into consideration. These include the European Commission's Transport White Paper, Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area (2011), which emphasises the need for clean urban transport and commuting, and sets goals to 'halve the use of 'conventionally-fuelled' cars in urban transport by 2030; phase them out in cities by 2050; and to achieve essentially CO₂-free city logistics in major urban centres by 2030'. The Commission's 2013 Communication 'Together towards competitive and resource-efficient urban mobility' emphasises the importance of the adoption of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP), as well as for more action on urban logistics, for smarter urban access requirements and for the co-ordinated deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS).

In the sub-section on the '*Current Situation and Strategic Approach*' (6a), cities are encouraged to provide information on:

- Relevant infrastructure for public transport, cycling and walking;
- Qualitative assessment of public transport services (frequency, geography, connections, reliability);
- Existing modal shares for passenger transport. Include where possible data on the percentage of journeys undertaken by each mode;
- Measures that have been put in place to improve conditions for public transport, cycling and walking;
- Measures that have been put in place to reduce car usage and make it more efficient including access and parking controls, as well as infrastructure management tools (including ITS);
- Measures that have been put in place to improve the environmental performance of freight transport including the diversion of trucks from the city and urban freight deliveries (including food) within the city in a more efficient manner and the use of alternatively-fuelled vehicles or cargo bicycles;
- Alternative mobility schemes, such as car sharing;
- Measures to encourage the use of alternatively-fuelled vehicles (e.g. electric, biogas, etc.);
- Any disadvantages or constraints of relevance to transport.

Cities are also encouraged to include information that sets out the principles of the city's approach to transport. It is particularly important in this respect to refer to any strategies, objectives, targets or priorities for transport, both short-term and/or long-term, that clearly show the direction of future transport policies in the city. If transport-specific strategies do not exist, reference should be made to relevant objectives, targets or priorities that are present in other strategies.

Please mention relevant background information, performance statistics, dedicated budgets or innovative forms of financing and key outcomes. Highlight why the measures were needed and any achievements and expected benefits from their implementation.

After having read this Section, the evaluator should have a clear picture of the current transport situation in the city, including the measures that have been put in place to green the city's transport system.

The sub-section, '*Citizen Participation and Public Awareness*' (6b) should set out how the city communicates with, and engages, its citizens and relevant stakeholders in the identification of issues with the current transport system, and on the future direction and implementation of transport policy. While it is important to mention how the city communicates and informs its citizens and relevant stakeholders, it will also be important to mention how the city actively engages with its citizens and relevant stakeholders to listen to their views and include them in decision making processes.