



Press Announcement
Brussels, 27 November 2024

Torino and Benidorm selected as 2025 European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism

The European Commission unveils the 2025 European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism, recognising their outstanding achievements in accessibility, sustainability, digitalisation, and cultural heritage & creativity as exceptional tourism destinations.

Torino (Italy) and Benidorm (Spain) have been selected as the winners of the EU's **2025 [European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism](#) competition**, following a European Jury meeting in Brussels on 26-27 November 2024.

In total, 37 destinations from across 16 countries competed for the European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism titles. Fourteen destinations were shortlisted and invited to present their candidatures in front of the European Jury. Torino impressed the European Jury not only with its remarkable achievements across all four categories of the competition, but also with the outstanding programmes of activities they intend to execute during 2025. Benidorm stood out as a pioneer in sustainable tourism, showcasing its capacity to act as a role model for other destinations.

Both winners will receive a purpose-built sculpture to be prominently displayed throughout their year as 2025 European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism. Furthermore, the winners will receive promotional support and become a part of the growing network of smart and sustainable tourism destinations in Europe. The network is facilitating knowledge sharing and the exchange of best practices, via a series of workshops and publication of a best practices guide. The 2025 European Capital of Smart Tourism will become a role model for digital, accessible, sustainable and creative tourism in Europe and beyond, showcasing innovative tourism measures. The 2025 European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism will be given a prominent role in shaping the future of sustainable tourism in the European tourism industry and actively participate in making a large impact on an international stage.

The European Capital of Smart Tourism competition aims to promote smart tourism in the EU by rewarding cities for their pioneering smart tourism approaches in accessibility, digitalisation, sustainability, and cultural heritage and creativity. Built on the successful experience of a preparatory action proposed by the European Parliament, the initiative seeks to foster innovative, sustainable, and inclusive tourism development, as well as spread and facilitate the exchange of best practices.

The European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism is the successor of the European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) competition. It aims to recognise and reward smaller destinations that have put in place successful strategies to boost sustainable tourism through green transition practices. The competition is founded upon the principle of promoting the development of sustainable tourism in destinations which brings value to the economy, the planet and people.

Smart tourism practices in Europe implemented by the applicants of the 2024 competition can be found in the [‘Leading Examples of Smart Tourism Practices in Europe’ report](#) and the [‘Leading examples of Smart and Sustainable Tourism Practices in Europe’ report](#). Likewise, delegates from the European Capital of Smart Tourism competition winners, shortlisted cities, and EU Commission’s representatives discuss in the [EU Smart Tourism Podcast series](#) the role of smart tourism innovation and examine tourism practices that are shaping the future in Europe.

For the [latest updates](#) on the European Capital of Smart Tourism, follow us on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), or [X](#), and subscribe to our [podcast series](#).

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Notes to Editors:

1. The 2025 European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism competitions were open to submissions from 6 March 2024 to 31 May 2024. Terms and conditions are available at <https://smarttourismcapital.eu>.
2. In the first stage of the competition, a panel of independent experts evaluated the applications. As the result of the evaluation, two shortlists of seven Capital and Green Pioneer finalists were established. All finalist Capital cities demonstrated excellence across the four competition categories combined and the finalists Green Pioneer destinations stood out for their green transition practices.
3. In the second stage, representatives of all finalists presented their candidatures and the programme of activities planned for 2025 in front of the European Jury. The European Jury met on 26-27 November 2024 in Brussels and selected two destinations to hold the titles of the European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism in 2025.
4. Smart tourism responds to new challenges and demands in a fast-changing sector, including the expectation of digital information, products, and services; equal opportunities and access for all visitors; sustainable development of the local area; and support to creative industries and local talent.
5. In 2023, from 29 applicant cities, Dublin was selected as the 2024 European Capital of Smart Tourism. In 2022, from amongst 29 EU cities which applied, Pafos and Seville were selected as the European Capitals of Smart Tourism in 2023. 2021, from 30 EU cities which applied, Bordeaux and València won the title of European Capitals of Smart Tourism 2022. In 2019, amongst 35 EU cities which applied, Málaga and Gothenburg stood out and were selected as



the European Capitals of Smart Tourism 2020. In 2018, amongst 38 EU cities, Helsinki and Lyon stood out and were selected the European Capitals of Smart Tourism 2019. Grosseto was selected as the 2024 European Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism, while previous winners of European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) include Kranj in 2023 and Middelfart in 2022.