

An aerial photograph of a city covered in snow, taken during a sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, pink, and blue. The city below is a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with snow-covered roofs and trees. Overlaid on the image are several decorative elements: a large blue semi-circle at the bottom left, a large orange rounded square in the center, and a smaller light blue square in the upper right. The text "ACCESS CITY Award 2023" is prominently displayed in the blue semi-circle.

ACCESS CITY Award 2023

Examples of best practice
in making EU cities
more accessible

#EUACCESSCITY

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2023

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Print ISBN 978-92-68-01337-3 ISSN 2363-0116 doi:10.2767/94 KE-BL-23-001-EN-C

PDF ISBN 978-92-68-01324-3 ISSN 2363-0140 doi:10.2767/197472 KE-BL-23-001-EN-N

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Access City Award 2023



Easy-to-read version

Who are we?



We are the **European Commission**.

The European Commission suggests laws that could make Europe better.

Amongst others, we work to make things and services in Europe accessible for people with disabilities and all people.



For this to happen, we work together with organisations of people with disabilities in Europe, like the **European Disability Forum**.

For example, every year, we work together to make the **Access City Award** happen.

What is the Access City Award?



The **Access City Award** is a prize we give every year to cities that work hard to be accessible.



A city is accessible when all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems.



For example, a city is accessible when all people can easily:

- Get the bus or the metro to go to work;
- Use ticket machines to buy a ticket;
- Go around the streets or get in public buildings, like hospitals and town halls;
- Get information in ways that they can read and understand.



This is important for all people, and especially for people with disabilities and older people.



Often things like buildings, transport and information are not accessible to them.

If things are not accessible, they will not be able to take part in the community like all other people.



For example, if buildings do not have ramps, people in wheelchairs will not be able to get in.



Or if information is not easy to read, people with intellectual disabilities and other people may not be able to understand it.

So the Access City Award is a chance for cities in Europe to show what they have done to become accessible to all people.



The Access City Award started in 2010 to remind cities how important it is to be accessible for all people.

Which city won the 2023 Access City Award?

The city that won the Access City Award for 2023 is **Skellefteå** in **Sweden**.



Skellefteå won the Access City Award because it keeps working on making things and services accessible for people with disabilities and all people.

Among others, in Skellefteå:



- Playgrounds, parks and streets are accessible and everyone can go around without problems.



- Blind people get information on their phones about possible dangers in the streets so that they can move safely.



- Buses have ramps, so that people in wheelchairs can use them without problems. On buses, there are audio announcements so that people who are blind can hear useful information about their journey. There are also screens so that people who are deaf can read this information on the screens.



- The city offers training to young people with intellectual disabilities about how to use technology and how to live independently.



Skellefteå got 150 000 euro for winning the Access City Award for 2023.

Two other cities won the second and third place in the competition:

- The city of **Córdoba** in **Spain** won the second place and 120 000 euro.
- The city of **Ljubljana** in **Slovenia** won the third place and 80 000 euro.



The next Access City Award will be for 2024.

Which cities can take part?

Not all cities can take part in the Access City Award. The cities that can take part in the Access City Award should:



- Be in countries that are part of the European Union. The **European Union** is a group of 27 countries in Europe that have come together to make things better for people.
- Have more than 50 000 people living in them. If a country has less than 2 cities with so many people, 2 or more smaller cities can team up. If together they have more than 50 000 people, they can take part in the Access City Award too.





- The city that won the Access City Award this year cannot take part again next year.

How can cities take part?



Cities that want to take part in the next Access City Award can apply online when the application period starts. People who run these cities and make important decisions for them should fill out a form on the internet.

In this form, they should:



- Say why they think their city should win the Access City Award;
- Give examples and show how their city works to make things accessible to all people;
- Talk about how they plan to continue this good work in the future.

You can find more information on our website at: www.ec.europa.eu/social/accesscityaward



There, we will soon say when the application period will start. When the application period starts, cities can fill out the form and take part in the next Access City Award. So keep an eye on our website to find this information!

How do we choose the winner?



After the cities apply for the Access City Award, groups of people check their applications and choose the winner.



In every country, there is a group of people that checks the applications of the cities of this country. They choose up to 3 cities as the best examples of this country.

Then another group of people in Europe checks all these cities and chooses which of them is the best example of all. This city wins the Access City Award for this year.

People with disabilities and older people are part of these groups. Among others, they check if cities have accessible:

- Buildings and streets;
- Buses and metro;
- Ticket machines and cash machines;
- Websites and other technology that people use to communicate;





- Information that is easy to read and understand for everyone.

They see which of the cities does a better job at making these things accessible to all people. This city wins the Access City Award.

When will the winner get their prize?



At the end of 2023, we will have a big meeting in Brussels to talk about the rights of people with disabilities. In this meeting, we will also say which city wins the Access City Award for 2024.

We will hand over the Access City Award to this city.

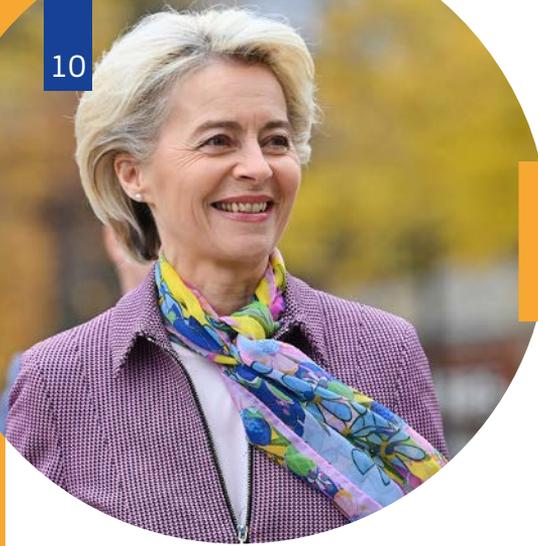
More information



If you want more information, you can check our website at:

www.ec.europa.eu/social/accesscityaward

If you have any questions, you can send us an email at: secretariat@accesscityaward.eu.



Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Celebrating the winners of the Access City Award

City life should be accessible to all. To enable each and every one of us to participate fully in all areas of urban life, we need original, effective solutions, just like what ACA award winning cities have put in place. Examples like these demonstrate the integrating power of our European society.

Winners of the 2023 Access City Award



1st

Skellefteå, Sweden



2nd

Córdoba, Spain



3rd

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Special mention
for information
and communications
technology (ICT)

Mérida, Spain

Special mention
for built
environment

Hamburg, Germany

Special mention
for transport

Grenoble, France

Previous winners of the Access City Award

Year	1st prize	2nd prize	3rd prize	Special mention	Special mention	Special mention	Special mention
2022	Luxembourg City, Luxembourg	Helsinki, Finland	Barcelona, Spain	Porto, Portugal	Palma, Spain	Leuven, Belgium	-
2021	Jönköping, Sweden	Bremerhaven, Germany	Gdynia, Poland	Poznań, Poland	Komotini, Greece	Florence, Italy	-
2020	Warsaw, Poland	Castellón de la Plana, Spain	Skellefteå, Sweden	Evreux, France	Tartu, Estonia	Chania, Greece	-
2019	Breda, The Netherlands	Evreux, France	Gdynia, Poland	Vigo, Spain	Kaposvár, Hungary	Viborg, Denmark	Monteverde, Italy
2018	Lyon, France	Ljubljana, Slovenia	Luxembourg City, Luxembourg	Viborg, Denmark	-	-	-
2017	Chester, United Kingdom	Rotterdam, Netherlands	Jūrmala, Latvia	Lugo, Spain	Skellefteå, Sweden	Alessandria, Italy	Funchal, Portugal
2016	Milan, Italy	Wiesbaden, Germany	Toulouse, France	Vaasa, Finland	Kaposvár, Hungary	-	-
2015	Borås, Sweden	Helsinki, Finland	Ljubljana, Slovenia	Arona, Spain	Luxembourg City, Luxembourg	Logroño, Spain	Budapest, Hungary
2014	Göteborg, Sweden	Grenoble, France	Poznań, Poland	Belfast, UK	Dresden, Germany	Burgos, Spain	Málaga, Spain

Year	Winner	Runner-up	Runner-up	Runner-up	Special mention	Special mention	Special mention	Special mention
2013	Berlin, Germany	Nantes, France	Stockholm, Sweden	-	Gdynia, Poland	Bilbao, Spain	Pamplona, Spain	Tallaght, Ireland
2012	Salzburg, Austria	Krakow, Poland	Marburg, Germany	Santander, Spain	Terrassa, Spain	Ljubljana, Slovenia	Olomouc, Czechia	Grenoble, France
2011	Ávila, Spain	Barcelona, Spain	Cologne, Germany	Turku, Finland	Barnsley, UK	Dublin, Ireland	Grenoble, France	Malmö, Sweden



Helena Dalli

European Commissioner for Equality

Foreword

Accessibility is an enabler of rights, autonomy, equality, independent living, and freedom.

It is a precondition for the 87 million persons with disabilities in Europe as well as those with reduced mobility to be able to participate fully in all areas of life.

I am pleased to introduce the 2023 Access City Award brochure, where we celebrate the good practices of this year's winners, and to encourage more European cities to take action to provide a barrier-free environment for all.

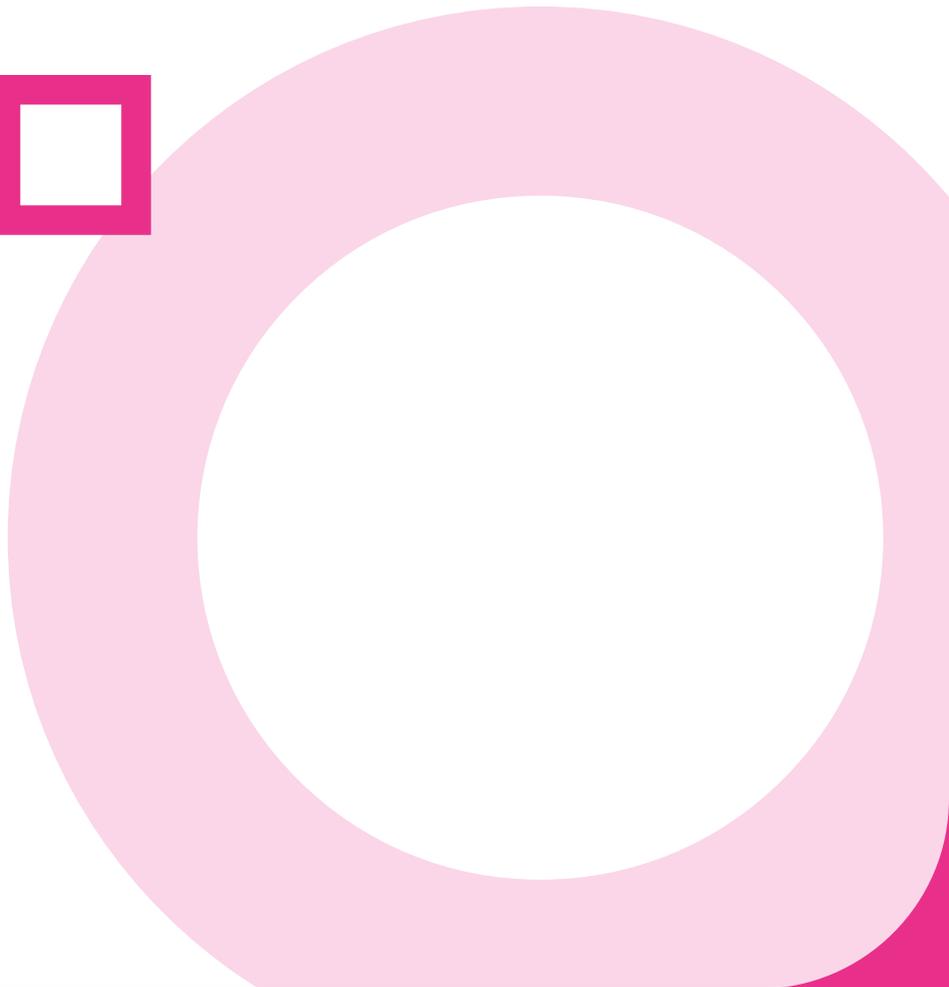
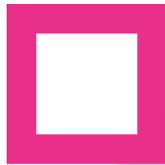
One in four European adults have some form of disability, more than one fifth of the EU population is aged 65 or over, and around 75 % of all Europeans are living in cities. Making cities accessible matters as it benefits everyone and contributes to building thriving and inclusive environments. By putting accessibility high on the agenda, cities demonstrate their commitment to implement concrete solutions that improve people's lives.

Over the past decade, the EU has come a long way on the accessibility front. But there are still millions of persons with disabilities who experience structural discrimination and barriers every day in their lives – for example, when trying to access information, buildings, the urban environment, and transport.

That is why accessibility is a cornerstone of the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, and we must ensure that it remains a priority at all levels, including in the Member States.

With the Access City Award, the European Commission recognises the commitment of cities across the EU in breaking down barriers and in designing and delivering on accessibility. Your efforts are contributing to building a Union of Equality.

I congratulate the city of Skellefteå for being awarded the 1st prize of the 2023 Access City Award. Your strong monitoring and evaluation system, your financial support for organisations of persons with disabilities and your focus on accessible ICT show your continued commitment to accessibility.



Introduction

The Access City Award recognises European cities' efforts to be more accessible to persons with disabilities. The Award is an opportunity for cities to showcase how they can transform the experiences of their citizens by eliminating barriers and become a beacon of good practice for other cities to aspire to.

Accessible cities allow persons with disabilities to live their daily lives without barriers, on an equal basis with others. Accessibility has a large area of application that affects all aspects of city life – from public transport and infrastructure to administration, leisure, and web services. Accessible cities are also easier to navigate for persons with limited mobility, such as older persons, persons with children in prams, persons with temporary disabilities.

The Access City Award is open to all EU cities with more than 50 000 inhabitants. All candidates are first evaluated by a national jury. Then the shortlisted applications are assessed by an EU jury of accessibility experts who select the winner and two runners-up.

Every year, the EU jury also gives a special mention award to cities who have done exceptionally well in a specific area. This year, the jury handed out special mentions for information and communications technology, built environment, and transport.



Winner

73 000 inhabitants

Skellefteå

Sweden

A coastal city situated in the north of Sweden, Skellefteå is part of Lapland province, meaning winter brings its own challenges for accessibility. Since winning third place in the 2020 Access City Award, Skellefteå has continued to prioritise accessibility and reflect on how to make the city more accessible with a strong monitoring and evaluation system.

Strategic work with strong determination and the right focus works. It enables people to be active, ensures participation, and moves us towards an equal and stronger society. By working together, we increase changes to build a more inclusive Skellefteå, for a future that does not settle for anything but full accessibility.

Elin Brännström, Participation Coordinator for Skellefteå.

Accessibility for everyone, across all areas

Skellefteå's municipal strategy for accessibility and participation, *Ett Skellefteå för alla 2015–2025* ('A Skellefteå for all 2015–2025'), is implemented at the highest level by the City Council. The overall aim is full participation at all levels of society for all citizens. This is realised within three focus areas: increased accessibility, raised levels of awareness, and better education and jobs for persons with disabilities.

Skellefteå takes a systematic and comprehensive approach to accessibility, including in all building plans and public procurement processes, as well as through the municipal policy on accessible public spaces. This policy aims to increase the coherency of accessibility measures in the city across several areas, such as pedestrian crossings, tactile paths, and bus stops.

Moreover, Skellefteå used the funding from its previous Access City Award to further improve accessibility. Specific measures implemented in the winter season illustrate how the city strives to remain open to everyone, all year round.



Street crossings and tactile paths in Skellefteå make the city safer and more accessible.

A strong system for continued improvement

Skellefteå's monitoring and evaluation system is a particular highlight of the city's continued commitment to accessibility. Jurors noted that few municipalities work with monitoring and evaluation and agreed that measuring progress over time is an important aspect of encouraging public administration workers to prioritise accessibility.

Funding to support better representation and accessible facilities and services

Skellefteå has 850 civil society organisations, including 30 representative organisations for persons with disabilities. All membership organisations can apply for financial support from the municipality, and generous funding is available for representative organisations. Subsidies are also available for organisations that aim to make their overall services and facilities more accessible.

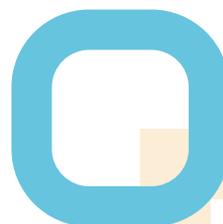
Increasing awareness

The Skellefteå municipality aims to build knowledge and raise awareness through a new, locally developed interactive educational course on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This course is mandatory for all municipal employees, and 62 politicians in the municipality took part in it in autumn 2022.

Technology is a key to the city for persons with disabilities

The municipality of Skellefteå and representatives of persons with disabilities have worked with the tourist office, Visit Skellefteå, to make accessible accommodation and facilities more visible. This includes an inventory of the levels of accessibility in public premises, which is hosted on the municipality's website.

Public playgrounds and streets in Skellefteå are highly accessible, with tactile information signs and ground heating to ensure snow and ice are not a hazard for persons with disabilities and other citizens. The city's central park and the nearby river area are functional and accessible meeting places with tactile paths, seating, an outdoor elevator and several tactile maps. Buses in Skellefteå's network are equipped with low floors that tilt to kerb level, ramps, text screens and audio announcements.



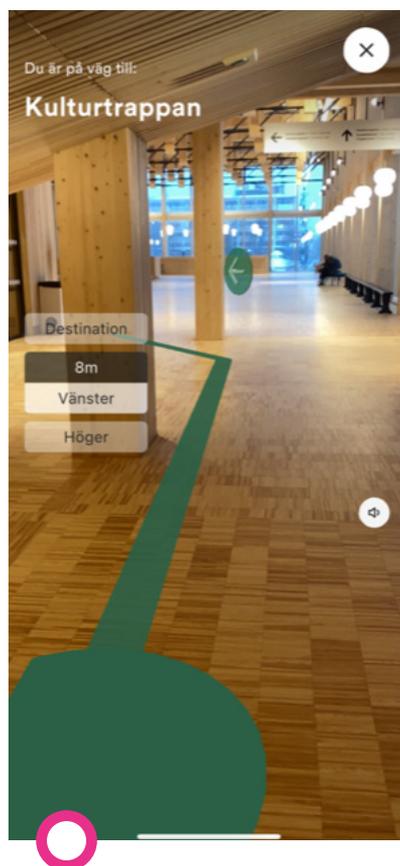
The political commitment to accessibility and inclusion of all inhabitants is one key to our success. We are also firm believers in universal design and doing things right from the beginning. Things that work for persons with disabilities are almost always a bit more convenient for the rest of us, as well. Our aim is not to separate issues of accessibility and inclusion of persons with different abilities, but to integrate these perspectives into all ongoing activities and projects in the city.

Elin Brännström, Participation Coordinator
for Skellefteå

The new Skellefteå Cultural Centre, SARA, has an augmented reality app that makes it easier to navigate around. This includes 3D mapping, route planning and a sound system for visually impaired persons, ensuring accessibility for the entire community.

To reduce potential hazards for persons with disabilities, a municipal webpage and SMS-service for visually impaired individuals provides up-to-date information on construction works taking place on Skellefteå's roads, along with other potential obstacles. The city also has a training department that allows young people with intellectual disabilities to explore technologies and ways of working that can support them to live a more independent adult life.

In this way, Skellefteå not only provides technologies to support persons with disabilities, but also helps to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to use them.



Skellefteå's Cultural Centre uses an augmented reality app to make it easier for visually impaired persons to navigate around.



Second prize

322 071 inhabitants

Córdoba

Spain

One of the oldest cities in Europe, Córdoba is set in an enclave among mountains and the Guadalquivir valley. The city considers universal accessibility a high priority, and particularly focuses on inclusive tourism and public-private partnerships.

We are aware that there is still much to do to achieve perfect accessibility, but we can assure you that our city is getting better with every year. Ultimately, in managing this wonderful corner of the world, the city of Córdoba is responsible for the care of all citizens and visitors, with or without disabilities. We do it for everyone, and everyone is always welcome here.

José María Bellido, Mayor of Córdoba

Cultural heritage for everyone to enjoy

Home to the largest old quarter in Spain and the only city in the world with four UNESCO-protected sites, Córdoba is popular with tourists. The Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba alone attracts up to 2 million visitors a year. In this context, actions carried out by the Delegation of Inclusion and Accessibility aim to promote continuous and comprehensive action to improve accessibility for tourists who visit the city.

A big part of Córdoba's cultural agenda is the Patios de Córdoba festival, where residents open their courtyards for the public to enjoy. During the festival, mobile ramps are installed for wheelchair users or people with reduced mobility, with reserved parking spaces.

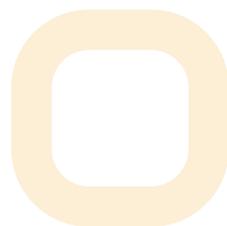
Córdoba's Julio Romero de Torres Museum is the first museum in Spain to be 100 % accessible, further showcasing the city's strategic commitment to inclusive culture. The museum is equipped with hearing loop and radiofrequency systems, relief paintings (wall-mounted tactile sculptures), and audio descriptions of the exhibits in 34 languages and Spanish sign language. There is also an accessible route which leads from the historic centre of the city to the museum.

Construction works to improve wheelchair accessibility in the Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos ('Castle of the Christian Monarchs') are currently underway. So far, the works have improved the overall accessibility of the monument by 90 %.

Finally, a special training programme, totalling 355 hours of learning, helps public and private tourism agents to better support visitors with disabilities.



Ramps are installed in Córdoba's cultural and recreational areas to improve wheelchair accessibility.





NaviLens codes help visually impaired users to independently use Córdoba's public transport network.

Accessibility across the entire transport network

Public transportation in Córdoba is free for personal assistants of persons with disabilities, and bus drivers are trained to work with them. A dedicated app developed by the city ensures users with reduced mobility can easily reserve a sensor-equipped parking space in advance. Train stations are also accessible.

Funding from NextGenerationEU is being used to make 220 bus stops in Córdoba 100 % accessible, including by installing the NaviLens system. NaviLens helps visually impaired users to be more independent. Overall, 50 taxi stops in Córdoba already use this system. To date, over 4 000 interactions have been had with NaviLens codes installed at 34 bus stops, and more than 1 200 with codes installed at the Julio Romero de Torres Museum.

Inclusive spaces for people to have fun

Córdoba uses pictograms to make it easier for children with disabilities to play, as well as adapted furniture in recreational areas for people with reduced mobility.

Pictograms like this one make it easier for children with disabilities to understand and play on recreational equipment





Third prize

293 218 inhabitants

Ljubljana

Slovenia

The capital and largest city in Slovenia, Ljubljana, is the cultural heart of the country, and has a rich historical heritage. The city won prizes in the 2015 and 2018 Access City Award. Since then, it has been working hard to become even more accessible, leading the way for other Slovenian cities.

Ljubljana is a city in which diverse people live together in mutual respect. We create the conditions necessary for all to live full and quality lives. Accessibility for all is one of the most important issues that we always have to consider as we redevelop the city. If the city is accessible to the most vulnerable groups, it is accessible and friendly to all.

Zoran Jankovičlin Brännström, Mayor of the City of Ljubljana



A tactile model of Ljubljana Castle is on display in the courtyard.

A rich cultural experience for every visitor

The old heart of Ljubljana features barrier-free access for pedestrians to the streets, squares and bridges across the river Ljubljanica. A total of 13 footbridges have been built or renovated to be more accessible. And out of the 13 free-of-charge public toilets, 10 are accessible to everyone.

Butchers' Bridge (Ljubljana's 'love bridge') has free accessible boarding facilities for river boats, and Ljubljana Castle can be visited via an accessible cable car. A tactile model of the castle for visually impaired persons is displayed in the courtyard, making it easier for them to experience its architecture.

To ensure that everyone can enjoy Ljubljana's extensive green areas, the city has invested in accessible urban gardens. This includes installing more than 3 000 benches. Several public playgrounds have also been upgraded to make them more accessible.

Free electric vehicles, including wheelchair-accessible cars, are available throughout Ljubljana.



Safe travel around the city

In Ljubljana's city centre, areas exclusively for pedestrians and cyclists have been extended and improved with evenly laid paving, tactile ground markings, dropped kerbs and ramps. More than 80 % of pedestrian crossings provide audible signals, and 2 % of parking spaces are reserved for persons with disabilities.

Free electric vehicles, including wheelchair-accessible cars, are available for citizens throughout the city. All city buses have low floors, and 96 % of them are equipped with video and audio announcements. Travel on city and intercity public transport is also free for residents with disabilities and their personal assistants, as well as for older people.

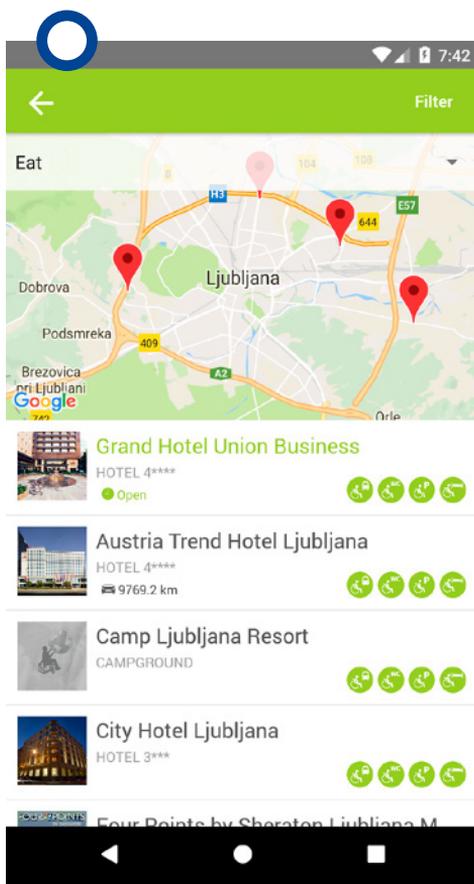
Persons with disabilities can safely use public transport in Ljubljana thanks to measures like special ID cards, which they can use to quickly request assistance from drivers on city buses.

Innovative mobile app

Since 2018, visitors to Ljubljana can download the free 'Ljubljana by Wheelchair' mobile app to access information for wheelchair users. The app shows information about accessible areas in the city and makes it easier for persons with disabilities to get around.

Smart digital solutions (including an accessible web portal for the Citizens' Initiatives Service) help to provide easier and faster access to information, as well as opportunities to participate, for everyone.

The 'Ljubljana by Wheelchair' mobile app provides relevant and up-to-date information on accessibility across the city



Active involvement of persons with disabilities

Ljubljana recently released a Strategic Accessibility Plan that involves both private and public actors and includes clear measures to make the city more accessible by 2025.

Persons with disabilities are directly included in city policymaking through SOAKO and SVSO, mayoral advisory bodies. SOAKO is made up of persons with disabilities, representatives from organisations for persons with disabilities, architects and municipal officials. The advisory body implements initiatives to remove and prevent architectural and communication barriers for persons with disabilities. It also proposes practical solutions to the relevant bodies within the city's administration.

As well as policymaking, persons with disabilities are also included in the practical implementation of policies. This includes testing accessible solutions in public spaces, such as tactile ground markings, test rides on city buses, and test reading of easy-to-read information. In this way, persons with disabilities are valuable partners in making the city open and accessible to all.

Ljubljana regularly consults persons with disabilities as part of decision-making, in order to better understand the specific services and actions that can support their integration, autonomy and independent living.



Mérida

Mérida, a historic city in the south-west of Spain, was declared a UNESCO World

Spain

Heritage Site in 1993 due to its rich Roman history. The city aims to promote access for all citizens to its cultural past, present and future, and constantly strives to become a city for everyone.

In Mérida, we are carrying out a project of urban and social transformation based on universal accessibility. To make it a reality, we understand that the only way to promote the necessary transformation is through the transversality of actions and policies. Only through universal accessibility and a social model can we achieve our goal: that all people, without exception, can fully exercise their citizenship.

Antonio Rodríguez Osuna, Mayor of Mérida



Visitors to Mérida's ruins and monuments can use their phones to scan interactive panels and access audiovisual information

Mérida has consistently worked to promote universal accessibility and consolidate collaboration with representative organisations of persons with disabilities. In particular, the city has used ICT to make cultural events and historic sites more accessible.

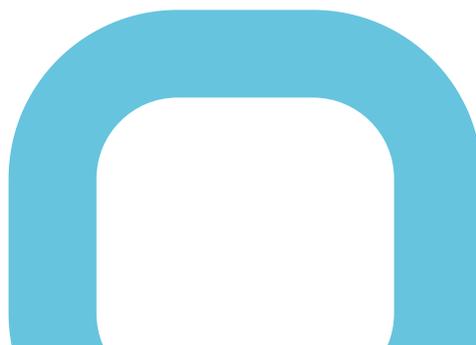
Innovative use of ICT at cultural events and historic sites

Mérida is a very old city that strives to respect its heritage while also becoming more accessible. It has placed special focus on enhancing the accessibility of its cultural events and historic sites.

To make Mérida's fascinating history available to more people, the city has installed accessible interactive panels at its ruins and monuments.

At Stone and Music Festival, which takes place annually in the Roman Theatre, vibrating bags are used to help people with limited hearing enjoy the music. Furthermore, Mérida's International Festival of Classical Theatre works with Plena inclusión (an organisation that supports persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities), ONCE (a foundation that supports people who are visually impaired), and Audiosigno (sensory accessibility services) to make shows more accessible and allow everyone to enjoy classical theatre.

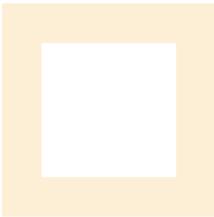
Mérida has introduced 'days without noise' at the City Fair and during the Wise Kings Parade at Christmas. On these days, music is turned off during specific hours to allow people with autism and other sensory sensitivities to attend without being overwhelmed.



The people who live in our city trust us to improve their lives by promoting global projects at the local level and to be a city that makes its heritage more universal, more accessible and more inclusive. A heritage that is part of the life of the citizens of Mérida and of all the people who visit us. A heritage that is lived and enjoyed.

Antonio Rodríguez Osuna, Mayor of Mérida

In the summer and Christmas holidays, children can take part in inclusive urban camps that make the city's heritage more accessible. The camps offer children specialised assistance to help them play sports, attend theatre and music events, and take part in guided tours. The public swimming pool is now accessible thanks to installation of an elevator, and accessible elements have also been introduced in many of the city's play areas.

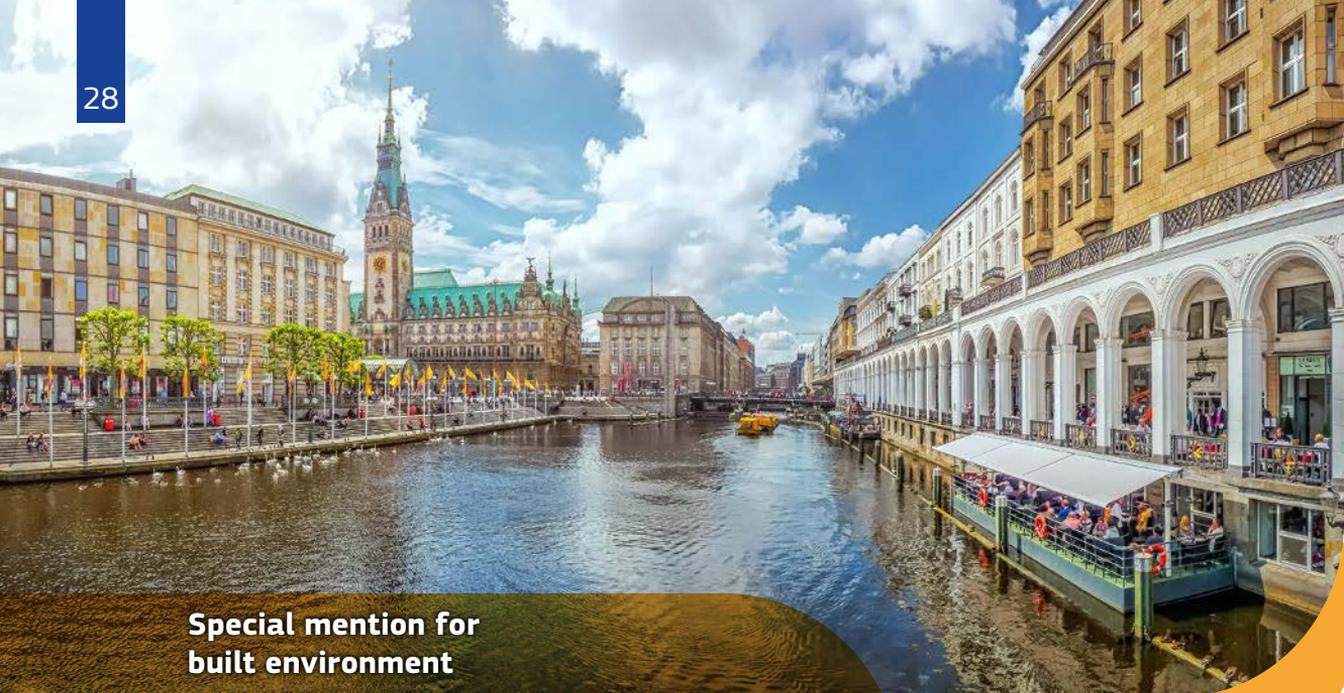


Representation

Mérida's key public buildings have magnetic loops, meaning more people can take part in city activities, forums and events. Since 2015, the city has also had a specific section of government dedicated to the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. Policies on accessibility are articulated around an inclusion plan. The plan was written in cooperation with persons with disabilities, their families and representative associations. It also involved a massive compilation of information through tests, meetings and interviews. It was then discussed and agreed upon between members of the local government. Of the 101 measures in the inclusion plan, the city has already launched 50, investing €2.1 million so far.



Inclusive urban camps make Mérida's heritage more accessible for children, including through guided tours



**Special mention for
built environment**

1.9 million inhabitants

Hamburg

Germany

Germany's second largest city, Hamburg, attracts millions of tourists every year. Its rivers and canals are crossed by around 2 500 bridges, making it the city with the highest number of bridges in Europe. With a population of around 1.9 million, Hamburg is constantly developing its cityscape to become a more inclusive city to live in for persons with disabilities.

Accessibility is a human right, and it is important for the citizens of Hamburg and Germany as a whole. Whenever people encounter barriers, they cannot participate fully in society, and thus they are robbed of their independence. In this respect, accessibility is also a fundamental part of democracy. A modern, future-oriented, democratic society is barrier-free and inclusive, and this is what we want for Hamburg.

Ulrike Kloiber, Senate Coordinator for Equality for Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility driven by innovative ideas

Hamburg maintains a strong focus on accessibility as part of its work on private and state-subsidised housing. The port of Hamburg, which is among the largest ports in the world, is one of the city's main attractions and a great example of a tourist spot that is highly accessible. Hamburg has also introduced innovative concepts such as the 'taxi of the future' (*Zukunftstaxi*). This concept provides subsidies for the operation of zero-emission taxis that can transport wheelchair users.

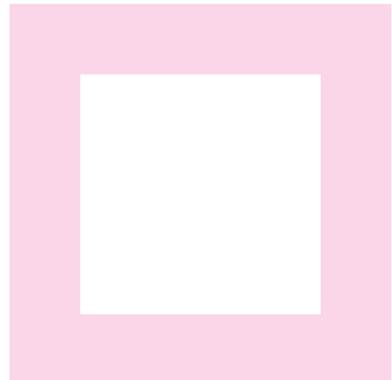


The 'taxi of the future' is a major step towards Hamburg's accessibility.

Active involvement across the city

Hamburg has a consolidated approach to accessibility which includes stakeholder involvement and coordinated actions between public and private sectors. One example is the State Working Group for People with Disabilities – an association that brings together almost 70 organisations of persons with disabilities. The working group advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities before the authorities and institutions.

Hamburg's broad focus means that the city has achieved much in becoming more accessible, from training taxi drivers to service clients with disabilities to having accessible online public administration services.

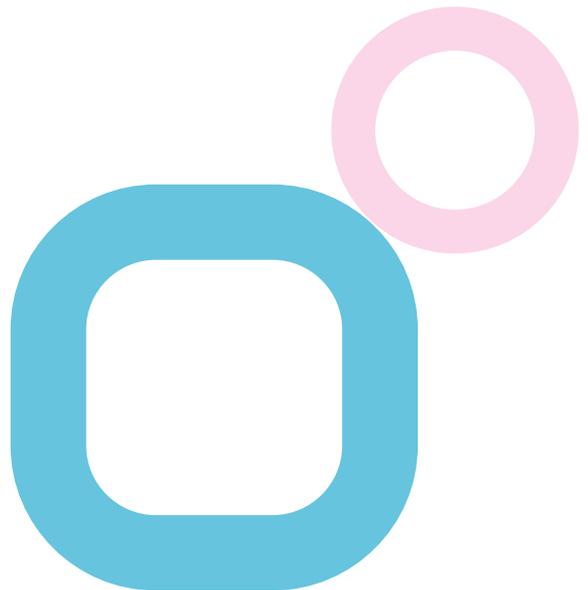




A group of people being photographed in a grand hall receiving an award.

Pathways for persons with disabilities

Hamburg aims to establish an Institute for Inclusive Education so that persons with intellectual disabilities can teach in higher education institutions. In addition, the city has its own law, the Disability Equality Act, which, like the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aims to establish independent living and equal participation of persons with disabilities in society.





Special mention for transport

160 000 inhabitants

Grenoble

France

Surrounded by mountains in the south-west of France, Grenoble has had a long-standing commitment to accessibility. The city won second prize at the 2013 Access City Award, and in 2020 it was awarded 'first accessible city' by the French association of persons with disabilities APF France handicap.

We want to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the creation of our city following the idea of “nothing about us, without us”. Our public transport is well equipped – our tram was the first accessible tram service in the world, and we are now focused on providing accessible housing to persons with physical disabilities.

Luis Beltran-Lopez, City Councillor in charge of accessibility and disabilities in the municipal team



Grenoble has made great strides in making its public transport accessible

Accessible travel around the city

Grenoble has a strong approach to transport accessibility. The city's public buses and trams have been made accessible, and it is currently working to provide adapted bicycles.

Dedicated awareness-raising campaign

Grenoble's Accessibility Month includes a series of events that aim to raise awareness of persons with disabilities, their needs, and their challenges. The city also organises field trips to assess the situation on the ground. Each year, Grenoble draws up a report on the state of accessibility of private and public structures and presents the results at the Municipal Accessibility Commission meeting.



The Municipal Accessibility Commission meeting discusses the state of accessibility in Grenoble



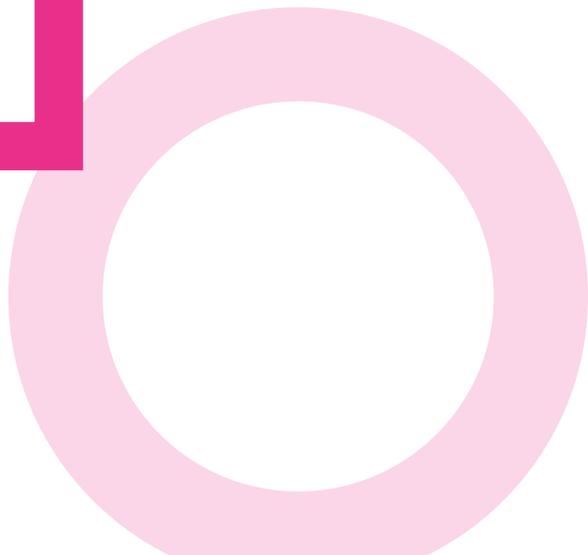
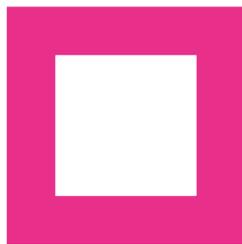
Grenoble is improving its facilities to make sports more accessible.

Beyond transport

The Ad'Ap plan, which runs until 2025, aims to transform Grenoble's buildings such as schools, cultural centres and sports facilities. This will allow the city to set up more sports projects. More than 40 facilities have already been made compliant.

Representation in decision-making

Financed by the Grenoble city budget, projects are submitted, and voted on, by the residents, which leads to new social inclusion projects. These include the setup of associations supporting autistic children who have dropped out of school, or the creation of playgrounds called 'handiparks'. These parks are intended for children with or without disabilities, thus fostering diversity from the earliest age.





Participating in the Access City Award 2024

You can help to make life easier for persons with disabilities. Join in and apply for the 2024 Access City Award.

The Access City Award is organised by the European Commission in partnership with the European Disability Forum. The Award recognises cities for their work to become more accessible, in particular for persons with disabilities.

Participating in the Award is an opportunity to gain European recognition and a unique chance to review the current situation in your city. It also allows you to share experiences with other European cities, helping you to become an even better city to live and visit.

Winning cities receive a financial prize:

- 1st prize: €150 000
- 2nd prize: €120 000
- 3rd prize: €80 000

Cities with more than 50 000 inhabitants can apply

The selection process is divided in two phases: pre-selection at national level and final selection at European level. The **national juries** in each country select a maximum of three cities from among the national applicants using the evaluation criteria provided by the European Commission. Pre-selected candidates then move on to the second phase of the competition and are assessed by the **European Jury**.

To apply, you must be a government authority of a city of over 50 000 inhabitants in an EU Member State. In Member States with fewer than two such cities, urban areas made up of two or more towns may also participate if their combined population exceeds 50 000 inhabitants.

As the same city cannot win the Access City Award in two consecutive years, the winning city in 2023 cannot take part again in 2024. The Award encourages all other cities, including the second and third prize winners and special mention cities, to participate again.

To apply, you must complete and submit an online application form by the deadline. When the application period opens, a guidance note and participation rules will be published to help you apply.

They will be available in all official EU languages on the 2024 Access City Award website.

ec.europa.eu/social/accesscityaward2024

Selection process and criteria

The juries will consider measures taken and planned in the following areas:

- built environment and public spaces.
- transport and related infrastructure.
- information and communication, including new technologies.
- public facilities and services.

The juries will evaluate the applications, taking into account the following six criteria:

- scope of the actions.
- ownership, level of commitment.
- impact.
- quality and sustainability of results.
- involvement of persons with disabilities and relevant partners.
- social innovation.

Please keep a close eye on our website for news on the final criteria.

The winner of the 2024 Access City Award will be announced on **1 December 2023**. The Award ceremony is part of the annual conference to celebrate the European Day of Persons with Disabilities (between 30 November and 1 December 2023).

Contact us

The Access City Award Secretariat can assist you with the preparation of your application. For any additional information, please contact:

secretariat@accesscityaward.eu.

Getting in touch with the EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en

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- at the following standard number: +32 22999696 or
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EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<https://data.europa.eu/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.

The annual Access City Award recognises European cities for their efforts to make themselves more accessible for persons with disabilities and older citizens. This brochure celebrates the achievements of the 2023 winners, runners-up and special mentions: Skellefteå (Sweden), Córdoba (Spain), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Mérida (Spain), Hamburg (Germany) and Grenoble (France). This year's cities have taken concrete steps to make public spaces, services, transport, buildings, culture, and tourism more accessible.

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