



PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Access•City Award

European Commission calls for entries from across Member States

Brussels, 27 July 2010 – The European Commission announces the launch of “Access•City Award”, the first European Award for Accessible Cities. This annual award aims to highlight the European cities that are taking the most effective and innovative action to improve their accessibility for disabled citizens. It will celebrate and showcase the most successful initiatives that allow people with disabilities to participate fully in society. Accessibility is not difficult to implement, this is the initiative’s key message.

Local city authorities are encouraged to submit their application before 23 September 2010. It will take place in two phases, with a pre-selection at the national level being followed by a competition at the European level. In the European competition phase, the finalists will be selected to attend the award ceremony in Brussels, which will coincide with the European Day of People with Disabilities Conference on 2-3 December 2010.

Approximately 80 million Europeans have disabilities. 16% of them are of working age, whilst almost 70% are over 60. As disability is so closely linked to ageing, it is likely to affect everyone at some point in their life. Accessibility is therefore a key element of the European Union’s disability policy.

The EU regards accessibility for all of its citizens to public buildings, transportation, information and communications to be essential in order to ensure sustainable economic and social benefits in the long term. In addition, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, accessibility will remain at the core of the new EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

Eligibility

Local city authorities in EU Member States and candidate countries (Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland and Turkey) as well as networks of cities or organisations are invited to apply. Participating cities should have a population of at least 50,000 inhabitants. However, cities with fewer inhabitants from smaller Member States will also be eligible. To be considered, initiatives must have been implemented within the past five years.

All entries will need to cover all areas below:

- Built environment and public spaces
- Transport and related infrastructure
- Information and communications
- Facilities and services open to the public

About the award

The winner of the competition will be recognised as the “Winner of the Access•City Award 2011” and will feature prominently in all activities aiming to promote accessibility at the European level during 2011. The applications from each country will be reviewed by national juries composed of representatives from the



National Disability Councils, from the national administration, as well as accessibility experts. The winner will be selected by a European jury.

In addition, a special “European Champion for Accessible Cities Award” will also be launched. This special award will be granted to a network of cities or organisations with outstanding results in the field of accessibility. The selection will be done by a European Jury and will be based on nominations from the National Disability Councils.

How to apply

All applications need to be submitted before 23 September in English (preferably), French or German using the entry form available at www.accesscityaward.eu. All participants are asked to provide details and evidence of the activities they have implemented. In applying for the Access●City Award, cities commit to serve as an example – if they are selected – in annual European activities in the field of accessibility. Additional details are available at www.accesscityaward.eu.

[Pan-European Media information:](#)

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