



French city Lyon rewarded with 2018 Access City Award for putting accessibility at the heart of its city life

Brussels, 5 December 2017

On the occasion of the European Day for People with Disabilities, the European Commission today announced Lyon, France, as the winner of the Access City Award. The city was rewarded for its inclusive and universal accessibility.

Presenting the award, Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility said: *"This Commission is fully committed to putting people first and making social inclusion a top priority on the political agenda. With the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights on 17 November, the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission agreed a social, inclusive Europe is the way forward. Making our cities and societies more accessible for people with disabilities is therefore a must. I thank Lyon, and all the other cities who have participated in this competition, for their efforts to make that happen. I hope the achievements of these cities can be an inspiration for many other cities, but also for all regional and national authorities."*

Lyon's public buses are 100% accessible, and access to culture for all is also ensured, thanks to the inclusion of accessible equipment in libraries, such as reading machines, audiobook readers and magnifying screens. The city has also developed digital tools for people with disabilities, and in terms of work integration, 7.8% of civil servants are people with a disability. This is significantly higher than the legal minimum quota of 6% required by the French legislation.

The European Commission also rewarded the city of Ljubljana, Slovenia, and the city of Luxembourg, Luxembourg, with a second and third place respectively. Ljubljana integrated accessibility in its overall policy, appointing a special advisory committee with elderly and people with disabilities on board so that they are directly involved in the city's policymaking. The city of Luxembourg has put a lot of effort into raising awareness among citizens to avoid stigma in relation to disability and building a highly inclusive city in which everyone feels comfortable.

Finally, the city of Viborg in Denmark has received a special mention for reconciling its historical heritage and hilly landscape with an accessible infrastructure.

Background

The [Access City Award](#), organised by the Commission together with the European Disability Forum, is one of the actions foreseen in the [EU Disability Strategy](#) 2010-2020 aiming to create a barrier-free Europe for people with disabilities. It continues to recognise those cities that are leading lights in overcoming barriers across Europe today. The Award is given to the city that has clearly and sustainably improved accessibility in fundamental aspects of city living, and that has concrete plans for further improvements. The purpose of the Award is to inspire other cities, who may face similar challenges and to promote good practices across Europe.

The Access City Award is addressed to European cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Cities are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive approach to accessibility across the four key areas: built environment and public spaces; transportation and related infrastructure; information and communication including new technologies (ICT); public facilities and services.

The Award is granted during the [yearly European Day of Persons with Disabilities conference](#), which is attended by about 400 participants coming from all over Europe.

EU policy on accessibility

Making Europe more accessible to those with disabilities is a key part of the EU's overall disability strategy 2010-2020. The strategy provides the general framework at EU level for action in the area of disability and accessibility to complement and support Member States' action. Specific provisions on accessibility are contained in EU legislation in areas such as transport and electronic communication services. The [Commission's proposal for an Accessibility Act](#), for instance, aims at making products and services more accessible to disabled persons. A report on the Accessibility act was voted by the European Parliament in September and on 7 December, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) is due to vote for a general approach.

The EU makes use of a variety of instruments beyond legislation and policy, such as research and standardisation, to optimise the accessibility of the built environment, ICT, transport, and other areas, and to foster an EU-wide market for accessible products and services.

Winners of the previous awards: 2011, Avila (Spain); 2012, Salzburg (Austria); 2013, Berlin (Germany); 2014, Gothenburg (Sweden); 2015, Boras (Sweden); 2016, Milan (Italy); 2017, Chester (United Kingdom).

For more information:

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