

THE EUROPE PRIZE



The top European award
for towns and municipalities



Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



ABOUT THE EUROPE PRIZE

ORIGINS

” The Europe Prize was created in **1955** by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in Strasbourg to reward towns and municipalities that have been especially active in promoting the European ideal.

HOW IT DEVELOPED

— Awarded each year, the Europe Prize is open to the municipalities of the Council of Europe's 46 member States, regardless of their size and number of inhabitants.

- ▶ It was an instant success in the years following the **Second World War**, with numerous French and German towns and municipalities applying in order to consolidate new bonds of friendship after the events of the past.
- ▶ In the **1990s**, new countries joined the Council of Europe in the wake of change in eastern Europe, enabling more towns to apply for the Europe Prize.
- ▶ The Europe Prize has constantly gained in popularity **over the years**, inspiring both small municipalities and big cities and involving many European countries.



ITS AIMS

— The Europe Prize is awarded to towns and municipalities distinguishing themselves through their commitment to Europe, twinning activities, exchanges in the spheres of education, culture and sport, organisation of European events, membership of organisations of municipalities or local authorities and solidarity initiatives.

- ▶ It helps towns and municipalities to become more **visible on the European scene** and forge **new links** with other municipalities.
- ▶ The winners also receive a **cheque for 20 000 euros**, making it possible for numerous young people to visit the European institutions in Strasbourg.

HOW IT WORKS

— Each town or municipality looking to win the Europe Prize must apply successively for the following awards (listed from lowest to highest level):

1. The European Diploma
2. The Flag of Honour
3. The Plaque of Honour
4. The Europe Prize

REMINDER: the Council of Europe and the European Union

Council of Europe

This international organisation set up in 1949, with its headquarters in Strasbourg, brings together 46 European States. Its mission is to promote democracy and safeguard human rights and the rule of law in Europe.

European Union (EU)

The EU has 27 member countries which have delegated part of their sovereignty to it so that it can take democratic decisions at European level on matters of common interest. To date, no country has joined the Union without first being a member of the Council of Europe.



THE EUROPE PRIZE TODAY

■ In June 2015, the 60th anniversary of the Europe Prize was celebrated in Strasbourg with a host of parliamentarians and representatives of prizewinning towns and municipalities in attendance.

■ The Europe Prize has moved with the times and its procedures have been simplified to boost its profile.

- ▶ Towns and municipalities now apply online, and the number of criteria has been reduced to four.
- ▶ The Europe Prize is gaining in popularity and becoming known in new countries.

The Association of Towns awarded the Europe Prize:

Set up in 1984, this association, with its current membership of 83 Europe Prize-winning towns and municipalities, meets at least twice a year. Chaired by one of the prizewinners, it forms a real platform for discussion, debate

and exchanges of good practices for municipalities, covering a wide range of topics: youth, education, migrants, social rights, public transport, climate change, renewable energies, etc.

PHASES

15 January

Deadline
for the receipt
of applications



End of April

Announcement
of the winners



May to December

Presentation
Ceremonies

HOW TO BECOME THE NEXT WINNER OF THE EUROPE PRIZE

Who can apply?

How to apply

- ▶ Any of the municipalities in the Council of Europe's 46 member States.

- ▶ **Only online.**

- ▶ Each municipality has to enclose a letter from the mayor and a **report**, which may be supplemented by press articles. The report must cover the **4 criteria**:



twinning activities, relations with foreign municipalities, co-operation and partnerships;



European events, Europe Day (5 May) and promotion of the European ideal;



European and international solidarity;



membership of local authority associations.

Deadline

How to apply for a higher award

- ▶ The online application form must be filled in and sent by 15 January.
- ▶ After winning an award, a municipality can then apply for the award at the next level. To do so, it must demonstrate a progressive level of European commitment.





AFTER THE WINNERS ARE ANNOUNCED

European Diploma

Winners are invited to take part in the **award ceremony** in Strasbourg in **June**.

Flag of Honour or Plaque of Honour

Winners organise a **public ceremony** actively involving young people, at which the award is presented by an (honorary) member of the PACE.

Europe Prize

The winner receives a cheque for **20 000 euros** for the town's young people during a **public ceremony** by the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize.



What the Europe Prize can do for you!

The Europe Prize can help your town or municipality become known and forge lasting links with other European municipalities. Check out the map of Europe on our webpage to see if your town is a winner.



www.assembly.coe.int/europe-prize/winners.asp



2022 Europe Prizewinner

Mr Mustafa Tunç Soyer, Mayor of İzmir (Türkiye)

■ Your city, İzmir, was awarded the 2022 Europe Prize. Why is this award especially important for İzmir?

We are aware of the key role of European values and standards in all urban issues and challenges. In this way, the success of our practices to increase the quality of life of each of our citizens is guaranteed. On the way to the goal of “Another life is possible” which we have adopted since I took office, we have put forward the concept of “circular culture” at the United Cities and Local Governments Culture Summit held in İzmir in September 2021. Accordingly, we carry out many activities and projects that simultaneously aim to “increase harmony with nature, with each other, with our past and with change”. Being awarded the Europe Prize is proof that the city of İzmir’s understanding of democracy, solidarity, harmony and European consciousness has corresponded to this process as planning and practices have changed.

■ Can you tell us what kind of initiatives your city used to make citizens more aware of Europe and its values?

İzmir is a culturally, socially, and economically active city and constantly wants to put the city forward in these areas. In this context, İzmir hosts many international cultural events and fairs. We endeavour to promote these events, fairs, and festivals every day of the year, and we strive for citizens to express themselves equally and transparently in all matters. Our citizens have always responded positively



to these efforts. Even the adverse effects caused by the Covid -19 pandemic did not slow down our efforts. By digitizing urban democracy and solidarity, fairs and cultural events, we have always tried to keep our citizens' awareness alive, especially young people, in terms of Europe and European values.

■ **After receiving the Europe Prize, have you forged new links with other municipalities?**

Izmir strengthens its ties with Europe every day by establishing cooperation and partnerships with European cities and taking important initiatives in international local government organisations and institutions. The Europe Prize has enabled us to diversify these activities, to reach more cities and institutions, and most importantly, to connect more closely with other municipalities sharing our common values. In the long term, we are confident that the Europe Prize will contribute further cooperation and closeness with new cities and organisations.

■ **What advice would you give to a municipality seeking to apply for the Europe Prize?**

In the age we live in, we experience so much disharmony that a part of us hurts almost every day. The only way to make another way of life possible is to increase harmony. For this purpose, it is crucial to understand and embrace European values; democracy, human rights, sustainability and reflect these values in the vision of the city. Cities that respect diversity with all their practices, bring new perspectives to democracy, absorb the unifying power of culture, and reflect all these notions in their future will be at an advantage for winning the Europe Prize. It is also key to attach importance to relations and cooperation with other municipalities abroad, membership in local government organisations, and active participation in European activities.



PERSPECTIVES

***Tiny Kox,
President of the Parliamentary Assembly***

”European towns and cities have faced unprecedented challenges after two years of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian Federation’s attack on Ukraine launched on 24 February 2022. They have borne the brunt of these crises and proved themselves outstanding at all levels.

First of all, during the pandemic they employed all their talents and skills to help other towns and cities, for example with the distribution of masks, the provision of Covid-19 prevention kits in schools, and the reception and care

of patients when hospitals in partner towns and cities were overstretched, as well as with prevention measures and information on the disease. In this respect, twinning arrangements helped to ensure faster and more effective mutual assistance.

In addition, the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize, set up in 1984, has enabled European municipalities to communicate with and help one another. From the outset of the Russian attack on Ukraine, Ukrainian towns and cities in this network have seen a huge



outpouring of financial and moral support. Since the beginning of the attack, more than 4.6 million Ukrainian refugees have fled their country, and European cities, especially in Poland, have made extraordinary efforts to welcome them. There have been many initiatives to help Ukrainian families, and this show of solidarity in towns and cities across the European continent sends a powerful message of hope for Europe and its values as a whole.

As President of the Parliamentary Assembly, I would also like to pay tribute to the local elected representatives in Ukraine, who are playing a key role in resolving the daily problems facing citizens in their martyred cities,

towns and villages, and to let them know that they have the support of PACE and the entire Council of Europe and that everything is being done to promote the protection of European citizens and bring about a resolution of the conflict in accordance with the fundamental principles of human rights.

Finally, I would like to offer my warm congratulations to the mayor and inhabitants of İzmir in Turkey, which has just won the 2022 Europe Prize, becoming the 4th Turkish city to receive this prestigious award after Istanbul, Bursa and Ankara. I wish them every success in their European activities.

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Tiny Kox

President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe



For more information:

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www.assembly.coe.int/europe-prize/

 **Europe Prize of PACE**

 **PACE_Europe_Prize**

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent’s leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. The Parliamentary Assembly, consisting of representatives from the 46 national parliaments, provides a forum for debate and proposals on Europe’s social and political issues. Many Council of Europe conventions originate from the Assembly, including the European Convention on Human Rights.



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