

European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award 2026: Shortlist announced

Brussels, 16 March 2026 - *13 towns, cities and regions from across 8 Member States have made it to the final round of the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award.*

The European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award, now in its fifth edition, recognises best practices of cities, towns, and regions that promote diversity as a source of progress and innovation, contribute to inclusive policies and societies, and foster a feeling of belonging for all their citizens. This year, a specific award is dedicated to inclusive labour markets for all, underscoring the importance of equal opportunities in the workplace and in the job market at large.

Following a competitive selection process, the following finalists have been shortlisted in three categories:

Category: Local authorities above 50,000 inhabitants

- Leuven, Belgium
- Hannover, Germany
- Piraeus, Greece
- Cabildo de Lanzarote, Spain
- Józsefváros, Budapest's 8th District, Hungary
- Metropolitan City of Milan, Italy
- Leiden, The Netherlands
- Skellefteå, Sweden

Category: Local authorities below 50,000 inhabitants

- Azpeitia, Spain
- Errenteria, Spain
- Orio, Spain
- San Xoán de Río, Spain
- Marsicovetere, Italy

2026 Award: Inclusive Labour Market for All

- Leuven, Belgium
- Hannover, Germany
- Piraeus, Greece
- Cabildo de Lanzarote, Spain
- Metropolitan City of Milan, Italy
- Leiden, The Netherlands
- Skellefteå, Sweden
- Errenteria, Spain
- Orio, Spain
- San Xoán de Río, Spain

The finalists have been recognised for their policies and initiatives that build fairer and more inclusive societies by tackling discrimination on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or LGBTIQ+ identity. They will now go through a final round of evaluation to claim gold, silver, and bronze awards.

The European Commission will unveil the winners at an official Award ceremony on 21 April 2026 in Brussels. The high-level event will gather mayors, national officials, diversity and inclusion enthusiasts and policymakers. Media representatives are invited to attend the ceremony, which will be organised together with the opening of the European Diversity Month.

Previous editions of the Award

Learn more about the [nine 2025 Award winners](#) recognised for their contribution to a more equal and inclusive Europe.

Looking for an inspiration? Get to know [best practices](#) of previous winners and shortlisted candidates and discover how exceptional dedication and innovation of towns, cities and regions in the EU can positively impact the lives of all.

Press contact

For media enquiries please contact: eudiversity_press@vo-europe.eu

Newsletter

To be added to our newsletter for updates on the latest developments regarding the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award, please register [here](#).

Further information

For more information on the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award and the European Diversity Month, visit our [website](#), check our [media backgrounder](#), and follow us on social media.

[X](#)

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[YouTube](#)

#DiversityCapitals #UnionOfEquality