



MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award

What is the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award?

This competition is the first edition of the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award, part of the [European Diversity Month initiative](#). The Award recognises and rewards local authorities across the EU that actively promote inclusion and diversity and help to build a better Europe.

The competition is a chance for cities, towns, or regions to highlight policies and initiatives that create more diverse and inclusive spaces for their citizens. These initiatives may have already been implemented or be in the process of being implemented.

Why will the European Commission designate a European Capital of Inclusion and Diversity?

Equality and non-discrimination are core values and fundamental rights in the EU, enshrined in its Treaties and the [Charter of Fundamental Rights](#).

Nevertheless, discrimination persists; with over 1 in 2 Europeans (59%) believing that discrimination based on one's ethnic origin is widespread. One in three people of African descent says they have experienced racist harassment in the five last years. Discrimination against LGBTIQ people also continues throughout the EU, with 43% of LGBTIQ people declaring that they felt discriminated against in 2019. The Covid-19 pandemic has also widened the gender gap, and women earn on average 16 % less than men across the EU. There are still many obstacles faced by people with disabilities when accessing essential services, healthcare, education, employment, and political life. And Roma people continue to face discrimination, racism, and social exclusion.

The creation of the European Capital of Inclusion and Diversity Award is part of the European Commission's ongoing efforts to [promote equality](#) and combat discrimination. The Award will focus on inclusion by recognising local authorities' efforts to build more inclusive and fair societies so that all members of our communities can reach their potential and no one is left behind.

More on EU Action on Equality:

- [EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025](#)
- [LGBTIQ equality strategy 2020-2025](#)
- [Gender equality strategy 2020-2025](#)
- [Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030](#)
- [EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030](#)
- [EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life \(2021-2030\)](#)

Who can apply?

The Award is open to local authorities in the 27 countries of the European Union that actively practice inclusion policies covering sex, age, disability, LGBTIQ identity, religion, and ethnic/racial origin discrimination.

The applicant must be an administrative unit governed by a city council or a democratically elected governmental body; it is open to towns, cities, and regions within the European Union.

Are there special Award categories?

There are two categories for 2022, one for local authorities with less than 50,000 inhabitants and one for those with more than 50,000 inhabitants. There is also a special prize for Roma inclusion in 2022.

What types of diversity initiatives is the Award planning to recognise?

The competition will reward diversity and inclusion initiatives that tackle all [discrimination grounds](#) (sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation) and intersectionality.

How will the winners be selected?

Applications for the Awards will be subject to an eligibility check and pre-assessment by independent experts. A European Jury will make the final selection in the two General categories and for the Roma Award.

Who will evaluate Award entries?

The European Commission will appoint independent experts for the pre-assessment phase and the European Jury members for the final selection phase. The European Jury will be made up of at least five members representing European non-governmental organisations. The European Jury for the Roma-Specific Award will comprise at least five people representing European non-governmental organisations and other relevant national and European stakeholders.

When and where will the award ceremony take place?

A ceremony announcing the award winners will take place in Brussels on 28 April 2022. The high-level event will be attended by the Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, and will bring together policymakers, city officials and representatives from diversity organisations.

How can I attend the prize-giving ceremony (online or in-person)?

Please get in touch with our media team, who will assist you (media@eudiversity2022.eu).

Can interviews be arranged with the Award winners or European Commission representatives?

Yes, interviews will be possible. Please write to our media team, who will work with you to facilitate quotes or interview requests (media@eudiversity2022.eu).

Where can I find more information?

Visit the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Award website: www.diversity2022.eu.

More information will be added to the Media toolkit in the lead up to the event. Get in touch with our media team to receive future press releases and related information: media@eudiversity2022.eu

You can also receive monthly updates by [signing up](#) for our Award newsletter, Diversity Capitals.