

# 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

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## 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

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■ 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 85 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?

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

### How to apply

- ▶ **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

- ▶ The online application form must be filled in and sent by 15 January.

### How to apply for a higher award

- ▶ 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

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### 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](http://www.assembly.coe.int/europe-prize/winners.asp)



## 2024 Europe Prize winner

### ***Mr Jordi Ballart, Mayor of Terrassa (Spain)***

■ Your city, Terrassa was awarded the 2024 Europe Prize. Why is this award especially important for Terrassa?

Terrassa has a long history in European Relations, with a specific department, created in 2002, that manages European affairs and works both to bring the European Union closer to citizens and to promote the city internationally.

This award represents recognition of all the work that Terrassa has been carrying out for years on an international level, and, above all, it highlights the interconnection of the city with the outside world. This candidacy is the result of joint work between the City Council and other entities in the territory to spread the European idea and promote European integration within the framework of sustainable urban development.

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

Regarding the dissemination of the European idea among local society, Terrassa is very active in the organisation of events with a European dimension, open to citizens, with the collaboration of the Academy and with special attention to young people and the educational sector. In fact, in Terrassa we are proud to have an Ambassador School of the European Parliament, the Cim School, from where students learn European values and their rights and duties as European citizens. In May 2024, the city council organised an activity to encourage other local schools to present their candidatures to become ambassadors of the European Parliament, with the aim of promoting European integration from young people.

Furthermore, in Terrassa we commemorate Europe Day annually with a European concert open to all citizens, and other activities organised by the Department of International Relations such as exhibitions, conferences or film screenings.





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

Terrassa has a long history of establishing bilateral relations with other European municipalities through city networks such as EUROCITIES, UCLG, as well as more sectoral networks related to our local identity such as the European Art Nouveau Network or the European Coalition of Cities against Racism, o Building Europe with Local Councilors (BELC).

Furthermore, Terrassa is part of various European partnerships in the implementation of European Commission program projects in the field of Sustainable Tourism (INTERREG EUROMED), Education (ERASMUS +), Civil Protection and Technology (HORIZON EUROPE) and Weather Policies (CERV).

The Europe Prize gives us more visibility to forge links with other municipalities.

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

The main advice I would give to a municipality that wants to apply for the Europe Prize is to work on the candidacy transversally, within the City Council, between the different municipal departments, but also with the entities of the territory, so that the work is reflected in common and collaborative and the candidacy obtains a comprehensive European dimension.

The application report must be a dynamic and stylish document that reflects the innovative potential of the city, adhering to the criteria of the call. It is important to emphasize the most relevant and identifying aspects of the city connected to the European sphere within the framework of the founding values of the EU.



## PERSPECTIVES

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***Theodoros Rousopoulos,  
President of the Parliamentary Assembly***

**”**T he year 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the Council of Europe.

75 years of defending democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

75 years during which the Council of Europe has worked to make these values a reality in the daily lives of Europeans.

It is in this spirit that the Europe Prize was born in 1955. Created by the Consultative Assembly (the former name of the Parliamentary Assembly), this distinction symbolizes values dear to the

Council of Europe: reconciliation and bringing people together, union and solidarity. Each year, while nearly a hundred cities apply for the Europe Prize and its various distinctions, only one European city is awarded the Europe Prize. It rewards its efforts to promote European values and takes into account twinning, exchanges between young people and exchanges of knowledge, the celebration of Europe in all its forms, solidarity between municipalities and membership in networks of cities. Far from being obsolete, these criteria are of particular importance in these troubled times.



The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has reminded us that it is essential to be united around common values.

By encouraging cities to maintain links, to be united and open to all cultures, the Europe Prize brings people together in the long term and contributes locally to maintaining peace.

The Europe Prize is more than an award; it is a testament to the ideals we share and a reminder of what we can accomplish together.

I look forward to its success and the celebration of its 70th anniversary in 2025.

Long live the Europe Prize!

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Long live the Europe Prize!”

*Theodoros Rousopoulos*

*President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*



**For more information:**

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[www.assembly.coe.int/europe-prize/](http://www.assembly.coe.int/europe-prize/)



Europe Prize of PACE



PACE\_News

**[www.coe.int](http://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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