
PRESS RELEASE | Brussels, 5 December 2023 | European Volunteering Capital 2025 WINNER

CEV is pleased to announce that **Mechelen, Belgium**, has been awarded the title of
European Volunteering Capital 2025

In choosing **Mechelen as the European Volunteering Capital 2025** the jury have noted that the city is an excellent example of harnessing volunteering for inclusion, diversity and participation of all its inhabitants, symbolising the European values of connection, diversity and progress. The jury was also impressed by their strategy for future growth in volunteering that focuses on accessible and talent-oriented volunteering, organisational growth and research, social relevance and impact with a permanent focus on training, cooperation and networking.

The jury felt that the accomplishments of **Aviles and Salamanca** municipalities to support and develop volunteering in the cities also deserves high recognition. The efforts undertaken in creating social awareness actions on the positive impact of volunteering activities and encouraging citizens' participation in this area has been seen by the jury as a fundamental element of the overall support shown to volunteers and volunteering by the candidates.

The jury feedback on the EVCapital Candidates 2025 is available at this link:
<https://www.europeanvolunteercentre.org/evcapital2025>.

CEV launched the European Volunteering Capital Competition to strengthen, inspire and celebrate volunteering and the impact made by volunteers at the local level by giving recognition to municipalities that support and strengthen volunteering, especially through partnerships with stakeholders from different sectors such as volunteer centres, volunteer-involving organisations and the for-profit sector.

The judging criteria are the extent of their strategies, policies, and programmes in connection to the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 and to the CEV Volunteering Policy Statements. Evidence about their engagement with, and support for, the European Solidarity Corps when the applicant comes from an eligible programme country is also required. Applicants are also asked to indicate if they are signatories of the Integrating Cities Charter.

The awarded municipality is chosen from the candidates by an **international jury of key personalities** connected with volunteering, representing civil society, the private, for-profit sector, as well as the EU institutions: Michel Lefranc (CEV Board), Daniele Antonozzi (CEV Board), Lena Karnalova (CEV Board), Tine Radinja (Mayor of Škofja Loka, Slovenia & EU Committee of the Regions member), Krzysztof Pater (EESC Member, Rapporteur Opinion "Volunteering - Citizens Building the Future of Europe"), Brando Benifei (Member of the European Parliament, S&D), Barbara Eglitis (Coordinator, European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre), Piotr Sadowski (Member of the Standing Committee the Conference of INGOs, Council of Europe), Begona Barbera Garcia (Iberdrola Social Projects Manager, Employee Volunteering European Network (EVEN)), Morten Wolden (Trondheim Municipal Director).

The previous winners are: Trento 2024 - Trondheim 2023 - Gdansk 2022 - Berlin 2021 - Padova 2020 - Košice 2019 - Aarhus 2018 - Sligo 2017 - London 2016 - Lisbon 2015 - Barcelona 2014.

The Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) is the European network of over 60 organisations dedicated to the promotion of, and support to, volunteers and volunteering in Europe at European, national or regional level. Through our network we work together to ensure that: the value of quality volunteering as an expression of Solidarity and European values is understood, supported and celebrated; policies & programmes, together with the European social environment, inspires, encourages and supports quality European Volunteering; Individuals



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and organisations that are active in the volunteering and civil society sphere share, learn and are inspired from one another in the framework of CEV . In this way we reach out to the many thousands of volunteers and volunteer organisations in Europe as a source of support bringing the European dimension to their work.