



# Access City Award 2026 - Guidance Note for applicants

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Please read these guidelines carefully before you register. You will find here all the necessary information that will help you fill in the sections in the application form correctly and describe your activities successfully.

## BASIC INFORMATION

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**Language:** Applicants are encouraged to submit their project proposal in English, in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and speed up the evaluation process. It should be noted, however, that proposals submitted in any of the **EU official languages**<sup>1</sup> will be accepted.

**Mode of delivery of applications:** via the online tool: <https://www.accesscityaward.eu/>

**Mode of delivery of applications:** [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/access-city-award\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/access-city-award_en)

**Deadline:** 9 September 2025 , 23:59 CEST

## HOW TO FILL IN THE APPLICATION

Your application should be as clear and precise as possible so the national and European jury will be able to appreciate your efforts in the area of accessibility. Please focus on **facts and numbers**. Give **examples**, including **qualitative and quantitative data**. Make sure that you have **clearly presented** your **approach and strategy** with regards to accessibility and that you have underlined all **innovative and extraordinary activities** that led you to success in this field. Indicate the timeframe of the activities: when they were launched and what the future developments will be.

The indicated maximum number of characters available for each reply includes spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> The EU has 24 official languages: Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish.

## A / CITY IDENTITY

### Short description of city (Max. 700 characters including spaces)

Include here some basic information about your city, its morphology and history insofar as these aspects can have an impact on accessibility (for instance whether it is built on hilly ground or has a medieval centre with narrow streets and hurdles difficult to overcome for wheelchair users or people with visual impairments).

## B / RELEVANCE TO THE OBJECTIVES

(Max. 2600 characters including spaces)

For each initiative / action / programme, include its aims, objectives, beneficiaries, start and end date. Demonstrate the global approach and ambitious vision for the future in improving accessibility in your city. Where possible, quantify the level or percentage of accessibility in the areas below. For example: percentage of accessible public spaces, metro/bus/train/tram stations, work environments, number of vehicles, websites, buildings, public administration, etc.

### Description of initiatives in the four areas of accessibility:

#### a) Accessibility of the built environment and public spaces

Please, describe measures related to the city centre design, streets and pavements, parks, squares, monuments and open spaces, work environments, markets, festivals, and other outdoor events.

#### b) Accessibility of transportation and related infrastructures

Please, describe measures related to the car parks, airports, railway stations and bus stations, taxis, trains, metro, buses and trams, proximity, interconnectivity of public transport and journey information and support availability.

#### c) Accessibility of information and communication, including information and communication technologies

Please, describe measures related to access to the city authorities' official information. For instance: accessibility of promotional multimedia information of the municipality, advice and citizen feedback procedures on the accessibility of the website, online information provision in arts, culture, entertainment, sport facilities, signage and guidance in public places, outdoor or indoor, tourist/visitor information, accessibility of the public information kiosks, provision of assistive technology and inclusive ICT resources for the whole community in public libraries and online centres, use of sign language and easy-to-read information for the provision of services.

#### d) Accessibility of public facilities and services

Please, describe the public services provided by your city (social services, healthcare, youth, education, leisure and sport activities and facilities, culture, employment services, training, housing, etc.) and indicate to which extent they are accessible. Please, illustrate how accessibility

is considered and integrated in these services. Besides the specific services for persons with disabilities, please also provide information on how the general services are made accessible to persons with disabilities. You can give examples of alternative formats for e-gov services, as well as examples of services provided in multimodal way and by different channels.

## C / OWNERSHIP / LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

(Max. 1300 characters including spaces)

- a) Describe your overall approach and global strategy to improve accessibility in your city and how you implement (or plan to implement) the corresponding policy in this area.**

Please, demonstrate the global policy on accessibility carried out in your city. For instance: inclusion of accessibility in a coherent strategy or policy framework, high-level policy statements and commitments to accessibility, mainstreaming in the city's policies and its regulations, structures or framework to implement/coordinate/monitor accessibility actions, responsible department(s), main actors involved, initiatives by private sector (if any), resources and staff allocated, monitoring and evaluation mechanism, information on a cost-benefit analysis of implementing accessibility (if any).

## D / IMPACT

Please, include quantitative and qualitative data showing the impact and effectiveness of your initiative and the benchmark. You can also include links to documents, webpages, or audio-visual material (films or pictures) that demonstrate the results and changes. The impact assessment must refer to initiatives mentioned in the above-mentioned Section "Relevance to Objectives".

- a) How has the city's policies/initiatives improved equal access and the quality of life of persons with disabilities? (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

Please, provide examples as well as qualitative and quantitative data. It is important to mention project(s) – if any – involving persons with intellectual disabilities.

- b) How do these initiatives benefit, beyond persons with disabilities, also wider parts of the population? (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

Please, provide concrete examples.

## E / QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

- a) How do you ensure the quality and sustainability of accessibility measures? (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

The quality of results is defined in terms of improvements made to the level of accessibility and advancing compliance with standards and legislation. You may also indicate whether your initiatives are related to any local, regional, national, and European actions.

Delivering sustainable accessibility measures requires continuous efforts and secure resources. There must be a sound structure and adequate processes and monitoring mechanisms (regular checking, notifying, and repairing problems, handling complaints, training on accessibility for municipal staff, etc.). Please, present the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms set up in your city as well as the resources allocated.

- b) What are your plans and initiatives to continue these efforts in the future? (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

Please, describe and indicate the timeframe, if possible.

- c) Has your city ever used EU funds, in particular for accessibility? How does your city inform your citizens about actions involving EU funds? (Optional) (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

This is an optional question, which will not have an impact in the evaluation of the application. The applicant is not obliged to reply to this question if it is not relevant.

## **F / INVOLVEMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND RELEVANT PARTNERS**

- a) Please, describe the involvement of persons with disabilities, their representative organisations and accessibility experts in the planning, implementation and maintenance of the city's policies and initiatives aimed at increased accessibility. (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

Please, describe these activities by providing examples of active and clear involvement of persons with disabilities and their organisations and relevant partners. Where possible, please include the views of persons with disabilities on the accessibility of the city.

- b) Do you carry out awareness raising or information activities around accessibility? Do you disseminate, exchange, share experience and good practices with other cities at local, regional, national and/or European level? If so, please describe them. (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

Please, give examples. You may also mention your membership in different kinds of networks and organisations related to accessibility.

- c) Have you addressed accessibility in other initiatives undertaken by your city? If so, you may mention any initiative your city has worked on, even if it was not addressed directly to persons with disabilities, as long as it includes measures to improve accessibility or raise awareness about disability and accessibility. (Max. 1300 characters including spaces)**

Please, describe these initiatives by providing examples and detailing the measures related to accessibility.

## **G / WHY DOES YOUR CITY DESERVE TO WIN THE ACCESS CITY AWARD 2026?**

Please, provide a short presentation of your overall accessibility policy and actions. Please, explain why your results and your city's accessibility policy are extraordinary and why you believe your city deserves to win the Access City Award 2026.

(Max. 1300 characters including spaces)

Please, state what your city is especially proud of. You may indicate what distinguishes your accessibility policy and which measures are especially worth to be promoted as good examples for other cities.

## **H / WHICH OF YOUR INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY ARE FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING ACCESSIBILITY IN HOUSING?**

(Max. 2000 characters including spaces)

The housing crisis is affecting millions of families and young people in the EU, especially persons with disabilities who have a higher risk of poverty than the average population and, in addition, have to face a generalised lack of accessibility of buildings. In this context, the Access City Award is looking for outstanding projects and initiatives that reflect in an exemplary way the development of accessible housing, including social housing, while also placing affordability, sustainability and the participation and vision of local communities and relevant stakeholders at the core of the process, including technical assistance of accessibility experts and checks of persons with disabilities.

Examples may involve the physical transformation of places to improve accessibility; housing support measures for persons with disabilities, such as compensations to make their homes accessible, including for energy-efficiency; accessible social housing for persons with disabilities; compensations for the rents and house-buying prices, among others.

## **I / WHICH OTHER OF YOUR INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY DESERVES A SPECIAL MENTION? (OPTIONAL)**

(Max. 2000 characters including spaces)

This is an optional question. The applicant is not obliged to reply to this question if it is not relevant.

Please, give concrete example(s) and information of initiative(s) that you have worked on to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities that can be considered for a Special Mention. Please, describe as well whether and how local communities and relevant stakeholders were involved and participated in the process of designing and implementing the initiatives.

Please, do not include here the initiatives focused on accessibility in housing already explained in the above section.

## **J / WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE 2026 ACCESS CITY AWARD COMPETITION**

- E-mail from the ACA secretariat
- Call from the ACA secretariat
- European Commission (website, media, press release, etc.)
- Other EU institutions (for example, Committee of the Regions)
- EU networks of cities (for example, Eurocities, Polis, ENAT, CEMR etc.)
- Permanent Representations of EU Member States to the EU/ representative offices of EU regions
- National/local administration
- Previous ACA awarded cities
- The European Disability Forum or another EU-level organisation of persons with disabilities
- National/local organisations of persons with disabilities
- Colleagues
- Other (please specify) (+ TEXT BOX)

Please, let us know where you heard about this competition. Multiple answers are possible for the options above.



## K / SUPPORTING MATERIAL

In addition to the four compulsory documents that must be uploaded on the portal:

1. Mayoral Declaration
2. Declaration on honour
3. Legal Entity Form
4. Financial Identification Form

you are invited to upload – or send a link to – a 10-slide Power Point presentation highlighting and illustrating (e.g., with pictures) the strong points of your application.

In total, you can upload up to five files (those above-mentioned). The uploaded files must fulfil the following requirements:

- Candidate cities are encouraged to submit their documents in English, in order to facilitate the assessment and speed up the evaluation process. Documents submitted in any of the official languages of the EU will be anyways accepted. No other languages will be accepted.
- Maximum size of one file is 10 MB
- Accepted file formats are doc, docx, rtf, pps, ppsx, ppt, pptx, xls, xlsx, pdf, zip, gif, jpeg, jpg, png.
- Each uploaded document must be appropriately named. The file name should be in English and should clearly state what the file represents or contains.

You may provide additional brief information about the content of the supporting documents in the field of the application form under this section.

## L / CONTACT DETAILS AND REFERENCE LINKS

Please, provide here all necessary contact details for the person in your administration responsible for this application.

Please, include also links to your administration's website and, if available, to pages focused on accessibility or containing related information.



