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Ghent on shortlist for European Youth Capital 2024

Ghent has been nominated for the title of European Youth Capital 2024, the European Youth Forum announced today. The other candidates are Chişinău (Moldova), Lviv (Ukraine) and Veszprém (Hungary). The winner will be decided by mid-november.



Priority

The European Youth Forum unites more than 100 European youth organizations and awards the title of European Youth Capital to a European city every year. Candidate cities must prove they're making an effort to emancipate and involve young people in the policy making process, and in this way also

strengthen the European identity. Winning the title is one of the cities' four international priorities, says Mayor Mathias De Clercq.

"If Ghent is European Youth Capital in 2024, we want to offer Ghent and foreign youth alike the opportunity to travel, to learn from each other and share knowledge. As a city we will share information and experiences with colleagues from abroad and aim to influence EU policy making on youth."

Mathias De Clercq, Mayor

The title gives cities the opportunity to showcase innovative ideas, projects and activities and demonstrate how young people can be better involved, from initiatives around public transport and urban infrastructure to cultural, recreational and educational programs. The current European Youth Capital is Klaipėda in Lithuania. Antwerp was awarded the title in 2011.

Shortlist of 4

In January 2021, Ghent submitted a candidate application to win the title for 2024. Nine other cities, including Batumi in Georgia and Lviv in Ukraine, and also La Louvière in Belgium, did the same. Today the European Youth Forum announced the remaining 4 finalist cities to go to the next round.

In this second round the candidate cities will complete and finetune their applications based on the jury's comments. They then have until September 2021 to submit the updated application. Out of these, a winner will be chosen and announced in Klaipėda in November.

For and by young people

The Ghent application, entitled 'we are the city', is built around three central themes: stimulating voluntary work and citizenship among young people in the city (Engage), creating physical and mental space for young people in the city (Empower) and building a warm city where young people feel safe (Care). The application contains a range of activities that can be given a youthful interpretation in 2024. It is not only about the city's own projects, but also about collaborations with Ghent's civil society, local educational institutions, and other partners.

"During this covid-crisis, our ambition to become European Youth Capital has only intensified. Young people are really struggling and often feel as if safety measures were imposed without their voices being heard. Thanks to this shortlisting the road is open to become European Youth Capital. We are looking forward to a festive 2024, and we're ready to shift gears to achieve that."

Elke Decruynaere, alderman for Youth

Ghent's application was drawn up based on contributions from young people in Ghent and signals from civil society. Young people in Ghent will also play an active role in the further development of the program. In this way, it will become a story for and by young people.

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