



## The city of Torres Vedras, one of Portugal's leading examples in sustainable urban development, has just been chosen to host the CIVITAS Forum 2017!

A celebratory atmosphere reigned over the closing of the CIVITAS Forum 2016 where next year's host city was recently announced. Torres Vedras, one of Portugal's historic gems, was selected as this year's winning city for many reasons. To begin with, the city is sharing the chairmanship of CIVINET Portugal Spain with the latter's city of Santander. Torres Vedras Mayor, Carlos Bernardes, is a proud member of the CIVITAS Political Advisory Committee, demonstrating a strong political commitment with sustainable mobility issues and with CIVITAS Network.

It is also important to highlight that Torres Vedras' love affair with sustainable development, tourism and transport goes back several years. It may have even been inspired in part by the city's belated bicycle racer and champion Joaquim Agostinho who finished first in the Tour de France 12 times and who won many other championships, setting the stage for bringing leisure and sustainable mobility closer together. More recently, in 2011, the city received the QualityCoast Gold Award for striving to become a sustainable tourist destination, and made it into the DestiNet global atlas for sustainable tourism as well.

Last year in 2015, Torres Vedras was awarded the European Green Leaf, a new EU-led competition for small and mid-sized towns and cities recognising commitment to the environment while encouraging growth and employment. The city was particularly commended for improving mobility, enhancing water management and working to preserve biodiversity.

Indeed, one of the key reasons for choosing Torres Vedras to host next year's Forum is its strong mobility strategy which is successfully identifying challenges and establishing measures to improve urban mobility. Some of the achievements of this strategy include improved mobility with the historic city centre, better spatial/urban design, more pedestrian areas, enhanced inter-modal transport, an electro mobility plan, a relocated city bus station, walk to school programme, and two new biking strategies.



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This transformation in recent years makes Torres Vedras a very interesting case study for other aspiring small and medium-sized cities, representing as well the perfect backdrop for next year's CIVITAS Forum. The city itself is a high-quality destination for sustainable tourism with its rich history, cultural heritage, vineyards, winemaking tradition, natural environment and traditional character, just 40 kilometres from the Portuguese capital Lisbon. CIVITAS is very much looking forward to welcoming its faithful followers and of course newcomers to next year's Forum in Torres Vedras.

If you are interested in joining the CIVITAS Initiative, or if you have questions, please contact the CIVITAS Secretariat at [secretariat@civitas.eu](mailto:secretariat@civitas.eu)

For press enquiries, please contact: Vivian Akrivi Kioussi  
[akrivi.kioussi@intrasoft-intl.com](mailto:akrivi.kioussi@intrasoft-intl.com) | +30 210 6876484

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[www.civitas.eu](http://www.civitas.eu) is your portal to the CIVITAS Initiative. Visit the CIVITAS website to learn more about the CIVITAS Forum City Network, the ambitious policies and innovative measures many of its members have implemented, and how you can learn more about these at the annual CIVITAS Forum Conference.

With regularly updated News and Events sections, the site is your one-stop-shop for sustainable urban mobility.

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