

Environment: Bologna Wins European Mobility Week Award 2011

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The Italian city of Bologna has won the 2011 European Mobility Week Award. The city was judged by an independent panel of mobility experts to have done the best job in promoting clean alternatives to using cars and involving citizens in activities to support sustainable urban mobility during European Mobility Week 2011. The runners-up were Larnaka in Cyprus and the Croatian capital Zagreb. The award was handed to the winning city by Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik and Vice-President Siim Kallas European Commissioner for Transport at a ceremony in the Brussels Musical Instrument Museum on 5 March 2012.

Vice-President Siim Kallas, responsible for Transport, said: "While responding to the challenge to make our cities cleaner and safer, the 2011 Transport White Paper highlights the need for a new approach to urban mobility. The winning cities have a lot to offer in this respect. By sharing experience on alternative mobility, European cities can implement more attractive and reliable options, thus making a positive impact on our quality of life."

Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik said: "With cities and their citizens increasingly suffering from congestion and pollution, there has never been a better time to switch from private cars to other means of transport. Bologna, Larnaka and Zagreb have found creative ways to permanently make their transport infrastructure more sustainable. I hope they will inspire other cities to do the same."

European Mobility Week 2011

The 2011 campaign theme – "Alternative Mobility" – set out to support the transition towards a resource-efficient transport system by promoting clean, fuel-efficient or human-powered modes of transport. The overuse of cars is damaging the quality of life in our cities by generating noise, air pollution and congestion. With resources like energy, land, water and raw materials under strain, there is a growing awareness of the need for alternative forms of transport that generate less pollution, consume fewer resources and help cut greenhouse gas emissions. By focusing on promoting alternatives to the private car, European Mobility Week 2011 encouraged citizens living in urban areas to use low-carbon modes of transport instead.

Winning entry: Bologna

Bologna won over the European Mobility Week jury by organising a Car Free weekend instead of just one day. The permanent measures implemented included building charging points for electric cars and a plan to extend the city's network of cycling paths to 130 km. The municipal authorities invited citizens to contribute their views to the plan during Mobility Week. Bologna also set up a large car-free zone at the heart of the city for the week. This pedestrian area was open to street performers, retailers and sports associations and as the initiative attracted over 60 000 visitors, the city authorities have decided to repeat it in future events. The city also organised numerous bike tours, bicycle workshops and self-repair stands, games, walks and an exhibition on electric cars. Police officers participated in information sessions giving tips and explanations on safe cycling to families and an information point was set up for citizens to learn about new services offered to cyclists.

Runner-up: Larnaka

Larnaka in Cyprus involved a wide range of partners in the organisation of events during European Mobility Week 2011. Its comprehensive programme of promotional activities included a free bus day, a hybrid car exhibition, an Environmental Café and lectures on sustainable mobility. The city showed its long-term commitment to road space reallocation by transforming one of the roads in the central business district into a pedestrian street. The city also created numerous bicycle parking spaces and set up a "Bicycle bank" to facilitate maintenance and reuse of bicycles.

Runner-up: Zagreb

The Croatian capital showed its commitment to sustainable urban mobility through an extensive set of urban planning measures showcased during the 2011 European Mobility Week. In collaboration with the CIVITAS ELAN EU project, Zagreb used opinion polls to collect valuable information on possibilities to improve its sustainable transport infrastructure and the quality of the 2011 event. The wide range of activities organised by the municipality included educational workshops, organised walks, open-air gyms, conferences, eco-markets and electric vehicle exhibitions.

Next Steps

European Mobility Week 2012 will be held from 16 to 22 September under the theme "Moving in the Right Direction".

Background

The 2011 edition marked the tenth anniversary of European Mobility Week. Over the last decade Mobility Week has supported cities in creating a more pleasant and healthy environment for citizens by encouraging them to reduce traffic congestion and promoting sustainable and human-powered modes of transport. Mobility Week has seen a continuous increase in the number of cities taking part since its launch in 2002, with 2268 towns around the world taking part in 2011.