



# Europe Prize

**Four European awards  
for municipalities**



# Encouraging



When the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers set up the Europe Prize in 1955, no one imagined quite how successful it would become. In the year 2012 seventy European municipalities had won the Europe Prize, 248 had been presented the Plaque of Honour, 1165 proudly flew the Flag of Honour and more than 600 municipalities had been awarded the European Diploma.

Who competes for the Europe Prize? Applications come in from cities and municipalities which have twinning arrangements with foreign municipalities and are involved in a wide range of activities to develop the relationship with their European partners.

The winners are chosen each year by the Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable

# partnership



Development, and more specifically by its Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize.

Since 1990, when the countries from Central and Eastern Europe joined the Council of Europe, the success of recent award ceremonies illustrates the importance attached to the Europe Prize in those countries.

Nearly sixty years after it was set up, the Europe Prize with its four separate awards (in ascending order of importance: the European Diploma, the Flag of Honour, the Plaque of Honour and the Europe Prize) is as relevant as ever, representing as it does an important vehicle for improving relations between all citizens of Europe and promoting the European ideal.



# One aim,

## The European Diploma

This is the first step in selecting prize-winners. Some 20 diplomas are awarded each year. Mayors of winning towns are presented with a diploma bearing the municipality's name and the date of the award at an official ceremony at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg during the June Part-Session of the Parliamentary Assembly.

## The Flag of Honour

The flag, embroidered and fringed with gold, is the most popular award and an essential step towards the Plaque of Honour and the Europe Prize. About twenty flags are allocated each year and over 1100 have been awarded since 1961. A member of the Parliamentary Assembly presents the flag to the winning municipality at a ceremony open to a wide public.

## The Plaque of Honour

The new version of the Plaque of Honour, created in 2001, consists in its upper part of brass figures representing the rape of Europe, in the central part of the twelve stars of Europe with the year the Plaque was awarded inscribed in the middle, and on the lower part a stylized map of the Greater Europe indicating the name of the prize winning municipality. The whole is fixed on a transparent support. It is presented to the winning municipality by a member of the Parliamentary Assembly at a ceremony to which the local population are invited. About ten plaques are awarded each year and 248 have been presented so far.

## The Europe Prize

The highest of the four awards, created in 1955 to recognise outstanding efforts in promoting European unity. Seventy municipalities

# four awards

have been honoured; each year one or two prizes are awarded to Plaque and Flag winners. The winners receive a trophy (held for a year), a bronze medal, a commemorative parchment and a scholarship to fund European study visits for young people in the winning municipality. The prize is presented by the President of the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly at a “European Day” organised by the municipality, attended also by the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize,

An association of Europe Prize winners (the “Association of Towns awarded the Europe Prize”) was set up in 1984. It brings together all winning municipalities and meets at least once a year. Since May 2011, it is presided over by Ankara (Turkey), the 2009 prize-winner.





## Who may apply?

Any municipality in any of the Council of Europe's member states. Applications must be submitted in writing by the municipality's chief executive or mayor, by 31 December each year to:

**Committee on Social Affairs,  
Health and Sustainable Development**

**Council of Europe**

**F - 67075 Strasbourg Cedex**

**Tel.: +33 (0)3 88 41 21 08 - Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 27 17**

**E-mail: [europeprize.pace@coe.int](mailto:europeprize.pace@coe.int)**

First-time applicants should answer the 9 questions in the questionnaire opposite. The Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize (comprising members of the Parliamentary Assembly) looks at applications in March/April and forwards its choice to the Assembly's Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development for approval. Successful municipalities are informed

by fax. Confirmation and suggestions for organising the ceremony follow shortly by post.

Applications are valid for several years, but municipalities should provide the Secretariat with a report on the previous year's European activities by 31 December each year.

Applications for a higher award may be made by sending the Secretariat a report on the previous year's European activities, where possible with relevant press articles.

Committee on Social Affairs,  
Health and Sustainable Development  
Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize



# Questionnaire

for applicant municipalities

## **1 Membership of organisations or local authorities**

Is your municipality a member of one of the major European or international organisations of local authorities interested in propagating the European idea and generally improving relations between peoples - such as the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, the United Cities and Local Governments, organisations having consultative status with the Council of Europe?

## **2 Twinning**

Has your municipality entered into twinning arrangements with other municipalities?

In member countries of the Council of Europe? With municipalities in other countries? Give particulars. What activities have been organised under these twinning arrangements?

## **3 Municipalities abroad**

Do you have ongoing contacts with municipalities in other countries, and if so, of what kind? Do local public, semi-public or private bodies - such as universities, chambers of commerce, professional associations, trade unions, cultural associations, sport clubs etc - also maintain relations with their counterparts in other countries?

## **4 Personal exchanges**

Have you arranged personal exchanges? If so, what kind of persons and on what basis?

## **5 European events**

What European events have you organised (demonstrations in favour of European unification, youth congresses, cultural gatherings, economic conferences, international folklore festivals, sport events, music festivals, international exhibitions, etc.)? Give dates and details.





## 6 Europe Day (5 May)

Do you arrange for Europe Day to be celebrated?

Do you arrange official events

on this occasion (formal sitting of Municipal Council, public events, flags flown on public buildings, festivities, posters, announcements to inhabitants)?

Do you attempt to associate the inhabitants, and particularly young people, with Europe Day events?

## 7 Propagation of the European idea

Do you foster the propagation of the European idea in municipal adult education institutes

(talks or lectures at evening classes or municipal educational establishments) and in schools (essay or drawing competitions on European themes, award of books on European topics as school prizes etc.)? Do you encourage local schools to take part in "European Schools Day"?

## 8 European solidarity

Has your municipality donated funds or offered assistance to European-wide appeals on behalf of the victims of natural disasters?

Have you encouraged the population to take part in such demonstrations of solidarity?

## 9 Presentation

If awarded the Flag of Honour or the Plaque of Honour, would you undertake to

organise a public ceremony, with active participation by young people, for its presentation by a member of the Parliamentary Assembly?

(The ceremony should not coincide with an election campaign or a party political event).

## Other initiatives

Please attach to your application a brief description (leaflet, booklet)

of your municipality. Applicant municipalities may submit any documents illustrating their European activities which they consider relevant.



The Mayor, Chief Executive or representative must apply  
in writing before 31 December each year to the:

**Committee on Social Affairs,  
Health and Sustainable Development**  
**Council of Europe, F - 67075 Strasbourg Cedex**  
**Tel.: +33 (0)3 88 41 21 08 - Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 27 17**  
**E-mail: [anne-marie.menger@coe.int](mailto:anne-marie.menger@coe.int)**





#### Article 1

A Europe Prize offered by the Council of Europe shall be awarded each year by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development of the Parliamentary Assembly to one or more municipalities which have in the Committee's opinion made outstanding efforts to propagate the idea of European unity.

#### Article 2

The Europe Prize shall consist of a trophy to be held by the winner for one year, a bronze medal, a parchment and scholarship to be spent on a study visit in Europe for one or more young persons resident in the winning municipality.

#### Article 3

A Plaque of Honour will be awarded to certain municipalities which have already held the Flag of Honour for several years and whose efforts to propagate the idea of European unity are considered worthy of this distinction, ranking just below the Europe Prize.

#### Article 4

A Flag of Honour is awarded to certain municipalities which deserve an award in recognition of their work in promoting the European idea. These municipalities will usually be selected from among those already holding the European Diploma.

#### Article 5

A European Diploma will be presented to municipalities whose European merits have been recognised but whose application is too recent for the award of the Flag of Honour.

#### Article 6

The Committee shall designate the winning municipalities from among those which have submitted applications.

#### Article 7

Applications from municipalities shall be submitted by the chief officer, mayor or other representative, and must reach the Secretariat General of the Council of

# Regulations

Europe in Strasbourg by 31 December each year. Each application must be accompanied by an account of the measures taken by the municipality to propagate the idea of European unity and a reply to the attached questionnaire. Applications submitted prior to the current year remain valid for succeeding years. Municipalities which remain candidates are however asked to supply additional information each year, by 31 December, about their European activities during the year.

#### Article 8

Applicant municipalities undertake to respect and apply the provisions of presentation referred to in the regulations. Prize-winning municipalities shall endeavour to establish close contacts amongst themselves (Association of Towns awarded the Europe Prize), notably by meeting together periodically in one of their member municipalities.

# Presentation



## The Europe Prize

The Prize consists of an itinerant trophy with a bronze plaque bearing allegorical figures and a Latin inscription. This trophy is retained by the winning municipality until the next award. It is then passed on to the municipality awarded the following year's Prize. The shield bears the name of each municipality which has won the Prize. It also consists of a bronze medal, a parchment and a scholarship to be spent on travel in Europe for one or more young persons from the winning municipality. It may also include any additional money grants which the government of the country, the associations of local authorities or any other body may wish to award to the winning municipality. It is officially presented to the winning municipality by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, assisted by the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize, during a "Europe Day" arranged by the municipality. The ceremonies for that



# ceremonies

Day will include a formal sitting of the Municipal Council in the presence of the members of the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize and a public gathering of residents of the winning municipality.

## The Plaque of Honour

A number of Plaques of Honour, rectangular in shape, engraved with the name of the winning town and year of award and decorated with the European symbol, will be presented to the winning municipalities. The presentation will, if possible, be made by a member of the Committee or by another member of the Parliamentary Assembly, at a ceremony organised by the municipality to which the public will be invited and attended by members of the Assembly who are nationals of the country concerned. The details of the ceremony will have been agreed in advance with the Council of Europe Secretariat. The Chairman

of the Committee or of the Sub-Committee may also designate an honorary member of the Assembly to present the Plaque of Honour.

## The Flag of Honour

A number of European Flags with gold embroidery and fringes are to be awarded by the Committee each year to municipalities which in its opinion have made great efforts to propagate the ideal of European unity. For presentation arrangements, refer to the presentation of the Plaque of Honour.

## The European Diploma

Mayors of the winning towns are presented with a parchment at an official ceremony at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg during the June Part-Session of the Assembly.



## The Council of

**T**he Council of Europe is a political organisation set up on 5 May 1949 by 10 European countries to promote the unity of the continent. It has now 47 member states: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

The Council of Europe aims to protect human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law, to promote awareness and encourage

the development of social cohesion and Europe’s cultural identity and diversity and to help consolidate democratic stability in Europe.

The Council of Europe’s wide range of initiatives often take the form of conventions or agreements. More than 200 have been adopted, among them the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Cultural Convention, the European Social Charter and the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

The Palais de l’Europe in Strasbourg (France) is the Council of Europe’s headquarters. The Council of Europe is run on the basis of a dialogue between its two statutory organs:

– The Committee of Ministers is the decision-making body, made up of the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the 47 member States, or their permanent diplomatic representatives in Strasbourg;

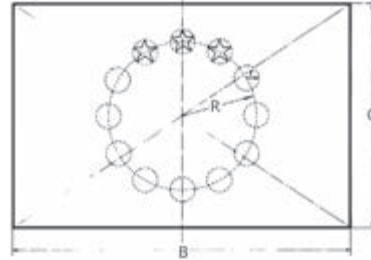
# Europe in brief

- The Parliamentary Assembly, which is the other statutory organ, is a forum in which its 636 members from the 47 national parliaments, as well as observers from non member countries, meet.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (636 members) is the voice of Europe's regions and municipalities.

The European Court of Human Rights consists of 47 judges. Any member State or individual claiming to be a victim of a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights may lodge directly with the Court an application alleging a breach by a member State of one of the Convention rights.





## The European Flag

Against the blue sky, 12 golden stars form a circle, representing the union of the peoples of Europe. The number of stars is invariable, 12 being the symbol of perfection.

The emblem is in form of a blue rectangular flag of which the fly (F) is one and a half times the length of the hoist (H). Twelve gold stars situated at equal intervals form a circle of which the centre is the point of intersection of the diagonals of the rectangle. The radius  $\textcircled{R}$  of the circle is equal to one-third of the height of the hoist (H). Each of the stars has five points which are situated on the circumference of an invisible circle of which the radius  $\textcircled{r}$  is equal to one-eighteenth of the height of the hoist. All the stars are upright – that is to say with one point vertical at  $90^\circ$  and two points in a straight line perpendicular to the mast.

The circle is arranged so that the stars appear in the position of the hours on the face of a clock. The colour heraldic azure is represented by light ultramarine blue. The colour heraldic or is represented by deep chrome yellow.

This emblem was adopted on 8 December 1955 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, on unanimous recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly. Since May 1986 it is also the official emblem of the European Union.

