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European Destination of Excellence 2023 shortlist announced / One Slovenian, one Cypriot and two Greek destinations named on the shortlist for this year's competition

Brussels (ots) -

Today, the European Commission announced the four shortlisted destinations for the [European Destination of Excellence \(EDEN\)](#) 2023 award. The EDEN initiative rewards the best achievements in sustainable tourism and green transition practices in smaller destinations across Europe.

Grevena (Greece), Kranj (Slovenia), Larnaka (Cyprus), and Trikala (Greece) convinced the panel of independent sustainability experts with their applications and were chosen among 20 applicant destinations. The shortlist for the 2023 finalists includes four destinations instead of three, as initially mentioned, because two destinations were awarded the same scores by the independent panel of sustainability experts. Find out more about each of the shortlisted destinations [here](#).

The European Destinations of Excellence is an EU initiative, implemented by the European Commission. Its aim is to recognise and reward smaller destinations that have in place successful strategies to boost sustainable tourism through green transition practices. The competition is founded upon the principle of promoting the development of sustainable tourism which brings value to the economy, the planet, and the people. The initiative covers the EU and the non-EU countries participating in the COSME programme.[1]

To compete for the 2023 European Destination of Excellence award, destinations were asked to demonstrate their best practices in sustainable tourism and green transition. In the next step, the four shortlisted destinations will be asked to present their candidature in front of the European Jury. The European Jury will select one winner, the European Destination of Excellence 2023, which will be awarded in November 2022.

The winning destination will be positioned as a tourism sustainability pioneer committed to the European Green Deal objectives and will receive expert communication and branding support at the EU level throughout 2023.

For all the latest news visit the [European Destinations of Excellence website](#).

Notes to Editors

1. Since 2007, the European Commission has supported EU Member States and other countries participating in the COSME programme to reward non-traditional, emerging sustainable tourism destinations in Europe through the 'European Destination of Excellence' (EDEN) award. This action aimed to foster sustainable tourism destination management models across Europe by selecting and promoting EDEN destinations. To date, 176 destinations from 27 different countries have received the award under different annual themes.
2. In 2019 the "Study on EDEN evaluation" was carried out to assess the continued relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the EDEN initiative and the various actions implemented in its framework, as well as its coherence with other EU initiatives. Following the results and recommendations of the evaluation study, the European Commission relaunched the initiative, taking into account European Green Deal goals. In addition to the EU countries, it also covers non-EU countries participating in the COSME programme. The competition addresses smaller tourism destinations which can showcase their outstanding achievements in sustainability and inspire other tourism destinations in their green transition.
3. The EDEN Award was implemented first as a pilot project and as a preparatory action initiated by the European Parliament and since 2011 has continued under the CIP/COSME programmes.
4. The 2023 EDEN competition was open to submissions from 31 March 2022 to 1 June 2022. Terms and conditions are available at <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/eden-en>
5. Eligible applications were evaluated against a set of established assessment criteria, by a panel of independent sustainability experts. The shortlisted destinations will be invited to present their candidatures in front of a European Jury. The European Jury will select one European Destination of Excellence 2023.
6. The current 2022 European Destination of Middelfart was selected at the end of 2021 and has since been acting as a role model for sustainable tourism in Europe. Find out more about the 2022 European Destination of Excellence Middelfart [here](#) and watch a video about the destination [here](#).

[1] Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom (<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/49405>). The EU stands in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Ukrainian cities retain the right to apply to the opportunities offered by the COSME programme.

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