

Lublin is the European Youth Capital 2023

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Lublin (Poland) is the European Youth Capital (EYC) 2023. We've interviewed Agnieszka Parol-Górna, the coordinator of Lublin EYC 2023 and youth worker, to tell us more.



Agnieszka Parol-Górna

Lublin is the European Youth Capital this year! Can you share with us what led to Lublin becoming the first Polish city to carry this title?

Agnieszka: We've decided to apply for the European Youth Capital (EYC) title because of its goal. To empower young people, increase their participation in the decision-making processes in the city, and strengthen their European identity. But also to build involvement of city residents based on the energy and activity of young people. It's also about the promotion of young, broadly defined culture and the activity of young people in various fields.

The EYC title contributes to changing the approach of cities towards youth policy. Creating the image of a youth-friendly city that supports and encourages youth social activity. The title encourages the creation of new opportunities for youth-city cooperation, financial support for youth ideas and activities, the creation of new spaces, cultural or sports events that young people will create and inspire. We want to use this opportunity to transform the way of thinking about the city and the role of residents in it.



Can you tell us more about the programme that the city has planned for 2023? What will be the focus?

Agnieszka: We've divided the celebration year into four seasons:

1. #SpotkajmySię / #Let'sMeet

Season one introduces the concept of the European Youth Capital and presents the ideas behind the celebrations of the title in Lublin. It also lets you get to know the city and people around it. The Opening Ceremony of the European Youth Capital Lublin 2023 and the events happening on the First Day of Spring mark the climax of the Season.

2. #LublinToTY / #LublinIsYOU

Season two is about broadening civic awareness, getting involved in youth volunteering, and implementing one's own initiatives. These initiatives stem from young people's needs.

It was also a time to present the activities of Lublin pupils and students during two events. **May Music Box** and **Youth Marathon The City is Ours** were held in June. This was the time of student festivals, Children's Day, fun, and learning. It's the time of school finals and exams at the end of the academic year.



3. #CziluJwLublin / #ChillInLublin

Season three is Summer chill & charge time! It's the time to charge batteries and have happy-go-lucky adventures. This Summer festival program is a great chance to spend some time in Lublin while enjoying artists and guests from all over the world. It's also an opportunity for young people to arrange a special Birthday Event for our City.

4. #FutureToMY / #WeAreTheFuture

Season four means the fulfillment of our European Youth Capital title commitment. During these weeks, Lublin will be the real Capital of Europe. It will be the venue of the most important social, political, sports, and cultural international events.



How will Lublin use the title? What opportunities come with it, and how are young people and all other stakeholders more engaged this year?

Agnieszka: The European Youth Capital title is both a great honor and an extremely important commitment for us. It's a chance for us to change the way we think about Lublin and create a city that is friendlier to young people. It also provides a huge opportunity to tap the potential of young residents. This potential comes firstly from international youth cooperation and Lublin's strong position as an academic city. A city that is vibrant with life and energy coming from its residents.

It's a time for Lublin to rethink how to involve young people in all aspects of city life, from infrastructure to socio-cultural programs, education, and participation in local policymaking. Our program aims to bring a permanent change in youth policy by, among other things, empowering youth organizations. We want young residents to take responsibility for themselves and the city by treating it as their place to live, study, future careers, and personal happiness.



The initiative is expected to contribute to the development of new ideas and innovative projects that will increase the active participation of young people in society. It's also intended to set an example for the development of European cities with the needs of young people in mind.

Generational boundaries are fluid, and the people targeted by the EYC will soon be young adults. It will be up to them to have a voice in discussions and decisions about the shape of the present and the future. Children participating today in our Entrepreneurial Kids program, planning changes, and arranging votes in School Civic Budgets, learning the principles of city functioning in the City Academy, will grow up and shape the labor market. Perhaps they will become local government officials, doctors, teachers, ... They will become conscious citizens to whom the future of Lublin belongs.

What type of impact do you expect for the city, municipality, and its citizens?

Agnieszka: We expect that the number of young people involved in decision-making processes will increase thanks to the improved or newly developed co-decision-making structures. This will result in the creation of a city which will be more responsive to the expectations of young people. It will also encourage young people to stay in the city and start their further activities, including professional activities, right here in Lublin.



How is the European Youth Capital title and programs contributing to the quality development of local youth work in your opinion?

Agnieszka: Thanks to the European Youth Capital, it was possible to launch important processes. Such as, first and foremost, the creation of a youth policy that will set the city's development directions for the coming years with the participation of young people.

We are creating, as well as improving, processes that include young people in co-deciding about the city. We're also involving them in activities. These are key tasks that would take much longer to implement under different conditions. The title of European Youth Capital has accelerated these processes.

What messages can you send to other cities that might consider becoming a candidate in the future?

Agnieszka: We strongly recommend making this effort. The European Youth Capital title supports cities on the road to being an open and welcoming city that identifies the needs and aspirations of young people. A place where, regardless of background, ideology, sexual orientation, or gender identity, young people have their own space, feel at home, and are heard and appreciated.

Read more

We've also interviewed Agnieszka for our series "Faces of EGL". [You can read it here.](#)

[The European Youth Forum](#) (EYF) awards the title of European Youth Capital. The EYF elects every year a city that has excelled in empowering their youth, boosted youth participation, and strengthened the European identity.

- [Highlights of the program Lublin European Youth Capital 2023](#)
- [The website of Lublin European Youth Capital 2023](#)
- [The Facebook page of Lublin EYC 2023](#)
- [The Instagram of Lublin EYC 2023](#)
- [The Tiktok of Lublin EYC 2023](#)
- [More information on the European Youth Capital from the European Youth Forum](#)