

# ECOC2030BE

## Namur, Molenbeek and Leuven: these cities are shortlisted to become European Capital of Culture 2030

The finalists for the prestigious title of European Capital of Culture 2030 are known: Namur, Molenbeek and Leuven. This is the 45th edition of this annual European competition. In Belgium, the competition is organised by the three Belgian Ministers of Culture in cooperation with the European Commission.

Six Belgian cities - Bruges, Ghent, Kortrijk, Leuven, Molenbeek and Namur - submitted their applications. From 21 to 23 October 2024, delegations from these cities presented their projects to an independent jury. The jury, composed of 12 European members, including two Belgian ones, assessed the cities based on the criteria defined in the European regulations and praised the quality of all applications submitted.

### Evaluation criteria

The assessment focused on:

- the project's contribution to the city's long-term strategy.
- the European dimension and the link with Europe.
- the cultural and artistic content of the project.
- the capacity of the applicants to actually implement the project.
- the involvement of the local population and civil society.
- the budget and business management.

### The winning city will be known by the end of 2025

At the end of the deliberations, the jury made a pre-selection of the following candidates: Namur, Molenbeek and Leuven. These cities will further develop their projects. In the second half of 2025, the final selection will be made, which will include a jury visit to the cities and a new presentation to the jury.

The jury also thanked the cities that were not selected for the second phase of the procedure - Bruges, Ghent and Kortrijk - their efforts and commitment. Their participation underlines the power of the European project to boost cities' cultural development strategies and the role of culture to mobilise and enthuse citizens.

Belgium has carried the title of European Capital of Culture four times in the past: Antwerp (1993), Brussels (2000), Bruges (2002) and Mons (2015). The journey to 2030 promises to be another cultural milestone for the country.

Discover the projects of the shortlisted cities at [www.ecoc2030.be](http://www.ecoc2030.be)

ECOC 2030 BE Committee  
Managing Authority for the Belgian ECOC 2030 competition

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