

# Lisbon — 2020

# European Green Capital

by **Fernando Medina**  
Mayor of Lisbon





Fernando Medina, Mayor of Lisbon. António Costa, Prime Minister of Portugal and José Sá Fernandes, Lisbon Councilman for Environment, Climate and Energy)



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Lisbon European Green Capital 2020

Over the last 10 years, Lisbon has introduced a comprehensive series of policies to mitigate the effects of climate change, positioning the capital city as a global leader in this debate. The city has set ambitious targets and is involved in formalising agreements for the next phase of climate policy, namely by participating in the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, signing the Compact of Mayors and being an active member of a number of urban-led collaborative

initiatives including C40, ICLEI and Eurocities.

In recognition of the projects undertaken and results achieved, Lisbon has been named by the European Commission as the European Green Capital 2020. Lisbon is the first southern European capital to be given this honour, and during 2020 it will put urban environmental sustainability – from a political commitment and external communication perspective – under the spotlight. [Lisbon European Green Capital 2020](#) is a fantastic opportunity to introduce and promote a series

of initiatives and showcase these successful urban policies worldwide, using them as leverage to influence and inspire leading cities to follow the same sustainable urban development path.

The motto chosen for the year is ‘choose to evolve’ a challenge to all local stakeholders, from individual citizens to the largest company, and other cities in the world, to evolve together with Lisbon and switch to an urban model which is able to cope and mitigate climate change while encouraging economic and social prosperity, with opportunities for all, leaving no citizen behind.





Lisbon, a view of the city featuring Castle of São Jorge

**“  
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The European Green Capital Award recognises Lisbon as a role model for combining sustainability and economic growth. It has taken major steps towards sustainable land use and urban mobility, promoting green growth and using nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation.

In order to deliver sustainable land use and counteract the effects of climate change, such as drought, extreme heat, and flooding due to storms, Lisbon has created a network of nine green corridors. This green infrastructure also supports biodiversity and provides ecosystem services, including air pollution mitigation and space for recreation and urban farming.

Since 2008, Lisbon has seen a 16% increase in new and renewed green space and intends to achieve 20% by 2021. Since 2017, more than 80,000 trees have been planted (100,000 projected by 2021) and 700 organic allotment gardens use collected rainwater and compost organic waste (1,000 plots by 2021). In Lisbon, 85% of people already live within 300m of green urban areas (> 2000m<sup>2</sup>) and this number is set to increase to 93%.

Nine rainwater retention stations have been constructed across the city as nature-based solutions to collect and store rainwater, reducing the effects of flash floods. A major drainage scheme is also underway, with large tunnels forecast to withstand the effect of extreme events within a 100-year period. Recycled water will be used to irrigate green spaces, replacing precious drinking water, and the city has already implemented efficiency and leakage control measures that since 2013, have reduced city-wide drinking water consumption by 50%.

When it comes to taking action on climate change, Lisbon was the first capital in Europe to sign the New Covenant of Mayors for Climate Change and Energy in 2016, after achieving a 42% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between 2002 and 2014 and reducing energy consumption by 28% between 2012 and 2017.

Lisbon has a clear vision for sustainable urban mobility, adopting measures to restrict car use and prioritise cycling, public transport, and walking. In 2017, a bike sharing scheme was launched, and to encourage cycling in the hillier parts of the city, two thirds of the bikes were

electric. Lisbon already has one of the world's largest networks of electric vehicle charging points (91% of the municipal light-duty vehicles are electric) and 93% of people live within 300m of a public transport service. But the most impactful mobility policy change was a major organisational overhaul of the provision of public transport tickets, at a metropolitan level. All public transport operators and systems merged into a single entity offering simple and universal tickets and reduced tariffs. Having cut tariffs by 32% when first implemented in April 2019, the €1/day ticket increased passenger numbers by more than 20% in just a few months. Lisbon is also a strong believer in 'power to the people' and citizenship/ bottom-up strategies play a key

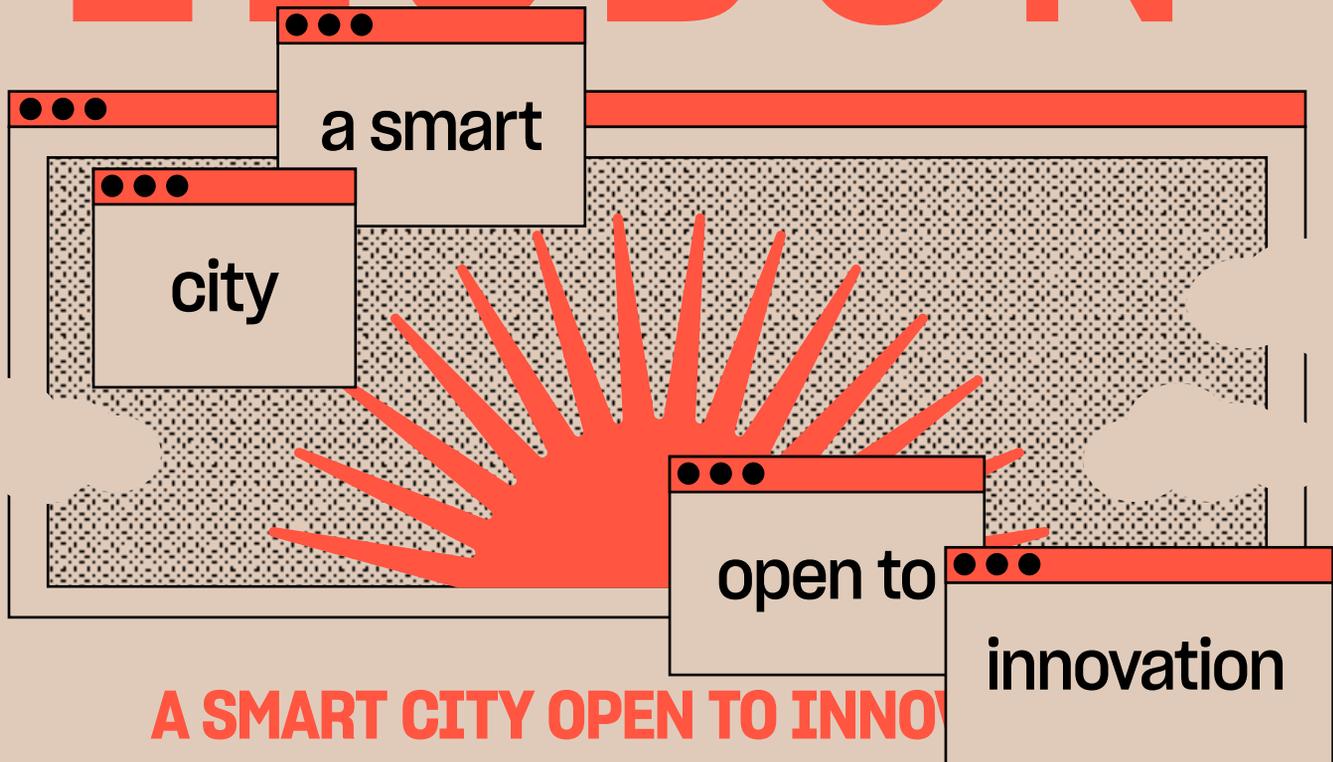
role in several of the city's green initiatives. One example is the annual Participative Budget, where people propose and vote on specific projects the municipality then promotes. In 2020, the Participative Budget doubled to €5m and it's entirely 'green', challenging citizens to propose, campaign for and vote on projects 100% related to urban sustainability. ●

Lisbon, a view of the river from Eduardo VII park



**Fernando Medina** has a degree in economics and a masters in economic sociology. He was an advisor to the Portuguese Investment Agency (2003) and the Institute of Innovation and Training (1998-2000) and a member of the Ministry of Education's working group for the Portuguese Presidency (1999-2000). Mr. Medina became a member of the Prime Minister's cabinet as an advisor on science, technology and education (2000-2002) before holding his first political appointment as secretary of state for employment and vocational training (2005-2009) and secretary of state for industry and development (2009-2011). In 2011 Mr. Medina was elected an MP in the Portuguese parliament, a position held until 2013, when he was first elected deputy mayor of Lisbon. In 2015 he became the mayor of Lisbon and was re-elected in 2017 as mayor of Lisbon and the presiding mayor of the Lisbon metropolitan area.

# LISBON



## A SMART CITY OPEN TO INNOVATION

Having been recognised as a European Entrepreneurship Region (EER 2015), the current host of the Web Summit for the next 10 years and leader in the Sharing Cities Horizon 2020 Smart Cities & Communities project, Lisbon has positioned itself as one of the leading entrepreneurship and innovation hubs in Europe. This can be leveraged to include and prioritise contributions for innovation in smart city strategies.

Cities nowadays comprise a network of housing, work, industry and leisure ecosystems, coupled with complex social and economic models. Lisbon's strategy is to focus on modernising its ability to respond to modern day demands. Combining networks and traditional services with digital technologies is critical, improving inclusivity, sustainability, efficiency, transparency and connectivity.

### Projects include:

- The Integrated Operational Centre which coordinates several operational services in connection with security and safety, emergency response and quality of life
- The Intelligent Management Platform is an award winner in the Digital Transformation category of the Smart 50 Awards. It gathers and processes large data sets, originating from cameras, sensors and social media, plus the information systems of the Lisbon Municipality and external partners
- The Urban Data Lab, a collaboration between academia and the municipal services, develops processes and algorithms to predict and respond to all types of events
- The Data Workshop, a programme to support municipal services in digital integration and transformation projects
- The Open Data Portal, this can be accessed, used, customised and shared for free, the only requirement is that Lisbon Municipality is credited when quoting results
- Real-time monitoring of environmental and weather data and its impact on the quality of life (air pollution, noise, traffic and climate). This enables informed strategic decisions to be made to address the city's environmental problems and tackle the effect of climate change.