

PRESS RELEASE

The 12th European Greenways Awards have been given on October 9th during the official ceremony in Basque Country (Spain)



Awarded Family Picture

Nine greenways from France, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and United Kingdom, have been awarded as reference of best practices in Europe. The Award ceremony was held in in Abanto-Zierbena, a small locality in Bizkaia province that lies in a unique natural setting, just 20 minutes from Bilbao.

The European Greenways Award was created in 2003 and has been held every two years since. The objective is to promote examples of best practices and to support their replication for other greenways all over Europe. The European Greenways Award is granted only to greenways under the [Lille Declaration](#), as well as to initiatives already in existence.

EGWA has been delighted to receive 33 candidacies from 13 countries, the highest number of candidacies received so far and we warmly thank all participants for responding to the call.



12 th
European
Greenways
Award - 2025



ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES VOIES VERTES
EUROPEAN GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION
ASOCIACIÓN EUROPEA DE VÍAS VERDES

EUSKADI
BASQUE COUNTRY

EUSKO JAURLARITZA
GOVERNEMENT BASQUE
Ministry of Tourism,
Culture and Consumer Affairs



GOBIERNO VASCO
BASQUE GOVERNMENT
Ministry of Tourism,
Culture and Consumer Affairs



Bizkaia
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In this 2025 edition the [international jury](#) meet on line 18 June 2025, has awarded projects in three categories: "Excellence", "Exemplary Initiatives" and "Green transition in Greenways". This special award is part of the activities promoted by EGWA in the co-implementation of the Transition Pathway for Tourism, to recognise initiatives addressing green transition challenges in the greenways ecosystem, and to showcase how the green transition happens on the ground. Furthermore, the jury give an special Jury award. Finally, a special mention was also made.

We are pleased to announce that the award winners are:

A. EXCELLENCE category

1st Prize: Montes de Hierro Greenway (Iron Mountains Greenway), presented by Enkarterrialde Association for Rural Development; Non-profit organisation (Spain)

For the transformation of a 39km of a former mining railway in a greenway, that is a living testimony to the industrial mining heritage of Bizkaia (Basque Country, Spain), and are converted now into a quality safe route for sustainable mobility. It combines its majestic heritage, the natural beauty of its landscapes, and is a current tourist attraction, boosting the local economy.

The Iron Mountains greenway also stands out for its collaborative management and partnership with public authorities at all levels, as well as with private sector, promoting activities to enhance the business community, and local dynamisation through outdoor activities. It is connected to public transport and counts with a new cycle path from Bilbao creating a safe access to the city center.

2nd Prize: VeloDunajec. Presented by Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Małopolskiego /Marshal's Office of the Małopolska Region UMWM . Regional government. (Poland)

For the realisation of an ambitious 63 km long greenway project that reuses an old railway track and follows the Dunajec river valley in the Polish-Slovak cross-border area, for its quality and holistic approach to sustainable tourism, environmental conservation and cross-border cooperation, exemplified by the pedestrian/cycle bridge in Sromowce.

The greenway beautifully integrates natural landscapes, historical heritage and local communities, while promoting environmentally friendly transport, in the south of the Małopolska region, being a reference in Poland. It contributed to a 20-30% increase in cycle tourism in this region.

"Ex aequo"

3rd Prize. Tâmega and Corgo International Ecovia, presented by Municipality of Vila Pouca de Aguiar. Local authority (Portugal)

For the 55 km long Ecopista that reuses the old railway line Chaves/Vila Real in the North of Portugal, and the rehabilitation of old railway stations in an accessible way, creating an integral tourist infrastructure.

The ecopista is integrated into a magnificent rural environment, with the mountain and valley landscape, to enhance nature, culture, historical heritage and gastronomy. All



this combined to create a tourist offer where the protagonists are the well-known local food products and nature, connected by bike, on foot or on horseback.

3rd Prize Limerick Greenway, Presented by: Limerick City and County Council (Ireland)

For creating a greenway that engages and supports local communities through economic and social development, while supporting biodiversity conservation. It has developed a Community Cluster model with local stakeholders to ensure that the greenway reflects and benefits the unique identity of each town it connects, through the greenway nodes.

The 40km Limerick scenic greenway, converted from a disused railway line, stands out as an exemplary application for its holistic, inclusive and forward-looking approach to rural regeneration, sustainable tourism and community wellbeing. It has achieved a great success, in terms of users and economic and social impact.

B. EXEMPLARY INITIATIVES category

1st Prize: Greenways and Cycl routes, presented by Greenways and Cycl routes Limited (UK)

For the Implementation of the volunteer-led Greenways charity initiative in UK to deliver greenways that have been difficult for others to achieve, involving volunteers from local communities, and working alongside local contractors in the construction works, carried out during dedicated work camps.

This highly relevant initiative connecting the knowledge of the charity's experienced leaders with volunteers to build greenways of a few kilometres, stalled for years, creating a sense of ownership, and motivating care for their maintenance, is inspiring for other communities. There have been 9 work camps since 2016, most of which have been on disused railway lines, on land now in private ownership.

2nd Prize: Fête des voies vertes (Greenway Festival), presented by Association Française pour le Développement des véloroutes et des voies vertes (AF3V). (France)

For the organization of an outstanding festival aiming to promote greenways in the whole country that has been running for 21 years. The festival is spread over one month (currently May) and features around 100 local events organised by associations, local authorities, tourist offices, local businesses or even individuals.

Promoted and coordinated by AF3V, the festival creates more visibility of greenways and advocates towards public authorities the need of development of a qualitative and quantitative network of greenways, considered not only to solve local mobility problems but as a large scale solution to decarbonise tourist and daily mobility.

3rd Prize. Suntaži station, presented by Latvian Greenways Association (LGWA). (Latvia)

For the transformation of the former Suntaži railway station from a completely abandoned building into a uniquely designed hotel for 24 guests. The hotel preserves the railway station as an important piece of industrial heritage and contributes to local economy.

It is well located in the middle of the 88 km long Rīga-Ērgļi greenway and constitutes a very interesting example for others. The station was purchased from the State Railway Company in 2020, the reconstruction works took 4 years of renovation, and has plans to upgrade new assets, as a nearby watermill, in the former railway area.

C. Special award, Green transition in greenways

Great Western Greenway Presented by Mayo County Council (Ireland)

For the holistic approach to sustainability, community engagement and environmental stewardship, while demonstrating the principles of the circular economy in action along the 48.5km Great Western Greenway, first greenway in Ireland.

Developed along a disused railway line, environmental innovation is central to the project (e.g. solar-powered compactor bins, electric bike charging stations and public furniture made from reused wind turbine blades) that supports biodiversity while preserving sensitive habitats; it integrates social innovation (connecting remote rural communities and encouraging inclusion and accessibility) and economic criteria (catalysing the growth of local businesses such as bike hire services, cafes, accommodation providers and artisan markets). This has led to job creation and strengthened community resilience.

Special Jury award

Cyclo-pedestrian path Monte Ciocchi-San Pietro. Presented by Roma Capitale – Department of Sustainable Mobility and Transport. (Italy)

In recognition of the realisation of the ambitious project that has been carried out in the city of Rome, consisting in the construction of an attractive greenway of approximately 1,200 m, using an old railway bridge and a tunnel, both part of the disused Rome-Viterbo railway line, to create a safe access to the Vatican, for pilgrim, as the new official terminus of the Francigena, for the local community, and for cycle tourists.

This project represents a model of regeneration of an urban asset and collaboration between public bodies, making the most of an extraordinary opportunity both in view of the 2025 Jubilee and for the daily mobility of citizens; it is an extension of the existing 'Monte Ciocchi-Monte Mario' pedestrian-cycleway.

Special Jury mention:

The jury decided to give a special mention to the two following candidacies presented by Georgian Ecotourism Association: Akhmeta greenway (presented in Excellence category) and Tianeti greenway (Presented in category Initiatives) (Georgia).

For adapting the concept of greenways to the local conditions to create new non-motorised itineraries using existing paths, which serve to connect and enhance the natural and cultural resources in their vicinity and promote ecotourism.

It values very positively the great interest of this practical initiative to promote sustainable rural tourism, using the concept of greenways, including the creation of new tourism resources.

The applicant, the Georgian Ecotourism Association, is strongly encouraged to continue working further on this line, putting into practice the concept of Greenways as a very suitable infrastructure to support development of ecotourism, and thus to enhance the huge opportunities for tourism in this territory, in a sustainable way.

The 12th European Greenways Award 20235 has been organized by the [European Greenways Association](#) and [Basquetour](#), in cooperation with, the [Provincial Council of Bizkaia](#), and the local entities [Enkartur](#) and [Enkarterrialde](#).

EGWA sincerely thanks the co-organisers in Basque Country, the members of the Jury, and all participants for responding to the call, as well as the participants at the Award gala in Abanto Zierbena, and the members of EGWA, for making this Award possible. The next edition will be held in 2027.

[Photos Awarded, Presentation & videos >> here](#)

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