



Towns and Cities, Growing Greener





Växjö is characterised by its wealth of forests, lakes and farmland.



Cycling paths and walkways allow citizens to enjoy Växjö's natural landscape.

Växjö at a glance

Växjö municipality is situated in county of Kronoberg, in the heart of southern Sweden. It has a population of just over 91,000, with approximately 66,000 people living in the city. Växjö boasts a wealth of natural areas, with the majority of its 1,925 km² area covered in forests, farmland and over 200 lakes.

A hub of activity

The city is a regional hub for business, particularly in the IT and service sector. Växjö has long been a centre of education and is home to one of the Linnaeus University campuses.

A city of culture

Växjö is rich in culture, with thriving theatre and music scenes. The municipality supports a range of cultural events and programmes, including Culture Night and the Spring City Festival.

A city surrounded by nature

The city is embedded in a landscape of forests and lakes, the perfect spot for those who love the outdoors. A vibrant city with nature at its doorstep, Växjö's citizens truly have the best of both worlds!

Växjö's Accolades

- 50% of all waste is recycled, digested or composted, with organic waste separated in 88% of households
- 90% of city dwellers live less than 300 metres from a park or natural area
- CO2 emissions have decreased by 58 % since 1993, to a level below 2 tons per capita
- 66% of all energy use in the city (including households, industry, agriculture, public buildings and transport) comes from renewable energy sources
- Just under half of all food served by the municipality is either organic or locally produced
- Trips per capita by public transport increased by 40% since 2005 and all buses are fuelled by renewable energy
- 95% of citizens live less than 300 metres from a bus stop
- Home to 200 endangered species based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species

Växjö, a green city

Climate and energy

Växjö started its shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy in 1980, and made the commitment as far back as 1996 to become a fossil fuel free city. It was also one of the first municipalities in Europe to sign the Covenant of Mayors, one of the largest climate change and energy initiatives in the world. Aiming to reach its ambitious energy targets by 2030, the transition to being fossil fuel free is well underway. Today renewable energy accounts for 85% of fuel used for heating and electricity, and 23% of transport fuel. At the same time, Växjö is focusing on increasing energy efficiency, for instance, by going beyond the national requirements for building standards.

Mobility

Växjö has taken a multipronged approach to sustainable transport, focusing on reducing the need for car use and promoting greener alternatives. Improvements in public transport and the city's streets have encouraged more

people to take buses, cycle and walk. There are now over 160 km of cycle lanes, allowing residents to travel almost anywhere by bike and through successful campaigning, more and more citizens are using electric bikes.

Biodiversity and land use

As a city surrounded by lakes, parks and forest, nature is never far away in Växjö. It is home to 27 Natura 2000 sites, and many of the protected areas are less than 5km from the city centre. In 2017 the municipality brought in measures to introduce more greening to the main industrial zone, helping to combat the negative effects of climate change such as flooding and urban heating.

Clockwise from Left to Right

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Växjö continuously strives to enhance the water quality of its lakes.



With over 160 km of cycle lanes, Växjö actively promotes cycling as an alternative to motorised transport.

Air quality and noise

Växjö is committed to ensuring its citizens live in a healthy environment, putting in place various measures to monitor and reduce both noise and air pollution. With traffic being one of the city's main sources of noise and air pollution, measures to reduce car use and promote cleaner alternatives will help the city reach its targets. Växjö's approach to protecting and enhancing its natural areas will also ensure its air quality continues to improve.

Waste management and circular economy

Växjö has introduced multiple measures to reduce waste. The incinerated household waste per person has been reduced by 25% in five years thanks to the successful introduction of organic waste separation. The city will also begin collecting recycling from people's homes, as opposed to designated centres, with the aim to further reduce the amount of waste going to incineration. Organic waste is used in the

production of biogas, providing a local source of fuel for public buses, and also made available for private vehicles. Växjö is continually striving to transition to a circular economy, developing and supporting projects that promote reuse and recycling.

Water and wastewater management

The quality of the water in the lakes has improved dramatically since the 1970's, thanks to a successful restoration programme. The water quality is also maintained through efficient storm water management, protecting the lakes from the negative impacts of heavy rainfall. The municipality treats wastewater from the majority of Växjö's citizens in modern treatment facilities, where nutrients from the resulting sludge are captured and reused in agriculture.



'Växjö Greenest City in Europe'. Cactus planting in Växjö's Linnéparken shows the city's pride in its environmental achievements.



Växjö promotes sustainable mobility through improvements in public transport infrastructure and by fuelling its vehicles from renewable sources.

Växjö, European Green Leaf 2018

Växjö has been a leader in sustainability for some years. Winning the 2018 European Green Leaf Award gives the city a chance to take its environmental work to the next level. Activities and events taking place throughout 2018 aim to connect Växjö with cities from around the world, while also generating dialogue and cooperation between civil society and industry.

Water

Having clean and healthy lakes is one of the municipality's main priorities, with many actions planned over the coming years to improve the quality of the lakes even further. At the same time, the city will strive to make these valuable amenities more accessible for inhabitants and visitors alike.

Sustainable transport

Transport is the main challenge for the city in its goal to becoming fossil fuel free. Växjö will continue to promote sustainable transport through increasing priority bus lanes and improving cycling infrastructure. It will also develop a strategic plan for charging infrastructure for electric vehicles to identify over 300 suitable charging points around the city.

Waste management

Växjö will continue improving its waste management through introducing recycling bins for households, recycling textiles, and developing facilities for reuse.

We look forward to an eventful year as European Green Leaf 2018!

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European Green Leaf Award Winners

Vinnare av European Green Leaf Award

- Leuven 2018
- Växjö 2018
- Galway 2017
- Torres Vedras 2015/2016
- Mollet del Vallès 2015/2016





European Green Leaf Award

The European Green Leaf is a competition aimed at towns and cities across Europe, with between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants which recognises a city's commitment to better environmental outcomes. It is the partner competition of the European Green Capital Award for cities over 100,000 inhabitants. Leuven in Belgium and Växjö in Sweden are the joint European Green Leaf Award winners for 2018. The Spanish city of Mollet del Vallès and the Portuguese city of Torres Vedras were the winners of the inaugural European Green Leaf 2015/2016, followed by the Irish city of Galway, who won the title in 2017.

The European Green Leaf and European Green Capital Awards are initiatives of the European Commission. To find more information about the winners, how to apply for the awards, how the winners are selected, and for any other questions, please visit our website below.

European Green Leaf Award

European Green Leaf Award är en tävling som vänder sig till europeiska städer mellan 20 000 och 100 000 invånare, och som är ett erkännande av stadens miljöarbete. Tävlingen är syskon till European Green Capital Award, som vänder sig till städer med mer än 100 000 invånare. Belgiska Leuven och svenska Växjö är delade vinnare av European Green Leaf 2018. Spanska Mollet del Vallès och portugisiska Torres Vedras vann den första European Green Leaf 2015/2016, följt utav irländska Galway som vann titeln 2017.

European Green Leaf Award och European Green Capital Award är initiativ från Europeiska kommissionen. Mer information om vinnarna, hur en ansökan går till, hur vinnarna väljs och andra frågor, besök vår hemsida.

