

PRESS RELEASE

GLOBAL DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX RELEASES FIRST EVER CITY RANKING

Geneva, 16 November 2016. The **Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index)** has released today its **first-ever ranking of the sustainability performance of 35 participating cities worldwide**. The results were announced at the **2016 ICCA Congress**, with the **Leadership Award going to Gothenburg** for attaining the highest overall score and the **Innovation Award to Helsinki** for their pioneering Greening Events project. Listed below are the cities with the 10 highest overall scores. For the full list of cities and scores please click [here](#).

Rank	City	Overall Score
1	Gothenburg	83%
2	Copenhagen & Reykjavik	79%
3	Zurich	73%
4	Stuttgart	71%
5	Uppsala	68%

Rank	City	Overall Score
6	Helsinki	66%
7	Glasgow & Tampere	64%
8	Stockholm & Västerås	61%
9	Espoo	59%
10	Frankfurt, Karlstad, Sapporo & Sydney	58%

“We are extremely honoured to win the GDS-Index Leadership Award,” says **Annika Hallman**, Director of the [Gothenburg Convention Bureau](#). **“From the very beginning, we had widespread support amongst all types of stakeholders to help us ensure a better society. Collaboration has been a key factor, allowing everyone to gather around a united vision. We gladly take responsibility for our industry’s ability to contribute towards a community that shows concern for the environment and its people, and we are grateful that the GDS-Index Leadership Award has recognised this.”**

Ines Antti-Poika, Director of the [Helsinki Convention Bureau](#) stated: **“It is a great honour for us to win the GDS-Index Innovation Award, and we sincerely appreciate the recognition. Moving forward, we would like to emphasize that one does not need an award in order to be a role model. In Scandinavia, we have many role models, and we encourage all of you to join us on this movement towards a sustainable future. This award has inspired us to continue leading and working towards an even more sustainable meetings region, and we hope it will inspire you too.”**

The GDS-Index is a **collaborative platform** that aims to **promote the sustainable growth** of international meeting destinations through benchmarking across **four key areas**: city environmental strategy and infrastructure; city social sustainability performance; industry supplier support (restaurants, hotels and convention centres); and Convention Bureau strategy and initiatives. **Launched by ICCA, IMEX and MCI in March 2016**, 35 cities in 5 continents have since joined the process of benchmarking and assessment, with **many more looking to join in 2017**. Through the **continued benchmarking and sharing of these best practices**, the GDS-Index aims to drive the adoption, promotion and recognition of sustainable practices **across 100 cities by 2020**.

Leading sustainable destinations on the GDS-Index have created and embraced a **robust sustainability strategy for the MICE industry** that supports the city's overall social, environmental and economic goals. Their strategy is reinforced through proper incentives and capacity training, strong local community and supplier engagement, and effective communication about sustainability initiatives.

Looking ahead, it is clear that our industry must embrace more sustainable practices and recognize that **all of us – be it government, suppliers, corporates or associations - play a key role in enabling a more sustainable future.**

ENDS



*Annika Hallman (left) & Innes Antti-Poikka (right)
with their awards*

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ABOUT MCI

MCI is the global leader in engaging and activating audiences. Our business is founded on a simple human insight: **When people come together, magic happens.** This magic is called **community**. Since 1987 we have been bringing people together through inspiring meetings, events, congresses and association management. MCI helps organizations harness the power of community by applying our strategic engagement and activation solutions to build unforgettable online and offline experiences that foster change, inspire, educate and enhance business performance. MCI is an independently owned company with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland and a global presence. Our 1,900 professionals in 60 cities and 31 countries work with clients across Europe, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, India, the Middle East and Africa. Find out more at www.mci-group.com.

MCI's pioneering and award-winning Sustainability Consultancy advises cities, governments, associations and corporations on how to accelerate transformation, catalyse innovation and enhance brand reputation. With over 700 high-profile environmental, social and governance (ESG) events managed to date and industry-wide recognition for our pioneering sustainable event management, ISO certification consulting and sustainability reporting, we have become the world's leading organiser of sustainable events and events about sustainability. Find out more at www.mcisustainability.com.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX (GDS-INDEX)

The Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index) is a prize-winning grassroots Scandinavian initiative that evolved into the first-ever sustainability ranking for event destinations worldwide. A collaborative partnership between ICCA, ICCA's Scandinavian Chapter, IMEX and MCI Group, it aims to promote the sustainable growth of



international meeting destinations, highlighting best practices and responsible business tourism. In a world increasingly focused on responsible business and addressing our environmental impact, the GDS-Index helps destinations to engage clients with sustainability, align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and drive the adoption, promotion and recognition of sustainable practices in their city. Find out more at www.gds-index.com.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS & CONVENTION ASSOCIATION (ICCA)

ICCA - the International Congress and Convention Association - is the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry. ICCA represents the main specialists in organising, transporting, and accommodating international meetings and events, and comprises over 1,000 member companies and organisations in over 90 countries worldwide. ICCA specialises in the international association meetings sector, offering unrivalled data, communication channels, and business development opportunities. Find out more at www.iccaworld.com.

ABOUT IMEX

IMEX in Frankfurt, the worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events which took place at Messe Frankfurt from 19 – 21 April 2016. For press releases - <http://www.imex-frankfurt.com/press/news-releases/>. For high resolution photography – <http://www.imex-frankfurt.com/press/images.-audio-video/press-photos/>. The IMEX Group also runs IMEX America, America's worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings & events, which took place 18 – 20 October 2016 at the Sands Expo and Convention Center at The Venetian® | The Palazzo®, preceded by Smart Monday, powered by MPI on 17 October. For further press information, please contact: Emma Ward: emma.ward@imexexhibitions.com or Chris Lewis: chris.lewis@imexexhibitions.com.