

Ganja – “European Youth Capital 2016”

On November 21, 2013 Ganja was announced as a “*European Youth Capital 2016*” by the decision of the international jury at the General of the Assembly of the European Youth Forum held in Thessaloniki, Greece. Ganja is the first city among CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and non-EU cities which won this title.

European Youth Capital (EYC) title is awarded to a European city for its high youth activity, youth development and awareness and lasts for a period of one year, during which it has the chance to showcase its youth-related projects and programs.

EYC is an international project implemented by the European Youth Forum since 2009. So far the EYC has been awarded to Rotterdam (Netherlands 2009), Turin (Italy 2010), Antwerp (Belgium 2011), Braga (Portugal 2012), Maribor (Slovenia 2013), Thessaloniki (Greece 2014), Cluj-Napoca (Romania 2015), Ganja (Azerbaijan 2016), Varna (Bulgaria 2017) and Cascais (Portugal 2018).

In order to ensure the implementation of events related to “*European Youth Capital 2016*” project in Ganja, a special order was signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on February 24, 2016.

The opening ceremony of “*Ganja 2016 European Youth Capital*” was held on May 4, 2016 in Heydar Aliyev Center in Ganja. Representatives of government agencies, diplomatic corps accredited in Azerbaijan, international organizations and foreign countries (Ireland, Italy, Portuguese, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Greece, Bulgaria and others), as well as European Youth Forum and European Youth Capital Network members participated in the abovementioned ceremony.

Within the framework of “*European Youth Capital 2016*” project, Ganja will host numerous local and international events in five priority areas, which are active youth participation in social life, volunteering, social cohesion, education and youth employment. These include such projects as: “European Youth Festival”, “Intellectuals”, Ganja 2016 – European Championship, European Voluntary Service, “Youth Camp for Religious Dialogue”, “Online Library”, “Ganja Forum for Young Researchers”, International Festival on “Europe and Ganja – Intersection of Cultures”, “Secondary Education Model of European Youth Capitals”, “Labor Fair”, “Social Entrepreneurship”, “Craft Fair”, “Youth Carrier Bus”, “Ganja Dance City” and many others.