

energy innovation austria

4/2024

Current developments
and examples
of sustainable energy
technologies



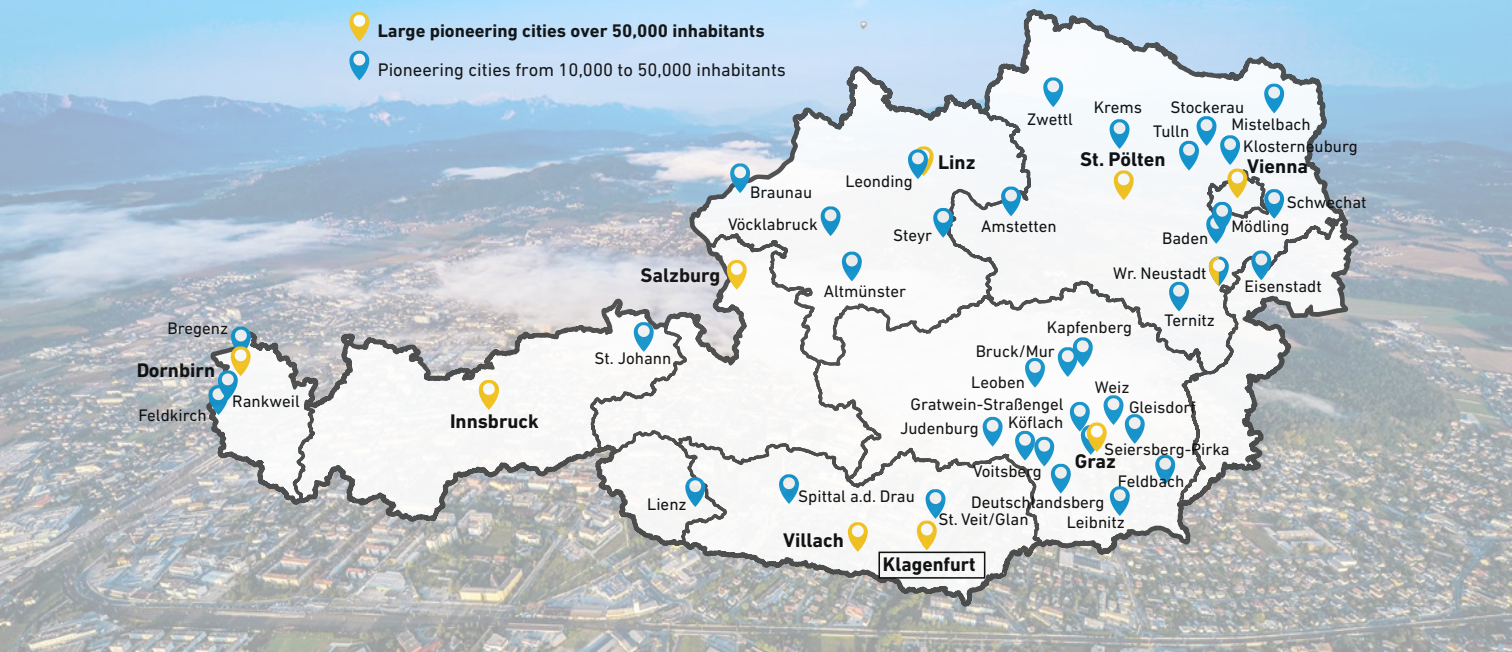
Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
Climate Action, Environment,
Energy, Mobility,
Innovation and Technology

Pioneering Austrian cities

leading the way to climate neutrality

Cities have a key role to play in tackling the climate crisis, because they are responsible for around three quarters of global carbon emissions and energy consumption. Austrian towns and cities of all sizes are currently forging ahead as pioneers and are devising some innovative strategies and solutions for achieving climate neutrality as quickly as possible. They are being aided in their endeavours by the mission "Climate-neutral City".

St. Pölten, Photo: Medienservice/Arman Kalteis



Mission "Climate-neutral City"

Getting Austria's towns and cities fit for the future

In this issue, we present examples of some of the activities being done by Austrian towns and cities as they lead the way towards climate neutrality. Reports from more cities will follow in future issues in this series.

Achieving Austria's ambitious goal of being climate neutral by 2040 will require a fundamental transformation in the economy and society underpinned by two key pillars: delivering the energy and mobility transformation and establishing a circular economy.

Cities have a major part to play in this transformation process. The effects of the climate crisis, such as heatwaves, heavy rain and other extreme weather events as well as air pollution and noise emissions are particularly apparent in urban spaces. Yet cities also have a great deal of potential for developing innovative solutions for climate protection and adapting to climate change and trialling them under real-life conditions.

With the "Climate-neutral city" mission¹, the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) and the Climate and Energy Fund are helping Austria's cities to become climate neutral as swiftly as possible.

LEADING THE WAY IN CLIMATE-NEUTRAL DEVELOPMENT

The mission is seeing pioneering towns and cities across the whole country come up with practical solutions for the energy and mobility transformation and the circular economy, all of which are intended to have a significant impact on the climate and be implemented and rolled out quickly. They serve as shining examples of how strategies and measures need to be directed in order to be able to ensure climate fitness in the future.

Ten pioneering towns and cities with over 50,000 inhabitants have formed an official partnership with the BMK and, over the next few years, will be showcasing how it is possible in practice to live and do business in a resource-efficient and climate-neutral way. They will build the necessary administrative structures and skills, lay out the first climate-neutral urban districts and share their knowledge with one another. This will create some valuable learning environments and generate expertise that other towns, cities and municipalities in Austria will be able to harness.

As well as contributing to climate protection, climate-neutral cities also offer the people living there a better quality of life and many more benefits, such as cost savings from using renewable energy sources and energy-efficient construction methods as well as new fields of work involving innovative, environmentally friendly technologies.

PIONEERING TOWNS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY

A further 38 Austrian towns with 10,000 to 50,000 people are also backing research and innovation in a bid to achieve the common goal of climate neutrality even sooner. The Climate and Energy Fund is helping them to devise sustainable strategies, objectives and measures for their journey towards climate neutrality.

LEARNING FROM ONE ANOTHER

Pioneering towns and cities of all sizes, which together account for over 40% of the Austrian population, are able to share their experiences and knowledge with other members of their network, leverage synergy effects and make use of tried-and-tested technologies and findings from research and trial projects. They are receiving comprehensive support from the BMK, the Climate and Energy Fund and the experts from the organisations guiding the process.² This includes:

- > Establishing learning environments and supporting knowledge transfer
- > Devising and compiling indicators for measuring impact
- > Identifying and preparing building blocks for solutions
- > Support for the pioneering towns and cities
- > Calculating greenhouse gas balances and other indicators

TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIONS FOR THE CLIMATE-NEUTRAL CITY

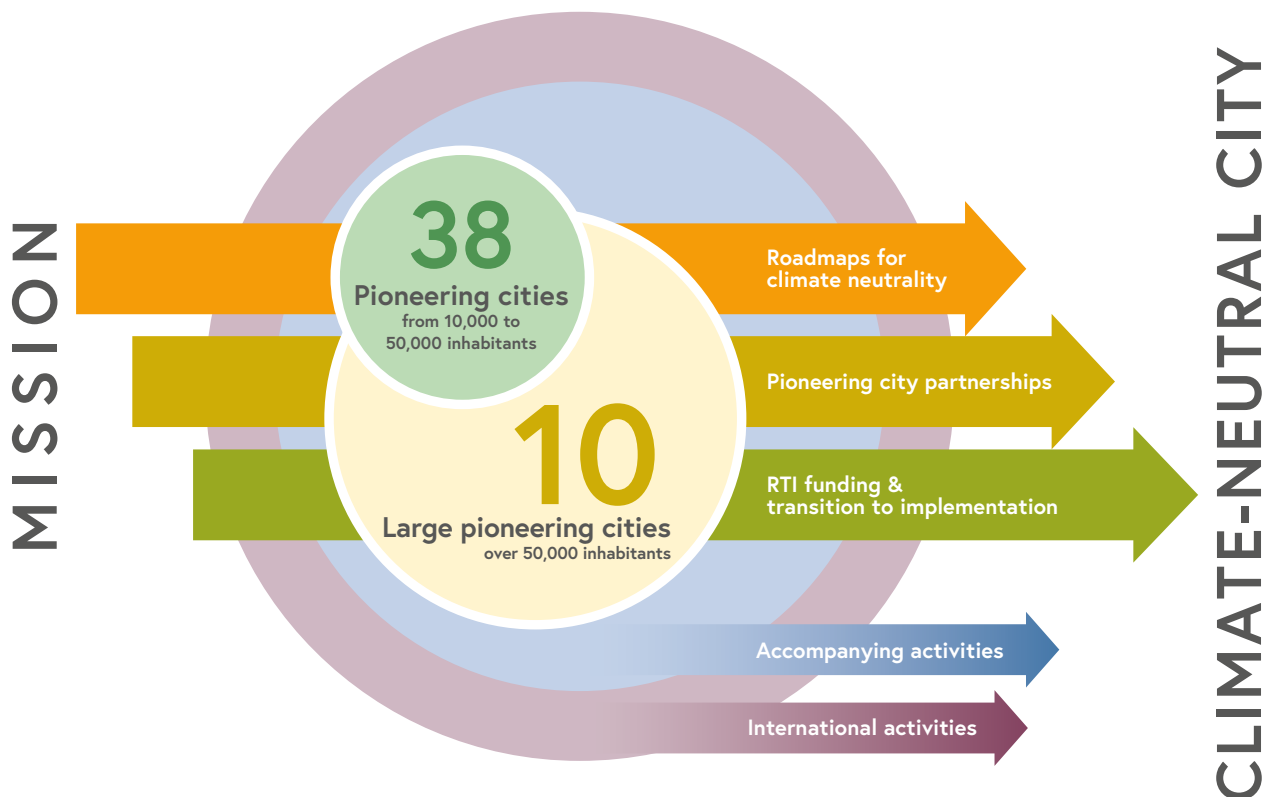
“Technologien und Innovationen für die klimaneutrale Stadt” (TIKS), an RTI programme launched by the BMK and the Climate and Energy Fund, is promoting the rapid development and trialling of innovative building blocks for solutions as part of the overall mission. The focus here lies on specific questions of applied research and on R&D services that will help to create cities, neighbourhoods and buildings that are resilient, climate-neutral and adapted to climate change.

[klimaneutralerstadt.at/en/initiatives/tiks-technologies-innovations-climate-neutral-city.php](https://www.klimaneutralerstadt.at/en/initiatives/tiks-technologies-innovations-climate-neutral-city.php)

¹ See also eia issue 4/2023 www.energy-innovation-austria.at/issue/eia-2022-04-en/?lang=en

² The mission “Climate-neutral City” is being supported by AustriaTech – Gesellschaft des Bundes für technologiepolitische Maßnahmen, the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), the Austrian Society for Environment and Technology (ÖGUT) and the Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR).

More information on the mission “Climate-neutral City” and the pioneering cities in Austria can be found at: www.klimaneutralerstadt.at/en/



KLAGENFURT

Leading the way to climate neutrality

Photo: City of Klagenfurt press office/Horst

Klagenfurt began gearing itself up for sustainable, climate-resilient development as long ago as 2017 with its “Smart City Climate Strategy”. It is the only city in Austria to be part of the EU-wide “100 Climate-neutral and Smart Cities 2030” mission and has been awarded the EU Mission Label for cities. ❶ Being part of this EU initiative and working with the BMK on the mission “Climate-neutral City” is helping Klagenfurt to meet its ambitious climate targets.

A number of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental fields of action were identified as early as when the Smart City Climate Strategy was being devised in order to embed the “smart city” philosophy in all relevant areas of city life. The city then used this as a basis to compile a list of measures – 241 at the last count – for actually putting the strategy into place.



Photo: City of Klagenfurt press office

“Originally, the horizon we had in mind for climate neutrality was 2050, so a long way off,” explains Stefan Guggenberger from the city’s Climate and Environmental Protection Department. “However, by taking targeted action such as expanding our district heating network and buying in green electricity via our municipal

utilities company, we were able to shrink our carbon footprint so much that we could make our climate targets more and more ambitious. Being part of the EU Cities mission has shown us that, in principle – if everything comes together – our Smart City Climate Strategy will allow us to become climate neutral by 2030.”

“The EU Cities Mission 2030 and the cooperation we’re engaging in at national level as a pioneering city for climate neutrality are the main tools that will enable us to put the measures from our Smart City Climate Strategy in place one by one.”

*Stefan Guggenberger,
Climate and Environmental Protection Department,
Klagenfurt City Council*

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SUPPLY

Klagenfurt is very well supplied with renewable district heating, with nearly half of the city’s buildings connected to the district heating system. And 90% of the energy for district heating now comes from renewable sources since a new biomass cogeneration plant came on stream. The municipal utilities company – the city’s largest generator and supplier of energy – now buys exclusively 100% certified green electricity. This has already enabled a significant reduction in harmful emissions from both heating and electricity.



EU MISSIONS

100 CLIMATE-NEUTRAL AND SMART CITIES

The European mission has set itself the objective of helping European towns and cities of all sizes to become climate-neutral by 2030. These places are serving as test beds and innovation centres in an effort to enable all European towns and cities to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The European Commission selected a total of 112 cities from all 27 EU member states, with Klagenfurt – a climate pioneer – representing Austria. The mission is pursuing a cross-sector, needs-based approach that generates synergy effects between initiatives already in place and aligns activities with what the cities actually require.

research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/climate-neutral-and-smart-cities_en



Photo: City of Klagenfurt press office/Horst

SMART CITY LAB

Successfully devising and implementing innovative solutions on the path to climate neutrality relies on the right people and sufficient funds being available. Through cooperation as part of the "Climate-neutral cities" mission, Klagenfurt was able to build up further competencies and recruit additional staff. The newly opened Smart City Lab currently has five full-time employees working on getting climate-neutral projects from the Smart City Climate Strategy in a position to attract funding and managing their delivery. The team looks after the projects from start to finish: from application and submission through to actual implementation, writing final reports and conducting audits. "We've also unlocked some great synergy effects," Guggenberger says. "At the same time as creating the Smart City Lab, we were also able to set up a citizens' office, where business leaders, other stakeholders and anyone in Klagenfurt who is interested can

PIONEERING CITY

come along and find out more about sustainability and climate protection." The aim is to increase the number of participatory processes and get as many different stakeholders involved as possible in the future. Motivating young people is a particular priority, and the city is working closely with schools as well as with Klagenfurt's youth council, which was created in a participatory process and consists of around 20 young people aged 14–19 who advise the city on various issues. The youth council also comes up with many ideas and projects of its own, which are then put into action with the help of city officials. With regard to climate protection, the young people are consulted on specific issues, e.g. developing city-centre squares or ideas for events.

DEVELOPING CLIMATE-RESILIENT NEIGHBOURHOODS

Klagenfurt has identified eight target areas for climate-neutral development in its Smart City Climate Strategy in order to demonstrate how climate protection can work in practice. These areas are parts of the city that are either undergoing or expected to undergo development. Furthest along in this process – and a prime example of it – is the district of Harbach, which hosted initial exploratory studies¹ as long ago as 2016. A sustainably and climate-neutrally planned new neighbourhood that includes social housing is being built here. Guggenberger explains: "People have already started moving into the first few flats, and the plan is to complete additional stages of the building work gradually, every two to three years, between now and 2030 – and beyond." The city is actively involved in the entire development process via the Smart City Lab and accompanying funding projects and provides a space for new technologies and climate-related measures to be evaluated under real-life conditions. The experience gained in the learning process will then be applied in the development of other neighbourhoods and districts.

INNOVATIVE MOBILITY CONCEPTS

Whilst Klagenfurt is already well on its way to becoming climate-neutral in terms of its electricity and heat, its greenhouse gas balances over the past few years have shown that traffic emissions remain consistently high – and are even increasing in some areas. "This is why we're taking targeted action to encourage residents to change their mobility behaviour," Guggenberger points out. For example, Klagenfurt's first multimodal transport hub has been set up in the new district of Harbach, boasting bus links, electric car-sharing and a bike rental scheme for e-bikes, bike trolleys and cargo tricycles. Parcel lockers have also been installed in a central location to aid the city's logistics efforts. The plan is to use this area to trial these innovative solutions and services and gradually develop them further.

¹ Also see smartcities.at/projects/smart-living-in-klagenfurt-harbach

PIONEERING CITY

INNSBRUCK

Alpine, urban and climate-neutral

In the Alps, the impact of climate change is being felt in numerous ways, including melting glaciers and extreme weather events bringing heavy rain and mudslides. The city of Innsbruck is doing a great deal to save energy and resources and reduce harmful emissions. Nestled in the mountains, Innsbruck has little space to spare but an urgent need for more housing. Balancing climate protection with affordable accommodation is one of the major challenges the city is currently facing.

"Innsbruck's housing market is very tight," says Marcus Maier, who heads the project for the mission "Climate-neutral City". "Urbanisation and sustainable land use are key issues in the city's development. We need much more new and affordable accommodation, e.g. for students. But building student and social housing while remaining on course for climate neutrality, i.e. laying the foundations for funding a high-quality building standard, is a tough task. Because we're short on space, renovating existing buildings also plays a major role, of course." A number of showcase new construction and renovation projects are demonstrating how innovative solutions work in practice. The city is planning and delivering these kinds of construction projects in close cooperation with its partners, namely its subsidiary IIG (Innsbrucker Immobilien GmbH & Co KG) and Neue Heimat.

CAMPAGNE REICHENAU – A SMART CITY DISTRICT

The Campagne Reichenau district is one example of best practice for sustainable residential development and building affordable homes to a passive-house standard. The long-term aim is to create a "zero-emission urban region", a concept that involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, embracing social sustainability, maximising energy efficiency and ecological quality, and using renewable energy as an essential component of the energy supply system. Affordable, highly efficient solutions that can readily be multiplied have been developed here under the leadership of IIG. As well as optimising the energy efficiency of the buildings, sustainable mobility concepts and smart supply and waste disposal structures are also being trialled in the new district. The first few stages of the construction work have already undergone klimaaktiv certi-



Visualization of Campagne Reichenau.
Image: Expressiv/IA Bogenfeld Architektur, construction section 1

fication and have been awarded the gold standard. "Campagne Reichenau is also one of the first places in Austria to achieve a klimaaktiv rating covering an entire housing estate," Marcus Maier explains. "We scored particularly highly in four areas: management, communication, urban development and building quality." IIG's Buildings A and B were also certified as passive houses in line with the PHI standard.

THE EICHHOF DISTRICT – RENOVATION AND NEW BUILDINGS TO PASSIVE-HOUSE STANDARD

Another project that is breaking new ground can be found in Innsbruck's Eichhof district. In several stages, a total of 530 housing units – some in new buildings that meet passive-house standards and some in renovated existing buildings – are being created on the site of a residential estate in the city that was initially constructed from 1941 onwards to house new arrivals from South Tyrol whose families had Austrian roots. 2021 saw residents moved into the first complex, containing 29 units, with a further 32 high-quality, highly energy-efficient newly constructed apartments being handed over to tenants in 2023. The aim is for the future construction stages to achieve the klimaaktiv gold standard.

BUILDING SKILLS AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Being part of the mission "Climate-neutral City" is helping Innsbruck to forge ahead with its process for achieving climate neutrality. Additional staff have been recruited to this end, with the four-strong Pioneering City team based at administration headquarters – specifically, in the office of the municipal directorate. This makes internal cooperation with the various offices and the organisational procedures significantly easier.

KLIMAAKTIV STANDARD FOR BUILDINGS, HOUSING ESTATES AND WHOLE DISTRICTS

The klimaaktiv building standard was developed in Austria to enable a building's quality to be measured and compared. The various rating categories are set out in a catalogue of criteria. Besides energy efficiency, an objective appraisal and assessment is also conducted for planning and implementation quality, the quality of construction materials and design, and key aspects of comfort, convenience and indoor air quality. www.klimaaktiv.at/gemeinden/gemeindegebaeude/gebauestandard.html

The klimaaktiv standard for housing estates and districts is an Austria-wide quality standard that demonstrates and ensures the sustainability of large-scale building projects, with a particular focus on climate neutrality and quality of life. Central to the catalogue of criteria for housing estates and districts is the issue of urban development, while other aspects are geared towards the quality of infrastructure (mobility infrastructure, energy and water supply, buildings) and the quality of planning processes (including organisational structures, objectives and formats for participation). www.klimaaktiv.at/service/publikationen/bauen-sanieren/kriterienkatalog-siedlungen.html



The Eichhof district, photo: M. Freinhofer

"Our job is to integrate the climate criteria more closely into our administrative processes, look for implementation opportunities, and identify and eliminate legal obstacles, e.g. in building regulations," Marcus Maier says, describing some of the new team's responsibilities. Communication, building networks and sharing information are key, not only with regard to the processes under way within the city but also in terms of cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders, the subsidiaries and the provincial government departments as well as with universities and research institutions.

"Thanks to the mission 'Climate-neutral City', there's a regular dialogue ongoing between the partner cities, the BMK and the FFG, which is providing the funding. It's this network and the exchange of information that's actually the most important thing about the mission. It's an opportunity to discuss the cities' specific needs, any problems on the horizon, and the various funding programmes and guidelines."

Marcus Maier, project lead for the mission "Climate-neutral City", Innsbruck City Council

PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS

Keeping the public informed and getting them involved are crucial to the success and acceptance of climate-related projects. A range of awareness-raising measures have therefore been launched in Innsbruck's new neighbourhoods, such as accompanying residents moving into their new apartments or providing specific information on how to save energy.

The cooperative planning procedure for the newly built Campagne Reichenau district proved a roaring success. "Locals were asked in advance what they needed in terms of schools, nurseries, clubs and so on, and what was created was a spacious site with many green spaces and play areas," says Maier, describing the process. "This allowed any pushback – which, as we all know, you get very often with new building projects – to be resolved at an early stage. Participatory planning processes like these, where people discuss things together right from the start, are something we also want to make more use of in future projects."

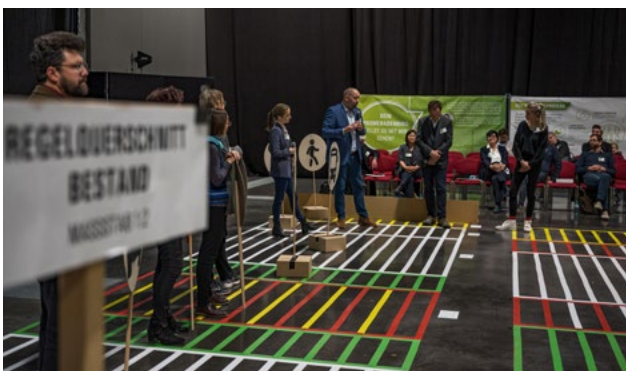
PIONEERING CITY

ST. PÖLTEN

A city on the move

St. Pölten, the capital of Lower Austria, the largest province in the country by area, is undergoing a dynamic process of change. The city has become particularly attractive since the expansion of the Vienna-Salzburg railway line and the good transport connections. However, a construction boom, a growing population and heavy commuter traffic are giving the city much to do and calling for new technical and social infrastructure. As a climate neutrality pioneer, the city is putting many innovative measures in motion – and one key issue is the mobility transformation.

“Although the climate crisis has definitely been a factor in the urban development concept, in residential development and in transport planning in recent years, there hasn't been an overarching strategy,” explains Carina Wenda, who is in charge of sustainable planning processes in the city's new Climate Coordination Office. With its “Climate framework strategy 1.0”, which was devised as part of the national Fit4UrbanMission funding project, the city bolstered its foundations for climate-resilient development back in 2022. “This brought all the relevant issues together for the first time and made it clear which specialist departments had to be brought on board on the journey to climate neutrality. However, our “Climate framework strategy 1.0” is also an important means of raising awareness,” Wenda emphasises.



Presentation on the Grüner Loop Promenade, photo: Medienservice/Arman Kalteis

BUILDING CAPACITY

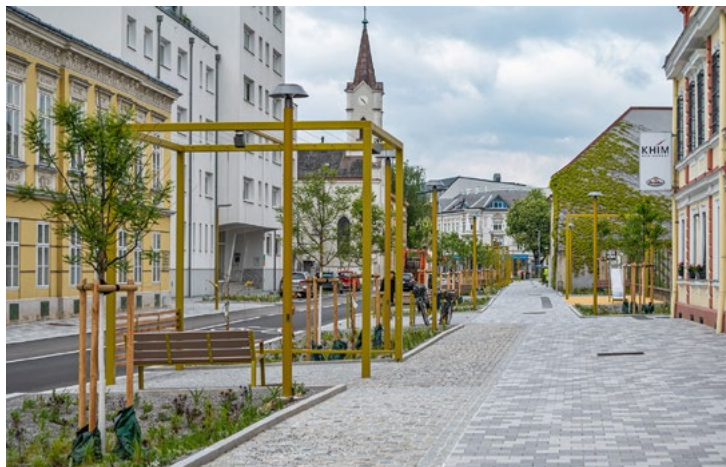
Joining the mission “Climate-neutral City” as a pioneering city is allowing St. Pölten to recruit additional staff and expand its skills base. It is this that has enabled the establishment of the Climate Coordination Office, for instance. “This is where the ‘pioneering cities’ initiative is having its greatest impact, we think,” says the project lead. “We’ve been able to give new staff new responsibilities and thus cover key areas that had previously fallen by the wayside somewhat. Needless to say, we’re working very closely with many other departments, such as Urban Planning and Transport Planning.”

FOCUSING ON ENERGY

The topic of energy is an important focus that the pioneer city team is working on intensively. Two municipal renewable energy communities have already been set up, while preparations are currently under way for citizen energy communities and for drawing up a concept for regional energy planning. Several photovoltaic projects are also on the verge of being implemented.

SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT

The city has partnered with ÖBB Infra and Alpenland, a non-profit building and housing cooperative. Both are currently planning pilot projects in St. Pölten for building new districts or renovating existing ones using innovative mobility and energy solutions. For instance, ÖBB's plans to renovate the "Eisenbahnerhöfe" are already well advanced. This former estate was built to house railway workers and features a number of listed buildings. One of Alpenland's projects, meanwhile, involves building a new neighbourhood on a brownfield site featuring high-density housing and mixed-use buildings. "We on the city council don't build anything ourselves, of course, so we're reliant on the willingness of our developers to cooperate," Wenda explains. "We're glad to have ÖBB and Alpenland working with us on this in order to set something in motion together."



Promenadenring in St. Pölten, photo: Medienservice/Christian Krückel

MODAL SPLIT OF THE RESIDENT POPULATION OF ST. PÖLTEN FOR THE YEAR 2034

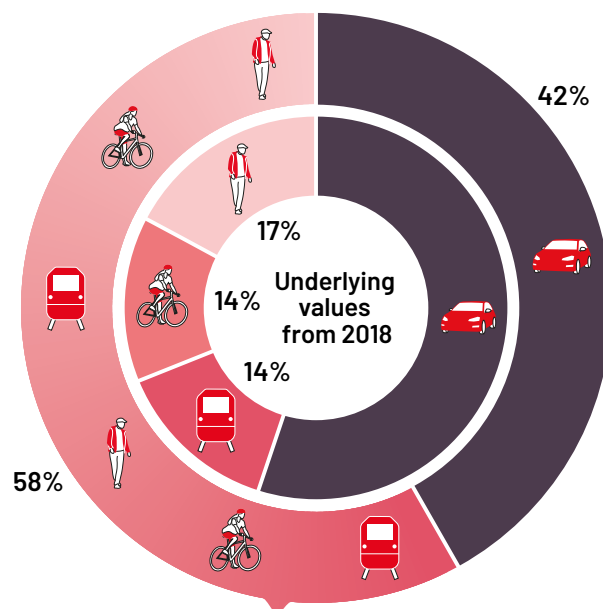


Photo: Medienservice/Christian Krückel

CHAMPIONING THE MOBILITY TRANSFORMATION

Transforming its transport policy is a key issue that St. Pölten is actively working on, and the city's firm commitment is reflected in its overall concept for active mobility, which was signed off by the city council earlier this year. The concept sets out some important measures for accelerating the switch from driving to walking and cycling. By 2034, the aim is for ecomobility (walking, cycling, public transport) to make up 58% and motorised individual transport (MIT) 42% of the modal split.

The overall concept for active mobility was devised in a broad-based participatory process that involved over 2,000 people. "We're very proud of a number of things, including our NextBike bike-sharing scheme, which is proving extremely popular with the public," Wenda explains. "Rental numbers doubled last year. This tells us that we in St. Pölten have the potential to become a sustainable mobility pioneer."

Boosting public transport is another big issue, with an important planning process currently ongoing in this regard. Because St. Pölten does not have a transport operator of its own – the municipal bus network LUP is run by the Verkehrsverbund Ost-Region (VOR) – the city works closely with VOR and is in the process of preparing an invitation to tender for 2027 in a bid to expand its bus network, increase service frequency and convert the fleet to electric buses from 2029 onwards.

"St. Pölten is an ideal place to get active and keep moving. The city's clear commitment to getting more people walking and cycling is leading the way for the whole of its urban development."

Carina Wenda, Climate Coordination Office, St. Pölten City Council

Roadmaps for climate neutrality, measures and solutions

in 38 pioneering towns and cities



A number of small and medium-sized Austrian towns and cities (with 10,000–50,000 inhabitants) have set themselves the objective of becoming climate neutral as quickly as possible and are busy devising appropriate strategies and measures to this end. The Climate and Energy Fund is currently helping 38 of them to formulate roadmaps for achieving climate neutrality as well as strategies and solutions tailored to their various target groups. These towns and cities are able to share experiences and knowledge with others in the same position, leverage synergy effects and draw on findings from research and trial projects in the larger pioneering cities.

BREGENZ

Setting a course for climate neutrality together

As an e5 city,¹ Bregenz – the capital of Vorarlberg – has been putting successful climate protection measures in place for some years now. 2023 saw the launch of an intensive participatory process to establish a roadmap for achieving climate neutrality that involved locals, Bregenz's Climate Advisory Board, business leaders and local associations, organisations and property management companies. One initial outcome of this was a provisional database containing 170 specific measures.

In July 2024, the target of becoming climate neutral by 2040 was approved unanimously by the city council and the next steps were agreed. "First of all, the Climate Advisory Board, an independent body of experts, will choose measures from the database to be put into action in the coming year," explains Gerold Ender, head of the Climate Protection, Environment and Energy Department in the city. "The e5 team (made up of senior administrators, city councillors and the mayor), who are responsible for energy policy work, will then check whether there are enough funds and staff available to implement the proposals, finalise the timetable, instigate the budgeting process and start getting the measures



Photo: visitbregenz/Christiane Setz

implemented." There are also plans to monitor the measures to indicate what impact they are actually having.

GETTING NEW STAKEHOLDERS ON BOARD

The city is constantly seeking to bring more stakeholders into the fold. For example, it is working with religious communities that have already voted to pursue energy self-sufficiency and are demonstrating a strong commitment to embracing climate neutrality measures for energy and buildings, amongst other things.

MOBILITY

Bregenz has been making good progress on transport policy for some years now. Motorised individual transport (MIT) makes up 35% of its total traffic volume, with cycling at 27%, walking at 23% and public transport at 15%. "However, another push is needed to prevent efforts from running out of steam," Ender says. "We want to motivate the remaining third

of people to use our full range of mobility options."

FOCUSING ON SPACE HEATING

The issue of space heating is a major challenge. Fossil fuels (mainly natural gas) provide 85% of the energy required for heating. Work is currently under way to construct a new biomass plant that is set to heat some 500 buildings on the outskirts of Bregenz in the future. The district heating project in the Weidach area of the city is being implemented by the municipal utilities company, the energy supplier Illwerke and the municipality of Wolfurt. Another project involves using water from Lake Constance, heat pumps and free-cooling technology to supply heat and cooling to Bregenz's new indoor swimming pool, its concert hall and parts of the city centre. A comprehensive heating plan is also being devised together with the municipal utilities company, the Climate Advisory Board and Vorarlberg's provincial government.

¹ www.e5-gemeinden.at

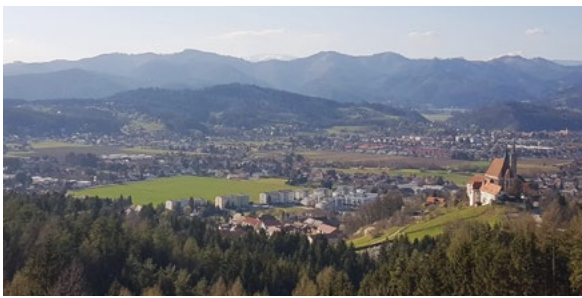


Photo: Gratwein-Straßengel town council

GRATWEIN-STRASSENGEL

Towards a climate-neutral future

Gratwein-Straßengel is one of the largest municipalities in Styria, with four districts – a mix of rural and urban – home to nearly 13,000 inhabitants. Gratwein-Straßengel is a member of the “Grat^{2r} climate and energy model region¹ and has already implemented some mobility and climate protection projects in the past. Now one of Austria’s pioneering towns, the municipality is currently working on a joint roadmap for climate policy complete with objectives, needs analyses and tangible

measures. Officials were quick to realise that more staff would be needed for planning and implementation, and so the municipality created a dedicated “Sustainability Unit” early on. Climate neutrality as understood by the “pioneering cities” project encompasses urban districts, buildings, mobility and energy.

The municipality is focusing on sustainable renovation and on enhancing existing neighbourhoods in the interests of climate-active residential development. A project application for planning a climate-neutral education and training campus, which includes expanding and upgrading an existing primary school to a twelve-class all-day school, is currently

being prepared. This also involves looking at nearby municipal buildings from an energy technology perspective and exploring opportunities for ecological restoration and depaving. “We’re only just getting started, of course, but there’s a lot going on, such as in the area of energy,” reports mayor Doris Dirnberger. “We’ve already got three private energy communities here and are considering setting one up as a municipality as well.”

The guiding principle as far as mobility is concerned is “avoiding, shifting, improving”. Key starting points in this area are installing traffic-calming measures and promoting walking, cycling, e-mobility and a multimodal approach to mobility.

¹www.gratquadrat.at

STEYR

Targeting climate neutrality by 2040

Steyr city council approved a roadmap for achieving climate neutrality back in July this year. Its vision, its strategy and numerous specific measures for becoming climate-neutral by 2040 were devised in a participatory process involving stakeholders from the worlds of politics, administration and business alongside the general public and civil-society organisations. This process was supported by PlanSinn and the engineering office e7, which also calculated an initial footprint for the city based on its latest energy consumption data.

Steyr views climate neutrality as an interdisciplinary topic that must be embedded in every department of the city council. Amongst other things, four moderated workshops have been held and an extensive toolkit of measures has been devised that the various specialist departments will be able to draw on in the future. A RE-START grant from the Public Employment Service (AMS) has enabled additional staff to be taken on. One new employee has



Situated on two rivers, Steyr is also examining the possibility of generating hydropower from the River Steyr, photo: Steyr City Council, press office

been recruited to handle coordination as well as internal and external communication about the city’s bid to be climate-neutral by 2040.

SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

Steyr is making active use of various funding opportunities so that it can deliver its ambitious projects at pace. To convert its bus routes to electricity, for instance, the city obtained a grant from the federal government’s “Zero-Emission Buses and Infrastructure” (EBIN) programme.² This support is expected to enable a total of eleven electric buses (half of the present fleet) to be purchased and the necessary charging infrastructure installed this year and next. The city has also launched a project to decarbonise its



Formerly a centre for the iron industry, it is now a clean industrial city on the path to climate neutrality, photo: Hannes Ecker

municipal vehicle fleet and has successfully secured an ENIN grant³ for this purpose. This will allow light goods vehicles, emergency vehicles and other municipal service vehicles to be replaced by their electric counterparts. “We’re lucky to have a Finance Director who’s always on the lookout for sources of funding,” reveals Katrin Auer, the city councillor responsible for environmental protection. “For example, this enabled us to switch all the public lighting in Steyr to LEDs with support from the federal government’s municipal investment programme (KIP). Another major project is a feasibility study for geothermal energy. This is a further area we’re actively involved in.”

²www.ffg.at/EBIN

³www.ffg.at/ENIN

INFORMATION

Mission "Climate-neutral City"

www.klimaneutralerstadt.at/en

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