

ENERGY ALLIES

TRANSATLANTIC MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES FOR THE LOCAL ENERGY TRANSITION

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY



Heidelberg is a city situated on the River Neckar in a mountainous region in the Land of Baden-Württemberg, Southwest Germany. The municipality is part of the densely populated Rhine-Neckar urban area. It has a young population and is known for its international atmosphere and openness to the world. Heidelberg has research centers of international renown. In this city of knowledge, the municipal departments and the scientific community work in close collaboration.

CLIMATE PLAN

Over the years, the city has made a name for itself as an environmental protection and sustainable development capital thanks to its wide-ranging network of partners. Heidelberg was the first German city to develop a climate protection concept in 1992. The initial climate protection concept and the energy concept were reviewed in 2004 and again in 2010.

Between 1987 and 2011, Heidelberg reduced CO₂ emissions of its municipal buildings by 58 percent and decreased final energy consumption by 68 percent. The municipality has worked in close cooperation with schools through various projects to include energy education in the curriculum and with SMEs to implement an environmental management system. The municipality considers communication as a means of raising citizens' awareness and has developed an innovative communication strategy. Through participation in regional, national, and international projects Heidelberg benefitted from additional funding that has helped to raise further interest among stakeholders.

In 1996, the municipality became a member of European local authority networks such as [Energy Cities](#) and joined the [Covenant of Mayors](#) in 2008 as one of the first cities. In 2012, Heidelberg became a model municipality for "[Masterplan 100% Klimaschutz](#)", a climate-neutral-city program led by the Federal Ministry of the Environment, with the following targets: reduce CO₂ emissions by 95 percent and cut energy use in half by 2050. In four years, the city has seen a 10 percent rise in renewable electricity and a 20 percent increase in heat from renewables.

In recent years the city has prepared a Green City Masterplan for sustainable mobility with Mannheim and Ludwigshafen. This plan has developed an electro mobility concept with Fraunhofer Research Institute and started an analysis on municipal fleet management.

GOVERNMENTAL COMPETENCES

German local governments have both compulsory and voluntary competences. These local governments are bound to compulsory tasks related to the energy transition by the national level that covers energy and water supply, urban land use planning, sewerage disposal, waste disposal, disaster control, and school management. The voluntary competences the city can employ to drive the energy transition are the management of road transport infrastructure and public transport.

PARTICIPANTS

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CLIMATE GOALS



50%
Renewable Energy
by:
2030



95%
Emissions reduction
by:
2050



European Union

Through the city-owned energy utility and building stock, the municipality can have ambitious energy management goals. Policy measures can help guide other players in the city or metropolitan area toward sustainable action and discourage unsustainable practices.

STELLAR PROJECT

For over 20 years, energy and climate policies have been designed and implemented by actively involving citizens and other local players. Heidelberg has pioneered a city-citizen collaboration throughout the energy transition process.

The first steps consisted of analyzing emissions and redefining the municipality's internal organization to offer optimal working conditions with the creation of an environmental office along with the allocation of additional staff. In 1992, the city council adopted the first climate protection and energy concept prepared by IFEU: Heidelberg's energy and environmental institute. The climate protection concept covered energy management where it not only provided technical solutions, but also included an analysis of the obstacles and pathways for raising key players' awareness. Implementation of the concept was monitored through periodic CO₂ emission reports.

The energy transition process has been built jointly with key local players through roundtable discussions. The city has developed a truly participative approach with the energy and climate protection circle as its most emblematic symbol. The energy concept has led to the adoption of low energy standards for new municipal buildings that are stricter than national regulations and to low energy requirements for building plots sold by the municipality.

CITY OBJECTIVES FOR ENERGY ALLIES

Why would you like to participate in Energy Allies?

The City of Heidelberg seeks to learn from French and U.S. cities for the city's own climate protection strategy. The exchange of knowledge on practical experience successes and specific challenges in implementation can contribute to inspiration for future international projects and can help Heidelberg overcome current challenges. Heidelberg hopes to obtain information on different structures and strategies to reach a Paris Agreement equivalent in cities and intensify its cooperation with the United States. The discussion of approaches can lead to the implementation of additional projects that will empower and motivate citizens to participate in the energy transition.

What added value would you like to bring by participating in this project?

Heidelberg has 26 years of experience in climate protection projects, where these projects have involved citizens and a variety of stakeholders. The city has maintained ambitious climate goals and a strong SME network with robust experience in sustainable management. The network spans across active civil society members and numerous nongovernmental organizations, all of whom are regularly engaged in the work of the City of Heidelberg. Over the years, Heidelberg has built a [passive-house sustainable-city district: Bahnstadt](#), a model city developed with a masterplan for 100 percent climate protection in accordance with the Federal Ministry of the Environment, and has executed several additional climate protection pilot projects.

What would you be interested in learning from your peers in terms of local government-civil society partnerships for the energy transition?

Heidelberg is interested in learning more about additional ways to involve citizens and stakeholders to make sure their opinions are heard and valued. In addition, the city would like to explore climate protection projects, solar initiatives in the United States, and projects related to the SME industry.



FACT AND FIGURES

Population	159,914
Metropolitan Pop.	2,300,000
Land Area	109 km ² / 68 mi ²
Metropolitan Area	5,630 km ² / 3,498 mi ²
Population Density	418/km ² / 668/mi ²
GDP	\$9.4 billion / € 8 billion
Sectors of Economy	Finance , Education, Health



European Union