

Dortmund, Germany

Participatory energy transition – effective public relations for comprehensive climate action

Dortmund demonstrates that an engaging and strategic public relations (PR) campaign is essential for driving effective climate action. By following a participatory approach, Dortmund is demonstrating how a local government can encourage coordinated action within a socially and culturally diverse stakeholder environment. Dortmund's culturally appropriate stakeholder involvement strategy has successfully addressed urban societal challenges such as structural change, unemployment, and the integration of large migrant populations.

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Abstract

As the economic center of the Ruhr metropolitan region, Dortmund has a particular responsibility in addressing climate issues. Although Dortmund is best known for heavy industry and world-class soccer, it has brought forward a set of ambitious goals for climate change mitigation: 40 percent reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2020, and 80 percent by 2050 (based on 1990 levels). These targets can only be achieved through teamwork; the various energy sectors must cooperate in a joint-action framework. Thus, in addition to technological solutions, the city has strategically built its campaign on the ingenuity and sense of community of its citizens. This will allow Dortmund to most effectively pursue the German path of energy transition. The *Action Program of Climate Protection 2020* was passed in 2011 in Dortmund, and aggregates all current climate measures and policies under a single umbrella brand: *Klima ist heimspiel* – “climate is a home game”. By tapping into Dortmund's passion for soccer, the City is successfully encouraging its citizens, businesses, and institutions to take responsibility for their climate impacts at an unprecedented level. Subsequently, the campaign has received a national award for its innovative brand, creative format, and participatory character; all of which have encouraged other local governments to adopt strong public relations practices on climate action.



Population / Land area
572,087 / 280.71 km² (2012)

Municipal budget
\$ 2,773 million (2013)
(€ 1,998 million)

Local Economy
Services, logistics, ICT,
heavy industry

Role of city in the region
Largest administrative and
economic center within Europe's
biggest regional economy



Image: Stadt Dortmund / Stefanie Kleemann



Case Study – City of Dortmund

Facts and figures

- CO₂ reduction targets of 40 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 (based on a 1990 baseline).
- The power consumption of private homes has decreased in recent years.
- The yearly retrofit rate of homes is under 1.0 percent - Dortmund targets 2.5 percent by 2020.
- The public administration was able to reduce its energy demands by 20 percent, subsequently lowering its CO₂ emissions (adjusted for weather/based on 2008 levels).

Context and character of Dortmund

During the industrial age, Dortmund was an important city for coal and steel production, with over 15 coal mines located within its city limits. During the structural transition of the economy, the 127,000 mining jobs that existed in 1960 were reduced to 37,000 by 1994, leaving the city with significant challenges in terms of unemployment, the integration of minority groups who had relocated for work, and wealth distribution gaps. Today, the City of Dortmund is actively pursuing inclusive development strategies to help mitigate socio-economic inequalities, while exploring synergies between ambitious climate and development goals. Thus, new employment opportunities are growing in the third sector, which by now accounts for 73 percent of Dortmund's workforce; mostly in specialized services, technology, and science based companies.

These inclusive development strategies seek to enable all citizens to take part in shaping Dortmund's present and future. A significant aspect of this is providing immigrant groups with access to language, employment, and intercultural training. Approaches such as these help to galvanize Dortmund's team spirit and reduce income inequality. The latter is particularly true when such trainings are supported with information on sustainable, affordable, and equitable energy production and use. In this area, the city has discovered an immense potential for energy saving and efficiency. But these win-win solutions can only be achieved through active dialogue between government, industry, and citizens. Hence, Dortmund's climate campaign aims to create a "climate for climate protection".

Cultivating a participatory civil society

The City of Dortmund is acutely aware of the tremendous efforts required to engage all members of society under a comprehensive local climate campaign, as well as within the national energy transition project. However, the city is confident in the ability and desire of its citizens to work together and achieve these goals, as the participatory process and stakeholder involvement has a long history in Dortmund. To more effectively engage its citizens, the Mayor's Office formed a *Civil Society and Citizen Interests Unit*, specifically aimed at increasing communication between citizens and the City administration. In particular, the office focuses on integrating marginalized groups such as youth, immigrants, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender community.

Dialogue and engagement of members from all demographics is achieved through different thematic fora. Here Dortmund is able to communicate, negotiate and implement its efforts more openly, which then promotes increased transparency, social acceptance and support throughout the urban society. One of the most prominent fora is the *Climate Protection and Energy Efficiency Consultancy* (Konsultationskreis Energieeffizienz und Klimaschutz – kek), where strategic planning and project design occurs.

Operational set-up to steer a city's climate action comprehensively

kek was established to act as Dortmund's coordinative platform to ensure broad participation throughout the entire climate action process. It promotes efficient information flow between key stakeholders, the bundling of expert knowledge, and it enhances networking for streamlined implementation of the *Action Program of Climate Protection 2020*. kek is comprised of different departments of the municipal government, public utilities, the Chamber of Commerce, consumer rights organizations and qualified citizens. The consultation circle is led by the Lord Mayor of Dortmund, which ensures that stakeholder involvement in climate action activities is a chief priority.

Action Program of Climate Protection 2020

In collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, the City of Dortmund developed the Action Program of Climate Protection 2020 as an essential part of the City of Dortmund's energy transition implementation strategy. It is an integrated climate protection concept that fulfills the obligatory requirements laid out by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) in their Climate Change Bill – the first of its kind in Germany. Through the program, strategies for urban management are transferred into tangible actions and extended across the entire city. Starting in 2010, kek, along with the City of Dortmund, developed the agenda and engaged all relevant social, political and economic actors in the metropolitan area. The city knew that participation in the development process, as well as execution of the program, would be essential for achieving the desired social acceptance and market uptake of the implemented energy measures.

In 2011, the Action Program of Climate Protection 2020 was officially adopted. It is comprised of more than 50 measures structured within six fields of actions: mobility, establishment of an energy efficiency center, renewable energy and energy supply, community building and urban development, retrofitting for energy efficiency in buildings, and cross-structural cooperation. As of 2014, 18 of these measures have been concluded, and a further 34 measures are currently being implemented.

Energy transition in Germany – “Energiewende”

The term “Energiewende” refers to the nationwide German initiative for energy transition. The initiative was introduced in 2011 and describes the transformation from the existing energy system – based on conventional energy carriers that deplete unrenewable resources – to an energy supply that is renewable, sustainable, and affordable. In its first phase, the Energiewende is focused on the substitution and shutdown of all nuclear power plants in Germany by the year 2022. Thus, the energy transition can be described as the accelerated expansion of a highly optimized, renewable energy infrastructure, and in this regard, it is clear that Dortmund's efforts to reduce carbon emissions align with the national initiative.

Image: Stadt Dortmund / Stefanie Kleemann



Local master plan for energy transition

The City of Dortmund and kek collaborated on the master plan for urban energy transition. This holistic framework is a strategic tool that incorporates scientific knowledge, practical experience from the business and skilled trade sectors, and the know-how of individual citizens. The input from these diverse sectors supports political decision-making processes in developing the best possible ideas for new projects and partnerships. The aim is to collaboratively develop a civil society supported strategy that will shape the future of the city and create an open discourse for sustainable, resource efficient urban development. Projects designed in this framework receive additional publicity.

As evidenced by the comprehensive scope of its six work packages, Dortmund's energy transition master plan does not solely focus on energy:

- Energy and energy industry
- Resource efficiency
- Mobility
- Climate protection / Climate adaptation
- Securing skilled labor
- Public relations

The master plan is an important element of Dortmund's general economic development; the initiative behind efficient energy transition brings an investment focus to renewable energy, energy management, information technology, micro and nano technology, as well as many other sectors. The master plan can be flexible to the needs of stakeholders, while at the same time responds to practical needs for action. It develops perspectives, builds bridges, and provides integration and coordination amongst involved actors with the aim of creating understanding and transparency. These activities support the core goal of the energy transition, the reduction of CO₂ emissions. Dortmund's intermediate mitigation efforts are outlined in the *Action Program of Climate Protection 2020*, on which the master plan builds on and extends.



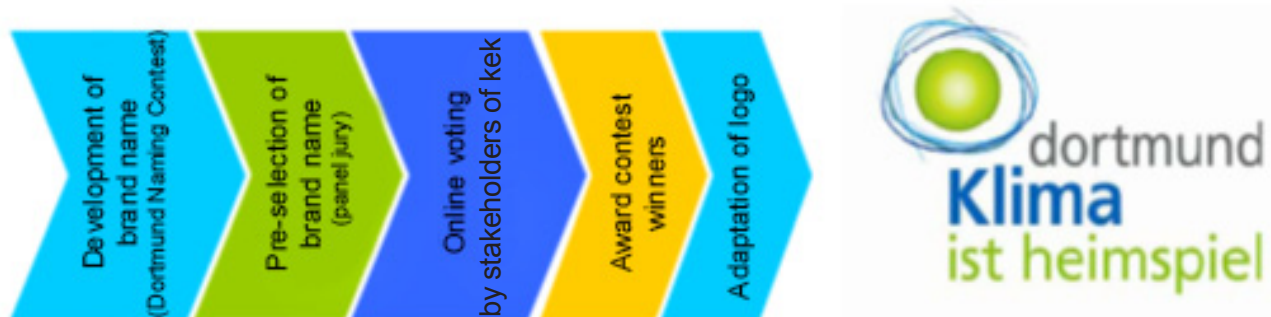
Image: Stadt Dortmund / Stefanie Kleemann

Build-up of a local climate campaign

Achieving the goals outlined in the Action Program of Climate Protection 2020 requires the broad and active participation of all of Dortmund's stakeholders, which in turn requires a heightened awareness of climate issues. Thus, a highly effective PR campaign is essential for calling a community to action. This requires the development of a corporate identity, and includes creating a corporate design. Dortmund understood that forming an identifiable, relatable brand, which would be present on all local climate activities, could augment its success in reducing its CO₂ emissions. The formulation of a brand, jointly developed with various stakeholders, demonstrates that climate protection is not only the responsibility of a few key actors; it is relevant and the responsibility of every citizen of Dortmund, regardless of their profession. To most effectively establish the idea of shared responsibility and teamwork, a brand with connotations to soccer was designed. Soccer was chosen because Dortmund is home to the world famous German Premier and Champions league team, Borussia Dortmund.

Regardless of socioeconomic or cultural background, the citizens of Dortmund strongly identify with their home team. Therefore, the "Klima ist heimspiel" brand embraces the positive emotions associated with the term "home game", and transfers them to climate activities. Furthermore, "home" is also linked with domestic energy efficiency measures such as using LED lights, insulating walls or cooking with a top on pots, while "home game" highlights the fact that climate protection is a team effort.

Figure 1: Milestones of corporate design process in Dortmund



The "Klima ist heimspiel" brand encompasses all efforts, by all actors, in regard to climate action, and encourages synergies between stakeholder groups and activities. All activities – whether they are as large-scale as city initiated energy transition policies, climate protection regulations initiated from the state level, or activities organized by a local community organization – fit and work together under the same brand.



Image: Stadt Dortmund

Kick-off the public relations on climate

Dortmund's "Klima ist heimspiel" campaign was unveiled through a Climate Action Day. The city government, along with numerous local institutions, companies and clubs, organized a varied program of activities to show that Dortmund's climate campaign is a team effort. The introduction of the brand kicked-off with visual teasers (e.g. posters, post-cards, stickers for envelopes, chalk stencils on pavement, etc.) throughout the city center. A symbolic Climate Action Day was organized to showcase existing initiatives of the state and local climate actors, whose actions and advice on mobility, sustainable consumption, climate change adaptation, renewable energy, and energy efficiency was illustrated at several stations throughout the city center. The focus of the event was on interaction with citizens, so as to demonstrate the diversity of climate mitigation and adaptation practices, bring citizens into direct contact with local initiatives, and stimulate thinking on how they can actively participate. This approach was emphasized through the engaging set-up of the climate parade, which operated under the motto: Discover! Learn! Try! (see highlights below).



Image: TriAss / Klaus Voit

Mobility: Bicycle parkour course

To illustrate that mobility comes in all shapes and sizes, a bicycle obstacle course was built to bring the mobility discussion to the forefront, and to showcase new technologies in mobility (from bicycles to buses). At this station, participants could test out different types of bicycles, including E-bicycles and bicycles made from bamboo! DSW21, Dortmund's public transportation company, also provided technical information related to their new hybrid bus line.



Image: TriAss / Klaus Voit

Climate and energy:

Hands on activities, such as experiments from KITZ.do, an organization that focuses on teaching children about science, brought information on climate change to schools, community groups and interested children. A pedal powered film was provided by Chaostreff Dortmund e.V., a local computer club. For the screening, participants powered a projector with their own legs, and enjoyed a movie related to climate and energy!



Image: TriAss / Klaus Voit

Sustainable consumption:

Regional markets providing products from producers in the area helped to solidify the sense of community in the region, as well as support local business. The Hansaplatz market is a place where consumers and producers can interact and learn from one another.



Image: Stadt Dortmund

Climate adaptation:

Climate change poses a challenge for the future of food systems, especially in urban areas. Access to nutritious food at affordable prices is largely dependent on complex supply chains that can be affected by climate change. Urban agriculture and gardening reduces Dortmund's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. By growing food in a yard, on a rooftop, or on a balcony, Dortmund's citizens can improve food security and create a more resilient city.

Renewable energy:

Have you ever wondered how the wind and sun are converted into energy for a computer? At this stand, community members learned about energy transition and the future of renewable energy production. The exhibit demonstrated the size of a wind turbine by creating a scale-model made of grass in the Friedenplatz square. Participants could also educate themselves about solar panels by seeing photovoltaic panels up close, and learning how they produce energy!



Image: TriAss / Klaus Voit

Energy efficient construction:

At the Berswordt-Halle, many different companies showcased the latest technologies in energy efficient construction and retrofitting. Individualized energy consultations were provided to those interested in energy saving retrofits. Additionally, an exhibition titled “Discover your efficiency – innovative heating technologies” took place in the DEW21 customer center.



Image: TriAss / Klaus Voit

Replicating and adapting ideas

In order to motivate Dortmund's citizens to protect the climate, the “Klima ist heimspiel” logo needed to be associated with a well-known component of social marketing: the pledge. The German City of Karlsruhe developed a “Climate Treaty”, which after local consultation, was modified to be used in Dortmund. One does not need to reinvent the wheel for every project; if a method has proven successful in other cities, adapting it for use on local projects can save a time and money!

A pocket full of climate protection – spreading the brand to multipliers

To publicize the umbrella brand “Klima ist heimspiel” within the administration, office managers and political committees were given climate friendly give-away prizes. This is a very simple but effective way to spread awareness of the umbrella brand and corporate identity, and provides a conversation piece to discuss energy transition in different contexts.

www.klima-ist-heimspiel.de as online base of activities

The internet is the fastest way to disseminate information and keep people up to date about happenings in town. As such, www.klima-ist-heimspiel.de is used as an online platform to inform users of events, browse information and play games. The online game CO₂ was developed by a private company, but was sold to the city for a symbolic amount of money as a gesture of goodwill. The game offers the user a playful approach to climate protection. Climate actions are presented in detail, with pictures and videos, and can be shared through the sending of e-cards. The event calendar, however, is the centerpiece of the page, where visitors can find dates and locations for events being hosted by climate actors in Dortmund.

Additionally, an online Advent calendar was created, with a piece of climate trivia hidden behind every door. Players that answered the questions correctly had the chance to win several prizes that were provided by external partner organizations and included things such as tickets for the natural history museum, free entry to the public pool, and more.

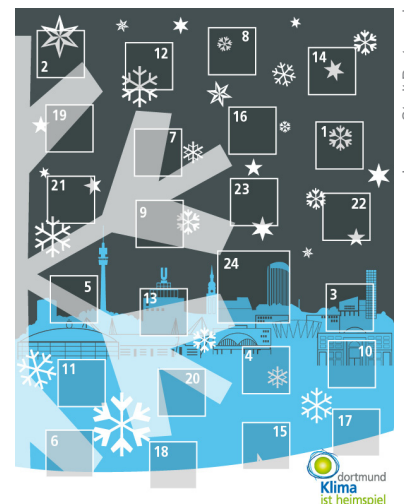


Image: Stadt Dortmund



Image: Stadt Dortmund / Joachim Müller

Citizen Service Center

The “dlze – Dienstleistungszentrum Energieeffizienz und Klimaschutz”, an independent advice center for the City of Dortmund, serves as a central public relations headquarters for “Klima ist heimspiel”, and also provides energy consultation services to citizens of Dortmund. Consultation is provided for topics relating to energy efficient construction and the renovation of buildings, renewable energy, power consumption and mobility.

MAI – Article in the employee newsletter

A two-page article in the Dortmund employee newspaper was published to create awareness amongst city employees about the “Klima ist heimspiel” initiative. Information related to the numerous activities and projects that are part of the initiative were outlined, and it showcased what city employees were doing to realize the project. Through this very intensely read newspaper, which reaches about 9,000 employees in Dortmund’s municipal government, a unified vision and goal were established. Moreover, it further emphasized the development of in-house solutions and human capacity within the city administration to support projects in the initiative through participation or leadership roles.

Lights out! Participation made easy

Thousands of cities, including Dortmund, shut off the lights to their most recognizable buildings and structures during the WWF Earth Hour to draw attention to environmental issues and energy conservation. Dortmund challenged many local building owners to join with thousands of cities across the world in order to help highlight this issue throughout the city. A total of 33 buildings and publicly lit places responded to the call. Several restaurants organized “lights off” parties with acoustic music and readings, or organized romantic candlelight dinners so as to show solidarity. The community of Dortmund showed how fun highlighting climate issues can be when organized creatively.

Energy consumption meters at the public library

Anybody with a valid library card in Dortmund can borrow a consumption meter to test which home appliances are the most energy intensive. This project, supported by the Dortmund Environmental Department, in cooperation with the state library system, aims to promote more energy conscious use of appliances. Homeowners may be surprised how much power appliances passively consume through standby mode; which is the standard mode for many espresso machines, stereos and wireless routers. An average German household spends 1000 Euro per year on electricity costs. Studies show that one third of this cost can be cut with little effort, and without sacrificing comfort. When armed with the knowledge of which appliances consume the most power, simple behavioral changes can both reduce CO₂ emissions and save money. The offer for borrowing energy meters was taken up so eagerly that the city had to order more devices and extend the project.

We are Climate Fans!

This hands-on initiative of Dortmund calls for the voluntary commitment of citizens to engage in climate friendly activities. Not only do participants win a better climate in Dortmund, they also have the chance to win one of many climate friendly prizes. In this contest, participants commit to climate friendly actions, such as using reusable shopping bags, or using a clothesline instead of an electric drier. Each one of these CO₂ reducing actions earns participants points, which are summed up and entered into a sweepstakes.



Image: Stadt Dortmund / Soeren Spoo / Dortmund-Agentur

5 out of 33 climate actions Dortmund's citizens can sign up to:

1. Heating/Cooling – I let my warm food cool down before putting it in the refrigerator! Warm food makes the refrigerator work overtime to bring the temperature back down to its programmed level. Energy can be saved and CO₂ emissions can be reduced.

2. Energy – I use energy saving light bulbs!

By changing light bulbs to energy-saving light bulbs, a household can reduce its energy use by up to 80 percent!

3. Consumption – I use reusable bottles for beverages and dairy products!

If all drinks in Germany were packaged in reusable bottles, 1.25 million tons of CO₂ could be saved; the same amount of CO₂ produced by 500,000 cars driving 15,000 km!

4. Mobility – I drive in a way that conserves petrol!

Good driving habits such as changing gears earlier and accelerating moderately can save over 260 Euros per year as well as 400 kilograms of CO₂.

5. Food – I buy fresh instead of frozen food!

Frozen foods are significantly more energy intensive to produce – frozen French fries use 25 times more CO₂ than French fries made from fresh potatoes!

Energy efficient communication in the city district – Unionviertel

Over 75 percent of Dortmund's buildings were built before 1979 and were thus not required to be thermally insulated. Not accounting for mobility, approximately 75 percent of household energy use is dedicated to heating rooms. Retrofitting old buildings for improved energy efficiency produces significant energy savings, and is thus one of the most efficient ways to reduce CO₂ emissions in Dortmund. The urban area of the Unionviertel district, home to about 10,000 citizens, has become a local model for disseminating communicative energy saving information.

The aim of this project within the climate campaign is to modernize a whole city district, placing an emphasis on energy efficiency. This is to be achieved through



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locally relevant events and an online platform, in combination with individualized consultations by energy consultants which are financed by the city.

What makes this project unique is the particular emphasis placed on the social and cultural elements of the city district, which has been part of a concerted effort to more effectively integrate citizens of all backgrounds. Packages of energy conserving measures are bundled and marketed in different ways based on the target groups.

Target group: Children of Kindergarten age

With the “mit Energie sparen” handbook, parents and teachers are given the resources to teach young children about saving energy through a hands-on detective game. Children are encouraged to explore the world around them by searching for the most energy consuming appliance in the room, documenting it, and sharing their findings with their peers. Activities such as these help make learning fun, while reinforcing good habits related to energy consumption.

Community based energy checks

Dortmund is also a model city for the “energy savings check” project, organized by Caritas, in cooperation with the Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt, UBA). The energy savings check offers free energy consultations to all people who receive unemployment benefits, social assistance, or housing benefits. An important success factor of this program is that the personalized audit of household power consumption is done by people that live in the same district and often have similar social and cultural backgrounds. The consultants, sometimes formerly unemployed community members, are trained by professionals and apply their knowledge afterwards in their district. This way the advice becomes much more relatable, and behavioral change is more likely. Apart from the energy check, the consultants also assist in installing energy saving devices such as a standby circuit breaker for the television, energy saving light bulbs, and power strips that can be switched on and off. Moreover, calculations are done together with the homeowners to guide the discussion not only towards possible ways to save energy, but to relate it to money and CO₂ emissions as well.



Image: Stadt Dortmund / Stefanie Kleemann

Budget and finances

Within the City of Dortmund administration, six people in the Environment Department are responsible for all climate related activities. In 2013 the “Klima ist heimspiel” initiative had a budget of approximately 40.000 Euro, of which 4.000 was dedicated to the development of the umbrella brand.

The financing of the campaign was made possible by the hard work of personnel within the city administration, who organized and implemented the project, and often volunteered their time to support it further. Moreover, open source and free resources were used as often as it was appropriate, reducing material costs even further. The main expenses of the project incurred in the production of advertising material, which was financed through the municipal budget.

Prizes and events such as the climate parade, the “We are Climate Fans!” contest, and the climate Advent calendars were funded in cooperation with internal and external sponsors.



Image: Stadt Dortmund / Stefanie Kleemann

Lessons learned

Ambitious climate targets can only be achieved through teamwork. The CO₂ emissions reduction target of – 40 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 – requires stakeholders from all sectors to cooperate intensively in a joint-action framework. In particular, increased communication between citizens and the City administration can be more effective.

A coordinated platform ensures broad internal and external participation throughout the entire climate action process. Dortmund established *kek* to meliorate the information flow between key stakeholders, bundle expert knowledge, build up transparency of implementing the Action Program of Climate Protection 2020, and developed a *Master Plan* for urban energy transition that is able to deliver and ensure comprehensive results in a complex and cross-cutting field of action. Both are strategic tools to assist the political and technical decision-making processes.

An effective climate change mitigation campaign requires the development of a corporate identity. Dortmund understood that forming an identifiable, relatable brand is essential for success in reducing its CO₂ emissions. The formulation of a brand should be jointly developed with various stakeholders to increase ownership and identification.

Don't reinvent the wheel. Dortmund identified and adapted methods that have proven successful in other cities, and saved time and money by doing so.

Add emotional appeal to climate action. By tapping into Dortmund's passion for soccer, the City is successfully encouraged its citizens, businesses and institutions to take responsibility for their climate impacts. Regardless of socio-economic or cultural background, Dortmund's citizens strongly identify with their home team. Therefore, the "Klima ist heimspiel" brand embraces the positive emotions associated with soccer, and proactively transfers them to climate activities.

A localized model for disseminating communicative energy saving information is very effective. By acknowledging the social and cultural elements of the city, and addressing potential language barriers, climate action in Dortmund was able to reach out to a greater percentage of the population. Moreover, Dortmund shows that the involvement of community members in the provision of advice makes guidance much more authentic and behavioral change more likely.

Focus on fuel poverty. The City's inclusive development strategy that seeks to enable all citizens to take part in climate mitigation and adaptation helps to galvanize Dortmund's team spirit and at the same time reduce income inequality. The latter is particularly true when respective efforts are supported with information on sustainable, affordable and equitable energy production and use. In this area, Dortmund has discovered an immense potential for energy saving and efficiency.

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Replication

Successful energy transition and climate protection is not only about securing sustainable energy sources and reducing carbon emissions; it is also about sourcing regional energy in a way that creates jobs locally, and that is affordable and available to all. The success of Dortmund's work on climate is based on its participatory character. By engaging all members of their community, Dortmund's energy transition efforts are more openly communicated, negotiated and implemented, which then promotes increased transparency, acceptance and support throughout all sectors of the city.

Thus, a city looking to replicate Dortmund's success would be advised to implement a similarly inclusive, participatory framework for strong public relations practices on climate action. This success could be further replicated by following Dortmund's example in aligning efforts to mitigate climate change with State and Federal State initiatives. Moreover, being part of networks that encourages political commitments can help to facilitate success; For example Dortmund is signatory of the *Covenant of Mayors*.

The Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources on their territories. By their commitment, Covenant signatories aim to meet and exceed the European Union 20% CO₂ reduction objective by 2020. www.eumayors.eu



Stadt Dortmund



State Chancellery of
North Rhine-Westphalia



The cCR is the leading global reporting platform of local climate action. It enables cities and regions to demonstrate their power and potential to reduce climate risks and move towards global low-emissions and climate resilient development through the reporting of energy and climate commitments, greenhouse gas emissions as well as mitigation and adaptation actions. www.carbonn.org



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