



# CLIMATE ALLIANCE

DISCOVER YOUR  
NETWORK FOR MUNICIPAL  
CLIMATE ACTION!

REVIEW AND OUTLOOK  
2023 | 2024

# IMPRINT

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Climate Alliance

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Die Mitspieler | [mitspieler.at](https://mitspieler.at)

Klima-Bündnis der europäischen Städte mit indigenen Völkern der Regenwälder |

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# FOREWORD

**Once a year in Germany, a jury selects a word of the year. For 2023, it was ‘crisis mode’. It expresses the fact that the state of emergency has become a permanent condition.**

The overlapping global challenges and their domestic political consequences are unsettling people the world over. They are leading to polarisation, which we are also feeling on a municipal level. Climate action is increasingly being cast as party politics. In crisis mode, our view narrows and our focus turns to tasks that must be tackled in the short term. The result is a lack of openness to long-term perspectives and innovations. This is undoubtedly a trying time for actors, municipal and otherwise, who are committed to achieving fair living conditions, preserving the natural foundations of life and overcoming all forms of discrimination.

All the while, weather extremes continue to become more common worldwide. Last year was (once again) declared the warmest year ever recorded globally according to the EU’s climate change service Copernicus. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) tells us that October 2023 was not only the warmest since

records began, but also the warmest in the last 125,000 years. In Canada, the 2023 forest fire season was the most intense in history by area. As of 6 October, 6,551 fires had burnt 184,961 square kilometres, around 5% of Canada’s total forest. Europe and other parts of the world also experienced extreme events with fatalities and major damage to infrastructure.

Amazonia was no exception: the area and its people have been hit hard by a prolonged drought and other effects of the climate crisis. Our indigenous partners, however, are also increasingly finding themselves confronted with physical violence. Many were murdered in 2023. With the support of our members, Climate Alliance is trying to offer a helping hand. The 30 year partnership between Climate Alliance Austria and the Rio Negro is a strong sign of this commitment.

Here in Europe, the Climate Star was, once again, a counter-model to widespread helplessness. The

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**OCTOBER  
2023**

**WAS THE WARMEST OCTOBER  
IN THE LAST**

**125,000  
YEARS**

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2023 edition honoured exemplary projects and strategies that are being implemented locally and motivating others to follow suit. Inspiring examples could also be seen at the Climate Alliance International Conference (CAIC) in Modena. The event, which we organised with the City of Modena, our new member AESS (Energy Agency of the City of Modena) and the Energy Cities network, was a great success! We look forward to the next edition of the Climate Star and our CAIC in 2024! Last year also brought some changes for our association. The newly founded Climate Alliance Services limited liability company began its work. Through it, we hope many new opportunities for our members will be developed. And after almost 10 years, Tine Heyse of the City of Ghent stepped down from the Climate Alliance board to focus on her municipal duties and her local elections before she ends her municipal work in 2024. We will greatly miss her tireless commitment to the network and her positive energy.

**As Climate Alliance President and on behalf of the entire Executive Board, I would like to thank all members and the staff at the offices in Frankfurt and Brussels as well as in the national coordination teams across Europe for their continued motivation and commitment.**



**ANDREAS WOLTER**  
Climate Alliance President and  
Mayor of Cologne (DE)

# AN ALLIANCE FOR THE CLIMATE

Only together can we rise to the challenge that is the climate crisis. It is up to all of us, as individuals and as communities. Climate Alliance unites – cities, neighbourhoods and people!

# EUROPEAN MUNICIPALITIES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES – TAKING LOCAL ACTION ON THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CRISIS

**Climate Alliance member municipalities have been acting in partnership with indigenous rainforest peoples for the benefit of the global climate for more than 30 years now. With nearly 2,000 members spread across more than 25 countries, Climate Alliance is the largest European city network dedicated to fair and comprehensive climate action. In answering the question of how mitigation of and adaptation to the climate crisis should be practised in our towns and cities, we pair local action with global responsibility.**

## Together for ambitious municipal climate action

Each of the member towns and cities has passed a local resolution on membership with which they embrace the association's goals. These are:

- To strive for a 95% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 compared to the 1990 levels, in line with the IPCC recommendations
- To implement effective and comprehensive climate action in accordance with Climate Alliance principles
- To promote climate justice together with indigenous peoples by supporting their rights, protecting biodiversity and abstaining from the use of unsustainably managed timber



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**1975\***  
MEMBERS FROM

**26**  
COUNTRIES

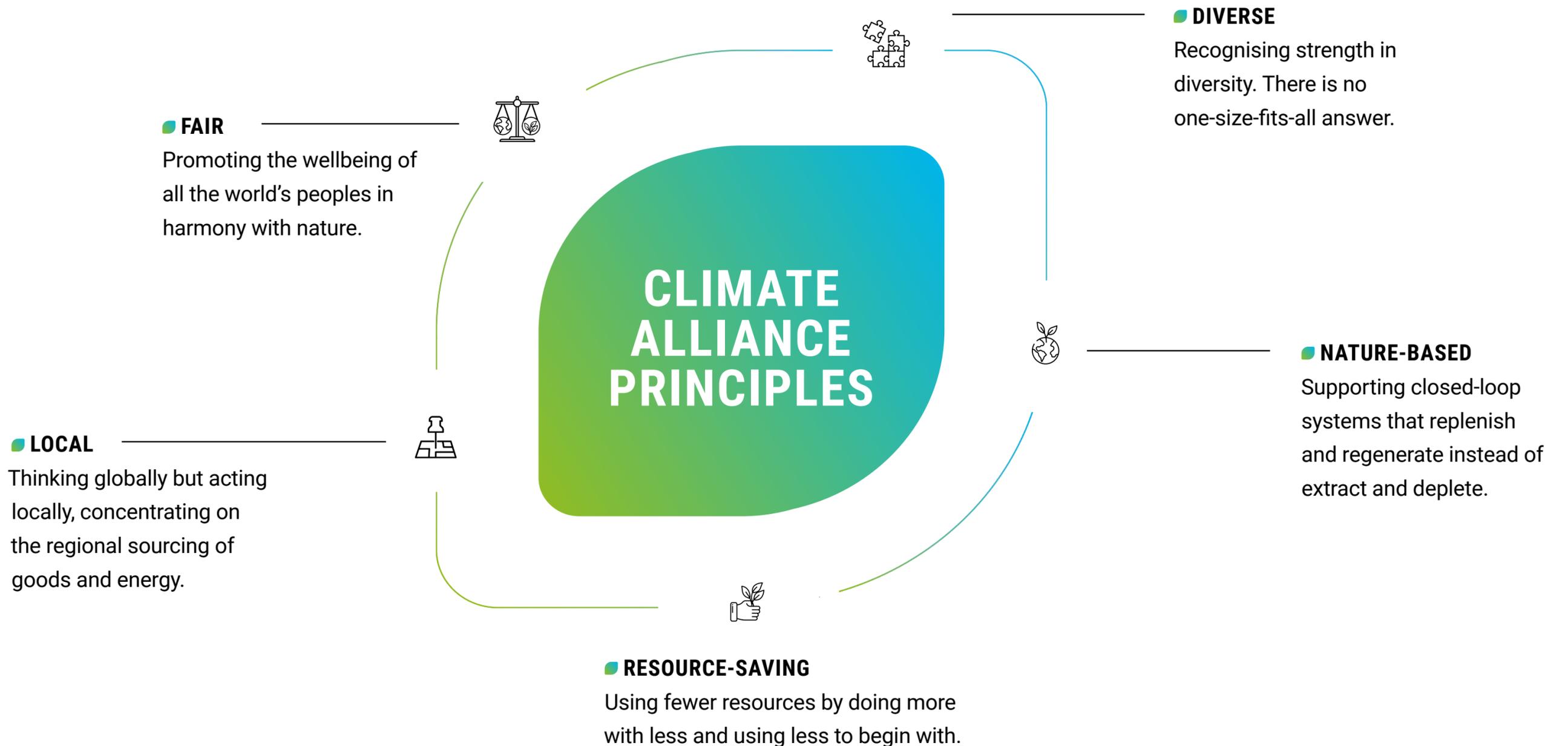
\* AS OF THE END OF 2023

With the Climate Alliance Member Charter, member municipalities receive concrete recommendations for action – from climate neutrality to 100% renewable energies to the introduction of carbon pricing. The aim is to encourage ambitious climate action on the local level and drive just transformation together.

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CLIMATE\\_ALLIANCE\\_CHARTER](https://bit.ly/climate_alliance_charter)

# THE CLIMATE ALLIANCE PRINCIPLES

Climate Alliance stands for a comprehensive approach to climate action that is guided by certain principles. These serve as both a compass and a filter for local and regional governments to implement effective and sustainable climate action:



# STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Climate Alliance members come from across Europe and beyond! The network continued to grow in 2023:

**1975**  
MEMBERS

**26**  
COUNTRIES

**39**

NEW MEMBERS  
JOINED OUR  
NETWORK...

... IN  
**2023**

CH BUCHS VAL DE BAGNES
ES GRAN CANARIA
HU PÁPATESZÉR
RO ALEA

AT DESSELBRUNN GNADENWALD HAIMING PINSDORF ST. GOTTHARD IM MÜHLKREIS ST. STEFAN IM GAILTAL TARSDORF	AT FRAUENTAL AN DER LASSNITZ GUTENBERG-STENZENGREITH INNSBRUCK SCHLÜSSLBERG STANZ BEI LANDECK STEINBACH AM ATTERSEE THIERSEE	MAUTHAUSEN
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DE BIEBERTAL KATHOLISCHE JUGENDAGENTUR KUPPENHEIM LANDKREIS HEILBRONN MEINE SCHÖMBERG TEMPLIN	DE BROHLTAL KATHOLISCHE JUGENDAGENTUR LANDKREIS BAD KISSINGEN LANDKEIS LÜNEBURG MÜNNERSTADT SCHWEINFURT USLAR	EINBECK KREFELD LANDKREIS BAD KISSINGEN LANDKEIS LÜNEBURG NIEDERKRÜCHTEN SYKE WEIDEN I.D. OPF.
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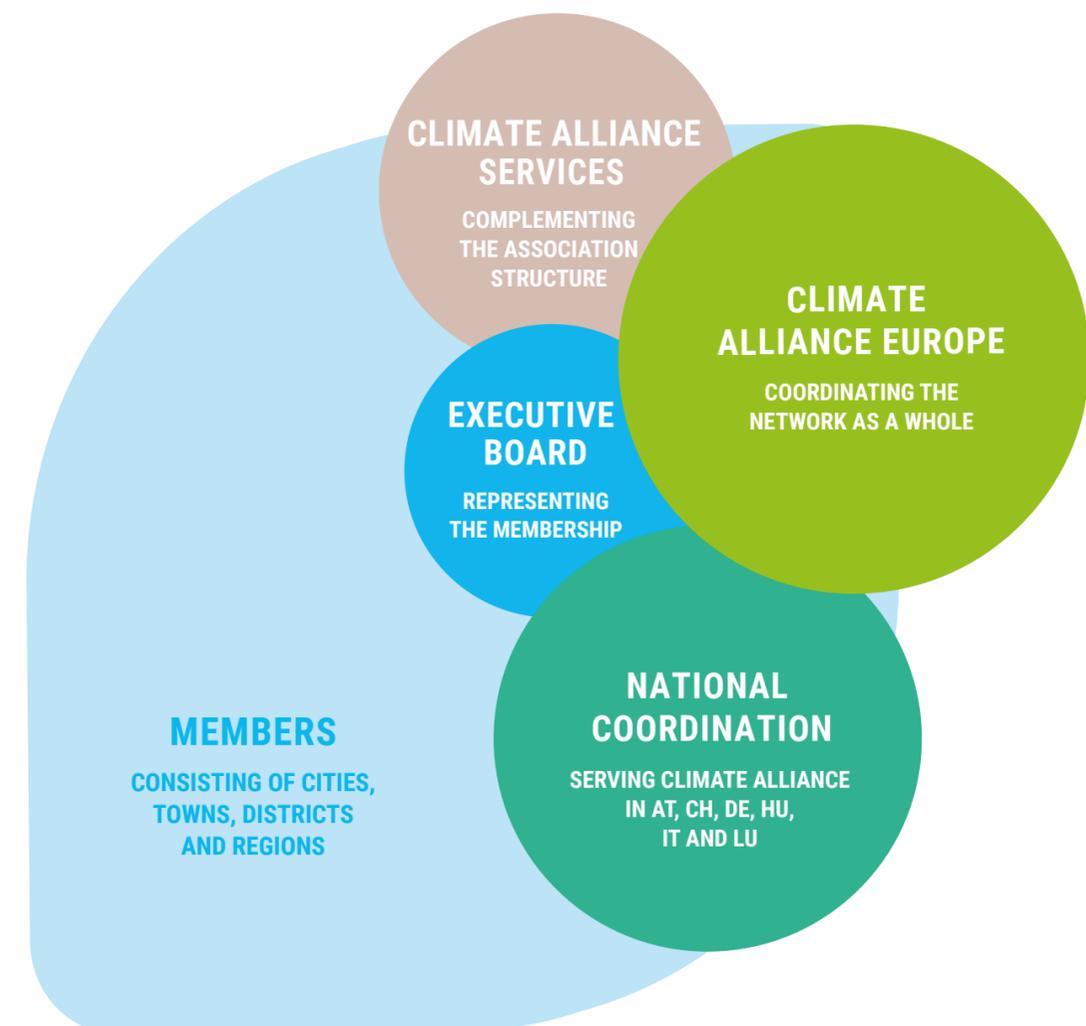
LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CA-NETWORK](https://bit.ly/ca-network)

# NETWORK STRUCTURE

Climate Alliance's members elect an executive board, responsible for the network's strategic direction, from among their ranks. The offices of Climate Alliance Europe manage the network at the European level and carry out numerous activities including projects and campaigns both for and with members across Europe. In Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, Hungary, Italy and Switzerland, members are additionally supported by a national coordination team.

## Climate Alliance Services

Climate Alliance's limited liability company, Climate Alliance Services, was founded in 2022 as a complement to the existing association structure. Climate Alliance Services strengthens the entire network and enables the further development of network offerings for members fostering increased independence from third-party funding. The limited liability company officially began its work at the start of 2023 with two key tools, the ESG Cockpit and the Climate Action Planner (Klimaschutz-Planer). As of 2024, the successful CITY CYCLING campaign along with the accompanying RADar! reporting platform and the RiDE portal for municipal cycle traffic planning will also be transferred to Climate Alliance Services.



# CLIMATE ALLIANCE EUROPE EXECUTIVE BOARD



**ANDREAS WOLTER | President**  
Mayor of the City of Cologne,  
Germany



**RAINER HANDLFINGER |  
Board Treasurer**  
Mayor of the Ober-Grafendorf,  
Austria



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Executive for Environment, Agriculture  
& Sustainable Mobility for the City of  
Modena, Italy



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**SIMONE RASKOB | Board Member**  
Deputy Mayor for Environment,  
Transport & Sport of the City of  
Essen, Germany



**EVA SCHOBESBERGER |  
Board Member**  
Councillor for the City of Linz, Austria

# THE TEAM BEHIND CLIMATE ALLIANCE EUROPE

The Climate Alliance European Secretariat is based in two locations with the headquarters in Frankfurt am Main (DE) and a second office in Brussels (BE). The office in Frankfurt also serves as the national coordination office for Climate Alliance Germany.

**THOMAS  
BROSE**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**FRANKFURT\***

**62**  
EMPLOYEES

**39.7**  
FULL-TIME POSITIONS

**BRUSSELS**

**15**  
EMPLOYEES

**9.0**  
FULL-TIME POSITIONS

\* Several employees work specifically on initiatives for Climate Alliance members in Germany.

# EUROPEAN CITIES ON THE PATH TO CLIMATE NEUTRALITY

## Climate Alliance members Mannheim (DE) and Guimarães (PT) focus on citizen participation

Without ambitious cities, the transformation towards a climate-neutral future will not work. Yet the involvement of citizens is just as important. As part of the EU's NetZeroCities initiative, which implements the EU's 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities mission, cities from all over Europe are being supported on their path to climate neutrality. Two Climate Alliance members, Mannheim (DE) and Guimarães (PT), are pilots in this initiative and are leading the way with their ambitious and innovative ideas.

The City of Mannheim is working together with the cities of Aachen and Münster on the German pilot project CoLAB (Committed to Local Climate Action Building). With this project, the trio is pursuing the goal of advancing the energy, heating and mobility transitions with the support of civil society and placing a special focus on consumption-based emissions. "Together, we want to find out how we can trigger behavioural changes and

break down entrenched consumption patterns – no easy task, as a city cannot typically exert any direct influence in this area," explains Agnes Schönfelder from Mannheim's Local Green Deal office. In addition, the trio of cities is also attempting to describe success indicators for behavioural changes in consumption and nutrition in order to make them more tangible and measurable.

As part of CoLAB, Mannheim wants to strengthen the individual responsibility and autonomy of its citizens. In particular, the city is planning to establish a platform to mobilise all urban stakeholders: iDEAL for Mannheim. The tool will serve as a point of contact, make local actions visible, introduce and connect stakeholders and analyse the effectiveness of measures. "With iDEAL for Mannheim, we want to make our citizens an offer to shape a green, clean and healthy Mannheim together with the city administration and other municipal stakeholders," Agnes Schönfelder



comments. Recently, Mannheim was also awarded the EU's Mission Label for its ambitious goals, which promises further support for the city's long-term plans.

The Portuguese city of Guimarães is taking an inclusive neighbourhood approach on its path to climate neutrality with its District C project. District C is set to be an area in which political strat-

**“With the District C project, we want to show that it takes more than just reducing emissions, we need to rethink urban structures.”**

GUIMARÃES TRANSITION TEAM

egies to achieve climate neutrality can be applied and tested. The project is focussing on several key topics including transport, the energy consumption of buildings, infrastructure, land use and waste management. “With the District C project, we want to show that it takes more than just reducing emissions, we need to rethink urban structures,” explains the Guimarães Transition Team.

To achieve this goal, the city is putting its citizens at the centre of its activities. “We want to promote shared responsibility for climate action through cooperation between citizens, industry and commerce as well as public institutions,” the Transition Team adds. The cornerstone of this endeavour is the Citizen Pact, a digital platform to promote the participation of all local stakeholders. This enables committed citizens to get involved, share their ideas and collaborate with the city administration. In addition, Guimarães is also planning to establish a citizens’ assembly through which people can contribute their visions

while building capacity within the community. With these interactive opportunities, Guimarães wants to ensure that everyone involved shares a common goal and has the same determination to achieve it. After all, the city council believes that this is the biggest challenge in local climate action. “The goal is simple: everyone should participate! We want to make sure that everyone feels part of the initiative and is involved in improving our city towards a more than green future,” the team comments.

The cities of Mannheim and Guimarães demonstrate how important the involvement of all local stakeholders is for an emission-free future. As pilot cities of the NetZeroCities initiative, the two cities are passing on their knowledge and experience to selected partner cities in a twinning programme designed by Climate Alliance. In spring 2024, other interested cities will have the opportunity to apply to become partner cities and thus promote the transformation at local level.

# MAKING CONNECTIONS

Our network's strength lies in the membership. Opportunities for exchange that transcend borders – both in person and online – are thus fundamental to our work. This is Climate Alliance!

# THE 2023 CLIMATE ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE | CAIC23

**‘Grafting Cities: Cultivating our common future’ was the motto of our 2023 annual conference. This year, we worked with several strong partners, organising the event along with Energy Cities and our members, the City of Modena (IT) and AESS (IT). Together, we packed three days with stimulating insights, networking opportunities and space for topic-based exchange. Over 400 registered participants from almost 40 countries filled the programme with life and made the event a unique experience!**

This year’s conference kicked off with the Climate Alliance General Assembly – a key date in our network calendar and a moment of coming together. In 2023, new members were elected to the Climate Alliance board, updates to the association’s key policy documents were adopted and two anniversaries were celebrated: 20 years of the international Green Footprints Campaign and 30 years of Climate Alliance Austria’s partnership with FOIRN, the umbrella organisation of indigenous organisations on the Rio Negro.

The second day revolved around questions of cultivating a common future, together. In an impres-

sive setting, participants filled the halls of the San Carlo church in Modena’s historical centre and listened to the experiences of municipal representatives from across Europe. The presentation of the Modena Declaration provided the true highlight of the morning: all those in attendance stood unified in support of the essential role of the municipal level in climate policy, of seeing the climate crisis as a social challenge and of the importance of decentralising the energy system – all strong messages for more climate action! Further on in the programme, participants had the opportunity to attend one of four Climate Alliance workshops:



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**Rewriting the adaptation narrative.** Together, participants developed solutions for Modena’s climate adaptation challenges such as extreme heat waves and flooding.

**Shaping our built environment.** Whether energy efficiency, communication or urban planning projects, municipal representatives were able to bring challenges from their everyday lives to this workshop and look for solutions together.

**Municipal solutions for energy poverty.** This pressing issue requires effective solutions. Two such approaches were presented in this work-

shop: increasing energy efficiency and building energy communities.

**Real answers – future options.** A wide range of measures were discussed in this workshop, from CO<sub>2</sub> pricing in local procurement and Climate Alliance’s climate fund supporting real climate responsibility to green hydrogen and its associated challenges.

The conference was rounded off on its third and final day with the Learn & Share event, a space in which interested participants could present their own projects and where Climate Alliance also presented many of its offerings. Topics ranged from energy communities, adaptation measures and nature-based solutions to energy-efficient buildings, attention-grabbing campaigns for citizen involvement and city partnerships in support of climate action.



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LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CAIC23](https://bit.ly/caic23)

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE WORKING GROUPS

**The network's European-level working groups are a further opportunity for members to learn from each other and exchange ideas. The groups are organised together with the members and are open to all Climate Alliance cities and towns.**

## ■ Adaptation

Whether heat island or flood risk, cities and towns must increasingly adapt to the advancing climate crisis with smart and effective solutions. The working group on adaptation has been providing a platform to discuss both options for action and municipal experiences since 2015. Members of the working group have the opportunity to take part in exciting events and are kept up to date with news from the field of climate adaptation.

**Interested in joining the working group on adaptation?** Contact the adaptation team at [adaptation@climatealliance.org](mailto:adaptation@climatealliance.org).

## ■ Financing

How can cities and towns finance climate protection and related measures? This is a question that concerns many of our members. The Climate Alliance working group on financing offers opportunities to discuss solutions and innovative financial instruments. The group also addresses the current challenges and needs of its members.

**Interested in joining the working group on financing?** Contact the financing team at [financing@climatealliance.org](mailto:financing@climatealliance.org).

### ■ CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring

The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is the central demand when it comes to climate protection. In this context, the working group on CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring is currently discussing the significance of a CO<sub>2</sub> price in public procurement as a means of promoting products and services with low emissions. The DeCarb-Pro project, which emerged from working group exchanges in 2023 and is now funded by Interreg Northwest Europe, is developing a strategic approach to CO<sub>2</sub> pricing in municipalities.

**Interested in joining the working group on CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring?** Contact Miguel Morcillo at [m.morcillo@climatealliance.org](mailto:m.morcillo@climatealliance.org).

### ■ Buildings

Our buildings in Europe are responsible for a large proportion of our total emissions. The path to a sustainable building stock is the subject of numerous discussions in the working group on buildings. The focus here is on increasing the renovation rate, energy-efficient refurbishment and effective communication with citizens. Members are regularly invited to exciting events and kept up to date with the latest news by email.

**Interested in joining the working group on buildings?** Contact the buildings team at [buildings@climatealliance.org](mailto:buildings@climatealliance.org).

### ■ EU policy

The voice of the local level is often not well heard in the formulation of EU policy. Climate Alliance wants to change this. The new working group on EU policy kicked-off at the end of 2023. By joining the working group, members get the chance to exchange ideas and discuss their demands of the EU level. The group targets municipal climate practitioners with a strong interest in the EU policies that they wish to influence and covers topics such as energy efficiency, energy performance of buildings, energy communities and energy poverty.

**Interested in joining the working group on EU policy?** Contact Noelani Dubeta at [n.dubeta@climatealliance.org](mailto:n.dubeta@climatealliance.org).

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CA-WORKING-GROUPS](https://bit.ly/ca-working-groups)

# NATIONAL ENERGY AND CLIMATE PLANS – CLIMATE ALLIANCE IN ACTION

**A look at the process in Germany, Austria and Luxembourg**

Without thorough and inclusive multi-level governance planning there is little chance the EU can reach climate neutrality. Close alignment between national policies and the recommendations of local authorities is a must. One key way to foster such alignment is through collaboration on the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs).

Via the NECPs, Member States are required to lay out key reforms on issues such as energy efficiency, renewables and emissions reductions. Collectively, the NECPs demonstrate whether the EU is on track to meet its targets by 2030. The second NECP review took place in 2023 and importantly, Member States were required to provide a way for local authorities to participate



in the revision process. Unfortunately, Climate Alliance found that information was often withheld despite requests to engage, including the draft NECPs themselves. National governments often provided impossibly tight timeframes for

comment and, in more than one instance, opportunities or processes to contribute to this first of two NECP drafting rounds had not been established even weeks before the EU's 30 June 2023 deadline.



© NORA LEONIE/UNSPLASH

In Germany, for example, there was no consultation process open to the public to have even a look at the draft NECP before the June deadline. Climate Alliance reached out to the responsible German Ministry and was told there would be no process for engagement until the beginning of 2024. This is untenable, especially as the Ministry of Economic Affairs promised future involvement of stakeholders after their 2019 NECP was submitted without a consultation process. Climate Alliance Germany has teamed up with a group of German NGOs also frustrated by situation and co-drafted a letter demanding that a public consultation process be provided in compliance with EU law.

In Austria, the Environment Ministry's 'Nationale Klimaschutz Komitee' ran a consultation of sorts, open to a small group of stakeholders by invitation only. Climate Alliance Austria took part to learn about the main challenges of meeting the targets in the draft as well as to ask questions and give statements on what was possible.

A timeline of next steps was also provided. However, pressure from a political party taking the position that reducing emissions may harm economic growth could hamper progress and eventually lead to a watering down of Austria’s NECP.

Luxembourg organised an early public consultation platform and both Climate Alliance Luxembourg as well as Climate Alliance members there were involved. Luxembourg’s draft NECP was presented at a meeting in April, but the short presentation left no room for questions or debate – instead, stakeholders were asked to send in any feedback without guidance on format or structure. A Multilevel Climate and Energy Dialogue was set up for information sharing and while a couple of meetings were held, the process was disorganised with little space for meaningful discussion or follow up.

A report by NGOs confirmed “widespread inaction on the part of Member States – with 14 out of 23 EU Member States surveyed failing to even

start any form of public consultation on NECPs.” This is not acceptable: local authorities and stakeholders must be able to participate meaningfully in NECP development through early consultation. Removal of the national obstacles that prevent their participation is the only way to ensure that the NECPs reflect local realities and are in full alignment with local climate, energy and resiliency efforts and needs for meaningful discussion or follow-up.

The first draft update of all NECPs was due by 30 June 2023. By late 2023, the European Commission had already reviewed and commented on Member States’ drafts to the extent that they were available and a final revision will be due by 30 June 2024. Climate Alliance calls upon Member States to organise fair and early public participation processes on the revision of the NECPs and further urges Member States to make the drafts fully available so that there can be honest deliberation on policies that will affect the local level.

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**14 OUT  
OF 23**

**MEMBER STATES  
SURVEYED FAILING  
TO EVEN START ANY  
FORM OF PUBLIC  
CONSULTATION ON  
NECPs**

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# ADVOCATING FOR THE LOCAL LEVEL

Municipalities are responsible for implementing climate and energy policies at the local level. Their expertise and concrete solutions can thus be neither overstated nor overlooked. Climate Alliance works hard to make their voices heard!

# COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES: A WIN-WIN FOR ALL

**When policy makers take advantage of inclusive processes to glean value from local authority expertise, such as through multi-level collaboration in the design of policy, everyone wins. Through position papers and letters as well as collaboration with coalitions and participation in European and international forums, Climate Alliance Europe continued voicing the interests of the local level throughout 2023, both in European policy circles and on the international stage.**

The year proved pivotal in terms of policy supporting the implementation of the European Green Deal – the EU’s overarching plan to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 and to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. Throughout 2023, major pieces of EU legislation were negotiated under the Fit for 55 package and Climate Alliance took a stand on issues of importance to local authorities such as energy savings, buildings and energy poverty. Climate Alliance also paid special attention to the National Energy and Climate Plans and the EU’s Governance Regulation.

Climate Alliance advocated for a stronger emphasis on municipalities in the Governance Regulation on the Energy Union and Climate Action, urging the barriers and opportunities they face

to be better taken into account in the development of European legislative and supportive frameworks. We called for adherence to the regulation directing Member States to provide a platform for local authorities to give feedback and input on climate and energy policy, drawing attention to weak and even non-existent options for public participation in the development of draft National Energy and Climate Plans in Germany, Luxembourg and Austria.

Climate Alliance supported the development of briefings by the Coalition for Energy Savings for more ambitious, binding energy efficiency targets in the Energy Efficiency Directive, also pointing to the ability of deep energy renovation to alleviate energy poverty. We joined forces with the Energy Power Coalition in an effort to

strengthen language in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive on the role of energy communities in producing their own, decentralised renewable energy. At the same time, we kept abreast of one-stop shop policy developments in both pieces of legislation and continued to inform Member States of the critical role local authorities have to play in one-stop shop design and deployment.

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CA-ADVOCACY](https://bit.ly/ca-advocacy)

# UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2023

As 2023 drew to a close, the UN Climate Summit in Dubai, COP28, dominated the international climate policy scene. In the end, COP28's hard-won final agreement gave some cause for optimism with the global community agreeing, for the first time ever, to transition away from fossil fuels while also making a commitment to the importance of equity and justice in the process – no small feat for a COP chaired by the head of an oil company.



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Climate Alliance was on the ground in Dubai with a small delegation to represent the association in official side events as well as with a dedicated Climate Alliance stand at the expo. Andreas Wolter, Climate Alliance President and Mayor of Cologne (DE) represented the network at the COP28 Local Climate Action Summit, which brought hundreds of local and national

decision-makers together to highlight the role of the local level in climate policy. Climate Alliance Europe, as part of the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency, also supported the CHAMP Initiative, urging national governments to take municipal actors into account in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). And of course, no COP would

be complete without the official presentation of the Green Footprint campaign results to the UNFCCC: celebrating its 20th anniversary, the campaign announced reaching some 3 million children from 42 countries over the last two decades!

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CLIMATE-ALLIANCE-COP28](https://bit.ly/climate-alliance-cop28)



# THE COVENANT OF MAYORS ON CLIMATE & ENERGY – EUROPE

Over the course of 2023, Climate Alliance continued to help steer the EU's Covenant of Mayors initiative, thereby advocating for multi-level governance that supports cities and towns weighing in on Europe's legislative developments. In particular, last year saw increased momentum for the support of local level adaptation efforts. Climate Alliance helped lead of the adaptation-focused Policy Support Facility, heading up the organisation of national adaptation workshops in twelve Member States and supporting 36 cities in receiving technical assistance for the implementation of adaptation measures.

The Covenant of Mayors Conference on 30 March was a highlight in the 2023 Covenant calendar, bringing together high-level representatives of EU institutions and mayors from cities and towns across Europe. The event emphasised how municipal responses to the energy crisis are setting an example for Europe's long-term efforts on energy and climate, as well as how the EU and municipal levels can work hand in hand to reach common objectives.

The Covenant Political Board, of which Climate Alliance board member Marc Serra Solé of the Province of Barcelona is a member, further advanced the topic of local authority involvement

in EU climate policy via direct dialogue with high-level EU officials. Talks were held with Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal Maroš Šefčovič and European Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson as well as the Directors General of Energy and of Regional Development, among others.

Climate Alliance's strong role in shaping the Covenant of Mayors both on the political and technical side, especially with regard to the topics of adaptation and energy poverty, helps ensure that EU policy frameworks are strongly informed by and supportive of the local level.

**"I know you mean business:  
you have much higher goals  
and climate targets than  
national governments."**

**MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ,  
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT  
FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SPEAKING ON THE ROLE OF  
LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

LEARN MORE AT  
[EU-MAYORS.EC.EUROPA.EU](https://eu-mayors.ec.europa.eu)

# KIDS ON THE MOVE IN THE CITY AND DISTRICT OF OSNABRÜCK (DE)!

**Children and teens are increasingly playing a key role in climate action. We must shape a sustainable and green future for and with them. But how can municipalities reach this target group? This is where Climate Alliance's Green Footprints campaign, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2023, comes into play. The district and the city of Osnabrück are showing how to successfully carry out the campaign at both the local and regional level.**



The city of Osnabrück started the Green Footprints campaign in 2017. Since 2018, the city and district have been carrying out the campaign together – and with great success. Having started with five daycare centres in 2017, they managed to involve a total of 48 educational institutions and 4,857 children by 2022. "The climate crisis concerns us all – whether older or very young, children in particular are affected. That's why we want to involve them as early as possible and provide them with knowledge about sustainability and climate action," comments Anna Kebschull, Municipal Councillor of the District of Osnabrück, on the motivation behind running the Green Footprints campaign. "We are convinced that climate education secures the future. That is why we are all the more happy that our offers are so well re-

ceived by institutions, children and parents," adds Osnabrück Mayor Katharina Pötter.

Since 2003, Climate Alliance has offered the Green Footprints campaign to municipalities across Europe. Children and teens at participating institutions collect so-called 'Green Footprints' with sustainable behaviours such as with car-free trips to school or by eating regional foods. At the end of the year, the collected miles are handed over to the UN Climate Change Secretariat at the Climate Change Conference in an effort to push decision-makers towards more concrete and ambitious climate action.

The footprint handover and thus the presentation of local efforts on an international level is a great

**"Successful educational work with children only works if the parents are also involved."**

**BIRGIT RADEMACHER, CAMPAIGN MANAGER FOR THE CITY OF OSNABRÜCK**

motivator for the city and district of Osnabrück. The campaign's simple and flexible implementation as well as the extensive materials Climate Alliance provides to participating municipalities also convinced the Osnabrück region. Another great advantage of the campaign is its potential to get parents involved. "Successful educational work with children only works if the parents are also involved. That's why we introduced parents' evenings," explains Birgit Rademacher, campaign manager for the city of Osnabrück. Verena Borgers from the Osnabrück District's education team adds, "For us, sustainable development education is a task in which both educational institutions and the family should be involved." The parents evenings are offered jointly by the district and the city. The topics discussed range from the energy transition to dealing with children's fears in the face of the climate crisis.

In all these activities, the district and the city cooperate at the administrative level and work is shared. The local authorities have been working together closely since 2012 as part of the master plan region programme and have since established corresponding structures. For the Green Footprints campaign, both the city and the district provide the facilities with the materials free of charge. Together, they thoroughly document the campaign results every year and organise a party for all participants. With around 200 children, last year's celebrations were a great success! The close, consistent cooperation with educational institutions participating in the Green Footprints campaign has not only strengthened ties to the city and the district, it has also improved cooperation between institutions. This facilitates lasting involvement of the teachers in the ambitious educational goals of the





Osnabrück region. The joint concept of the district and the city of Osnabrück is a best-practice example of how educational work can successfully advance municipal climate action.

The Green Footprints campaign is available as an instrument to all interested municipalities throughout Europe, and can again be used in 2024. As in the previous 20 years, Climate Alliance will continue to support municipalities and educational institutions in running the campaign with a wide range of materials and information as well as via direct consultation.

# RAISING AWARENESS

We must all tackle the climate crisis together. But what can we do? Our Climate Alliance campaigns are a way for municipalities to involve citizens in climate action and raise the awareness for a sustainable lifestyle.



# CITY CYCLING CYCLING FOR A BETTER CLIMATE



**More municipalities, more cyclists, and more kilometres cycled every year – the successful CITY CYCLING campaign continues to grow in popularity!**

The campaign idea is as simple as it is effective: municipalities invite citizens and local politicians to cycle and cover as many kilometres as possible by bike during a three-week period and thus set an example for more cycling, climate action and quality of life.

In 2023, the campaign broke several records:

- For the first time ever, **MORE THAN 1.1 MILLION PEOPLE** participated in CITY CYCLING.
- A total of **2,836 MUNICIPALITIES (FROM FIVE COUNTRIES)** took part in the 2023 campaign.
- Together, participants cycled **227 MILLION KILOMETERS**, thus saving **37,000 TONNES OF CO<sub>2</sub>** in comparison to travel by car.



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The winning municipalities were honoured at an award ceremony in Cologne (DE) in mid-December. The CITY CYCLING team organised the ceremony together with the City of Cologne, the Ministry of Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Zukunftsnetz Mobilität NRW network.

**"In many municipalities, there are still blind spots when it comes to cycling planning. This is precisely where the CITY CYCLING campaign and app come into play."**

**ANDRÉ MUNO, CITY CYCLING CAMPAIGN  
LEAD, CLIMATE ALLIANCE**

The CITY CYCLING campaign takes place annually from May to September; registrations for 2024 are open as of mid-March. Municipalities from across the world are invited to take part and promote cycling in their city or town! And with the RADar! reporting platform, the campaign can also be used to improve cycling infrastructure in a very concrete way with the help of the citizens.

**Want to learn more?** Contact the CITY CYCLING team at [info@city-cycling.org](mailto:info@city-cycling.org)!

**LESEN SIE MEHR UNTER  
[CITY-CYCLING.ORG](https://www.city-cycling.org)**

# GREEN FOOTPRINTS KIDS ON THE MOVE FOR CLIMATE ACTION



**The Green Footprints campaign has been teaching children from all over Europe about climate action and sustainability in a playful way for 20 years now!**

Together, children from participating kindergartens and daycare centers collect so-called green footprints for sustainable activities such as walking to school instead of travelling by car. In this way, they learn the importance of making climate-friendly choices. Local authorities serve as multipliers and coordinate the implementation of the campaign together with their educational institutions.

The year 2023 marked the 20th anniversary of the Green Footprints campaign. Since 2003, children from across Europe have been collecting green footprints, sending a clear signal to the world's decision-makers. Every year, Climate Alliance presents these green footprints to the UNFCCC Climate Change Secretariat at the annual UN Climate Change Conference, just as we did in Dubai (UAE) in 2023.

**"20 years of Green Footprints is a success story! We should all see the tireless commitment of the children as a challenge to do more. The big decisions for a future worth living must be made together, here and now."**

**THOMAS BROSE,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
CLIMATE ALLIANCE**



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To mark the anniversary, the campaign team has developed new offers for children, including the hands-on activity "Cozy Spaces and Not So Nice Places" for school routes and new learning materials on the effects of strawberry cultivation in Spain or the state of the forest in Germany.

Even after two decades, the campaign continues to enjoy increasing popularity.

- In 2023, a total of **252,746 CHILDREN FROM 1,653 INSTITUTIONS** collected **3,670,936 GREEN FOOTPRINTS** – a campaign record!
- Over the past two decades, the campaign has reached more than **3 MILLION CHILDREN** from **42 COUNTRIES** and collected **OVER 44 MILLION GREEN FOOTPRINTS**.

**Want to learn more?** Contact Claudia Schury at [c.schury@climatealliance.org](mailto:c.schury@climatealliance.org).



LEARN MORE AT  
[ZOOM-KIDSFORCLIMATE.EU](https://zoom-kidsforclimate.eu)

# ENERGY CARAVAN

## MOTIVATING CITIZENS FOR ENERGY RETROFITS



**The Energy Caravan is THE tool for municipalities to mobilise their citizens for energy-efficient retrofits. High consultation rates (25%) and renovations rates (by roughly 60% of those consulted) speak for themselves – the Energy Caravan scores with tangible results and tells positive stories. As a result, the campaign greatly strengthens acceptance of climate action measures at the local level!**

The campaign, managed by Climate Alliance and fesa e.V., turns the principle of traditional energy consulting on its head and brings qualified consultants into people's homes. The Energy Caravan follows a neighbourhood approach that municipal administrations can then replicate in further neighborhoods after learning how it is run. And the best thing about it? Thanks to this approach, the Energy Caravan works in every municipality – whether it's a large city or a rural town. This is also reflected in the 2023 activities.

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- The Energy Caravan can now look back on successful implementation in municipalities of all sizes – from Munich (DE) with **1,512,000 INHABITANTS** and Aachen (DE) with **252,000 INHABITANTS** to Riegel am Kaiserstuhl (DE) with **4,000 INHABITANTS**.
  - In **LUXEMBOURG**, the Energy Caravan campaign was launched outside of Germany for the first time in mid-2023 in **2 MUNICIPALITIES**: Strassen (LU) and Betzdorf (LU). Plans for **3 MORE** Energy Caravan municipalities are currently underway for 2024.
  - **FREIBURG IM BREISGAU (DE)** was presented as a pioneering municipality in the Covenant of Mayors network in 2023, where the Energy Caravan was able to shine with good results: more than **800 CONSULTATIONS** have been carried out in **8 EDITIONS** since 2019.
  - **FÜRTH (DE)** achieved a strong result for its first Energy Caravan: more than **180 CONSULTATIONS** were organised in the district of Vach. This result has prompted Dominik Wiehl, climate protection manager in Fürth, to organise another energy caravan in the district of Stadeln next year.
-



The Energy Caravan team intends to expand the campaign even further in future and has intensified its contacts with other stakeholders in order to examine the campaign's potential for replication in other European countries. The declared aim is to enable even more municipalities to carry out the campaign independently. Climate Alliance and fesa e.V. are providing the knowledge needed to do so and supporting participating municipalities during all campaign phases.

**Want to learn more?** Contact Jan Schwarz at [j.schwarz@climatealliance.org](mailto:j.schwarz@climatealliance.org).

READ MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/ENERGYCARAVAN](https://bit.ly/energycaravan)

# THE ENERGY CARAVAN COMES TO LUXEMBOURG

## THE MUNICIPALITY OF STRASSEN (LU) BRINGS ENERGY CONSULTATIONS TO ITS NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Like other EU countries, Luxembourg isn't hitting its climate targets in the building sector. The current renovation rate of 0.7 – 1% is significantly lower than the target of 3%. It quickly became clear to Climate Alliance Luxembourg that energy efficient retrofits must be promoted in a quick and efficient way. Since 2021, the team has been working to bring fesa e.V. and Climate Alliance's successful Energy Caravan campaign to Luxembourg. In May 2023, the first edition was carried out in the municipality of Strassen – with great success!**

"With the Energy Caravan, we can reach a broad public and raise awareness for energy efficient retrofits. The campaign allows for a systematic and sustainable approach, it can be replicated and in the long run, it allows for independent implementation by cities and towns of any size. These arguments convinced us of the Energy Caravan," explains Pol Straus, coordinator of Climate Alliance Luxembourg's Energy Caravan on the decision to run the campaign.

Together with Jan Schwarz of Climate Alliance and Brice Mertz of fesa e.V., the campaign con-

cept and the working materials were adapted to circumstances on the ground in Luxembourg but the core elements of the campaign remained the same: the Energy Caravan brings energy consultation to citizens' homes. "We have also retained the campaign's neighbourhood-centric approach, but there are many municipalities in Luxembourg with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants. That is why we have also made the target neighbourhoods smaller, around 100 – 250 households, all with high potential for energy efficient retrofits," adds Straus. The mayor then invites the residents of each target neighbourhood to the kick-off event,



**"The campaign allows for a systematic and sustainable approach, it can be replicated and in the long run, it allows for independent implementation by cities and towns of any size."**

**POL STRAUS, COORDINATOR  
OF CLIMATE ALLIANCE LUXEMBOURG'S  
ENERGY CARAVAN**

where the campaign is presented. Afterwards, so called climate teams go door to door and inform citizens about the possibilities for professional energy consultation offered by the Luxembourg energy agency, Klima-Agence. "Since the personnel capacities in municipalities are often limited, we have built on existing, mostly voluntary structures with the climate teams. The climate teams were established in Luxembourg's municipalities with the Climate Pact in 2013," explains Pol Straus. These teams then pass consultation requests from interested citizens on to the national energy agency Klima-Agence, which in turn schedules the individual consultations and informs interested citizens about funding opportunities for energy-efficient retrofit measures. In the municipality of Strassen, this innovative concept could then be put into practice for the first time. On 22 May 2023, the kick-off event took place with Mayor Nico Pundel. In the following weeks, the Strassen climate team took to the streets of the target neighbourhood, informing citizens about free energy consultation services. Around a quarter of the households approached decided to take advantage of the free consultation offer. This means that the very first Luxembourg edition of the Energy Caravan reached the



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reference value for a successful municipal implementation of the campaign.

Climate Alliance Luxembourg also remains convinced of the campaign's approach. The next Energy Caravans are already in the pipeline. The

success of the first Energy Caravan in Luxembourg underlines just how flexible the campaign concept is – with adaptations to national framework conditions, the Energy Caravan can travel from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, municipality to municipality and even country to country.

# ACTING ON THE LOCAL LEVEL

Cities and towns are the level of government closest to the people and it is they that translate both European and national guidelines into concrete action. Climate Alliance is involved in projects and initiatives to promote municipal climate action, both for and with its members!

# THE FUTURE IS NOW! THE 10TH CLIMATE STAR COMPETITION

In April 2023 the time had finally come – at a festive gala organised with the support of the Province of Lower Austria, Climate Alliance Lower Austria and Climate Alliance Europe officially honoured the winners of the Climate Star's 10th edition.



For the Climate Star's anniversary edition, local projects of exemplary character demonstrating sustainable solutions from across Europe were sought. How can we leave our children and grandchildren a world worth living in? How do we move from talk to action? How do we make our cities and towns more resilient? How do we secure a future worth living?

A total of 16 municipal projects illustrating the effectiveness of municipal climate action were recognised. From citizen participation to renewable energy projects and from sustainable mobility to creative offers for resource saving – the topics tackled by the winners were wide-ranging.

## WINNING PROJECTS OF THE 10TH CLIMATE STAR COMPETITION

- **Braunschweig (DE)**  
An energy cooperative for the energy transition
- **Bruck an der Leitha (AT)**  
The largest agri-photovoltaic plant in the country
- **Dachverband für Natur & Umweltschutz Südtirol (IT)**  
Tap water for all
- **KEM Stubaital (AT)**  
Becoming a climate frontrunner region
- **KLAR! Region Südliches Weinviertel (AT)**  
Modern green space management
- **Langau (AT)**  
Modern infrastructure with citizen participation
- **Kompetenznetz KlimaMobil (DE)**  
Climate-friendly parking management
- **Korschenbroich (DE)**  
Child reporters investigating local climate action
- **Krems an der Donau (AT)**  
Assessing the climate impact of local projects
- **Monheim am Rhein (DE)**  
Free public transport with the Monheim Pass
- **Nadace Partnerství in the City of Brno (CZ)**  
A green urban oasis
- **Pápateszér (HU)**  
Tradition meets sustainability
- **Rems-Murr-Kreis (DE)**  
Bicycle-friendly companies
- **Sanem (LU)**  
A centre for circular economy
- **Schaffhausen (CH)**  
City buses go electric
- **Weiz & St. Ruprecht an der Raab (AT)**  
A holistic energy concept

READ MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/10TH-CLIMATE-STAR](https://bit.ly/10th-climate-star)

# ADAPTATION

## Boosting climate resilience in our cities and towns

Whether heavy rainfall or heatwaves – the climate is changing, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and the effects are becoming increasingly noticeable. The local level must break new ground in climate adaptation, our cities and towns must become more climate-resilient and citizens must be sensitised to the effects of the climate crisis.



## INTERLACE

### Nature-based solutions for the restoration of urban ecosystems

With its Cookbook and Urban Governance Atlas, the Interlace team published two key tools to promote nature-based solutions (NBS) in 2023. The cookbook offers recipes for digital exchange formats on NBS while the atlas' database of 250 policy solutions shows the way forward on ecosystem restoration. Be sure to also stay tuned for the continuation of the Cities Talk Nature event series in 2024!

## IB-GREEN

### Industrial and Business Parks – Climate resilient and fit for the future



Industrial and commercial areas are heavily sealed and therefore particularly susceptible to overheating. They thus play a decisive role in the rise of urban heat islands. But how can cities and towns reduce heat stress in these areas? The answer is blue and green infrastructure!

Climate Alliance is coordinating the new IB-Green project, funded by the Interreg programme for Northwest Europe. The 11 project partners are working together on solutions to promote green-blue infrastructure in commercial areas and thereby to reduce heat stress, improve air quality and boost the quality of life in urban areas. The official kick-off took place in September 2023. Since then, the consortium has been developing pilot projects to support local authorities and businesses in the implementation of green-blue infrastructure. Examples of this include the assessment of the

potential for nature-based solutions in Bonn (DE) and an environmental matrix from Lille (FR), which is used to identify key environmental problems.

The project is still in its early stages, but the team has great ambitions. The overarching goals are to make existing business parks more climate and heat resilient through better public-private cooperation, to motivate entrepreneurs to implement adaptation measures and to involve municipalities in the strategic promotion of these projects.

**Want to learn more?** Contact H el ene Rizzotti at [h.rizzotti@climatealliance.org](mailto:h.rizzotti@climatealliance.org)

## POLICY SUPPORT FACILITY

**Supporting local and regional stakeholders in the development of adaptation strategies**

Through national workshops, peer-to-peer learning experiences, expert exchanges, and the sharing of success stories, Climate Alliance has worked to support municipalities in the implementation of their adaptation strategies. As part of the Covenant of Mayors – Europe, the initiative primarily addressed Covenant signatories. At the end of the project in early 2024, a dynamic report including webinars, podcasts and best practices will be published and made available to all municipalities across Europe.

## INVEST4NATURE

**Promoting investments in nature-based solutions**

Financing nature-based solutions is a major challenge for many local actors. With the Invest4Nature project, Climate Alliance is supporting the development of a decision-making tool to help inform investments in nature-based solutions (NBS). In 2023, the team worked to get a better understanding of the economic costs and benefits of NBS as well as to identify existing incentives for financing NBS and methods for calculating the financial benefits.

## EUROPEAN TOPIC CENTRE ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION (ETC CA)

**Telling the story of climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation action in Europe**

As part of the European Environment Agency's ECT-CA, Climate Alliance contributed to a report published in 2023 on the current status of national adaptation action in Europe. In 2024, a complementary report lead by Climate Alliance will be released, providing an update on the status of local level urban adaptation. As part of this project, Climate Alliance was also on the steering committee for the highly successful 2023 European Urban Resilience Forum (EURESFO) in Cascais (PT)!

## READY4HEAT

**Protecting citizens from heat**

Having already supported the development of the Worms Heat Action Plan, the Climate Alliance team proceeded to facilitate the transfer of findings to three European pilot cities in 2023. Specifically, Climate Alliance provided assistance by producing urban heat stress maps and a strategy paper for the development of an urban heat action plan.

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CLIMATE-ALLIANCE-PROJECTS](https://bit.ly/climate-alliance-projects)

# CAPACITY BUILDING

## Closing funding and capacity gaps, supporting local ambitions

There is no shortage of ideas and ambition at the local level. But committed cities and towns are often held back by a number of challenges. They often face a scarcity of human resources and a lack of funding. To close these gaps, an increasing number of initiatives at the EU level are aiming to build local capacities. Climate Alliance is involved in several projects that are investigating just how to best provide cities and towns across Europe with the necessary resources to implement ambitious climate action on the ground.

### CEESEU DIGIT

**Capacity building for new energy and climate plans in Central and Eastern Europe**

As part of CEESEU DIGIT, Climate Alliance is supporting capacity building in six regions throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The aim is to develop regional energy and climate plans and support municipalities in their development. In 2023, Climate Alliance was particularly involved in the implementation of workshops as well as policy and advocacy activities and is also working on a innovative financing methods report due out in 2024.

### EUROPEAN CITY FACILITY (EUCF)

**Supporting European cities in unlocking financing for sustainable energy**

Supporting municipalities in the development of investment strategies for sustainable energy projects – that is what the EUCF is all about. In 2023, the initiative published a call for support and selected a total of 66 municipalities to receive assistance. The sixth call will be launched at the beginning of 2024. Selected municipalities will not only receive expert knowledge and technical assistance, but also specific funding for their investment plans in a lump sum of 60,000 euros.

## **DECARB-PRO**

### **Decarbonising public procurement in North West Europe**

The Interreg project DeCarb-Pro, launched in 2023, was the brain-child of Climate Alliance's CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring working group. Through the project, Climate Alliance plans to develop a strategic approach to carbon pricing in municipal procurement together with municipalities, energy agencies and other partners. The group is driven by a shared vision of reducing emissions in our municipalities by expanding the range of low-emission products and services used – with the help of carbon pricing.

## **GOOGLE PARTNERSHIP**

### **Strengthening local climate action with climate-relevant data**

High-quality data is essential for targeted and precise climate action measures. For this reason, Climate Alliance entered into a partnership with Google in 2023 and has since been able to grant its members from all over Europe access to data via Google's Environmental Insights Explorer. In this way, members can access data on transport, the potential for solar roofs, building emissions and tree canopy – a real asset for municipal climate planning!

## NETZEROCITIES

**Towards climate neutral European cities by 2030**

This flagship EU project works with 30 selected pilot cities on their way to climate neutrality and supports them with grants of up to 1 million euros! As a project partner, Climate Alliance is officially responsible for activities related to innovative financing and the organisation of a city twinning process. The aim of the initiative is not only to work with the 30 pilot cities, but also to support a wider group of cities interested in learning from the pilots via a tailored process developed by Climate Alliance.

In 2023, it was all hands on deck for the city twinning process. In an open call, 40 cities successfully applied for the programme. These will be assigned to 25 pilot projects and embark on a 20 month peer learning journey with the aim of developing their own, individual plans. In spring 2024, further ambitious cities will have the chance to apply to become twin cities.

NetZeroCities is a principal vehicle through which the EU is implementing its Cities Mission for 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030. The Cities Mission aims to support cities throughout Europe and beyond on their way to climate neutrality by 2030.

**Want to learn more?** Contact Max Beijneveld at [m.beijneveld@climatealliance.org](mailto:m.beijneveld@climatealliance.org).

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT FORUMS (SEI FORUMS)

**Boosting large-scale investment in energy efficiency at the national level**

The use of private financing is becoming increasingly important in order to achieve the EU's climate and energy targets. SEI Forums helps boost investment momentum for energy efficiency in the EU's building sector. In particular, Climate Alliance supported the organisation of numerous events and discussion rounds with the aim of promoting exchange at a national level between public sector stakeholders, municipalities and financial institutions.

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[BIT.LY/CLIMATE-ALLIANCE-PROJECTS](https://bit.ly/climate-alliance-projects)

# BUILDING RENOVATION

## Making our building stock fit for the future

Europe's building stock is largely inefficient and is one of the continent's biggest CO<sub>2</sub> emitters. It is therefore clear that the EU's climate targets can only be achieved if we renovate our buildings to make them fit for the future. The associated challenges are great. Renovation? Yes, but how? In recent years, Climate Alliance has increasingly endeavoured to provide its members with answers by participating in relevant projects. Aspects such as optimised energy efficiency, one-stop shop concepts and the planning of energy demand as well as prefabrication and serial refurbishment all play a role.



## outPHIT

### Deep retrofits made faster, cheaper and more reliable

The outPHit project combines the idea of prefabrication with passive house principles for fast, energy-efficient refurbishments of the highest quality. In 2023, this approach was tested in case studies across Europe, with positive results. For example, the residents of a flat renovated to the EnerPHit standard in Greece were successfully lifted out of energy poverty and even remained comfortable despite extreme summer temperatures. The project team is also planning to launch a tool in 2024 that will make it easier for users to decide on appropriate renovation methods.

## EU PEERS

### A European community for one-stop shops to increase the renovation rate

By coordinating EU Peers, Climate Alliance is planning to establish a European community of practice on one-stop shops for the energy-efficient renovation of residential buildings together with ten project partners. The community is to be made up of municipal practitioners and experts in the field of one-stop shops and become a platform for European dialogue on increasing the renovation rate in private residential buildings.

The renovation process can be very complex and challenging for homeowners. One-stop shops accompany homeowners on their deep renovation journey along the entire process chain, for example by providing tailored information and access to funding. Currently, however, there are few one-stop shops EU-wide and those that exist are not connected despite the fact that they face similar challenges. This is set to change with EU Peers, which will help promote and disseminate one-stop shop concepts while also creating national and transnational platforms through which local practitioners and other stakeholders can network and work together. EU Peers will further offer training, events and a mentoring program-



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me and will also engage in political dialogue to achieve improved framework conditions for the creation of one-stop shops at the local level.

**Want to learn more?** Contact Jenny-Claire Keilmann at [j-c.keilmann@climatealliance.org](mailto:j-c.keilmann@climatealliance.org).

## CROSSCERT

### **Towards reliable, practical, and people-centred building energy performance certificates**

Building energy performance certificates provide an initial orientation for building renovation, but they are still often imprecise, difficult to understand and difficult to compare. Climate Alliance wants to change this with CrossCert. The team is developing policy recommendations to improve the user-friendliness of building energy performance certificates throughout Europe. To this end, Climate Alliance consulted municipalities and other stakeholders in 2023 to gather their experiences and challenges in relation to energy performance certificates.

## WHY

### **Understanding and projecting the energy demand of the residential sector**

By predicting consumption patterns that deviate from standardised values and instead incorporate human reactions to external changes, the energy system model (EMS) developed in WHY makes customised energy system planning possible – for single buildings or entire districts. The approach was tested in 2023 in the planning of a new development in Maintal (DE). The results showed that the heating energy requirement for the new district would have been overestimated by an average of 7.5% if standardised data on consumption behaviour had been used!

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# ENERGY POVERTY

## For an equitable and socially just energy transition

The climate crisis is not only environmental – it is, at its core, also one of the greatest social challenges of our time. This idea, which has been part of Climate Alliance's DNA from the very beginning, is also gaining increasing recognition at the EU level. Energy poverty, now widely seen as a serious problem, is a prime example of this new understanding. For years, Climate Alliance has been working tirelessly to support cities and towns in the fight against energy poverty while voicing their needs in the policy arena. With Climate Alliance's resolution from 2022, the entire network set a strong example: members emphasised their will to increasingly integrate social aspects into local climate and energy policy and to eliminate energy poverty by 2050. Today, Climate Alliance supports its members with a range of comprehensive programmes on this issue.

## ENPOR

### Mitigating energy poverty in the private rented sector

Making energy poverty visible, developing measures for greater energy efficiency and offering political guidelines – these are the goals of ENPOR. In concrete terms, this means information and training campaigns, research reports on the current state of energy poverty in the private rented sector and a database full of measures to combat energy poverty. The project came to an end in 2023 with the publication of comprehensive policy recommendations. They clearly show that cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, consideration of the particular challenges faced by low-income households and the coupling of energy efficiency measures with strong communication and advisory measures are essential.

## RENOVERTY

### Home renovation roadmaps to address energy poverty in vulnerable rural districts

The RENOVERTY project aims to alleviate energy poverty in rural and suburban households and promote energy efficient renovation. In seven pilot countries, the project team developed 17 rural renovation roadmaps to support citizens in overcoming common renovation barriers and dealing with diverse building typologies. Care is being taken to ensure that the model is replicable and can be scaled up at the EU level. In 2023, the team organised a national event with ENPOR in Frankfurt (DE) on solutions for an inclusive energy transition and an exchange with over 30 other initiatives in the field of energy poverty in order to exchange knowledge and identify common solutions.



## The leading EU initiative for local action against energy poverty

As coordinator of the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub, Climate Alliance has been supporting the vision of eradicating energy poverty and accelerating a just energy transition in European municipalities since 2021.

Last year, the EPAH team launched a second call for technical assistance in the fight against energy poverty. A total of 51 municipalities from twelve countries won the tender. They each benefit from the customised support of experts and the EPAH team in the development of local activities to combat energy poverty. The annual EPAH conference was once again the central meeting point in 2023. This time, the team brought together over 330 participants in Warsaw (PL) and online to look for new solutions.

The Energy Poverty Advisory Hub also offers concrete tools for addressing energy poverty locally, such as the handbook on diagnosing energy poverty and the second EPAH online course for knowledge and capacity building, published in 2023. Last year, the database of national indicators was also upgraded. The aim: to provide local authorities and decision-makers with a simple tool for the effective development of a comprehensive approach to measuring energy poverty.



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# PARTICIPATION

## Shaping the future together

The top priority in the climate crisis? We must tackle solutions together! Cooperation and participation at all levels is a key success factor for our climate policy ambitions. Governments must involve cities and towns, the municipal level must reach out to citizens, we must all come together and work together – this is the only way to overcome the challenges of our time. The network idea underpins all that Climate Alliance does. For over 30 years, the association has been facilitating exchange and cooperation – across national borders and across continents. Climate Alliance works hard to carry this spirit forward in key European initiatives and is committed to working with and for its members.



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## CEESEU

### Towards a sustainable energy union in Central and Eastern Europe

CEESEU is a community of eleven partners from ten Central and Eastern European countries. The focus lies on supporting cities and towns in the development of their sustainable climate and energy plans (SECAPs). Climate Alliance has been helping coordinate necessary training activities in this regard since 2021 and, in September 2023, organised the successful final CEESEU conference in Hungary (HU).

## EUROPEAN CLIMATE PACT

### Engaging citizens in climate action



The EU Climate Pact is part of the European Green Deal and the key initiative for the mobilisation of citizens on climate action. It is about establishing a community in which mutual learning and the exchange of ideas flourish as well as in which solutions can

be developed and climate action can be promoted at all levels. Since 2023, Climate Alliance has been a part of the European Secretariat of the Climate Pact, managing the network of 27 country coordinators which includes five of the six Climate Alliance National Coordination Offices as well as the Climate Alliance Brussels Office. Climate Alliance also coordinates the Climate Pact community and citizen engagement activities. The initiative pursues a national approach. Climate Alliance builds on this approach and combines it with the local level to reach people on the ground. The Climate Pact thus also provides cities and towns with a tool for communicating with their citizens. In 2024, the Climate Pact toolkit for local level activities will provide concrete guidelines for involving citizens to generate meaningful climate action.

Pact Ambassadors are a further key feature of the Climate Pact. These local stakeholders act as role models and inspire others. Through their own activities on the ground and by helping country coordinators carry out their national action plans, they help promote the key messages of the Pact.

**Want to learn more?** Contact the Climate Pact team at [contact@climatepact.eu](mailto:contact@climatepact.eu)

## LIFE-BECKON

### Boosting energy communities

Driving the energy transition forward together and empowering municipalities to support their citizens – this is Climate Alliance’s focus as part of the LIFE-BECKON project. In this context, concrete support mechanisms for the establishment of energy communities were initially trialled by municipal energy offices in three European regions. Throughout the beginning of 2024, the project team was looking for cities and towns interested in replicating solutions. The team is also planning to publish a tool in 2024 that can help municipalities set up support services for energy communities. A one-stop shop for municipal networking completes the project's offerings.

## TANDEM

### Franco-German exchange for local sustainable transition

For 10 years now, Climate Alliance has been promoting exchange between German and French municipalities through the TANDEM initiative with the aim of advancing sustainable transformation on both sides of the border. In 2023, the team once again offered a wide range of exchange opportunities and thematic discussions – from deep renovation to heat action plans and heat planning. The Franco-German CITY CYCLING campaign was also a resounding success last year!

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CLIMATE-ALLIANCE-PROJECTS](https://bit.ly/climate-alliance-projects)

# NEW PROJECTS FOR NEW MOMENTUM ON CLIMATE ACTION

Climate Alliance's work will continue in 2024 with many exciting projects and initiatives that promote strong municipal climate action. Here is a taste of what's in store.

## **JUST STREETS**

Shaping street infrastructure and changing individual mobility behaviour

## **SAVEENERGYTOGETHER**

Boosting emergency interventions that put energy efficiency first

## **CEESEN-BENDER**

Building interventions to fight energy poverty in vulnerable districts

## **JUST PEPP**

Just positive energy planning processes in disadvantaged urban areas

## **COPPER**

Participative municipal electricity grid planning for more resilience

## **URBREATHE**

Fostering participation through urban revitalisation

# STOPPING THE WASTE FLOOD IN OUR CITIES AND TOWNS

**The City of Tübingen (DE) responds with a truly exemplary tax on packaging**

In the EU, around 177 kilograms of packaging waste per inhabitant are disposed of every year. In Germany alone, disposable packaging is responsible for approximately 830,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and is thus a major burden on the environment and the climate. The EU and national governments are trying to stem the tide of packaging through regulations and laws. But cities and towns can also do something at the local level as the City of Tübingen has impressively demonstrated.

"We observed a dramatic increase in packaging waste in Tübingen. Take away packaging, disposable cups and dishes in particular were becoming more and more present in the cityscape. We wanted and needed to act," explains Claudia Patzwahl, packaging tax project manager for the

City of Tübingen on the decision to launch the project. The municipal packaging tax was finally introduced at the beginning of 2022, dictating a 50 cent net tax on disposable packaging and tableware as well as a 20 cent net tax on disposable cutlery. What's special about the Tübingen model? The tax targets the companies that put the packaging into circulation and can thus be seen as a supplement to existing regulations at the EU and at national levels. The city flanked the introduction of this tax on single-use packaging with a support programme for the implementation of reusable systems to help businesses switch to sustainable alternatives.

The path to the packaging tax had already been paved in 2018 with a city council decision to develop an initial draft. "During the development of



**"We observed a dramatic increase in packaging waste in Tübingen. Take away packaging, disposable cups and dishes in particular were becoming more and more present in the cityscape. We wanted and needed to act."**

**CLAUDIA PATZWahl,  
PACKAGING TAX PROJECT MANAGER FOR  
THE CITY OF TÜBINGEN**



the statutes for the packaging tax, legal support was particularly important to us in order to put the project on solid ground. But early communication with the food service industry was also of great importance in order to optimally involve the affected target group," emphasises Ms. Patzwahl. The city held several informational events to explain the packaging tax to food service establishments and put them in touch with suppliers of reusable systems. Still, the idea of the packaging tax was not well received by all businesses. The operator of the McDonalds Tübingen branch filed a lawsuit against the introduction of the tax in 2021. In 2022, McDonalds initially won the case before the Administrative Court of the State of Baden-Württemberg. But Tübingen appealed the decision. The packaging tax was finally legitimated by the Federal Administrative Court in May

2023. "A landmark ruling for Tübingen, but also for other cities and towns. This makes it clear that municipal taxes on disposable packaging are lawful," comments Claudia Patzwahl.

In addition to informational events, the city also offers numerous materials including informative films and tips for the restaurants, cafés and other gastronomic establishments. Tübingen's stated goal was to involve and educate businesses early on and this was well received. In an initial survey six months after the programme's launch, a majority believed the packaging tax to be a sensible measure. "In relation to the population, there are now more restaurants in Tübingen with a reusable system than anywhere else in Germany. That alone shows how effective the packaging tax is," Patzwahl points out. The example from Tübingen

**"In relation to the population, there are now more restaurants in Tübingen with a reusable system than anywhere else in Germany."**

**CLAUDIA PATZWahl,  
PACKAGING TAX PROJECT MANAGER FOR THE CITY OF TÜBINGEN**



impressively illustrates how important and influential ambitious local level measures can be. Other German cities have been inspired by the Tübingen example and are currently looking into introducing a packaging tax including Constance, Munich and Freiburg. Gummersbach announced its intention to introduce a packaging tax as early as the beginning of 2024. The reduction of packaging waste through local government initiatives is also the theme of the Environmental Action Germany (Deutsche Umwelthilfe) Plastic-Free Cities campaign. With the campaign, the organisation is drawing attention to effective options for municipalities to curb the growing flood of single-use waste.

# AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

Global partnerships are of central importance in the fight against the climate crisis. Climate justice and cooperation with indigenous peoples in the Amazon region is thus firmly part of Climate Alliance's DNA – and has been for over 30 years!

# INDIGENOUS REALITIES IN AMAZONIA

**The world's largest rainforest area has its back to the wall: the area is transitioning from a carbon sink into a carbon source. The reasons for this are illegal logging, overexploitation and drug trafficking. Yet the situation is different in indigenous territories. The forest can be preserved here; indigenous peoples know how to live and work with and not against nature. However, threats and dangers to indigenous peoples are increasing dramatically and activists in particular often have to fear for their lives.**



An interview conducted by Climate Alliance last year with an indigenous representative from the border region of Peru and Colombia showed just how dire these developments are for many indigenous peoples. In the interview, Luís, whose name has been changed for his own protection, describes how dramatic the situation is on the ground: Illegal logging, illegal gold mines and drug trafficking threaten entire territories home to indigenous peoples. The drug trade in particular harbours great dangers for people and the environment: large areas in indigenous territories are being cleared for the illegal cultivation of coca, rivers and lakes are being poisoned with chemicals, and villagers are being threatened and murdered. In Peru alone, over 30 indigenous human rights activists have been murdered in the last 10 years. But Luís also sees solutions to these

dangers including the strengthening of indigenous institutions and support for indigenous peoples from the international community.

**"We need people to give us a voice. In business, in politics, in society. Alone we can only reach a limited number of people. Be advocates for us indigenous peoples. Show solidarity. Speak out about the abuses in our habitat, support petitions, question companies' plans involving indigenous territories!"**

**LUÍS, INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATIVE  
FROM THE BORDER REGION BETWEEN  
COLOMBIA AND PERU**

In his interview, Luís also describes another challenge for indigenous peoples: CO<sub>2</sub> offset projects. More and more companies are offering such projects and for them, buying out both indigenous peoples' land and their livelihoods. Research conducted in spring 2023, however, illustrated that carbon offset projects often fail to deliver what they promise. Researchers examining a third of the projects identified by Verra, the world's leading certification body, found that 90% of the certificates were worthless – corresponding to a value of 89 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in false certificates.

These findings confirm Climate Alliance's long-standing position of focussing on direct cooperation with indigenous peoples and supporting them to fight for their rights as well as in their efforts to protect the rainforest.



# CLIMATE ALLIANCE – SIDE BY SIDE WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

**Cooperation with indigenous peoples is part of Climate Alliance's identity and has been since 1990. This close relationship is evident in Climate Alliance's extensive activities, such as its enduring cooperation with COICA, the umbrella association of indigenous organisations in the Amazon basin as well as its advocacy work and the tangible opportunities it offers to support indigenous peoples in the Amazon region.**

Climate Alliance supported its indigenous partners throughout 2023 and helped make their voices heard, for instance at the UN Climate Change Conference. Support also came from the national level. In Germany, for example, the network called for more federal funding for climate partnerships between municipalities and indigenous peoples to raise awareness of realities on the ground while also supporting demands to the German government for a cross-departmental strategy to protect indigenous peoples via the ILO-169 Coordination Group.

In addition to representing the interests of indigenous peoples in the political arena, Climate Alliance also provides direct assistance on the ground. Specific projects such as the financing of legal aid, counselling on the use of renewable energies in indigenous communities or the construction and distribution of solar boats are supported with associated member contributions and donations via Climate Alliance's funds.



# ACT NOW AND TAKE CLIMATE RESPONSIBILITY!

Many member municipalities are already involved and interested cities and towns can join in. Climate Alliance offers a range of opportunities to support indigenous peoples and assume genuine climate responsibility.



## CLIMATE ALLIANCE'S CLIMATE FUND

Last year, we set up a brand new fund: The Climate Alliance Climate Fund. What's so special about it? We are working together with our member, the Autonomous Territorial Government of the Wampís (GTANW), to preserve its indigenous territory through specific projects that make a direct contribution to global climate action. With this fund, we expressly distance ourselves from traditional CO<sub>2</sub> offsetting projects and instead work together with our indigenous partners onsite to implement projects with true, sustainable added value for the preservation of the rainforest and the global climate!

The first milestone was achieved at the end of last year: donations totalling 12,650 euros were received in 2023. With this funding, six hectares of deforested land in the Wampís territory will be replanted and sustainably upgraded with the help of local youth and community elders.

**Also want to take climate responsibility and learn more?** Contact Sike Lunnebach at [s.lunnebach@climatealliance.org](mailto:s.lunnebach@climatealliance.org).

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CA-CLIMATEFUND](https://bit.ly/ca-climatefund)

## CLIMATE ALLIANCE'S OTHER FUNDS

With established funds such as the Legal Aid Fund or the Renewable Energy Fund, Climate Alliance is providing specific support in Amazonia. The Legal Aid Fund supports indigenous activists in legal disputes and provides emergency assistance wherever necessary. Through the Renewable Energy Fund, Climate Alliance promotes the dissemination of sustainable energy projects in Amazonia.

In 2023, contributions totalling 38,241 euros were paid into both funds, facilitating the support of numerous projects. In Peru in particular, various meetings and conferences were financed to help address the tense situation in the Amazon region. The main focus was on illegal logging and the activities of drug cartels in indigenous areas. The threat to indigenous activists has risen sharply and networking between the various organisa-

tions and communities in the area is important in order to strengthen and protect those affected. Murders and death threats are on the rise. Those directly affected and their families often have to (temporarily) leave their communities and be taken to safety. Last year, Climate Alliance provided financial support to various indigenous leaders to help them find refuge in a safe house.

In Ecuador, support was given to the YASunidos initiative, which campaigned for a referendum against oil extraction in the Yasuní National Park on 20 August 2023, when almost 60% of the Ecuadorian population voted in favour of stopping oil extraction in the Yasuní National Park. This success can be attributed in part to the Yasuní ITT campaign (2007/08) – a political initiative of the Ecuadorian government aimed at promoting emissions reductions by keeping fossil fuel resources in the ground

in exchange for compensation payments from the international community. Climate Alliance supported Yasuní ITT from its very beginnings.

Other funding included support for forums and events at the regional level in Amazonia as well as support for the participation of indigenous representatives in conferences at the international level, such as the UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP28).

**38,241 €**  
EUROS WERE PAID INTO  
BOTH FUNDS

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/CA-FUNDS](https://bit.ly/ca-funds)

## RAISING AWARENESS ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate Alliance also provides a variety of materials and offers for local educational work. With flexible exhibitions on the climate crisis, land grabbing and resource depletion, municipalities can raise awareness amongst their citizens on climate justice and link to Europe's consumption-oriented lifestyle. Cities and towns can use the exhibitions to engage with their citizens and organise a vernissage or a discussion in the city hall. Climate Alliance members need only pay the shipping costs for the exhibition panels. Last year, the exhibitions were once again very popular with the panels being shown in six municipalities.

Since 2023, Climate Alliance has also been offering interested members a film screening of the documentary "The Illusion of Abundance". The film tells the stories of three environmental activists from Latin America and their tireless resistance against environmental destruction. In 2023, the German cities of Kleve and Emmerich am Rhein took up the offer together – with lasting effect. The imposing images in the film were fodder for intense reflection by the audience.

LEARN MORE AT  
[BIT.LY/INDIGENOUSPARTNERS](https://bit.ly/indigenouspartners)



# DIGITAL PLANNING DATA FOR A FUTURE-PROOF CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Münster (DE) designs its bicycle network 2.0 with the help of the new RiDE platform

The promotion of cycling is a key element of the mobility transition and user-oriented planning of cycling infrastructure is particularly relevant. Since the end of 2022, the RiDE (Radverkehr in Deutschland – Cycling in Germany) platform has been providing German municipalities with the necessary foundation, which the City of Münster is making use of for its bicycle network 2.0 project.

The RiDE platform offers comprehensive digital cycling data to municipalities. The data originates from Climate Alliance's CITY CYCLING campaign and is therefore available to all participating municipalities throughout Germany. As part of the campaign, trips that participants make by bike are tracked via the CITY CYCLING app. The RiDE platform evaluates this information and prepares the data visually, allowing municipal planners to see how smoothly cycling

traffic flows, which routes are particularly busy and how long the waiting times at traffic lights are. The platform was developed jointly by scientists from the Technical University of Dresden, flow.d GmbH and Climate Alliance.

**"From the very beginning, the aspect of digital cycling data [...] was an important part of the campaign for us."**

**MALTE KONRAD  
CYCLING OFFICE OF THE CITY  
OF MÜNSTER**

By providing an overview of the cycling activities within a city or town, the data available on the RiDE platform packs a huge potential, something



© CITY OF MÜNSTER, TOM BENDIX

that Münster acknowledged immediately after its first CITY CYCLING campaign. "The City of Münster participated in the CITY CYCLING campaign for the first time in 2020. From the very beginning, the aspect of digital cycling data [...] was an important part of the campaign for us," comments Malte Konrad, Cycling Office of the City of Münster. "It is important for us that these data

sets appropriately reflect the cross-section of the population, as is the case with CITY CYCLING", added Malte Konrad. For Münster, information on cycling volume as well as average speed is particularly relevant for argumentation, prioritisation and evaluation purposes. Based on this data, the potential for improvement of the urban infrastructure quickly becomes clear.

"Smartphone-generated data was used for the first time for the bicycle network 2.0 project," explains Malte Konrad, "together with other data sources, including a specially conducted tracking campaign, the CITY CYCLING data made available via the RiDE platform was incorporated into the development of the bicycle network 2.0." The aim is to expand cycling infrastructure in a convenient and supply-oriented way. With the information from the RiDE platform, the City of Münster can also specifically examine cycling traffic corridors and derive appropriate measures. "At the same time, we will soon be expanding the ten permanently installed cycling counting stations by a further 13 locations, which will provide us with daily updated data on cycling activity," explains Malte Konrad.

The City of Münster is convinced of the importance of cycling data and will increasingly rely on it in the future. In 2023, for example, the city made use of speed data from the RiDE portal to calibrate the Leezenflow green light assistant, a system that helps cyclists reach traffic lights when they are green.



In order to reflect the needs of municipalities of all sizes even more precisely, RiDE is continuously being further developed, currently via the MoveOn project, which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Digital Affairs and Transport. In 2024, interested municipalities once again have the chance to access the digital cycling data. Municipalities can register for this year's CITY CYCLING campaign as of spring 2024, choose a campaign period of three weeks between May and September and collect cycling kilometres together with local politicians and citizens. After this year's campaign, RiDE cycling data will be made available to all participants from Germany for the rest of 2024.

# NATIONAL COORDINATION

Local action on the global climate crisis – this approach is also reflected in the work of Climate Alliance's six national coordination offices, located in countries with especially large numbers of members. The team act as national contacts for member municipalities.

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE GERMANY

COORDINATORS: SVENJA SCHUCHMANN UND JULIAN THOSS

51 EMPLOYEES

19.3 FULL-TIME POSITIONS \*

In Germany, the National Coordination team advocates for the interests of over 600 member municipalities in the policy arena. Climate Alliance Germany also supports member cities and towns with a wide range of services and practical instruments for climate action.

## For a strong local level

In 2023, Climate Alliance Germany further strengthened its call for climate change mitigation and adaptation to be anchored as a mandatory municipal task. The focus of advocacy work lay on publications about the topic and corresponding legislation such as the Federal Climate Adaptation Act and the Act on Heat Planning and Decarbonisation of Heating



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\* This number corresponds to the number of people working at least part-time on German projects and the approximate number of full-time equivalents dedicated to German projects. Given that the European Secretariat also serves as the German national coordination office, an exact assignment of staff is only possible to a limited extent.

Networks. Priorities in terms of content were set in close dialogue with municipal representatives via Climate Alliance's working groups.

A joint conference with the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy – Europe on 7 December 2023 at the European House in Berlin was certainly the highlight of the year. At the event, municipal representatives discussed how to improve the framework conditions for local climate action with decision-makers from the federal government and state levels.

**"There was a broad consensus that the federal and state governments must provide universal staffing and long-term, unbureaucratic funding for climate tasks in local authorities. In addition, specific climate protection tasks must be made mandatory for municipalities and financed. This is the only way to achieve Germany's climate targets."**

**JULIAN THOSS, NATIONAL COORDINATOR  
FOR CLIMATE ALLIANCE GERMANY**



The German national coordination team also met with several associations and published statements on relevant draft legislation as well as press releases and communications on current political developments. The team held numerous policy discussions to raise awareness on municipal climate issues among decision-makers at the federal and state level, organising, for example, a virtual policy evening on the Energy Efficiency Act. By working closely with strategic partner organisations and collaborating on selected campaigns and publications, the national coordination team made the voices of the local level in Germany heard.

### **Promoting the energy transition on the regional level**

With Region-N, Climate Alliance offers an initiative through which committed regional authorities in Germany can network and campaign for a citizen-centred energy transition. Together, they are pursuing the goal of 100% renewable energy in regions by 2030. Last year, the team celebrated five years of Region-N together with local and regional representatives. Around 150 stakeholders from regional authorities are now part of the initiative. In 2023, Region-N organised several networking meetings on the expansion of wind and solar energy as well as on municipal heat planning. During these events, energy transition stakeholders exchanged knowledge, experiences and best practice. Region-N also publishes a newsletter on current energy transition topics with expert interviews and best practice examples. Climate Alliance members can join Region-N free of charge.

**Interested?** Contact Edgar Bazing at [e.bazing@climatealliance.org](mailto:e.bazing@climatealliance.org).

## Reducing emissions through comprehensive monitoring

The Climate Protection Planner (Klimaschutz Planer) is the recommended CO<sub>2</sub> balancing instrument for local authorities in Germany. The tool enables the creation of final energy and greenhouse gas balances, integrated benchmarking and scenario visualisation. Climate Alliance supports local authorities in using the tool by building expertise through quality assurance and by helping to transfer legacy data from other systems. In 2023, the Climate Action Planner team was able to expand its scope once again – the tool is currently being tested by pilot municipalities in Austria for the first time and is due to be rolled out nationwide in mid-2024. Interest is also continuing to grow in Germany: almost 2,000 municipalities are now using the Climate Action Planner as an accounting tool – a milestone! The tool's functions have been steadily expanded over the past year. The results of a user survey led to the addition of two new functions: the inclusion of data on a municipality's modal share and a more detailed analysis of municipal buildings.

## Supporting municipalities on the path to climate neutral administrations

With ESG Cockpit, Climate Alliance offers a tool for accounting and sustainability reporting in municipal administrations as well as municipal enterprises – since its launch in 2022, a real support for municipalities reaching for climate-neutrality in their administrations. Last year, the team supported the introduction of the tool in the climate-neutral state administration of North Rhine-Westphalia and at the Garmisch-Partenkirchen District Office. Climate Alliance supports such projects with consultancy, training and other advisory services, including data preparation, the development of climate balance sheets and the identification of optimisation measures.

Due to great interest in the topic of climate neutral municipal administrations, the team quickly decided to set up its own working group. The climate neutral administration working group met for two informational online sessions in 2023, discussing municipal approaches and practical examples. The working group already



boasts around 60 members. Further interested Climate Alliance members are invited to join!

**Interested?** Contact Sina Jäger at [s.jaeger@climatealliance.org](mailto:s.jaeger@climatealliance.org).



### Improving planning for cycling on the basis of data and citizen participation

How smoothly does cycling traffic flow? Which routes do cyclists prefer and which do they avoid? What about waiting times at traffic lights and junctions? The RiDE portal can answer these questions thanks to data from the CITY CYCLING campaign. The platform offers local authorities insight into cycling data relevant to planning. Last year, RiDE was able to access over 7.8 million journeys made by bicycle, all recorded as part of CITY CYCLING. Interested cities and towns are invited to take part in the 2024 CITY CYCLING campaign and subsequently receive access to relevant cycling data. RiDE is offering free or low-cost access to the data for German municipalities through the end of 2024.

In addition to RiDE, the RADar! reporting platform also fosters the optimisation of cycle traffic planning. With the help of the platform, local authorities can invite their citizens to report disruptive or dangerous cycling spots by simply

placing digital pins on a road map. In this way, they can directly help their local administrations improve critical cycling infrastructure. In 2023, this tool was again avidly used by some 700 municipalities! Thanks to a revision last year, RADar! will become even more user-friendly as of 2024 and thus provide even more reliable support for cyclists and municipalities in their cycle traffic planning.

**Interested?** Contact Ann-Kathrin Beichel at [a.beichel@climatealliance.org](mailto:a.beichel@climatealliance.org) (for RiDE) and Liane Hauff at [info@radar-online.net](mailto:info@radar-online.net) (for RADar!).

LEARN MORE AT  
[KLIMABUENDNIS.ORG](https://www.klimabuendnis.org)

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE ITALY

COORDINATOR: KARL-LUDWIG SCHIBEL

4 EMPLOYEES

3 FULL-TIME POSITIONS

**In Italy, Climate Alliance has over 120 members – cities, towns and regions as well as a variety of institutions such as the diocese of Bolzano-Brixen. Members are supported in their climate action policies by the Italian national coordination team, which also manages the Covenant of Mayors helpdesk for Italy.**

The highlight of 2023 was, without a doubt, October's Climate Alliance International Conference in Modena – the first Climate Alliance conference in Italy for 13 years! The national coordination team was involved in the organisation of the event from the very beginning and was active onsite, especially when it came to the promotion of the CITY CYCLING. The declared goal of the Italian team in 2023 was to establish this successful cycling campaign in Italy with the help of the European Secretariat and in collaboration with the AESS energy agency, a Modena-based Climate Alliance member. The ambitious plan is also a challenge, as the Climate Alliance and AESS teams will have to adapt the campaign to

the needs of Italian municipalities. A task force of interested Italian cities and towns met during the conference and will help make meeting this goal possible in the future.

Climate Alliance Italy is also part of a number of European initiatives that benefit cities and towns throughout Italy. Last year, for example, the team organised a workshop in the Metropolitan City of Rome on the topic of citizen participation. The goal: to strengthen the involvement of citizens in energy projects locally through the presentation of expertise and tools. All in all, the Italian national coordination team can look back on an active and successful year.



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- In **6 NEWSLETTERS**, Climate Alliance Italy informed around **6,500 LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES** about local climate action.
  - The team ambitiously promoted the **CITY CYCLING CAMPAIGN** in Italy with **8 DEDICATED WORKSHOPS**.
  - In 2023, Climate Alliance Italy was part of **4 EUROPEAN PROJECTS WITH A TOTAL OF 2 INTERNATIONAL PROJECT MEETINGS, 6 PROJECT EVENTS AND 1 TRADE FAIR**.
- 

The work of Climate Alliance will continue in 2024. Events and further offerings on a variety of topics such as the financing of sustainable energy projects, sustainable mobility, climate impact assessments and citizen engagement are already in motion or in the pipeline.

**“The cutting-edge solutions created in Modena in recent years and decades in the fields of mobility, urban green and energy efficiency in buildings are also due to the impulses we have received from the collaboration with the European networks of which we are members.”**

**ALESSANDRA FILIPPI, DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CITY OF MODENA AND CLIMATE ALLIANCE EUROPE BOARD MEMBER**

LEARN MORE AT  
[CLIMATEALLIANCE.IT](https://climatealliance.it)

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE LUXEMBOURG

COORDINATORS: PAUL POLFER, POL STRAUS, BIRGIT ENGEL UND CÉDRIC REICHEL

7 EMPLOYEES

5 FULL-TIME POSITIONS

**In Luxembourg, Climate Alliance is coordinated by two NGOs: Mouvement Ecologique and Action Solidarité Tiers Monde (ASTM). Together, they support 40 Climate Alliance municipalities throughout Luxembourg. Last year, the team worked with and for these members to drive forward a comprehensive process of thematic development for the network. The aim was to align the work and offerings of Climate Alliance Luxembourg as closely as possible with the expectations and needs of its member cities and towns.**

A milestone in 2023 was the successful implementation of the Energy Caravan energy consulting campaign. The first two editions of Luxembourg's Energy Caravan took place in the municipalities of Strassen and Betzdorf. With some 25% of the citizens contacted opting for free energy advice, both caravans were a success! In 2023 the Luxembourg team also faced a major challenge in the form of elections at the municipal and national levels. Climate Alliance, however, saw this as an opportunity, compiling and disseminating comprehensive recommendations for and demands of the political level.

Climate Alliance Luxembourg was also active in the field of climate justice. As part of the

'Learning from the Global South' series, the team offered training courses for activists, featuring, for example, Mexican actress and philosopher Maria Grace Salamanca, to experiment with theatre as a means of communication and raise awareness on climate justice issues as well as enable people to deal creatively with global crises. The campaign against the Mercosur free trade agreement also picked up speed again. At a conference with Larissa Bombardi, a professor at the University of Sao Paulo, a discussion on pesticide contamination caused by imports to Europe – a long-neglected aspect of the free trade agreement – took centre stage.

**“In order to put an end to the continuation of colonial practices in climate financing, the distribution of funds according to the watering can principle must finally stop. The people living on the frontline of the climate crisis in countries of the Global South are the ones who have to formulate the financial needs in terms of the damage caused, not those who can afford COP tickets.”**

BIRGIT ENGEL, LUXEMBOURG NATIONAL COORDINATOR DURING COP28



- In 2023, participants of the **TOUR DU DUERF** (Luxembourg's edition of the CITY CYCLING campaign) cycled a total of **214,553 KILOMETRES**.
- Children participating in the **GREEN FOOTPRINTS CAMPAIGN** in Luxembourg collected a total of **31,515 FOOTPRINTS** in 2023.

For Climate Alliance Luxembourg, 2023 was as intense as it was successful – a mix that is due to continue in 2024. Several projects are already in planning.

- A **NEW CYCLING CAMPAIGN** will combine **TOUR DU DUERF** and a **COUNTERPART FROM THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT**, thus becoming a single, national campaign.
- A new city tour concept will enable municipalities to inform citizens about **CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND HEAT STRESS** in a fun way.
- Working groups are to be launched in 2024 so as to fulfil the members' wish to be **MORE CLOSELY INVOLVED IN THE NETWORK'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**.
- **STUDY TRIPS** throughout Climate Alliance's European network will **IMPROVE EXCHANGE WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES** and highlight examples of success.
- **EXCHANGE WITH PARTNERS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH** on climate justice issues – both digitally and in person – will be further expanded.
- **TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION MATERIALS ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND CLIMATE JUSTICE** will provide municipalities with a deeper understanding of the global effects of local level activities in Luxembourg.

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE AUSTRIA

■ DIRECTORS: ELKE KASTNER UND NORBERT RAINER

■ 142 EMPLOYEES

■ 67.5 FULL-TIME POSITIONS

**1,100 municipalities, 900 educational institutions and 1,738 businesses – that's Climate Alliance Austria. Members are supported in their local climate action efforts by seven provincial associations and the national association of Climate Alliance Austria itself (which also includes Burgenland and Vienna).**



For Climate Alliance Austria, 2023 was characterised by two special anniversaries: 30 years of partnership on the Rio Negro and 20 years of the Climate Footprints campaign. The Rio Negro partnership connects Austrian towns, cities and federal states with two Brazilian organisations, FOIRN, the association of indigenous organisations on the Rio Negro, and ISA, the Socio-Ecological Institute. The anniversary was celebrated at events in Austria and on the Rio Negro. At the same time, the successful Climate Footprints campaign (Green Footprints at the European level) also celebrated a birthday. Every year since 2002, thousands of day care and school

children across Europe have been collecting green footprints for the global climate. Climate Alliance Austria has been involved from the very beginning!

Another milestone last year was the inauguration of Climate Alliance Austria's new visual identity. The updated logo and design unites Austria with Climate Alliance throughout Europe. The launch of the new website was also a highlight – klimabuendnis.at now presents Climate Alliance Austria's offerings in a comprehensive and compact way.

## There was also a lot happening on the regional level in 2023:

- **WEFAIR**, a sustainability fair from Linz, was held in **VIENNA FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2023** and it was a great success. The next edition is already planned for 2024!
- **CLIMATE ALLIANCE LOWER AUSTRIA** organised the **10TH CLIMATE STAR GALA** in April and honoured 16 municipalities and regions from seven countries for their climate action initiatives.
- The **CHILDREN'S AUDIO BOOK, KLIMACHECKER (CLIMATE TRACKER)**, was read by two well-known actors, **MICHAEL OSTROWSKI AND HILDE DALIK**, and is now going on tour in Styria!
- A total of **4,820 SCHOOLCHILDREN FROM LOWER AUSTRIA** took part in two mobility competitions: "Klimafit zum Radlhit" and BikeRider.
- Climate Alliance celebrated **14 MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES IN SALZBURG** in 2023, even visiting some members in person to present anniversary certificates.
- The **DOPPELPLUS** initiative from Tyrol, which supports households in saving energy, received the **1ST STATE PRIZE FOR VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT**.
- Climate Alliance in Carinthia published a **BROCHURE** full of practical ways out of the climate crisis via its **MENSCH MACHT KLIMA (PEOPLE MAKE CLIMATE) PROJECT**.
- The **KLIMACHECKER:INNEN@WORK (CLIMATECHECKERS@WORK) PROJECT FROM UPPER AUSTRIA**, which teaches apprentices about climate action – **WON THE 2023 ESD AWARD FOR ITS EFFORTS**.



Climate Alliance Austria's work for and with its member municipalities will continue undiminished in 2024. The focus will once again be on numerous educational programmes, events and a wide range of specific support services for climate action in municipalities, businesses and educational institutions.

LEARN MORE AT  
[WWW.KLIMABUENDNIS.AT](http://WWW.KLIMABUENDNIS.AT)

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE SWITZERLAND

COORDINATOR: DAPHNÉ RÜFENACHT

**Climate Alliance Switzerland is coordinated by the Swiss Association for Municipal Infrastructure (SVKI) and currently has 23 members – from large cities to small towns. The Swiss coordination office supports its members in their local climate action measures and promotes networking at municipal level.**

In 2023, the Climate and Energy Charter continued to be at the centre of the Climate Alliance Switzerland's activities. By the end of the year, a total of 84 cities and towns had signed the charter, thereby demonstrating their commitment to dedicated and effective climate action. In September, the first annual conference on the Climate and Energy Charter was also held with almost 50 stakeholders from the municipal level. The thematic focus was on monitoring climate protection measures, but successful practical examples from cities and towns also played an important role. The bottom line of the conference? Cities and towns both want and need more dialogue!



© SVKI



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The goal of the Climate Alliance in Switzerland for 2024 is therefore clear: networking between committed cities and towns is to be further strengthened and their valuable commitment to climate action made more visible. The second annual conference on the Climate and Energy Charter will provide a platform for just this endeavour and has already been planned for 30 October 2024.

- The **23 SWISS MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES** represent **1,376,295 CITIZENS, OR 16%** of the **SWISS POPULATION**.
- **MORE THAN 25%** of the Swiss population **LIVE IN A CITY OR TOWN THAT HAS SIGNED UP TO THE CLIMATE AND ENERGY CHARTER**.
- In **2023 ALONE, 13 ADDITIONAL MUNICIPALITIES** with a total of **ALMOST 95,000 INHABITANTS** announced their support for the charter.

LEARN MORE AT  
[KLIMABUENDNIS.CH](https://www.klimabuendnis.ch)

# CLIMATE ALLIANCE HUNGARY

■ COORDINATOR: CSABA LAJTMANN

■ 3 EMPLOYEES

■ 3 PART-TIME POSITIONS

**Climate Alliance Hungary is led by the Reflex environmental organisation and is thus embedded in an active network of green NGOs. The Hungarian team promotes climate action nationwide and currently supports some 20 Hungarian members in their local endeavours.**

Every year, the Green Footprints campaign stands as one of the highlights in Hungary. As part of a national conference in the run up to COP28, Climate Alliance Hungary presented the 2023 campaign results to Hungary's COP delegation, composed of Barbara Botos, Hungary's Ambassador for Climate Action, and Gábor Szántó, Head of the Climate Policy Department of the Ministry of Energy.

Last year also saw the completion of Climate Alliance Hungary's new office, an energy-efficient straw bale building that also provides space for Climate Alliance's various offerings and networking events. Climate Alliance also continued its efforts in 2023 to further advance climate action throughout the country, focusing in particular on close cooperation with other NGOs and multipliers.



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- **20,831 CHILDREN AND 1,993 TEACHERS FROM 93 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS** collected **350,617 GREEN FOOTPRINTS** as part of the Hungarian Green Footprints campaign.

- Climate Alliance Hungary was one of the co-organisers of the annual meeting of Hungarian green NGOs, attracting **OVER 400 PARTICIPANTS**.

- **MORE THAN 1,000 PEOPLE** took part in **CLIMATE ALLIANCE HUNGARY'S EVENTS** on climate adaptation.

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The Hungarian national coordination team also has big plans for 2024. The team has been responsible for coordinating the Hungarian arm of the European Climate Pact since 2023 and, as such, is driving the initiative's national activities forward.

Climate Alliance Hungary also supports European initiatives such as the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH) as well as the European City Facility (EUCF) for the financing of sustainable energy projects, in addition to other European projects that reinforce climate action nationwide.

**“Many don’t understand how important community is! There is so much power in coming together for a good cause!”**

**SZALAI BORBÁLA, PARTICIPANT OF THE GREEN FOOTPRINTS CAMPAIGN IN HUNGARY**

**LEARN MORE AT**  
**[EGHAJLATVEDELMISZOVETSEG.HU](https://eghajlatvedelmiszovetseg.hu)**

# NOT YET A MEMBER?

**TAKE THE FUTURE OF THE GLOBAL  
CLIMATE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS AND  
JOIN NOW!**

Take advantage of tools and ready-made campaigns.  
Find partners in Europe and beyond.  
Raise your profile regionally and internationally.  
Get your messages conveyed to key decision-makers.  
Be inspired by the experiences of others.

**Find out more at [climatealliance.org](https://climatealliance.org)**

**Follow Climate Alliance on social media!**



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