

Vorchdorf's energy transition: together as community



The energy group of the municipality of Vorchdorf is successfully turning the energy transition from theory into practice. Many projects have already been implemented in this Upper Austrian municipality of around 7,000 inhabitants. The energy group develops each project upon three key pillars: energy savings, replacing fossil fuels with renewables and community involvement. Thanks to well-designed projects, the municipality saves each year the average annual energy demand of 150 people and generates an amount of clean energy equal to the annual heating oil demand of 785 homes!

25 % less in municipal buildings

The electricity bought from the grid for the outdoor pool was reduced by 75 % through the installation of a 20 kW_p PV system and a modern circulation pump. A variable frequency drive enables the pump speed and flow to be decreased outside of opening hours, leading to significant energy savings as well as extending the pump's service life. The entire street lighting – more than 400 light points – was converted to LEDs. The new lamps consume around 60 % less electricity, are individually adjustable, and provide high-quality lighting without unnecessary light pollution. The electricity demand in the nursery schools and schools was reduced by up to 40 %, for example, by switching to LED lighting, replacing the heating pumps, and installing energy-efficient cooling systems.

This was achieved

Municipal installations

- Total electricity savings: 25 % (300,000 kWh/year)
- Electricity savings in street lighting: 60 % (110,000 kWh/year)

Renewable energy

- 120 PV systems in the municipality, 1,900 kW_p
- 9 municipal PV systems; 143 kW_p, 80 % self-consumption
- Sewage gas CHP plant
- Local biomass district heating network

Mobility

- 3 charging stations with 6 x 22 kW
- up to 200 Euro subsidy for bicycle trailers
- e-cargo bike for free rental
- on-demand bus service (Traunstein taxi)



Renewable electricity, biomass heating & sustainable mobility

In Vorchdorf, a sewage gas CHP plant and a total of 120 PV systems generate clean electricity. The local biomass district heating network supplies renewable space heating for all public buildings as well as 260 companies and households. Three municipality-owned e-charging stations, a car sharing project, and the community's own e-cargo bike confirm the ongoing turnaround in mobility in the rural area. Demand-oriented solutions for local public transport, like the "Traunstein taxi", improve the mobility and independence of citizens without a car.

Achieving more together!

Communication and citizen involvement are key aspects of Vorchdorf's energy initiative. Since 2012, the annually published "Energy Messenger" is distributed to 14,000 households and makes the municipality's successes known to neighbouring communities. A full page in each issue of the widely read, quarterly municipal newspaper is reserved for energy and sustainability topics. A variety of events (i.e., summer cinema, excursions, advice services, talks, school projects) aim to inspire citizens of all ages to partake in the energy transition. "Climate protection is a joint project," as emphasised by Christian Hummelbrunner, the project initiator. "Right from the start, we motivated our citizens to participate and supported them with climate-friendly initiatives." The numbers speak for themselves. Vorchdorf is on the right track.

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