

Leipzig, Germany

Project city profile

City description

Leipzig has been an important trade city since the time of the Holy Roman Empire. The City sits at the intersection of the Via Regia and the Via Imperii, two important medieval trade routes. Leipzig was once one of the major European centers of learning and culture in fields such as music and publishing. In the 19th century, Leipzig became a major urban center and one of the richest cities in the German Empire. In the German Democratic Republic, it developed as a center of various industries. Leipzig later became the center of peaceful demonstrations against the communist regime of East Germany.

In the last decades, Leipzig experienced a major decline in industry and inhabitants. As a result of reunification, in 1989 over 90,000 work spaces were lost. Population steadily declined during this time, with 530,000 inhabitants in 1989 down to 437,000 in 1998. Thankfully due to economic recovery, unemployment currently is at 9%, slightly higher than the national average of 6.4%. The population has been continuously growing, and is currently at an all time high of 560,000.

Since the reunification of Germany, Leipzig has undergone significant changes through the restoration of historical buildings and the development of a modern transport infrastructure with a vision for sustainable mobility. Today it is a modern city with large automobile manufacturing and logistics industries, environmental and biotechnology sectors, universities and research institutions, and a young creative industry. The GfK marketing research institute has recently proclaimed Leipzig the most livable city in Germany.



Facts & Figures

Population (year) / Land area

554,000 (2015) / 297 km²

Municipal budget (year)

1.45 billion EUR (2015)

Mayor and term

Mr. Burkhard Jung
February 17 2013 - February 16
2020

Website

www.leipzig.de

Project partner city

Kumamoto, Japan

Sustainability profile

Following the reunification of Germany, Leipzig has undertaken immense efforts to restore and expand its transportation plan and infrastructure. The City has taken measures to expand its public transportation network, and now has the second-largest network in Germany after Berlin. In conjunction with its promotion of public transport, it has also taken steps to limit the presence of cars in the city center.

Leipzig is working to expand its cycling network and become a more bicycle-friendly city. With the development of a bike-sharing program, larger areas for bicycle parking, and over 436 km of bicycle paths and lanes, Leipzig now has almost 4 times more cyclists on the streets than they did 20 years ago. As result of its efforts, Leipzig won the German National Award for Sustainable Cities in 2012 for its quality of life and urban structure. The City also hosted the OECD's 2015 International Transport Forum.

Public transportation

Leipzig has continuously prioritized fast, convenient, and safe access to public transportation. Leipzig's public transportation system is large and wide, with 13 tram lines and 61 bus lines. Throughout central Germany, ticket prices and fares are regulated with the same company, and therefore are easy to use and pay for. Leipzig's central station is a main hub in Germany, with excellent long distance train connections as well as a well integrated, state-of-the-art station for local trains.

In order to increase ridership, the City of Leipzig has prioritized barrier free tram stops to optimize accessibility for all citizens. First, the City is trying to minimize the gap between the tram stop and the actual tram to be no more than 5 centimeters. This would then replace folding ramps, and allow easier, uninterrupted access on and off trams. Leipzig is now trying to integrate solutions to various barriers, including trams stop in the middle of roads, and passengers crossing into traffic lanes to access trams.

Georg-Schumann Street is an example of the City's efforts in creating inclusive streets for all modes of transport. Before Leipzig's intervention, the street was predominantly used by cars and had little or no space for bicycles, public transport, or greenery. In the redesign plan, space was taken away from cars, both from parking and from the road, and given to extend the footpaths accessible for vulnerable transport users. Trees and tree pits were added by reducing the amount of parking available on the street. In all the stages of the street transformation, various public consultations were held to obtain feedback from experts and users.

Project Team

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Mr. Fritjof Mothes
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Stadtlabor



Stadt Leipzig

Bicycle infrastructure

In the past 20 years, Leipzig has tripled the number of cyclists. To increase this, Leipzig developed a safe infrastructure that supported cyclists. With large political support, the City was able to quadruple its network, reaching over 400 km. Bike lanes were designed to be wide enough for comfort and safety, and were well integrated with tram stops and pedestrian zones. Leipzig also created a car reduced city center, to make roads sharable and friendlier to cyclists. The city's overall goal is to increase the modal split for bicycles to 20% by 2020. Leipzig's "Project Bike Stands" increased the number of bike parking and stands to 1,000, and the addition of two bicycle garages with 1,000 spaces at Leipzig University.

Energy and climate protection

As early as 1992, Leipzig began working on its energy plan which included the City's goals for renewable energy and plans for energy reduction. In 2005, Leipzig laid the foundation with the Climate Protection Program and in 2011, updated and renewed it to the Energy and Climate Protection Plan. The plan has five core aspects:

- Analysis of available energy and use in the economy, community, household consumption, and transportation;
- Emission balance;
- The analysis of trends and actions for fossil fuels, renewable energy, energy conservation and efficiency for 2020, 2030, and 2040;
- An instruments and measurement index; and
- Scenario for 100% renewable energy use.

Thematic areas and goals

Compact city development

Leipzig's sustainable transportation systems and strong, pedestrian-friendly city center make it a model European compact city. The city center is designed for pedestrians and accommodates the elderly, with large pedestrian areas, rest zones, and a car-reduced system.



A light rail transit station in Leipzig, Germany



The City of Leipzig showcases its plans to develop Georg-Shumann Street with the City of Kumamoto



Designated bike lane next to a tram line in downtown Leipzig

Leipzig has discussed issues related to compact city development with its partner city of Kumamoto in a previous exchange in 2013. Together the two cities discussed development of the city center and transport planning, particularly pedestrian area expansion, institution of bicycle routes and bike shares, and transit network development. Leipzig looks forward to exchanging experiences related to the concentration of city functions and improving transportation networks with other project cities.

Low-carbon development

Leipzig has set a plan to reduce CO₂ emissions by 10% every 5 years to reach 2.5 tons of CO₂ emissions per capita by 2050. One of the ways the City intends to achieve this reduction in emissions is to become a capital of electric mobility through planning for better tram services (handicapped accessibility), better integration of tram tracks in streets, planning for cyclists and pedestrians, car-reduced city centers and pedestrian zones, and speed zones in residential areas. Leipzig is particularly interested in the development of smart mobility systems. The City has set a complementary goal of reducing trips taken by car by 25% over the next ten years by offering more attractive alternatives.

Goals: Leipzig is interested in discussing ways to more effectively reduce its carbon emissions, particularly through the development of sustainable transport systems with other project cities. With its partner city Kumamoto, Leipzig plans on collaborating to create an outline for a handbook on tram station design, a collection of good practices from Leipzig, Kumamoto, and other cities. The handbook is expected to discuss integrated urban design that shall focus on compact cities. The overall objective of the handbook is to underline the means to implement EcoMobility oriented street design.

The cities are exploring the opportunity for Kumamoto to implement a pilot project with the new tram station design and evaluate its performance. In addition, the cities have also agreed that continuing communication and raising awareness among citizens are crucial for ecomobility. The delegates committed to cooperating and exploring the means to raise awareness of ecomobile activities within their cities.



Street art in Leipzig depicting old parking signs that are no longer in use, taken during the Second Working Meeting, November 2015

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