

Climate Star 2007

For the third time, Climate Alliance has invited all European cities and municipalities to present their climate protection activities and apply for a Climate Star.

In November 2007 the Climate Star laureates 2007 were awarded on invitation of the regional authority Lower Austria at a ceremony in Baden near Vienna.



Awarded projects

Alcalá de Henares (Spain, 204,000 inhabitants)

Alcalá Bici Service: a firm commitment for sustainable transport

Alpine Pearls (21 municipalities from Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland)

Cross-border sustainable mobility for tourists

Baden AT (Austria, 25,300 inhabitants)

Bicycle traffic plan

Baden CH (Switzerland, 17,000 inhabitants)

'Badenmobil' mobility management in enterprises

Essen (Germany, 582,100 inhabitants)

Image campaign 'Climate Heroes'

Esslingen am Neckar (Germany, 91,500 inhabitants)

'Esslingen Net' a sustainable, climate friendly traffic plan

Ghent (Belgium, 224,000 inhabitants)

Ring the bell for a better environment

Karlstad (Sweden, 83,000 inhabitants)

The Echo Action – sustainable life and consumption styles

plan-b Mobil (6 municipalities from Austria)

Alternative ways from a to b

Sheffield (United Kingdom, 520,700 inhabitants)

Emissions impact tool for city traffic

Stockerau (Austria, 16,600 inhabitants)

Municipal vehicles with vegetable oil

Wieselburg (Austria, 4,000 inhabitants)

Fantastic climate: without gas accelerator across Erlauf Valley

Zwischenwasser (Austria, 3,200 inhabitants)

Sustainable mobility, focusing on 'area-wide speed limit 30 kmh'

Alcalá Bici Service: a firm commitment for sustainable transport

Alcalá de Henares

(204,000 inhabitants), Spain

In the city of Alcalá de Henares, located near Madrid, private cars are still the standard mode of transport for getting around town, with the usual result being daily traffic jams and congested streets. The solution: the bicycle. The city came up with the idea of 'Alcalá Bike Service', a bike borrowing service with a total of 200 bicycles. The bikes are available free of charge, but users have to register with the city administration which equips them with a helmet, lock, reflective clothing and a route map, as well as a comprehensive info packet. This packet published by the city contains street maps, bicycle path routes, parking places, bike borrowing stations and instructions for safe cycling. Visitors can also get their info packet at the tourist information office. The Alcalá Bike Service initiative has also been buttressed by infrastructure improvements, including a network of 19 bicycle parking spots. So far the bikes have been a great success, helping to reduce the number of motorists. As a result the bike service has made an important contribution to protecting the climate and reducing the negative effects of automobile traffic.



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Cross-border sustainable mobility for tourists

Alpine Pearls

21 tourism municipalities in the Alp area (Arosa, Bad Reichenhall, Berchtesgaden, Chamois, Cornedo-Collepietra, Feltre, Forni di Sopra, Funes, Hinterstoder, Interlaken, Les Gets, Morzine-Avoriaz, Neukirchen, Nova Levante, Nova Ponente, Pieve di Cadore, Racines, Sauris, Tires, Villard de Lans, Werfenweng)



Twenty-one tourist towns in the Alpine region spread out over Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland have banded together under the umbrella association 'Alpine Pearls' to jointly promote environmentally-friendly mobility. The special feature about this association: These 21 towns have turned the spotlight on 'gently mobile' holidays, joining forces to cooperate on marketing. These towns start by giving their guests directions on how to arrive at their holiday destination car-free. Once there, the guests can get around using practical, innovative and environmentally-friendly means of transport, including an electro-shuttle bus and even a horse-drawn carriage. But as fun and clever as these kinds of transport may be, nothing beats the first-rate hiking and bike trails these towns offer. Bundling and expanding on individual initiatives have helped promote sustainable mobility in tourism more intensively – for the benefit of the holiday-makers, who can be sure that clearly defined minimum standards are met, and for the benefit of these tourist towns, who are increasingly combining an ecological approach to holiday travel with economic success.

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Bicycle traffic plan - a comprehensive cycling initiative

Baden

(25,300 inhabitants), Austria

The idea was to encourage people to help reduce CO2 emissions by cycling more and leaving their cars at home. That's why the town of Baden in Lower Austria came up with a comprehensive cycling initiative in 2001 which has been gradually implemented over the last few years. Now the town boasts cycling friendly credentials, and the percentage of bicycle traffic has doubled. Plus, cyclists are no longer left by the wayside when it comes to street planning. Gaps in the continuity of bicycle paths have been gradually closed and new paths built that bisect the town. New multi-purpose and bicycle paths have been built, red pavement surfaces added and special stopping areas at intersections designated for cyclists. In addition, all one way streets have been opened to two-way bicycle traffic. Bicycle parking has also been expanded: Baden has Austria's largest Bike & Ride complex, bike parking racks have been distributed throughout the town centre, and the plans for the construction of the new train station were drawn up with cyclists in mind. Some very special features of Baden's initiative are its bike borrowing scheme, a staffed bicycle service point and the solar-powered bike self service boxes with tools and pressurised air. Baden holds regular events to raise public awareness, such as the 'Bicycle Breakfast' or the free-of-charge 'Bike Check', and has sent a bicycle route map to every household. All of these efforts have contributed significantly to making Baden very bicycle-friendly.



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Badenmobil – mobility management in enterprises

Baden

(17,000 inhabitants), Switzerland



Businesses were the chief focus of the 'badenmobil' project initiated by the city of Baden, in the Swiss canton Aargau, and its neighbouring municipalities. Proper mobility management efforts in companies can make a key contribution toward solving traffic problems in cities. The goal was to offer businesses with more than 100 employees various services, such as an assessment of their initial situation and qualified mobility consultants, within the context of an initial consultation free of charge. Financial support was offered in the following way: up to 50 percent of the costs for the consulting process were subsidised and many matters were referred to the competent municipal and cantonal authorities. In addition, 'badenmobil' also acts as a communication and exchange platform. The companies that took part in the initial project phase from 2003 to 2006 had great potential for improvement, potential that was exploited successfully. The percentage of automobile traffic dropped from as high as 85 percent to under 25 percent in some cases. Efforts focused on parking management, commuter traffic, exploiting car sharing and promoting public transport by offering bonuses. At Baden's occupational training centre the issue of mobility was part of the curriculum, helping to raise awareness, not just among workers, but also among apprentices as well badenmobil: to be continued ...

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Image campaign 'Climate Heroes' – Right-of-way for 'Climate Heroes'

Essen

(582.100 inhabitants), Germany

You've always wanted to be a hero? The City of Essen, located in North Rhine-Westphalia, makes it easy for you to be a 'climate hero' simply by taking the train or the bus. This is just one of the catchphrases in the city's image campaign 'Climate Heroes', initiated by the Essener Verkehrs-AG (Municipal Transport Services) aimed at broadening the notion of what a hero is and giving everyone the chance to be one. One small change in behaviour, like taking public transport more often, has a large impact on the climate. The idea of a 'climate hero' raises awareness in a humorous and novel way without being preachy, while also going hand in hand with the website www.klimahelden.de which offers background and additional information on the climate, the environment and the public transport system. Within the context of this campaign 100 buses and trams have been outfitted with slogans, such as 'Carpool for the Climate', or 'Right-of-Way for Climate Heroes', and advertise throughout the city. Billboards, leaflets and postcards have been printed up, ad space purchased and a number of events organised. Seven Sundays have been designated to encourage those who take the bus or train seldom or not at all to try it out by offering them a coupon for a free ride. And public transport regulars are rewarded for the 'heroic' behaviour they demonstrate on a daily basis.



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'Esslingen Net' a sustainable, climate friendly traffic plan

Esslingen am Neckar
(91,500 inhabitants), Germany



For the town of Esslingen am Neckar in Baden-Württemberg, with its historic old town, narrow streets and densely populated centre, mobility with as few cars as possible has always been a priority. For that reason the town has approved a climate-protection strategy that focuses instead on environmentally friendly means of transport. The result has been the first-ever walkway map to be developed by a Germany municipality, and its network of bike paths is being further developed with the help of involved citizens. Some 8.5 million people regularly take advantage of the town's public transport system offering high-quality service and tight schedule coordination with the regional and supra-regional public transport network. A programme to accelerate bus traffic, equipping the routes with the necessary technology and introducing a number of bus lanes in several areas, is underway. These efforts make possible an integrated transport schedule with reliable intervals aimed at ensuring that passengers will catch their transport connections. Low-floor busses with ramps and tilting technology make it easier for passengers to get on, and the gradual addition of tactile cues on the pavement and pushbuttons at bus stops aid the visually impaired. A great deal of attention has also been paid to the appearance of the bus stops which reflect the town's red and green colours, and schools that 'adopt' a bus stop receive € 700 a year. Emission and low-noise trolley busses service the town centre, as do additional 'duo busses' equipped with diesel motors and electro-propulsion which can travel outside of the trolley routes. Night owls can also take advantage of the services offered by a subsidised night-taxi.

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Ring the bell for a better environment

Ghent

(224,000 inhabitants), Belgium

The city of Ghent is known as the bicycle capital of Flanders. Public policies consistently implemented over the last several years to promote environmentally-friendly mobility have begun to bear fruit: in Ghent 110,000 routes are travelled daily by bicycle, 17.5 percent of all routes are travelled on foot, including in the city's pedestrian areas covering a total areas of 35 hectares. The city is famous throughout the country for its innovative campaigns aimed at sparking increasing interest in this new kind of culture of mobility. And since last autumn Ghent has been breaking new ground: its initiative 'Ring Your Bike Bell for a Better Environment' has raised awareness among the city's inhabitants, district for district, for sustainable mobility and the plusses it brings for both the climate and the pocketbook. A detailed brochure provides information on bicycle and walkway connections, as well as public transport fares, schedules and connections to all of the important destinations in day-to-day life, not to mention 30-kmh zones, car-sharing offers, etc. for each city district. Inquiries can be made via e-mail or telephone – or even at home – for personal advice on mobility. Ghent's inhabitants can share their experiences with others in 'mobility teams' organized by the city. The campaign is currently underway in the Brugse Poort district; four more districts are to be added every year.



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The Echo Action – sustainable life and consumption styles

Karlstad

(83,000 inhabitants), Sweden

With its project 'Echo Action', the Swedish city of Karlstad has set high goals for itself, such as making the municipality more ecologically sustainable by encouraging families to change everyday habits.

Objectives include lowering energy consumption for heating, encouraging sustainable mobility and promoting more environmentally friendly behaviours in general. 'Echo Action' is aimed at developing models for the active and voluntary participation of households, as well as of members of the local business community and financial institutions. The local energy agency and the city administration work together to coordinate the project as a part of the municipal energy strategy.

Phase one is to involve 100 households whose successes are to be shared with the rest of the town's inhabitants. This illustrates the project's two-pronged approach: to communicate directly with families on one hand, thereby addressing the demand side of the equation, and also to involve the trades, businesses and banks on the other, who represent the supply side. Working groups – family members are to be divided up among different groups – are to take a critical look at households' lifestyles and consumption patterns. Subsequently, the focus is to turn to implementing low-cost measures and supporting those households who are willing to make expensive investments. The results reported by a preliminary study of 11 families were significantly promising: consumption of electricity, heating and petrol all fell by 20 percent each.



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Alternative ways from a to b

plan-b

The municipalities of Hard, Kennelbach, Lauterach, Schwarzach and Wolfurt and the city of Bregenz, Austria



In 2004 municipalities in the province of Vorarlberg began taking action to raise awareness for the issue of mobility in kindergartens, schools, companies, public administration and tourism by drawing up and implementing tailor made transport solutions. For example, a mobility management in every area. Success through 'school-walker passport' was developed for 1,700 school children, a campaign that by itself was responsible for saving 3,900 car trips to school each time the it was carried out. Plan-b municipalities also provide local companies with information and support for mobility management and have worked together with public transport to develop and implement a number of company mobility solutions. Public administration has lived up to its reputation as a role model in the region by actively pursuing mobility management policies for their employees and citizens as well. Plan-b has also motivated event organisers to back the use of environmentally friendly forms of transport, for example transport services to and from the event, or providing enough parking for bicycles during events. The music group Bürgermusik Wolfurt and the bike club Radcult have joined forces to make a staffed bicycle storage area available for event participants. Plan-b projects have already begun to gain ground throughout Vorarlberg, as well as beyond its borders.

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Emissions impact tool for city traffic

Sheffield

(520,700 inhabitants), United Kingdom

The City of Sheffield in England wants to know exactly what's what: How high are the CO2 emissions caused by city traffic? Ballpark figures were not enough; it had to be possible to take precise measurements of the city's CO2 footprint based on individual journeys. The new measurement instrument for the city centre is already in action; other districts are to follow suit soon. Now potential CO2 emissions caused by planned, new urban development can be measured in advance. As a project developer, the city administration can use these figures as a basis for incorporating plans to reduce CO2 emissions and examine emission-reducing measures proposed by developers as well. In addition, the calculations also form the basis for CO2 compensation in emissions trading. In the future the measurement instrument is to be used for other purposes as well, such as to optimise the fleet of busses that service Sheffield. Every single traffic route generated by urban development can be included in the catalogue of measures to lower CO2 emissions and in the city's traffic strategy. The objective is to examine how much potential the measures in Sheffield's traffic strategy have to reduce CO2. Furthermore, the city's toll fee model can also be adjusted to take the reduction of CO2 emissions into account.



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Municipal vehicles with vegetable oil

Stockerau

(14,500 inhabitants), Austria



The municipality of Stockerau in Lower Austria plans to equip its rolling stock with the latest in vehicle technology: every vehicle is to be powered solely by vegetable oil. By the end of 2008 the municipality is to take the first step to purchase five vehicles that run only on sunflower seed oil. The sunflowers will be grown by farmers in the surrounding areas, and the oil is to be pressed locally as well, allowing the region to retain the value-added and also promote jobs. Class A organic compost is to be used to grow the sunflowers with a high humus content, the best way to enrich the soil with valuable humus. This is also a key factor in terms of the climate as well, as a one percent increase in humus content in the soil can bind approximately 90 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

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Great for the climate – car free through the Erlauf valley

Wieselburg an der Erlauf
(4,000 inhabitants), Austria



In Wieselburg, the school contest 'Prima fürs Klima – ohne Gaspedal durch das Erlauftal' (Great for the climate – car free through the Erlauf valley) was developed primarily with one goal in mind, namely to reduce car traffic in front of schools. Every child who walked, rode his/her bicycle or took the bus to school coloured in a dot on the regional map. The class that managed to colour in all of their dots first won a prize, the top prize being a travel voucher for the Austrian Federal Railways for the whole class. So far a total of 900 school children in elementary, middle and secondary schools have taken part, learning more than how to navigate their way in street traffic. Taking the environmentally friendly route to school was also healthier and helped promote the children's social skills. The children's parents also learned a great deal – a positive side effect that shouldn't be underestimated. The contest can be adapted to accommodate any region. In fact, two neighbouring municipalities have already followed Wieselburg's example.

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Sustainable mobility, focusing on “area-wide speed limit 30 kmh”

Zwischenwasser

(3,200 inhabitants), Austria

Zwischenwasser is a small country municipality that has made sustainable town policies a priority. Knowing full well that the issue of mobility is the toughest to tackle when striving to achieve sustainability, Zwischenwasser has come up with a comprehensive and ambitious package of policies entitled ‘Sustainable Mobility’ and has been committed to implementing them, including an attractive public transport system with bus stops. These measures are flanked by a number of incentives, such as free tickets, or an on-call bus for the sparsely populated outskirts of town on the weekends. Other services, such as car sharing, driver safety courses and carpooling exchanges, are also on offer. One particular success was the introduction of a 30-kmh speed limit throughout the town which has raised awareness of the problems caused by traffic. Accompanied by police enforcement and tickets for infractions, average vehicle speed has dropped significantly, as has the number of accidents. An attempt by local politicians to do away with the 30-kmh ordinance failed, as the change had been met by a great deal of approval by the town’s inhabitants.



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Nominated cities and municipalities

LONDON TOLL AS ROLE MODEL. The most prominent candidate for the Climate Star was certainly the city of **London** with its inner city toll introduced at the beginning of 2003. Toll revenues have made an ambitious expansion of the city's public transport system possible. Individual motorised traffic has fallen by five per cent since 2000 – truly a unique result. Stockholm has adopted a similar model, and New York City is soon to follow suit as well. The jury decided against awarding London the Climate Star for one reason, namely because this initiative, which has set new standards in climate protection, is already so widely known. However, the jury did decide to single London out for honorary mention.

EUROPEAN ROLE MODEL IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT. The French city of **Nantes** was also among the cities nominated as a positive example of a flourishing city pursuing proactive policies in urban development, transport and the environment. Nantes' modern and excellently coordinated network of regional rail, trams and busses has made the city a role model throughout Europe in public transport. Currently additional steps are being developed based on the city's climate strategy passed in March 2007 aimed at halving CO2 emissions by 2025.

PROJECT WITH A FUTURE. Several of the nominated projects contain measures that are still in the developmental stage or are just on the cusp of implementation, but were viewed as particularly promising and worthy of imitation. The aim of nominating them is to encourage these cities and municipalities to submit their initiatives again at a later date for consideration. One of these projects is the "Universade per Bicycle" in **Belgrade**. The project, initiated by the "Yugo Cycling Campaign", was deemed exemplary for its environmentally friendly management of large-scale events, flanked by permanent measures for environmentally friendly mobility in the city. The project centres on the building of a bike path network that interconnects the most important destinations of the student Olympiad. A number of public relations and lobbying activities have accompanied the project's implementation.

"SHARED-SPACE". The recent concept of "shared space" is aimed at designing public space so that travelling, lingering and other spatial activities enjoy a balanced co-existence. The municipality of **Hollabrunn** has taken this concept to heart with the aim of becoming Austria's model "shared space" municipality. A project partnership, including research trips to Haren in the Netherlands, has served as Hollabrunn's inspiration.

NOISE REDUCTION STRATEGY. The German city of **Norderstedt**, part of the conurbation surrounding the city of Hamburg, has come up with Europe's first noise reduction strategy in line with the EU Environmental Noise Directive that was elaborated in close cooperation with the public. The Noise Reduction Strategy is aimed at changing the "modal split" in Norderstedt in the long-term by 2013: motorised individual traffic is to be reduced from 58% to 51%, bicycle traffic and pedestrian traffic are to increase by 14% and 16%, respectively. The overarching goal is, of course, to lower CO2 emissions: 11% of traffic emissions and 3% of Norderstedt's total emissions.

"CUT DOWN ON TRAFFIC". The Climate Star 2007 winners and nominated cities and towns have come up with a number of answers to the question posed by the EU Green Paper: What measures can be taken to promote walking and cycling as real alternatives to the automobile? One exemplary initiative is the "Cut Down on Traffic" project in the Austrian province of Lower Austria. The objective is to motivate inhabitants to reduce the number of trips they take by car by raising awareness, launching creative campaigns and carrying out simple public works measures. The municipality of **Bad Vöslau**, for example, has submitted its pedestrian guide system as its current traffic saving project. This initiative was developed in close cooperation with the town's inhabitants to encourage both residents and tourists to do more walking within the municipality.

REMOVING OBSTACLES FOR CYCLISTS. With its bicycle traffic strategy the city of **Luxembourg** has demonstrated that it is possible to promote cycling even in topographically adverse conditions. The strategy is modelled on the concept of "bicycle traffic as a systematic approach". To enable cyclists to overcome the 70 meter difference in altitude in the settlement area several lifts and bridges were built and are open to pedestrians and cyclists only. One other feature is that selected bus lanes have been opened to bicycle traffic.

"**VIRGER MOBIL**". Even smaller municipalities came up with a number of effective ideas for counteracting the daily surfeit of traffic. The municipality of **Virgen** in Austria has created its own environmentally-friendly mobility service entitled "Virger Mobil". A passenger car with volunteer drivers is available throughout the day from Monday to Friday. In the mornings the car travels two set circular routes, and the car serves as an "on-call" bus in the afternoon. Trips within the municipality to the doctor or the grocery store are to be taken "no longer alone, but together" in the future.

REDESIGNING AN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TOWN CENTRE. Yet another example of a small municipality that has distinguished itself thanks to its integrated approach is **Spillern** in Lower Austria. When redesigning its town centre, Spillern seized the opportunity to concentrate a number of functions in one general vicinity and make it possible to access them by bicycle and primarily on foot.

"**ON FOOT IS FINE**". The motto of the municipality of **Ulrichskirchen-Schleinbach** in Lower Austria is "On Foot is Fine". Experienced movement experts teach school children how important daily physical activity is, and police officers instruct them on traffic regulations. Every Friday morning the elementary school children meet at certain (pedestrian) stops where participating parents then escort them on to school. Along the way, more and more children join the group. Currently more than 35% of all elementary school children are currently participating in this initiative.

YEAR OF MOBILITY. **Feldkirch**, Vorarlberg, has dedicated all of 2007 to the issue of mobility. A comprehensive package of mobility management measures covers about 60 smaller and larger-scale individual measures aimed at raising awareness, providing information, services and advice, improving the existing framework and creating incentives for the eco-mobility network known as the "Umweltverbund". The initiative has focused on a creative corporate design and bettering infrastructure for the "Umweltverbund", such as offering bicycle service points and expanding bus and car sharing services.

ATTRACTIVE LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT. Mobility in the **Pinkatal/Stremtal** region has been made truly attractive thanks to the construction of a municipal alliance for local public transport. Modern low floor buses and transport schedules that run on fixed intervals, not to mention a "party bus" (runs until 3 a.m.) are the cornerstones of this impressive project. New busses are to be purchased in the course of 2008 which are to run on bio-SNG (and made in Güssing, a model region for energy self-reliance on the basis of regional resources).

MUNICH AS A ROLE MODEL. The basis for the jury's evaluation was, in addition to the project itself, information on the climate protection programme and the most important individual measures provided in the form of a checklist. The city of **Munich** was nominated because it had by far the highest point score. Munich is a role model, not just in developing climate protection strategies, but also thanks to its district heating network – the largest in Europe – its high percentage of combined heat and power generation, several projects for solar-powered buildings and cooperation efforts with companies, architects and craftsmen.