



6th Conference on Sustainable Development in Municipalities (23.09.2019)
European Dialogue on the municipal implementation of the 2030 Agenda



City of Solingen
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Global Sustainable Municipality NRW Sustainability strategy of Solingen

In 2016, Solingen launched the project 'Global Sustainable Municipality NRW' to implement the United Nations' SDGs on local level. In this context, Solingen has developed an integrated strategy for sustainable urban development involving numerous local players. In autumn 2018, the City Council unanimously adopted the strategy and the associated program of measures. Since then, the implementation of the strategy has been driven forward together with many groups of actors.



Initial situation

- Numerous actors from the urban and civil society in Solingen have been working on projects and concepts to promote Sustainable Development for many years. The city has been awarded repeatedly for this.
- Like many municipalities in NRW, Solingen is in heavy debt and is facing austerity measures. Additionally, the population of Solingen is growing.
- Against this background, the City leaders, politicians and civil society support the aim to set up a target and steering system for Sustainable Development at local level. Related to this plan were the goals to establish a sustainability management system, to expand the collaboration with city, civil society, business and science as well as to achieve a broader implementation of measures.



Objectives

- Based on an intensive inventory (SWOT analysis) six key action areas of Sustainable Development were to be chosen—with the target to use strengths and to reduce local weaknesses.
- These key action areas are: societal participation, natural resources and environment, climate and energy, mobility, labor and economy as well as global responsibility and one world.
- A mission statement and 24 strategic and 56 action-guiding (SMART) goals were the result of an intensive dialogue. They describe Solingen's path towards a sustainable future and have been developed in collaboration with many actors.
- A program of measures including 210 initiatives points out the first steps to realize the goals.
- Against the background that societal discourses are currently undergoing radical change and that a growing number of people—especially young people—are calling for climate protection and sustainability, a much faster and more dynamic implementation is urgently needed.



Implementation

- Work organization and the participation process are an important basis for the development and the current implementation of the sustainability strategy.
- The coordination of the project is the responsibility of the mayor's office.
- A core team in the administration integrates the central departments, works interdisciplinary and promotes development and implementation.
- The steering group, chaired by mayor Tim Kurzbach and consisting of 30 members from politics, business, science and civil society, works in close cooperation with the core administrative team.
- Additionally, public sustainability conferences take place. From these many steps of further participation have emerged.
- The intensive dialogue delivered a significant contribution to the City Council's unanimous adoption of the sustainability strategy.
- Since May 2019, a sustainability assessment is in place. It reviews the impact of policy decisions on sustainability objectives.



Achievements

- Solingen has positioned itself as a pioneer in terms of municipal sustainability strategies.
- In fact, the strategy makes it possible to advance action for a sustainable future in a more result-oriented manner. An increasing number of players develops its own projects based on the goals.
- Currently, 16 major impulse projects derived from the program of measures are in the process of being implemented.
- Beyond that, the administration defines further key projects. These are projects with high relevance for the goals' achievement and a perspective for implementation by the end of 2020.
- Additionally, the administrative work organization will be strengthened further.

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