



## Local farmers grow their own energy

Bruck an der Leitha, Austria – 8 000 inhabitants

Wind energy – Organic farming – local partnership

A small Austrian town fights climate change with an innovative partnership of small, local entrepreneurs.



CREDITS: EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK

### Project in a Nutshell

The first Bruck wind farm in 2000 was intended to move the town toward fully renewable energy usage. Bruck set up a non-profit organisation to develop three major renewable energy sectors—a biogas plant, biomass district heating, and wind parks. The project is the fruit of 52 local shareholders who organized themselves in a private limited partnership. A quarter of the investors are organic farmers and the average investment was about EUR 100 000. Energiepark Bruck Leitha GmbH is also an investor and the project was supported by the European Investment Bank (EIB) thanks to the Investment Plan for Europe.

### Impact & Next steps

The 12 turbines with a total power of 36 MW produce clean energy for 27 000 households. The community takes a lot of pride in the windfarm. Because of the legal framework in Austria, all the energy is sold to the grid. Green-funded wind power is bought by a state-owned organisation, which is responsible for the commercialisation of green power on the free market. The project also created jobs in the village, which has been previously been suffering from brain drain to Vienna.

### Replicability: Challenges & Success Factors

Favourable politics and economics play an important role for renewable energy projects. Austria has a commercially and politically favourable environment for renewable energy installations (i.e. feed-in tariffs), which has led to the achievement of significant cost and carbon savings across the country. The engagement of the EIB played a significant role in making this project come true especially in terms of risk minimization: small companies should think out of the box and dare to apply for European funding. Thanks to the Investment Plan for Europe, the EIB is allowed to support small entrepreneurs and to take on more project risk than in previous onshore wind transactions.



Additionally, having local investors in renewable energy projects can lead to a high level of citizens' identification with the wind power and renewable energy in general, leading in this case to a wider acceptance of wind farms in this region.

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