

BEST PRACTICE



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Eliminating carbon and creating jobs

Sønderborg, Denmark - 28 000 inhabitants

CO₂ reductions – Economic growth – green jobs

Climate change is an important issue to Sønderborg's citizens. The entire area is involved in the vision of creating a CO₂-neutral growth area before 2029, creating and demonstrating new solutions, robust measurable CO₂ reductions, new green jobs and a generation of talented young people.

Project in a Nutshell

ProjectZero is a public-private partnership created to inspire and drive Sønderborg's transition to a zero-carbon community by 2029, based on improved energy efficiency, conversion of energy sources into renewables and by creating participation of all stakeholders to reach the goal. In order to move toward the vision, the city has acted on different fronts: from citizen engagement activities, to educational programmes (for all ages) and green energy infrastructure development.

Impact & Next steps

Sønderborg District Heating, in combination with massive absorption heat pumps and biomass burners, supplies more than 10 000 households, businesses and industrial customers in the city centre. Coupled with thermal solar heating facilities, biomass burners, bio-oil furnaces and other sources the network will be expanded to supply approx. 60% of households on the island of Als with green, CO₂-neutral district heating. By 2029, the project foresees the installation of several new onshore wind turbines and establishing an offshore large coastal wind turbine park on the north-east coast of the island of Als.

At the beginning of this programme in 2007, 82% of Sønderborg's energy consumption came from fossil fuels. By the time the second road map was prepared in 2015, this number had been reduced by 30%. Additionally, approximately 800 new green jobs were created between 2007 and 2013.

Replicability: Challenges & Success Factors

The success of this project is due, in part, to the inclusive approach taken and the strong focus on education and support for the different groups involved. For example, through group courses and workshops (Family-Zero), Sønderborg's families obtained knowledge of key changes in their everyday lifestyle which could bring efficient results; both in terms of CO₂-reductions and economic gains.

Through international and local partnership with industries, energy companies and municipalities, in Denmark but also abroad, Sønderborg manages to exchange best practice and develop new knowledge and ideas for next steps.



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