

Sønderborg Municipality, Denmark



## Learning city of Sønderborg

Keyword(s):

active citizenship, health

sustainability



### Introduction

To propel development, the city of Sønderborg is prioritising three interdisciplinary areas: citizenship, health and sustainability.

### Main challenge

Organizationally, the city of Sønderborg approached the implementation of SDGs in a comprehensive way. To this end, they anchored Sustainable development in three core departments, which are all represented and monitored in the Finance Committee. Responsible municipality departments have also been established. Securing action for sustainable Development is anchored in all settings from policy to action plans.

In Sønderborg, municipality actions for a sustainable future are intended to concentrate on the following areas:

- Sustainability
- Active citizenship
- Lifelong learning for all.

Examples of initiatives carried out:

ProjectZero – a public-private partnership driving Sønderborg's transition to a ZEROcarbon community by 2029 – engaging local citizens, the business community, education etc.

Municipal Sustainability Policies – ensure that sustainability will be an integral part of daily life throughout municipality departments.

Active Citizenship Policy – supporting co-creation between citizens and companies, inspiring municipal decision-making processes, student involvement in schools and e.g. in the design of activities in urban spaces.

VidensBy Sønderborg – promotes high standards of quality in education. Educational institutions' work with lifelong learning, education in the workplace and local associations' provision of learning in public spaces.

Another interesting example is the Festival of Sustainable Development, which brought together 2600 schoolchildren and 1700 citizens in 2019. (It seems to take place in different Danish cities every year.)

### **Timing**

Ongoing

### **Objective**

It is Sønderborg's intention to increase the positive outcomes of ongoing projects which have a focus on environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability. The city would also like to improve the quality of learning, strengthen external partnerships, and make sure that all citizens contribute to the process of establishing a learning city.

### **Target group**

City residents

### **Geographical range**

City of Sønderborg

### **Stakeholders and partners**

Various stakeholders are involved, e.g. for the Festival of Sustainable Development many partners of different profiles contributed: schools, NGOs, industry partners. Also, ProjectZero is based on private-public partnerships.

### **Strategy / materials**

The city strategy can be described as follows:

(according to <https://uil.unesco.org/city/sonderborg>):

“The ‘4-17-42’ way of thinking is Sønderborg’s main project as a Learning City. The three figures 4, 17 and 42 stand for:

The 4 policies for sustainability:

the Environmental sustainability policy;

the Economic sustainability policy;

the Social sustainability policy; and

the Cultural sustainability policy

A link to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Investing into quality education for all, sustainable energy and global partnerships for sustainability.

The 42 Key Features for Learning Cities: Ensuring coherent thinking and linking activities with tools to monitor results and boost development.

In addition, ProjectZero offers scientific and educational tools promoting a ZEROcarbon future from Kindergarten to PhD levels and envisions sustainability as a natural way of living.”

### **Compliance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**

SDG 17 as the Foundation

SDG 4, the basic prerequisite to ensure inclusion and local development

SDG 9, 11, 12 and 13 focus areas

SDG 8, decent jobs for all is a necessity.

### **Innovation(s)**

Clear strategy for implementation of SDGs, accountability of different departments involved (monitoring by the Financial Committee of the municipality).

### **Success parameters**

Awarded the 2019 UNESCO Learning City Award.

### **Replicability**

The initiative can be replicated and adapted to different environments.

### **Website/Social Media profile(s) of the initiative**

Website of the city: <https://sonderborg.dk/>

To learn more, you can visit:

- <https://uil.unesco.org/city/sonderborg>

- <http://www.houseofscience.dk/media/1489/unesco-learningcity-engelsk.pdf>
- <https://nordregio.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Sonderborg.pptx>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_xpoucVPIM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_xpoucVPIM) and  
<https://www.sustainablenow.org/> (Festival of Sustainable Development Goals)
- <http://brightgreenbusiness.com/> (Project Zero)

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