

## INCLU:DE case studies

# City of Ludwigsburg: Free and accessible climate solutions for low-income residents

In alignment with the United Nations' Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Leipzig Charter, the City of Ludwigsburg is dedicated to reducing carbon emissions and driving the energy transition to attain climate neutrality by 2035. As part of its climate protection efforts, Ludwigsburg launched the 'Climate Bonus' program in 2022, offering subsidies for climate-friendly housing with 350,000€ allocated for this purpose. The program was tailored to homeowners and tenants while integrating the needs of social welfare recipients.

Ludwigsburg's approach centered on the socially equitable design of the municipal 'Climate Bonus' funding program, featuring an innovative service for plug-in solar devices. For social welfare recipients holding the Ludwigsburg-Card (LB-Card) - which provides city-wide discounts on educational and cultural institutions for low-income residents - the city offered its solar subsidy as a comprehensive 'carefree package'. This innovative approach allowed applicants to simply indicate their interest while the city directly coordinates purchase and installation of the device. The package covered all service and installation costs totaling 1,450€, rendering the device completely free of charge and ensuring no money transfer was required from applicants. The package also included delivery and installation by a service partner. This eliminated financial barriers, administrative complexities and technical uncertainties - factors that often prevent disadvantaged households from accessing climate protection measures. On 1 September 2025, the Ludwigsburg KlimaBonus including the balcony solar subsidy program was suspended, since all available funds had been exhausted. Due to budget constraints, it is currently unclear when the program will reopen; a motion from the Green Party to reactivate the KlimaBonus is currently under consideration.

## Supportive measures

Through the INCLU:DE project, Ludwigsburg has implemented comprehensive measures to enhance program accessibility and community engagement:

- **Communication materials development:** The city designed new flyers and updated the Ludwigsburg homepage using plain language, developed in consultation with ICLEI and the city's Integration Council to ensure materials are accessible to diverse communities and non-native German speakers.
- **Local multiplier collaboration:** Strategic planning and identification of cooperation partners has enabled promotion during solar consultation sessions and other local events. This approach leverages trusted community relationships to reach households who might not otherwise learn about available programs through traditional municipal communication channels.
- **Targeted promotion strategies:** The city implemented direct outreach through emails to LB-Card holders and included program offers in the LB-Card voucher booklet, ensuring information reaches low-income residents through channels they already use. Planning did also foresee a public transport advertising campaign following ICLEI guidelines on target-group-oriented communication. Following the closure of the KlimaBonus, this campaign could not be implemented. Instead, the city launched a targeted social media campaign to focus on the Stromspar-Check. The goal is to reach new individuals within the target group and, by building and maintaining trust, to connect with these networks once the KlimaBonus funding resumes.

## Municipal uptake measures

Ludwigsburg is developing systematic approaches to embed social equity considerations comprehensively across its climate action efforts, from program design and public engagement to municipal planning and policy frameworks:

- **KlimaBonus balcony solar program optimization:** The city will maintain and refine the in-kind process for balcony solar installations, preparing all processes and target group contacts for the relaunch of the KlimaBonus. This initiative prioritizes outreach to LB-Card holders, with a focus on the precarious milieu in all communications. Due to the current funding situation, the program is likely to resume only in 2027.



- **Community testimonials:** Building on the Stromspar-Check campaign, future communication could feature testimonials from past LB-Card balcony solar recipients, highlighting success stories such as the 100th PV module installation through media and public outreach. This approach aims to demonstrate the program's impact and encourage broader participation among the press and potential participants, particularly LB-Card holders. The campaign is tied to the relaunch of the KlimaBonus and could serve as an ideal kick-off for the program's restart.
- **Urban development integration:** Using INCLU:DE insights, the city will frame socially just climate action within its Urban Development Concept, strategically integrating social cohesion and climate neutrality as complementary objectives rather than competing priorities. This aims to mobilize and connect municipal actors working towards social inclusion, particularly in the Participation/Social Cohesion Department. The update of the concept will likely take place in 2027.
- **Political integration:** In February 2026, Ludwigsburg presented the INCLU:DE guidebook as a formal report to the City Council, aiming to ensure that project learnings influence broader municipal climate policy and resource allocation decisions while fostering institutional commitment to inclusive climate action principles. Together with an additional presentation to Councillor Andrea Schwarz in March 2026, this initiative targeted political decision-makers to raise awareness of just and inclusive climate action and encourage its prioritization in future policy decisions.

