



Leipzig

The Ecoguide



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The Project

Youth Participation against Climate Change

RYCA is a 2 year project aims at fostering youth networking, participation and action on the matter of Climate Change. This contributing on one hand, to the general goal of the European Youth Together call to increase youths engagement in the European political debate and on the other, to the broader goals indicated in the European Green Deal to address the imminent danger represented by the global climate crisis.

The rationale of the project sees the two streams of general objectives as complementary and intersected with each other:

- Increasing the youth ability to participate in the social and political life, locally and transnationally, in Europe both as a way to reconcile its often disrupted relations with grassroots, informal political streams of action
- and as a way to bring the European Green New Deal to the more capillary level of local actions and debates, where often the Europeans institutions are felt at their farthest from the EU citizen.

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Intro to Leipzig

Leipzig is one of the most popular cities in Germany. But what makes Leipzig so particularly worth living in?

One third of the city consists of parks, green spaces and floodplain forest. The Leipzig floodplain forest is considered the largest inner-city, contiguous forest area of its kind in Europe.

Leipzig is therefore, with good reason, one of the greenest cities in Germany. Thanks to the good connections and the numerous options, such as e-bikes, car sharing and the like, you are always mobile and just a stone's throw away from the adventures that await you in the city. In addition, you will find a large selection of shops in Leipzig for fair fashion and regional products, organic markets and unpackaged shops. A visit to Leipzig also promises a lot for the taste buds. Numerous cafes, restaurants and markets leave nothing to be desired and have a lot of to offer.



Photo from Canva Photos

1. Food production and consumption



I. Food production and consumption

Food production and consumption is a fundamental theme to discuss: the way we purchase and consume food as well as our dietary choices have a huge impact on the environment. Having a deeper knowledge of local sustainable options and of a few easy tricks could reduce food waste and have a positive influence on our own health and the environment.

Leipzig's culinary scene features plenty of sustainable and vegetarian-friendly options:

Vegetarian and vegan cafes/restaurants:

- Katzentempel (Katharinenstr 17);
- Zest (Bornaische Strasse 54);
- An Chay (Karl-Liebknecht Strasse 1);
- Pizza LAB (Georg-Schwarz-Str. 10);
- GAO Vegan (Zentralstrasse 1);
- Quan Xanh (Zschochersche Strasse 48);
- Kaspar Schmauser (Karl-Liebknecht-Str 8).

Organic Markets:

- Leipzig Market Square;
- Biomarkt;
- Farmer's market;

Zero-Waste Restaurant:

- Kaffeefreunde.



Food sharing networks:

Food sharing is an increasingly popular movement in Leipzig, with various platforms and initiatives working to reduce food waste by redistributing surplus food. Groups such as Food sharing Leipzig and local food banks collect excess food from supermarkets, restaurants, and individual households to share with those in need. These initiatives not only combat food waste but also help to address food insecurity within the community. With designated "fair trailer" points throughout the city, residents can drop off and collect surplus food, fostering a culture of sustainability and solidarity.

TAFEL Deutschland:

It is one of the most popular food bank in the Germany. This organization have around 60,000 volunteers and during their work they save 265,000 tons of food per year. Every day they collecting and distributing food for those who need it.

This food bank chain is able to operate because they receiving support by donors and sponsors. These people/companies/organization provide TAFEL not only with money, but also food and their time (volunteering).

In Leipzig there is one location of TAFEL there people can find help like providing childcare, tutoring, senior citizens assistance, also food. You can find it in Jordanstr. 5. Leipzig, Germany.

Community fridges

Leipzig has embraced the concept of community fridges to combat food waste while fostering a spirit of sharing and solidarity. These publicly accessible fridges, located in various neighbourhoods throughout the city, allow residents, businesses, and restaurants to donate surplus food that might otherwise go to waste. People in need, or anyone looking to reduce food waste, can take what they need from the fridges free of charge. Community fridges help ensure that edible food is not wasted, while also promoting food equity within the community. Managed by volunteers and supported by local initiatives, these fridges serve as hubs for sustainable living, encouraging residents to actively participate in food redistribution and waste reduction efforts.



2. Sustainable Fashion



2. Sustainable Fashion

Leipzig's sustainable fashion scene combines creativity, ethics, and environmental awareness. Whether you're shopping, swapping, or sewing, you'll find plenty of opportunities to embrace a greener wardrobe while supporting local and ethical businesses.

In Leipzig there is numerous organic markets and shops. Here is some shops where you can find sustainable fashion brands:

- Luxxa Fashion Store;
- pussyGALORE;
- Grünschnabel;
- Sister & Sister;
- HARBOR;
- HIVYOHIVYO;
- Suse dear Suse.

So if you living or visiting Leipzig, don't forget to visit one of these store to look for unique and sustainable clothes. Of course there is more stores like this in this city, this is just a small list of them, because there is more to uncover in here.

Fair Fashion Lab:

This is network which brings together numerous designers, retailers, activists, textile creators and everyone who wants to revive and develop create modern, sustainable, fair and innovative fashion. This initiative is active since 2019.

Fair Fashion Lab want to spread awareness about fashion industry, because they believe that fashion can and should be sustainable, ecological friendly, fairly produced.

This network attracts many local activists, and fashion field related people. They support initiative and on the daily bases spreading information about more environmentally friendly future.

One of them is Marisa Becker, podcaster, blogger and journalist which have her own blog where she writes about ecology related articles. You can check her blog [HERE](#).



3. Waste, Recycling and Upcycling



3. Waste, Recycling and Upcycling

In Leipzig, more than 600,000 people live, and while this may not be a large number compared to other German cities, the city still faces a significant food waste problem. A community named Community-supported agriculture (CSA) connects farmers and consumers directly, reducing food waste by 22–70% compared to regular farms. Even with smaller harvests, less waste balances the difference.

Waste management

Stadtreinigung Leipzig (Leipzig Waste Management Services) is a direct service organization of the City of Leipzig with 800 staff. Its services include waste management, street cleaning, and maintaining Leipzig's green spaces.

Interesting facts:

- 17 recycling centres;
- Waste collections for about 340,000 households and business customers;
- Maintenance of 760 green spaces, parks and squares with a total area of 798 hectares;
- Cleaning of two thirds of the road network with a total length of 1,780 km, about 1,000 km of public pavements and cycle paths, and the popular pedestrian zones in the city centre.

Zero-Waste grocery stores

Several zero-waste grocery stores in Leipzig, such as *Ladencafé Fleischerei* and *Unverpackt Leipzig*, play a critical role in reducing food waste. These stores encourage customers to purchase only what they need by offering unpackaged food and allowing shoppers to bring their own containers. By reducing packaging and promoting mindful consumption, these stores help to minimize food waste at the source. Additionally, they often partner with local farmers and producers to ensure that food is fresh and that any surplus is redistributed rather than discarded.



Waste separation

Different types of waste are collected and recycled separately. In Germany, waste separation starts directly with the consumer. This means that every household must sort its own waste and throw it into different bins and containers. Most of the waste in Germany is recycled and composted, which conserves resources and protects the environment. Basically, avoiding waste is still the easiest way to do something about the growing mountains of rubbish. If you throw something in the wrong bin, the employees or sorting facilities at the recycling centres must sort it out. If we all sort correctly, we can avoid this effort, reduce costs and do something for the environment. In Germany, you must separate your waste and put it in the correct bins. Each bin has a colour showing what can go inside. Check the yearly "waste calendar" for collection dates. Incorrect waste separation can lead to fines or higher costs. Always follow the rules to avoid trouble.



Deposit obligation

There is a so-called "deposit obligation" for certain drinks packaging. If you buy plastic and glass bottles or drinks cans in the supermarket, you pay a few cents more for them. If you return them empty later to the empties collection point in a supermarket (usually a vending machine), you get this money back. This is called a "deposit". There are two different types of these special bottles:

- On disposable bottles (which are recycled) you will find a square sign with a can and a bottle surrounded by an arrow. This is the logo of Deutsche Pfand-System GmbH. You will receive a 25-cent deposit back on bottles or cans with this symbol.
- On returnable bottles (which are washed and refilled) you will either find no labelling at all, a "blue angel" or the words "returnable (bottle)", "returnable bottle" or "deposit bottle". You get a 15-cent deposit back for returnable bottles. For beer bottles it is 8 cents.
- Beverage cartons are deposit-free.

If you don't have the time or inclination to return your deposit bottles yourself, you can also leave them in a clearly visible place next to a rubbish bin on the street. There are many people in Germany who collect these bottles to earn a little extra money.

4. Transportation & Travel



4. Transportation & Travel

Accounting for 20 % of all CO2 emissions, the transport sector is one of the largest producers of greenhouse gases. The city of Leipzig is an impressive example of sustainable mobility in action: it is in the heart of Europe, has excellent transport links, and is quick and easy to get around. For organisers and guests alike, it offers the very best in terms of accessibility and mobility to make conferences, congresses and events sustainable.

Leipzig: compact and pedestrian-friendly

Leipzig ranks as the 5th most walkable city in Europe, making it perfect for exploring on foot. Key attractions like the Botanical Garden, New Town Hall, Bach Museum, historic market, and Zoo Leipzig are all within a 30–90-minute stroll. The city's compact layout means hotels, conference venues, and cultural spots are close to the main railway station and each other. Whether for business or leisure, Leipzig offers convenience and charm with every step.

Sustainable mobility in Leipzig

Leipzig offers eco-friendly transport with one of Germany's largest tram networks and a growing fleet of electric buses powered by 100% green electricity. The City Tunnel connects key stops across the city, while LVB congress tickets make public transport easy for event attendees. For a greener experience, explore by bike with rental stations and free e-bike charging at popular spots like Zoo Leipzig and Leipziger Messe. With over 80% of public transport trips powered by electricity, getting around Leipzig is convenient and sustainable.

Public transport tickets

If you want to use public transport in Leipzig you of course need to buy a ticket, there is different types of tickets, some of them is for single trip, others valid for one hour. Also there is daily, weekly, monthly tickets. For some it can look expensive, but monthly public transport ticket is 104.90 euros and single trip ticket cost around 2.30 euros. For students city offers discount with student card.

If you visiting Leipzig as a tourist you can buy LEIPZIG CARD or LEIPZIG REGIO CARD. With REGIO CARD you can explore not only the city but also region around Leipzig in MDV area. LEIPZIG CARD holder can travel for free on all lines (including trams, buses, city trains etc.), also these holders and get up to 50% discount on admission to museums and shops, cultural events, restaurants, cafes and leisure facilities, magazines, guided tours and walking tours.



5. Water



5. Water

Leipzig's proactive water management policies and community-driven initiatives make it a leader in water sustainability. Whether you're enjoying a serene lake or strolling along the riverside, your eco friendly habits can help preserve Leipzig's water resources for future generations.

Leipziger Wasserwerke delivers tap water for 660,000 people in and around Leipzig. City is every year invest into modern technology and modern infrastructure to keep water and environment as clean as possible. Also, every school year it accepts pupils from schools to have educational lessons about water, it's quality and cleaning.

Facts about Wasserwerke Leipzig:

- Volume delivered (million cubic meters per year): 36,9
- Extracted in Leipzig (million cubic meters per year): 125,7
- Supplied residents 708 700

Walking around the city residents and visitors of Leipzig can find 28 free drinking water fountains. Also, in the city there is six indoors and six outdoors pool which are open for public usage.

Lakes

In Leipzig and around it there is more than 20 lakes which are open for public and are safe to swim in them. Most of these lakes are connected with canals and it is easy to navigate in them. Because of these canals it is very popular to swim in them with boats or small ships. There is also option to visit beaches around those lakes or find summer house in this area.

White Elster, Pleiße, and Parthe Rivers

These rivers flow through Leipzig and are vital to its biodiversity, recreation, and local water management systems.

Because of these rivers it is popular to try to travel in these waterways. There is boats tours, canoeing. Canoeing through the Water City Leipzig is old tourism tradition of over 150 years. You can also find paddling tour on the Elbe from Belgern via Torgau to Dommitzsch.



6. Energy



6. Energy

Energy is very important sector for city development, but it is more important that energy would be green. So here is some aspects of energy in Leipzig.

Companies

The Leipziger Energie GmbH & Co. KG. (10) is an established medium-sized company in the solar power industry based in Leipzig, which has been planning, implementing and assessing technical systems specialising in photovoltaics (PV) for more than 20 years. We accompany the projects of our national and international customers in all respects in order to strengthen sustainable, regional value creation with green energy concepts.

Floating photovoltaic plants

From the artificial reservoir or excavator lake to the natural lake landscape – floating photovoltaic systems (swimming photovoltaics). Floating PV for the production of green solar energy are used on standing waters and also in the near coast sector. They hold great potential for sustainable electricity generation.

Open-space photovoltaic systems

The generation of sustainable solar power is an essential pillar of the energy transition. In the 2030 Climate Protection Programme, the Federal Government is pursuing the goal of achieving a share of renewable energies in electricity consumption of 65 percent, which can be implemented by expanding the installed PV service to 98 GW. A predominant part of the PV capacity to be installed will be included in open space photovoltaic systems.

Leipzig places a strong emphasis on sustainability, not just in lifestyle but also in education. The city offers plenty of opportunities to learn about environmental protection, green practices, and sustainable living, whether you're a student, resident, or visitor.



7. Biodiversity



7. Biodiversity

Leipzig is home to various green spaces, parks, and water bodies that support diverse plant and animal life. Key areas include:

- **Auwald (Leipzig Riverside Forest):** One of the largest alluvial forests in Central Europe, this area hosts a mix of rare and common species. It includes.
 - Mammals like beavers, otters, and deer.
 - Bird species such as woodpeckers, owls, and herons.
 - A rich array of insects and amphibians, supported by the diverse forest ecosystem.
- **Parks and urban gardens:** Parks like Clara-Zetkin Park and the Leipzig Botanical Garden provide habitats for urban-adapted species and serve as important biodiversity hotspots.

Aquatic ecosystems

Leipzig's rivers, lakes, and canals, including the White Elster and Pleiße rivers, support aquatic biodiversity.

- Fish species like pike, perch, and roach.
- Amphibians and waterfowl that depend on these ecosystems for survival.
- Restoration projects have improved water quality, enhancing habitats.

Biodiversity conservation initiatives

Leipzig is committed to preserving biodiversity through various strategies:

- **Green corridors:** Ensuring connectivity between habitats to support species movement.
- **Urban greening projects:** Encouraging green roofs, walls, and urban meadows to increase biodiversity within the city.
- **Sustainable development:** Balancing urban expansion with conservation goals, as seen in projects like the Leipzig New Lakeland, where former mining areas have been rehabilitated into natural habitats.

Leipzig as a research hub

Leipzig hosts institutions like the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ), which conducts extensive research on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The city also engages in international biodiversity projects and partnerships.

Leipzig's approach to biodiversity highlights a strong commitment to integrating ecological values with urban living, making it a model for sustainable city development.

8. Education



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Leipzig University (Universität Leipzig)

One of Germany's oldest universities, Leipzig University, offers programs focused on environmental science, sustainability, and renewable energy. The Faculty of Life Sciences conducts research on biodiversity, climate change, and sustainable resource management. The university hosts workshops and public lectures on topics like climate justice, eco-friendly urban development, and sustainable business practices.

Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ)

A globally renowned research institute located in Leipzig, UFZ focuses on solutions for environmental challenges. Topics include water management, renewable energy, and urban ecology. The UFZ organizes community events, open days, and knowledge-sharing sessions to engage the public in eco-awareness.

Eco-Initiatives in schools

Leipzig schools actively incorporate sustainability into their curricula. Programs emphasize recycling, energy conservation, and urban gardening. Several schools partner with local eco-organizations to run nature education workshops, encouraging students to explore forests, rivers, and biodiversity. Green School Programs: Leipzig supports initiatives like "Umwelt macht Schule" ("Environment Makes School") to promote eco-consciousness among younger generations.



9. Participation



9. Participation

Leipzig is a city where community participation plays a central role in shaping its green and sustainable future. The local government, environmental organizations, and grassroots movements actively encourage residents and visitors to take part in sustainability initiatives.

- **Bürgerbeteiligung (Citizen participation):** Residents can provide input on urban development plans, such as creating new parks or pedestrian-friendly zones.
- **Climate action plans:** Leipzig's government frequently holds public forums and online surveys to gather ideas for its Climate Neutral Leipzig 2040 initiative.
- **Events and festivals:** Leipzig hosts several eco-themed events where locals and visitors can participate.
- **Umweltmesse (Environmental fair):** Learn about sustainable products and services, and attend hands-on workshops.
- **Ökofete Leipzig:** One of Germany's largest environmental festivals, featuring eco-friendly brands, live music, and activities for all ages.
- **Repair cafés:** Bring broken items to a repair café to learn how to fix them, reducing waste and promoting a circular economy.
- **Participatory urban planning:** Leipzig involves its citizens in urban development projects with a focus on sustainability.



10. Laws and regulations



10. Laws and regulations

Leipzig has many laws and regulations regarding ecology, in this chapter you will find some of them, but we can ensure you that there is more of them. These laws are aiming to protect Leipzig nature, green spaces, sustainability and trying to lower CO2 emission.

Recycling regulations

Leipzig operates under **Germany's Circular Economy Act**, which mandates recycling and proper waste disposal. Residents must separate waste into categories: paper, plastics, organic waste, and general waste. Green waste collection: composting initiatives for garden and organic waste.

Zero waste policy

Leipzig supports zero-waste initiatives, encouraging the reduction of single-use plastics and promoting reusable alternatives. Public establishments are required to provide recycling bins and reduce unnecessary packaging.

Nature conservation act

Strict regulations protect Leipzig's green spaces, such as parks, forests, and rivers. Urban planning projects must include measures to preserve biodiversity and green infrastructure.

Tree protection ordinance

Cutting down trees in Leipzig requires special permits, ensuring urban greenery is preserved. Developers must replace felled trees or contribute to reforestation projects.

Sustainable construction laws

New developments must adhere to eco-friendly construction practices, including the use of sustainable materials and renewable energy sources.

Emission zones

Leipzig has designated Low-Emission Zones (LEZs) where vehicles must meet specific emissions standards to reduce air pollution. Older, high-emission vehicles are restricted or fined for entering these zones.

Bicycle Infrastructure Policy

Leipzig invests in cycling infrastructure under its Bicycle Strategy 2030, ensuring safe, extensive, and eco-friendly travel options. Bike-sharing programs are supported by city subsidies.

Public Transport Sustainability

Public transport systems in Leipzig are transitioning to renewable energy sources and low-emission vehicles. Discounts and incentives for frequent public transport users, including students and seniors.

Water Protection Laws

Leipzig enforces **Germany's Water Resources Act** to protect its rivers and lakes, ensuring clean and sustainable water management. Strict controls on industrial discharge to preserve water quality in the Pleiße, Parthe, and White Elster rivers.

Rainwater Management

Green infrastructure projects, such as green roofs and permeable pavements, are mandatory for certain developments to manage stormwater and reduce flooding.

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