



Vienna Climate Team

Findings from the pilot years
2022 and 2023



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Foreword

Dear Readers,

Vienna is a city of participation. Whether it's shaping parks, your neighborhood, or participating in planning processes, the people of Vienna actively contribute beyond just elections. This wasn't always the case; it is the result of decades of continuous expansion and defense of democratic instruments and core values. Over the past decades, Vienna has seen a growing landscape of participation formats. In the future, we will continue to focus all efforts on democracy, its protection, and its strengthening. This is particularly important in the face of rising authoritarian tendencies worldwide, which have the potential to threaten even seemingly well-established democracies. Recently, Vienna was named the European Capital of Democracy – a title that we intend to honor.

The Vienna Climate Team is one of our most ambitious and successful initiatives launched in recent years, as it skillfully combines two future-oriented topics – democracy and climate protection. The beauty of this project lies in the way that the City of Vienna gathers thousands of (climate protection) ideas and suggestions for improvement that reside in the minds of the people of Vienna, which might never have been expressed without the Vienna Climate Team.

Behind this seemingly simple idea lie years of preparation, immense organizational effort, and a great deal of creative energy. The responsible municipal department, City of Vienna – Energy Planning, demonstrated all these qualities, and more, making the Vienna Climate Team an integral part of the city's participatory landscape. It has transformed from an ambitious pilot project into a permanent fixture.

Even in its first two pilot years, the people of Vienna showed enormous interest in the Climate Team: more than 3,000 climate protection ideas were submitted in total, and the winning projects have already been partially implemented or are in the process of being realized. All of them have one thing in common: they bring us closer to our goal of making Vienna climate-neutral by 2040.

You can read more about the diverse impact of the Vienna Climate Team and its importance for citizen participation in this publication about the now-completed pilot phase. I hope you enjoy reading!

Best wishes,

Mag. Jürgen Czernohorszky

City Councillor for Climate, Environment, Democracy, and Personnel



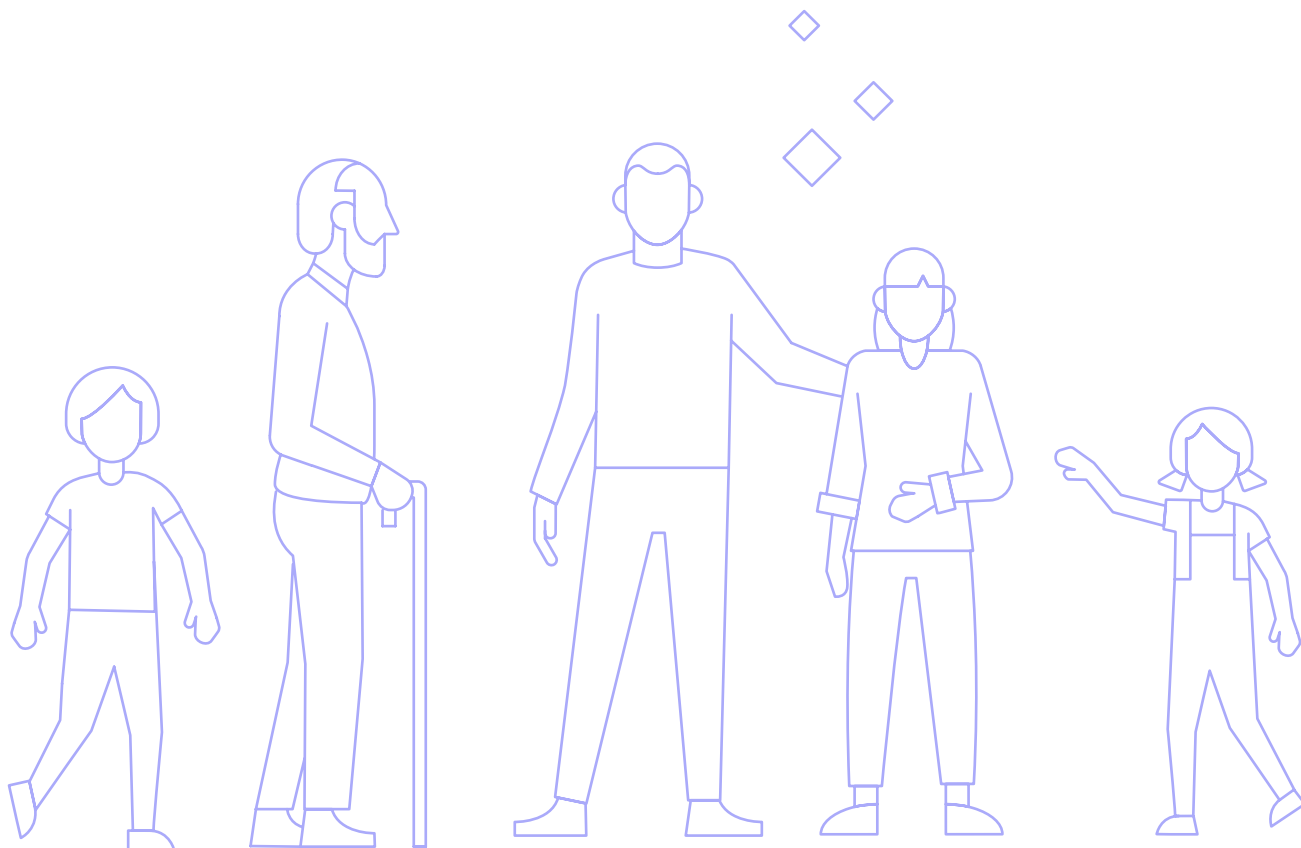
The Vienna Climate Team – A Learning Process



The Vienna Climate Team

Our Goals

With the Vienna Climate Team, the City of Vienna aims to explore new paths regarding participation, activation, governance, and cooperation. Participatory democratic elements are used to ensure broad and inclusive involvement of different social groups. All Viennese residents should have the opportunity to actively participate in shaping their living environment and to bring their ideas into action in collaboration with politics and administration. Climate protection and climate adaptation projects should therefore be developed jointly by citizens, administration, and politics, and implemented across sectors and topics. The focus is not only on fostering collaboration and mutual learning among all participants but also on developing projects that contribute to climate-friendly and socially equitable urban development in Vienna. Through these efforts, the Vienna Climate Team aims to serve as an exemplary model for joint action in addressing the climate crisis.



Joint Action is Needed!

Nina Abrahamczik, Wencke Hertzsch, and Thomas Madreiter in Conversation

In a conversation with City Councillor Nina Abrahamczik, Climate Team project leader Wencke Hertzsch, and Planning Director Thomas Madreiter, it becomes evident how deeply the project has developed over the past two pilot cycles and how the culture of participation in Vienna continues to evolve.

The starting point for developing the Climate Team was embedding participation as a goal within the Smart City Vienna framework strategy. This strategic process laid the foundation for realizing a participation format like the Vienna Climate Team. "Two things are key," emphasizes Thomas Madreiter, "making citizens participants, so a shared perspective emerges, and showing possible courses of action." These courses of action have become increasingly relevant in the context of climate change, which is manifesting more frequently through extreme weather events and heat in the city: "There arose a need to be active and to find answers to climate issues," says Wencke Hertzsch.

Before the Climate Team pilot cycle, several preliminary steps were necessary. A year before the start, various municipal departments and actors from the city and broader circles were activated to jointly shape the Climate Team process and to gain as many early supporters as possible. Potential challenges were also identified to prepare for setbacks and delays.



"In the entire climate debate, so much revolves around sacrifice; it should really be more about what we stand to gain." – Nina Abrahamczik

The Vienna Climate Team aims to bring climate issues to an everyday level and to create a framework in which citizens' ideas are optimally supported.

"It is also crucial that people's participation actually has an impact," says Nina Abrahamczik: "For the people of Vienna, it is important to see how they can make a difference."

It is a large-scale experiment that actively involves various actors – from municipal departments to

districts, politics, and residents. The focus is on joint learning and exchange. The Climate Team builds on the extensive experience of citizen participation that already exists in Vienna and aims to develop new decision-making pathways to promote projects and ideas that have positive impacts on the districts and the entire city. Trust in the process from the political side was crucial in the first two years, Wencke Hertzsch emphasizes.

At the beginning, it wasn't clear where the Climate Team's journey would lead and what specific effects it would achieve.

A key factor in the project's success is constant communication – during preparation, implementation, and follow-up. Listening was especially important: to the people of Vienna, as well as to municipal departments

and political representatives. It was necessary to consider different needs and continuously adapt the process. Good cooperation meant responding to challenges and showing that all participants were heard.

Particularly in the first pilot districts Margareten, Simmering, and Ottakring, significant pioneering work was done, as Wencke Hertzsch recounts. Today, the dialogue with districts regarding project implementation is ongoing: "It requires communication at many levels and great perseverance to achieve something like this."

The effort pays off. Especially in involving hard-to-reach groups, the Climate Team is having an impact: "Around 60 percent of participants had no previous participation experience, which was a big 'aha' moment from a participation perspective," reports the project leader. In addition, people who had not previously engaged intensively with the climate crisis were reached. Evaluation showed that

among the participants, not only did knowledge increase, but there was also a willingness to reconsider opinions: "The best result is that a large proportion of participants were willing to question their views."

"We need formats that ground the often elitist climate discourse in the reality of people's everyday lives." – Thomas Madreiter

In the future, it will be necessary to involve people quickly and efficiently in decision-making, says Thomas Madreiter: "We will need even more sophisticated instruments than today because changes will come at us faster."

"Central to the success of the first two years was also the trust placed in the process by politics and administration." – Wencke Hertzsch

Vienna is the European Capital of Democracy in 2024/2025. It is especially important, says Wencke Hertzsch, to inspire participation and democracy and "to make the quieter voices in a democracy heard." The Climate Team creates the framework to make democracy more tangible and is entering its third round in 2024 after two pilot years. The entire project is being stabilized, which is crucial for the city's participatory landscape overall, emphasizes Nina Abrahamczik: "I think it's wonderful that we now all know: The Vienna Climate Team is here to stay, and that's very good!"



Nina Abrahamczik is a Member of the Vienna State Parliament and Chairwoman of the Municipal Council Committee for Climate, Environment, Democracy, and Personnel.

Wencke Hertzsch heads the newly established "Office for Participation" of the City of Vienna and has been involved in the establishment of the Vienna Climate Team as a project leader from the start.

Thomas Madreiter is a long-serving Planning Director of the City of Vienna and head of the Competence Center for Urban Planning, Smart City Strategy, Participation, and Gender Planning in the Vienna Building Directorate.

The Pilot Process in Overview

What has happened so far...

The foundation for the Vienna Climate Team was laid with the adoption of the Smart City Vienna framework strategy, which places great emphasis on the development of participation formats and, in particular, foresees new tools for participatory budget planning.

The implementation concept for the Vienna Climate Team was developed and finalized over a period of nearly two years. Preparation included analyzing international examples, conducting numerous expert interviews, and activating stakeholders within the city administration. An advisory board with

experts from climate protection, governance, and participation has been accompanying the process since 2021.

2019

2020

2021

Fundamentals

Preparation



Status Quo

- Expert interviews
- Case study

State of the Art

- Evaluation of international examples

Ideal set-up

- Instruments
- Process
- ...

Deep Demonstration Vienna

Local stakeholder process

Set-up Advisory Board

During the two-year pilot phase in 2022/2023, the Vienna Climate Team was tested in six Viennese districts and evaluated to determine how well processes and methods worked to achieve the set goals. A wide range of actors were involved in a broad monitoring and dialogue process – from district

politicians and staff members of the City of Vienna, to participation and communication agencies, and active citizens. Feedback was gathered from citizens, focus discussions were held, and participatory observations were made. In several reflection and strategy workshops, evaluation results were discussed,

and the Climate Team process was adjusted accordingly.

2022

2023

2024

Pilot Phase

Verstetigung

Realization in the districts of Margareten, Simmering, Ottakring

Realization in the districts Währing, Mariahilf, Floridsdorf

Accompanying evaluation

Process optimization

Start of implementation in the districts of Alsergrund, Meidling, Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus

How the Vienna Climate Team works



A Team for the Climate

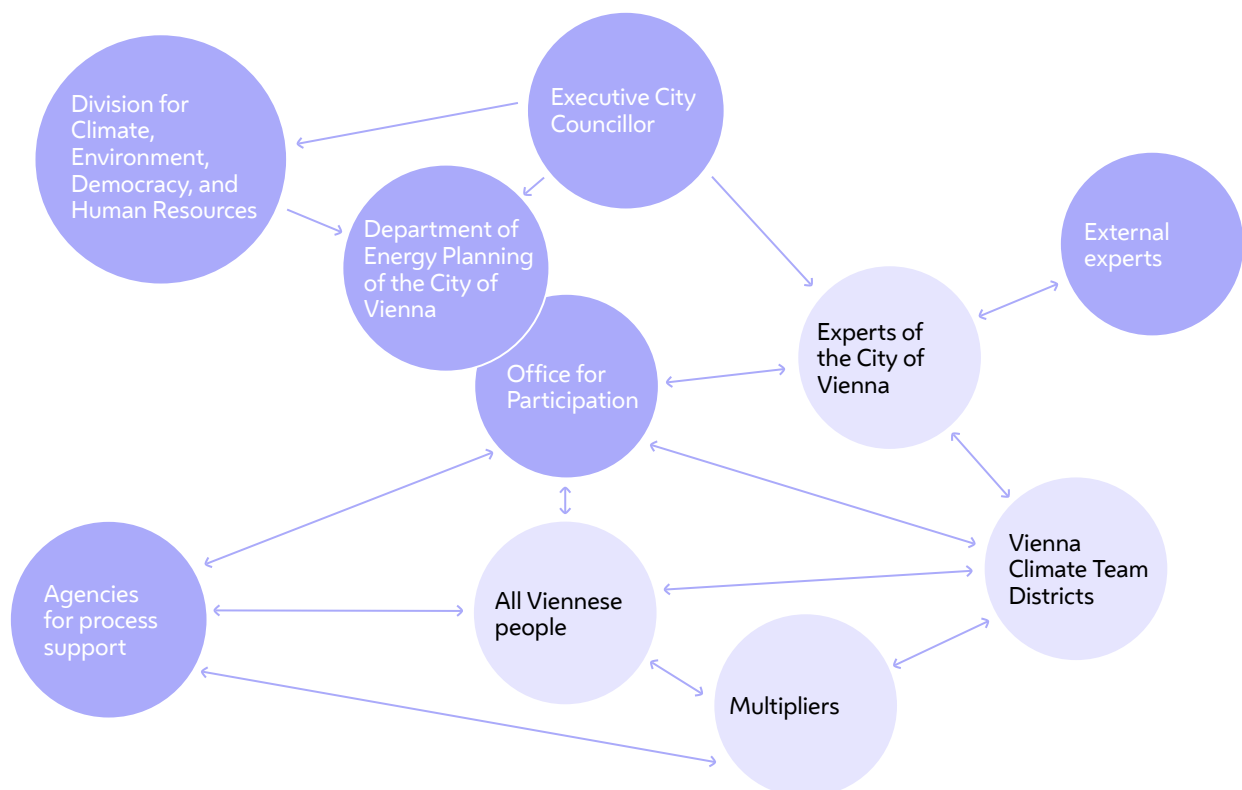
Civil society, politics and administration – together they form the Vienna Climate Team

The people of Vienna contribute their ideas for a better climate and develop projects together with other Viennese residents, City of Vienna experts, and politicians. A representatively chosen citizens' jury selects the projects to be proposed for implementation.

The districts are local partners of the Vienna Climate Team. They have networks in the district and hold bundled local knowledge. They support activation, take on the role of hosts, and ensure that the projects are implemented. The district chairperson and their team act as ambassadors for the Vienna Climate Team process in their district.

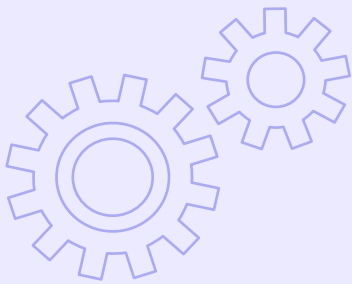
Multipliers are organizations, initiatives, institutions, educational establishments, and associations that bring the Vienna Climate Team to the people of Vienna, motivate them to participate, and represent the interests of their target groups in the process.

Experts from the City of Vienna are involved in all phases and accompany ideas from submission to implementation. The experts contribute their knowledge and commitment to the process and become facilitators of the Vienna Climate Team projects. They know how to make an idea feasible, which permits need to be obtained and where, how project ideas can be more effective systemically, and how much an implementation would cost.



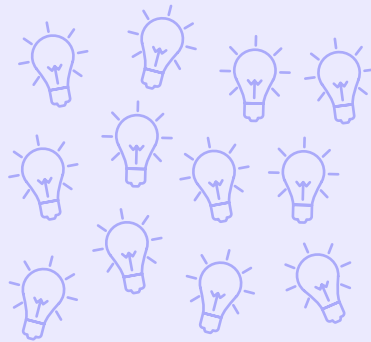
This Is how the Vienna Climate Team Works

In an annual cycle, individual ideas are developed step by step into joint projects for a better climate.



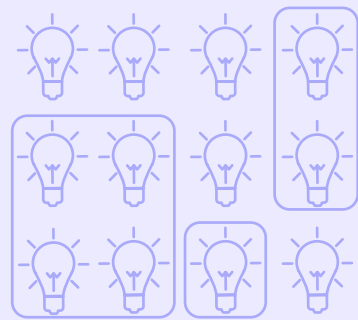
PHASE 0: PREPARING THE PROCESS

The process requires careful preparation. Therefore, onboarding is the focus during the preparation phase. Representatives of the districts, experts from the City of Vienna, and multipliers come "on board." There are several exchange formats to jointly prepare and coordinate the process.



PHASE 1: SUBMITTING IDEAS

In this phase, Viennese residents can submit their ideas either via an idea card or online. Submission criteria such as the responsibility of the City of Vienna and a positive climate impact must be met. During this phase, various events and activation formats take place in collaboration with local multipliers to reach and motivate as many diverse residents, users, and visitors as possible to contribute their ideas and needs.



PHASE 2: ASSESSING IDEAS

In this phase, experts from the City of Vienna first provide a professional assessment of the feasibility of the submitted ideas. Then, in an idea workshop, citizens and experts jointly review all submitted ideas. Each idea is examined and some may be combined into a larger concept on-site. Citizens and experts discuss which ideas should be pursued further. Even Viennese residents who have not submitted an idea can participate here.



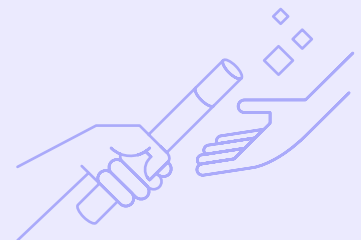
PHASE 3: DEVELOPING PROJECTS

In each district, all ideas forwarded from Phase 2 are further developed in a project workshop. Here, citizens and City of Vienna experts further refine the ideas into projects. Subsequently, the experts conduct a realization check to assess feasibility and add further details if necessary.



PHASE 4: SELECTING PROJECTS

In this phase, a representative-ly drawn group of residents, as a citizens' jury for each district, deals with the projects developed in Phase 3. The citizens' jury consists of a wide variety of people living in the district. They decide which projects will be proposed for implementation with the available financial resources of the City of Vienna.



PHASE 5: IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS

The selected projects are handed over to the City of Vienna and the districts. The experts from the City of Vienna then prepare detailed project plans, which involve numerous technical details. The City of Vienna, the relevant departments, and the districts take care of implementing the projects within two years. The Vienna Climate Team Mail regularly provides updates on the implementation process. Interested parties can subscribe to the newsletter.



Learning Along the Way

With the Vienna Climate Team, Vienna entered new territory: the focus was on jointly developing projects using “co-creation” methods. The close cooperation between the city, district, residents, and administration was also new. Moreover, the citizens themselves could decide on the use of public funds.

During the two-year pilot phase in 2022/2023, the Vienna Climate Team was implemented across six districts. This phase served to test specially developed informational and participation materials, along with activation formats, while also refining procedures and processes to identify successes and areas for improvement.

To learn from the first Climate Team experiences and draw conclusions, the pilot phase was scientifically accompanied and evaluated over two years by TU Wien and the Vienna Climate and Innovation Agency “UIV Urban Innovation Vienna”. Additional insights also came from the EU research project “LOCALISED,” in the course of which the Austrian project partner ÖGUT (Austrian Society for Environment and Technology) also examined the Vienna Climate Team closely.

In the evaluation, different methods were used in all phases of the "Climate Team cycle":

Feedback from Citizens via Feedback Forms:

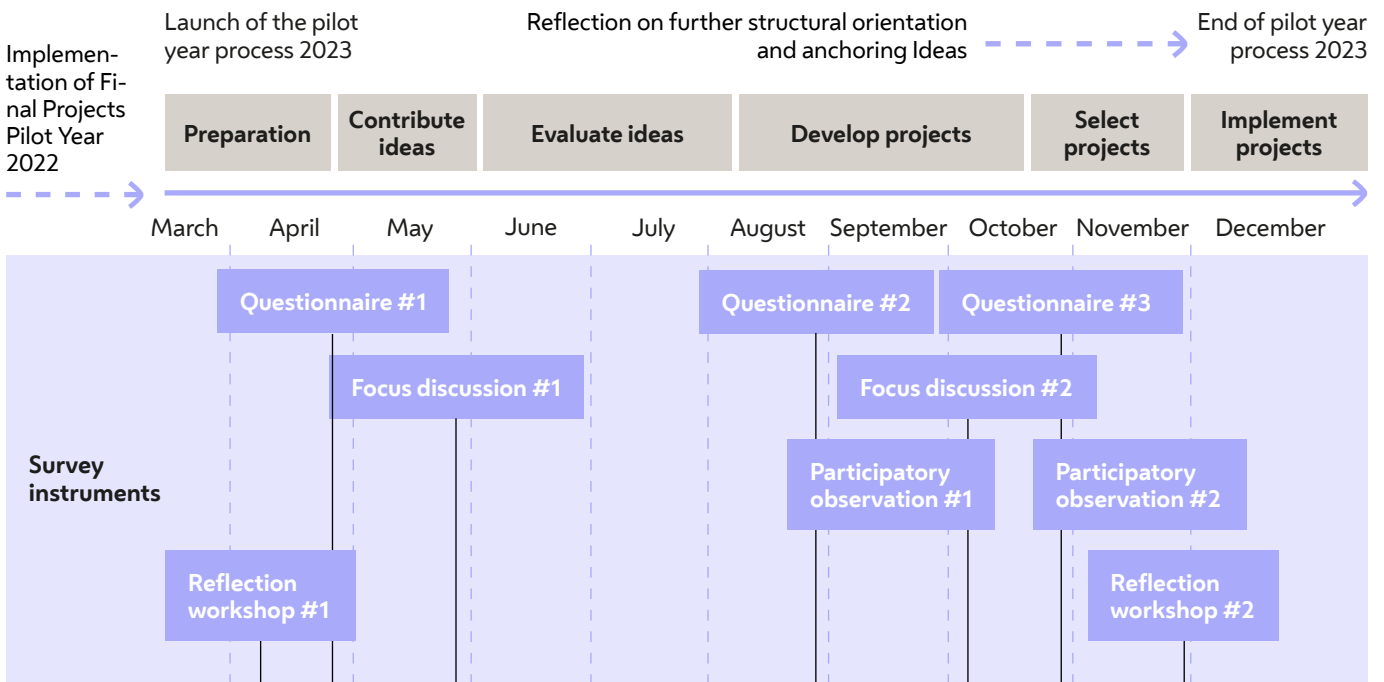
- **Phase "Submitting Ideas":** After the submission phase, feedback from participating citizens was gathered through an online survey. The online questionnaire was sent to both idea submitters and supporters who commented on the ideas on the participation platform.
- **Phase "Developing Projects":** Participants of the project workshops gave their feedback directly on-site using questionnaires.
- **Phase "Selecting Projects":** The randomly selected members of the citizens' jury had the opportunity to complete a feedback form after the jury sessions in their district.

Focus discussions: To gain qualitative assessments of the methods used and the results achieved, the evaluation team conducted guided focus discussions with various actors, including district representatives, participation and communication agencies, multipliers, and participating experts from City of Vienna departments. The focus discussions were conducted after the idea-finding and project development phases.

Participatory Observations: During the neighborhood and project workshops as well as at the citizens' jury meetings, members of the evaluation team were present as passive observers and documented details about the communication, opportunities for different actors to contribute, the dynamics of decision-making, or organizational framework conditions on-site. This approach allowed a systematic analysis of the quality of exchanges between politics, administration, and citizens during project development as well as the decision-making process within the citizens' jury.

Strategy and Reflection Workshops: In several reflection and strategy workshops with City of Vienna officials, the results of the scientific evaluation were reflected upon, and the impacts of the Climate Team were collectively reviewed to draw conclusions for the continuation of the initiative beyond the pilot phase.

Feedback from City of Vienna Employees: To improve collaboration with more than 50 experts from around 25 City of Vienna departments during the ongoing process, a total of three online feedback questionnaires were distributed. Overall, around 80 qualitative responses were generated from the surveys.



During the evaluation process, the voices of around 400 people, including citizens as well as representatives from politics, administration, and experts, were captured and analyzed.

This Is how the Vienna Climate Team Creates Impact



The Vienna Climate Team Creates Impact

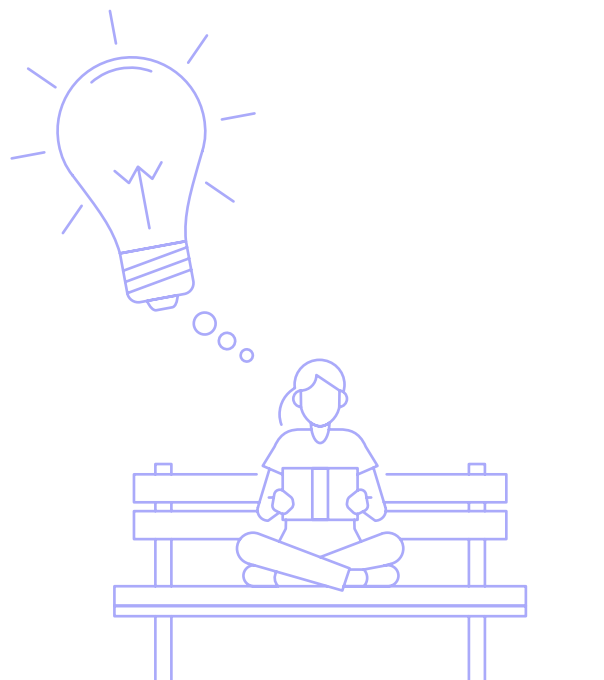
The Vienna Climate Team has multiple objectives:

Systemic Climate Protection: Projects should be developed and implemented that have a tangible impact on climate protection, climate adaptation, and resource conservation. At the same time, citizens should gain an understanding of the impact relationships regarding climate measures.

Strengthening Democracy and Social Justice: The participatory approach aims to enable broad and inclusive involvement of different population groups, which are otherwise difficult to reach through other participation processes (and often are not eligible to vote). The projects should contribute to social justice and community building and promote the self-efficacy of residents.

Governance Innovation: New forms of collaboration between politics, administration, and the public, as well as different public institutions, should be developed and tested, along with appropriate organizational structures and "workflows."

The following pages summarize the findings from the pilot phase and illustrate how the Vienna Climate Team unfolds its impact.





The Vienna Climate Team Mobilizes for Climate

The Vienna Climate Team creates awareness and mobilizes for active engagement with climate protection, climate adaptation, and the circular economy at the local level. It thereby makes an important contribution to making these issues part of a broadly supported political agenda. Through work on specific implementation projects, participants gain the feeling that their commitment genuinely makes a difference and that they are actively contributing to climate protection.

The Climate Team process succeeds in creating awareness of the significance of climate issues and their immediate relevance for each individual. This awareness-raising process is as important as the development of concrete ideas.

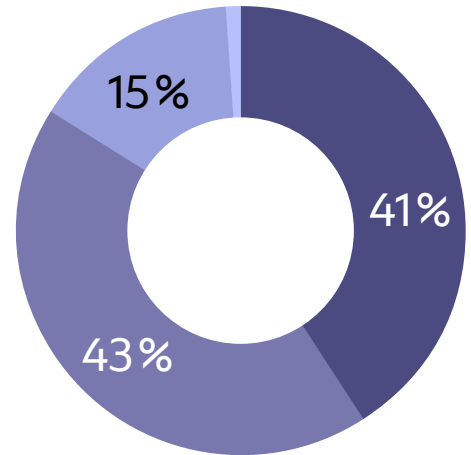
"A participation process is not just about involving citizens; it is always also an activation of politics and administration" – LOCALISED report

For many citizens, climate issues do not yet hold high urgency. Their daily lives are shaped by other concerns. This is precisely where the Vienna Climate Team comes in, engaging directly in the immediate living environments of citizens with outreach formats. These on-site activities are resource-intensive in terms of time and effort but effective. They have proven particularly successful among marginalized groups and people with migration backgrounds, as well as children and young people. By integrating climate issues into a broader easily accessible dialogue about everyday life, an open conversational climate is created. This allows connections to be made to each individual's life, enabling them to express their personal concerns.

Some materials have proven particularly successful in enhancing dialogue and making climate issues more tangible during the process: A large-format aerial photo carpet of the district arouses curiosity and quickly provides entry points for conversation as an "ice-breaker." The Vienna Climate Mosaic was successfully used to prepare members of the citizens' jury. This tool allows the causes and effects of climate change on Vienna to be traced in a playful and accessible manner. Through the process, complex climate issues become comprehensible, understandable, and above all "workable."

The Vienna Climate Team Enables Broadly Supported Decisions

"I feel that by participating in the Vienna Climate Team, I can make an active contribution to Vienna's climate policy."



■ yes ■ rather yes ■ rather no ■ no
 n = 165, Source: Online survey of idea contributors 2023

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND NEIGHBORHOOD: A REPAIR CAFÉ AS A MEETING PLACE FOR MARGARETEN

In the heart of the 5th Viennese district, the Repair Café of the Vienna Climate Team has established itself as a lively hub for community and the circular economy. Once a month, residents come with broken household items, clothing, electronics, or even bicycles to the Repair Café, where the items are repaired by professionals – free of charge. Viennese residents can thus act in a climate-friendly manner while also saving money.

The Repair Café is much more than just a workshop for broken items. It is a place for neighbors and exchange, where people of different generations and backgrounds come together to find solutions and learn from each other. "Real friendships are formed here," says Maria, a long-time resident of Margareten. "We share not just tips and tricks, but also stories and life experiences."



The Repair Café in Margareten shows that sustainability and community support can go hand in hand. With this initiative, the Vienna Climate Team has provided an important impetus that resonates far beyond district boundaries. "We hope our example sets a precedent and that similar projects emerge in other districts," says Anna. With

their dedication and the support of the neighborhood, the Repair Café in Margareten has proven that circular economy and community spirit are not just theoretical concepts but can become a living, practical reality.



The Vienna Climate Team Enables Broadly Supported Decisions

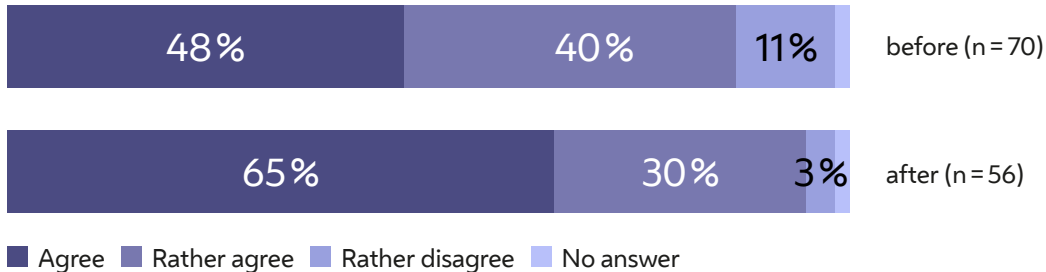
A participatory budget allows Viennese residents to independently decide on the use of public funds. A representatively drawn citizens' jury suggests which projects should be implemented using the budget (approximately 20 € per district resident).

By using a random selection procedure for the citizens' jury, it is possible to reflect the diversity of the Viennese population and include citizens in decision-making processes who are difficult to reach through other participation processes (and often do not have the right to vote). In this way, the Vienna Climate Team drives democratic innovation.

"The jury members quickly became a group, a team." – Focus discussion

Good decisions require a common knowledge base and dialogue. Therefore, the members of the citizens' jury are well prepared for their tasks and roles. In a playful, accessible manner, they learn about the causes and consequences of climate change on Vienna, the city's climate goals, and consensus as a mode of decision-making. Through the joint discussion of project drafts, participants can build knowledge and reconsider their own positions. This leads to decisions that are supported by all members.

"I feel well-informed about climate change and its consequences."



The comparison of survey results before and after the jury process shows the perceived increases in knowledge. (Source: ÖGUT)

A NEW MAIN SQUARE FOR OTTAKRING

The forecourt of the terminus of the U3 in Ottakring is currently hardly a place to linger for long. "I just got off work, and there is no reason for me to stay here for long," says a passerby. Many people in the district feel the same way.



However, the square is now set to undergo a comprehensive redesign, set in motion by the initiative of the Vienna Climate Team. The goal is to turn the square into a vibrant, climate-friendly place for the residents of the 16th district. As part of the Climate Team, citizens had the opportunity to submit their ideas and wishes for their new main square. Together with the City of Vienna, these suggestions were turned into concrete measures that aim to improve the square ecologically and socially.

The redesign focuses on greening and climate adaptation: new trees and green areas are planned to provide shade and cooling while also enhancing the quality of the space. Additionally, sustainable materials and permeable surfaces are planned to make the area more resilient to heat and to better handle water during heavy rainfall.

Through its participatory approach, the Vienna Climate Team has actively involved the local population in the planning process, ensuring that the new main square meets the needs of residents.



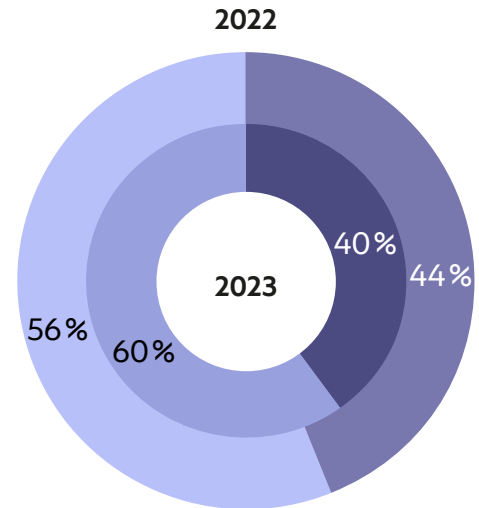
The redesign will create not only a climate-adapted space but also a place for community, relaxation, local amenities, and events, ultimately improving the quality of life

in Ottakring and making the forecourt more than just a traffic hub.



A significant effort is required for genuinely broad and inclusive involvement of different population groups, such as outreach formats and the active involvement of multipliers with direct contacts to various communities, as well as overcoming participation barriers. Thus, where possible, a multilingual team is used, and childcare and refreshments are offered at public events. The effort pays off: an online survey shows that more than half of the citizens activated by the Vienna Climate Team participated in a participation project for the first time.

For a truly broad and inclusive engagement of diverse population groups, considerable effort is required, such as outreach formats and the active involvement of multipliers with direct connections to various communities, as well as overcoming participation barriers. Wherever possible, a multilingual team is deployed, and public events offer child-care and catering. However, the effort is worthwhile: As an online survey shows, more than half of the citizens activated by the Vienna Climate Team participated in a civic engagement project for the first time.



■ yes ■ no

60% of the participants in 2023 were “participation newcomers,” with nearly as many in 2022.

“Aside from the Vienna Climate Team, have you ever participated in a participatory project?”

2023: n=177, 2022: n=78

Source: Survey of the members of the Citizens' Jury 2023

COOL ZONE WÄHRING – A RETREAT FROM SUMMER HEAT

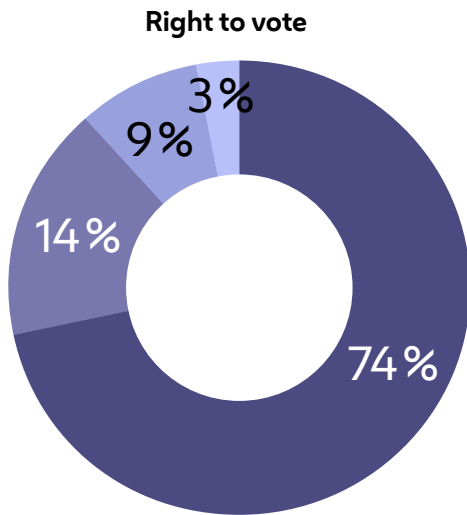
On a Friday at 2 p.m., the municipal office in Währing is usually not particularly busy, but this summer it is different. The live music program on this Friday in the municipal office's banquet hall is one of the most popular program items in Währing's "Cool Zone," a supervisor explains.

As one of six selected ideas of the Währing Climate Team, the municipal office transforms into a "Cool Zone" during the summer months of July and August: from Monday to Friday, between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., the banquet hall is open to all residents, providing a cool place to escape the heat for a while. There is a relaxation area, as

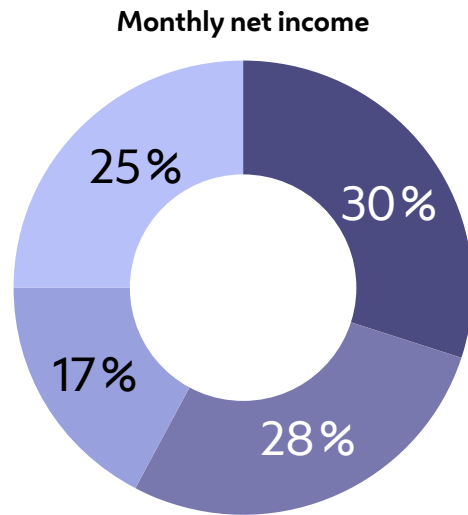
well as a space for interaction and activities. In cooperation with the local senior citizens' club, the "Cool Zone" offers a colorful program – from a "smartphone roundtable" to dance and yoga classes. Additionally, cold drinks, a healthy snack, and tips and informational materials for dealing with the heat in everyday life are provided – all for free.



The offer is well received, reports Anna Reicht, head of the district office, especially by older people but also by parents with their children. "And people from other districts come to us – that's not forbidden; we're happy!" The district aims to continue providing the "Cool Zone Währing" in the coming years.



■ yes ■ no
■ partly ■ no answer



■ less than € 1,500 net ■ between € 1,500 and € 2,000 net
■ over € 3,000 net ■ no answer

The citizens' jury reflects the diversity of Vienna's population well.
n=59, Source: Survey of the members of the Citizens' Jury 2023

A GREEN GATEWAY TO STREBERSDORF

The name says it all, explains Sabine Gehmayr from the district office of Floridsdorf: the basic idea was to make the intersection of Rußbergstraße/Prager Straße a green, mobility- and climate-friendly entrance to Strebersdorf. Today, there are already some shops and public transport stops there, but also a lot of traffic and noise and few quality places to stay. In the summer, the area has become more and more of a heat island. Now, the street space along the existing shopping strip will be greened as much as possible; planting and a drinking fountain are planned to create a cool area to stay.



The idea arose as part of the Vienna Climate Team, and the district is even taking the participatory process a step further in its implementation: residents of Floridsdorf can now also contribute to the detailed planning of the project. "It was important for us to explain that the plans don't just emerge behind closed doors but are based on the perspectives of a Strebersdorf resident and are being further developed through dialogue," Gehmayr explains. "This created a very good atmosphere for discussion from the outset."

Local entrepreneurs, as well as students from the nearby middle school, were involved. Residents had the opportunity to shape their visions of future qualities into future scenarios. The original ideas submitted will be incorporated into the upcoming detailed planning. The submitter emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of women and girls in the design, as well as creating spaces for residents of Strebersdorf to meet. The

district office will also advocate for this.





The Vienna Climate Team Creates Mutual Understanding

In the Vienna Climate Team, residents of Vienna, district representatives, and City of Vienna experts engage in co-creative dialogue on climate protection and adaptation. Together, they generate ideas, and develop joint projects aimed at providing effective solutions. The focus is on collaboration and mutual learning among all participants while focusing on projects that promote climate-friendly and socially equitable urban development in Vienna.

*"The project workshop was very well and respectfully conducted, with above-average commitment from the moderators."
– Survey of citizens' jury participants*

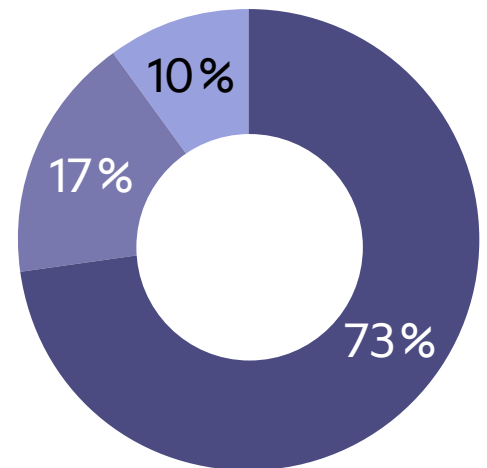
Exchanges with experts from various municipal departments during the project workshops give participating citizens insights into city processes, responsibilities, and technical feasibility. Understanding these interrelationships and sometimes opposing needs is also a crucial prerequisite for creating acceptance for political and administrative action.

The experts, in turn, learn more about the actual needs and concerns of the residents. The City of Vienna experts are key to developing practical solutions and assessing costs and implementation timelines. Their willingness to consider unconventional ideas and jointly develop solutions is essential to the process and to creating entirely new, creative approaches.

Overall, the Vienna Climate Team does not prioritize competition, in which a few ideas prevail over many others, but rather a co-creative solution-finding process in dialogue between citizens, district, and city.

The participants of the project development workshops were generally satisfied with the process design and their opportunities to contribute.

“My opinion was valued and respected.”



■ agree ■ partly agree ■ no answer

n = 59, Source: Feedback from the participants of the project workshops

POWER TO THE PEOPLE – MARIAHILF TAKES THE ENERGY TRANSITION INTO ITS OWN HANDS

The transition from fossil to renewable energy is the major challenge of the coming years. “We will completely exit fossil fuel heating by 2040,” is one of Vienna’s central climate goals.

Mariahilf aims to take a step ahead with the help of the Climate Team. The project “Power to the People” (or “Energy for My Neighborhood”) aims to motivate residents of the 6th district to jointly generate and use renewable energy. To this end, a platform is being created to serve as a meeting point for interested residents of Mariahilf – regardless of whether they are owners or tenants. The goal is to form groups of residents within a building block who will work together to sustainably shape their energy supply.

At information events, to which all residents of Mariahilf are invited via

direct mail, interested individuals can register. In the next step, interested parties are grouped according to their place of residence and then referred to existing contact points such as “Hauskunft” or the Renewable Energy Competence Center at the Vienna Climate and Innovation Agency, where they receive technical support and advice for implementing their projects. Quarterly information and advisory events continue to support the formation of energy communities in the respective neighborhood.

The initiative provides a practical solution to advance the local energy transition and thus actively involve Mariahilf’s residents in climate protection.





The Vienna Climate Team as a Model for New Governance

The Vienna Climate Team enables the development and testing of new forms of cooperation between district politics, the public, and city administration, as well as between different public institutions.

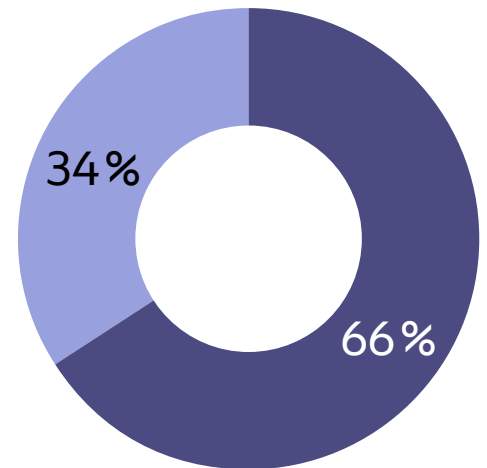
"Co-creation is the heart of the Climate Team – definitely keep it." – Focus discussion

The co-creation process yielded promising results and broadly supported decisions through dialogue among different stakeholders, each bringing up their specific perspectives and expertise. Early structured exchanges with and between specialized departments at an early stage of planning can serve as an example for further processes.

However, the process does not end with the conclusion of a Climate Team year. Project implementation also requires resources for coordination and quality assurance. Adequate capacities are needed both at the project management level and among the participating specialized departments to ensure a professional process and ultimately rapid implementation of the selected projects.

High willingness to participate in future engagement projects.

"Will you participate in engagement projects again in the future?"



■ yes ■ maybe

n = 167, Source: Online survey of idea contributors 2023

NATURE FOR KIDS – A FAMILY-FRIENDLY NATURE TRAIL IN SIMMERING

Between Schloss Neugebäude and Florian-Hedorfer-Straße, there was once a nature trail that had been abandoned a few years ago. Now, it has been redesigned on the initiative of the Simmering Climate Team. For children, young people, and adults, a recreational space has been created, equipped with play and sports equipment, information panels, benches, and colorful flowerbeds.



"I like the new play equipment," says a jogger, "they've made everything very nice!" An older gentleman agrees: "I heard this was

done on the initiative of Simmering; I think it's great!" As a regular walker, he is especially pleased with the new seating.

The nature trail aims to bring visitors closer to the local flora and fauna while also raising awareness of climate protection and sustainability. The trail passes through various green areas in the district and offers interactive stations where people can learn more about local plant and animal species. From an insect hotel to bee meadows to a tree nature trail, the natural treasures of the district are made tangible. Especially for school classes and families, the nature trail is a popular destination that offers both education and relaxation.

The special aspect of this project is the close collaboration between residents, district administration, and environmental experts. Together, a place has been created that not only imparts knowledge

but also strengthens community spirit and underscores the importance of nature conservation in urban spaces.



Outlook

DEINE IDEE
FÜRS KLIMA
↓↓↓

Deine 1er
Idee fürs
Wiener Kli

Deine 1er
Idee fürs
Wiener Kli



How It Continues

Vienna Climate Team Enters the Next Round

After two years of the pilot phase, the Vienna Climate Team is now being rolled out further, initially (since September 2024) in the districts of Alsergrund, Meidling, and Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus.

The experiences from the first two years and the results of the accompanying evaluation were used to further optimize processes and tools:

New is that the people of Vienna will be more involved in the assessment phase of the submitted ideas: together with City of Vienna experts, they will review the submitted ideas in an idea workshop and set priorities for which ideas to pursue further.

In all project phases and materials, greater emphasis is placed on simple language and the use of images and graphics to reach more target groups, even during the idea collection and project development phases.

The Vienna Climate Team remains a joint learning process even after this process optimization: new experiences will continue to be used for ongoing development, whether improving interfaces between the various participation processes in the city or making experiences from previous Climate Team years accessible to “newcomers.”

The Vienna Climate Team, therefore, remains in motion – stay tuned!

“It would be nice to know whether the idea pool reached the district and city in ways other than just the winning projects. After all, many project ideas could be pursued (and given the climate situation, we probably urgently need to).” – Survey of idea submitters 2022 & 2023

“It would be important to get to know other idea submitters to have the opportunity to start and advance other ideas related to climate and environmental protection.” – Survey of idea submitters 2022 & 2023

The Most Important Innovations for the Vienna Climate Team at a Glance

Result of evaluation

New development within the Climate Team Process

Communicating results transparently

Many participants expressed a desire for greater transparency and traceability, particularly regarding the assessment and selection of ideas. Co-creative formats (neighborhood workshops, project workshops) were very well received by participants: direct exchanges with City of Vienna experts provided citizens with insights into processes, responsibilities, and technical feasibility. The experts, in turn, learned more about the actual needs and concerns of residents.

Further development of the idea assessment into an "Idea Check" (Phase 2): After the idea collection ends, City of Vienna experts first provide a professional assessment regarding the feasibility of the ideas. Citizens and experts then jointly review all submitted ideas in the idea workshop. Several similar ideas can also be clustered. Citizens and experts discuss which ideas should be pursued further. Viennese residents who did not submit an idea can also participate. The result is publicly displayed, allowing a high degree of transparency in the Idea Check.

Provide regular updates

Idea submitters and interested district residents want more communication about the results of individual project phases, especially regarding the implementation status of the final projects.

Communication via the participation platform, newsletter, and public relations will be intensified. Status updates, for example, regularly provide information on the implementation status of final projects.

Communicate more simply

To involve hard-to-reach target groups more effectively, appropriate language and communication channels are needed. .

All materials have been revised and simplified. In all project phases and materials, simple language is increasingly used, and explanatory videos have been produced for better understanding. Basic information is available in several languages. When needed, staff and cooperation partners who speak languages other than German are involved in on-site discussions.

Adapt project cycle

Some project phases (assessing ideas, developing projects) in the one-year Climate Team cycle fall into the summer months and therefore vacation time, limiting participation opportunities.

The Climate Team cycle will align with the school year from 2024/25 onwards, with results expected at the beginning of the summer holidays.

The "Office for Participation" is here!

The Vienna Climate Team community wishes more networking, exchange of experiences, and joint activities beyond the one-year project cycle.

In 2024, the "Office for Participation" was launched. It aims to become a central point of contact for participation and democracy in Vienna, offering services and advice to both Viennese residents and the city administration, and further developing participation formats.

