C-Change City Profile

WROCLAW
A history of over a thousand years which has seen many different rulers come and go
A city which experienced the traumatic impact of World War II, ending with a complete exchange of the city’s population due to redrawing of the German-Polish border
A city which created a new identity after World War II
A key role in the Solidarity Movement and the end of 45 years of communist rule
Political transformation in the 1990s triggered an economic transformation with heavy industry, chemical and food industries replaced with IT, banking and outsourced services
A city whose culture, traditions, history and development are inextricably linked to water and the river valleys and canals which form the city’s landscape
Devastated by two great floods in the last century, in 1903 and in 1997
Following reconstruction following the great flood of 1997 the city is well-prepared for future flooding and is turning towards the river
Facing serious air pollution due mainly to the use of coal and burning of illegal substances
A growing population, with an increase of about 11% in ten years, including 100,000 foreigners, many from the Ukraine
One of Poland’s key university cities, with a student population of 120,000
A high level of citizen engagement with over 100,000 citizens actively engaged in civic affairs led by the city’s Public Participation Office
An open, young and progressive city

**Understanding the City**

- **Population**: 638,400
- **Unemployment**: 2.8%
- **GDP**: €18,327 per head of population vs. €12,555 Polish average
- **Area**: 292.9 km²
- **Natural Sites**: 6 in or near the city, 4 designated sites of national biodiversity importance
- **River System**: 80 km one of the largest and most complex in Europe
Wrocław’s vibrant and diverse arts and cultural scene has a key role to play in city life and is a priority area in the City Strategy 2030. It is home to a wide range of theatres, museums, cinemas, music and cultural centres, including the National Music Forum, Contemporary Art Museum (located in a restored air raid shelter) and Museum of Architecture. It hosts about 80 cultural festivals a year, from international film, theatre and guitar festivals to one of Poland’s oldest jazz festivals, and has a strong cultural NGO sector.

Wrocław was European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2016. It was the first ECoC to introduce architecture into the programme, underlining the role of public/shared spaces, the importance of the environment and of sustainable development in culture. Wrocław’s year as ECoC led to i.a. the establishment of Culture Zone Wrocław, 100% financed by the city but completely independent, and the creation of 16 new venues, including the History Depot, an old tram depot which played a central role in Wrocław’s Solidarity Movement.

Public participation was a key strand of the ECoC programme, including a micro-grants scheme to support public participation in cultural life. The scheme has led to a range of community-artist initiatives on i.a. urban greening and community food-growing.

Culture Zone Wrocław continues to support for arts, culture and creativity in the city, across three strands – places, festivals and programmes. It has implemented hundreds of projects, working with over 350 partners and thousands of Wrocław residents, and leads the micro-grants scheme.

**Culture Facts**

- European Capital of Culture 2016
- UNESCO World Book Capital 2016
- One UNESCO World Heritage Site – the Centennial Hall
- Municipal budget for culture is one of the highest in Poland
- Over 100 projects funded through the micro-grants project on public participation in cultural life
Wrocław is one of Poland’s most ambitious cities in terms of climate change. In 2017 it created the Department of Sustainable Development, comprising the Office of Nature and Climate Protection and the Office of Sustainable Mobility. It was the first city in Poland to create a climate change office and is recognised nationally for this good practice.

As a city already experiencing the consequences of climate change – flooding and extreme heat in particular – and dependence on a largely coal-based energy system, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and nature-based solutions in particular, are essential to Wrocław’s sustainable development. Central to this are its Low Carbon Economy Plan 2015 and Sustainable Urban Mobility plan. It is also working on an Urban Climate Change Adaptation Plan, co-ordinated by the national environment ministry, and due in 2019.

Awareness-raising and citizen engagement are central to the city’s approach. The Wrocław Citizens Budget, introduced in 2013, has a strong environmental focus. The budget has grown from €0.75 to €6 million and, so far, has made about 300 projects a reality. In 2016, over 104,000 people took part in voting on the use of the budget, about 20% of all citizens. The city is also leading by example on environmental action and has an environmental management system registered under the EU’s Eco-Management and Audit Scheme.

- 4.01 million tonnes CO₂ emitted in 2015 / 6.31 tonnes CO₂ per inhabitant
- Target of a 20% emissions reduction by 2020 and 80% by 2050 from a 1990 baseline
- 12% emissions reduction 1990-2015
- 60% of energy supply is coal-based
- Signatory to Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

Key initiatives include:
- €6.2 million investment programme to phase out the use of individual coal heating
- €12.5 million investment in refurbishment of residential and public buildings
- GrowGreen a €11.2 million Horizon 2020-funded project with twenty partners across Europe and China on citywide greening strategies, co-ordinated by Manchester
- Kids for Climate schools programme to raise awareness and support action on energy and sustainable mobility with 2,500 students from 10 primary schools participating to date
EXAMPLES
of arts and culture sector climate action and engagement in the city

- Pedal-powered phone charging, living walls, recycled art and 3-D printing with plant-based materials at the municipal library’s multi-media centre
- LED lighting, green walls and nature art at the Capitol Music Theatre
- The city’s micro-grants scheme to support public participation in cultural life which has led to a range of community-artist initiatives on i.a. urban greening and community food-growing
- Trafostation, a work by artist Joanna Rajkowska, an attempt to re-naturalize the ecosystem at Niskie Łąki in Wrocław, transforming a defunct transformer station building from the 1930s into a scaffold for a living sculpture