

## Countries Talk, Cities Act [1]



[2]

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Two of POCACITO's case study cities have ambitious targets to become the first carbon neutral city in the world. Copenhagen in Denmark has plans to reach this goal by 2025 whereas Malmö in Sweden plans to reach their target five years later in 2030. Becoming carbon neutral will not be an easy task. It will take a holistic approach in partnership with key stakeholders and strong citizen participation to commit to changing behaviors. Here are just some of the key initiatives that each of the cities are taking to reach their targets.

One of the harder tasks that citizens can commit to is altering modes of transportation by exchanging cars for bikes. The ease of making this switch can be increased if the city prioritizes cycling over individual automobile use. Copenhagen is already the number one city in the world for cycling. Monica Magnussen, Project Manager for Sharing Copenhagen, explained that "not owning a car is not connected to lack of financial resources, rather cycling around the city is simply the fastest way for anyone to get from point A to B." Some of the ways Copenhagen has made this possible is by prioritizing traffic lights for cyclists, constructing over 390 km of biking lanes throughout the city and removing winter snow from the bike paths before the clearing snow from the streets for cars. Not only does this benefit city cycling enthusiasts but it also creates incentives to choose a transportation method that does not produce carbon emissions to the extent that cars do.

In addition to cycling, Copenhagen is sourcing the world's highest proportion of renewable energy from wind power at 31% with the goal of increasing this to 50% by 2020. Citizens in Copenhagen are actively engaged in this process. In particular, they are able to purchase shares in wind turbines from the city-owned power company, becoming actual investors in their city and its renewable infrastructure.

In Malmö, the promotion of renewable energy sources is also highly prioritized. Lillgrund Wind Farm, one of the largest wind farm investments in Sweden, is located about 10km offshore of the city and produces 0.33 TWh of electricity per year or the equivalent of powering 60,000 homes.

Another initiative that has been in the works since 1959 is the district heating network which is the largest district heating network in all of Sweden. Not only are 99% of homes hooked up to this system which helps to eliminate fuel poverty but 60% of the energy supplied through this network is generated from the excess heat from waste sources that would have otherwise gone into a landfill.

None of these initiatives could be done without the commitment of the citizens within the city. The targets that the city has in place are shared with the citizens and education about the importance of sustainability formally starts when kids start elementary school, if not before.

Reaching goals of becoming carbon neutral are not mandatory but through actively involving citizens and relaying the benefits of hitting the targets set in place to them, these two cities are well on their way to reaching their goals. Additionally, these cities are proud of where they are headed and believe in the importance of sharing their solutions with other cities. That being said, take a look the full range of initiatives that both of the cities are aiming to achieve to see if your city can devote actions to similar activities.

For more information on initiatives in Copenhagen, click [here](#) [3]. For more information on Malmö, click [here](#) [4].

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[2] <https://pocacito.eu/sites/default/files/Copenhagen%20Malm%C3%B62.png>

[3] <http://www.siemens.com/press/pool/de/events/2014/infrastructure-cities/2014-06-CCLA/copenhagen-climate-close-up.pdf>

[4] <http://malmo.se/English/Sustainable-City-Development.html>