Short Electoral Programme Volt Hannover

People all over Europe have decided that it is high time to stand up for common values and act beyond national borders. Volt Europa was founded four years ago based on this idea.

Solutions and ways for a better living together already exist all over Europe, which can also be applied right on our doorstep. Volt Hannover is running for the city council, the regional assembly and the district councils in Mitte, Linden-Limmer, Herrenhausen-Stöcken, Vahrenwald-List and Ricklingen in order to effectively transfer these so-called "best practices" of other European cities to our city.

This programme contains our plans and ideas for Hannover's future. We will always examine and review them and be open to new ideas - always with the aim of shaping a social, sustainable, economically strong and liveable Hannover, where every citizen counts.

We at Volt live progressive politics - free of ideology, instead value-based and solution-oriented. Volt does not fit into pigeonholes. For modern politics we need a flexible approach that goes beyond the usual left-right thinking. To this end, we want to work constructively with all democratic forces on the basis of the Grundgesetz and the values of the European Union[1] in order to come as close as possible to our objectives.

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[1]https://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/europaeische-union/42851/grafik-werte-der-eu

I.   Mobility

Volt Hannover advocates a consistent shift away from the car towards sustainable and user-friendly mobility. A reduction in car traffic will result in better air quality, less noise and more space in our city. To this end, cycle paths and public transport should be significantly expanded and enhanced in their attractiveness.

That is why we demand:
- Bicycle lanes that are both wide and physically separated from car traffic and run through the city without interruption.
- More affordable public transport. Long distances from the Region to the city should be made less expensive. On Saturdays, public transport should be free of charge.
- A car-free city centre within the Cityring. The neighbouring districts are to be made low-car areas. We want to reduce the number of parking spots in the city. More streets should be closed to cars and only be used by bicycles and pedestrians.
- More Park & Ride parking spaces. The parking ticket should also be valid as a ticket for public transport.
- Fostering (station-based) Car-Sharing by making more parking spaces available exclusively for Car-Sharing.

Best Practice: Copenhagen is the most bicycle-friendly city in the world.[2] Cycle lanes are well developed and physically separated, so that Copenhageners cycle 1.44 million kilometres a day.

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[2] https://copenhagenizeindex.eu/cities/copenhagen

II.   Involvement of citizens in politics

Our goal is a living, vibrant democracy in Hannover. Especially at the municipal level, citizens are directly affected by decisions and should therefore be more involved. In particular, we want to reach groups that currently have little participation in politics.

That is why we demand:
- The introduction of lottery-based, issue-related citizens' assemblies, which are summoned by a city council's decision or a petition. The assembly's recommendations should be discussed in the city council and their rejection must be justified.
- Citizens' budgets, in which the citizens themselves can decide directly and democratically on the use of a certain amount of money (e.g. 1€ per citizen).
- Youth councils for the representation of pupils and students.
- More transparent local politics, e.g. by streaming and recording sessions and easy access to information on the web.
- A digital administration so that citizens can complete all administrative procedures at home.

Best Practice: In Reykjavik, citizens can suggest projects on an internet platform, which are then voted on. Three million euros per year are available for the implementation of the most popular projects.[3]

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[3]https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/wohnen/was-die-islaendische-hauptstadt-reykjavik-lebenswert-macht-16475954.html

III.   City development and housing

The local government must take an active and formative role in the further development of the city. Volt wants to take action against rising rents, prepare our city for higher temperatures and make Hannover's city centre more attractive.

That is why we demand:
- Urban planning based on the "hub city" model: more sub-centres should be created within which all everyday services are available to citizens (workplace, leisure facilities, medical services, etc.).
- A larger stock of publicly owned housing so that policy makers can have a direct influence on the development of rents.
- More social housing.
- More green areas, the greening of facades and buildings, and more water surfaces in public spaces to cool down the urban climate.
- To make the city centre more attractive, we want to establish a diverse shopping offer, create more green areas and places to rest, create housing and make the city centre car-free.

Best Practice: For more than 100 years, Vienna has been buying and building properties through its municipal subsidiary "Wiener Wohnen" and renting them out at affordable prices. Due to this municipal influence, rents are very low.[4]

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[4] Sozialer Wohnungsbau - Warum Wiener günstig wohnen (Archiv) (deutschlandfunk.de)

IV.   **Europe**

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Volt stands for politics that thinks beyond national borders. We therefore want a European Hannover that works closely with other European cities and sees itself as part of the European family.

That is why we demand:
- A better perception of the EU in Hannover. The EU funds many projects in the region, and local companies sell their products Europe-wide. These advantages should be highlighted.
- A stronger European orientation of our city. We want to promote student exchanges, give away Interrail tickets to 18-year-olds and introduce a European citizen card in cooperation with other cities.
- Intensified exchange and close cooperation with other cities. This will enable Hannover to benefit from and emulate good ideas and solutions in other cities.
- A strengthening of our town twinning. On a political and civil society level, we want to establish close ties with our twin cities, e.g. in the fields of art and culture, sports or science.

Best Practice: The twin towns of Krefeld and Venlo have set up a joint committee in which they continuously exchange information and work together.[5]

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[5]https://www.rgre.de/gute-beispiele-der-kommunalen-europaarbeit, S.14

V.   Better climate protection in Hanover

Fighting the climate crisis is one of the most important political tasks of our time. In Hannover, too, more efforts must be made to achieve this. Volt supports the city's goal to be climate neutral by 2035. For the Region, we want to achieve climate neutrality by 2040.

That is why we demand:
- A rapid expansion of solar energy, among other things through a solar obligation for new buildings and the use of open spaces (covered parking spaces, side strips).
- More energy rehabilitation. Private landlords should be allowed to add savings in energy costs to the basic rent, as long as the rent including heating does not increase (so-called "Warmmietenmodell").
- The long-term transformation of our economy to a circular economy so that as many resources as possible are reused.
- An increased usage of sustainable building materials (e.g. wood).
- A climate assessment for each administrative measure.
- A more frequent collection and publication of CO_2 statistics by the local government.
- Increasing the environmental awareness of citizens.

Best Practice: In Bottrop, the "Warmmietenmodell" is applied. Three times more buildings are updated to become energy efficient per year than the national average.[6]

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[6]https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/themen/earth-overshoot-day-2020-ressourcenbudget

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VI.   Hannover's Economy

Volt wants to facilitate the creation of start-ups so that
creative entrepreneurs can realise their ideas. In addition,
we see city-owned companies as important instruments to
achieve political goals. We want to increase cooperation
between the public sector and private companies.

That is why we demand:
- A single administrative point of contact for founders
  ("one-stop-shop solution").
- A digital registration of companies within one week.
- The provision of a coordinator for founders to help
  them with bureaucratic tasks.
- More co-working spaces in Hannover.
- The increased use of cooperation with private
  companies to provide services to citizens. The
  authorities should define a clear framework for this.
  Such cooperation can be used, for example, for the
  design of public space (toilets in public parks) or
  digital projects (collection of traffic data for better
  traffic control).

Best Practice: Sacramento has formed a partnership with
several private companies to provide citizens with modern
and intelligent transport concepts.[7]

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[7] https://www.urbanmovementlabs.com/

VII.   Education

Education must fulfil many tasks. It should develop personalities, produce well-trained specialists and contribute to social cohesion. For all these tasks, good education needs more human and financial resources than in the past. Such spending is an important investment in our future.

That is why we demand:
- Anticipatory school development planning that is based on birth rates and provides sufficient capacity in a timely manner.
- Modern and renovated school buildings. In the future, schools can be developed into district centres that offer citizens a wide range of services and are thus a meeting place for all citizens.
- A comprehensive broadband expansion at schools.
- An all-day offer that not only supervises the children in the afternoon, but offers them open activities in which they can develop their interests and inclinations.
- An inclusive school system in which all children can grow up together. Special needs schools should remain, but be located close to regular schools and cooperate with them.
- More human resources in childcare and early childhood education.
- Good facilities for adult education centres to provide education for citizens of all ages.

VIII.   Social Hannover

Volt stands for an open and inclusive society. We resolutely oppose discrimination, hostility and exclusion. It is the task of politics to ensure equal participation of all people in Hannover, because the city and the region belong to all of us!

That is why we demand:
- A long-term fight against poverty. Especially in neighbourhoods where poverty is more prevalent, the local government must act at an early stage. Child poverty is to be combated in the long term through support during childhood and adolescence.
- According to the principle of "Housing First", homeless people are to be provided with housing unconditionally and thus with a stable environment.
- A one-stop-shop solution for refugees to facilitate integration.
- Outpatient care for the elderly according to the Dutch Buurtzorg model, where care is provided by small, flexible, well-coordinated teams.
- Children's and youth councils so that the concerns of young people are clearly heard.
- More bins in public spaces to make our city cleaner.

Best Practice: Finland applies the Housing First principle and is the only EU country that has been able to reduce homelessness.[8]

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[8]https://www.nordisch.info/finnland/das-einzige-land-der-eu-das-die-obdachlosigkeit-reduziert-hat/

IX.   Vibrant culture in Hannover

The arts and culture scene in Hannover is in a deep crisis due to the pandemic. Moreover cultural life is heavily concentrated in a few districts. Volt wants to give art and culture more space throughout the city through targeted political support.

That is why we demand:
- More facilities that can be used for art and cultural projects.
- More attractive publicly accessible spaces (e.g. libraries, youth centres) so that they become a meeting place for the citizens of the neighbourhood.
- Unbureaucratic cultural funding. Committees of citizens and experts should decide locally on the financial support of projects.
- A cultural fund for young artists.
- An urban cultural competition to make public spaces available for street art and neighbourhood aesthetics.
- Greater visibility for the arts and culture scene on the city's website, which is to be redesigned.
- A lively nightlife that not only takes place in the "trendy districts", but also offers nightlife opportunities in other parts of the city (especially in the city centre).