Own Your SECAP

OWN YOUR CLIMATE FUTURE: HOW MUNICIPALITIES ARE MAKING IT HAPPEN

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INTRODUCTION

Across Europe, many municipalities are working hard to reduce energy use, cut emissions, and build more sustainable communities. The OwnYourSECAP project has supported local governments in taking ownership of their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs), helping them move from planning to real action.

This publication shares the experiences of municipalities that have taken part in the project. It highlights what worked well and how other towns and cities can learn from their journey. Whether you're a local leader, a community member, or simply interested in climate action, this document offers practical insights and inspiring examples of how local efforts can make a big difference.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable (D6.1) presents a compilation of case studies from the "Own Your SECAP" project, showcasing innovative and practical approaches to the development, implementation, and governance of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) across 11 European countries.

The report documents concrete experiences from municipalities at various stages of their climate journey—from those initiating SECAP development and baseline definition, to more advanced actors engaging in climate mainstreaming, intermunicipal cooperation, and energy management system certification.

Each case study highlights specific challenges, solutions, and outcomes, offering both quantitative and qualitative results. The standardized format enables comparison across diverse contexts, facilitating peer learning and knowledge exchange. The deliverable emphasizes success factors and the transferability potential of each approach, aiming to support replication in other municipalities.

By capturing a wide spectrum of local climate actions—from citizen engagement and internal capacity building to strategic planning and technical innovation—this report contributes to the broader objective of accelerating climate action at the local level throughout Europe. It serves as a valuable resource for municipal decision-makers, practitioners, and stakeholders seeking to strengthen their climate governance and energy transition efforts.

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LATVIA

CREATING NETWORK OF ENERGY MANAGERS

SUMMARY

The primary target audience of the OwnYourSECAP project is municipal energy managers. Since we introduced our activities in eight municipalities and Latvia is a relatively small country, we were able to regularly bring together not only energy managers from these eight municipalities but also others from across the country. The Municipality of Ropaži, located in central Latvia, kindly agreed to host our bi-monthly meetings. Over the course of three years, energy managers from an average of 15 municipalities participated in these gatherings, which served as a platform to discuss pressing issues, everyday challenges, and opportunities. This approach is worth replicating, as it fosters peer learning, strengthens professional networks, and creates a low-cost, high-impact structure for continuous capacity building in municipal energy planning.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: National

Municipality, Region and/or Country: Latvia

Population: over 1 million people

Challenges: As of August 2023, all municipalities in Latvia are required to introduce and maintain energy management systems. This means that each municipality must hire or appoint an employee—typically an energy manager—to develop and oversee the system. In many cases, energy managers start from scratch and need to build their competencies and knowledge base, often requiring guidance and support.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Implementation Process

Timeline: The first workshop took place in January 2023 and was held in person. The topic focused on communication—specifically, how to engage with colleagues on energy and climate-related issues. Subsequent workshops were held regularly on average once a month. Each session addressed one of five key topics: developing energy management systems; implementing measures from Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs); addressing climate adaptation; introducing climate mainstreaming; and, once a year, a workshop on communication featuring an invited coach.

Resources: The workshop venue was provided by the Municipality of Ropaži. The project covered refreshments (coffee and snacks) and the cost of the communication coach.

Financing: Costs were covered by OwnYourSECAP project.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: In total, 20 workshops were organised, and 564 participants attended. The most attended workshop focused on energy audits and their role in public building refurbishment, with 120 participants.

Qualitative impacts: Energy managers highly appreciated the workshops. During the final session held on June 12, 2025, an agenda for the 2025/2026 season was agreed upon and is already published here: www.plano.lv

Other OwnYourSECAP countries/municipalities who also successfully implemented this action: Spain, Sweden.

LESSONS LEARNED

Everything worked better than expected. As the workshops were held in an informal setting, energy managers felt comfortable sharing their challenges and seeking advice from peers. Ekodoma provided technical assistance and facilitated each session. While the initial workshops followed a presentation-plus-Q&A format, the approach gradually evolved: municipalities began presenting real issues they faced (e.g., related to energy management or SECAP implementation), which were then collectively discussed during the sessions.

If the first two years focused mainly on energy management and SECAP implementation, including climate adaptation, the third year introduced climate mainstreaming. This required energy managers to involve colleagues from other departments—an initially challenging shift that ultimately led to positive outcomes.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

The national legal framework was a key enabler, as municipalities are now obliged to have energy management systems in place. Even when an energy manager leaves, there is a tendency to find a replacement who then joins the workshops.

This is an easy-to-replicate action that delivers great added value for participants, as it raises awareness, builds competencies, and encourages a culture of experimentation and resilience. Even though the OwnYourSECAP project ends in August 2025, the new session for 2025/2026 has already been planned, and the Municipality of Ropaži has agreed to continue hosting the in-person workshops.

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SPAIN

DESIGN THINKING: REACHING AND ENGAGING PEOPLE

SUMMARY

This case study showcases the application of the Design Thinking (DT) methodology in three municipalities in the Region of Murcia, Spain—Lorquí, Cieza, and Jumilla—engaging citizens in climate decision-making. Through participatory workshops, citizens identified local challenges, generated ideas, and prioritized actions for their SECAPs. This process empowered citizens who do not typically engage in these processes, thus fostering their commitment to local climate actions.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: Spain

Population: 70,000 people

Challenges: They share climate challenges such as water scarcity, high temperatures, and the need to improve energy efficiency. DT was used in Lorquí (which had an existing SECAP), Cieza (which was updating its SECAP), and Jumilla (developing a new SECAP from scratch). All faced challenges like limited resources, low citizen engagement, and increasing climate vulnerabilities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Design Thinking is a collaborative approach consisting of five stages: *Empathize*, *Define*, *Ideate*, *Prototype*, and *Test*. In these workshops, citizens, local government staff, and other actors worked together to identify climate challenges and solutions.

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Key activities included:

- Grouping participants by thematic areas such as mobility, public spaces.
- Identifying local climate issues based on emissions data.
- Brainstorming and refining ideas using visual tools.
- Prioritizing feasible actions aligned with local concerns.

In Lorquí, a citizen survey was conducted to vote on top priorities.

Implementation Process

Timeline: The process unfolded over two years, with workshops adapting to each municipality's SECAP stage. In Lorquí, 10 measures were assessed and voted on by citizens. Cieza followed a similar approach, while Jumilla engaged citizens from the outset to co-create their SECAP. The workshops had 15-20 participants each, supported by EuroVértice facilitators.

Financing: Costs were covered by OwnYourSECAP project.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: Design Thinking enhanced citizen involvement in climate planning. The process led to the identification of realistic and relevant climate actions that addressed local needs. Quantitative results included:

- Involvement of 3 municipalities: Lorquí, Cieza, Jumilla
- 15-20 participants per session, with multiple work sessions

Qualitative impacts:

- Increased citizen engagement in climate action.
- Better alignment of public policies with local needs.
- Empowered local actors and reinforced SECAP legitimacy.

In Lorquí, the use of multi-criteria analysis helped prioritize key actions. In Cieza and Jumilla, citizen input helped identify and adapt solutions to local contexts.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Design Thinking process underscored the importance of citizen inclusion for enhancing commitment to climate actions. Design thinking's flexibility to adapt to different municipal needs was vital, as was the engagement of political actors to ensure long-term involvement.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

This approach is highly adaptable to other municipalities, regardless of size or context. It can be applied to other climate, energy, and urban planning projects. It is particularly relevant for European municipalities aiming to promote citizen involvement in sustainable planning.

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AUSTRIA

FROM SECAP TO RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITIES IN AUSTRIA

SUMMARY

Around the start of the project period, the idea of establishing renewable energy communities (REC) had already emerged in two of the partner municipalities, Ottensheim and Langenzersdorf. Within the framework of "Own Your SECAP," e7 was able to support and accompany this process with its technical expertise. Through a series of online workshops, the topic was linked to municipal energy management, highlighting synergies and practical implementation approaches. In addition, the workshops fostered inter-municipal exchange, enabling partner municipalities to share experiences and jointly address challenges encountered during the establishment of their respective energy communities (ECs).

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: Ottensheim and Langenzersdorf

Population: Ottensheim: 5421 / Langenzersdorf: 8153

Challenges: The municipalities aim to promote the local production of renewable energy and reduce the need for fossil-based energy by generating electricity collectively at the local level.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

The process began with an online workshop in which e7 provided the partner municipalities an introductory overview of the concept of ECs. Topics included the legal framework and organizational models in Austria, necessary contracts, initial considerations around energy data management, and ways in which e7 could support the municipalities.
Subsequently, e7 held individual workshops with Ottensheim and Langenzersdorf to address the specific local conditions. These sessions included an analysis of current municipal electricity demand, PV expansion potential on municipal areas, the economic feasibility of an EC, and relevant best-practice examples from already existing energy communities in other Austrian municipalities.
e7 continued to offer technical support as needed throughout the process towards establishing the ECs. A third joint workshop focused on facilitating knowledge and experience exchange between Ottensheim, Langenzersdorf, and other project partner municipalities such as Leobendorf and Baden. This exchange proved extremely valuable for all participants - both in discussing open questions and shared challenges (given that ECs remain a relatively new topic), and in learning about practical solutions from other municipalities. Topics included the scope of ECs, selected tariff models, citizen involvement, and the setup of energy data management systems.
Each of the workshops brought together political and administrative representatives from the municipalities.

Implementation Process

Timeline:

- June 2023: Decision by the municipal council to evaluate the establishment of an EC in Langenzersdorf
- February 28, 2024: First project workshop on ECs and energy data management
- April 9, 2024: Individual project workshop with Ottensheim
- Since April 2024: Regular internal municipal working group meetings in Ottensheim as preparation for the establishment of a REC
- April 11, 2024: Individual project workshop with Langenzersdorf

- 2024: Assessment of public interest and needs regarding an EC in Langenzersdorf (An interest in consuming 210,000 kWh and feeding in 160,000 kWh of electricity was identified.)
- January 9, 2025: Information event in Langenzersdorf for potential EC producers and consumers
- May 8, 2025: Most recent municipal working group meeting in Ottensheim (included an invitation to all local associations that operate their own electricity meters as the idea is to establish the EC in a first step between the municipality and these associations)
- Current status: The relevant metering points of the municipality have been identified, and the necessary EC contracts are currently under review.
- May 13, 2025: Joint workshop focused on inter-municipal exchange

Resources: Experts from e7 for technical support and as coordinators of the workshops

Financing: EU LIFE CET funding for staff costs

Results and Impact

Quantitative results:

- Investments in PV expansion of 80,000 €.
- RES increase of 60 MWh/year (a new PV plant as result of the decision to go towards an energy community).
- No. of people reached through workshops: 20

Impact:

- Raising awareness of local energy production and energy (data) management
- Establishing an inter-municipal exchange network for shared learning and cooperation
- Reducing dependence on fossil fuels through local renewable energy initiatives
- Strengthening the sense of collaboration and community engagement
- In addition to Ottensheim and Langenzersdorf, the municipalities of Baden and Leobendorf were also involved in EC workshop activities and benefited from the experience exchange.

LESSONS LEARNED

In retrospect, an additional joint workshop on the topic of ECs for all partner municipalities - similar in format to the final EC exchange session - could have been offered earlier in the project. This final workshop was very well received and proved to be particularly valuable for sharing experiences.
In general, we observed that inter-municipal cooperation in Austria is not very strongly developed. Formats like those used in OwnYourSECAP, which focus on peer learning and facilitated exchange, can help to strengthen collaboration across municipalities in the future.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

Smaller municipalities often have limited resources to build up expertise on complex topics such as energy communities. External support is therefore essential—not only for technical guidance, but also to facilitate exchange between municipalities. Such peer exchange has proven highly valuable, as local representatives contribute practical knowledge that is often just as important as technical input. Online formats offer a low-threshold way to access both expertise and shared experiences.

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PORTUGAL

ENHANCING MUNICIPAL SYNERGY THROUGH SECAP BUILDING

SUMMARY

Municipalities play a key role in driving sustainable development, balancing economic growth, social well-being, and environmental protection. In this context, the Municipality of Figueira da Foz, supported by OwnYourSECAP project, used the development of its first Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) not only to address climate challenges but also to foster internal collaboration and shared decision-making across departments. This case study presents the process, which extended beyond technical planning into a collaborative governance approach, laying the groundwork for effective future climate action.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: the Coimbra Region

Population: over 60,000 people

Challenges: The municipality of Figueira da Foz, located in the Coimbra Region (Centre of Portugal), covers 379 km² . Geographically well-positioned, it is divided by the Mondego River into two areas with distinct socio-economic dynamics. Until 2022, the municipality lacked an integrated plan for climate mitigation, adaptation, and energy poverty reduction. Existing responses were dispersed across several sectoral plans, reflecting institutional fragmentation and limited cross-departmental coordination. The development of a SECAP was seen as a strategic step to address these challenges.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Supported by the OwnYourSECAP project, the development of Figueira da Foz's SECAP was designed as a catalyst for strengthening institutional coordination across municipal departments. Beyond defining mitigation and adaptation measures, the process aimed to inform, engage, and integrate staff from various departments, as well as involve the broader community.

Implementation Process

Timeline: The SECAP development process, carried out between November 2022 and February 2024, successfully strengthened internal coordination among municipal departments, promoting integration, optimising resources, and aligning goals and priorities. It relied on technical and methodological support from ISR-UC (OwnYourSECAP project), active involvement of municipal technicians, facilitation and participatory design methodologies adapted to the municipality's context (including design thinking), and the integration of capacity-building and active listening sessions during diagnosis and planning phases.

Implementation: Multiple internal work sessions and workshops were organised, facilitated by ISR-UC, involving key municipal units such as the Environment Division, Studies and Projects Division, Science and Economic Development Division, Civil Protection Service, and the Energy Transition Team. Participatory methodologies — including internal actor mapping, interdependency analysis, and co-creation exercises — were applied to build a shared understanding, clarify roles, and foster mutual trust. As a result, the SECAP reflects not only a technical planning effort but also a shared institutional vision and a joint commitment to implement effective local climate actions.

Results and Impact

- Creation of an informal network of reference technicians ('focal points') per thematic area, fostering trust among employees from different departments and promoting a more collaborative work environment.
- Increased ownership by departments of the objectives and measures defined in the SECAP.
- Identification of synergies and coordination between actions planned for different areas (e.g., mobility and social action; urban planning and adaptation).
- Integration of SECAP measures into other municipal strategies and applications.
- Internal recognition of the importance of maintaining a minimum interdepartmental coordination structure.
- Strengthening of the organisational culture.

LESSONS LEARNED

Key takeaways from the SECAP process include:

- Climate plan development can drive internal institutional change; the process itself is transformative.
- External facilitation is key to overcoming resistance and mediating neutrally between departments.
- Starting with informal dialogue and trust-building creates a strong foundation before formal structures.
- Informal communication helps identify and solve problems efficiently.
- Participatory methods must fit organisational culture and staff availability.
- Involving political decision-makers early legitimises the process and ensures technical departments stay engaged.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

Municipalities are key to sustainability, and effective replication models can help scale up sustainable practices nationally and across Europe. Information sharing and collaboration are essential for successful local climate action. This operational model is highly replicable in other municipalities that are beginning their approach to local climate action. The key success factors identified include:

1. Existence of external technical-methodological support with expertise in interdepartmental facilitation.
2. Political commitment to building a common, collaborative vision for climate action.
3. Availability of municipal technicians to actively participate in collaborative and collective work sessions.

Minimum Conditions for Replication:

1. A facilitation team with experience in local governance and participatory methodologies.
2. Involvement of at least 4 to 6 municipal technical departments.

This model can serve as a basis for permanent local climate governance structures, adapted to each municipality, and promote inter-municipal networks for sharing experiences and best practices in internal climate communication.

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LATVIA

INTRODUCING CLIMATE MAINSTREAMING IN MUNICIPAL BUDGETS

SUMMARY

Many municipalities are unaware of how much of their investments or annual budgets are dedicated to climate and energy actions. Our case studies reveal that this share already ranges between 30% and 60%, with clear potential for further increases. The OwnYourSECAP project has developed a simple methodology that enables any municipality to determine this share. The approach combines technical analysis with participatory decision-making, ensuring that financial data is transformed into clear, actionable priorities. Through workshops and collaborative discussions, municipal stakeholders identify 8–10 priority measures for the next two to three years, assess their cost-effectiveness and impact, and integrate them into both the municipal budget and the SECAP.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Municipal

Municipality, Region and/or Country: Liepāja, Latvia

Population: 68,000

Challenges: Municipalities often struggle to ensure and strengthen inter-departmental cooperation, particularly on cross-cutting issues such as climate and energy. Yet, climate considerations are closely linked to almost every area of municipal activity. The key challenge is finding effective ways to ensure that SECAPs, once developed, are actively implemented and not left as static documents.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Implementation Process

Timeline: Once the methodology was developed, two workshops were organised with the pilot municipality. The first focused on explaining why climate mainstreaming is important, outlining its main benefits, and presenting the methodology. By the end of this workshop, the municipality agreed to pilot the approach using its investment plan (covering the period until 2030). Between the two workshops, the investment plan was analysed according to the agreed methodology (materials available here). The second workshop was then held to review the results and set further priorities based on both the SECAP and the investment plan. The entire process was completed within one month.

Resources: No additional costs needed besides the personnel costs

Financing: Costs were covered by OwnYourSECAP project.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: The Municipality of Liepāja selected nine priority actions for implementation, each detailed using the short action template developed by OwnYourSECAP. Together, these actions are expected to deliver planned energy savings of 35,000 MWh and reduce emissions by approximately 88,000 tCO_2.

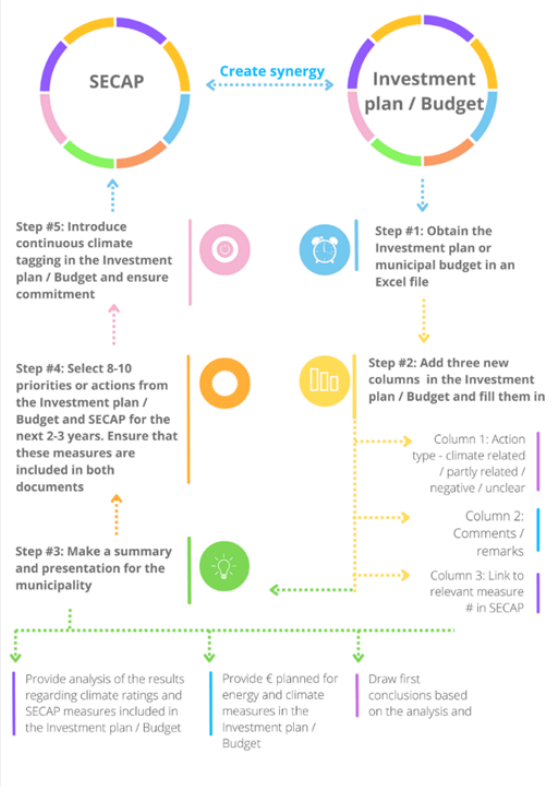
Qualitative impacts: The process strengthened inter-departmental cooperation, increased staff awareness of the links between budgeting and climate goals, and fostered greater ownership of SECAP measures. It improved alignment between the Investment Plan and SECAP, enhanced transparency on climate-related spending, and established a foundation for integrating climate tagging into future budgeting. These changes also encouraged broader stakeholder engagement and built consensus for long-term climate action.

LESSONS LEARNED

The approach proved easy to test, requiring minimal time and resources, which encouraged municipalities to participate. Feedback from stakeholders was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the method's clarity, practicality, and ability to quickly reveal actionable insights for integrating climate considerations into municipal budgeting and planning.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

The methodology is highly adaptable and can be applied in municipalities of varying sizes and contexts with minimal adjustments. Its simple structure, combined with a participatory approach, makes it easy to replicate in other regions or countries. By using locally relevant tagging categories and linking budget lines to existing climate action plans, the process ensures relevance while maintaining a consistent framework that supports comparison and knowledge sharing across municipalities.



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IRELAND

CAPACITY BUILDING ACROSS DIFFERENT LOCAL AUTHORITIES

SUMMARY

In 2024, Ireland published its Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LACAPs), aligned with Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) commonly used across the EU. These plans set out a series of ambitious actions to be achieved by 2029. To ensure successful implementation, it became clear that upskilling local authorities in emerging and high-impact climate topics was essential. Many municipalities also required clear guidance and practical support to make meaningful progress toward the 2030 climate targets.
OwnYourSECAP project addressed this need by delivering targeted capacity-building initiatives. The Tipperary Energy Agency (TEA) played a key role, successfully engaging the majority of local authorities across Ireland. TEA strategically identified high-demand topics, relevant platforms, and key stakeholders to maximise participation and impact. Due to the simplicity, relevance, and effectiveness of the approach, the TEA model offers a valuable blueprint for replication in other regions.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: National

Municipality, Region and/or Country: All municipalities across Ireland

Population: 5 million

Challenges: Publishing the LACAPs was a major milestone, a step closer towards strengthening climate resilience and decarbonisation, and advancing global and national climate goals.

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The LACAPs actions showcase the underlying themes of climate mitigation, adaptation, energy poverty / energy efficiency, supporting community-led renewable energy initiatives etc. Retention of resources and capacity building was a major challenge for municipalities. With a tight timeline of 5 years, municipalities were looking for opportunities to upskill themselves in on-demand topics.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Through the activities of the OwnYourSECAP project, the Tipperary Energy Agency (TEA) successfully encouraged widespread participation from local authorities across Ireland. TEA employed a straightforward yet effective strategy: engaging multiple departments within each municipality and tailoring content to their specific needs. Topics for workshops and webinars were selected based on the expressed interests of the local authorities involved, including those in replication municipalities.
Interestingly, there was notable alignment across local authorities regarding the topics they wanted to explore. TEA identified these recurring themes and assessed whether in-house expertise was available. When required, external specialists were brought in to deliver high-quality sessions. For example, on the topic of district heating, TEA partnered with HeatGrid Ireland, a national leader in the field. For effective climate communication, TEA collaborated with MCO, a strategic design and project management consultancy with expertise in this area.
To boost attendance—particularly for online events—TEA found the most effective method was promotion via the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's (SEAI) Energy Link platform. This platform serves as a knowledge-sharing hub for public sector energy managers and local authority stakeholders across Ireland. Events were listed with full details, including descriptions, posters, and registration links (via Microsoft Teams or hosted directly on the platform). Reminder emails with event details were sent to all registered participants ahead of each session.

This coordinated and responsive approach was applied consistently across all online workshops and webinars, helping to maximise participation and knowledge transfer.

Implementation Process

Timeline: 2023 - 2025

Resources: TEA staff and sometime external expertise

Financing: LIFE CET funding

Red represents target municipalities;
Yellow represents replication municipalities;
Blue represents all the other municipalities reached.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: 26 local authorities across 23 counties; 559 participants

Qualitative impacts: Raise awareness, capacity building, enhanced coordination and collaboration, increased visibility, better networking

LESSONS LEARNED

The approach of using the Energy Link platform was very useful to increase participation. Relevance to the LACAP/SECAP is necessary to gain the interest of municipalities. TEA has always been a trusted organisation due to its on-groundwork with local authorities. Support for their actions through OwnYourSECAP activities also helped gain trust. Existing relationships with local authorities to establish new relationships was very important. Bringing in external experts when needed, also increased their participation.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

In Ireland, since all local authorities have a Climate Action Team, talking to the right people was primary to increase visibility. Having a small team with interdisciplinary skills is important and this structure can be transferred and replicated in other countries. A platform such as energy link, and an overall committee cutting across all municipalities can be replicated to aid in spreading the word about the events that are held.

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ITALY

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CERTIFYING EnMS IN ROVEREDO IN PIANO MUNICIPALITY

SUMMARY

The Municipality of Roveredo in Piano was the first participant in the OYS Project to achieve ISO 50001 certification for its Energy Management System (EnMS). This EnMS focuses on controlling energy performance contracts for building heating and public lighting, established through CONSIP frameworks, enabling the municipality to measure and continuously monitor energy consumption against set indicators and dynamic variables. The ISO 50001 certification underscores the municipality's commitment to energy performance improvement at all organizational levels.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: Roveredo in Piano – Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Italy

Population: 5800

Challenges: The Municipality of Roveredo in Piano adopted an EnMS primarily to address a lack of internal technical expertise in managing energy performance contracts and the absence of tools to verify expected energy savings from heating and public lighting contracts. To overcome these challenges, they trained internal staff with support from SOGESCA and structured a customized EnMS that provides daily verification procedures and tools for controlling their project financing contracts.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

The Municipality of Roveredo in Piano's journey to ISO 50001 certification began with comprehensive staff training and the involvement of energy contract holders. They meticulously analyzed existing energy performance contracts and established a system for tracking energy consumption through structured EnPIs.

This foundation supported the development of a robust EnMS framework, including policies and documentation, which underwent thorough internal audits and management review. The selection of IMQ as the certification body culminated in a successful external audit in December 2023. Ultimately, this rigorous step-by-step implementation led to the Municipality achieving ISO 50001 certification for their energy management practices.

Implementation Process

Timeline:
The preparatory phase, which includes the structuring of the Energy Group, the appointments, the training and the definition of the System documention (including the collection and verification of data), lasted approximately 1 year. The first certification phases (Stage 1 and Stage 2) lasted 1.5 and 1 day respectively for a total of 2.5 days in line with the organization's complexity assessment performed according to the requirements of ISO 50003 (low complexity). For the Municipality of Roveredo in Piano it was not necessary to carry out the pre-audit even though ISO 50001 provides for the possibility.

Resources:
The staff's willingness to undertake the certification process was total. The support and interest from Top Management was constant and unconditional. These two aspects decreed the achievement of the certification objective. Roveredo in Piano is a small municipality with a single technical office. However, this also means that the staff is responsible for managing not only the municipal assets but also the entire territory of the municipality (about 16 km²).

Financing:
The Municipality of Roveredo in Piano has a history of managing energy and seismic improvement funds and has established project financing contracts for building and public lighting energy upgrades. They also invest their own resources in photovoltaic systems to boost local energy production. Their ISO 50001 Action Plan outlines a total investment of over 8.1 million Euros.

This includes significant allocations for energy requalification of municipal buildings through project financing and NZEB standards, renovation of public lighting via project financing, and the installation of new photovoltaic systems. These planned investments demonstrate the Municipality's strong commitment to energy efficiency and sustainable energy practices across its assets.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: Thanks to the investments outlined in the EnMS Action Plan (and SECAP), the Municipality anticipates significant environmental benefits, including annual energy savings of 622.6 MWh and the production of 86 MWh of renewable energy via PV systems. This will result in an estimated yearly reduction of 173.5 tons of CO_2e emissions.

Qualitative impacts: The implementation of the EnMS in Roveredo in Piano fostered enhanced internal technical skills in energy management and improved governance over performance contracts. Distributing the Energy Policy increased awareness among stakeholders, contributing to a developing culture of energy performance improvement across the municipality. The strategic EnMS Action Plan strengthened long-term energy planning and introduced greater transparency in energy management practices.

"As the first municipality in the OYS Project to achieve ISO 50001 certification, Roveredo in Piano holds the potential to serve as a valuable model for others. These qualitative impacts demonstrate a significant organizational shift towards a more informed and efficient approach to energy" – Paolo Nadal, Roveredo in Piano Mayor.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Municipality of Roveredo in Piano experienced very positive results, largely due to the staff's availability and the strong support from Top Management (the Mayor and the delegate Councilor). Structuring an EnMS closely linked to evaluating the energy performance of existing Project Financing contracts for Buildings and Public Lighting was essential for their success. However, ongoing specific staff training remains crucial to manage complex tasks like verifying the implementation of these contracts.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

Key factors for replicating Roveredo in Piano's ISO 50001 success include strong leadership support and dedicated staff engagement. A targeted EnMS focused on evaluating existing energy performance contracts, coupled with leveraging external expertise and peer collaboration, proves highly beneficial. Finally, a well-structured and documented EnMS framework provides a transferable blueprint for other municipalities to adopt.

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CZECH REPUBLIC

Own Your SECAP

DEVELOPING JOINT SECAP

SUMMARY

Joint SECAP has been developed with an active collaboration of six associated municipalities that was an example of good practice with strong replication potential for Czech Republic and other regions with a high number of small and scattered municipalities. Significant economies of scale were achieved – the six municipalities would not commission SECAP individually on their own.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: Voluntary association of municipalities Tolštejn

Population: 4700

Challenges: Czech Republic is among the countries with the most dispersed municipalities in Europe. Local authorities in rural areas tend to be small with low capacities and limited ability to plan and invest. Sharing the climate planning is a way to overcome capacity deficiencies.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

SEVEn engaged six municipalities from the Voluntary Association of Municipalities Tolštejn (also known as DSO) in a joint effort to co-develop a common SECAP. From the outset, a working group comprising the six mayors, an energy manager, and SEVEn team members began preparing the SECAP. SEVEn coordinated the development process in accordance with the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) guidelines, which proved highly useful.

The mayors and the energy manager were actively involved throughout the process. Initially, they contributed by providing emissions data and determining the sectors to be covered. Their key contribution, however, was in proposing and prioritizing SECAP measures. The involvement of local leaders and staff ensured that the final SECAP was both acceptable and its measures feasible.
Up to this point, the process can be described as well-managed but otherwise typical for SECAP development. What made the DSO case unique was its collaborative nature. Six independent municipalities pooled their resources and shared certain risks and benefits, which significantly supported their collective effort.

Implementation Process

Timeline: September 2023 - May 2024
Resources: SEVEn team members
Financing: EU LIFE CET funding for staff costs

Results and Impact

Shared SECAP for 6 municipalities that would otherwise not have it.

- Joint Commitment: Enables the distribution of savings across the entire municipal association.
- Sectors Covered by SECAP: Determined through joint agreement; however, complications may arise if one municipality has significantly different characteristics.
- Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI): Required for the entire territory and must include data from all participating municipalities.
- Risk Management: Assumes similar risk profiles across municipalities within the same region.
- Adaptation and Mitigation Measures: Should be communicated individually with each municipality. One municipality can support others in implementing saving and adaptation measures.
- Administrative Formalities: Benefit from economies of scale, including streamlined submission to the SECAP portal.
- Responsibility: Shared among multiple mayors, reflecting distributed leadership and accountability.

Comparison of regular and joint SECAPs:

Factors	Regular SECAP	Joint SECAP	Economies of scale
Size of municipality	No restrictions	Municipalities should be below 10k population each	-
Pledge	Individual, each municipality must meet its pledge	Joint pledge, might be distributed unevenly	Medium
Included sectors	Selected	Joint agreement	-
BEI	Individual	Joint	Small, limited
Risks	Individual	Joint for the region	Extensive
Measures	Individual	Joint, need for working communication	Small
Formal requirements	Individual	Joint	Extensive
Responsibility	One municipality, one mayor	Distributed respondisility	-

LESSONS LEARNED

Associations of Municipalities suitable for joint SECAP development:

- Should be located within the same region
- Should be of similar size
- Should face similar challenges or issues

Additional Considerations:

- The presence of an atypical municipality may reduce the potential for economies of scale.
- Baseline emissions inventories should be disaggregated for each municipality to allow for comparison.
- Strong communication and good relationships within the association are essential for successful collaboration.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

In the Czech Republic, this approach has strong potential for replication due to the fragmented structure of local administration. There are over 6,500 municipalities serving a total population of 10.5 million, with the median municipality having just 382 inhabitants. Although the average population in the DSO Tolštejn municipalities is higher—nearly 800—none of them would be able to commission a SECAP independently.

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FRANCE

REFERENCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION: A GATEWAY TO ENERGY MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY

A first essential step in setting up an energy management system in accordance with the ISO 50001 standard is determining the baseline, or reference, energy consumption.
When we helped local authorities implement ISO 50001, this step, based on Excel analyses, was highly appreciated. It seems to us to be a good introduction to encourage people to go further in the process, without requiring a lot of resources.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: CA Rochefort Océan and CA Tarbes Lourdes Pyrénées

Population: 65 272 and 128 774 inhabitants

Challenges: Local authorities know how to monitor their energy bills, but it is very complicated for them to monitor their energy performance. Energy performance indicators that are too simple do not adequately reflect reality, and indicators that are too complex are difficult to communicate, making it difficult to involve all staff in the energy management process.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Stage 1: data collection and validation

The local authority's referent collects monthly energy data over several years. An initial analysis, in particular comparing changes in consumption with previous years, ensures that the data collected is valid. The factors that could have an impact on consumption are then identified and collected

These factors may not usually vary (such as surface area) or may be subject to regular variations (climatic conditions, number of users, water consumption, etc.).

Step 2: Analysis of the influence of the variables

A statistical analysis is used to assess the importance of the factors that explain energy consumption for a given energy use. Based on this analysis, multivariable linear regression is used to construct a theoretical model of energy consumption, i.e. the energy baseline.

Step 3: Analysis and awareness

If the model is sufficiently robust (R^2>0.75), comparing actual consumption with the energy baseline (EB) will enable to identify the energy performance over time. If actual consumption is lower than the EB, then the performance has improved. The difference between the 2 curves can even be used to assess the energy gain according to the Measure and Verify approach.
Conversely, if the actual consumption curve is higher than the EB consumption curve, then the performance has deteriorated.
This simple graphical representation is a simple way of communicating with staff, who can see their performance levels and thus see the results of their actions or identify any deviations.

Results and Impact

A graphical representation makes it easier to communicate with staff and raise their awareness of their energy performance. It also allows us to better control consumption and to better manage the action plan. In fact, this type of EB makes it possible to estimate the benefits of the actions taken and/or detect consumption drifts.

LESSONS LEARNED

Implementing an EB of this kind arouses real interest among agents, who thus have a powerful management tool at their disposal.
When creating the theoretical consumption model, it is recommended to ensure the quality of the data and to create the model over a representative reference period (at least once every season) and on a constant perimeter (if significant work has been carried out, the model will change).

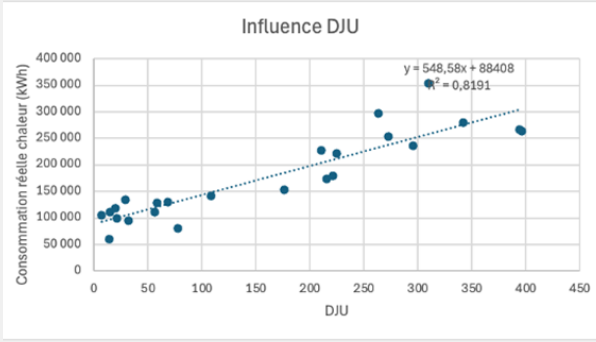

Figure 1 Example of analysis of the influence of outside temperature

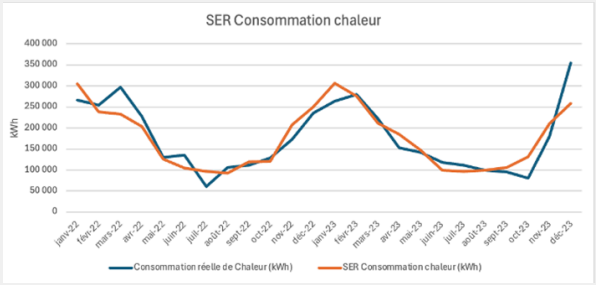

Figure 2 Example of comparison of actual consumption and reference consumption

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

This action is very easy to reproduce. All you need is a minimum of mathematical knowledge to use a multi-variable linear regression function to build the model.

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POLAND

Own Your SECAP

UPDATING SECAP TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION

SUMMARY

The City of Bydgoszcz has updated its Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) to ensure it remains relevant, data-driven, and implementation-oriented. The decision to update the SECAP was driven by the city's choice to discontinue the development of a separate Low-Emission Economy Plan (PGN) and instead consolidate planning efforts into a single, comprehensive Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan. The process strengthened local climate governance, fostered cross-departmental cooperation, and enhanced the integration of mitigation and adaptation measures. These updates aligned local climate actions with national and EU-level targets. The methodology followed the Covenant of Mayors framework, offering a scalable and replicable approach for municipalities across Europe. The update included Monitoring Emission Inventory (MEI), adapting to new legal frameworks, and aligning with city-level strategic plans. SECAP of the City of Bydgoszcz sets a roadmap to reduce CO_2 emissions by a minimum of 40% by 2030 while building resilience to climate change. The work was led by the municipal Energy Management Team, with support from the Association of Municipalities Polish Network "Energie Cités" (PNEC).

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: Local

Municipality, Region and/or Country: City of Bydgoszcz, Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, Poland

Population: Approximately 330,000

Challenges: The key challenges addressed in the updated SECAP included the necessity to improve air quality and urban climate resilience. Integrating both mitigation and adaptation measures into a single strategic document allowed Bydgoszcz to better respond to local and EU policy requirements.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

The process of updating the document was coordinated by the Association of Municipalities Polish Network "Energie Cités" with support from Bydgoszcz's Energy Management Team and involved extensive collaboration with internal departments and external stakeholders, including utilities, transport operators, and NGOs. Key steps included updating the greenhouse gas emissions inventory (MEI based on 2022 data), reviewing and revising planned actions, and integrating climate adaptation measures drawn from the city's existing Climate Adaptation Plan. The SECAP was aligned with national and regional legislation, such as the Air Quality Programme for the Bydgoszcz agglomeration. Financing options were mapped, and responsibilities for implementation and monitoring were clarified.

Implementation Process

Timeline:
The update of the SECAP of the City of Bydgoszcz was made between May and August 2023. The work began with a review and analysis of existing planning documents and emission data. Data collection was conducted, followed by stakeholder engagement and coordination meetings to ensure cross-sectoral input. Based on this, the draft SECAP was prepared, internally reviewed, and finalised for adoption by the City Council.

Resources:
The Association of Municipalities Polish Network "Energie Cités" provided technical assistance to develop the document, in close cooperation with the City of Bydgoszcz's Energy Management Team. Additional input was provided by the city's urban planning and transport departments, local experts, and external stakeholders such as the public transport operator.

Financing:
The process of updating the SECAP was co-funded through the LIFE+ Programme within the OwnYourSECAP project. Support from the City of Bydgoszcz was provided through staff involvement and coordination resources from the municipal administration.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: The updated SECAP confirms the City of Bydgoszcz's target to reduce CO_2 emissions by 40% compared to the 2005 baseline, with a deadline set for 2030. Based on the latest Monitoring Emission Inventory (MEI from 2022), the city has already made significant progress toward this goal. The plan includes specific actions involving municipal buildings, energy-efficient transport, renewable energy installations, and improved waste-to-energy systems. Additionally, around 86 million passengers used public transport in 2022, reflecting Bydgoszcz's commitment to sustainable mobility.

Qualitative impacts: The update process enhanced municipal coordination by clearly defining responsibilities related to energy and climate policy. It also fostered stronger collaboration across departments, ensuring a more coherent approach to sustainability. By incorporating climate adaptation and air quality priorities, the plan gained both strategic clarity and broader relevance. Additionally, improved access to updated data and analytical tools has strengthened Bydgoszcz's capacity to align local actions with EU climate objectives.

LESSONS LEARNED

Effective coordination across municipal departments and the use of current energy data played a crucial role in the plan's success. For future updates, involving citizens more actively and integrating digital tools for tracking progress could strengthen both transparency and overall effectiveness.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

The approach used in Bydgoszcz can be replicated by other municipalities. Key success factors include strong political commitment, a dedicated coordination team, access to recent energy consumption data, and alignment with national and EU strategies. Successful replication also depends on effective cooperation between municipal departments and support from technical experts.

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SWEDEN

CREATION OF NATIONAL PLATFORM IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER PROJECTS

SUMMARY

Electricity used for street lighting is considered high potential to be reduced. A platform for technicians/engineers has been created with the aim of raising awareness of how usage can be reduced in order to achieve the goals set for the municipality. Various meetings have been arranged together in collaboration with another LIFE project to reach out to many municipalities. The collaboration between two projects has provided added value and increased the individual municipality's ability to reduce its electricity usage.

CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Level of implementation: international

Municipality, Region and/or Country: South Sweden

Population: 2 million

Challenges: The costs for electricity for final users increased significantly during the autumn of 2022. ESS together with regional authorities gathered the local administrations in the Region of Kronoberg to discuss possible savings/efficiency actions for the municipalities to decrease their use. Two certain areas of use were recognized: Street lighting and kitchens of schools, kindergartens and elderly. Street lighting was considered the most promising area to focus on, as the highest potential with limited change of behaviour.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

ESS organised, in cooperation with the County Administrative Board of Kronoberg, a first meeting where technicians/engineers from the eight municipalities in the region were invited.

Own Your SECAP

Two important conclusions from the meeting were to go on with an additional meeting and to invite the target group from additional municipalities, also from the region of Kalmar and Skåne. There is another LIFE CET funded project ongoing, targeting various target groups in the region of Skåne, e.g. technicians. Based on ESS awareness of the status on energy planning and implementation of actions in municipalities in this region, a broader base for intermunicipal experience exchange is facilitated. There are traditionally collaboration platforms between municipalities within a certain region, but not with the focus on street lighting, however less possibilities across the regional boarders. For that reason a platform covering several regions is considered a non-traditional possibility to facilitate cooperation and exchange of knowledge and experience. In addition, the meetings have attracted the target profession from municipalities located to other regions as well, which has further increased the base for beneficial cooperation. The two LIFE projects are similar to each other, but do also differ in some important aspects. Own Your SECAP has a wider perspective and includes e.g. introduction of energy management systems and climate-mainstreaming budgets. The variations between the projects have entailed replication of learnings between the targeted municipalities, not exclusively on street lighting, but also on other relevant aspects on energy planning.

Discussions have been opened in the end of each of the following meetings after the first tentative gathering, and decisions have been taken to go on with additional meetings. The fifth meeting was organised in the spring of 2025 in the municipality of Alvesta and it is decided to continue with a sixth meeting in the autumn of 2025, after the Own Your SECAP has ended. The meetings have been organised in different municipalities, where the local administration in the current location has hosted the meeting. The meetings have been organised in collaboration with ESS, where the host has financed some certain costs e.g. premises, meals and costs related to invited speakers.

Implementation Process

Timeline: First platform meeting on 3rd of May 2023 in the municipality of Älmhult.
Resources: Staff for coordination of the activities within the platform.
Financing: Sources of funding are EU funds from LIFE CET, for staff costs.

Results and Impact

Quantitative results: More than 100 attendees have taken part of any of the meetings, with approximately 50 unique individuals.
Qualitative impacts: Awareness is raised regarding technologies and innovations on e.g. steering, monitoring for e.g. different ways of dimming the lights certain time-slots of the day and introducing presence sensors. Technicians/engineers from various municipalities have started collaboration on certain topics, e.g. public procurement of equipment.

LESSONS LEARNED

ESS is acting as the coordinator of the platform. It is appropriate to use a regional actor for that task for several reasons. The Agency is well-known for all the municipalities and without any business interests. It is sustainable, enduring and works for long term goals. It has the required knowledge of the area.

The officials at the Agency have experience on energy planning and the content of the municipal SECAPs in their region, gained by Own Your SECAP project and others. It is key for the outcome of the meetings to compile an agenda which relate to actions on street lighting in their respective SECAPs. The content of the meetings are based on hands-on solutions where the outcome has the target to foster the target group to decide on technical solutions to implement relevant actions from their SECAPs.

TRANSFERABILITY AND REPLICATION POTENTIAL

The department for street lighting in the local administration is often very small, in several cases in the small municipalities in south Sweden, it may consist of one or two technicians/engineers. It´s not unusual that these persons have other area of responsibility as well, e.g. any traffic related task. The small department entails limitations for experience - and knowledge exchange internally. For that reason the possibility of part-taking of exchange with technicians/engineers from other municipalities are appreciated and valuable. No specific skills or budget allocation are required to participate.
Each local administration itself is normally not able to coordinate this kind of platforms, since they have limited resources and such task is not defined in their "must do" tasks. Furthermore, it is beneficial for the outcome of the meetings when the hostship are circulated among the municipalities, since it deepen the understanding for the conditions in that certain municipality.

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CONCLUSION

The case studies presented in this publication illustrate the rich diversity of approaches and experiences among European municipalities engaged in climate action.
From foundational steps such as SECAP development and baseline definition to more advanced initiatives like climate mainstreaming, ISO 50001 certification, and the creation of energy manager networks, the OwnYourSECAP project has supported municipalities at every stage of their climate journey.

This diversity is not a limitation—it is a strength. Just as municipalities differ in size, capacity, and context, so too do their pathways toward climate neutrality. The examples shared here demonstrate that meaningful progress is possible regardless of starting point. For municipalities beginning their climate work, tools like participatory planning, joint SECAP development, and baseline energy assessments offer accessible entry points. For those further along, initiatives such as intermunicipal cooperation platforms, integrated budgeting, and renewable energy communities showcase how climate action can be embedded into governance and operations.

Importantly, the project highlights the value of peer learning, local ownership, and flexible methodologies that adapt to municipal realities. Whether through citizen engagement, internal capacity building, or strategic partnerships, each case contributes to a growing body of knowledge that can inspire and guide others.

As climate challenges intensify, the need for local leadership and collaboration becomes ever more critical. The lessons learned and practices documented here offer a replicable foundation for municipalities across Europe to take bold, informed, and inclusive steps toward a sustainable future.

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MORE INFORMATION

Within the OwnYourSECAP project, we have developed several useful tools and materials that might be of interest to you or your colleagues. Here are some examples.

- Guidelines on systematic implementation of SECAP measures
- Tools for institutionalising climate adaptation
- Sharing and expanding knowledge: towards Owning Your SECAP
- Final public project report
- Templates for SECAP, SECAP measures, internal audit and more.
- Climate-mainstreaming in municipal budgets: lessons learned

Visit our website and find these and other resources:

https://www.ownyoursecap.eu/