

COVENANT SUPPORTERS Implementation Report

2024



Introduction



Each year, the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy - Europe conducts a survey targeting local and regional energy agencies, national associations of local and regional authorities, city networks, and other related entities that support signatories across Europe, in their role as Covenant Supporters.

This Implementation Report gathers insights on their approaches in mobilising and assisting Covenant signatories in achieving ambitious climate and energy objectives.



Multilevel governance is at the core of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy Europe. Covenant Supporters play a key role raising awareness, mobilising and providing technical and financial support, bringing the initiative closer to municipalities of all sizes across Europe.

This year's survey focused on gathering insights on the technical and financial support offered to signatories, on multilevel governance processes, as well as on the Covenant campaign "Cities Heat Detox". The survey aimed at exploring the key challenges cities face when implementing climate resilience and heat reduction measures as well as highlighting ongoing projects and strategies aiming at "detoxifying" heating and cooling across Europe.

The 2024 report summarises the findings from the CoM Europe Supporters survey, sent to all Covenant of Mayors Supporters between November 2024 and January 2025. In this year's survey, 27 organisations* participated, representing 18 countries. These 27 organisations are supporting all together 5521 local and regional governments from Europe, being their members and stakeholders.

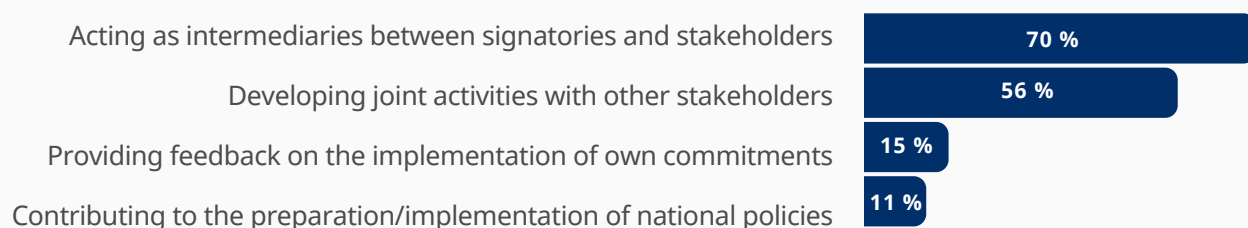
***Respondent organisations:** ZZMO CITENERGO; ABMEE - Agency of Brasov for the Management of Energy and Environment; OER - Energy Cities Romania; Agenzia Territoriale per l'Energia e la Sostenibilità di Parma; Fundacion Asturiana de la Energia; Codema; Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments; Association of Finnish Cities and Municipalities (AFCM); Strasbourg Climate Agency; AECM. Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities; AGIRE SRL; Eurocities; Energy Cities; Union des Villes et Communes de Wallonie; Consell Comarcal del Bages; Energiaklub; Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic (SMOCR) ; Association of Energy Managers of Towns and Municipalities (SEMMO); AGIRE Energy Agency of the Province of Mantova; AREANATEjo; Aldeias Históricas de Portugal - Associação de Desenvolvimento Turístico; FEDARENE; VVSG; Alleanza per il Clima Italia - Climate Alliance Italy; Climate Alliance; TALQ Consortium; Energy and Climate Agency of Podravje (ENERGAP)

Multilevel Governance

In the context of the Covenant of Mayors - Europe, multi-level governance represents the type of collaboration the Covenant supporters have with Signatories, Coordinators, National Ministries or Agencies and/or any other stakeholders with relevant competences in particular on climate and energy as well. In this sense, multilevel governance is a way for Signatories, Supporters and Coordinators to share the decision-making process and coordinate the related process.

This section describes how the Supporters are collaborating with other levels of governance, and how this collaboration is beneficial for the signatories.

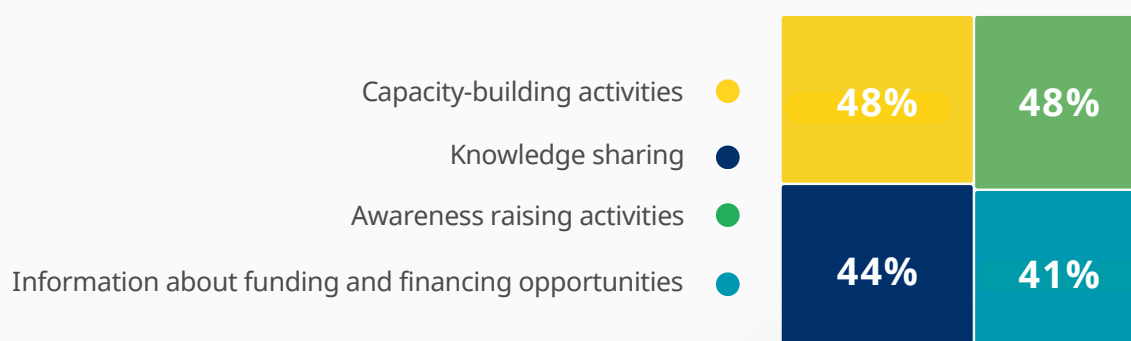
How Supporters collaborate with different levels of governance?



How are Covenant targets perceived by municipalities?



Overall support needed by Signatories to achieve the targets

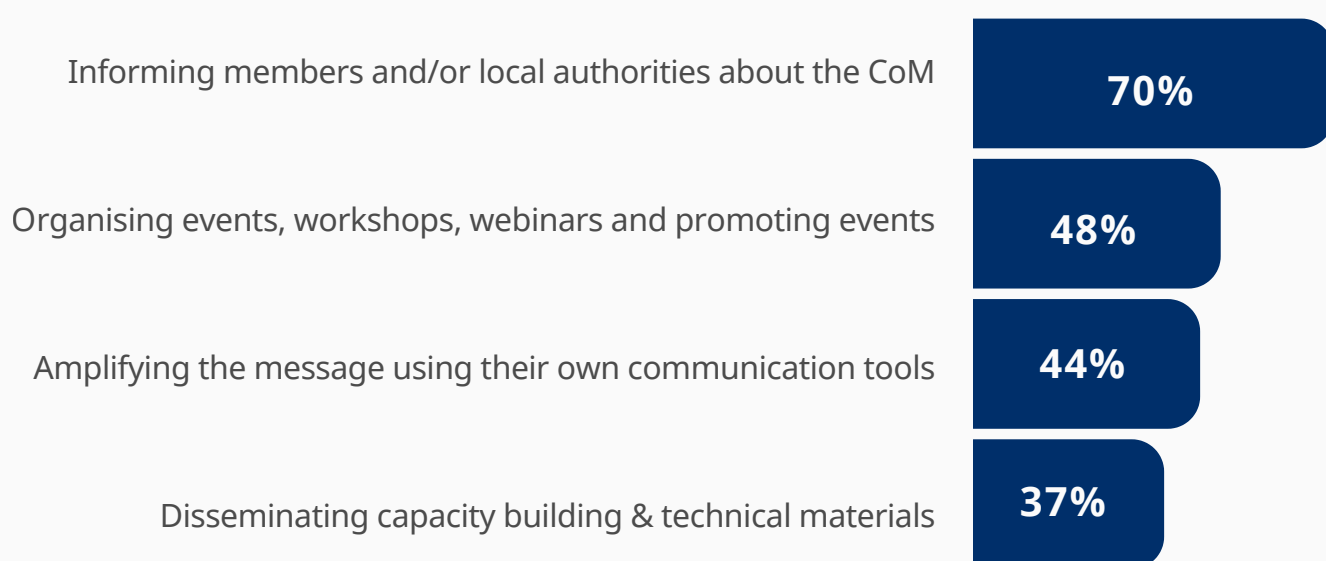


Promotion

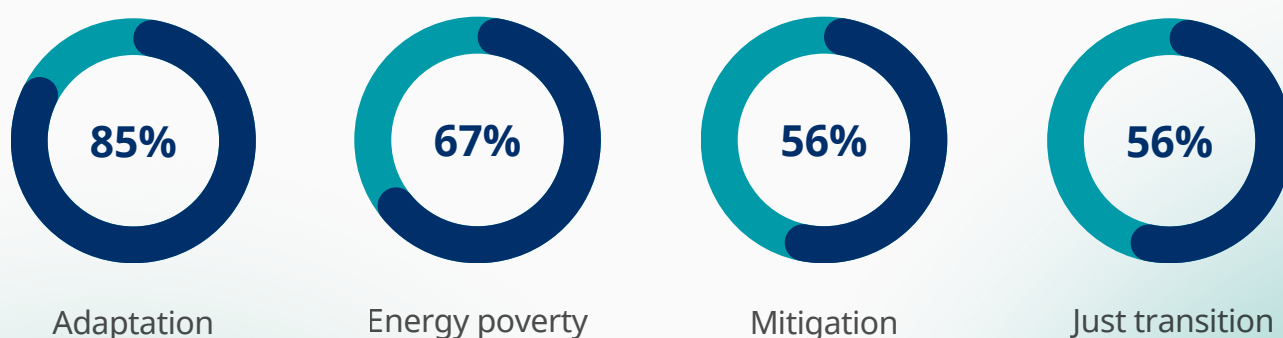
This section investigates how the respondents raise awareness about the Covenant of Mayors – Europe among their signatories and/or members. The section also describes which topics and sub-topics need further promotion.

Respondents have also presented examples of their contribution to the Covenant of Mayors – Europe activities in 2024, and shared good practices that can be replicated.

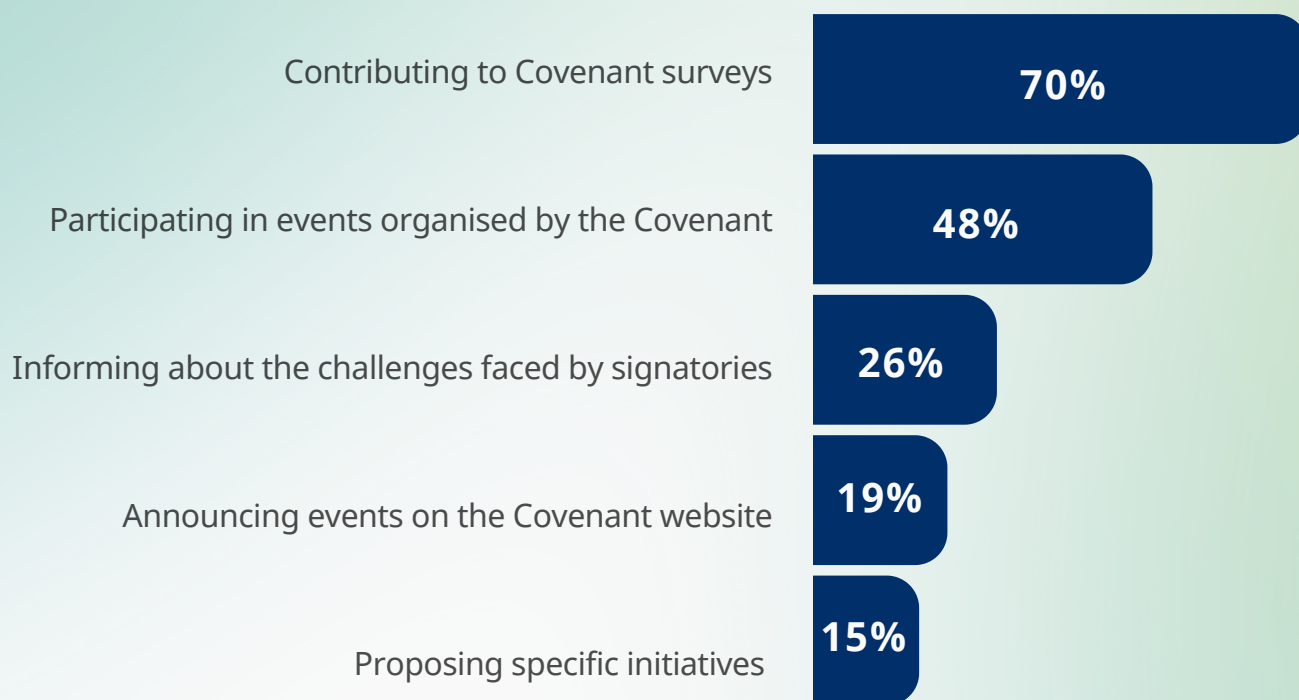
How are Supporters promoting the Covenant?



Awareness raising efforts needed in Supporters territories



How are Supporters participating in Covenant activities?



Adaptation to climate change and **Energy poverty** emerged as top priorities for awareness-raising, followed by climate change mitigation and a just transition; respondents also highlighted **Citizen engagement** and **Technology standards for smart cities** as key sub-topics.

Nearly **50% of Supporters** also attended events organised by the Covenant of Mayors Office, and among the 27 respondents, 4 proposed specific initiatives to signatories in collaboration with the Covenant office.

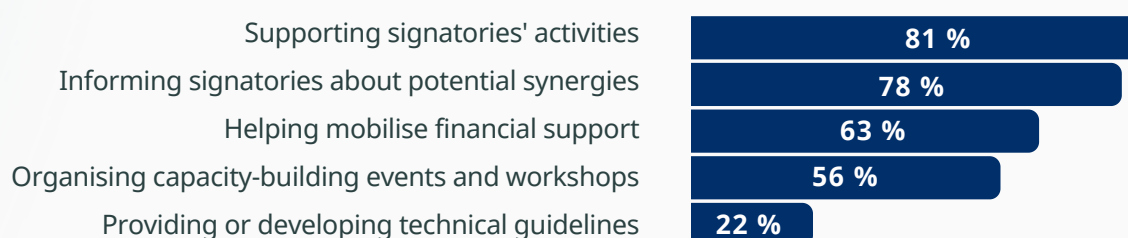


Support

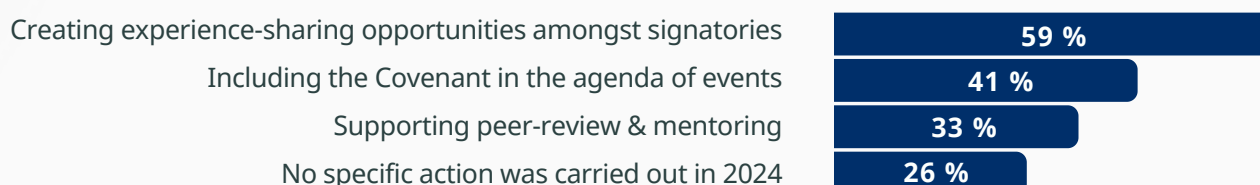
This section gathers information about different types of capacity building support provided by Covenant Supporters to the Signatories in 2024.

It includes the types of knowledge-sharing activities they organised. Respondents also shared the most important topics and the types of support needed to help signatories to achieve the EU 2050 climate neutrality target.

Type of capacity-building offered by the Supporters



Type of knowledge-sharing offered by the Supporters



Most of the respondents provided **direct support to signatories' activities** and informed them about **potential synergies at the national, regional, and local levels**. Moreover and given that funding is seen as a significant challenge, helping Signatories to **mobilise funds** emerged as one of the most important support activities undertaken by Supporters.

More than half of the respondents have also organised capacity building events and workshops, and also facilitated **experience-sharing opportunities** among signatories. 41% of the respondents are including the Covenant as part of the agenda of their activities.

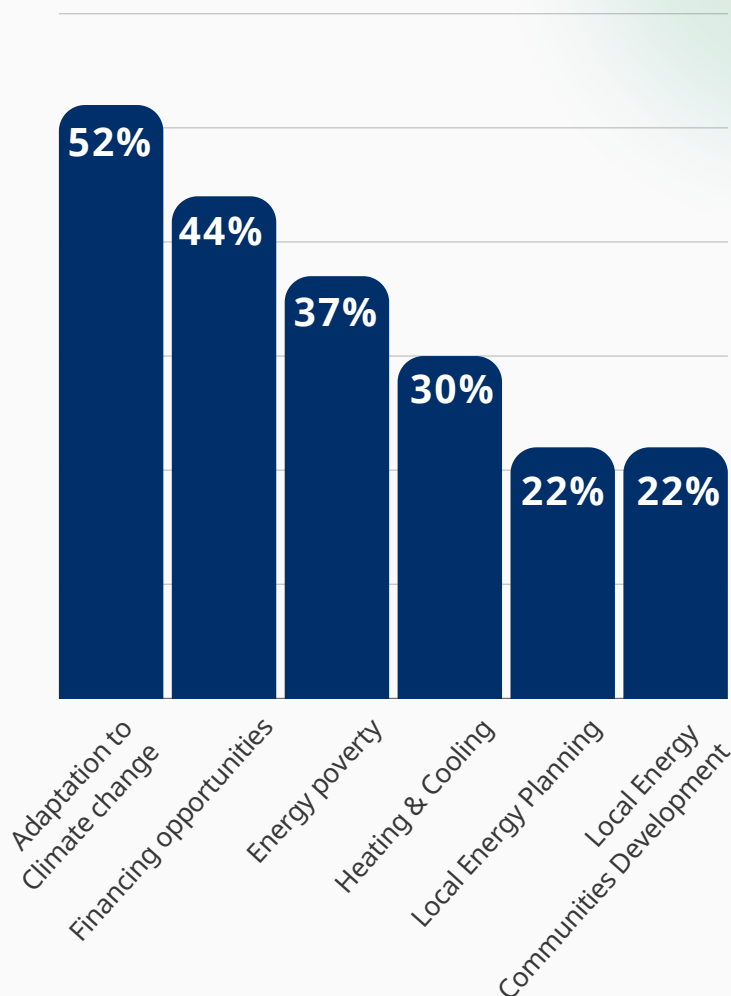


Capacity building needs

Respondents were asked to identify the most important capacity-building needs in their territories. The results show that **Adaptation to climate change** (52%), **Financing opportunities** (44%) and **Energy poverty** (37%) were ranked as the top 3 capacity building needs.

In addition to the options shown in the chart, respondents were also able to select other relevant areas such as renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, just transition, and climate neutrality.

30 %



Capacity building support needed to achieve the EU 2030 & 2050 climate goals



Information about funds



Technical workshops



Peer-to-peer learning



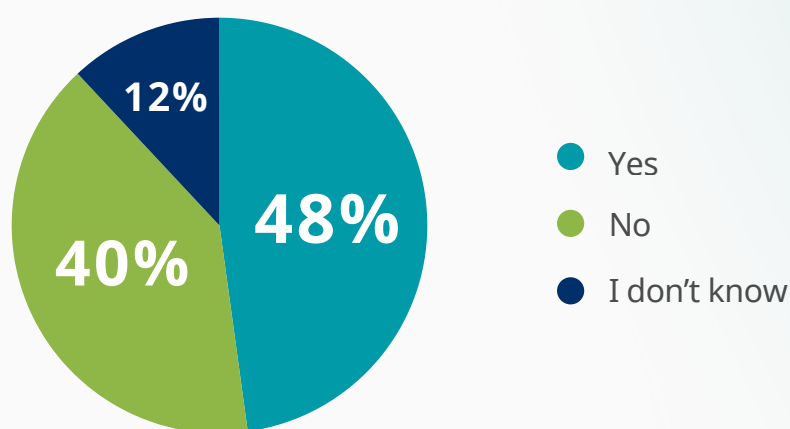
More awareness raising about targets

Funding



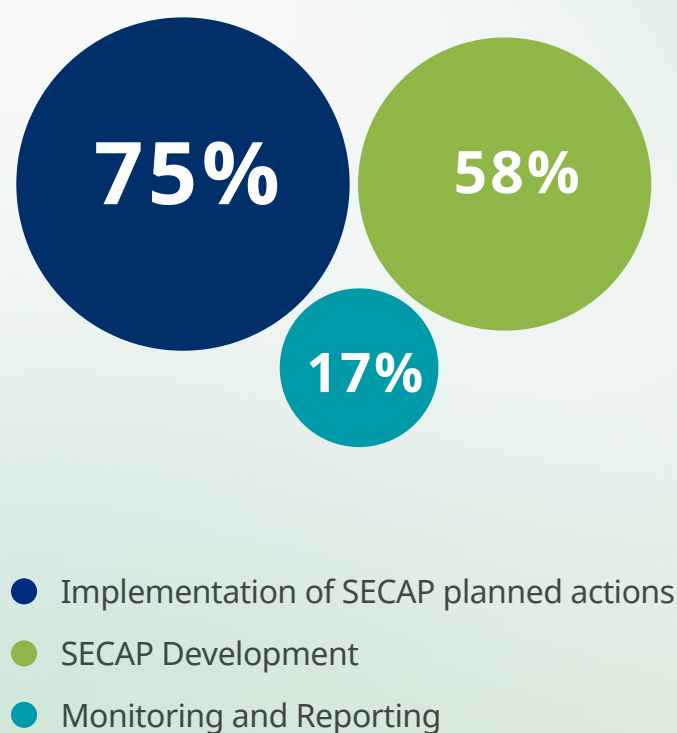
The Funding section provides information regarding the knowledge of the respondents about available funds, at regional or national level, to finance specific actions related to the Covenant of Mayors (e.g. development of SECAPs) and how they inform the signatories of the Covenant of Mayors about these funding possibilities.

Knowledge of funding at national or regional level to finance CoM-related actions



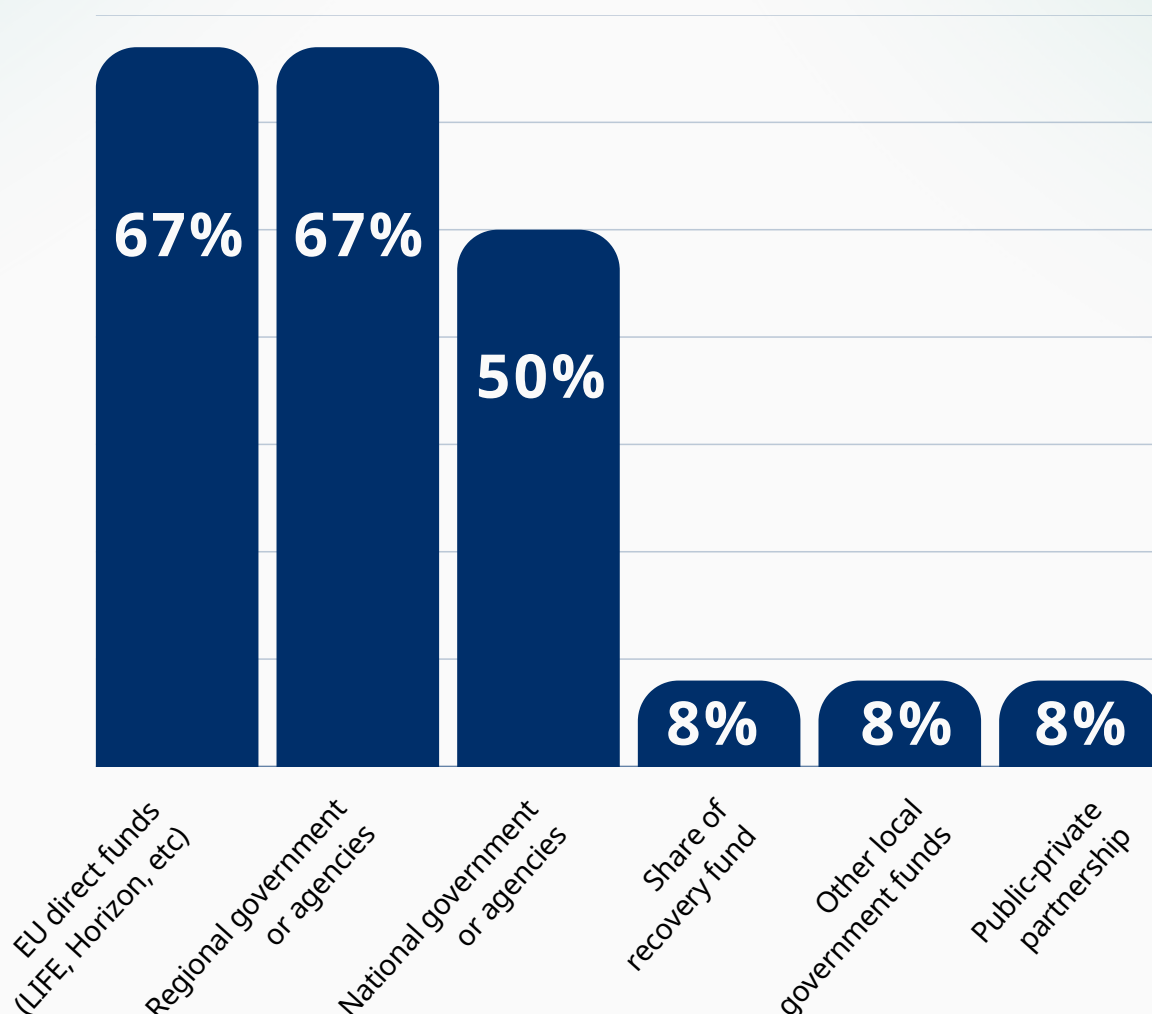
48% of Supporters responding to this survey are aware of regional and/or national funds to finance specific actions related to the Covenant of Mayors. These funds are primarily used to support the implementation of actions included in the Sustainable Energy and Climate Actions Plans, followed by support to SECAP development. **17% of the respondents** are also aware of funds available for monitoring and reporting.

Funds used for





Types of funding used for CoM-related actions



EU direct funds, along with **funds from regional government agencies**, were identified as the most used types of funding to support Covenant related activities, followed by funds from national governments or national agencies.

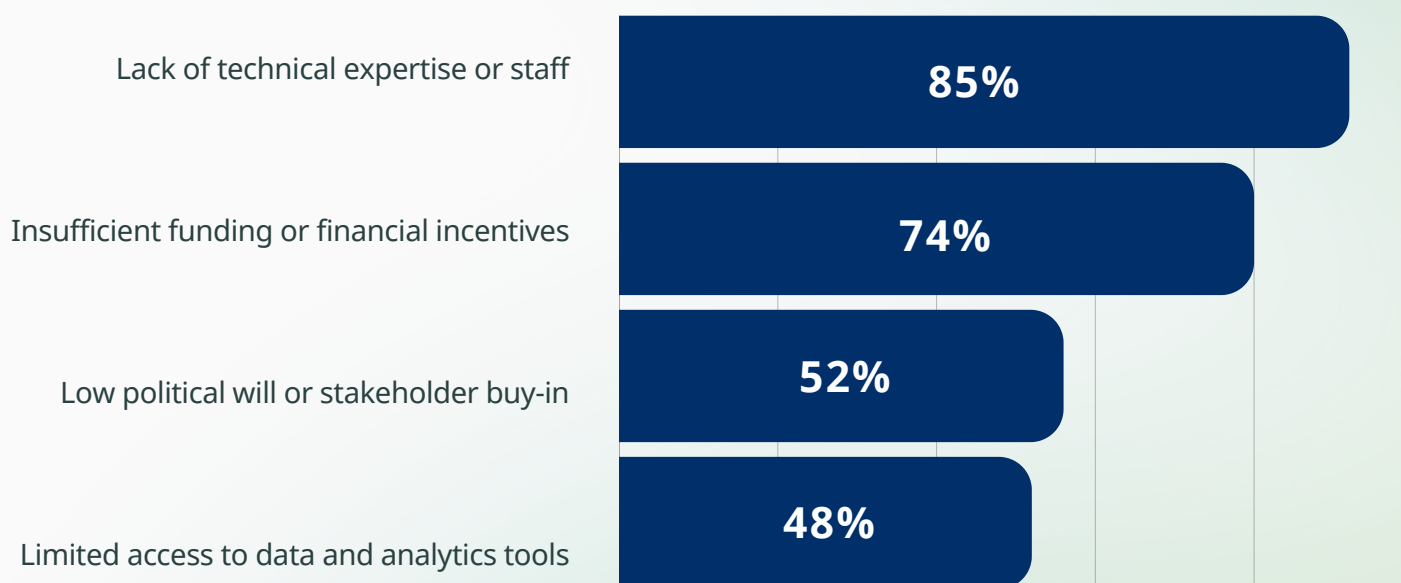
Very few respondents have referred to Recovery Funds, other government funds or public-private partnerships.

Heating and Cooling

The Covenant of Mayors Campaigns aims at raising awareness, offer solutions and share practices focused on topical challenges in the climate and energy transition.

It is an invitation for cities to share concrete actions they are taking, promoting practice-sharing amongst local governments and spotlighting local-level responses to existing challenges. It includes promoting a series of in-depth case studies from champion and pioneer cities, or showcasing different solutions and responses from cities and towns of all sizes across Europe in many events. The Campaign "Cities Heat Detox" focused on decarbonising the heating and cooling sector. The following section gather some of the challenges cities face to implement climate resilience and take heat reduction measures.

Key challenges faced by cities for the implementation of strategies for detoxifying heating and cooling



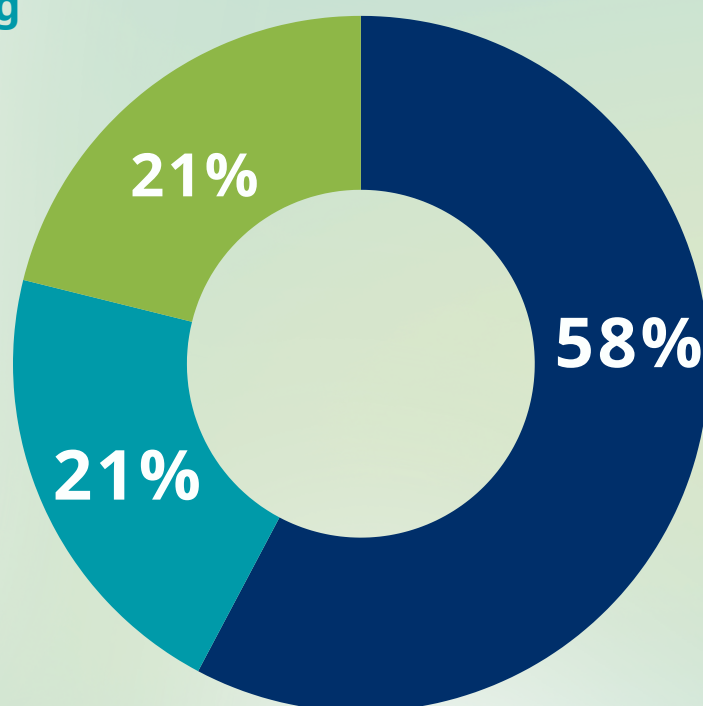
A clear **85% of respondents** referred to **lack of technical expertise or staff** as one of the key challenges cities face when implementing climate resilience and heat reduction measures.

Insufficient funds and low political will were also selected by more than **50% of respondents**.



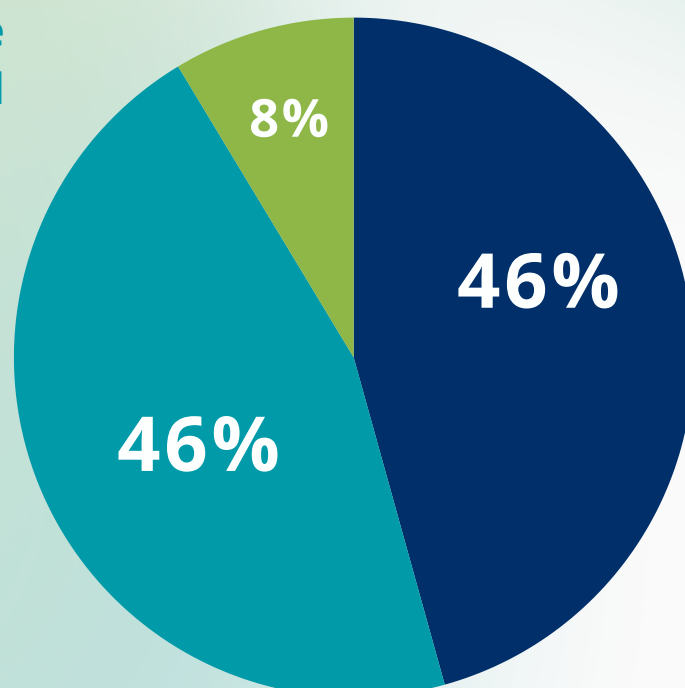
Are Signatories implementing strategies for decarbonising Heating and Cooling?

- Yes
- No
- In progress



Are Supporters implementing projects related to the detoxification of Heating and Cooling?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know



Good practices

Covenant Supporters played a key role highlighting the need for climate action and sustainable energy transition, while promoting the Covenant of Mayors. Their efforts include supporting signatories, raising awareness, hosting capacity-building workshops, and creating collaboration platforms. It highlights a unified dedication to tackling climate change and promoting a greener, more energy-efficient future. This section highlights some practices undertaken by CoM Supporters.

Multilevel Governance

AECM. Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities - Estonia

The Association organised Green Club events all along the year of 2024. The Green Club is a knowledge network and cooperation body for local government leaders, focusing on strategically selected environmental and climate themes, which together can be conceptualised and linked to the implementation of the green transition in the day-to-day management of local governments as well as investment activities.

CODEMA - Ireland

The four Dublin SECAPs are a collaborative response to the impact that climate change is having on the Dublin Region and its citizens. The SECAPs follow on the Dublin Climate Change Action Plans, and while each plan is unique to its functional area, they are unified in their approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and their commitment to lead by example in tackling climate change.

VVSG - Belgium

VVSG organises a monthly meeting with all the actors in their Network, public authorities and civil society organisations as business associations.

Energiaklub - Hungary

Energiaklub participates in the Monitoring Committee of the Operative Programme for Environment and Energy and of the one of Recovery and Resilience Facility and supports the development of proper funding programmes targeting local municipalities to implement SECAP measures. It has close contact with the Ministry of Energy, participates actively in national policy development in the fields of climate.

Promotion

AREANATEjo - Portugal

AREANATEjo implemented an EU funded project focusing on increasing the technical and organisational capacity of 6 Local Administrations in Alto Alentejo sub-region, that already joined the CoM as signatories.

ABMEE. Agency of Brasov for the Management of Energy and Environment - Romania

On July 23-24 2024, at the 5th meeting of the Partnership for Transatlantic Energy and Climate Cooperation (P-TECC), held in Bucharest, ABMEE participated in a panel on "Cities as Laboratories for Innovation," promoting the Covenant of Mayors and emphasising cities' role in advancing low-carbon solutions. During the Business Forum, which was the first part of the event, CEOs and industry leaders discussed energy challenges.

The Alliance of Green Cities brought together local political leaders to explore how cities can drive clean energy initiatives and serve as laboratories for innovation. The event was organised by the Romanian Ministry of Energy, the US Department of Energy and the Atlantic Council Global Energy Centre, with involvement of public and private leaders to discuss European energy security, addressing the clean energy advancement and cybersecurity of energy infrastructure.

Strasbourg Climate Agency - France

The Agency organised climate walks to raise awareness on climate risks in urban territories, and participated in local events to raise awareness on climate change and solutions to decarbonise, to adapt at citizen level or municipality level.

Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments - Latvia

The Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments organised a "Sustainable Development Week", in the framework of the European Mobility Week in September, in which municipalities have organised activities to inform inhabitants on climate related issues, such as the prevention of coastal erosion.

Support

Aldeias Históricas de Portugal - Portugal

Sustainable and inclusive mobility is a priority action for improving the quality of life of citizens, but also for decarbonisation, especially in the context of a border area with low density. In this sense, the organisation is working with 10 municipalities integrated in the network on this theme. The organisation is in the process of finalising the action plan to apply to national funds.

Consell Comarcal del Bages - Spain

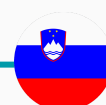
The Consell mentioned that supporting the Covenant of Mayors is a plus when a local government ask for economical supports to "Diputació de Barcelona".



OER. Energy Cities Romania - Romania

OER has developed two comprehensive guides specifically designed for local authorities. The first guide focuses on the development of Local Long-Term Climate Strategies, outlining best practices for creating sustainable and effective climate action plans that align with both local needs, national and EU goals. The second guide provides detailed criteria for Energy Performance that should be considered during the tendering and project implementation processes. This guide aims to ensure that energy efficiency and sustainability are prioritized in public projects.

In addition, OER organised Energy and Climate Dialogues, which serve as a platform for facilitating discussions and knowledge exchange between local governments and national entities. These dialogues aim to foster collaboration, share insights and support local authorities in effectively implementing the national climate and energy objectives at the community level. With these initiatives, OER aim to empower local authorities to take meaningful actions in addressing climate change and energy transition.



ENERGAP. Energy and Climate Agency of Podravje - Slovenia

ENERGAP developed a One Stop Shop (OSS) primarily aiming to support municipalities and empower them in accelerating process towards climate neutrality. In one place, the municipalities and other public organisations (as well as private) are able to get the information, help and support about regulation, strategical and operative planning energy and climate data (including spatial and vulnerability data), definition of needed measures and time frames as well as financial planning and using different financial mechanisms, monitoring of the results and reporting (in the case of support of EU funds). A communication strategy for the service was prepared. It was promoted through different channels (mails, monthly online news, website, articles in professional magazines, personal visits and presentation at different local events). Workshops about the service were organised for mayors and municipal staff.



TALQ - Germany

TALQ organised roundtables about smart tenders for smart street lighting to discuss on the topic of "How can city tenders?":

- 1) Assure a future-proof outdoor lighting system?
- 2) Increase energy savings through system features?
- 3) Avoid vendor lock-in for cities and municipalities?



Alleanza per il Clima Italia. Climate Alliance Italy - Italy

The Alleanza elaborated policies and actions for Just Transition. The organisation also organised Conferences and debates, such as the National event on EUClimatePact.



SMOCR. Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic - Czechia

SMOCR organised a series of webinars focusing on the role of the Covenant of Mayors and the opportunities of SECAP, as well as other topics important for municipalities. Additionally, they hosted a conference on energy and waste management, addressing key issues and sharing insights relevant to local governments.

Funding

AGIRE. Energy Agency of the Province of Mantova - Italy

AGIRE is involving Municipalities and private companies in the development of co-financed EU or National projects.

Union des Villes et Communes de Wallonie asbl - Belgium

In 2023, the Government of Wallonia renewed its support for 171 municipalities as part of the POLLEC call for projects launched in October 2022. It allows beneficiaries to hire or sustain (for a total duration of 3 years) the positions of the SECAP coordinators, in charge of implementing climate policies at local level.

Walloon Program UREBA subsidises investments to improve energy efficiency of local authorities' buildings.

With funding from the European Recovery and Resilience Plan and the Recovery Plan for Wallonia, the Region launched various calls for projects to support energy renovation of buildings.

At the end of March 2024, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation launched the third call for projects of the investment plan in school buildings: 200 million euros of grant are available. The main objective of the investment plan is to accelerate the energy transition in school buildings while also considering other aspects such as digital transition, inclusion, etc.

Heating and Cooling

Agenzia Territoriale per l'Energia e la Sostenibilità di Parma - Italy

The City of Parma - signatory of the Covenant of Mayors Europe and also member of the EU Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission - is promoting several activities to achieve decarbonisation targets for heating and cooling. Through the one-stop shop activity "Energy & Condominium Desk", ATES is implementing a pilot project to replace winter air conditioners with electric heat pumps.

Energy Cities - France

Energy Cities is managing the EU Tracker to monitor how Member States support local governments who have the obligation to develop a local heating and cooling plan, as part of the recast EU Energy Efficiency Directive.

AFCM. Association of Finnish Cities and Municipalities - Finland

There are several examples shared by the Finnish signatories as part of the Campaign, for the cities of [Vantaa](#), [Lappeenranta](#), [Espoo](#) and [Turku](#).

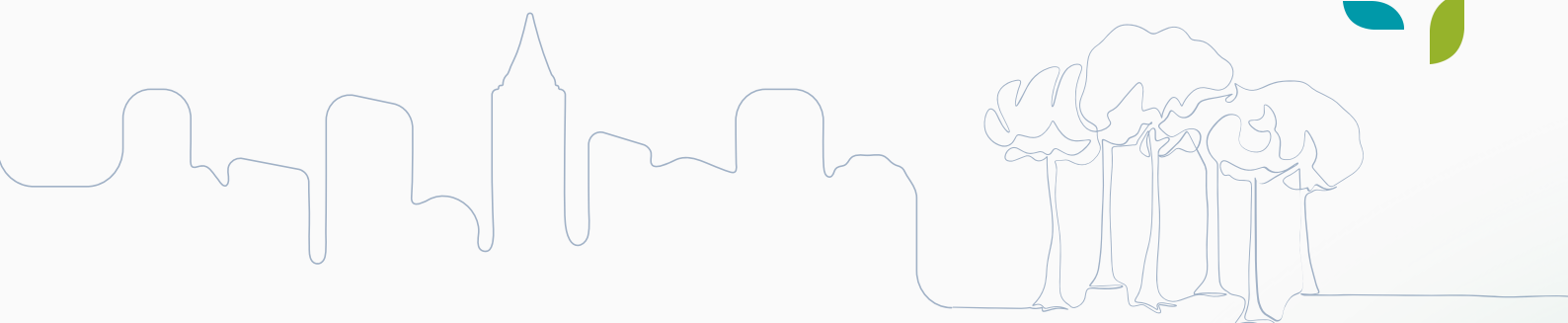
The association published a survey on the state of local climate action in 2024 showing that 90% of the Finnish people live in a municipality that now has a local climate target.

Findings



- The 2024 survey edition clearly underscores that **climate change adaptation** remains one of the most challenging issues that must be addressed through targeted awareness campaigns, involving a broad range of stakeholders.
- **Acting as intermediaries** between signatories and stakeholders continues to be the most common approach for collaboration with other Covenant and national stakeholders.
- Municipalities are still focused on a more attainable **40% emissions reduction** target by 2030, and are looking to address the 2050 targets.
- Signatories identify capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, including the **need for better access to information about available funding opportunities** equally essential to achieving their targets.
- Survey results highlight an important **need to raise awareness about national and regional funding sources** that can support CoM-related initiatives, helping signatories better access the resources they need.
- While EU direct funds (e.g., LIFE, Horizon) and regional government agency funds remain the most commonly used for CoM-related actions, there is **clear need to increase the use of recovery funds and public-private partnership funds**.
- On the campaign 'Cities Heat Detox' Survey findings indicate that **cities require increased support** in terms of technical expertise and staffing to effectively implement climate resilience and heat reduction measures. On the other hand, majority of Signatories the CoM Supporters are following are implementing or are working on implementation of the strategies for decarbonising Heating and Cooling.
- The 20 Good Practices serve as a **positive indicator** of the progress made by the Signatories in advocating for climate action and contributing to a greener, more energy-efficient future.

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