

Aspects of strategic climate work in Nordic municipalities

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Union of the Baltic Cities



UBC Commission on Environment

- Based in Turku since 1997
- International team of 19 professionals
- Current focus areas: Sustainability management, local climate work, water management, sustainable urban mobility, marine issues



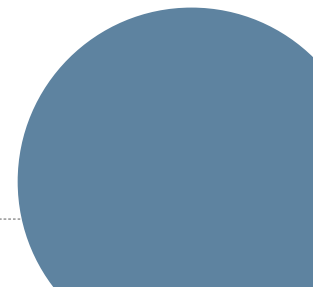
Climate change and local authorities

"Local governments have to deal with the problem as it's on their door step – whether there is a global agreement between national governments or not"

Local authorities should be recognised as key actors in climate change response

Local authorities have huge potential to fight climate change regarding both climate mitigation and adaptation:

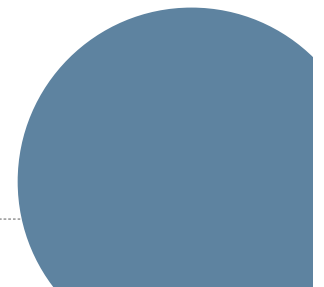
- Responsible for a variety of planning and management issues relevant for responding to climate change – emphasized in the Nordic countries
- Directly involved in awareness raising and supporting their communities to tackle climate change



Climate change – a challenge for municipalities

Responding to climate change requires *long-term decision-making, cooperation across all municipal sectors and new ways to work.*

Measures mitigating climate change often have positive side effects, such as monetary savings or improvements in local air quality.



NordLead project

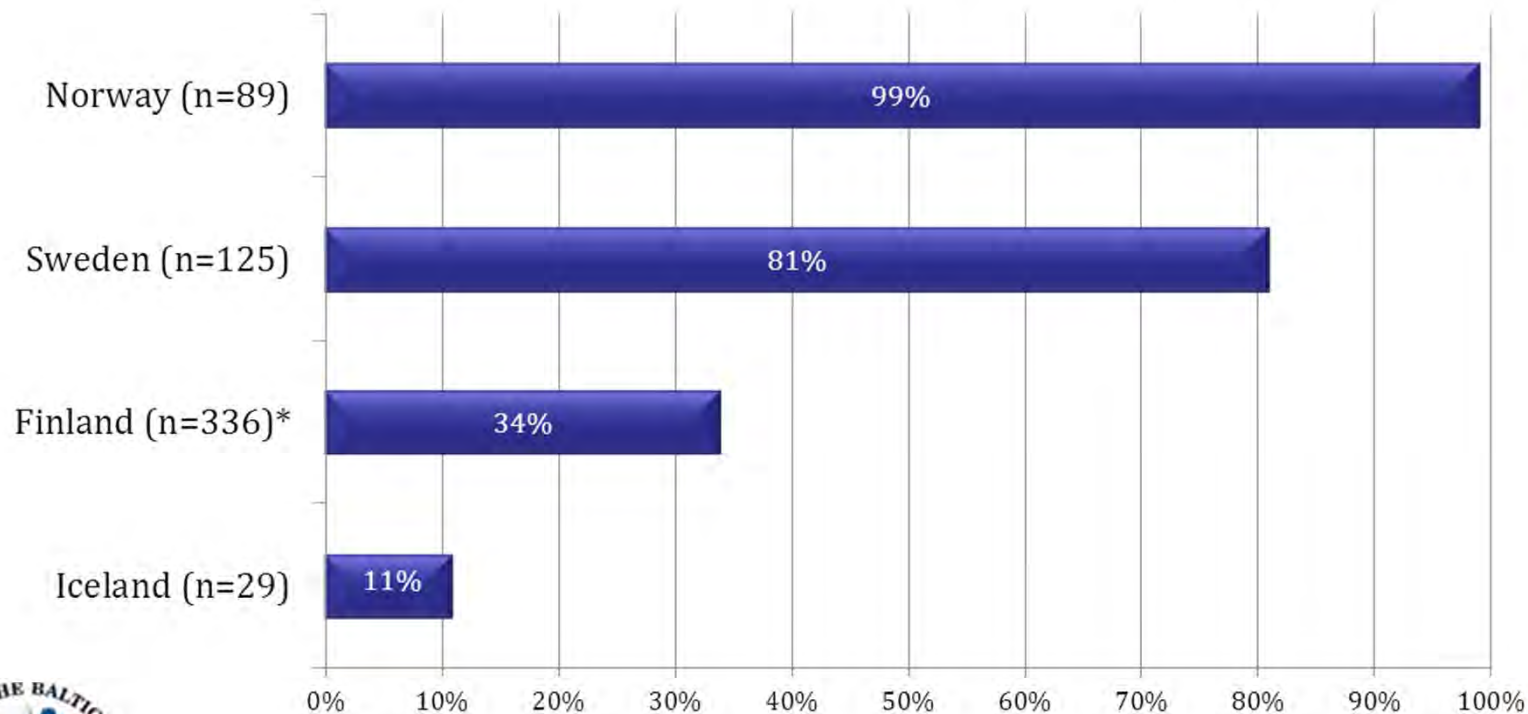
- Identifying and analysing the **success factors and need for support in Nordic municipalities in their climate change response**
- Survey among Icelandic, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish municipalities



Climate strategies in place

Municipalities that have a climate strategy or are preparing one

*) Finnish figure from an earlier mapping incl. all municipalities

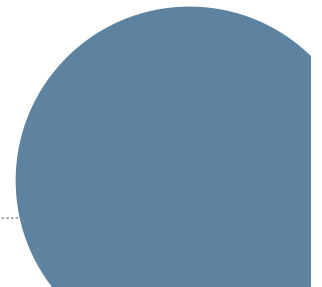


What triggers local climate work?

Nordic municipalities are most often driven by...

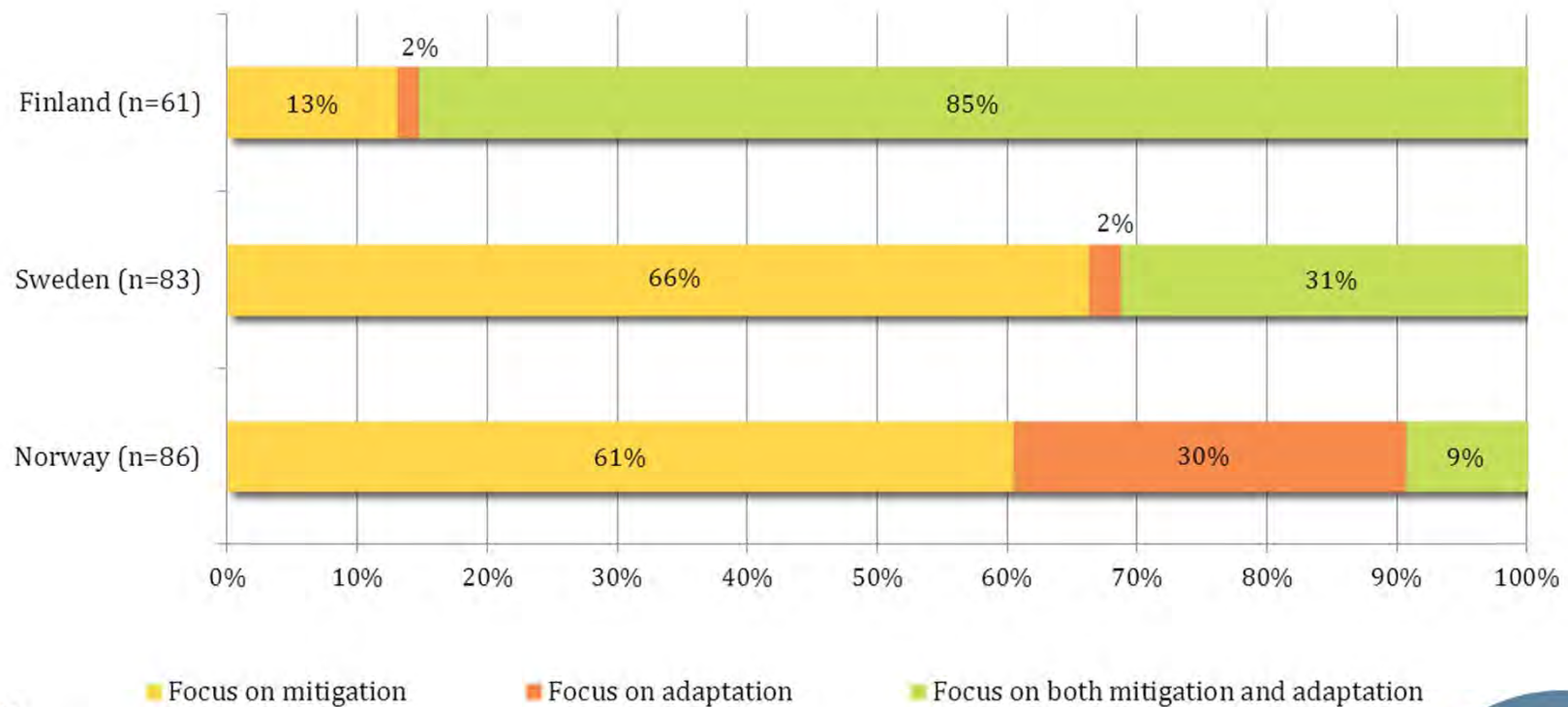
- strong local politicians, local leaders or management
- national regulation, national and regional initiatives
- inter-municipal and regional cooperation
- local business and economy
- tradition in sustainability work

→ BOTH top-down and bottom-up triggering factors!



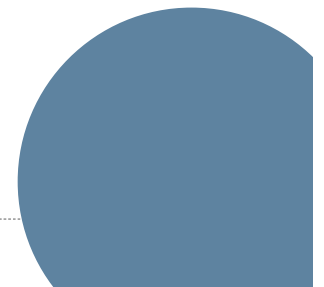
Strategies focus more on mitigation

Strategies focusing on mitigation, adaptation or both, by country



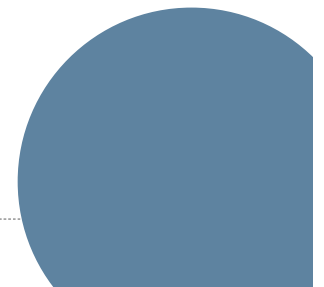
Success factors in local climate work

- Responsibilities for coordinating and implementing the climate strategy are clearly defined
- Routines for follow-up
- Smooth structures for cross-sectoral cooperation
- Political leadership and engaged management
- Sufficient budgeting and resourcing
- Knowledge about most effective and cost-beneficial measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change



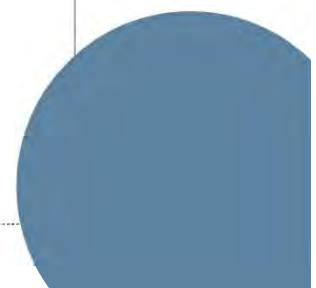
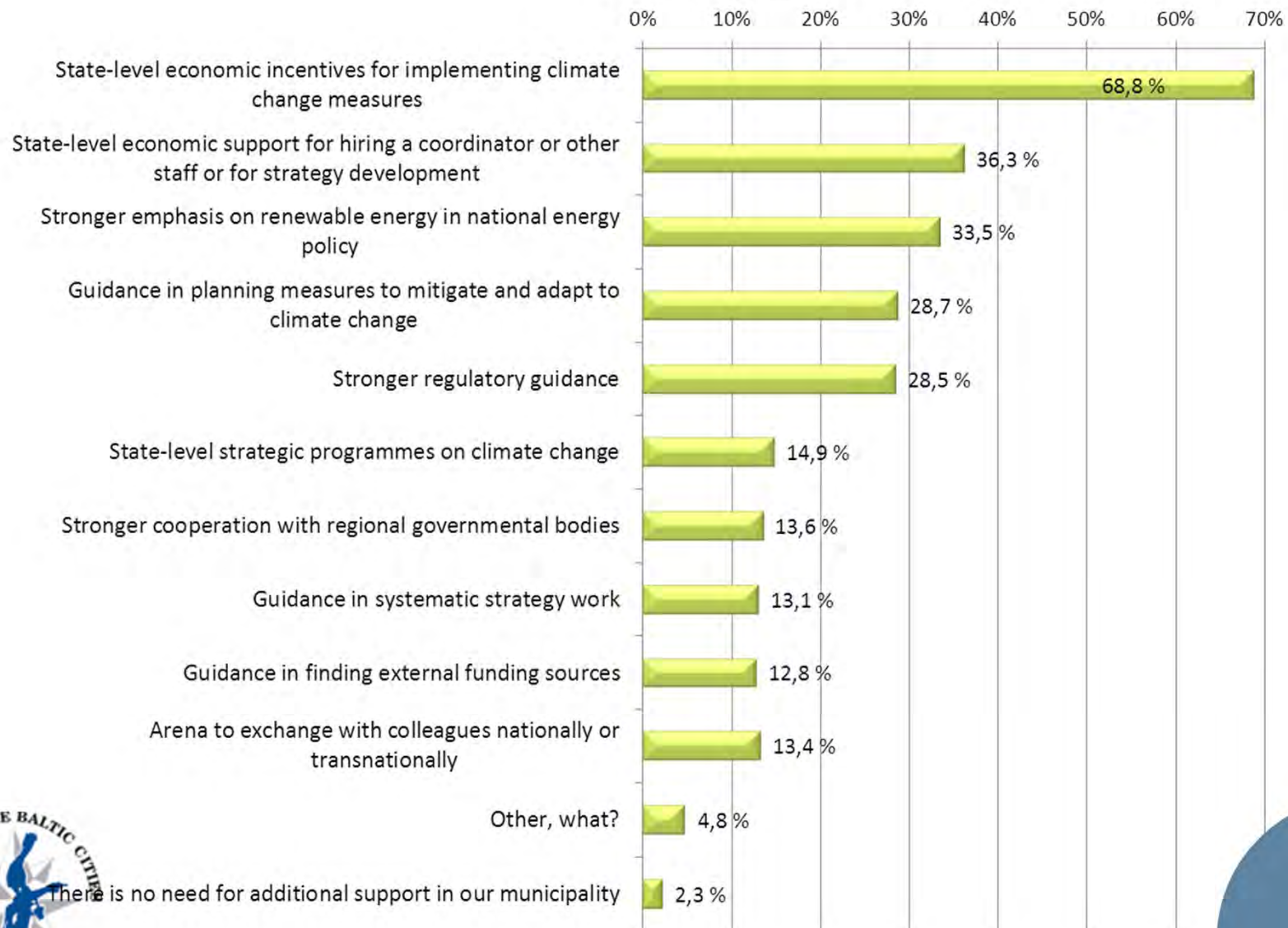
Challenges

- Lack of political interest and priorities
- Lack of experience in climate work
- Lack of resources for implementation of climate measures
- Lack of responsibility and organisational structure
- Lack of national incentives /clear signals
- Lack of knowledge and human capacity



What kind of additional support would your municipality need to improve your local climate work?

n=397 respondents

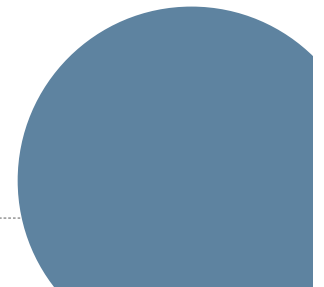


How to make it work?

“The Swedish combination”

- Municipalities acting on their own initiative
- Support from the state available
- Municipal central administration taking a strong role

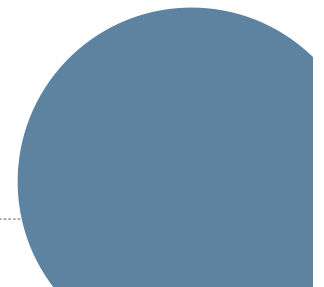
→ the best results in successful local climate strategies



Conclusions and recommendations

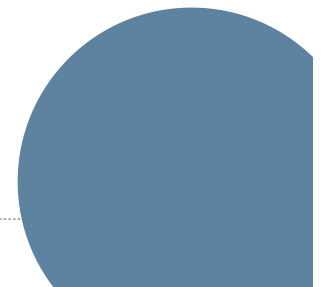
- Legal requirements for municipal climate strategies should not come without resources to plan, implement and monitor the work
- The most efficient way of organising local climate work – the central administration coordinating the implementation of the strategy?
- How to create political commitment?

Arenas to exchange experiences



Conclusions and recommendations (cont.)

- The need for cross-sectoral climate work is a challenge → capacity building in this task is needed
- Guidance to plan measures on CC mitigation and adaptation
- Support in finding external funding for climate work
- Metropolitan and small municipalities have very different capacities to work with the issue



An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely Bergen, Norway, showing a large harbor with several ships, a dense urban area, and green hills in the foreground. The sky is overcast.

Thank you for your attention!

The whole publication can be downloaded free of charge at
<http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publikationer/2012-557>

Or you can order an electronic copy at
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