



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

The Climate Action Regional Offices are an initiative of the Government of Ireland funded by the department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and managed through Local Authorities.

November 2022

Local Authority Climate Change Adaptation Strategy / Climate Change Action Plans

Annual Progress Report 2022

An Overview

**Oifig Réigiúnach um
Gníomhú ar son na hAeráide
Rialtas Áitiúil**

Climate Action
Regional Offices
Local Government



Introduction

The local authority progress reporting template was developed to enable the local authority sector to report on the progress of the implementation of their climate change adaptation strategies / climate change action plans on an annual basis. The National Adaptation Framework (NAF) “mandated the development and implementation of sectoral adaptation plans and local authority adaptation strategies which together, would form part of the national response to the impacts of climate change.” Additionally, the NAF outlined the requirement to report on progress in terms of meeting the terms of the Framework and sectoral plans. This is the third of these reports and follows on three years after the adoption of these plans by all 31 County Councils. The first of these reports was developed and submitted in December 2020. The progress reporting template was designed in consideration of the different methods and styles used by local authorities across the country, in the publication of their strategies / plans. It enables the information from each to be collated into a national progress report for the sector. The following is an overview / summary of this national progress report.

Progress

In 2020, local authorities reported on 2451 actions, adopted the previous year by their respective elected members, covering actions in mitigation, adaptation, community engagement, biodiversity, mainstreaming and awareness building. The number of actions reported on in 2021 increased to 2462 actions and in 2022 this number increased again to 2478 actions. A net increase of 16 actions. A breakdown of these additional actions is provided later in this overview. With the increase in national climate ambition and the number of new actions reported by local authorities for 2022 the CAROs aim to ensure that these actions are fully captured in the development of Local Authority Climate Action Plans in 2023 and are subject to all statutory requirements of the plan making process.

The format for reporting has remained the same as it was for 2020 and 2021 with local authorities asked to categorise the progress, they’ve made on implementing their actions across five categories including: not started, ongoing, postponed, completed and new. Local authorities were also asked to update the list of external stakeholders involved in the implementation of their actions as well as provide comments on how actions are progressing. The following charts show the level of progress made over the last year along with the progress level reported by the sector in 2020 and 2021.

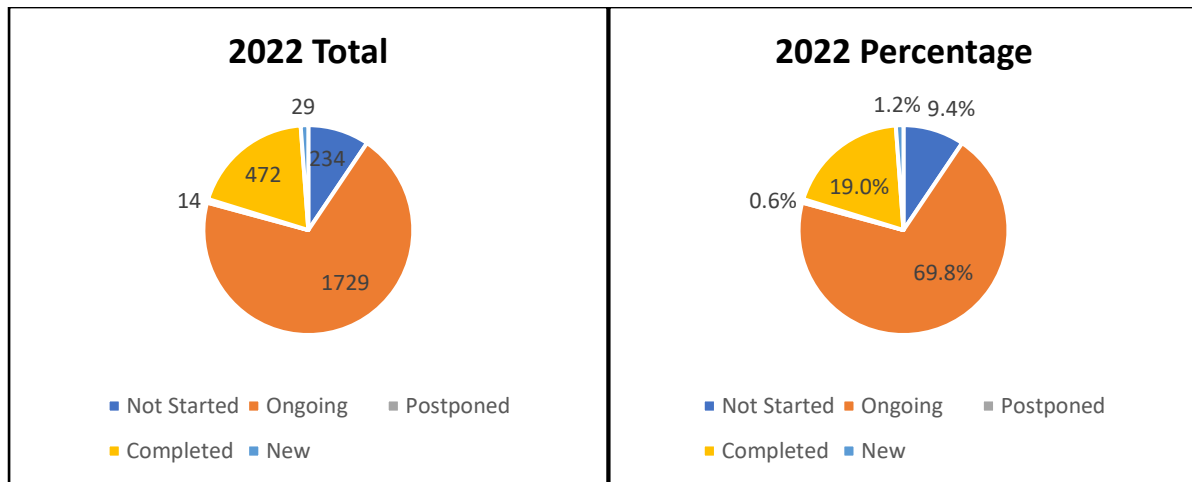


Chart 1.1 & 1.2 – Breakdown of Actions by number and percentage for 2022 – based on progress category

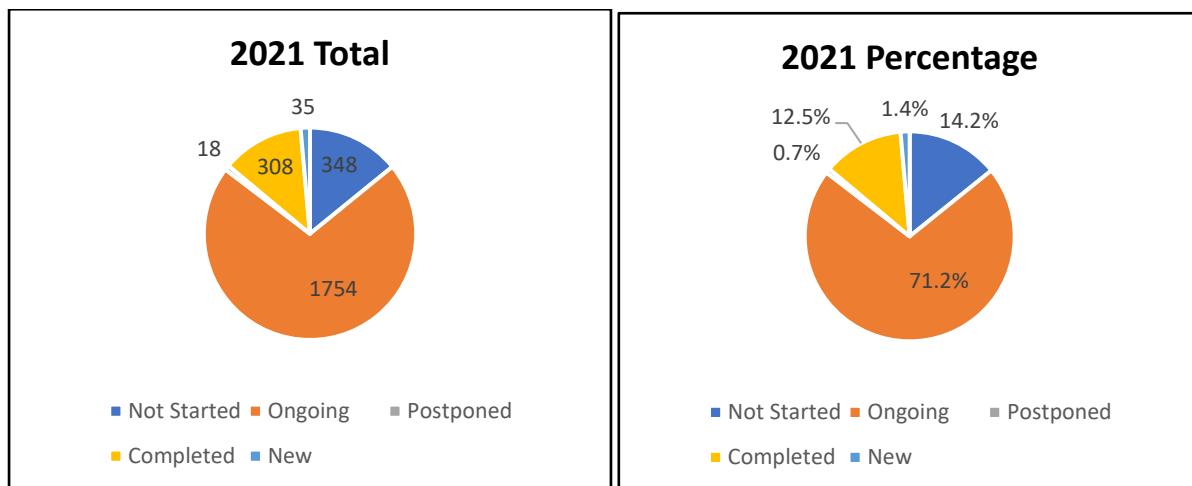


Chart 1.3 & 1.4 – Breakdown of Actions by number and percentage for 2021 – based on progress category

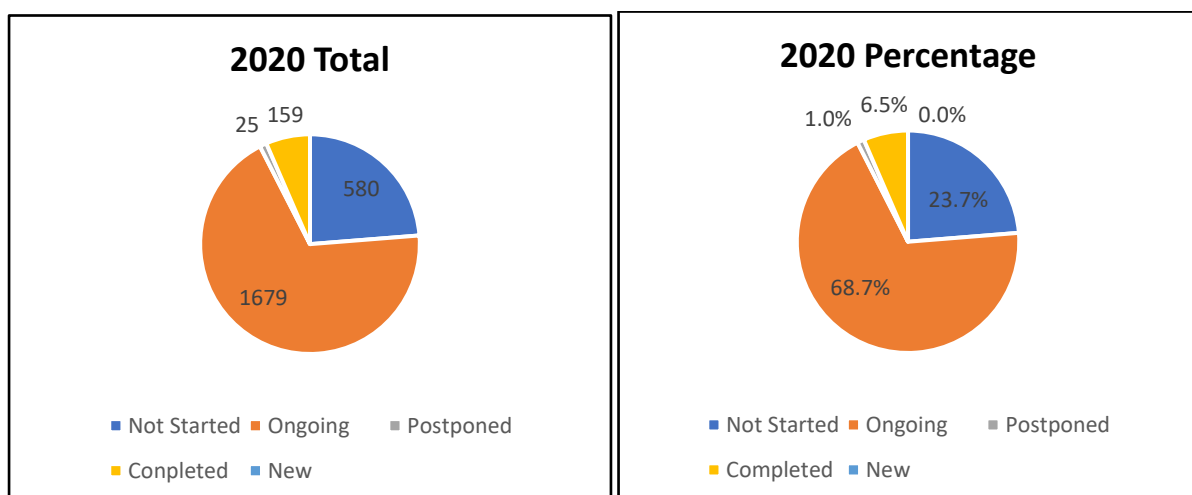


Chart 1.5 & 1.6 – Breakdown of Actions by number and percentage for 2020 – based on progress category

Three years after the adoption of the strategies / action plans local authorities have completed the implementation of 19% of all actions. This is up from 12.5% in 2021. Local authorities continue to make steady

progress with 88.8% of all actions started and ongoing towards completion. 69.8% of actions were reported as 'Ongoing' in 2022. 9.4% of actions have not yet started however they are still planned to commence within the timeline outlined in their respective strategies / plans. This category has reduced from 14.2% as reported in 2021. 0.6% of actions were categorised as 'Postponed' down from 0.7% last year. Reasons for postponement are outlined later in this overview. 30 new actions were introduced within this reporting year by the sector with 14 actions removed or merged with other actions, this is also outlined later in this overview.

As outlined above 88.8% of all actions are either ongoing or completed. And as highlighted in both the 2020 and 2021 report, the actions that are ongoing are broad ranging, a lot of these actions will take several years to be completed while others will have a rolling duration. For example, actions such as gully cleaning or flood defence monitoring activities will always be fundamental in increasing the adaptive capacity of council services to address the impacts of more frequent and intense rainfall events due to climate change. The rolling nature of such actions will be required as an ongoing endeavour and are likely to take a higher level of priority in the future. As such the progress of the local authority sector should not be solely measured on the number of 'Completed' actions, but rather the mainstreaming of climate action across all LA functions and services and enabling the Country to increase its overall resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The dashboards incorporated in the Progress Report provide a breakdown of progress by local authorities. As this is the third year of reporting both the 2020 and 2021 Progress Report has been included with this year's submission for ease of reference. As with the 2021 Progress Report, for this 2022 submission an additional 'Comparison Worksheet' has been developed to enable side-by-side comparison of a local authority's progress for 2022 and 2021. This worksheet is also filterable by local authority allowing for a local authority to be viewed individually, thus avoiding the need to scroll down the full page. Additional columns are also filterable enabling the selection of actions under a particular progress category to be viewed in unison. An overview of an individual local authority's progress can also be selected on this worksheet through the pie charts at the top of this worksheet by selecting a local authority from the options box provided (for both 2021 and 2022).

A breakdown of progress by local authority is now provided in the following bar chart. The full colour part of each bar shows the percentage of actions currently ongoing with the dashed part of each bar showing the percentage of actions that have been completed to date. Local authorities are colour coded by their CARO region as per the dashboards in the National Annual Progress Report.

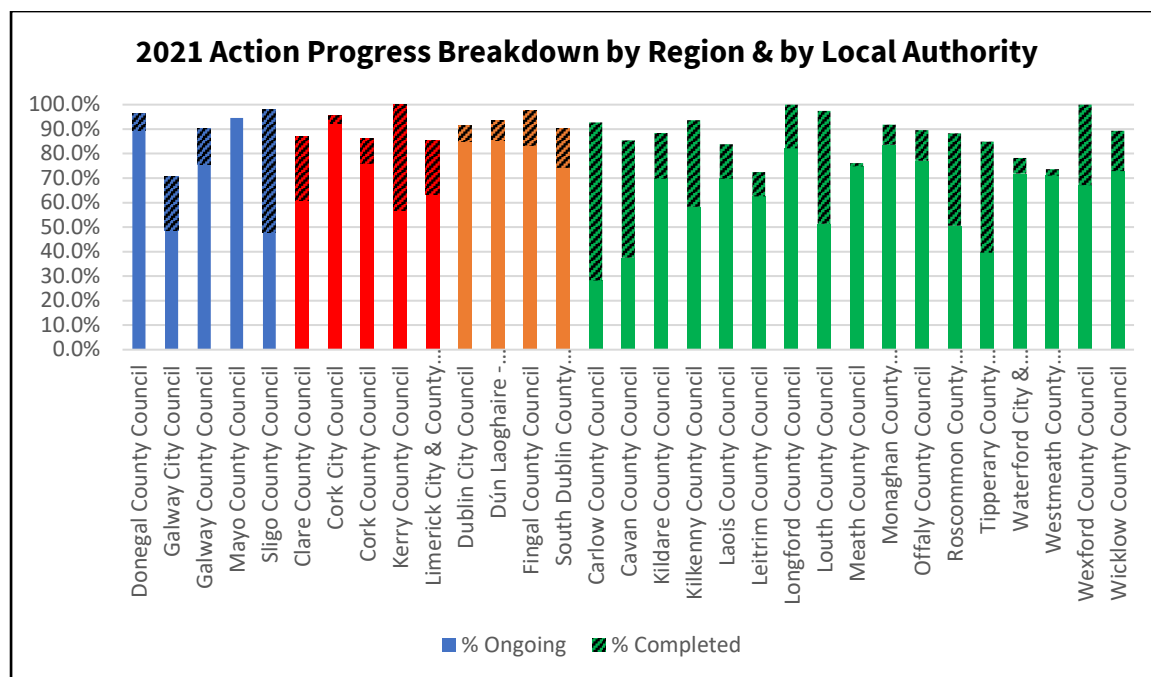


Chart 1.7 – 2022 Action Progress by Local Authority and Region – showing percentage of actions completed and ongoing

Actions Postponed

0.6% (14) of actions were categorised as postponed in this year’s report. Down from 0.7% (18) the previous year. The reasons provided included:

- Staff resources
- Funding issues
- Action in this area has been undertaken and coordinated at a national level and therefore a local level initiative was not required
- A different approach was being prioritised at this time instead (e.g. increasing renewable energy use in individual buildings instead of implementing a district heating project at this time)
- Committed to the use of 3rd party software to deliver action. Awaiting use of software

COVID-19 was not listed as a reason for actions being postponed in 2022.

Actions Completed

19% (472) actions have now been completed by local authorities. As highlighted in both the 2020 and 2021 overviews, all adaptation actions in strategies / plans can be classified as either soft, green or grey. As stated in the Local Authority Strategy Development Guidelines 2018, ‘Soft’ adaptation actions involve alterations in behaviour, regulation or systems of management, such as land-use planning policy. ‘Green’ adaptation actions are those that seek to use ecological properties to enhance the resilience of human and natural systems in the face of climate change. With ‘Grey’ adaptation typically involving technical or engineering-oriented responses to climatic impacts. Most actions categorised as ‘Completed’ in both the 2020 and 2021 annual report submissions were classified as soft actions. In this (2022) national annual report, more ‘Green’

and ‘Grey’ actions are now being implemented, guided by related soft actions implemented within the previous three years.

Actions - New, Merged, and Removed

29 new actions were reported by local authorities for this 2022 Progress Report submission. The following chart shows which local authorities introduced these new actions.

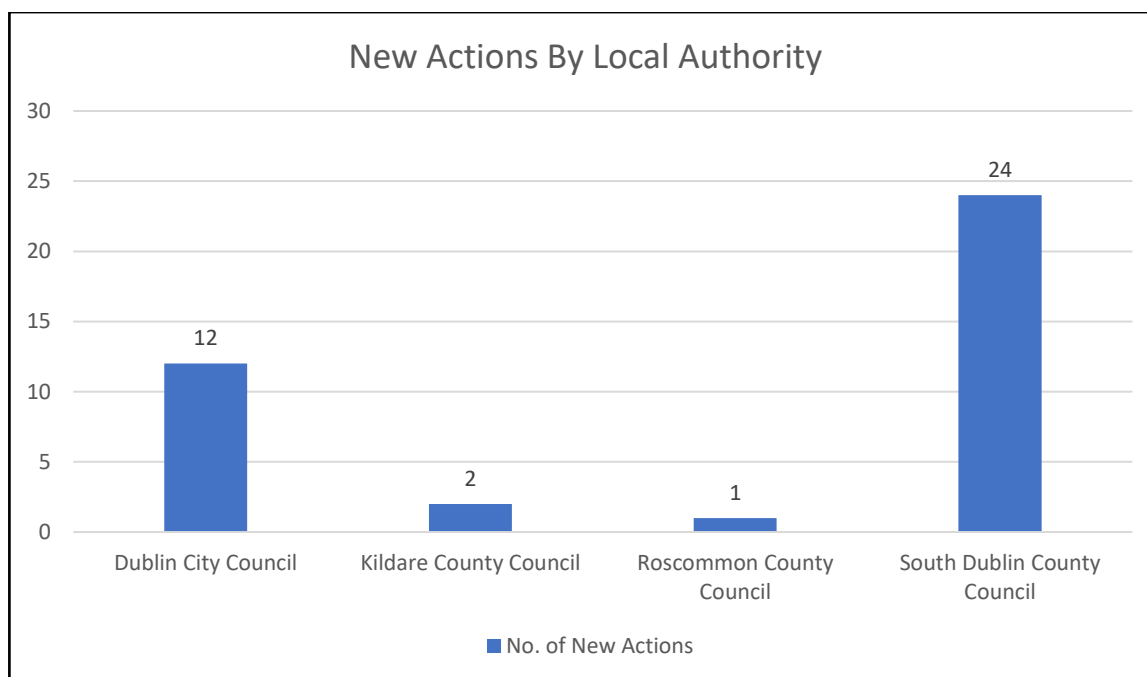


Chart 1.8 - number of new actions introduced for 2022 Progress Report by Local Authority

Of the 29 new actions reported by local authorities, several actions were also reported as ‘Ongoing’ or as ‘Completed’. To keep the focus of this year’s Annual Report submission on the implementation progress of actions listed from 2021 as well as to avoid double counting of actions (in charts on the dashboards) all 29 actions are categorised as ‘New’ (only). Their category of progress will be captured in next year’s Annual Progress Report. This year Dublin City Council reduced their number of actions, through removal or merging with other actions, by 12 actions resulting in their net total actions remaining at 199. Additionally, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council removed one action. The actions removed have been strikethrough(ed) in the ‘Master Report’ with the original text remaining underneath for reference. These changes resulted in a net increase of 16 actions for the local government sector in this year’s Annual Progress Report.

External Stakeholders Updated

Many external stakeholders have been identified by Local Authorities to help deliver on action implementation through their Adaptation Strategies / Climate Change Action Plans in Annual Progress Reports for 2021 and 2020. Local Authorities were again asked to update their external stakeholder list for this

Progress Report after another year of implementing actions. The updated breakdown of external stakeholders involved in the implementation of local authority actions follows.

Government Department	No of Entries	Action Ongoing	Actions Completed
*Department of Environment, Climate & Communication (formally DCCA) – both included	49	41	4
Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht	25	23	1
Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine	29	22	3
Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government	34	25	2
Department of Transport Tourism and Sport	34	32	1
Government Department (no specific dept mentioned)	9	8	0
Department of Health	3	3	0
*Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	7	6	1
Total	190	160	12

The remaining external stakeholders, most identified and National Bodies, are listed below:

External Stakeholder	No of Entries	Action Ongoing	Actions Completed
Office of Public Works (OPW)	181	143	19
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	122	87	16
Irish Water	78	57	13
Academia / 3rd Level Institutions	79	52	1
National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS)	81	61	13
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)	76	61	14
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	50	42	5
National Transport Authority (NTA)	41	40	1
Local Authorities Waters Programme (LAWPRO)	31	25	3
The Health Service Executive (HSE)	25	18	2
Met Eireann	27	19	4
Climate Ireland	23	19	3
Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA)	22	15	7
Regional Assemblies	21	16	1
Irish Farmers Association (IFA)	13	11	2
National Biodiversity Data Centre	15	14	1
The Heritage Council	15	12	0
Marine Institute	12	10	2
An Taisce	16	14	1
Enterprise Ireland	11	9	1
ESB	11	8	1
Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)	8	7	1
Teagasc	9	7	0
Bord Ná Mona	8	6	0
Inland Fisheries	6	4	2
Failte Ireland	4	3	0
Listed as - Sectors in the National Adaptation Framework (NAF)	4	3	1
Eirgrid	4	4	0
Waterways Ireland	6	3	2

Gas Networks Ireland	2	2	0
Bord Gais	2	2	0
Invasive Species Ireland	2	2	0

National Adaptation Framework Themes & Sectors

The above information categorised under sectors identified in the National Adaptation Framework, where relevant follows:

Themes, Sectors and Lead Departments under the National Adaptation Framework			
Theme	Sector Level		Lead Departments
Natural and Cultural Capital	Seafood, Agriculture, Forestry, Biodiversity, Built & Archaeological Heritage		DAFM; DCHG
External Stakeholder	No. of Entries	Actions Ongoing	Actions Completed
Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine	29	22	3
Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht	25	23	1
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	122	87	16
National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS)	81	61	13
National Biodiversity Data Centre	15	14	1
The Heritage Council	15	12	0
An Taisce	16	14	1
Teagasc	9	7	0
Inland Fisheries	6	4	2
Bord na Mona	8	6	0
Invasive Species Ireland	2	2	0
Waterways Ireland	6	3	2
Total	334	255	39

Critical Infrastructure	Transport Infrastructure, Electricity and Gas Networks, Communication Networks		DTTAS; DECC
External Stakeholder	No. of Entries	Actions Ongoing	Actions Completed
Department of Transport Tourism and Sport	34	32	1
*Department of Environment, Climate & Communication (formally DCCAIE)	49	41	4
Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	50	42	5
National Transport Authority (NTA)	41	40	1
ESB	11	8	1
Bord Gais	2	2	0
Eirgrid	4	4	0
Gas Networks Ireland	2	2	0
Total	193	171	12

Water Resource and Flood Risk Management	Flood Risk Management, Water Quality, Water Services Infrastructure		OPW; DHPLG
External Stakeholder	No. of Entries	Actions Ongoing	Actions Completed
Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government	34	25	2
*Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	7	6	1
Office of Public Works (OPW)	181	143	19
Irish Water	78	57	13
Local Authorities Waters Programme (LAWPRO)	31	25	3
Marine Institute	12	10	2
Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)	8	7	1
Total	351	273	41

Public Health	Health		Dept. of Health
External Stakeholder	No. of Entries	Actions Ongoing	Actions Completed
Department of Health	3	3	0
The Health Service Executive (HSE)	25	18	2
Total	28	21	2

Conclusion

The local authority sector, through this third annual progress report, has shown that progress is continuing at a steady pace with the implementation of actions from their Climate Change Adaptation Strategies / Climate Change Action Plans as well as through new actions introduced by several local authorities during 2022 and 2021.

It is noted that, as part of the requirements of the Climate Action & Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, the development of new Local Authority Climate Action Plans has commenced with preparatory work already underway. The development and implementation of these plans will increase the level of resources required within local government to deliver on this level of climate action. The sector welcomes the recent communication and commitment from the Department of Environment, Climate & Communications (DECC) to provide funding to support this work at the local authority level. The new resources this funding will help provide will support the sector to increase the momentum it has gained over the last few years as it deals with increased targets, challenges, requirements, and responsibilities in the area of climate action.

The Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) will continue to assist their local authorities including in the preparation and development of Local Authority Climate Action Plans and in the implementation of actions

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thereafter. Additionally, the CAROs will continue to work with their local authorities to implement actions outlined in the Climate Action Plan 2021 and the soon-to-be published Climate Action Plan 2022, the Local Authority Climate Action Charter.

It must also be noted that a significant level of work is required to produce the Annual Progress Report and accompanying Overview every year. As well as taking into consideration the previous year(s) progress data. To improve the reporting process for local authorities as well as for the CAROs, the development of an online reporting system/portal, which will provide additional functionality and the potential for more regular reporting, will need to be undertaken. The CAROs had aimed to commence the development of this online reporting system in early 2022 however decided to postpone the development of an online reporting system in order to consider the configuration and reporting requirements of the new Local Authority Climate Action Plans. It would be desirable that this work would commence in 2023 so that it would be developed and in place in time to meet the more rigorous reporting requirements that will go alongside the Local Authority Climate Action Plans.