Irish National Platform
- MRV good practice -

Local government in the Republic of Ireland is made up of 31 local authorities, which mostly operate at the county level, with city councils in Dublin, Cork and Galway. The national government works closely with the local authorities on climate action. In 2024, all 31 local authorities were mandated to create a **Local Authority Climate Action Plan** (LA CAP), with guidance and support provided from the national level, following the publication of **Ireland's National Climate Action Plan**. The local authority sector formally reports emissions from its own activities to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), and the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) has established ten key performance indicators (KPIs) that further monitor the impacts of local authority climate action.

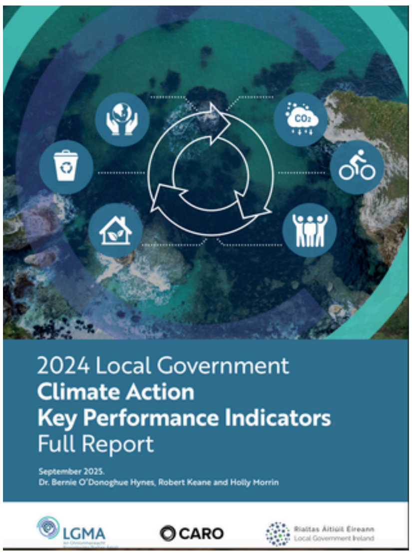
This work is made possible by the direct funding of two climate staff for each local authority, a climate coordination officer and climate action officer, by the national government, with direct regional support from the national funded Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs). By addressing the capacity issue directly, one of the most common barriers to local climate action, and by providing uniform structures and platforms for monitoring and reporting to all 31 local authorities, the national government enables local climate action and makes formal monitoring possible, both qualitative and quantitative. This, in turn, is a key driver of the National Climate Action Plan.

Services Provided and Challenges Addressed

The traditional MRV, reporting energy consumption to a third party, for public bodies in Ireland is managed by the SEAI, which also provides regular training and clinics to learn the system. This enables them to track progress towards energy and climate policy targets, as well as publish the findings. More detail can be found on their website.

However, this covers only the local authority emissions from its own activities, e.g. from government buildings, public lighting, or the municipal fleet, which account for a small proportion of total emissions, about 3% in 2023. Local authority climate actions impact their entire community and these impacts should be monitored as well. This is where the LGMA KPI system comes into play. These indicators spread across different themes, assessing the sector's impact on mitigation and adaptation, capacity building, and mindset change. They also track whether sufficient resources, infrastructure, and dedicated staff are in place to mainstream climate action across the local authority. This practice, enabled by the officers funded by the national government, allows both local and national levels of governance to assess the performance of the LA CAPs, especially in areas where exact GHG figures are missing or politically sensitive. A full report on the KPIs and their 2024 status can be found here.

The local authorities directly report four of the ten indicators and various national bodies report on the remaining six. The National Transport Authority (NTA) provided Active Travel data, the LGMA Housing Delivery Coordination Office (HDCO) provided Social Housing Retrofit data, the SEAI provided the GHG emissions data, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) provided the Community Climate Action Programme data, the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG) supplied the staff and elected members' training data, and Enterprise Ireland (EI) provided the Green for Business programme data.



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Innovative Features of the Good Practice

The high level of collaboration between national government bodies and the local authorities around climate action and monitoring makes this good practice interesting. The local authorities and national government use the same Climate Action Plan structure, allowing strong alignment and exchange. Recognizing that internal capacity is a major obstacle, the national government provides direct support to each local authority. The SEAI database is a great example of transparent and regular reporting for emissions and energy consumption, and the KPI monitoring system, again a collaborative effort between local and national authorities, is an innovative way for a more comprehensive monitoring and reporting mechanism. One that, within Ireland, is uniform and standardised, and thus comparable across the country.

Areas for Improvement

While the local MRV system in Ireland does an admirable job, it is missing the full picture of emissions on the local level. Local authorities in preparation for writing the LA CAP, each conducted a Baseline Emissions Inventory, covering the full range of emissions from activities within their administrative borders. However, there is no mechanism in place for further monitoring and reporting of these, at least that is mandated and standardised, the way the processes detailed above are.

Local government in Ireland consists of 31 local authorities working closely with the national government on climate action, including through the mandatory development of Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAPs) starting in 2024. National funding supports this work by providing dedicated climate staff in each authority and regional assistance through Climate Action Regional Offices, enabling consistent capacity, monitoring, and reporting across the country. Emissions from local authority operations are tracked through the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, while broader community impacts are monitored through a coordinated set of ten national KPIs managed by the Local Government Management Agency and multiple national bodies. This highly collaborative, standardised system allows both local and national governments to assess performance in mitigation, adaptation, capacity building, and behavioral change, making it a strong example of integrated, multi-level climate governance.

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