



### **Research highlights lack of political and financial support to reach urban sustainability targets across Europe**

**A thinkstep AG and Drees & Sommer study into delivering sustainability targets in European cities has found that a lack of political support and financial resources are among the biggest barriers.**

Bridging the Climate Gap focused on the municipal building sector in 15 European cities including Glasgow, Helsinki, Munich and the Swedish city of Växjö. It looked at their current strategies to meet targets set out in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to assess the challenges and highlight good practices.

While all cities claimed to be affected by the consequences of global warming, more than 60% lacked the greater political support necessary to deliver on sustainability targets aimed at keeping temperature increases below 1.5°C, as recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Based on a mixture of interviews, surveys and empirical data, 70% also said they lacked the financial resources to set more ambitious climate targets and 40% believed there wasn't an appropriate administrative structure for multi-disciplinary climate protection measures.

Two thirds also said there were too few people with the right technical skills and expertise with lack of education, guidance and training seen as a barrier.

However, Växjö, an award-winning city, was held up as an example of how the early and broad-based introduction of strategies to reduce greenhouse gasses can lead to economic growth and prosperity.

The report's authors Martin Blumberg, VP Sustainable Building & Construction at thinkstep AG and Gregor Grassl, Team Leader Integrated Urban Solutions at Drees & Sommer, set out measures to help cities deliver on their sustainability targets. These include the development of recyclable buildings, mobility strategies and alternative methods of funding.

Gregor Grassl said: "The findings make it clear that we need more courage and comprehensive expertise to decarbonize our society and industry. In the search for solutions, we should also consider that there are external factors for municipalities they cannot influence, for example,

**Nadja Lemke**

**Head of Media Relations and International Communications**

**phone +49 (0)711 1317 177 • mobile +49 (0)172 7699566**

**nadja.lemke@dreso.com**



changes in the energy mix. Governments have to, therefore, introduce legislative change in order to transform their systems and to encourage and facilitate emissions reductions.”

Martin Blumberg said: “When looking at the example of Växjö, it is vital to recognize they have succeeded in encouraging the different stakeholders such as municipal organizations, citizens and companies to support the ambitions. Building strategical alliances and collaborating on many levels is a critical factor for municipalities for reaching their goals.”

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**nadja.lemke@dreso.com**