

Best practices in Energy and Climate Action Plans (ECAP+) development in Central and Eastern Europe



CEESEU-DIGIT
CONFERENCE
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Mazovia Energy Agency
Presented by Ewa Szulc
Energy Specialist

Scope of the presentation:

1. ECAP+
2. Partners
3. A closer look into the development process
4. Best Practices & Key Lessons
5. Potential for replication



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➔ **Just Energy Transition**

➔ **Energy Security**

➔ **Energy Poverty**

➔ **Climate change**

➔ **Aligning with other documents and
EU goals**

➔ **Financing adaptation and
mitigation actions**

ECAP+ - a new type of uniform, holistic, cross-sector Energy and Climate Plans

**HR: Medjimurje
Energy Agency
Ltd.**

the coordinator of the
process

**LV: Vidzeme
planning region**

Expert

SI: LEASP

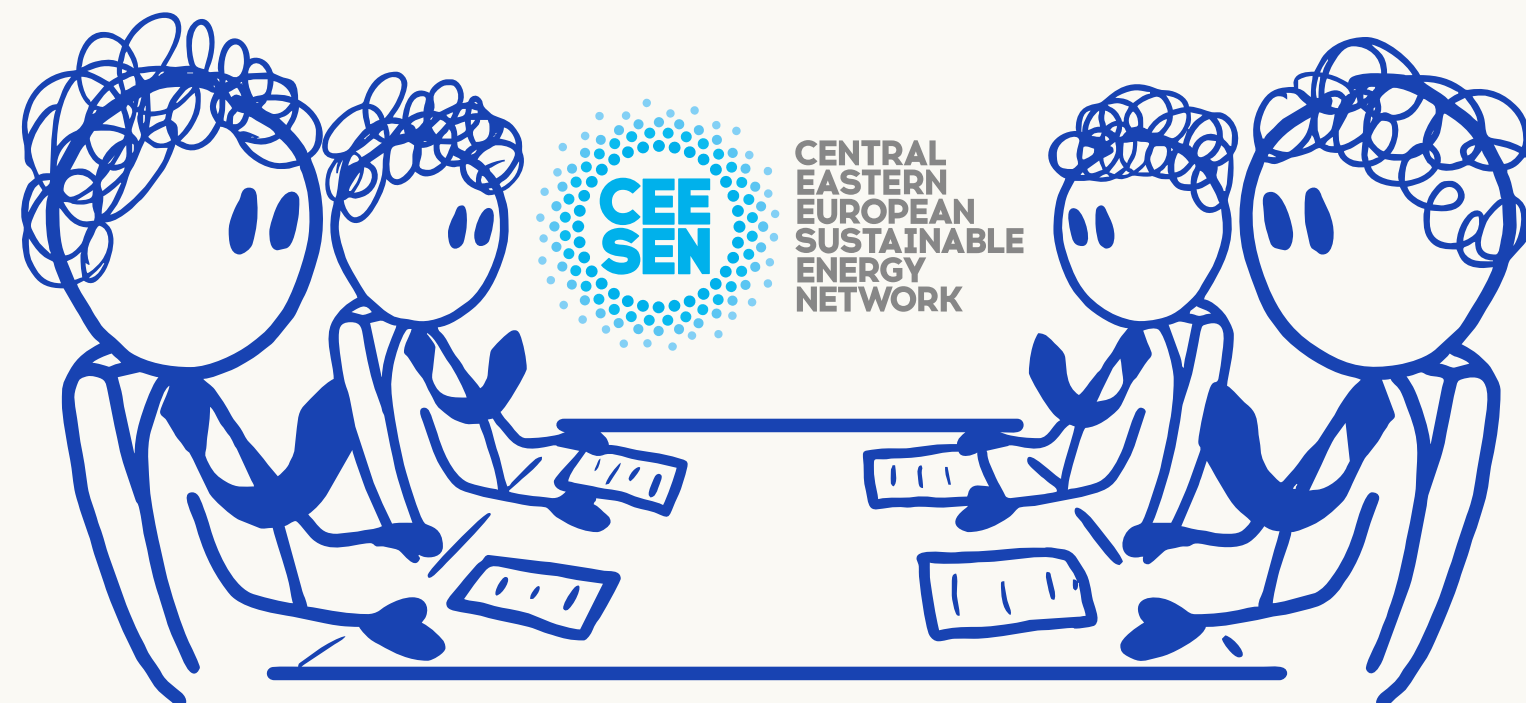
project manager/ECAP
developer

PARTNERS

CZ: ENVIROS

Partner

**PL: Mazovia
Energy Agency**
Coordinator



TREA, UTARTU

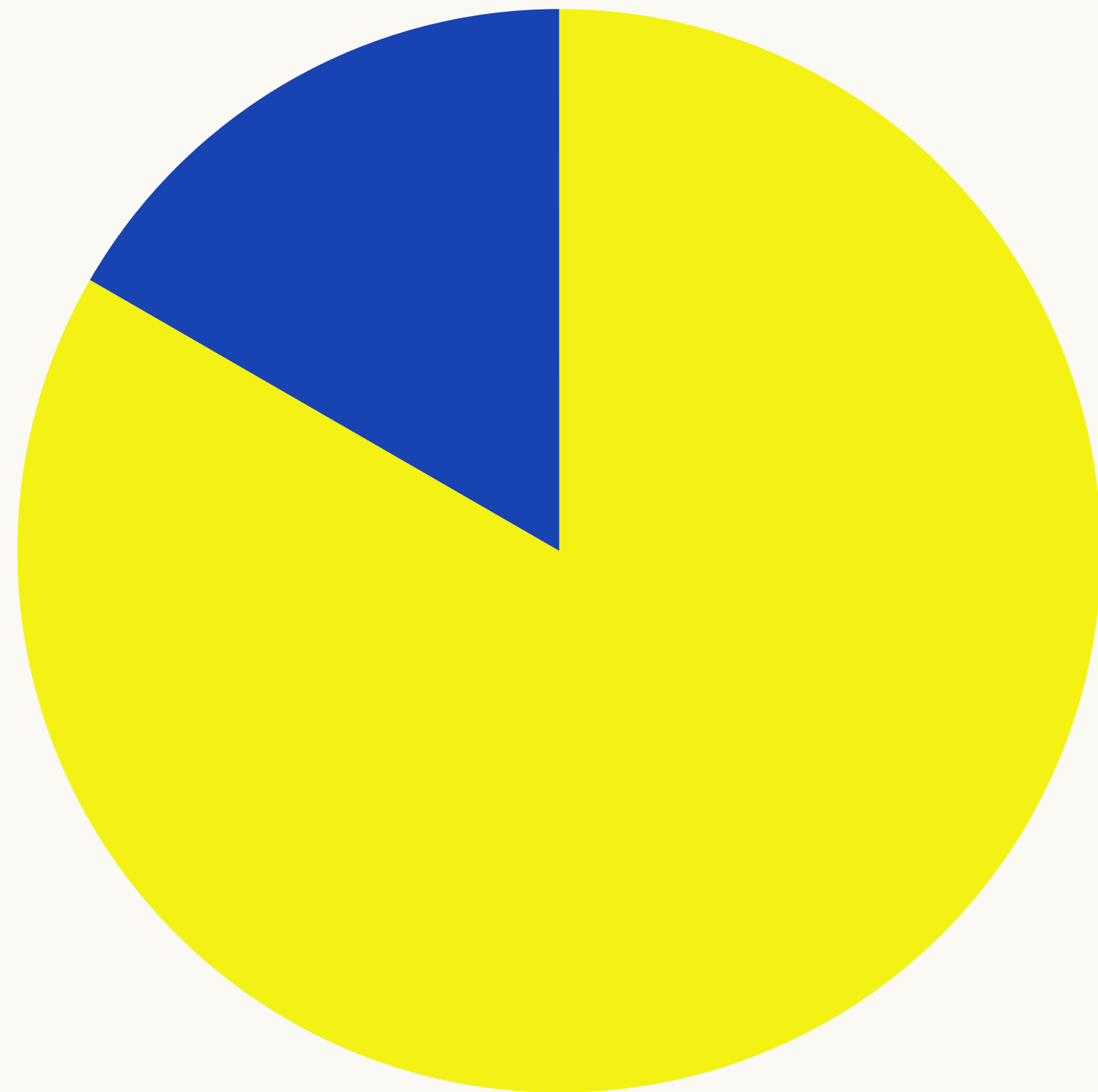
Supporter

A closer look into the development process



How were regional and municipal authorities involved in the ECAP+ development process?

Thru the external company
16.7%

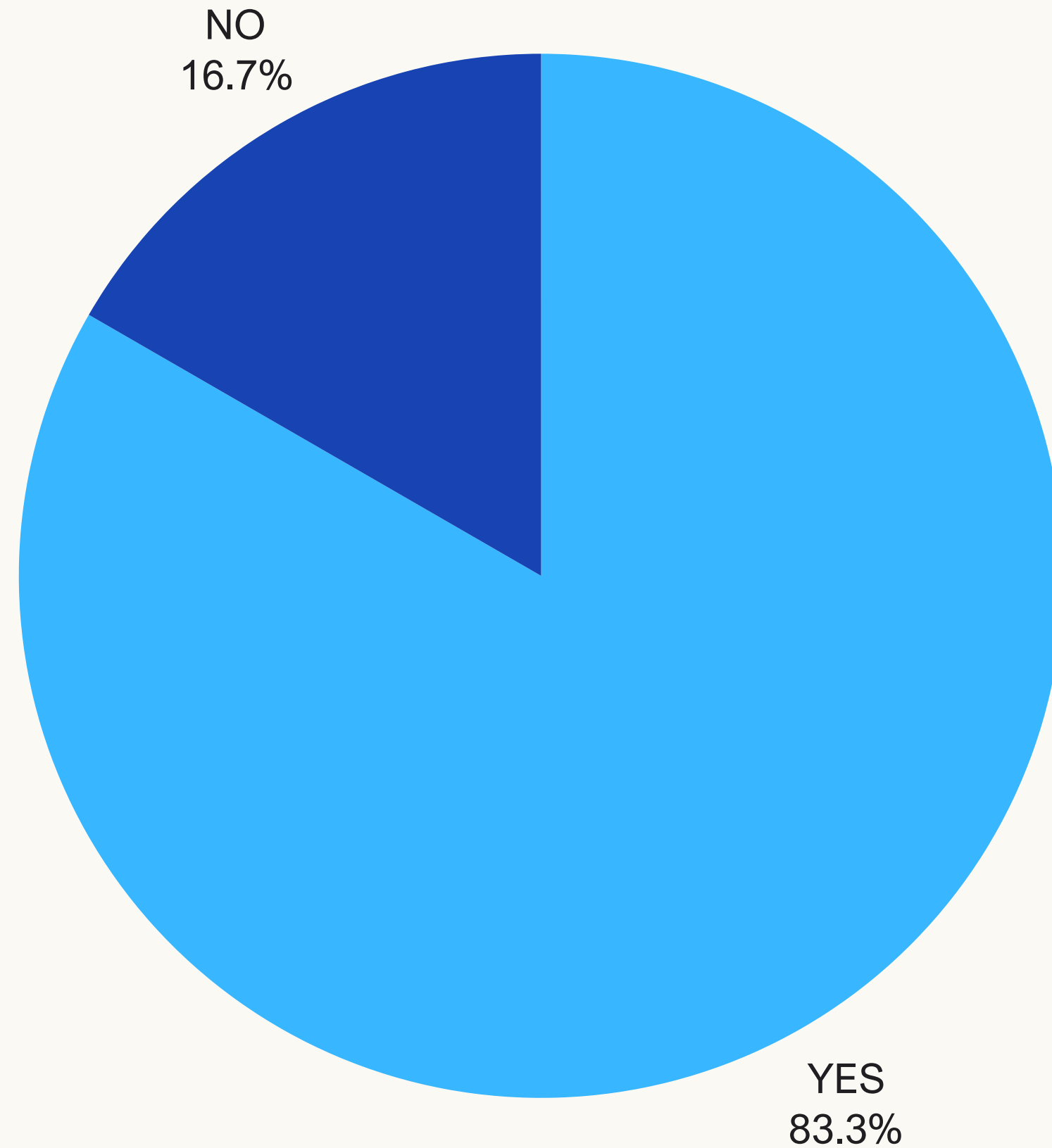


Regular dialogue/meetings
83.3%



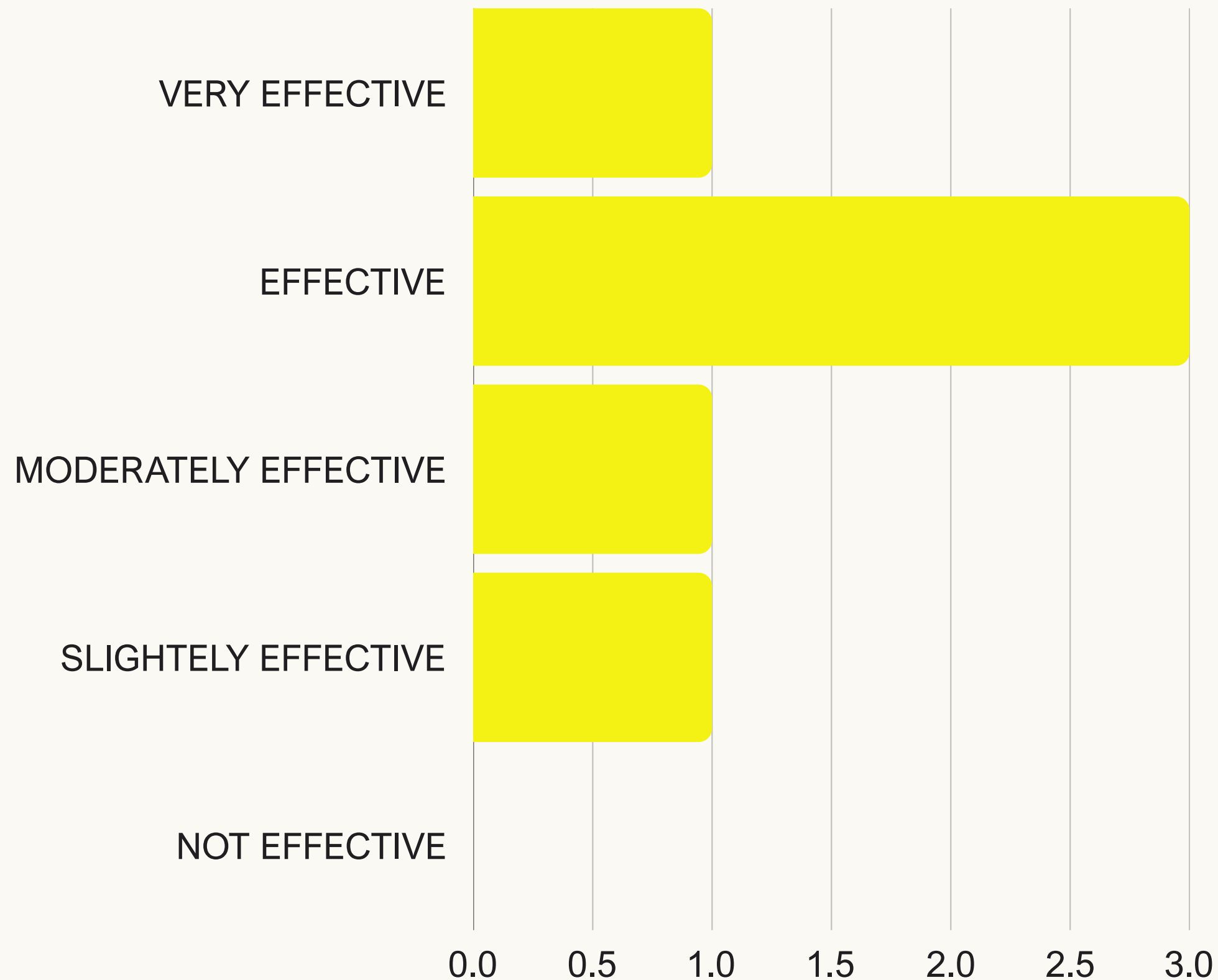
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Was the alignment with National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) a key part of your regional ECAP+ development?



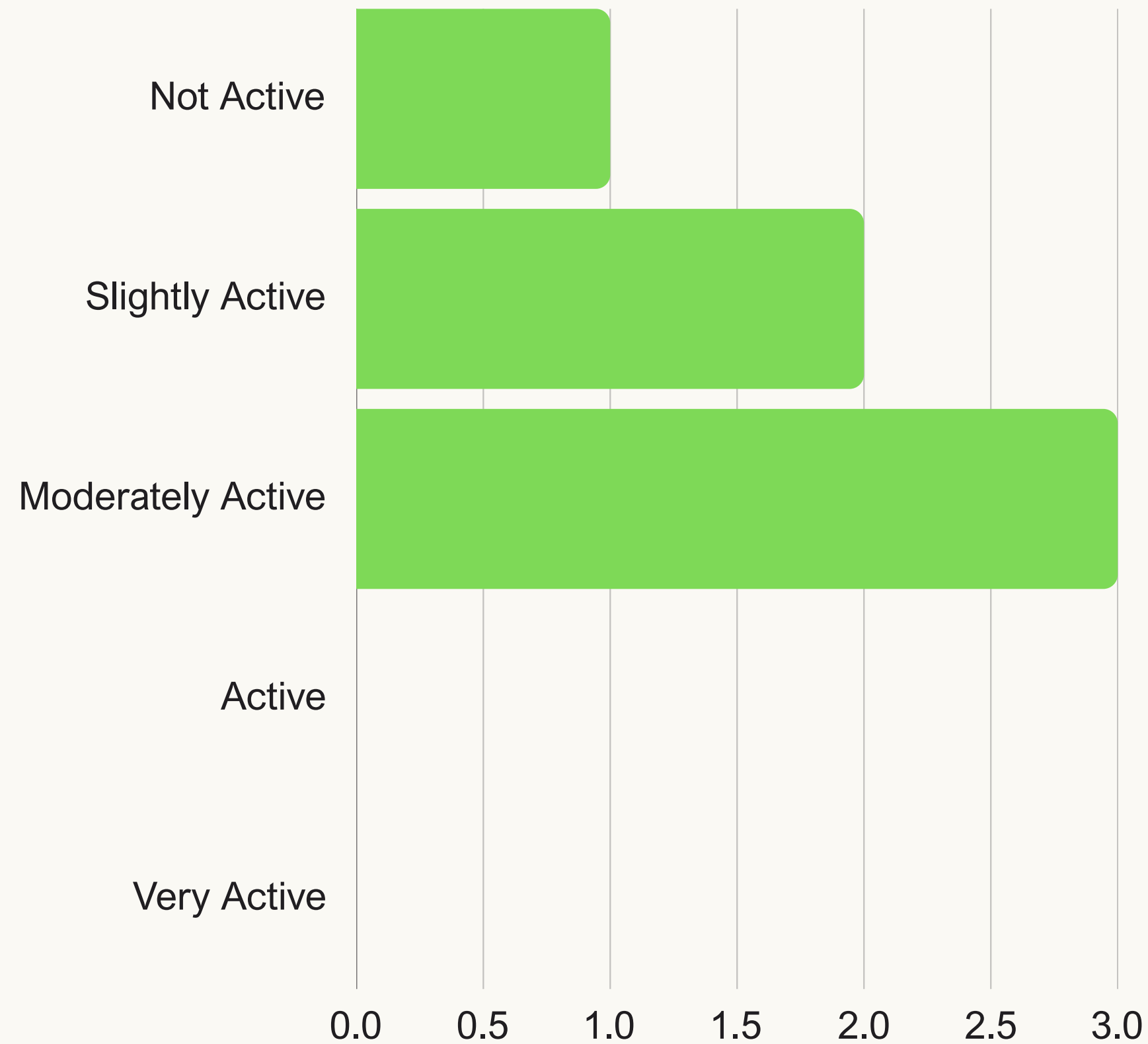
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How effective were the training sessions for regional authorities in preparing them to develop ECAP+(s)?

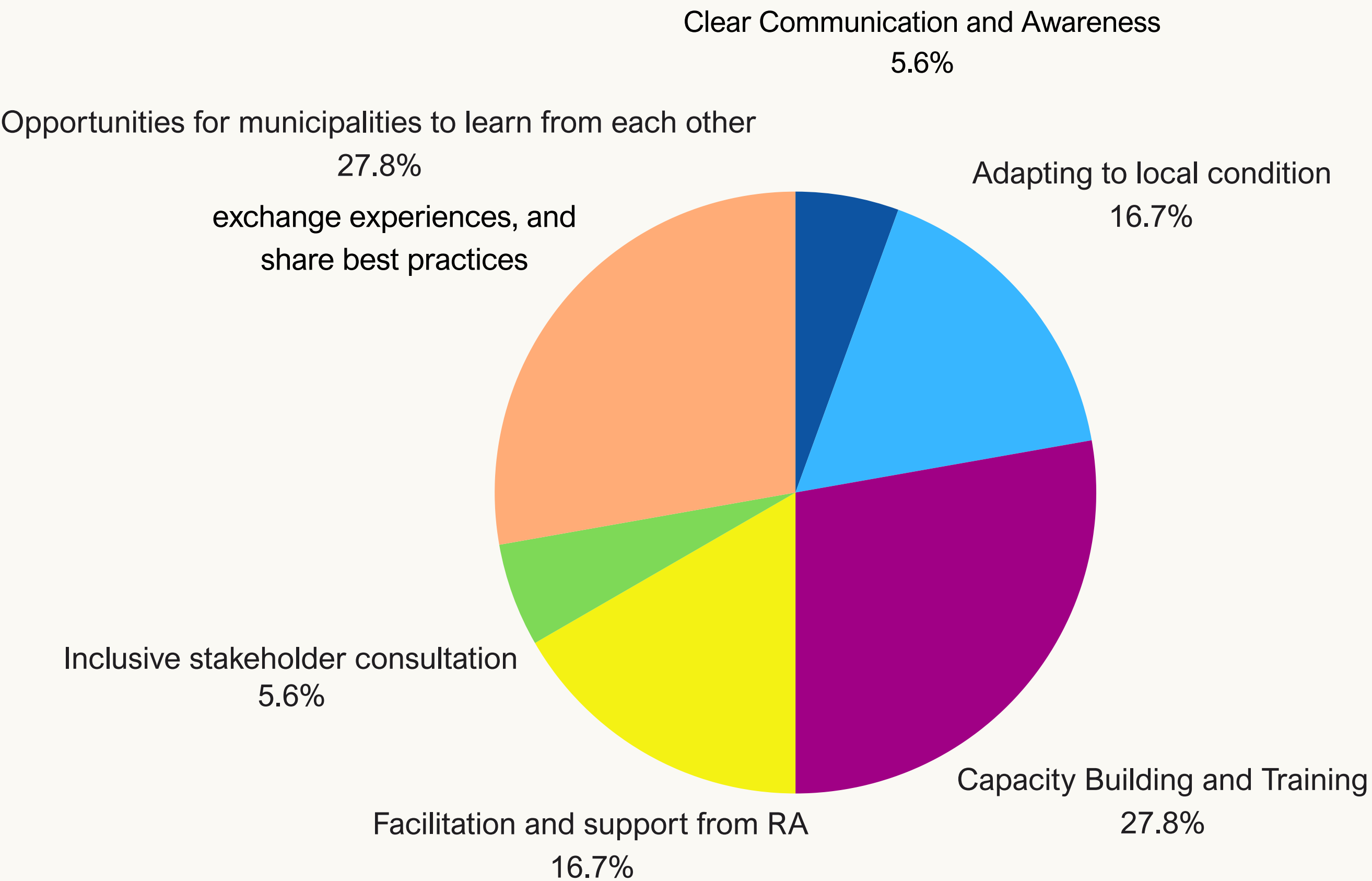


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How would you assess the level of participation from local municipalities in the ECAP+ development?



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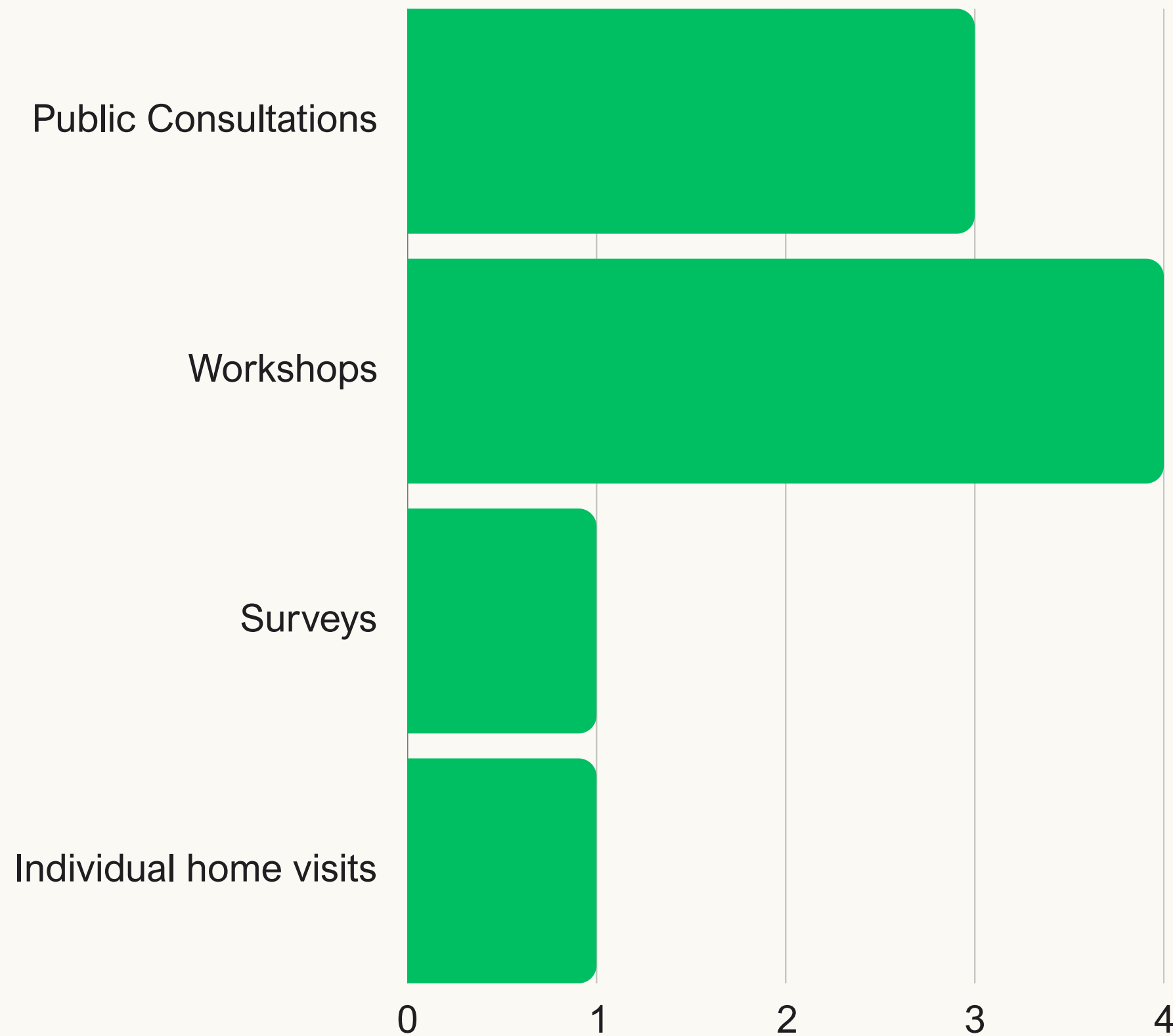


In which area was the involvement of municipalities in the ECAP+ development most helpful?



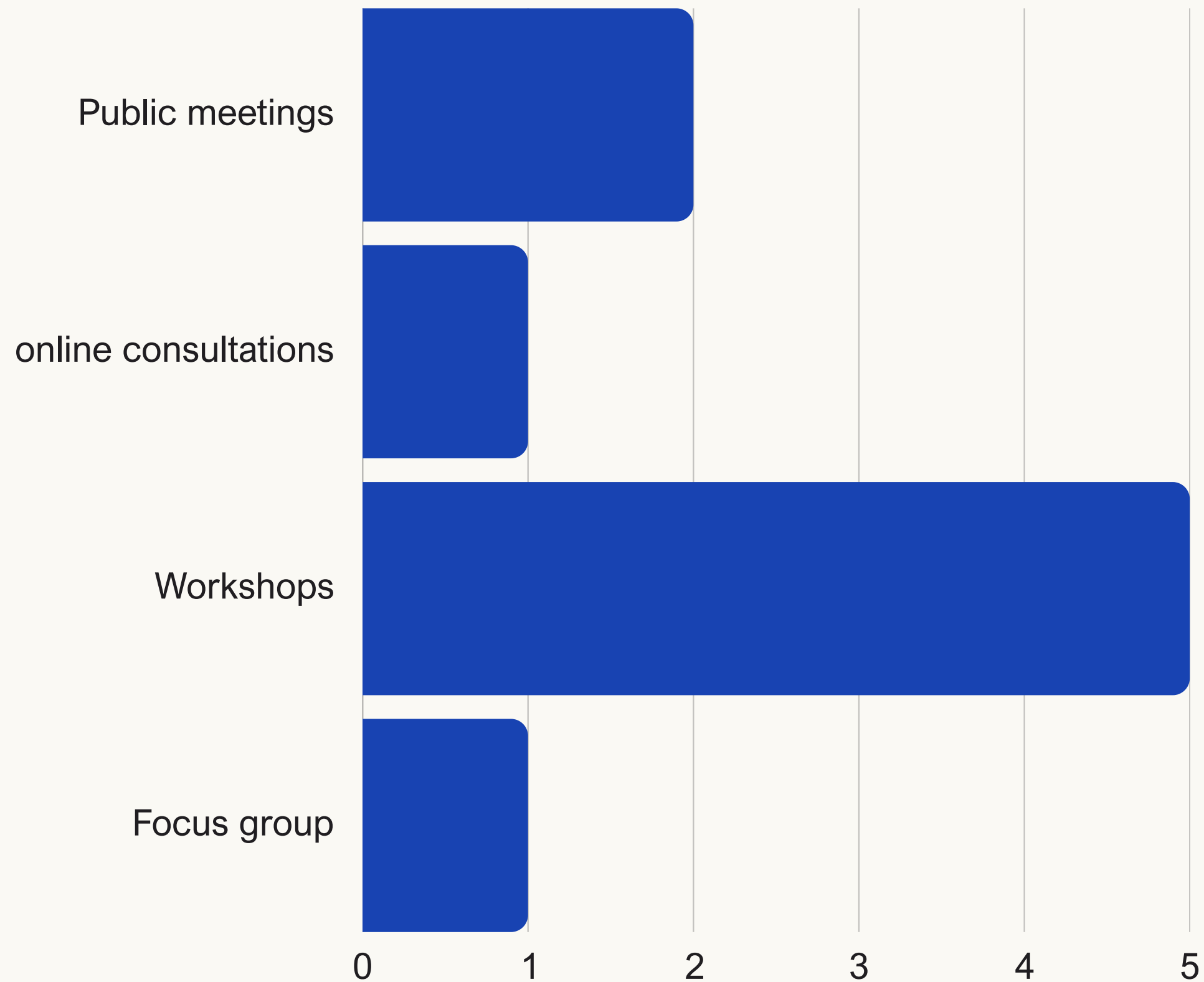
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How did you ensure the inclusion of vulnerable social groups (e.g. seniors, youth, low-income, energy-poor etc) in the planning process?



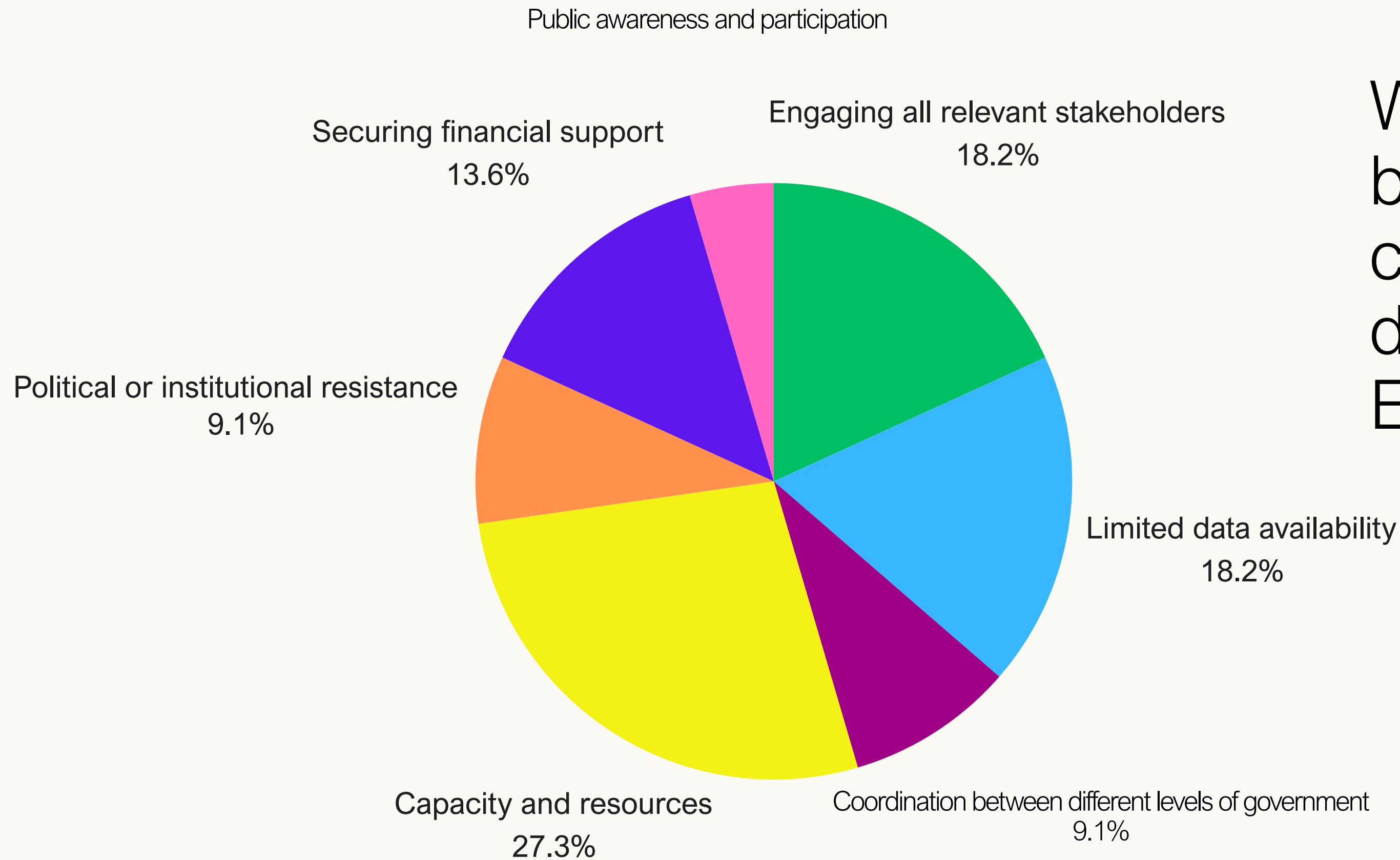
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What methods did you use to encourage meaningful participation in stakeholder meetings?



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What were the 3 biggest challenges in developing the ECAP+?



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Were there any challenges in engaging with certain stakeholder groups?



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Reaching vulnerable groups is difficult, especially with limited resources.

Vulnerable groups struggle to understand their role or the value of participating in stakeholder processes.

Socially vulnerable citizens often have low energy literacy and are more open to communication when accompanied by trusted intermediaries (e.g., social workers, Red Cross).

Low interest from those most in need (e.g., pensioners, energy-poor individuals), while more informed individuals attended mainly to validate their own actions.



Local governments show interest, but limited staff capacity leads to resistance in implementing proposed measures.

Public officers are hard to engage due to stakeholder fatigue, especially in early planning stages.

Private sector engagement is also challenging and inconsistent.

Best practices & key lessons





Could you propose any engagement methods that could improve the outcome of this process and that you would consider using in the future?

Use trusted community spokespeople, especially from the vulnerable group itself.

Hold informal, relaxed meetings—preferably with social workers present—to build trust and avoid making participants feel like a problem to be solved.

Tailor engagement methods to the specific needs, interests, and priorities of each group.

Hire dedicated, skilled professionals who can communicate effectively and adapt to the audience.

Consider using focus groups for more targeted and meaningful discussions.

Focus on topics relevant to the group, especially practical ones like funding opportunities (grants, subsidies, etc.).



Create a welcoming atmosphere—even light-hearted ideas like offering free refreshments could help boost attendance.



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What successful practices or strategies did you implement to facilitate intergovernmental dialogue and collaboration?



ESTABLISH CLEAR
COMMUNICATION CHANNELS



ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND
TRANSPARENT PROCESSES



OVERALL SUCCESS WAS
LIMITED.



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Key Lessons for Effective Stakeholder Engagement in ECAP Development



- **Start early with a clear plan** – Early and structured engagement builds trust and ownership.
- **Map and involve the right stakeholders** – Broad, inclusive participation brings valuable insights and long-term support.
- **Use diverse, accessible methods** – Combine formats (e.g., small focus groups, social media, in-person) to reach different groups.
- **Set clear expectations and show impact** – Let people know how their input will be used to maintain interest and trust.
- **Keep engagement ongoing** – Build lasting relationships, not one-time consultations.
- **Make data understandable** – Use simple language and visuals to help non-experts follow the issues.
- **Promote meetings well** – Use local channels, trusted figures, and clear messaging to boost participation.



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Focus on energy poverty –
Implementation of information campaigns and education on energy poverty for vulnerable groups.

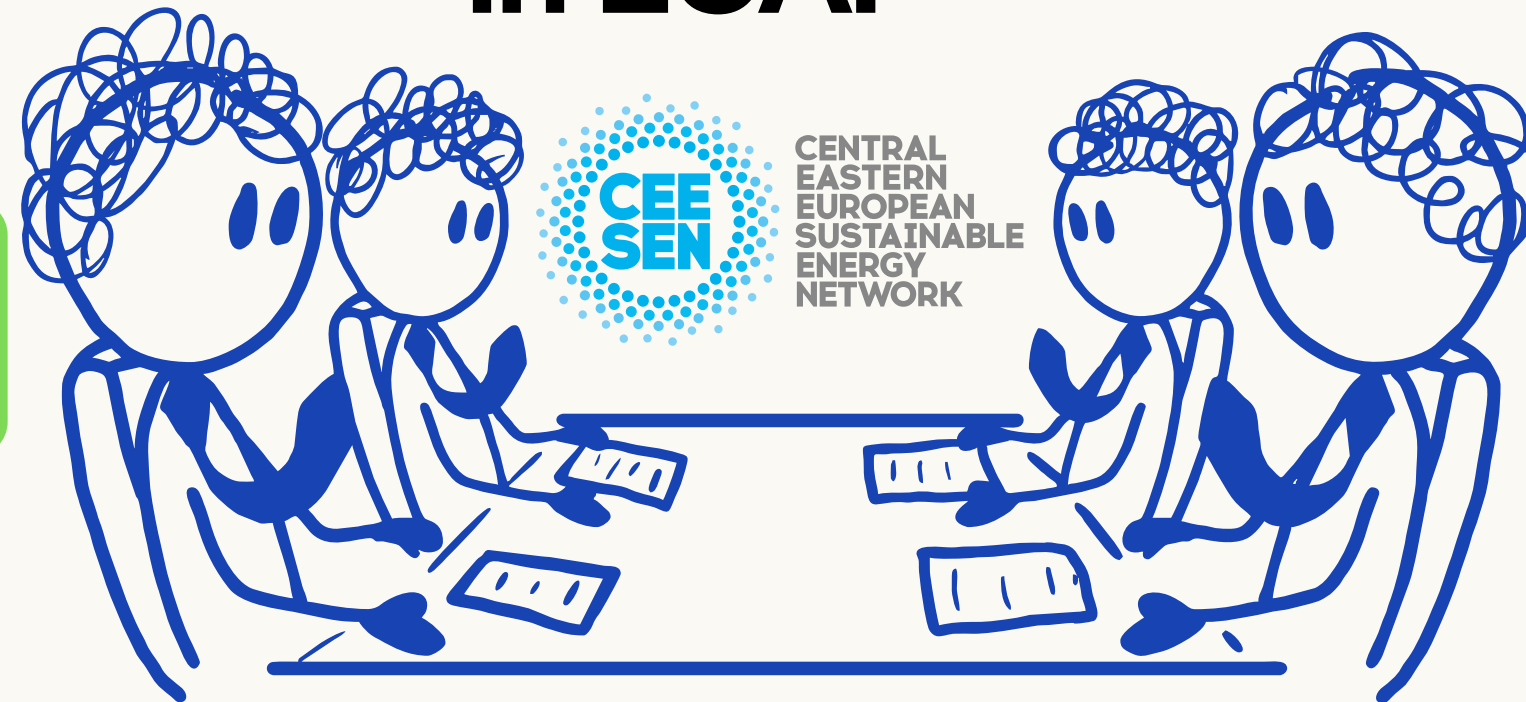
Collaboration with social institutions and NGOs –
Partnered with organizations to support vulnerable groups.

Energy audits for energy-poor households

Key Initiatives and Measures to Highlight in ECAP+

Detailed proposals for municipal buildings – Focused on improving energy efficiency in local infrastructure, communicated through newspaper articles

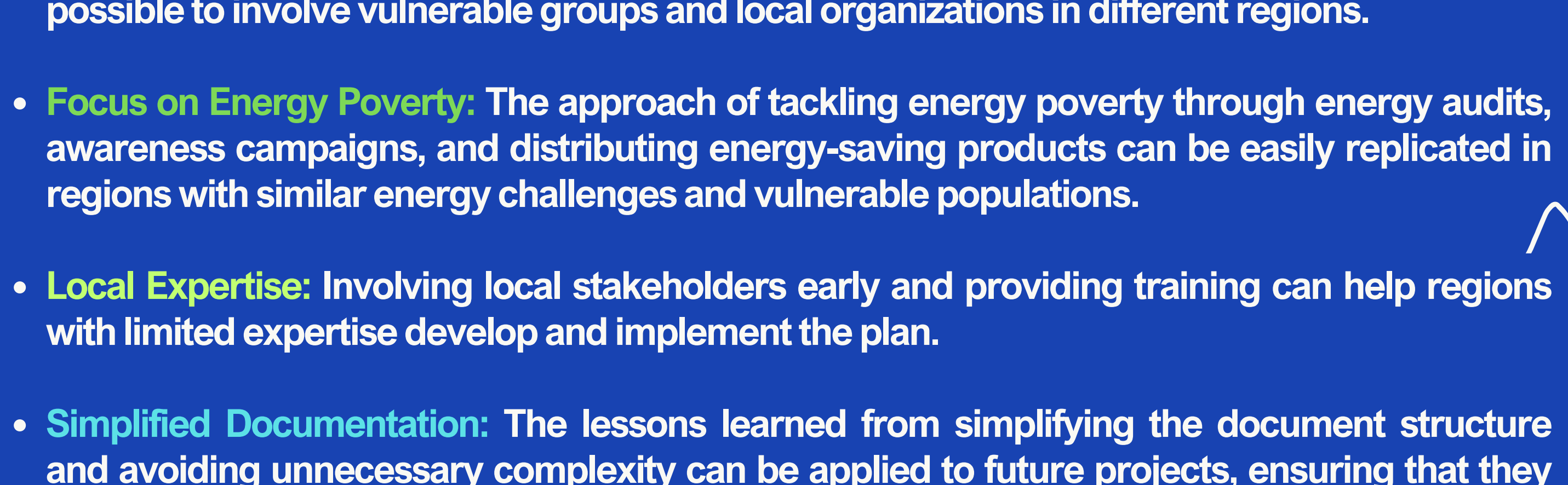
Energy Poverty Report



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Potential for replication

- **Unified Methodology:** A consistent approach at all levels can be easily applied in other regions for benchmarking and progress tracking.
 - **Data Availability:** Standardized data collection would make the process faster and easier to replicate in other areas. Regions that have already established data-sharing practices would benefit most from this approach
 - **Tailored Engagement:** Engagement methods can be adapted to local needs, making it possible to involve vulnerable groups and local organizations in different regions.
 - **Focus on Energy Poverty:** The approach of tackling energy poverty through energy audits, awareness campaigns, and distributing energy-saving products can be easily replicated in regions with similar energy challenges and vulnerable populations.
 - **Local Expertise:** Involving local stakeholders early and providing training can help regions with limited expertise develop and implement the plan.
 - **Simplified Documentation:** The lessons learned from simplifying the document structure and avoiding unnecessary complexity can be applied to future projects, ensuring that they are easier to understand and implement in other regions.
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