

Implementing 2030 Agenda in organizations (IntAg2030)



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The aim of the project IntAG2030 was to explore the best practices on how to implement the 2030 Agenda towards the sustainable development in organizations. This folder presents the results from interviews with both private and public organizations in Sweden, Latvia and Estonia. Questions about the organizations work with sustainability have been asked and the result can be seen as a source of inspiration.

The interviews were conducted during the spring in the year 2021 and the participating organizations are:

Sweden: The municipality of Åtvidaberg,
The municipality of Norrköping, Econova AB,
Städarna Sweden (Cleaning company)

Latvia: GREN the Northern European green energy company,
Jekabpils County, Zemgale NGO Centre.

Estonia: Tartu City, Tartu Regional Energy Agency (TREA),
Estonia University of life Science.

IntAg2030 contributes to strengthen the partnership between the participating countries through collaboration, exchanging knowledge and gain experience. The project has been carried out by the Zemgale Regional Energy Agency (ZREA), Estonia University of Life Sciences (EMÜ) and County Administrative Board of Östergötland (CAB).





Step into your leadership shoes! How the municipality of Åtvidaberg implemented Agenda 2030.

Yasmine Dernelid began working with Agenda 2030 in 2015 in connection with updating municipal environment programmes. Yasmine then decided to approach her supervisor as well as local politicians with the idea of creating a sustainability program – an idea that was welcome by everyone! Since 2015, Åtvidaberg Municipality has:

- Mapped out the current situation and drawn up internal sustainability development goals. *'We all agreed to focus on ourselves first and set a good example before reaching out to the business community and other local stakeholders.'*
- Applied its Sustainable Development Goals on a local level. We asked ourselves: *'What do these goals mean for us in Åtvidaberg Municipality?'*
- Worked on integrating the perspective of sustainability in every process. The overall vision and objectives of the municipality are, among other things, linked to Agenda 2030 and the Global Goals.
- Engaged and involved municipal employees in the sustainability work through workshops and knowledge-building activities.
- Raised awareness among politicians and members of the Community Management Group through communication initiatives. *'These days, the issue is driven by politicians which is critical to the success of our work.'*
- Integrated the sustainability perspective in the municipal budget. *'We believe it to be of utmost importance that issues relating to environmental sustainability remain visible throughout the budgeting process.'*
- Participated and collaborated with a number of regional networks. *'The networks primarily contribute with inspiration and an exchange of knowledge.'*
- Reorganised its operations in line with Agenda 2030. Today, Yasmine Dernelid heads up the new Strategic Development Unit. The unit employs people with expertise in social, economic and ecological dimensions. *'We are altogether three people who work to ensure that the sustainability perspective is not forgotten and instead, permeates every aspect of the municipal work.'*
- Developed and implemented an initial sustainability programme. *'To be able to see how we are doing, we must follow up on every Sustainability Development Goal!'*
- Åtvidaberg Municipality is currently developing a sustainability programme that covers the overall objectives of the municipality. There must be a common thread running through it all from the overall vision, objectives and sustainability programme of the municipality down to management and operational plans. *'In this way, the sustainability programme becomes the overall governing document of the municipality.'*



Yasmine Dernelid,
heads of Strategic Development Unit, Åtvidaberg Municipality



Use the sustainability perspective as a competitive advantage!

Econova is a company that has had a circular business model from day one. 'The company brand is strongly linked to sustainability and circular solutions,' explains Anders Bergquist, Sustainable Development and Strategy Manager. As part of its sustainability work, Econova has:

- Developed and integrated a Sustainability Strategy. *'We aim to become the most sustainable company on the market in terms of social, ecological and environmental aspects.'* *'Working with these issues now will give us an advantage in future – and not just us but everyone!'*
- Linked all business plans to the Sustainability Strategy. For almost all employees, our business plans have been transformed into personal plans. *'There must be a common thread running throughout – from strategy and business plan to other employees.'*
- Created support and commitment and received clear assignments from the Management Group. *'It is a lot easier to have the company owner and management with you from the start rather than trying to drive issues from the bottom-up (..)'* *'The questions asked by members of the Management Group have shown be very useful. Questions such as 'when are we going to build a new factory or buy a new machine?'* *This makes us think about sustainability in everything we do, from the work environment to environmental issues, finances, etc.'*
- A sustainability department that drives development forward. The department is staffed by a Sustainability Manager, a Sustainability Integration Manager and Anders Bergquist.
- Developed a sustainability reporting framework with the aim of achieving higher goals and ambitions than is required by law. *'This is significantly above the level of reporting required under the law.'* Econova see their sustainability reporting and status as an effective marketing strategy that will bring in more business. They also want to be transparent about where and what they can improve on.
- Developed methods for categorising products based on Agenda 2030 sustainability goals. At Econova, the perspective of sustainability is linked to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are used to measure how effective the company is at achieving vital business goals.
- Networked/networking with other companies, authorities and academia. Econova has participated in many local sustainability projects and regularly collaborates with students on their degree projects.



Anders Bergquist,
head of Sustainable Development and Strategy at Econova.



How sustainability initiatives were set in motion by a new political direction.

Norrköping Municipality has long worked with sustainability in many different ways. The municipality has for many years been the organiser of a sustainability event called the Global Weeks, the aim of which is to raise awareness of Agenda 2030 throughout the community.

In 2019, Norrköping Municipality was unambiguously assigned the task of working with Agenda 2030 within the municipal group. As part of its sustainability work, Norrköping Municipality has:

- Received the assignment to increase the level of ambition in its work with the Agenda 2030 and Global Goals. The councils and corporate boards have been tasked with helping employees gain a better understanding of the Global Goals and introducing particular activities that will contribute to the fulfilment of such goals. 'All councils have been asked to describe in their Action Plan how they intend to work with the Global Goals.'
- Linked the overall goals of the assignment period to provisional global targets. 'It is difficult to make an impact without a political assignment,' says Karin Faxér, Environmental Strategist at Norrköping Municipality.
- Created a working group called the Global Working Group at the office of the municipal council with the task of supporting all (municipal) operations and companies in their work with Agenda 2030 and the Global Goals. The Group develops tools, guidance and knowledge-building activities for the implementation of the work with Agenda 2030.
- Developed a Global Goals portal on the municipality's intranet with information about the Global Goals and budget assignment. The Global Working Group uses the portal to provide information on the ongoing sustainability work and development of tools.
- Organised a number of inspirational lectures and workshops in 2021 for municipal corporations, municipal management groups and councils on how to integrate Global Goals into everyday operations.

- Followed up/following up on how the sustainability work of the municipality contributes to the fulfilment of the subgoals of Agenda 2030. Activities that are followed up include activities linked to the subgoals of Agenda 2030 such as the reduction in purchases of single-use plastics. 'A development in the right direction and the performance indicator for the fulfilment of provisional global targets shows GREEN (right direction). A development in the wrong direction and it shows RED (wrong direction). If most of the activities carried out to fulfil a subgoal lead to a development in the right direction, the performance indicator for the entire goal will show GREEN.' Corporate sustainability work is reported in a Sustainability Report, 'The companies report, among other things, on what activities have been implemented and how Global Goals are integrated into business plans.'
- Investigated how aspects of sustainability can be used to market the municipality of Norrköping.
- The Municipal Director has created a forum where CEOs and other managers can exchange ideas, experiences and discuss their work with Agenda 2030.



Karin Faxér,
Environmental
Strategist,
Norrköping
Municipality



See sustainability work as the most obvious work an organisation can do!

The company Stådarne AB has worked hard for many years to protect the well-being of its employees in the form of strong collective agreements and competent staff. The company refers to its work with environmental sustainability as its 'manifesto.' In 2019, the company recruited Jenny Berg as its new Sustainability Manager. Since then, Stådarne AB has:

- Held a workshop on the Agenda 2030 and sustainability goals with CEOs and employees at the head office. *'It was a fantastic workshop where everyone got to learn more about the Global Goals.'*
- Mapped the company's existing sustainability work as a result of which, it was discovered that much of the work had already been done within the social and economic dimensions. *'Our greatest potential for improvement lies in our environmental work.'*
- Drafted Sustainability Reports, referred to by the company as its 'Manifesto'. All employees were given the chance to be involved in the preparation of the report. *'It is very important for all employees to feel that what is stated in the report is true and not just empty words.'*
- Organised a Sustainability Evening for all employees with the aim of raising awareness of environmental issues and sustainability at the same time as launching the company's second 'Manifesto'.
- Integrated sustainability issues in the company's Employee Survey.
- Invested in assessment and follow-up courses. *'We need to learn how to follow up and measure progress towards sustainability goals.'*
- Enlisted the help of students in its work with sustainability. The students have, among other things, assisted the company in making climate calculations in line with the GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Protocol.
- Networked with other companies, local authorities and academia. *'It is extremely important to help and learn from each other.'*



Jenny Berg,
Sustainability Manager, Stådarne AB



An ecological way of living must reach all citizens!

Sustainability issues, similar to Agenda 2030, are very important in Tartu city development, now and in the future.

- Tartu is not specifically working with Agenda 2030 within the organization, but sustainability issues are very important in the city and are in focus.
- City of Tartu has a strategy called the development strategy “Tartu 2030”. Agenda 2030 goals are also partially covered with our Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan.
- Tartu’s vision for 2030: *“An ecological way of living must reach all citizens. In city life, this means a more environmentally friendly system of waste collection, sorting and storage. For residential building construction and renovation, environmentally friendly solutions and materials as well as efficient energy use will be preferred. City life management will curb uncontrolled urban sprawl, while promoting the use of non-motorised and public means of transport.”*
- Click for more information:
<https://tartu.ee/en/sustainable-tartu>.



Raimond Tamm,
Deputy mayor, Tartu City, Estonia



Everybody talks about the sustainability but very few are ready to pay for it!

Agenda 2030 is currently the best internationally accepted framework developing sustainable institutional capacity.

- It all started through the participation in European energy efficiency grant programs for public sector. Establishing funding opportunities and financial sustainability of the activities. This cooperation model was essential for the main work to begin.
- The most significant benefit working with the Agenda 2030 is that it is internationally and the most generally accepted framework for developing institutional capacity.
- A long way is ahead but all is possible although additional financial support is crucial. Energy transition and reducing the consumer habits/ mentality among the Estonian public is important issue to tackle forward.
- In society, better coordination of sustainable initiatives and more organizations in the region need to accept their role as forerunners of energy efficiency and transition towards clean energy.
- Click for more information: www.trea.ee/eng



Neeme Kärbo,
Project Manager,
Tartu Regional Energy Agency (TREA),
Estonia.



Marek Muiste,
Energy Expert,
Tartu Regional Energy Agency (TREA),
Estonia.



Commitment in every level is crucial to make Agenda 2030 a success in academia!

There is need to talk about the Agenda more nationally and in connection to the academic studies.

- It all started with the sustainability seminar where the management made an introduction to the Agenda 2030 in January 2020.
- The seminar initiated the discussion about the connections of the SDG and curricula. All connections with specific goals were pointed out on EULSs curriculum basis, so that in the future it would be possible to show it more in the curricula but also to think about how to further support the achievement of goals through university curricula towards society.
- This broader knowledge about the SDGs made university staff to think about the connections both at the level of the curriculum as a whole and in terms of subjects, especially if the curriculum related to several goals.
- Currently and in the future curriculum managers and lecturers will take the SDGs into account when new curricula and individual subjects are developed.
- Click for more information:
<https://www.emu.ee/en>



Ina Järve,
Department of Academic Affairs, Head of the Department,
Estonian University of Life Sciences (EULS), Estonia



I am the angel of earth because... Experience of Jekabpils County.

In Jekabpils county, Latvia you can stand by poster, imagine you have wings as an angel of the earth and tell what are the good things you have done and do for the planet earth – why are you the angel...

- Jekabpils municipality started to work with UN Agenda 2030 sustainability goals quite long time ago. In planning the goals were/are pursued in indirect way. In Latvia the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre (CSCC) – the institution under the direct authority of the Prime Minister is responsible for the Latvian development planning at national level. Municipalities, when elaborating its local plans and strategies, take into account the national sustainability documents and strategies.
- Goal 7 – affordable and clean energy: In 2009 Jekabpils signed the Covenant of Mayors and use of wood biomass in district heating has increased more than two times since then, green procurement started to be used and in public transport among others 6 natural gas (methan) busses are used.
- 2018-2021 Jekabpils City Education Initiative Centre implemented the project “Global Civil Education – Bridge to Sustainable Development” project or “Bridge47”. The aim was to involve the citizens of Jekabpils in promoting global sustainability.
- A bus of global targets was set up, reminding people visually of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, or Global Goals.
- A wall of Global Objectives was created.
- In future human resources would be crucial to maintain/improve the work with UN Agenda 2030 – to have funds to hire a specialist for work with UN2030, who would be responsible for including the UN 2030 targets in the work of the municipality, would develop wider cooperation with NGOs and others through networking and advice.
- Click for more information:
<https://www.jekabpils.lv>





This is where the future is being energized today in a sustainable and efficient way.

The heat provider of Jelgava city, Latvia – GREN – works mostly with the goal 7 of UN2030 sustainability goals – affordable energy.

- Gren – the Northern European green energy company, as a brand is quite new. Yet it is positively familiar to its stakeholders as Gren companies have been operating in the Baltic market for several decades. The owner and the brand has changed, but the solid foundation of sustainability and environmental responsibility laid is strong and continues to drive Gren's operations and development.
- Gren focuses on developing and providing sustainable energy solutions, primarily district heating, using renewables and local resources to meet local communities' needs and provides comfort for their daily lives while also having a positive impact on the environment.
- Gren has continuously improved efficiency of energy production and district heating (DH) network in Jelgava, Latvia. As the result Jelgava DH system is among the greenest in Europe.
- To improve the affordability of clean energy and the service of DH in Jelgava, Gren is continuously working on connecting new customers to the network.
- GREN's combined heat and power (CHP) plant in Jelgava is the first large scale biomass CHP plant in Latvia that uses local renewable energy resources, primarily wood chips, to provide heat and electricity. Today around 95-97% of heat energy necessary for Jelgava DH is produced from renewable resources.
- Gren's CHP plant in Jelgava has played an important role in reducing the CO₂ emissions from heat production by 90% Jelgava and favored fulfillment of the city's targets under the Covenant of Mayors.
- To further improve resource efficiency and responsible production, Gren has constructed a 5000 m³ large heat accumulation tank at Jelgava biomass CHP plant. That secures more efficient use of the primary fuel – wood chips.
- Now Gren is developing a new project that will secure diversification of fuels in Jelgava biomass CHP plant. Adding up to 35% refuse derived fuel (RDF) to the main fuel – wood chips, would lessen the amount of waste that is taken to landfills and will develop more sustainable waste management system in the region. It will also have positive effect on heat and waste management prices for customers.
- Gren's most valuable asset is its employees. To take care of the health and wellbeing of its employees Gren regularly organizes different lectures on healthy lifestyle, common sports activities, internal entertaining competitions both remotely and when possible, also in person.
- Click for more information: <https://gren.com>





Zemgale NGO Centre: Work with UN Agenda – a sense for better future.

Work with UN Agenda 2030 objectives is in the hands of organization staff and the board – a sense of a better future, which is consistent with these objectives.

- Zemgale NGO Support Centre, Latvia, started to work with Agenda 2030 about 2 years ago, when the organization "LAPAS" (Society "Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation") introduced with sustainable development objectives.



- It was important to look at the day-to-day activities of the organization and to see where we could introduce sustainable development objectives. Which were the day-to-day activities, where we could apply them? Gender equality in events (selecting participants), waste sorting, diversity assessment in the activities of the organization, developing countries involved in the international projects, ensuring that national representatives could be involved. These are some small things that are already in the process, but we understand that they still have little influence.
- The success factors would be work with all sectors, including the education system and not only young people, but it should also be integrated into the lifelong learning system for adults.
- Click for more information: <https://zemgalei.lv/en/>

Uldis Dumins,
Chairman of the board of Zemgale NGO Centre