

Report on results of the Citizen Survey in Växjö 2008

According to a survey performed in Växjö, around 90 % of the citizens think that it is very or rather important for the city to work with energy issues to reduce the impact on the environment. The survey also shows that the share of citizens that say that RES and RUE are very or rather important to them, has increased from 39 % three years ago to 75 % today.

The national statistical agency of Sweden, SCB, performs “Citizen Surveys” in different cities now and then. The purpose of the survey is to identify how satisfied the citizens are with municipal activities, such as technical management, elderly care, schools etc. Such a survey has been performed in Växjö 2006 and 2008. The city has the possibility to add questions in the survey. In 2006, Växjö added some questions about how engaged the citizens are in the environmental work. In 2008, the same questions were added, but there were also a few questions added that have relation to SESAC. If a survey is done also in 2010, we can have a follow-up also of the questions related to SESAC.

SESAC-related questions

In Annex I of the SESAC contract, some “Measures of success” are described. Most of them, such as MW of new renewable electricity generators, or m² of constructed eco-buildings, can be easily identified through the demo projects of SESAC. But Växjö identified two measures that were not that easy to identify: increase of renewable energy in electricity consumption in the Concerto community, and quantitative data on householders with changed attitudes towards RES and RUE.

With the annual energy balances created in Växjö, within WP21, there is a possibility to calculate how much electricity is consumed in Växjö. However, since there is a free electricity market in Sweden, it is impossible to find out where the electricity actually comes from. Instead, we are forced to use figures from the national average. Within the free electricity market there is a possibility to choose electricity which is certified that it comes from renewable energy sources. Therefore, one of the questions in the survey was:

“Did you actively choose environmentally certified electricity?”

Yes	11 %
No	64 %
I don't know	17 %
No answer	8 %

Of the citizens, 11 % had chosen environmentally certified electricity. However, this doesn't mean that the rest don't have electricity based upon renewable energy sources. It is interesting that 17 % don't know. This can be a result of a complicated electricity market, and that someone else in the family has chosen the electricity. It could also mean that they misunderstood the question and simply answered that they don't know if they have environmentally friendlier electricity or not.

The next two questions were a way to find out how the attitude towards RES and RUE has changed lately:

“How important is RES and RUE for you today?”

“How important was RES and RUE for you three years ago?”

	Today	Three years ago
Very important	34 %	12 %
Rather important	41 %	27 %
Not especially important	7 %	34 %
Not at all important	1 %	6 %
I don't know	8 %	10 %
No answer	9 %	11 %

The result shows that 75 % of the citizens think that RES and RUE is very or rather important for them today, compared with 39 % three years ago. This hopefully reflects an increased awareness among the citizens when it comes to the need for RES and RUE to fight the climate change. We hope that we can show that the change of attitudes continues.

Other questions

There were also a number of questions that didn't have the direct link to SESAC. One section of questions was dedicated to finding out how important the citizens think it is that the City of Växjö is working with different environmental issues. When adding up the answers "Very important" and "Rather important" it was found out that a very high percentage of the citizens acknowledge the importance of the involvement of the city to solve environmental problems:

How important is it that the City of Växjö works with:	Very important	Rather important
Consumption patterns	41 %	38 %
Waste management	71 %	21 %
Nature and water	69 %	23 %
Energy	65 %	24 %
Transport	62 %	28 %

Another question was about how environmentally aware the citizens think they are. 13 % answered that they are very environmentally aware, and 67 % answered that they are rather environmentally aware.

The survey also included 11 questions, which were used to calculate an environmental awareness index for the citizens of Växjö. The questions are focusing on what the citizens themselves actually are doing to reduce their impact on the environment. If all the people answering the survey would answer every question with "Yes, always", the result would be an index = 100. In 2006, the index was 56, and in 2008 the index is 60. Also, for every individual question, the index had improved during the two years.

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