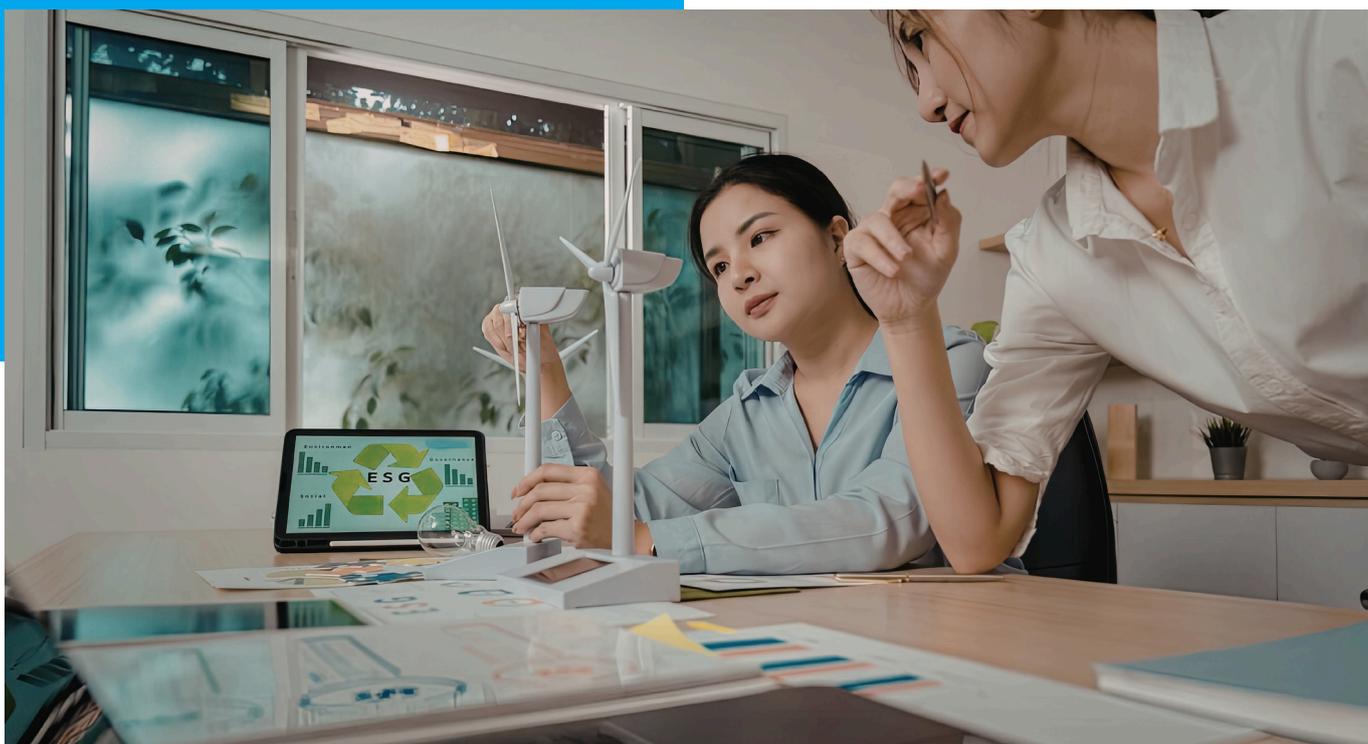The Climate
Reality Project®
EUROPE

City Climate Action Assessment

CHECKLIST

written by
The Climate Reality Project Europe

How to use this **checklist**?

This checklist is a companion to the City Climate Action Assessment Guidebook. It is designed to help Climate Hubs and individual Leaders take the first practical steps in understanding what is happening on climate action in their city – and where there may be gaps.

You do not need expert knowledge, full data, or insider access to use this checklist. Many questions are intentionally framed as Yes / No / Not sure. "Not sure" is a valid and useful answer – it often points to areas where more transparency, communication, or engagement is needed.

The purpose of this checklist is to support observation, shared learning, and constructive dialogue. You can use it alone, or together with others in your Climate Hub.

The checklist works best when used selectively. You do not need to complete every section at once. Start where information is easiest to access or where local interest is strongest.

In summary, your 8-step climate action assessment journey is:

1   **Discover** your council's climate pledges and plan.

2   **Review** the plan for targets and coverage of key areas.

3   **Spot and check** visible actions in clean transport (buses, bikes, etc.).

4   **Examine** progress in clean energy and efficient buildings.

5   **Observe** greening efforts, climate adaptation, and waste initiatives.

6   **Assess** how the council involves and informs the community.

7   **Verify** the governance foundations (staff, budget, monitoring) for climate action

8   **Engage** by sharing findings, joining forces with others, and constructively pushing for more.

The Climate
Reality Project
EUROPE

Step 1: Climate commitments: has the city set a direction?

☐ Has the city declared a climate emergency or made a clear climate commitment?

    ☐ `just transition` Are the tragets equitable and include mentions of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities?

☐ Is there a publicly stated target (for example, climate neutrality/net zero)?

☐ Is a target year mentioned?

    ☐ If yes, which year? _____

☐ Is climate action presented as a priority in city communication?

☐ Is the city a member of coalitions supporting climate action (*for example, C40, the Covenant of Mayors, Powering Past Coal Alliance, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, etc*)

☐ `just transition` Justice commitments are included in official policy, not just vision statements.

Overall impression:

☐ Clear commitments

☐ Some signals

☐ Unclear / missing

Step 2: Climate plans: is there a plan behind the promise?

☐ Does the city have a climate or energy action plan?

☐ just transition Does the climate or energy plan mention co-benefits such as improving public health (clean air), green jobs, safety etc?

☐ Is the plan publicly available and easy to find?

☐ Has it been updated in the last 2–3 years?

☐ Does it include concrete actions (not only goals)?

Overall impression:

☐ Actively updated, living plan

☐ Exists but vague

☐ Hard to find / outdated

☐ Not sure

Step 3: Transport & mobility: is low-carbon travel visible?

☐ Are there safe bike lanes or pedestrian-friendly areas?

☐ Is public transport being expanded or improved?

    ☐ `just transition` Is socio-economic data (for example gender disaggregated data) applied to inform the overall transport and mobility strategy?

    ☐ `just transition` Does the plan include affordability safeguards so low-income households don't bear high costs?

☐ Are there electric or low-emission buses, trams, or trains?

☐ Is the city limiting car traffic in some areas?

☐ Are there municipal campaigns to support low-emissions transport/mobility?

Overall impression:

☐ Moving swiftly towards climate-neutral transport

☐ Mixed signals

☐ Still car-focused

☐ Not sure

Step 4: Energy & buildings: is the city shifting away from fossil fuels?

☐ Are there solar panels or renewable energy projects on public buildings?

☐ Does the city support home insulation, renovations, or clean heating?

  ☐ `just transition` How does the city aim to protect vulnerable households during the transition?

  ☐ `just transition` Is there protection from energy price increases, particularly for low-income households?

  ☐ `just transition` Are benefits (for example retrofits) and burdens (for example taxes) distributed fairly?

☐ `just transition` Is energy poverty mentioned?

  ☐ Are there specific policies and/or mechanisms to prevent energy poverty in the context of climate and energy transition?

☐ Are new buildings promoted as energy-efficient?

☐ Are energy communities or local energy projects mentioned in city planning, promotion campaigns, or community discussions?

Initial take-away:

☐ Clear progress

☐ Early steps

☐ Little visible action

☐ Not sure

Step 5: Nature & resilience: is the city preparing for climate impacts?

☐ Are trees, parks, or green spaces being expanded or protected?

    ☐ `just transition` Who benefits from green spaces?

☐ Are there visible measures for heat, flooding, or extreme weather?

    ☐ `just transition` Is socio-economic data (for example disability-disaggregated data) applied to inform those measures?

☐ Does the city talk about adaptation or resilience, not only emissions?

    ☐ `just transition` Is indigenous or community knowledge treated as valuable expertise in the planning process?

☐ Is food, waste, or circular economy part of climate discussions?

    ☐ Are there municipal campaigns to reduce food waste and/or switch to a plant-based diet?

    ☐ Are there measures taken by the city to improve waste management, particularly food-related (which are a significant source of methane emissions)?

    ☐ `just transition` Is education on food, waste, and circular economy accessible to all social groups?

Your impression:

☐ Preparing well

☐ Some actions

☐ Gaps visible

☐ Unclear

Step 6: Community engagement & fairness: who is involved?

☐ Are residents invited to climate-related meetings or consultations?

☐ Are young people, community groups, or NGOs involved in a participatory way?

☐ `just transition` Is information shared in accessible ways (language, format, digital literacy, people with disabilities, childcare)?

☐ `just transition` Does the city talk about equity, affordability, or social impacts?

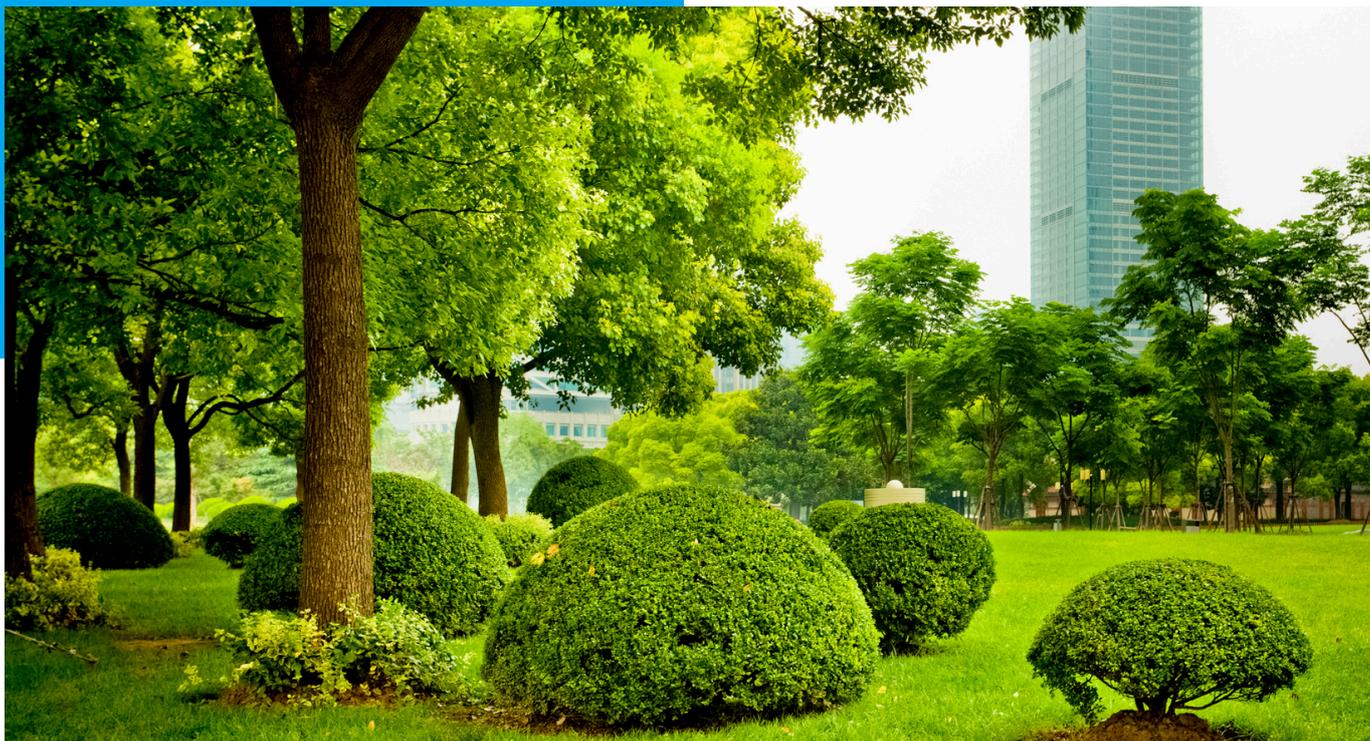**Community and residents engagement seems:**

☐ Open and inclusive

☐ Limited

☐ Mostly top-down

☐ Not sure

Step 7: Governance & resources: who is responsible and how?

☐ Is there a named climate lead (mayor, councillor, department)?

☐ Is climate action linked to a budget or funding source?

    ☐ `just transition` Is there clear budget and staff allocation towards equity-focused policies (rather than general, city-wide initiatives that might ignore marginalized groups)?

☐ Are progress updates or reports shared publicly?

☐ Is climate mentioned regularly by city leaders?

Governance shows:

☐ Clear ownership

☐ Some structure

☐ Weak accountability

☐ Unclear

From assessment to everyday life.

Climate action is most effective when it responds to real issues people experience in their daily lives — such as high energy bills, unsafe streets, heat stress, or lack of trust in local decision-making.

The following page adds a simple reflection layer to the checklist. Its purpose is to help you connect what you observed in your city with the pains, concerns, and priorities of residents. This can help you identify where climate action could not only reduce emissions, but also improve quality of life.

You do not need perfect answers. This exercise is about noticing patterns, building empathy, and identifying opportunities to link climate action with issues people already care about.

City Life Lens: Linking Local Pains to Climate Opportunities

Step 1: What seems hardest for people in our city right now?

Circle or mark 3–5 issues that seem most relevant locally.

- ☐ High energy bills or energy insecurity
- ☐ Cold homes in winter / overheating in summer
- ☐ Air pollution or health concerns
- ☐ Traffic, noise, unsafe streets
- ☐ Lack of green space or shade
- ☐ Flooding, heatwaves, or extreme weather
- ☐ High cost of living or affordability
- ☐ Feeling ignored by local decision-makers
- ☐ Low trust in institutions
- ☐ Other: _____

Step 2: Where did we notice gaps or uncertainty in the checklist?

Link the pains above to areas from the checklist.

Residents' pains	Related checklist area
high energy bills	*Energy & Buildings*
poor air quality	*Transport & Mobility*
...	....

Step 3: How could better climate action help here?

For one or two pains, reflect briefly:
- If the city acted more strongly in this area, how could life improve for residents?
- What co-benefits could this bring (comfort, health, savings, safety, trust)?

Space for notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 4: Who would care about this issue?

Think about people or groups who already talk about or experience this pain.

- Residents most affected:

_____

- Local groups, organisations, or voices:

_____

- Potential allies (schools, NGOs, professionals):

_____

Step 5: One small next step (next 3–4 weeks)

Choose one realistic action your Hub could take:

☐ Ask a clarifying question to the city

☐ Request a meeting or public information

☐ Share observations with a local group or ally

☐ Prepare a short internal Hub briefing

☐ Other: _____

Our chosen next step:

_____

_____

_____

_____