



# NonHazCity3 stakeholder survey Summary

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**Interreg**  
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SUSTAINABLE WATERS

**NonHazCity 3**



The NonHazCity3 stakeholder survey collected feedback from approximately 150 respondents representing municipalities, public authorities, architects, NGOs, researchers, construction professionals and other organisations involved in the project's activities. The responses show that the project generated substantial capacity building across the Baltic Sea Region, particularly in understanding hazardous substances in construction, adopting new tools, and integrating chemical safety into planning and procurement processes.

## 1. Used new knowledge or skills

A large majority of respondents reported gaining new knowledge and skills related to hazardous substances in construction materials, their impacts on indoor environments and ecosystems, and ways to reduce these risks through better material selection and procurement practices.

Municipal staff and designers emphasised improved understanding of the occurrence of hazardous substances in building materials and their relation to circular construction and climate goals. Many respondents noted that the project strengthened their ability to evaluate materials, identify potential risks and consider chemical safety earlier in the design process.

Training events, seminars and project materials played a key role in this learning process. Participants highlighted the value of practical examples, screening results and case studies that demonstrated how chemical considerations can be integrated into real projects. Several organisations reported using the knowledge gained to guide safer material choices, improve environmental performance in construction projects and raise awareness among colleagues and stakeholders.

In some cases, the project also influenced education and research activities. Universities and training institutions incorporated project knowledge into teaching and research programmes, while NGOs and advisory organisations used the materials to support professionals and communities in making safer building and renovation decisions.

## 2. Adopted new tools

Many organisations reported adopting or testing tools developed within the project or strengthening their use of existing tools inspired by project activities.

The most frequently mentioned tools include the NonHazCity Building Materials Catalogue, the Step-by-Step Guide for tox-free construction and renovation, the CheckED application, and the training materials and online learning resources. These tools helped stakeholders navigate complex information about hazardous substances and provided practical guidance for safer material selection.

Several respondents also reported using external material databases and assessment systems more actively, such as building material evaluation tools and certification systems. In some cases, organisations developed their own simplified tools inspired by NonHazCity3, such as internal guidance documents, sustainability checklists or “traffic-light” style material assessment systems.

NGOs and educational organisations highlighted that the project tools enabled them to create new training formats and educational resources for professionals and the public.

### 3. Adopted new procedures or workflows

Stakeholders reported a range of procedural changes resulting from the project. Many organisations introduced new steps into their workflows to better address hazardous substances during construction planning and procurement.

For municipalities and construction organisations, this often meant integrating chemical criteria into procurement processes, design guidelines and project planning procedures. Several respondents reported adopting the “three-pillar approach” linking chemical safety, circularity and climate considerations.

Some organisations introduced new review procedures for building materials, including additional verification steps, improved documentation of materials and stronger dialogue with suppliers. Others reported strengthening collaboration between environmental experts, architects and procurement teams to ensure that sustainability requirements are considered throughout the project lifecycle.

These procedural changes help organisations move from general sustainability goals towards more concrete and controllable practices for tox-free construction.

### 4. Changed organisational structure

Structural organisational changes were less common than knowledge or procedural changes but still reported by several respondents. In many cases, the project strengthened cooperation between departments rather than creating entirely new organisational units.

Municipalities noted improved collaboration between environmental departments, procurement teams, construction units and sustainability offices. Some organisations created or strengthened specialised roles related to environmental coordination or sustainable construction.

Even where formal organisational structures did not change, respondents emphasised that the project improved internal communication and awareness. In several municipalities, NonHazCity3 helped connect previously fragmented teams working on chemicals, circular economy and climate issues.

### 5. Further comments

Additional comments highlighted the broader value of the project. Respondents frequently emphasised the importance of international cooperation and knowledge exchange between cities and experts in the Baltic Sea Region.

Several stakeholders noted that hazardous substances in construction are still an under-recognised issue in the building sector. The project helped bring this topic into discussions that are otherwise dominated by energy efficiency and climate considerations.

Participants also highlighted the importance of continuing cooperation and further developing tools and policies based on the project results. Many expressed interest in follow-up projects and initiatives that could build on NonHazCity3 outcomes and continue strengthening regional capacity for tox-free, circular and climate-friendly construction.

Overall, the survey responses confirm that NonHazCity3 significantly increased institutional capacity among stakeholders. The project improved knowledge, introduced practical tools, strengthened procedures and fostered collaboration across organisations, providing a strong foundation for further progress in reducing hazardous substances in the built environment.