

# Integrated Action Plan

**EcoCore:  
Green Transition in Small Cities  
along Transport Corridors**



**Santo  
Tirso**

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# Section 1- focus, context, needs and vision



## 1.1- Introduction

Santo Tirso, an established industrial city in northern Portugal, is carving out its niche in the global marketplace. With a population of 67,700, the city forms part of the dynamic Porto Metropolitan area and is rapidly gaining recognition as a key destination for business investment. This is exemplified by the recent opening of a new Airbus factory and the introduction of a Municipal Interest Project (MIP) to incentivise local investment with tax benefits.

The municipal division, **Invest Santo Tirso**, is actively engaged in promoting economic diversification and has been instrumental in the creation of 662 new companies since 2015, significantly reducing the

Nonetheless, the city acknowledges the emerging challenges in its growth trajectory, such as filling skilled positions, managing traffic, ensuring sustainable water use, and expanding industrial land.

In alignment with the **EcoCore** project, Santo Tirso is enhancing its commitment to sustainable economic development. EcoCore, resonating with the EU's Green Deal, focuses on environmental sustainability and the efficient use of resources, encouraging cities like Santo Tirso to adopt practices that support the circular economy and contribute to a greener future.

## 1.2- Current situation and data

### 1.2.1- Territorial context

The municipality of Santo Tirso is part of the Porto Metropolitan Area, occupying a geographical transition area between Porto, the Ave Valley and the Sousa Valley, with an area of 132.6 km<sup>2</sup>. It is bordered by the municipalities of Vila Nova de Famalicão and Guimarães to the north, Vizela, Lousada and Paços de Ferreira to the east, Valongo to the south and Trofa and Maia to the west. Since the administrative reorganisation of 2013, which brought together several parishes, the municipality now consists of 14 parishes. The Ave and Vizela valleys to the north, the Leça valley to the south and the Assunção mountain range to the east characterise the morphology of the municipal territory. In the Ave and Vizela valleys there is more intense settlement and the interconnection of housing with other functions, namely industrial activities, services and equipment. Settlement is dispersed and results from linear occupation along roads and public thoroughfares. This area, where around 75% of the municipality's population lives, is home to the municipality's main urban centres, such as the city of Santo Tirso, the seat of the municipality, and the towns of Vila das Aves, Vila Nova do Campo, S. Tomé de Negrelos, Roriz, Rebordões and Vilarinho. In the Leça Valley, the settlement is more nucleated, although it also shows some dispersion with linear occupation along the main roads and public thoroughfares, generally located halfway up the hillside and with more rural characteristics. Agricultural occupation in the valley and forest settlements are dominant.

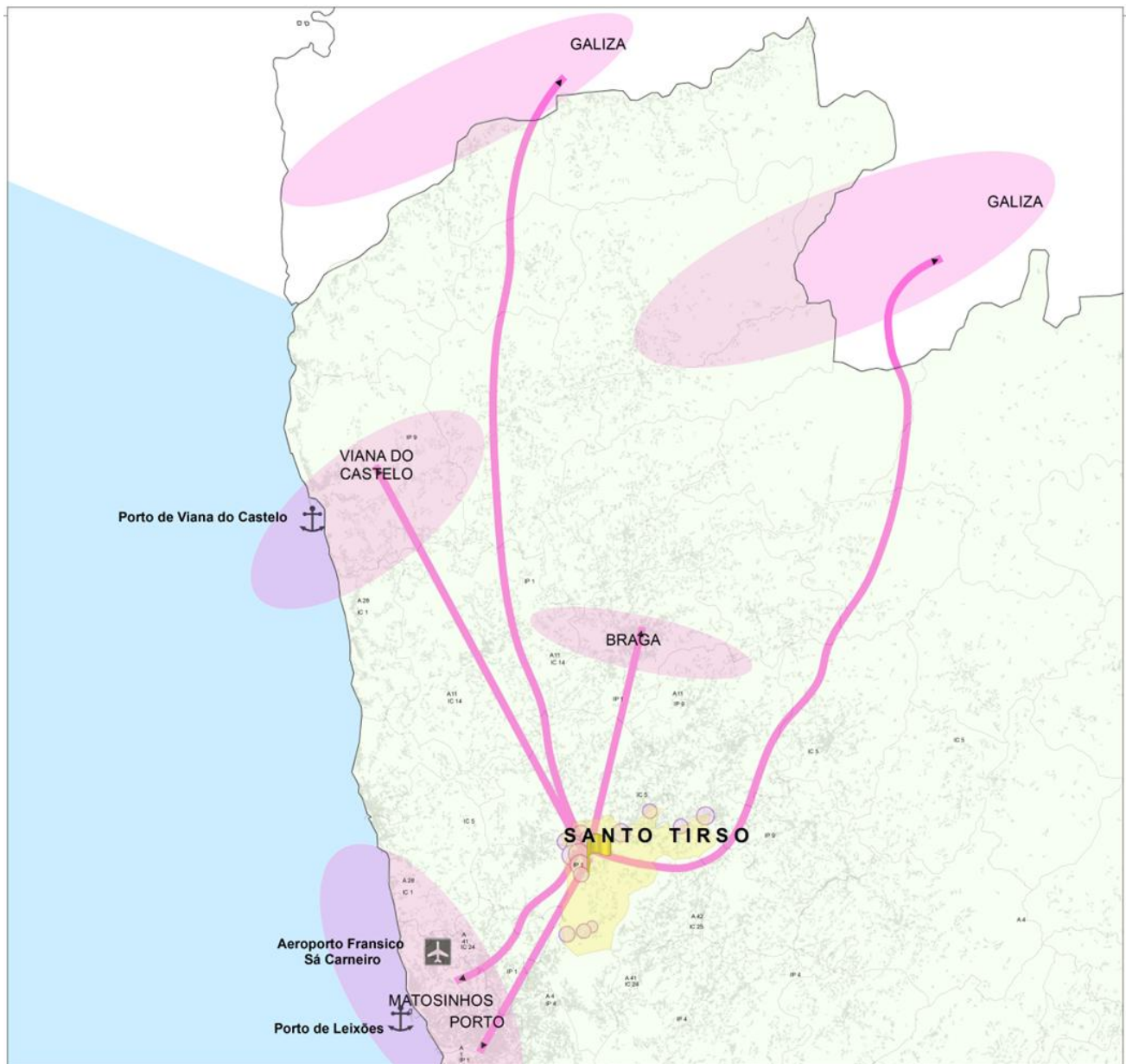


Figure 1 - Santo Tirso's Strategic Location

In terms of accessibility and transport, Santo Tirso is served by the A3 and A41 motorways, the EN 105, EN 104 and EN 204 national roads, the ER207 and ER 319 regional roads, the Porto/Guimarães railway line, with passenger stations in the city of Santo Tirso and Vila das Aves, as well as a road transport hub located at the municipal seat. Strategically situated with easy access to major transportation networks, Santo Tirso is ideally located just 20 kilometres from Porto's primary airport and the Leixões port, offering significant logistic advantages. The city's close connection to universities and technological centres is pivotal to support its skilled workforce and fostering innovation. Boasting a heritage rooted in the textile industry, Santo Tirso continues also to be a centre of textiles, plastics, and polymers production. The Santo Thyrsos Spinning and Fabric Factory, dating back to 1898, has been rejuvenated into a vibrant quarter for cultural and entrepreneurial activities. It now hosts facilities like a fashion incubator and a business and innovation centre, which draws in young entrepreneurs.



## 1.2.2- Population

Resident population according to the 2001, 2011 and 2021 Census, total and by sex, in Santo Tirso								
TOTAL			Masculine			Feminine		
2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021
72 414	71 537	67 826	35 221	34 281	32 275	37 193	37 255	35 550

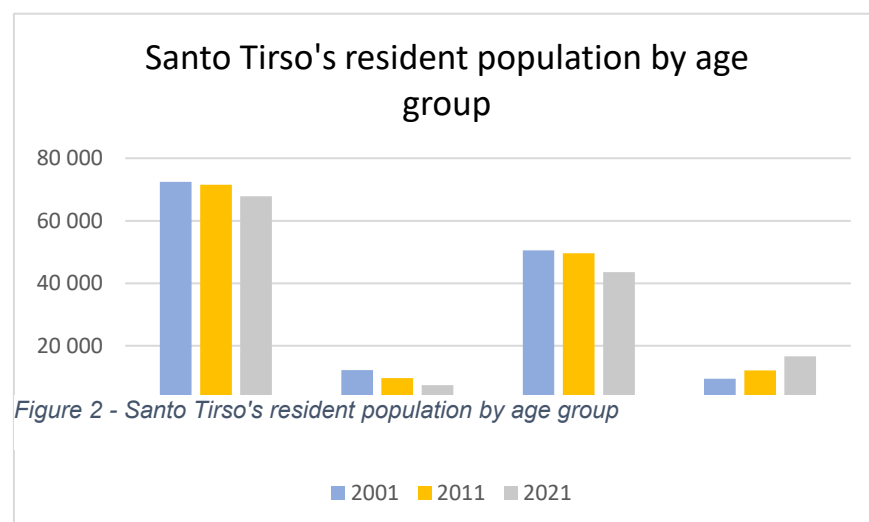
Table 1 - Resident Population by sex (INE 2011, 2021)

According to the censuses that are carried out every 10 years, we find that over the course of 20 years, the resident population in Santo Tirso has decreased by about 6.76%, which represents 4 588 fewer residents. Female population has always been more prevalent throughout the decades.

Santo Tirso resident population by age group				
Years	Total	0-14	15-64	65 or more
2001	72 414	12 314	50 565	9 535
2011	71 537	9 703	49 651	12 183
2021	67 826	7 492	43 621	16 713

Table 2 - Resident Population by age group (INE 2011, 2021)

As present in the previous table and the following graph, Santo Tirso's population has been gradually aging, with an 75,28% increase over the last two decades in age group above 65 years. Consequently, the remaining age groups have been decreasing.



The largest age group (15-64) consisted of 43,621 residents in 2021, compared to 49,651 in 2011 and 50,565 in 2001. This age group represents the active workforce within Santo Tirso's population. Decreases over time in the 0-14 age group, showcases a reduction in the birth rate.

### 1.2.3- Economy

Turnover (2022), in euros Total figures (INE)	
County	Turnover (€)
Porto Metropolitan Area	87 467 034 065 €
Santo Tirso	2 864 132 341 €

Table 3 - Turnover (2022) Porto Metropolitan Area/Santo Tirso

The turnover of companies in Santo Tirso in 2022 was 2 864 132 341 €, thus ranking it in 10th place in comparison to other 17 municipalities companies of the Porto Metropolitan Area.

Turnover, in euros Total values (NSE)			
County	2021	2022	Differential
Porto Metropolitan Area	73 836 960 703 €	87 467 034 065 €	13 630 073 362 €
Santo Tirso	2 404 284 174 €	2 864 132 341 €	459 848 167 €

Table 4 - Turnover (2021 & 2022) Porto Metropolitan Area/Santo Tirso

Comparing the years 2021 and 2022, Santo Tirso had an increase of 459 848 167 € in turnover compared to the previous year (2021).

Exports, in euro (€)			
County	2021	2022	2023*
Santo Tirso	709 252 195 €	851 851 545 €	758 327 066 €

Table 5 - Exports from Santo Tirso (2021, 2022, 2023)

Santo Tirso registers 758 327 066 € in exports, however in comparison to neighbouring municipalities it ranks 12th, while Vila Nova de Famalicão leads the ranking followed by Maia in 2nd, Guimarães is 5th, Trofa is 8th and Valongo is 16th. Globally, Santo Tirso's exports represent about 5.61% of the total export volume of the Porto Metropolitan Area.

### 1.2.4- International trade

International Trade (2023), in euros Preliminary figures (INE)			
County	Exports (€)	Imports (€)	Trade balance (€)
Santo Tirso	758 327 066 €	534 469 048 €	223 858 018 €

Table 6 - International Trade 2023 in Santo Tirso

International Trade (Trade Balance), in euro			
County	2021	2022	2023*
Santo Tirso	167 263 206 €	150 438 720 €	223 858 018 €

Table 7 - International Trade Balance (2021, 2022, 2023) in Santo Tirso

The trade balance corresponds to the difference between exports and imports of goods and services. This balance is positive, when the value of exports is greater than the value of imports (trade surplus),



or negative, when the value of imports exceeds the value of exports (trade deficit). A trade surplus indicates that the Municipality is exporting more than it imports, which contributes to the economic growth of the Municipality. On the other hand, a trade deficit indicates import dependence or a lack of competitiveness in exports, which can have negative implications for the economy. Santo Tirso has a positive balance of trade of 223 858 018 €, making it the 5th best of the Porto Metropolitan Area.

### 1.2.5- Projects of Municipal Interest

Year	PIM's	Investment	PT Creation	Fees (with 50% reduction)	Tax Benefits	Total Benefits Awarded
2015	2	18 200 000 €	210	*	867 500 €	867 500 €
2016	4	11 671 387 €	92	*	395 520,95 €	395 520,95 €
2017	8	15 318 471 €	134	8 818,42 €	854 535,11 €	863 353,53 €
2018	10	38 620 668,98 €	119	106 467,27 €	459 443,35 €	565 910,62 €
2019	23	24 485 979,51 €	227	355 034,98 €	579 238,27 €	934 273,25 €
2020	21	36 043 942,62 €	249	392 859,50 €	125 374,90 €	518 234,40 €
2021	16	262 096 800 €	655	217 943,84 €	851 510,87 €	1 069 454,71 €
2022	17	124 135 000 €	571	732 373,63 €	2 264 030,65 €	2 996 404,28 €
2023	18	18 372 461,74 €	4	664 882,20 €	- €	664 882,20 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>548 944 710,85 €</b>	<b>2261</b>	<b>2 478 379,82 €</b>	<b>6 397 154,10 €</b>	<b>8 875 533,92 €</b>

Table 8 - Projects of Municipal Interest (Santo Tirso)

In total, until December 2023, 119 Projects of Municipal Interest (PIM) have already been deliberated, which represents a total private investment value of 548 944 710,85 €. These 119 PIM's will enhance the creation of 2261 new jobs over the implementation period of the investment projects.

In terms of Municipal Fees and Licenses, TMU (Taxa Municipal de Urbanização) and Urban Compensation, a reduction of 50% was awarded, which represents a total value of benefits for companies of 2 478 379,82 €.

In terms of Tax Benefits (IMI (Imposto Municipal sobre Imóveis), IMT (Imposto Municipal sobre Transmissões Onerosas de Imóveis) and Derrama), the benefits attributed were in total 6 397 154,10 €. Moreover, the total Benefits (IMI, IMT and Surcharge, Municipal Fees and Licenses, TMU and Urban Compensation) attributed to companies, from 2015 to 2023, was 8 875 533,92 €.

## 1.3- Relevant strategies and policies

In line with the principles of the New Leipzig Charter, Santo Tirso is shaping its urban development with a focus on sustainability, productivity, and inclusivity. This approach is reflected through its active participation in various European Union projects, each supporting a vision of a greener and more inclusive city. Among these initiatives are the [Green Deal project](#), which promotes circular economy practices, and the [Capacita project](#), aimed at integrating people with disabilities into the labour market. Additionally, the [ATLIC project](#) under the Interreg Atlantic Area program enhances enterprise and innovation among youth in the blue economy, while the [GIATEX project](#) addresses sustainable water management challenges specific to the textile industry.

To guide and support these initiatives, Santo Tirso leverages a structured policy framework spanning national, regional, and local levels:

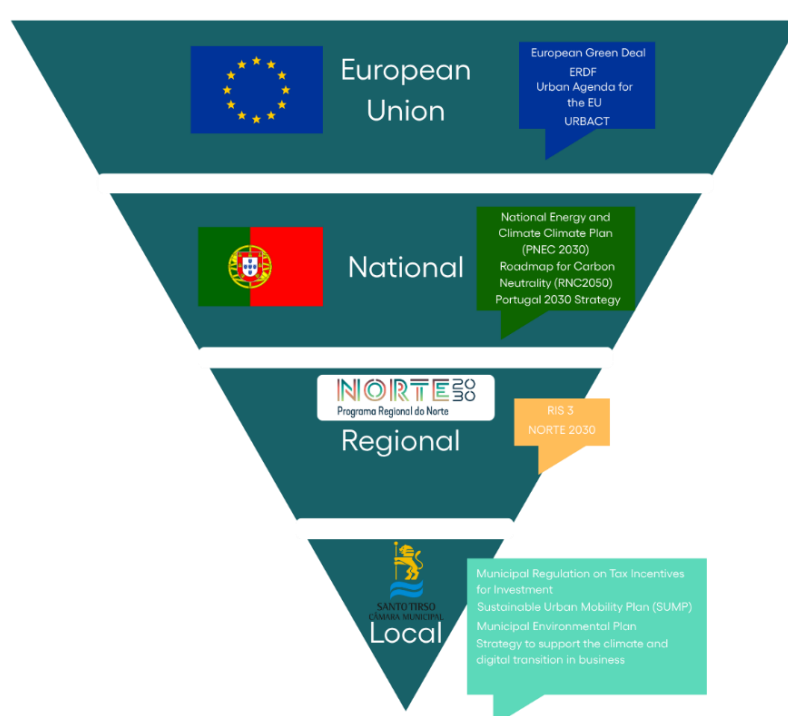


Figure 3 - Eco Core Policy Frameworks

## 1.4- Problem identification by local stakeholders

### 1.4.1- SWOT Analysis

Santo Tirso is facing critical challenges as it tries to adapt to its growing industrial sector. Despite its robust economy, innovative culture, and strategic location, Santo Tirso is struggling to attract enough skilled workers to fill job openings across various industries. This issue is exacerbated by the lack of quality transportation solutions and major reliance on cars which in turn increases traffic congestion. Additionally, there is a pressing need for sustainable water management as the city works to align with environmental goals and make the green transition. Another significant challenge is the need to expand industrial areas, whilst ensuring sustainable and equitable growth. These problems are connected to wider issues identified in the city's SWOT analysis. Addressing these

challenges effectively is essential for Santo Tirso as it continues to implement the EcoCore project and strengthen its competitive position in a sustainable manner. Santo Tirso's SWOT analysis is showcased in the table below:



Figure 4 - SWOT Analysis

#### 1.4.2- URBACT Local Group meetings and Stakeholders

The URBACT Local Group of Santo Tirso brings together 19 diverse organisations, representing a broad spectrum of stakeholders dedicated to sustainable urban development. The group includes public authorities, private enterprises, academic institutions, and civil society actors, ensuring a well-rounded and collaborative approach to local policymaking. From the public sector, several key institutions are involved. The Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) coordinates regional urban policies, while the Autoridade da Mobilidade e dos Transportes (AMT) oversees mobility and transport regulation across Portugal. The Comunidade Intermunicipal do Ave (CIM AVE), responsible for regional cooperation and transport services, also plays a significant role.

Additionally, Transportes Intermodais do Porto (TIP) and Transdev Mobilidade, S.A. contribute their expertise in managing and operating public transport systems. At the municipal level, the city of Santo Tirso participates through several departments: the Municipal Division for Investment (Divisão Municipal INVEST Santo Tirso) promotes economic development and investment; the Division of European Funds (Divisão de Fundos Europeus) manages EU funding programmes; and the

Division of Public Space Management (Divisão de Gestão de Espaço Público) oversees the maintenance and planning of shared urban areas. The private sector is represented by a number of forward-thinking companies. WOWPLUG operates electric vehicle charging infrastructure, while SOPSA Eco Innovation and Etuk Factory contribute expertise in sustainable technologies and electric vehicle production. The construction and logistics sectors are represented by Garcia Garcia, S.A. and Logicor, respectively, while OLV adds further industrial capacity. Aliados Consulting, a strategic consultancy firm, provides technical support in planning and innovation. From the field of higher education and research, the University of Minho (UMinho) lends academic rigour and technical knowledge, strengthening the bridge between research and urban development practice.

Finally, the Associação Comercial e Industrial de Santo Tirso (ACIST) represents the local business community, ensuring that the voices of small and medium-sized enterprises are included in the urban dialogue. The topic of ULG meeting, structure and number of active members are changing.

- [11/10/2023](#)

The first ULG meeting took place during the visit of the Lead Partner (LP) and Lead Expert (LE) on 11th October 2023. A total of 12 stakeholders were in attendance including representatives from various departments within the municipality such as Invest Santo Tirso, the EU funding department, the environmental department as well as the mobility and public space department. External stakeholders included representatives from the University of Minho, a business association, the industrial design and build developer García & García, a business association and a local consulting firm. In addition, a representative from a private company providing e-vehicle charging points joined remotely.

- [13/03/2024](#)

The EcoCore Core Network Meeting No.2 in Santo Tirso focused on advancing the project through strategic discussions on industrial development, innovation, and the green transition. The meeting began with a session on the Integrated Approach, followed by a partner activity to explore practical applications of this approach. Then, updates on partner progress were shared, identifying successes and areas for collaboration, which were followed by a session on Santo Tirso's industrial development providing insights into the region's innovation ecosystem. In addition, a presentation on the green transition in industrial zones addressed sustainable development strategies aligned with EcoCore's objectives. Finally, the meeting concluded with a site visit to local industrial zones, including the Ermida Industrial Zone and WEGeuro, to observe sustainability practices and discuss integration of green transition strategies.

- [22/04/2024](#)

During this ULG meeting, members convened to address Santo Tirso's challenges within the framework of the EcoCore project, focusing on creating practical and hands-on solutions. After reviewing Santo Tirso's ongoing issues, the meeting employed an interactive session through Mentimeter to list the priorities for the city, which facilitated and structured an engaging discussion among the participants.

The ULG members selected **three main priorities or strategic axis** for the city:

1. Reducing dependency on private vehicles.
2. Attracting and retaining young people in the city (both for work and housing).
3. Rehabilitating Business Zones with a focus on sustainability and environmental considerations.

These priorities reflect a strategic focus on sustainable urban development and demographic renewal. Following the selection of priorities, the meeting transitioned into a more interactive phase, where three separate Zoom breakout rooms were set up, each dedicated to one of the chosen priorities. Participants were given the freedom to join any room based on their interests and expertise.

In these sessions, the groups were tasked with addressing three specific questions for their priority:

1. What are the three biggest solutions for Santo Tirso?
2. What should the goals be in the next two years?
3. What pilot actions should be initiated?

Each group spent approximately 30 minutes deliberating these questions. The discussions were aimed at generating innovative ideas, setting achievable goals and defining concrete pilot actions that could be implemented to address the specific challenges associated with each priority. As a wrap up, representatives from each group showcased the results of their discussions to all participants with proposed actions.

- 17/06/2024

In this session a masterclass on sustainable economic growth by José Costero was had for the ULG Group. The masterclass focused on the ecological transition of industrial parks, emphasising the integration of circular economy principles, climate adaptation, decarbonisation, and energy transition. It highlighted the importance of green and smart industrial parks, urban regeneration, and advanced technologies like Industry 4.0 and digitalisation to drive industrial innovation. Investment attraction was discussed to achieve regional development goals, such as supporting SMEs and human capital development. Industrial innovation was presented as a key driver of economic growth, focusing on new technologies, processes, and products to improve efficiency and sustainability. Finally, ten categories for designing actions to improve industrial parks were outlined, including renewable energy, smart manufacturing, green transportation, smart water management, industrial symbiosis, smart waste management, community engagement, regional added value creation, economic value added, and environmental value added.

## 1.5- Focus area

The Urban Local Group (ULG) identified three strategic axes as priorities for Santo Tirso's sustainable transition:

1. **Reducing dependency on private vehicles.**
2. **Attracting and retaining young people in the city (both for work and housing).**

### **3. Rehabilitating business zones with a focus on sustainability and environmental considerations.**

These axes reflect the key challenges highlighted in the diagnostic phase and define the areas where change is most needed. They provide the foundation for the Integrated Action Plan. The next section translates them into a long-term vision, SMART objectives, and concrete high-level actions.



# Section 2 - Overall Logic & integrated Approach



## 2.1- Vision and ideas of final actions

Santo Tirso aspires to emerge as a reference point in sustainable urban and industrial development within the Porto Metropolitan Area. By prioritising environmental sustainability, economic diversification, and innovative mobility solutions, the municipality seeks to create a vibrant and resilient community that attracts young professionals and businesses alike. Building on its strong industrial legacy, Santo Tirso will commit to renewable energy, circular economy practices, and sustainable growth, positioning itself as a hub of innovation. Strengthened social cohesion, opportunities for young people, and a thriving green economy will make Santo Tirso a place where businesses flourish, the environment thrives, and residents are empowered to live, work, and grow sustainably.

This vision is ambitious and requires the commitment of all key stakeholders — entrepreneurs, workers, educators, experts, citizens, political actors, and governance structures — to address pressing challenges such as demographic decline. To shape this collective ambition, the Urban Local Group (ULG) engaged in a structured process of discussion and prioritisation, resulting in three strategic axes:

- 1. Reducing dependency on private vehicles**
- 2. Attracting and retaining young people in the city (both for work and housing)**
- 3. Rehabilitating business zones with a focus on sustainability and environmental considerations**

Within these axes, measures to strengthen skills, attract education providers, and support small and medium-sized enterprises are treated as enabling strands, embedded under the demographic and business-zone priorities.

To improve readability and ensure broader policy alignment, these three axes were subsequently reformulated into more inclusive and action-oriented expressions. The revised axis titles are:

- 1. Enhance collective and alternative mobility**
- 2. Demographic rebalance, renewal and in-flows**
- 3. Rehabilitate and develop green business hubs**

These adjustments retain the original priorities as defined through ULG input, while allowing greater flexibility in implementation, communication, and monitoring.



*Figure 5 - Eco Core Strategic Axes*

From these three priorities, a set of SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) was defined, each with tangible goals and high-level actions. The following table presents how the vision cascades into objectives and actions through a structured, trickle-down approach.

N	Strategic axis	Objective	High-level action	Timeline	Budget	Action owner
1	Enhance collective and alternative mobility	Increase public transport users $\geq 5\%$ by <b>Dec 2027</b> ; reach $\geq 1,000$ avg passengers/month by <b>Dec 2027</b> .	Operate & scale Line 1/271 (12–14 trips/day).	from Jan 2025	€100,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso, MobiAve
		Invest in transport infrastructure	Refurbish 15 bus stops and shelters.	Jan 2026	€20,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
		Develop a “walkable city” concept in strategic locations to foster commerce, cultural	Deliver <b>2 km</b> bike lanes + $\geq 5$ charging stations.	Jun 2027	€30,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
			Provide $\geq 20$ e-bikes; monitor uptake.	Jun 2027	€25,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
			Map transport flows & design alternative plans.	2024–2027	€10,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
		<b>Subtotal</b>			<b>€185,000</b>	
2	Demographic rebalance, renewal and in-flows	Promote the development of 500 new affordable housing units for people under 35	Create a set of tax incentives and city benefits for incoming residents and Santo Tirso’s youth. Map and make available public land or buildings to rent at competitive prices	Dec 2027	€150,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
		Strengthen talent retention and attraction by establishing a skills-to-work pipeline and modern work infrastructure that increases young	Open <b>CESAE Digital</b> ; throughput $\geq 444$ learners/yr from 2027. Refurbish <b>5</b> buildings at <b>Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó</b> (education use)	Sep 2027	€150,000	CESAE, Municipality of Santo Tirso
			Leverage funding opportunities for student mobility such as Erasmus+. Secure Erasmus+	Dec 2027	€100,000	CESAE, INVEST Santo Tirso

		residents' opportunities and anchors them locally by 2028.	funding for at least 10 students from 2026 onwards.			
			Create one municipal co- working space	June 2026	€20,000	INVEST Santo Tirso
		Foster creative economy development through cultural events	Deliver <b>2</b> creative-economy events ( <b>≥ 300</b> attendees each)	Dec 2026	€30,000	INVEST Santo Tirso
			Create a textile and cloth industry itinerary	Dec 2026	€10,000	INVEST Santo Tirso
		Subtotal			€450,000	
3	Rehabilitate and develop green business hubs	Support green transition in business zones through incentives, reporting, and recognition <b>2025–2030</b> .	Tax incentives and grants for retrofitting, based on investments in Santo Tirso.	2026–2027	€100,000	INVEST Santo Tirso
			Energy communities: engagement + roadmap; seed <b>≥ 1</b> community.	2026 - 2027	€20,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
			Annual sustainability reporting competition among 30 local businesses to encourage the publishing of sustainability reports	Jan 2026	€30,000	Municipality of Santo Tirso
		Subtotal			€150,000	
Total					€785,000	

Table 9 - Eco Core SMART Objectives and Actions

# IAP BUDGET OVERVIEW

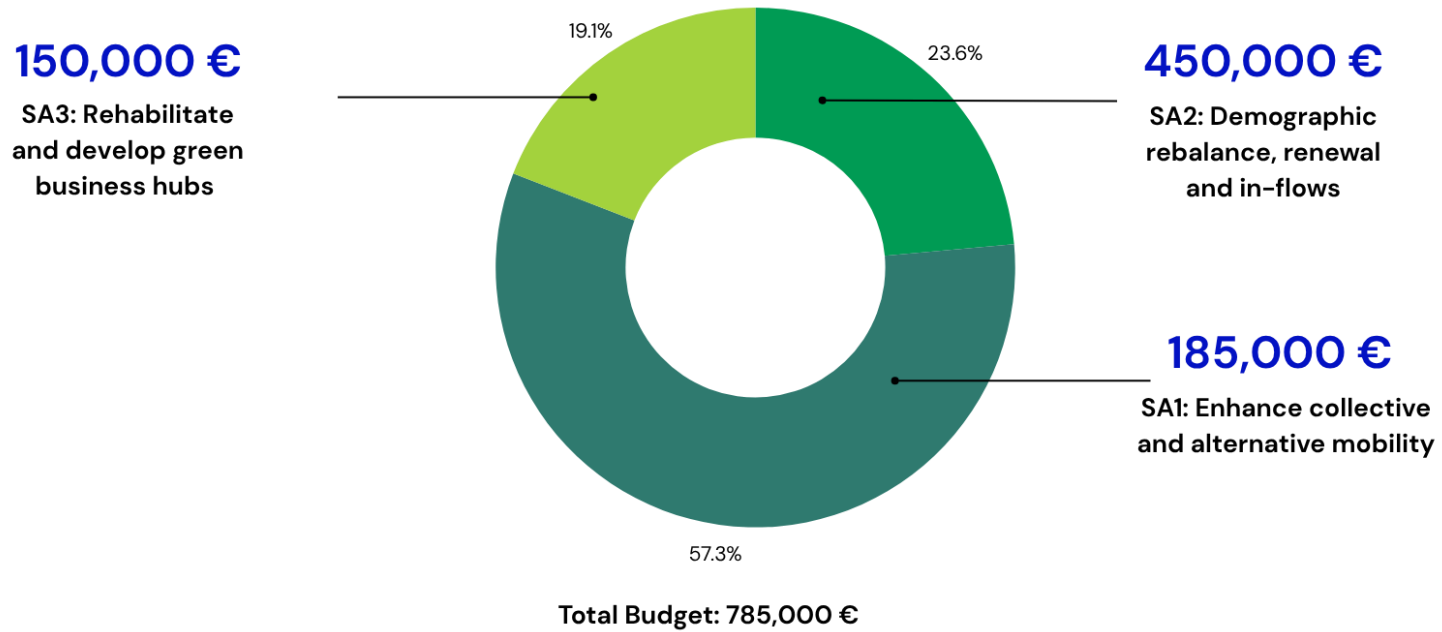


Figure 6 - IAP Budget Overview



# IAP BUDGET PER ACTION

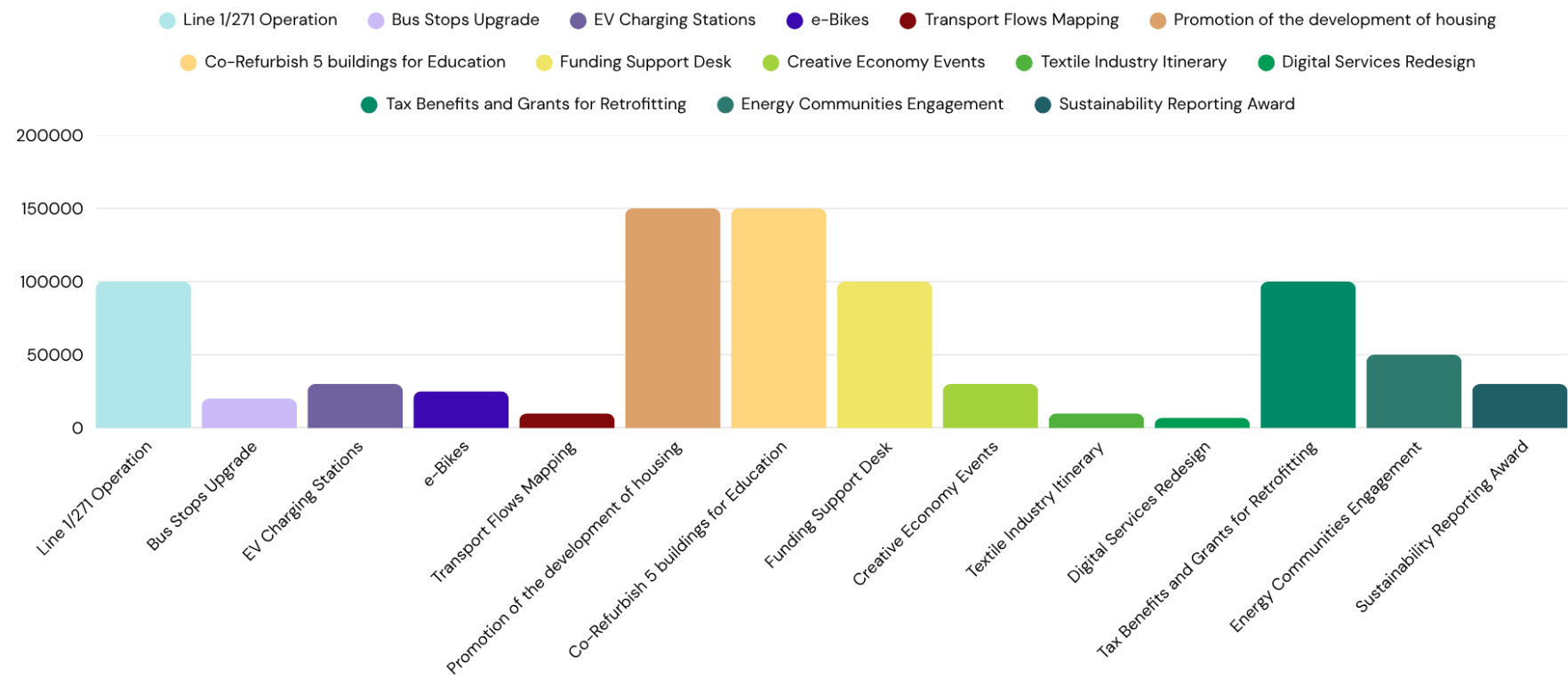


Figure 7 - IAP's Budget Per Action

# Section 3 - Action planning details



## 3.1- Testing Actions

Section 3 presents the four pilot actions designed to test new approaches under the Integrated Action Plan for Santo Tirso. Each pilot is linked to a strategic axis and has been selected to address pressing local challenges while generating evidence for long-term implementation. The pilots are concise in scope, have clear budgets and monitoring indicators, and provide a bridge between analysis, stakeholder engagement, and full-scale delivery.

### 3.1.1 - Pilot I

To support the strategic axis “**Reducing dependency on private vehicles**”, the municipality of Santo Tirso launched a pilot public transport service linking the Ermida Business Zone to the central train and bus stations. This intervention was developed in response to a pre-pilot travel survey conducted among 2,433 workers across 15 companies, with 555 responses. The survey revealed that 88 % of employees travelled alone by car, while only 2 % used public transport. Among those open to alternatives, 51 % preferred an express bus, and 49 % favoured carpooling.

In response, a 6.3-km route was introduced, offering 12 trips in one direction and 14 in the other, operating on weekdays. The service aimed to reduce peak-time traffic and improve access for commuters in the area.

The route, later designated Line 1/271, demonstrated strong initial uptake, with 7,262 passengers between 1 March 2024 and 31 March 2025, and an additional 5,061 passengers recorded between 1 April and 31 August 2025, following route renumbering. These early results confirm the latent demand for sustainable commuting options and demonstrate the potential to shift travel behaviour away from private car use. The service operated at an average cost of approximately €182 per day.

Activity number	Activity Name		
1	Line 1/271 — Ermida Business Zone to Train and Bus Stations		
Link to vision		Reduce traffic and emissions; improve access between industrial zones and hubs.	
Area of intervention		Ermida Industrial Zone, bus and train stations.	
Task description			
Task 1 — Operate weekday service, 12–14 trips/day, 6.3 km route			
Task 2 — Track demand and adjust timetable; report monthly.			
Task 3 — Upgrade infrastructure of bus stops.			
Leader		Partner	Role
Municipality of Santo Tirso			Coordination, budget, oversight
		Invest Santo Tirso	Business liaison
		MobiAve	Route operation, data
Contact	varaujo@cm-stirso.pt		
Implementation timeframe			

Start date: January 2025				End date: June 2027				
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Task	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2,3	1,2,3
Cost				Funding				
Category		Amount	Total	Secured			Needed	
Public transport service expansion		€100,000		€100,000			€0	
15 bus stops upgrades		€20,000		€0			€20,000	
Monitoring & evaluation		€10,000		€5,000			€5,000	
			€130,000	€105,000			€30,000	
				Funding Sources				
				Municipality of Santo Tirso			€60,000	
				Fundo Ambiental (National Programme)			€40,000	
				European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)			€30,000	
Monitoring								
Output indicator		Monitoring mechanism			Baseline		Target	
Public transportation user		Ticketing system reports; monthly pass registrations			0 users (new route)		≥ 2,000 tickets / 200 subscriptions	
Route trips per day		Operator logs and schedule adherence data			0 (before pilot)		12–14 route trips/day	
Infrastructure investment		Bus stops renovations by municipality			0 bus stops		≥ 15 bus stops	
Businesses engaged		Signed partnership or registration in programme database			No active participants		≥ 15 businesses involved	
Result indicator		Monitoring mechanism			Baseline		Target	
Traffic reduction		Traffic sensors, local counts			No baseline reduction		≥ 15% reduction during peak hours	
Reduction CO2 emissions		Emissions calculator (based on modal shift)			Not measured		≥ 10 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> reduced	
Public transport demand		Ticketing records; transport usage relative to schedule			0 users		≥ 75% occupancy during peak trips	
Risk assessment								
Risks			Odds	Impact	Mitigation measures			
Slow implementation of infrastructure investment			Medium	High	Ensure the SUMP is within the town hall political agenda			

Insufficient weekend and off-peak transport services	Medium	Medium	Extend operating hours and provide weekend transport services
Limited reach of public transport routes	Medium	High	Map route diversification possibilities
Ineffective communication strategy	High	High	Ensure new routes, schedules and frequency is visible in public spaces and announcements are made.
Lack of participatory methodologies	Low	High	Survey users and service providers regarding public transportation, mobility infrastructure and incentives.
Scaling up public transport routes without users	Medium	High	Launch interconnected pilot routes to feed events within the city (sports, cultural, political), to targeted locations

Table 10 - Pilot I

### 3.1.2 - Pilot II

To advance the strategic axis “**Attracting and retaining young people in the city**”, the municipality conducted an in-depth assessment of co-working needs to support remote workers, entrepreneurs, and start-ups. This action builds on public interest expressed during the **2020 and 2024 Young Participatory Budget initiatives**, both of which proposed the creation of a shared workspace at the Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó.

The assessment confirmed strong local demand. Respondents primarily worked in design (60%), technology (20%), and marketing (20%). Most users discovered co-working spaces through friends’ recommendations, followed by events and networking. Usage patterns showed that 60% used spaces daily, while 40% visited several times per week. Regarding tenure, 40% used co-working spaces for more than a year, another 40% between four and six months, and 20% between one and three months.

The most valued factors were the quality of the work environment (40%), followed by infrastructure and opportunities for community-building. Notably, 100% of respondents said they would recommend their workspace to others. In terms of location and design, preferences included a central site with good access to public space, with room to grow, as well as features such as 24-hour access, a staffed reception, natural ventilation and lighting, and clear separation between business and educational activities.

These findings underpin the decision to open a municipal co-working space in 2026 within an existing building at the Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó, offering modern, flexible, and affordable facilities tailored to young professionals and entrepreneurs.

Activity number	Activity Name
2	Co-working spaces
<b>Link to vision</b>	Attract and retain young professionals and entrepreneurs in Santo Tirso

Area of intervention		Santo Tirso						
Task description								
Task 1 – Facility mapping & assessment								
Task 2 - Equipment & upgrades for opening (fit-out of existing building at Fábrica de Santo Thyrso)								
Task 3 - Promotion & outreach (pre-opening)								
Task 4 - Opening & initial operations								
Task 5 - User survey & profiling (post-opening check-ins)								
Leader			Partner			Role		
Municipality of Santo Tirso						Budget approval		
			Invest Santo Tirso			Project management, coordination		
Contact	varaujo@cm-stirso.pt							
Implementation timeframe								
Start date: June 2026				End date: December 2027				
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Task	1,2	1,2	3	3	3	4	4	4
Cost				Funding				
Category		Amount	Total	Secured			Needed	
Facility mapping & assessment		€1,000		€1,000			€0	
User survey & profiling		€2,000		€2,000			€0	
Equipment & upgrades (opening fit-out)		€15,000		€5,000			€10,000	
Promotion & outreach		€2,000		€0			€2000	
			€20,000	€8,000			€12,000	
				Funding Sources				
				Municipal Budget			€20,000	
Monitoring								
Output indicator		Monitoring mechanism			Baseline (date:)		Target (date:)	
Co-working spaces		Facility audit; municipal records			0 identified space		1 identified space	
Users		User surveys; sign-in systems			None		At least 20 active users	
Users in co-working space		Aggregated usage logs			0		Average: 12 per space	



Industry ID & Job position	User profiling via structured questionnaire	Not previously collected	All users profiled
Beneficiaries use	Survey data	Not available	100% of respondents recorded
Frequency of use	Frequency of use in user survey	Not tracked	Average 3 times per week
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Monitoring mechanism</b>	<b>Baseline (date:)</b>	<b>Target (date:)</b>
Increase of users	Comparison of user surveys	0% growth recorded	≥ 50% user base increase
User satisfaction	Post-use feedback survey	Not yet measured	≥ 80% report high satisfaction
New businesses linked	Follow-up interviews;	Not tracked	2 new links
<b>Risk assessment</b>			
<b>Risks</b>	<b>Odds</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>
Small sample size	High	High	Launch a communication strategy showcasing the service and its benefits.
Insufficient demand for co-working spaces	Medium	High	Conduct market research to identify potential users and tailor the co-working space offerings to meet their needs
Insufficient infrastructures	Medium	Medium	Survey potential infrastructure development possibilities close to users
Ineffective communication strategy	Medium	High	Develop a communication strategy involving current users' inputs

Table 11 - Pilot II

### 3.1.3 -Pilot III

In relation to the strategic axis “**Rehabilitating business zones with a focus on sustainability and environmental considerations**”, the municipality launched a pilot to evaluate and support companies’ sustainability reporting in line with new EU legislation. The pilot targets 30 relevant businesses in Santo Tirso, providing a pathway to align with European standards while strengthening local transparency and environmental performance. A dedicated survey has been designed and distributed to the 30 target companies. It assesses current reporting practices, readiness for evaluation, and interest in free maturity assessments. The questionnaire also explores how sustainability is integrated into operations and identifies areas needing improvement. Early feedback shows firms are open to guidance and willing to participate in tailored support. The approach is inspired by Guimarães, which has pioneered guidance through workshops, seminars, and advisory services to raise the quality of company reporting. It also connects with ongoing awareness and circular economy programmes such as [PEGADAS](#) and [RRRCICLO](#), which emphasise communication, community engagement, and recognition for firms that excel in sustainability practice. This assessment is the first step towards a structured reporting programme

that will benchmark companies, highlight gaps, and reward leadership in sustainable business practice.

Activity number	Activity Name							
3	Evaluation of companies' sustainability reporting performance							
Link to vision		Incentivise Santo Tirso's businesses green transition						
Area of intervention		Santo Tirso						
Task description								
Task 1 – Map top <b>30</b> businesses for evaluation.								
Task 2 - Conduct evaluations with external experts.								
Task 3 - Provide feedback reports and support sessions.								
Task 4 - Launch annual reporting competition among <b>30</b> businesses.								
Leader			Partner			Role		
Municipality of Santo Tirso						Coordination		
			Invest Santo Tirso			Communication, engagement and dissemination		
			Environmental Unit at Municipality of Santo Tirso			Technical input, compliance guidance		
			Business Networks			Outreach and participation		
Contact	varaujo@cm-stirso.pt							
Implementation timeframe								
Start date: September 2025				End date: December 2027				
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Task	1	1,4	1,2	2,3	1,4	1,2	2,3	4
Cost				Funding				
Category		Amount	Total	Secured			Needed	
Mapping top 30 businesses		€3,000		€3,000			€0	
Survey design & distribution		€5,000		€5,000			€0	
Sustainability evaluation		€12,000		€0			€12,000	
Reporting and feedback support		€5,000		€0			€5,000	
Annual Event		€5,000		€0			€5,000	
			€30,000	€15,000			€15,000	
				Funding Sources				
				Municipal Funds			€30,000	

Monitoring			
Output indicator	Monitoring mechanism	Baseline (date:)	Target (date:)
Nº of communication and engagement activities conducted	Internal activity log; event reports  <i>Table 12 - Pilot III</i>	0	At least 6 activities
Nº of surveys distributed to businesses	Distribution records via email/newsletter tracking	0	At least 60 surveys sent
Nº of businesses participating in the sustainability evaluation.	Survey response database and engagement logs	0	Minimum 30 businesses
Result indicator	Monitoring mechanism	Baseline (date:)	Target (date:)
Nº of feedback reports provided.	Number of personalised business summaries issued	0	At least 30 reports issued
Increase in the number of businesses producing sustainability reports.	Follow-up survey or public data tracking	Estimated 5	≥ 30 businesses adopt reporting
Improvement in the sustainability maturity of participating businesses.	Comparative analysis using a sustainability scoring framework	Initial baseline survey score	20% average improvement
Positive feedback and satisfaction from participating businesses	Post-evaluation feedback survey	No initial data	≥ 80% rate satisfaction as high
Risk assessment			
Risks	Odds	Impact	Mitigation measures
Low response rate to the survey	Medium	High	Enhance outreach efforts through targeted communication and incentives to encourage participation
Limited engagement from businesses due to perceived low value proposition	Medium	Medium	Provide clear benefits and support to businesses, emphasising the value of the sustainability evaluation and feedback

### 3.1.4 -Pilot IV

In relation to the strategic axis “**Rehabilitating business zones with a focus on sustainability and environmental considerations**”, Santo Tirso is assessing the potential to establish local energy communities. These communities allow businesses and citizens to share renewable energy, reduce exposure to energy price volatility, and reinvest benefits locally. To launch the process, an informative session will bring together top local firms and key public institutions — such as sports complexes, the agricultural school, and the *Cooperativa de Apoio à Integração do Deficiente (CAID)* — alongside expert speakers from the energy sector. The session will present the benefits of energy communities and test their viability as a pathway for increasing renewable energy generation, cutting costs, and strengthening local development in Santo Tirso.

According to the municipal assessment, industry in Santo Tirso consumes approximately 700 MWh per day, representing around €105,000 in daily costs — equivalent to 60% of the municipality’s total energy consumption (DGEG, 2020). Installed power capacity rose from 30,530 kW in 2023 (including 5,750 kW photovoltaic) to a projected 41,010 kW in 2024, with 9,250 kW of PV. Several leading firms — including Casfil, Finieco, WEG, LIDL, and Aldi — already operate significant PV systems. Scenario modelling shows that at current PV levels, an energy community could save around €200 per day, compared with standalone generation. With expanded capacity, this could increase to €4,500 per day, comprising €3,100 in direct savings and €1,400 in indirect benefits.

These findings suggest strong potential for local energy communities to lower operational costs, enhance energy resilience, and contribute to sustainable economic development in Santo Tirso.

Activity number	Activity Name	
4	Assessment of the establishment of energy communities	
Link to vision	Incentivise Santo Tirso’s businesses green transition through renewable energies	
Area of intervention	Santo Tirso	
Task description		
Task 1 – Mapping of the top businesses and key public sector infrastructures in the city		
Task 2 – Informative session on integrated renewable energy solutions such as energy communities		
Task 3 - Facilitate expert-led workshops and draft a roadmap.		
Task 4 - Support the initiation of at least one community.		
Leader	Partner	Role
Municipality of Santo Tirso		Lead coordination, reporting, oversight
	Green Volt	Technical knowledge, session delivery
	Industry Representatives	Feedback, roadmap testing

Contact	varaujo@cm-stirso.pt							
Implementation timeframe								
Start date: September 2025				End date: December 2027				
Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Task	1	1	2	1	2	3,4	4	4
Cost				Funding				
Category		Amount	Total	Secured			Needed	
Event & logistics		€8,000		€1,000			€7,000	
Stakeholder mapping		€2,000		€2,000			€0	
Communication materials		€3,000		€0			€3,000	
Expert facilitation & roadmap development		€7,000		€0			€7,000	
			€20,000	€3,000			€17,000	
				Funding Sources				
				Municipality of Santo Tirso			€20,000	
Monitoring								
Output indicator		Monitoring mechanism			Baseline		Target	
Community involvement		Sign-in sheets at events; participant registration			0 participants engaged		At least 20 participants	
Private sector involvement		Number of businesses present in sessions			No structured data		Minimum 15 private businesses	
Type of industry		Classification of participants by sector			Not yet mapped		At least 3 distinct sectors (e.g. manufacturing, logistics, retail)	
Result indicator		Monitoring mechanism			Baseline		Target	
Increase in awareness and understanding of renewable energy communities		Pre/post session surveys measuring understanding			< 25% have prior knowledge		> 75% report increased understanding	
Adoption of renewable energy practices by local businesses and public institutions		Follow-up interviews/surveys with participants			Low adoption (<10%)		≥ 5 businesses adopt new measures	

Formation of new energy communities within Santo Tirso	Project tracking and formal registration	0 existing communities	At least 1 Energy community initiated
Reduction in energy costs and carbon footprints among participating entities	Case studies and voluntary business reports	No baseline data	Reduction reported by 2–3 participants
Risk assessment			
Risks	Odds	Impact	Mitigation measures
Limited engagement	Medium	High	Launch a communication strategy showcasing the session or its outputs.
Insufficient infrastructure	Medium	Medium	Survey infrastructure development needs
Insufficient expertise and resources within institutions	Medium	High	Enhance collaboration with experienced partners and stakeholders in the renewable energy sector

Table 13 - Pilot IV



# Section 4 – Implementation Framework



## 4.1 Governance and Oversight Structure

The governance of the Integrated Action Plan will be led by the Municipality of Santo Tirso, supported by the Urban Local Group (ULG) as the main participatory forum. During implementation, the ULG will be renewed and expanded to ensure broad and representative participation. This renewal will prioritise the inclusion of young and social entrepreneurs, lead companies engaged in sustainability initiatives, and relevant institutional partners.

The expanded ULG will bring together:

- Mobility stakeholders such as MobiAve, UNIR, and CP to reflect the importance of regional flows.
- Education and skills actors, including CESAE Digital and the Agricultural Professional School Conde de São Bento.
- Business and enterprise representatives, such as Espaço Empresa and leading sustainability-oriented firms.
- Community and territorial actors, with parish councils ensuring that actions and opportunities reach across the municipality.

The ULG will not function solely as an advisory body. Dedicated working groups will be created around each strategic axis, allowing members to participate directly in the planning and operation of pilots. This enables stakeholders with relevant expertise — for example, mobility operators in Pilot I or entrepreneurs in Pilot II — to be involved in implementation as well as visioning. Young entrepreneurs will be considered a permanent stakeholder group in governance, reflecting their central role in shaping the future of the municipality.

The ULG will meet twice a year, in January and June. Agendas will be drafted one month in advance and circulated to members, supported by surveys, reports and activities that provide data and discussion points for the meetings. Outside of these sessions, thematic working groups will continue their work on specific topics relevant to their expertise and interest.

The results of each ULG meeting will be formally communicated to the Municipal Assembly as well as to the parish councils of Santo Tirso, creating a strong link between participatory debate, municipal decision-making, and territorial integration. Day-to-day management will remain with the municipality, ensuring administrative coherence, while the ULG provides participatory guidance and operational input. At the highest level, the Municipal Assembly will provide political endorsement and anchor the plan within the city's governance framework.

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

## ECOCORE IAP SANTO TIRSO

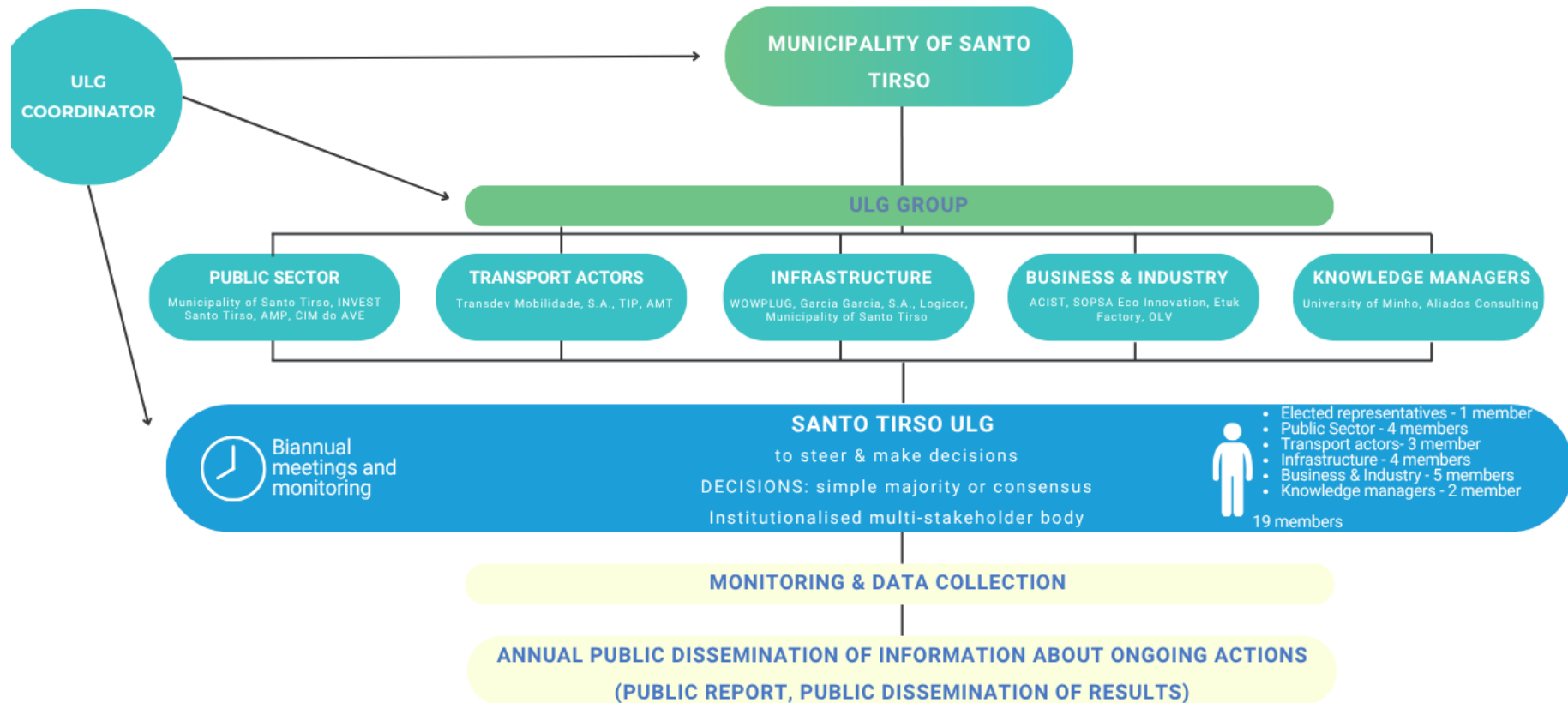


Figure 8 - Eco Core's Governance Structure

## 4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation



Figure 9 - Eco Core Expected Impact

Monitoring and evaluation of the Integrated Action Plan will be led by the **Municipality of Santo Tirso**, with data collection shared among key implementing partners. A distributed model ensures that each strategic axis is monitored by actors directly involved in delivery:

- **MobiAve** will report on ridership and mobility flows
- **CESAE Digital** will monitor training and learner participation
- **Espaço Empresa** (within Invest Santo Tirso) will gather data on business uptake
- **Invest Santo Tirso** will oversee indicators related to remote workers, sustainability reporting, and activities at Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó

This coordinated approach ensures robust data flows, direct accountability, and continuous learning. A **consolidated monitoring report** will be produced **annually** by **Invest Santo Tirso**, drawing on contributions from all relevant actors. The report will be shared and discussed at **Urban Local**

**Group (ULG) meetings**, held **twice a year in January and June**, and results will be communicated to the **Municipal Assembly and parish councils** to support integrated local governance.

The monitoring framework is based on the **SMART objectives and pilot indicators** set out in Sections 2 and 3 — such as achieving **1,000 passengers per month** on Line 1/271, providing **20 shared e-bikes**, and ensuring **30 businesses adopt regular sustainability reporting**. The ULG may also propose **new or revised indicators** where emerging challenges are identified, supported by thematic working groups.

To strengthen transparency and rigour, the municipality will engage an **external academic partner** (e.g. a university) to conduct **mid-term and final reviews** of the monitoring system. This independent validation will ensure credibility and alignment with wider European standards for sustainable urban development.

The monitoring process will follow a clear annual cycle. Data collection will be coordinated by the municipality, with each partner contributing according to their area of responsibility. This information will be synthesised into briefing notes approximately one month before each ULG meeting, to support informed discussion and timely reflection. ULG meetings — held biannually in January and June — will provide a platform to assess progress, propose new indicators where appropriate, and adjust implementation where needed. Each year, Invest Santo Tirso will consolidate all data and analysis into a formal monitoring report, which will be shared not only with the ULG but also communicated to the Municipal Assembly and parish councils to foster cross-sectoral alignment. Mid-term and final evaluations will be independently reviewed by an academic institution to secure transparency, external oversight, and comparability with similar initiatives across Europe.

Strategic Axis	Indicator	Target (by 2027)
Enhance collective and alternative mobility	Average monthly public transport users on Line 1/271	≥ 1,000 passengers/month
	Number of e-bikes made available	≥ 20 e-bikes
	Length of new bike lanes	2 km
	Number of EV charging stations installed	≥ 5 stations
	Number of refurbished bus stops	≥ 15
	Reduction in peak-hour traffic (pilot area)	≥ 15% reduction
Demographic rebalance, renewal and in-flows	Number of active users in municipal co-working space	≥ 20 users
	Annual learners trained at CESAE Digital	≥ 444 learners/year from 2027
	Affordable housing units enabled for people under 35	500 units

	Cultural and creative events delivered	2 events with $\geq 300$ attendees each
	Erasmus+ student participation	$\geq 10$ students
<b>Rehabilitate and develop green business hubs</b>	Businesses adopting sustainability reporting practices	$\geq 30$ businesses
	Establishment of local energy communities	$\geq 1$ community initiated
	Businesses participating in energy info sessions	$\geq 15$ companies
	Economic sectors involved in energy roadmap development	$\geq 3$ sectors
	Reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from business engagement	$\geq 10$ tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> reduced

Table 14 - Summary of IAP Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators

## 4.3 Funding Strategy

The funding of the Integrated Action Plan is firmly anchored in the four pilot actions, each with a defined budget and secured sources of financing. The Municipality of Santo Tirso is the primary funder across all pilots, demonstrating strong local commitment and ensuring feasibility. For Pilot I, additional co-funding has been secured from national and European programmes, underlining both the credibility of the initiative and the municipality's capacity to leverage external resources.

Pilot I, aligned with the axis of reducing dependency on private vehicles, has a budget of €90,000, covered by €40,000 from the Municipality, €20,000 from the national Fundo Ambiental programme, and €30,000 from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This mix of local, national, and European funding strengthens the project's financial sustainability and reflects its broader relevance. The remaining pilots are fully municipally funded. Pilot II, focused on attracting and retaining young people, has a budget of €20,000 dedicated to the mapping, surveying, fit-out, and promotion of a co-working space at Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó. Pilot III, addressing sustainability reporting within business zones, is allocated €30,000 to carry out surveys, evaluations, feedback reports, and to launch a reporting competition that supports company alignment with EU sustainability standards. Finally, Pilot IV, which promotes the establishment of local energy communities, is funded with €20,000 to support stakeholder engagement, expert facilitation, and the preparation of a roadmap for implementation.

## PILOT'S FUNDING SOURCES

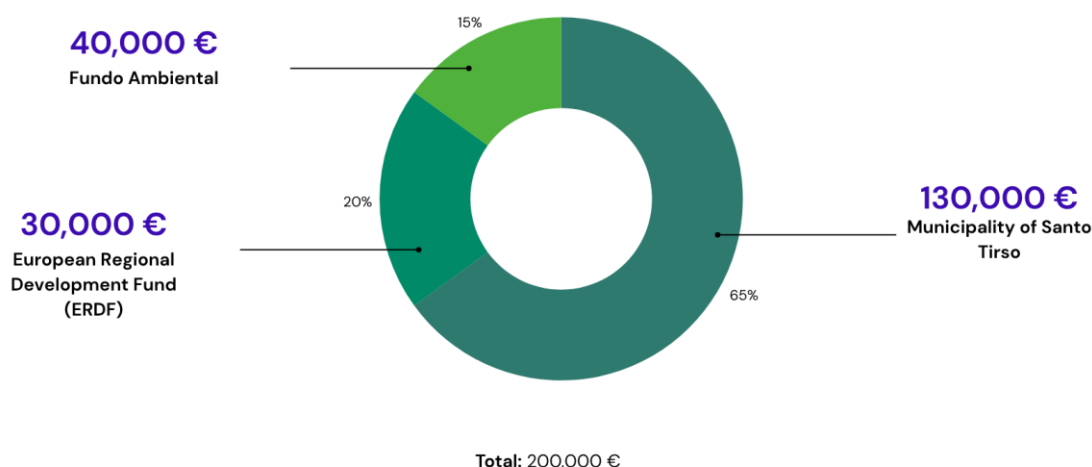


Figure 10 - Pilot's Funding Sources

While three pilots are mostly fully municipally funded at present, the municipality will actively seek additional resources from national and European programmes, as well as private and institutional partners, to expand and scale initiatives. This approach both reduces the financial risk borne by the municipality and increases the long-term sustainability and impact of the actions.

Pilot	Funding Source	Estimated Contribution	Purpose
I - Mobility	Municipality of Santo Tirso	€60,000	Operation of Line 1/271, cycle lanes, shared e-bikes
	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	€30,000	
	Fundo Ambiental	€40,000	
II – Co – Working	Municipality of Santo Tirso	€20,000	Mapping, survey, fit-out, promotion of co-working space
III – Sustainability reporting	Municipality of Santo Tirso	€30,000	Business survey, evaluations, feedback, reporting competition



<b>IV – Energy communities</b>	Municipality of Santo Tirso	€20,000	Stakeholder engagement, expert facilitation, roadmap
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Table 15- Funding Sources per Pilot

## 4.4 Estimated Cost Overview

The total cost of the Integrated Action Plan is determined by the four pilot actions, each with a defined budget and detailed allocation. Together, these pilots represent an estimated €200,000 in direct investment, with secured contributions from the Municipality of Santo Tirso, the Fundo Ambiental, and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

## PILOT'S BUDGET

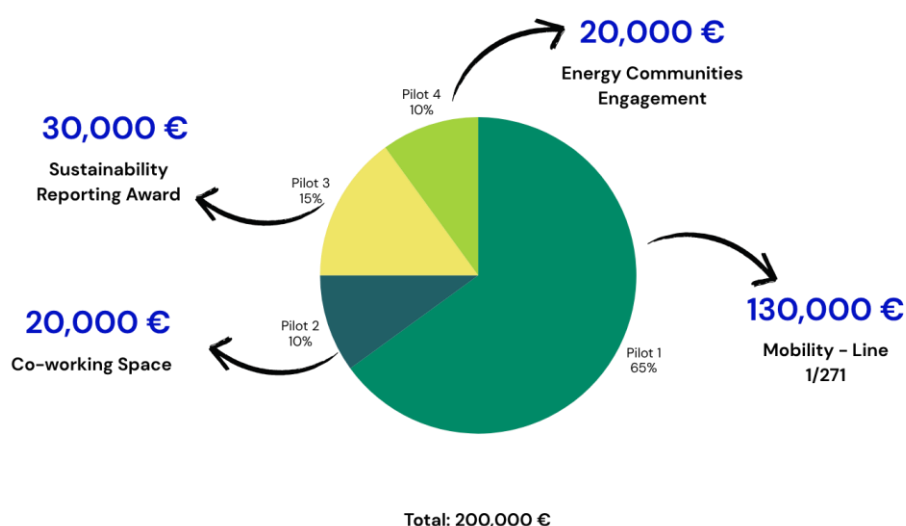


Figure 11 - Pilot's Budget

Pilot I, focused on reducing dependency on private vehicles, represents the largest financial commitment with €130,000 dedicated to public transport operations, infrastructure, and promotion. Continuation beyond the pilot is expected to require approximately €65,000 per year, primarily borne by the Municipality, with opportunities for external reinforcement through national or European programmes.

Pilot II, aimed at attracting and retaining young people, is allocated €20,000 for the establishment and promotion of a co-working space at Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó. Pilot III, dedicated to sustainability reporting in business zones, carries a budget of €30,000 for surveys, evaluations, and a reporting competition. Pilot IV, promoting the establishment of local energy communities, has a budget of €20,000 to support stakeholder engagement, expert facilitation, and roadmap development.

Pilot	Strategic Axis	Cost Category	Estimated Cost (€)
I – Mobility	I	Public transport service expansion	€100,000
		Infrastructure Upgrade (Bus Stops)	€20,000
		Monitoring & evaluation	€10,000
Subtotal			€130,000
II – Co-working	II	Equipment & upgrades (opening fit-out)	€15,000
		User survey & profiling	€2,000
		Promotion & outreach	€2,000
		Facility mapping & assessment	€1,000
Subtotal			€20,000
III – Sustainability reporting	III	Sustainability evaluation	€12,000
		Survey design & distribution	€5,000
		Reporting and feedback support	€5,000
		Annual event	€5,000
		Mapping top 30 businesses	€3,000
Subtotal			€30,000
IV – Energy communities	III	Event & logistics	€8,000
		Expert facilitation & roadmap development	€7,000
		Communication materials	€3,000
		Stakeholder mapping	€2,000
Subtotal			€20,000
Total			€200,000

Table 16 - Summary of Pilot's Budget Division

The overview shows that the bulk of resources are concentrated in Pilot I (Mobility), which requires substantial investment in infrastructure and service provision. This is complemented by leaner but strategically significant investments in Pilot II (Co-working), Pilot III (Sustainability reporting), and Pilot IV (Energy communities), where costs are mainly associated with surveys, capacity-building,

communication, and stakeholder engagement. This balance ensures that while Santo Tirso invests heavily in tangible infrastructure, it also supports the social, economic, and institutional dimensions of its long-term vision.

## 4.5 Risk Management

The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan involves financial, operational, stakeholder, political, and long-term risks. Identifying these risks early allows the municipality and its partners to establish mitigation strategies that minimise disruption and increase the resilience of the actions. Financial risks relate to the reliance on municipal funding and the possibility of cost overruns, particularly in Pilot I. Operational risks are tied to the uptake and delivery of individual pilots: mobility ridership, co-working occupancy, business engagement with sustainability reporting, and the technical complexity of establishing energy communities. Stakeholder risks concern the ability to sustain strong engagement from citizens, businesses, and youth, while political and regulatory risks reflect the influence of municipal election cycles and evolving EU/national legislation. Finally, long-term risks include the danger that pilots remain isolated experiments rather than being embedded into municipal planning. The following table summarises the key risks, their probability and impact, and the mitigation strategies designed to address them.

Risk	Pilot	Type	Description	Probability	Impact	Mitigation	Responsible party
Over-reliance on municipal funding	All	Financial	With three pilots fully municipally funded, strain on local budget may occur	Medium	High	Seek additional funding from Fundo Ambiental, Portugal 2030, ERDF, LIFE; explore private co-financing	Municipality of Santo Tirso (Finance Dept.), INVEST Santo Tirso
Cost overruns	I	Financial	Infrastructure and service expansion may exceed planned budget	Medium	Medium	Conservative budgeting; phased implementation with regular reviews	Municipality of Santo Tirso (Finance Dept.), INVEST Santo Tirso
Low ridership uptake	I	Operational	Passenger numbers may fall short of target (1,000/month)	Medium	High	Adjust timetables, strengthen promotion, integrate with MobiAve, UNIR, CP	Santo Tirso's Mobility Dept., ULG coordination

Low occupancy of co-working space	II	Operational	Co-working may not attract enough young professionals	Medium	Medium	Targeted outreach, ULG youth entrepreneur involvement, flexible membership offers	INVEST Santo Tirso
Limited business engagement	III	Operational	SMEs may not prioritise sustainability reporting	Medium	High	Advisory support via Invest Santo Tirso/Espaço Empresa; recognition through annual event	INVEST Santo Tirso, ACIST
Regulatory complexity	IV	Operational / Regulatory	Creation of energy communities may face legal/administrative barriers	High	High	Expert facilitation, early engagement with regulators, staged feasibility studies	Municipality of Santo Tirso Legal Unit, INVEST Santo Tirso
Limited stakeholder engagement	All	Stakeholder	Citizens, businesses, or institutions may not fully participate	Medium	Medium	Renewed ULG, working groups, biannual meetings, surveys and reporting	ULG Group, Municipality Communication Office, INVEST Santo Tirso
Youth disengagement	II	Stakeholder	Young professionals may not use new opportunities	Medium	High	Permanent youth entrepreneur representation in ULG governance	CESAE, INVEST Santo Tirso, ULG Group
Political change	All	Political	Municipal elections could alter commitment to IAP objectives	Medium	High	Embed IAP in Municipal Assembly and parish discussions for cross-party backing	Mayor's Office, ULG

Policy misalignment	III & IV	Regulatory	EU/national rules may evolve faster than local capacity	Medium	Medium	Academic partner involvement to track compliance and adapt	Mayor's Office, Regional Bodies
Pilots remain one-off	All	Long-term	Pilots risk ending after initial phase without integration	Medium	High	Embed pilots into municipal planning cycles; secure long-term co-funding	INVEST Santo Tirso, Mayor's Office
Weak monitoring	All	Long-term	Incomplete or inconsistent monitoring reduces credibility	Low	Medium	Annual report by Invest Santo Tirso; university validation at mid-term and final	INVEST Santo Tirso

Table 17 - IAP's Risk Evaluation & Management

## 4.6 Long-Term Timeline

The Integrated Action Plan establishes a clear delivery sequence for its four pilots, with implementation concentrated in the period **2025–2027**. This ensures that early results can be measured, lessons learned, and successful actions scaled in the following years. The timeline highlights the delivery window for each pilot and outlines the opportunities for scaling from 2027 onwards.

# Eco Core Timeline

Strategic Axes		2023	2024	2025				2026				2027			
	Tasks	Kick-off		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
		1 Jun - 31 Dec	1 Jan - 31 Dec	1 Jan - 31 Mar	1 Apr - 30 June	1 Jul - 30 Sep	1 Oct - 31 Dec	1 Jan - 31 Mar	1 Apr - 30 June	1 Jul - 30 Sep	1 Oct - 31 Dec	1 Jan - 31 Mar	1 Apr - 30 June	1 Jul - 30 Sep	1 Oct - 31 Dec
Enhance collective and alternative mobility	Pilot 1: Operate & scale Line 1/271														
	Pilot 1: Upgrade 15 Bus stops														
	Deliver 2 km bike lanes & 5 EV charging stations.														
	Provide ≥ 20 e-bikes														
	Map transport flows														
Demographic rebalance, renewal and in-flows	Promote the development of 500 new affordable through Tax Incentives														
	Open CESAE Digital, Refurbish 5 buildings for educational use														
	Leverage funding opportunities for student mobility such as Erasmus+														
	Pilot 2: Create a Municipal Co-working Space														
Rehabilitate and develop green business hubs	Tax incentives and grants for retrofitting														
	Pilot 3: Sustainability Reporting Award														
	Pilot 4: Energy communities: engagement														

Figure 12 - Eco Core Gantt Chart (Timeline)



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