

INTRODUCTION

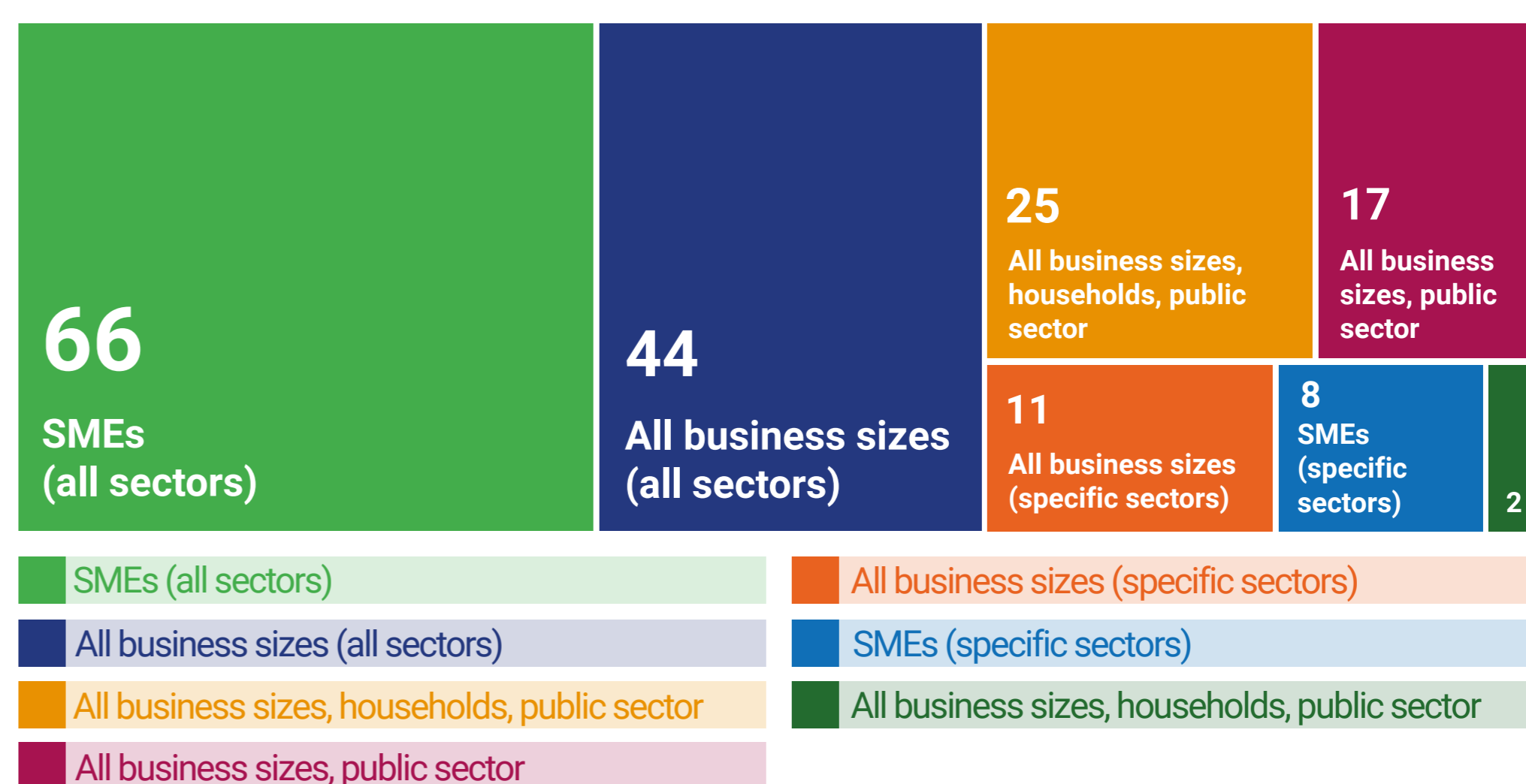
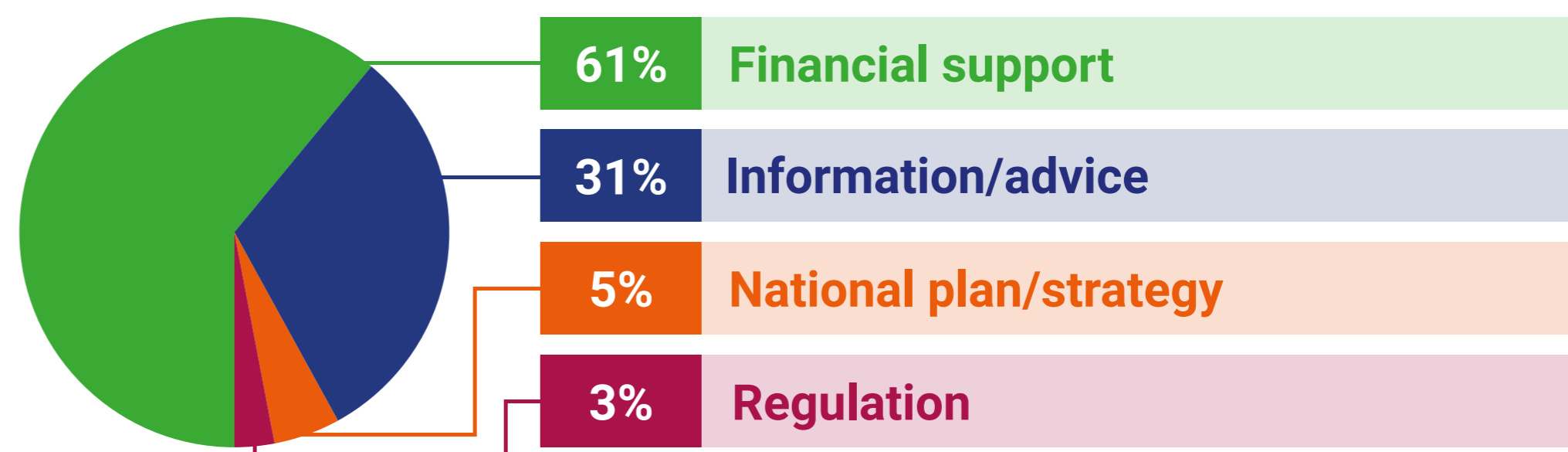
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the European economy. Within the LEAP4SME project, we have analysed the economic and energy aspects of SMEs in Austria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom. In all the targeted countries, there are no explicit data sources for energy consumption to enable cross-country comparisons. To obtain consistent and comparable energy data at SME level for all partner countries, two calculation approaches were developed to estimate the total energy consumption of SMEs.

Policy mapping in partner countries

A total of 173 policies, programmes and projects were identified through a literature review conducted by the LEAP4SME partners, researching the policies and support programmes available in their respective countries. Information has also been collated and presented on the European policy context in relation to SMEs and energy.

The policy instruments and support programmes were categorised as follows:

- ▶ **Financial support** – where the primary aim of the policy is to provide financial support to SMEs via grants, loans, subsidies, tax relief or a combination of measures.
- ▶ **Information/advice** – including support through awareness raising, guidance, providing energy audits, amongst other forms of information and advice.
- ▶ **Regulation** – policies such as supplier obligations and standards.
- ▶ **National plan/strategy** – national plans and strategies for energy efficiency, renewable energy or low carbon technologies, or environmental protection which could affect SMEs.



Successes, challenges and lessons learned

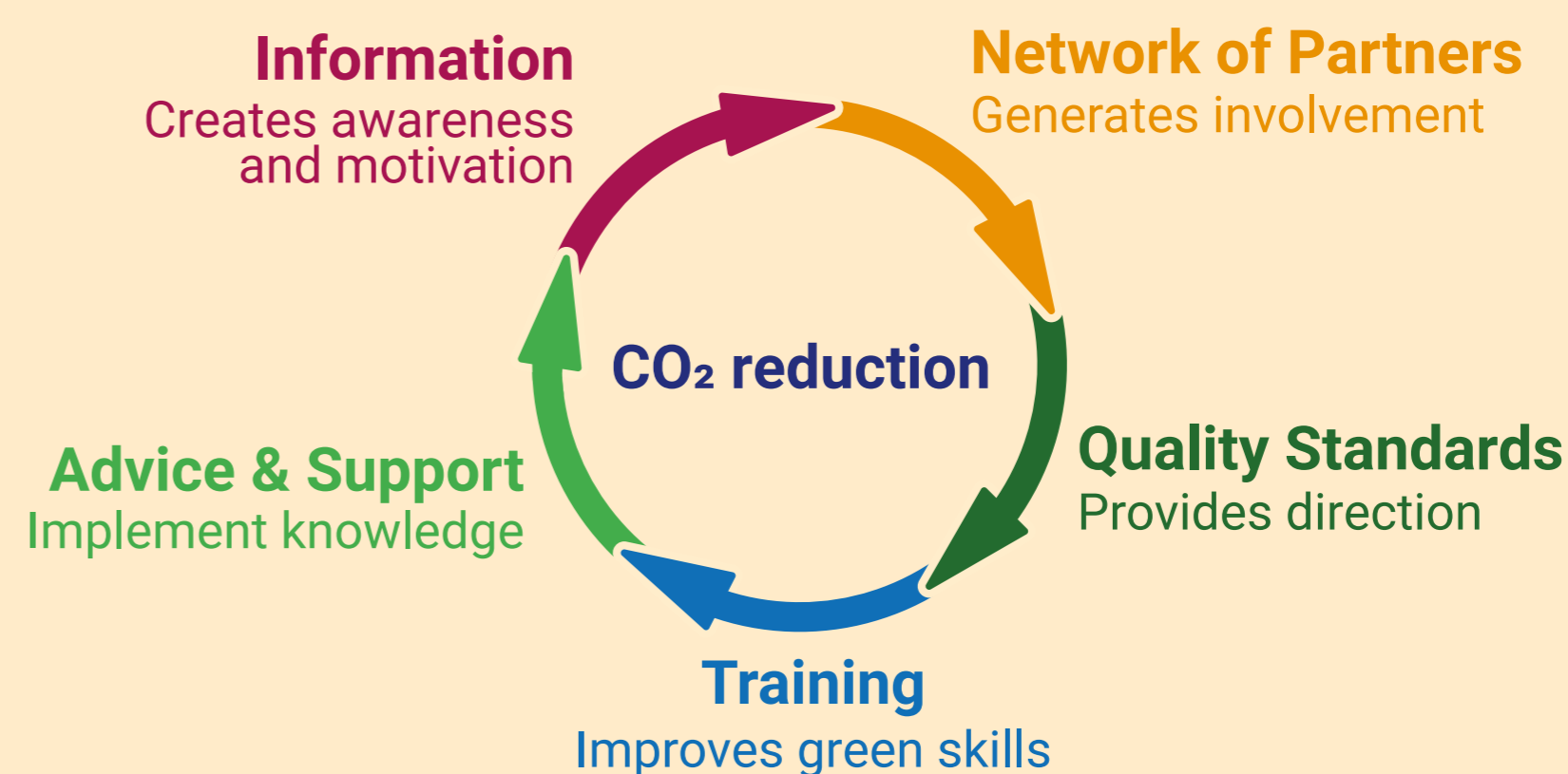
LEAP4SME partners were asked to provide information on some of the key learnings from the policy instruments which they identified. One difficulty was finding information for active support programmes which have not yet undergone an evaluation. Additionally, it was not always clear from the partners' data whether the scale of the impacts from the support programmes are deemed to be a success, due to not having clear indicators for comparison or understanding the targets initially planned for by the policies.

There were also a number of challenges and lessons learned reported by partners related to:

- ▶ **Low uptake of project applicants (in particular SMEs), including being under the targeted amount of spending for financial support**
- ▶ **A lack of appropriate training and information**
- ▶ **Programme planning and insufficient time allowed for piloting projects**
- ▶ **Ineffective evaluation and data capture**
- ▶ **Insufficient clarity of application processes for receiving support**
- ▶ **Long waiting periods for support/funding**

Example of policy Programme for energy efficiency in SMEs in Austria

- ▶ **klimaaktiv** is the climate protection initiative set up by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Climate Action
- ▶ The programme **klimaaktiv Energieeffiziente Betriebe** is addressing energy efficient companies by following the transition cycle



REFERENCES

- ▶ LEAP4SME, 2021, "Report Existing support measures for energy audits and energy efficiency in SMEs"
- ▶ LEAP4SME, 2021, "Mapping SMEs in Europe"

CONSORTIUM



ABOUT LEAP4SME

LEAP4SME aims to support countries in establishing or improving effective policies for SMEs to undergo energy audits and implement cost-effective, recommended energy-saving measures through identifying the barriers for unlocking energy efficiency measures and proposing effective solutions to realise both energy and non-energy benefits.

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