



**NET  
ZERO  
CITIES  
SGA2-NZC**

# Communication, Dissemination & Exploitation Plan

Deliverable 3.3

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

Acronym	Description
WP	Work Package
NZC	NetZeroCities
PCP	Pilot Cities Programme
NMCs	Non-Mission Cities

## Summary

This Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation Plan outlines the strategy and actions that will be implemented as part of SGA2-NZC's communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities during the 48 months of the project. These will seek to build on and complement the activities initiated with the NetZeroCities and SGA-NZC projects, using consistent messaging and similar channels where relevant. The activities proposed will be monitored to ensure that the objectives set are achieved. If needed, corrective measures will be applied in updated versions of the Deliverable Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation Plan.

## Keywords

NetZeroCities, communication, dissemination, climate neutrality, climate action, awareness raising.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and scope

The Communication and Dissemination Plan lays down the **overall strategy for the communication and dissemination activities of SGA2-NZC**. The scope includes all project activities taken internally and externally to scale up the knowledge dissemination and public communication of the project and its results.

This document identifies the **communication objectives, target groups and key messages**, and defines the **tools and channels** used to communicate with the audience and to disseminate project results. It also includes a list of **key performance indicators (KPIs)** to measure the impact and evaluate the effectiveness of the project's communication and dissemination activities.

Please note that for the purpose of this document, 'the NetZeroCities Project' refers to the NetZeroCities project which has received funding from the H2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement n°101036519. **'NetZeroCities' without mention of the project refers to the common brand used across the NetZeroCities project, SGA-NZC, and SGA2-NZC**. This common branding helps leveraging the community and visibility achieved throughout these projects, and promote the activities of the Mission Platform, managed by the consortium across grant agreements, in a consistent way.

The Communication and Dissemination Plan will **contribute to two main objectives of the project**: the first is to reinforce the support received by cities selected to participate in the Mission on financing their roadmap of activities towards climate neutrality, and the second is to develop basic Mission Platform services for cities who are willing to commit to climate neutrality on a longer timescale than the Cities Mission, here referred to as Non-Mission Cities or NMCs.

This Communication and Dissemination Plan will be **continuously monitored and updated** to include results obtained and recommendations for the future.

LGI leads the communication and dissemination activities of the SGA2-NZC project (Tasks 3.2 and 3.3), as well as of the NetZeroCities (WP12) and SGA-NZC (WP9) projects. To coordinate all these activities in a coherent and organised manner, LGI holds monthly communication and dissemination meetings with all partners involved.

## 1.2 Partner contributions

See below a summary of the communication and dissemination activities of the SGA2-NZC project and the involvement of the different partners in the tasks.

T3.2: Communication, Dissemination & Exploitation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of the support and resources provided by the Mission Platform to NMCs.</li> <li>Communicating finance and investment resources and opportunities in an attractive way to Mission Cities and beyond.</li> <li>Participate in joint information and dissemination activities with other HE/H2020 related initiatives and projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGI leads these activities, with support from CKIC and contributions from partners EuC, ICLEI, EnC, ERRIN and R-Cities.</li> <li>Coordination will be sought with all SGA2-NZC partners, beyond WP and task partners, to ensure alignment of key messages and communication &amp; dissemination activities with the activities happening in the project.</li> </ul>
3.2.1 Communication and dissemination coordination	
<b>Communication and Dissemination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGI leads communication and dissemination activities, including</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Communication and Dissemination Plan (M5) to lay down the overall strategy.</li> <li>• Communication and Dissemination support to WP1 and WP2 (branding and formatting of outputs).</li> <li>• Continuous dissemination of key messages and relevant content through an attractive online presence.</li> <li>• Adaptation of existing NetZeroCities and SGA-NZC materials to engage NMCs.</li> <li>• A flyer presenting the Mission Platform service offer and resources for NMCs.</li> <li>• Regular emails to Mission Cities to present available tools, resources and support (linked to NetZeroCities T12.1 and NZC-SGA T9.1.4, T9.3.1 and T9.3.2).</li> <li>• Media relations and monitoring of dissemination efforts made by partners.</li> </ul> <p><b>Campaigns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A campaign (M4) to build engagement with NMCs through city networks.</li> <li>• Three additional campaigns will be delivered to promote tools and resources available to NMCs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal communication, translations, and quality management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of internal communication activities.</li> <li>• Translation of key project materials to ensure broader dissemination across countries. This includes interpretation services at events and translation of the NetZeroCities Portal static content.</li> <li>• Quality control of outputs before dissemination.</li> </ul> <p><b>Overarching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve relationships with Mission and NMCs based on lessons learned.</li> </ul>	<p>campaigns, with contributions from CKIC, EuC, ICLEI, EnC, ERRIN and R-Cities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICLEI leads media relations and monitoring.</li> <li>• LGI manages the provision for translations.</li> <li>• CKIC leads quality checks and internal communication, with support from LGI.</li> <li>• CKIC and EuC will use lessons learnt by City Advisors in their interactions with cities to maximise the relationships with the Mission Secretariat and NMCs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.2.2 Content creation</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In coordination with NetZeroCities task 12.2 and SGA-NZC task 9.2, communication and dissemination content will be created to promote resources and services available to NMCs and to showcase finance and investment content related to WP2 to Mission Cities.</li> <li>• A podcast series of at least 12 episodes will be created to showcase Mission and NMCs' journey towards climate neutrality.</li> <li>• Three infographics will be designed to explain finance and investment content in an easy-to-understand way.</li> <li>• At least six videos featuring interviews with experts and cities about their experience in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGI, ICLEI and CKIC will lead the editorial work involving consortium partners when needed.</li> <li>• LGI will lead the podcast production, with editorial support from ICLEI.</li> <li>• LGI will lead the design of the three infographics.</li> <li>• ICLEI will interview and film videos featuring city representatives, with LGI in charge of the editing.</li> <li>• ICLEI will create a short video presenting the Portal and LGI will lead the creation of the additional six videos on how to use the different tools and features available.</li> </ul>

<p>the EU Cities Mission, with a special focus on finance and investment, will be produced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A short, animated video presenting the Portal and six other videos explaining its different features and tools will be created.</li> <li>• Articles and interviews will highlight the work carried out by cities, the Mission Platform's offer to support them, and the finance and investment dimensions of the journey to climate neutrality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICLEI and CKIC will oversee the editorial calendar and contribute with articles and interviews that showcase the work carried out by cities, the Mission Platform's offer to support them, and the finance and investment dimensions of the journey to climate neutrality.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2.3 Clustering with other initiatives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with other projects and initiatives will be sought to increase the visibility of the tools, resources and services available to cities in their journey towards decarbonisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CKIC and ERRIN will lead clustering activities, in coordination with SGA-NZC's WP6 that works on partnerships, policy and networks.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2.4 Exploitation Coordination</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In coordination with SGA-NZC T9.7, SGA2-NZC exploitation activities will focus on scaling up the Mission Platform's offer to suit NMCs. This includes ensuring the offer can provide cities with primary support until 2030 and provide secondary support until at least 2050.</li> <li>• Additional exploitation activities include maximising the use of finance and investment outputs, identifying all relevant stakeholders in the exploitation value chain and carrying out a risk analysis on the exploitation of results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGI leads exploitation activities, with support from all partners.</li> </ul>
<b>T3.3: Events</b>	
<b>3.3.1 Cities Mission mid-term conference</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional resources are available to scale the 2025 Cities Mission Conference planned in NetZeroCities T12.6 and SGA-NZC T9.5 into a mid-term flagship Conference for the Mission that will gather up to 700 delegates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICLEI will coordinate the organisation of the conference, with organisation support from CKIC and LGI, and content support from all partners.</li> </ul>
<b>3.3.2 Cities Mission Conference 2026</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A two-day Cities Mission Conference will be organised in 2026 to showcase cities' progress, with a focus on finance and investment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICLEI will organise the conference, with organisation support from LGI and CKIC. All work packages will contribute to the content, in particular WP2.</li> </ul>
<b>3.3.3 Participation in events</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In line with NZC T12.6 and NZC-SGA T9.6, partners will participate in a variety of external events to promote the Mission Platform's resources, tools and services. This includes participation in joint events with related HE/H2020 initiatives (see SGA2-NZC T3.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGI will lead the events coordination, with support from CKIC.</li> </ul>

Table 1: Partners contributions

## 1.3 Relation to other activities

The success of the overall communication, dissemination, and exploitation strategy depends on and is linked to the work undertaken in other WPs. Communication and dissemination activities rely on the work of all partners and their collaboration in providing WP3 with information on their activities and achievements, and in sharing relevant information about the project to their own contacts and networks.

The work of the communication, dissemination, and exploitation WP is particularly interrelated with the work of the following WPs and tasks:

WP1 Non-Mission Cities Support	WP2 Finance & Investment services to Mission Cities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WP1 will regularly inform WP3 of the development of the different activities targeting NMCs.</li> <li>• WP3 will support WP1 with the dissemination survey foreseen under T1.1: NMCs Needs, Pathways.</li> <li>• WP3 will promote the extended portal functionalities for NMCs, such as the City Readiness Self-Assessment Tool (T1.2.1) and the Helpdesk Service (T 1.2.3).</li> <li>• WP3 will promote content available to NMCs as scoped and consolidated under T1.3.2 &amp; T1.3.3.</li> <li>• WP3 will support WP1 in showcasing the online capability building programme and related resources like the course learning pathway (T1.4).</li> <li>• WP3 will communicate on peer learning activities at European level (T1.5), including the online discussion group on the Portal; the EoI to join the Study visits or the twinning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WP2 will inform WP3 of the progress made by cities in relation to their Investment Plans.</li> <li>• WP3 will help promote the open-source economic model developed by WP2 to help Mission Cities establish the cost of their climate actions.</li> <li>• WP3 will inform cities about the support available via workshops, forums and webinars, and about relevant European and national public funding opportunities.</li> <li>• WP3 will promote the City Finance Framework once it is integrated into the Portal to both Mission and NMCs.</li> <li>• WP3 will produce editorial content focusing on financing and investment to profile and promote WP2 work.</li> <li>• WP3 will promote investment seminars/events in which Mission Cities present their projects to potential investors and private capital providers.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Relation to other activities

## 2 Communication and Dissemination Strategy

The Communication & Dissemination Strategy in SGA2-NZC largely builds on the NetZeroCities Project's Communication & Dissemination Strategy (See NetZeroCities Project's deliverable D12.3 for the most updated version, submitted in September 2023), and SGA-NZC's Communication Strategy (See SGA-NZC's deliverable 9.1). The Communication & Dissemination Strategy and activities will therefore be developed with an approach of continuity, to deliver consistent messages and services to cities and all target audiences.

The SGA2-NZC activities build upon the existing NetZeroCities project and SGA-NZC project's C&D&E strategy, channels, and tools to widely promote and ensure the visibility of the Mission Platform, its objectives and results at different levels (local, regional, national, and European), raise awareness of the 2030 ambition of Mission Cities and 2050 ambition for all European Cities to follow suit, promote the commitments and work of the cities involved in the Mission, and support them in communicating towards their local audiences.

As a result, the NetZeroCities project's activities, the SGA-NZC activities and the SGA2-NZC activities will be promoted under the same 'NetZeroCities' brand, using similar communication channels (same social media accounts, same website and NetZeroCities Portal, same Mission Cities distribution list, for instance).



The SGA2-NZC Communication & Dissemination activities seek to extend and complement existing communication, dissemination, and valorisation activities developed in the NetZeroCities and SGA-NZC projects, promoting the specific activities and results developed in SGA2-NZC. Continuous coordination with the HE Mission on Climate-neutral and smart cities will be sought.

In particular, the strategic approach and activities related to Communication & Dissemination in SGA2-NZC will seek to achieve the following:

Activities primarily focus on two objectives: the first to reinforce the support received by cities selected to participate in the Mission on financing their roadmap of activities towards climate neutrality, and the second to develop basic Mission Platform services for cities who are willing to commit to climate neutrality on a longer timescale than the Cities Mission.

- Extending the promotion of services provided by the Mission Platform to NMCs, tailoring messages to their specific needs and building awareness; fostering their engagement towards the Mission and helping maximise the uptake of the offer developed in SGA2-NZC.
- Promoting the capability building programme to help facilitate knowledge exchange mechanisms among Mission and NMCs.
- Showcasing the finance and investment dimension of the EU Cities Mission to enhance understanding among all stakeholders; increasing cities' awareness of the finance and investment support available to them.
- Highlighting relevant European and national public funding opportunities available to support cities' climate transition efforts.

## 2.1 Objectives

The main communication and dissemination objectives in SGA2-NZC are aligned with the objectives developed in the NetZeroCities and SGA-NZC projects and include the following goals. Please note that in this list of objectives, 'NetZeroCities' refers to the NetZeroCities brand across all grant agreements: **To ensure Mission Cities are fully engaged with the Mission Platform and the array of services, tools and resources developed with SGA2-NZC, especially with regards to finance and investment:**

- Continuously embarking Mission Cities in the climate neutrality journey, ensuring buy-in from contact points and municipality stakeholders.
- Communicating information clearly, ensuring Mission Cities have a clear picture of the key concepts, of the work ahead of them and of the ways of working with the consortium.
- Ensuring Mission Cities are aware of what the NetZeroCities Portal can offer and are empowered to use it.
- Fostering a culture of knowledge sharing among Mission Cities by showcasing best practices and encouraging peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.
- Informing Mission Cities about, and assisting them in identifying relevant European and national public funding opportunities, facilitating access to financial resources for their climate initiatives, ultimately enabling them to implement ambitious plans effectively.
- Showcasing the financing and investment resources provided by the Mission Platform, empowering Mission Cities on their decarbonisation journey.
- Promoting Mission Cities' efforts to develop viable investment projects thus helping them attract potential investors and private capital providers to secure necessary funding for climate initiatives.

- Ensuring Mission Cities receive information shared by the European Commission Cities Mission team whenever there is a need.

**To ensure that all cities – in particular Non-Mission Cities – are aware of the resources and opportunities at their disposal:**

- Communicating positively about the climate transition to encourage cities and key stakeholders to become part of the movement for a more sustainable future.
- Creating the conditions to embark cities that are not yet at the forefront of climate action.
- Raising awareness among NMCs about available tools and resources, explaining how they can support their climate transition journey and encouraging their use, communicating clearly on the Mission Platform's offer to these cities.
- Informing NMCs about existing opportunities to connect with Mission Cities and transfer learnings both at the EU and national level.
- Encouraging the participation of both NMCs and MCs in online peer knowledge exchange groups hosted on the NetZeroCities Portal, facilitating collaboration.
- Promoting new tools and resources developed by the consortium, tailored to the needs of both NMCs & MCs, to support their respective climate initiatives efficiently.

**To support all cities – including Mission Cities and NMCs – in communicating climate action and the Mission to their citizens.**

**To raise awareness of NetZeroCities and the Mission** with EU, national and regional policymakers; practitioners, researchers and innovators; private investors, NGOs and civil society organisations; and to some extent the general public.

**To promote project knowledge and findings** to the professional and general public across the EU.

**To demonstrate a clear value for practitioners** to engage in a new, ambitious roadmap, to build capacities and capabilities on innovative forms of practice, supporting engagement and collaboration between public and private stakeholders to leverage expertise and resources for financing climate projects and initiatives within Mission Cities.

**To position NetZeroCities as a thought leader** in the climate neutrality and sustainable and smart cities space. This includes building a strong image to be able to influence the conversation, raising awareness on the critical role of cities to achieve climate neutrality, and advocating for increased funding opportunities empowering cities to secure additional financial resources to accelerate decarbonisation. This also aims to support better-informed policies at city, regional, national and EU levels, in connection with other EU missions related to climate change.

**To create visibility and acceptance around critical concepts such as:** Climate-Neutrality; Systemic Innovation; Social innovation; Citizen and stakeholder engagement; The Climate City Contract; Investment Planning for climate neutrality; EU Mission Label, etc.

**To establish NetZeroCities as the reference platform**, having a clear narrative on the added value of NetZeroCities as the EU Cities Mission Platform in a crowded environment of platforms and initiatives, and standing out as a One-Stop-Shop for both Mission Cities and NMCs.

**To support the exploitation of the Mission Platform, services, pilots and solutions.**

## 2.2 Communication Layers

To achieve these communication and dissemination objectives, the Communication and Dissemination activities are based on four main layers, that are all interconnected and form the basis of our workstreams. This layers-based approach is used across all grant agreements (NetZeroCities project, SGA-NZC, SGA2-NZC), to ensure a streamlined work organisation.

**Internal Communications**

Information sharing and good coordination of work across the consortium are critical to disseminating results, coordinating action, and providing the best possible support for cities. Internal communication is crucial to support effective information flows between partners and foster a shared culture and a sense of shared priorities. It is essential to align our messages and ensure consistency in reaching out to cities primarily but also to other key target groups.

**City Practitioners Communication & Dissemination**

All cities (both Mission and NMCs) and the practitioners working inside cities to implement the Cities Mission goals are a primary target audience that needs to be communicated to in an efficient way. This includes ensuring cities receive all the information they need, such as resources, milestones, and opportunities. This is about making available support accessible to cities, all the while building continuous engagement and a sense of community.

**External Communication & Dissemination**

The external communication and dissemination activities target all audience groups, including cities, to highlight their remarkable journey, unprecedented efforts, and achievements. They also serve the purpose of widely promoting the Cities Mission approach to climate neutrality (such as systemic innovation, finance and investment for climate neutrality, etc.). By sharing resources and learnings with a broad audience interested in cities and climate action, we seek to inspire and attract NMCs and other stakeholders to join the journey to urban climate neutrality. These activities also contribute to providing transparency on the actions carried out as an EU-funded project.

**Influence**

Our communication and dissemination activities also seek to create visibility and acceptance of key concepts. The communication and dissemination activities contribute to pushing the Climate Neutrality Agenda to decision makers at various governance levels (city, region, state, regional...), based on proven impact and data evidence.

## 2.3 Target audiences and key messages

The list of target audiences of SGA2-NZC, as well as the key messages for each target group largely draw upon the audiences and messages identified in the NetZeroCities and SGA-NZC projects to provide a consistent narrative. A set of overarching messages has been developed that form a consistent narrative to be communicated across all audiences and adapted to each target group. These are organised across 6 key themes:

**Role of Cities in Climate Action**

Cities are at the forefront of climate action and in a prime position to spearhead new ways of working and living. Not only do they account for more than 70% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and are home to 75% of EU citizens, but they are also centres of economic activity, knowledge generation, innovation and new technologies. Throughout history, cities have often been at the forefront of change and innovation, and now is no exception for them to act as a catalyst for change.

**Climate Neutrality by 2030 in Mission Cities**

We believe in cities and will work with them to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all the while ensuring decarbonisation efforts are equitable and contribute to the well-being of European communities. Achieving climate neutrality by 2030 is an unprecedented and challenging ambition, with the power to trigger action at the scale needed to build a better future for all. NetZeroCities supports the 112 cities in the EU Cities Mission to become the first 100 cities to reach climate-neutrality by 2030.

**All European cities following suit by 2050**

We believe the work undertaken by the 112 Mission Cities can empower all European cities to follow suit, contributing to making Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The experimentation and

innovation happening in Mission Cities, and the methodologies developed to support them can be shared and adapted to NMCs committed to climate action, facilitating their journey towards decarbonisation. This contributes to fostering a sustainable and thriving future for all in Europe. With SGA2-NZC, there is now funding to provide resources, services and support to all cities in the EU and Horizon Europe associated countries, beyond Mission Cities.

### Systems Change

Only a new model of collective and coordinated effort will be up to the task of achieving climate neutrality. Reaching climate neutrality requires all of us to act collaboratively, understanding interdependencies between us as actors and our actions to uncover the barriers blocking change. Technical solutions alone are not enough to achieve this transition. We need to improve and renew governance structures, democratic participation, finance, learning capabilities and our use of social innovation. Together, these enable a systemic transformation - transformation across domains and sectors to shift society toward climate neutrality.

### Financing the climate transition

Achieving climate neutrality requires substantial financial support from both public and private sectors, effectively allocated to address the unique needs of each city. To ensure a successful climate transition, we are committed to offering comprehensive support and expert financial guidance tailored to each city's specific capital and finance requirements as they put their plans into action and progress towards climate neutrality.

### You are changemakers

All stakeholders engaging with the Cities Mission have agency to make climate neutrality happen in an inclusive way. City staff, civil society and all other actors in the city are active changemakers. All types of stakeholders, including citizens, the private sector, researcher actors and civil society, at all levels – local, regional, national and European – need to be involved and join forces, leveraging each other's knowledge, know-how, relationships and resources to make a difference.

Target groups		Key messages
<b>Mission Cities</b>	Elected officials (mayors, city council members and city representatives)	<p><u>Journey towards climate neutrality as part of the EU Cities Mission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your city's ambitious journey towards climate neutrality requires substantial funding support from both public and private sources to be successful.</li> <li>The Climate City Contract is an instrument to mobilise and crystallise territorial action, and to "unify" a climate agenda and increase legibility and visibility of action for citizens.</li> <li>The Investment Plan, a key element of your Climate City Contract, ensures strategic alignment with your Action Plan guaranteeing that your financial needs are in line with your climate initiatives and projects.</li> <li>Your city is a leading the way on climate action, this is the opportunity to inspire other cities to follow suit, and support them by sharing your insights.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities' support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NetZeroCities will provide you with comprehensive support tailored to your city's</li> </ul>

		<p>capital and finance needs as you progress towards your decarbonisation goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your city will benefit from expert financial guidance to assist in the development of your Investment Plan, aimed at attracting both public and private sources of capital to accelerate decarbonisation.</li> </ul>
	<p>Mission Cities Officers &amp; Technical Staff</p>	<p><u>Journey towards climate neutrality as part of the EU Cities Mission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successfully achieving climate neutrality in your city will require significant financial backing.</li> <li>Breaking down departmental silos and fostering collaboration across municipal sectors, particularly in financial planning, is essential to achieve climate neutrality.</li> <li>Efficient allocation of financial resources is critical to address your city’s climate needs and ensure a successful climate transition.</li> <li>Your learnings and experience in the journey to climate neutrality can inspire other cities to follow suit, and you will have opportunities to support them by sharing your insights.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities’ support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cities Mission Capital Hub facilitates funding and financing, investments, and provides technical assistance in support of your city’s ambitions of reaching climate neutrality.</li> <li>There are national and European funding opportunities to finance your city’s climate transition, ensuring you seize relevant opportunities for financial support.</li> <li>Benefit from an open-source economic model that will help you assess the costs of your climate actions, identify high impact projects and list relevant funding gaps, enabling precise planning.</li> <li>Identify key bankable projects within your climate neutral portfolio with NetZeroCities’ assistance and move closer to implementation.</li> <li>Participate in investment seminars organised by NetZeroCities to showcase your viable investment projects to potential investors and private capital providers, fostering essential partnerships for success.</li> <li>Access a plethora of support through workshops, forums, webinars and in person events organised by NetZeroCities, offering invaluable insights and assistance in navigating the complexities of financing the climate transition.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your NetZeroCities City Advisor, City Finance Specialist and the City Support Groups will be essential allies in your climate transition journey, providing invaluable support and guidance every step of the way.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities Portal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access a wealth of knowledge, research, innovation and useful tools through the NetZeroCities Portal, empowering your city with the financial capabilities needed to achieve the climate transition.</li> <li>Engage in collaborative learning and knowledge exchange on all climate neutrality related topics, including financing and investment within the NetZeroCities Portal.</li> </ul>
<p>Non-Mission Cities in the EU and Horizon Europe associated countries</p> <p><i>Including the cities that submitted an EOI in 2022 to join the EU Cities Mission.</i></p>	<p>Local public bodies</p> <p>Elected officials (mayors, city council members and city representatives)</p>	<p><u>NetZeroCities' support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cities Mission Capital hub serves as a central platform to streamline funding and financing options available to your city, facilitate investments, and deliver technical assistance, all aimed at supporting your city's journey towards climate neutrality.</li> <li>The NetZeroCities Portal offers resources, tools, and collaborative learning opportunities on all climate neutrality related topics, including financing and investment.</li> </ul> <p><u>Join the climate transition</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in climate action and pave the way for an inclusive, thriving, climate resilient and sustainable future.</li> <li>The Mission Platform, managed by NetZeroCities is now expanding its support to all cities committed to climate neutrality by 2050.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities' added value</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NetZeroCities Platform provides tools and services to help your city regardless of where it finds itself in its journey to climate neutrality.</li> <li>We provide an evolutive support Platform that will adjust its support to best address cities climate support needs.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities Programmes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply to our Twin Cities calls to learn and experiment new solutions to climate issues and to position your city as a leader in climate neutrality.</li> <li>Our Twinning Programme will give you the opportunity to be paired with Mission Cities to share experiences and best practices.</li> </ul>



	<p>Technical staff within municipalities</p>	<p><u>The EU Cities Mission</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are multiple ways and opportunities to engage with the Mission and to embark on a shared learning journey with Mission Cities.</li> <li>• The Mission Platform, managed by NetZeroCities is now expanding its support to all cities committed to climate neutrality by 2050.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities' added value</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mission platform managed by NetZeroCities provides all cities with online resources and peer to peer collaboration opportunities to help you achieve climate neutrality. Check out our online Portal!</li> <li>• NetZeroCities gives you access to a vast and open-source body of relevant knowledge, research, innovation and useful tools, and will put you in contact with your counterparts in other cities, as well as other key actors.</li> </ul> <p><u>NetZeroCities' Programmes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Twinning Programme, led by NetZeroCities, will enable your city to receive expertise and support to test and experiment innovative solutions.</li> <li>• Dedicated capacity and capability building activities will be organised to support NMCs.</li> <li>• NetZeroCities provides a platform to foster knowledge exchange and collaboration with Mission Cities.</li> <li>• Join peer learning exchange opportunities to accelerate your climate transition.</li> </ul>
	<p>Local public bodies</p>	<p><u>NetZeroCities' added value</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mission platform managed by NetZeroCities provides all cities with online resources to help them achieve climate neutrality. Check out our online Portal!</li> <li>• NetZeroCities will give you access to a vast body of relevant knowledge, research, innovation and useful tools, and will put you in contact with your counterparts in other cities, as well as other key actors.</li> <li>• NetZeroCities provides a platform to foster knowledge exchange and collaboration with Mission Cities.</li> </ul>
<p>Public stakeholders (EU, national and regional and local decision-makers)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching the EU's climate neutrality goal by 2050 will require a collective effort at local, national, and European level. Cities are key to reach climate neutrality targets and will need global policy support to get there.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate neutrality by 2030 requires rapid replication and scale-up of good practices and systems transformations, an endeavour supported by the EU Cities Mission Platform, managed by NetZeroCities.</li> <li>• Systemic innovation will be crucial to overcome local barriers and seize opportunities, outline a portfolio of actions and develop collaboration relationships in order to reach climate neutrality.</li> <li>• Massive capital will be needed to invest at scale in urban climate neutrality. NetZeroCities support cities support cities in identifying financing and investment opportunities, and in making their climate plans and projects investment ready.</li> </ul>
Private stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joining cities' efforts in reaching climate neutrality will position your company as a frontrunner in climate action and create new business possibilities.</li> <li>• Supporting frontrunner cities' activities is a significant opportunity to capitalise on the magnitude of the transition to climate neutrality.</li> <li>• This is the opportunity to prepare your business for the future, strengthen your business in front of ESG standards, and participate in shaping a futureproof local economic development.</li> </ul>
Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financing cities' efforts in reaching climate neutrality will position you as a frontrunner in climate action and create new opportunities. You have the ability to turn ambitious climate projects into reality.</li> <li>• We are supporting cities with technical assistance and capital facilitation, to make their projects bankable and investment ready.</li> <li>• This is your opportunity to strengthen your position in front of ESG standards, and to participate in shaping a futureproof local economic development.</li> </ul>
Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting involved in the NetZeroCities community of practice will enable you to build capacities and capabilities on innovative forms of practice and connect you with a wide community of climate neutrality practitioners from various sectors.</li> </ul>
Civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EU Cities Mission will transform our cities to make them better places to live, with cleaner air, safer streets and green spaces.</li> <li>• NetZeroCities provides effective solutions, tools and support for cities to achieve climate neutrality. We work towards a thriving, climate resilient and sustainable future.</li> <li>• Actions at city level are crucial to reach the EU's climate neutrality target by 2050.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We work to help cities finance their ambitious climate plans, supporting them in leveraging both public and private capital.</li> </ul>
Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cities are key to achieving climate neutrality faster and ensuring our decarbonisation efforts are equitable and contribute to the well-being of European communities.</li> <li>You are needed! We have to get everyone on board and reach climate neutrality at city level.</li> <li>Transitioning to climate neutrality will transform your city into a healthier, safer and more inclusive place to live.</li> <li>What do you want your city to look like? Shape the city you would like to live in!</li> <li>NetZeroCities supports cities as they are on the journey towards climate neutrality, including to finance their ambitious climate plans.</li> </ul>
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EU Cities Mission Platform, managed by NetZeroCities, enables European cities and citizens to show the way forward towards an inclusive, thriving, climate resilient and sustainable future.</li> <li>NetZeroCities provides the tools, resources, and expertise needed for cities to achieve climate neutrality by 2030 in 100+ cities.</li> <li>NetZeroCities supports cities to experiment innovative solutions to address climate change; and replicate learnings from each other.</li> <li>We support cities every step of the way, from building climate plans to financing and implementing them. We work to help cities finance their ambitious climate plans, supporting them in leveraging both public and private capital.</li> <li>NetZeroCities is now expending its support beyond Mission Cities to address all cities committed to climate neutrality by 2050.</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Target groups and key messages**

## 3 Work Organisation

### 3.1 Workplan

The below timeline gathers all key communication and dissemination dates throughout the project, with deliverables indicated in green colour and milestones in blue colour. This timeline will be **continuously updated** to reflect key activities during the 48 months of the project.

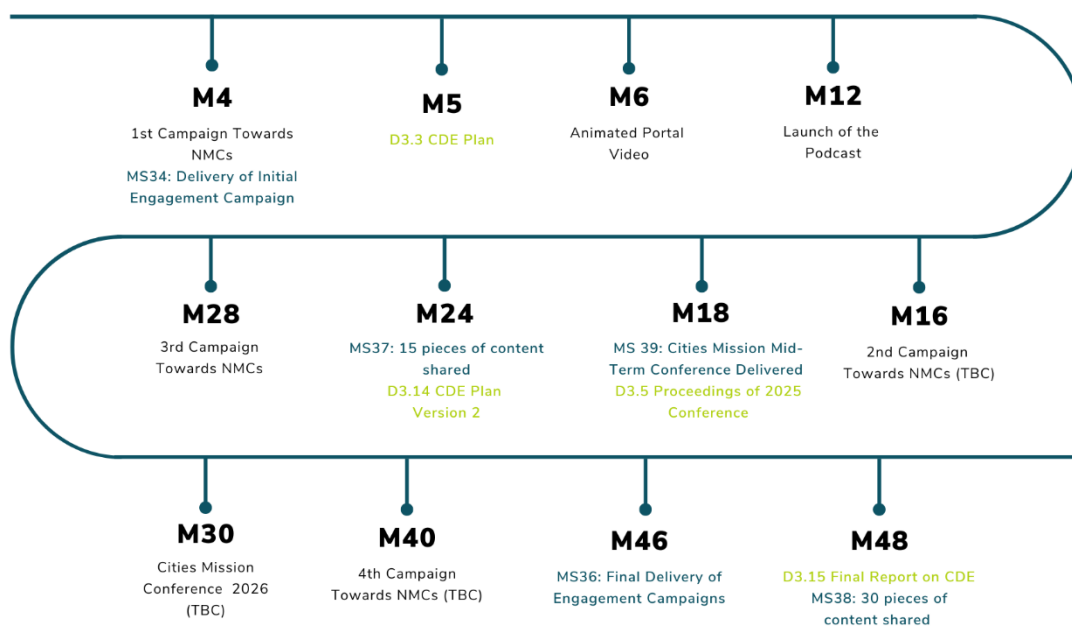


Figure 1: Overview of key C&D activities, milestones, and deliverables

Partners use a Gantt chart shared with the project management and portal teams across WP3 to keep track of the progress of milestones and deliverables. A shared editorial calendar, an event calendar and communication to cities calendar detail the workplan in a more operational, flexible and comprehensive way, and are available to all partners.

### 3.2 Meetings

To ensure clear, effective and well-coordinated communication activities, several regular core meetings are organised by the WP3 (T3.2 and 3.3) team:

A **monthly meeting** has been set up to coordinate the integration of communication activities of SGA2-NZC WP3 with activities of the NetZeroCities Project's WP12 and SGA2-NZC's WP9, ensure consistency across communication activities, and organise the workplan. This meeting brings together all project partners involved in communication and dissemination activities.

A separate regular meeting is set up across GAs to **discuss the editorial calendar**, plan and monitor editorial content production, and content dissemination to target audiences.

**Regular meetings with the Cities Mission Secretariat** have also been set up to coordinate on key communication and dissemination activities and have relevant communication materials reviewed and approved by the Mission.

WP3 also participates in **weekly operations calls**, together with representatives from the NetZeroCities Portal team and the project coordination team to align all activities and discuss priorities.

### 3.3 Shared CDE Resources for the involvement of project partners

Several tools have been set-up to allow all partners to collaborate on content creation and relay the information shared through our various communication channels:

- **Meeting minutes** are stored in a Teams “Communication” folder accessible to all project partners. All communication and dissemination outputs are to be stored there.
- A **Communications and Dissemination Tracker** is available for project partners to inform WP3 of all the communication and dissemination efforts they have undertaken, such as events, articles, press releases, flyers, social media activities, etc. This tracker has been created under the NetZeroCities Project’s WP12 and has been modified to enable partners to indicate whether the activities they report have been performed as part of the NetZeroCities Project, SGA-NZC, or the SGA2-NZC project.
- A folder containing **communication and style guidelines**, the NetZeroCities logo, partners logos, presentations, press releases, roll up, virtual backgrounds, visual resources, communication toolkits, etc. This folder is updated to ensure project partners have access to communication and dissemination materials.
- **The editorial calendar** (mentioned above) is available to all partners and allows to keep track of the project key milestones and the communication activities planned to promote them. Project partners are encouraged to add key outputs of their WPs to the calendar so that WP3 can plan the necessary communication actions.
- A **communication to cities calendar** (mentioned above) is available to all partners.
- An **events calendar** (mentioned above) is available on Teams for all partners to keep track of participation to conferences, trade fairs, symposiums, etc.

## 4 Workstreams & Outputs

Several workstreams and outputs will be developed as part of SGA2-NZC to meet the objectives of the project and disseminate key messages to the audiences identified in section 2.

### 4.1 Communications to Non-Mission Cities

#### 4.1.1 Communication campaigns to NMCs

4 campaigns towards NMCs are planned as part of SGA2-NZC. These will take place throughout the SGA2-NZC project, in accordance with key milestones in the project and in connection with external communication opportunities where relevant.

##### 4.1.1.1 About the first NMC engagement campaign

The first campaign, aiming to build initial engagement from NMCs was delivered in M4-M5 of the project. The campaign was designed by LGI with support from WP1 partners, to be used by the City Networks (EuC, ICLEI, ERRIN, EnC, RCN), and was also disseminated using several multipliers networks and organisations.

**Main focus.** This first campaign focused primarily on the objective of disseminating T1.1 Needs assessment survey, as a way to build engagement across NMCs about the Mission Platform's offer. Launched the day of the release of the T1.1 Needs assessment survey (11<sup>th</sup> April 2024), this first communication campaign targeting NMCs highlighted the added value of the Mission Platform to support cities in their journey towards climate neutrality, encouraging NMCs to contribute to shaping the future of the Mission Platform's service offer. Three main objectives were sought:

1. Disseminating the needs assessment survey to NMCs
2. Starting to build engagement across NMCs regarding the EU Cities Mission and the Mission Platform managed by NetZeroCities, and start building momentum for the upcoming offer to NMCs
3. Raising awareness of NMCs about the resources available under the Portal

**Key messages.** Messages include general examples of resources available as well as testimonials from Cities already involved in capacity building programmes such as the Pilot Cities Programme or the Twinning learning programme. Specific messages included:

- NetZeroCities, as the implementation platform of the Cities Mission, aims to build the capability and capacity of all European cities to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. NetZeroCities pursues this objective in alignment with the second goal of the Mission, "Climate-neutral & Smart-cities", striving for Mission Cities to serve as pioneering experimentation and innovation hubs, inspiring other cities to follow.
- To better design the Mission Platform services, NetZeroCities experts need to better understand the support required by non-mission cities to overcome challenges faced on their journey towards climate neutrality,
- Non-mission cities can already benefit from a number of activities developed by NZC and the EU Mission, such as the twinning programme.
- The NetZeroCities Portal provides all cities with a place to learn and exchange about climate neutrality strategies.
- NetZeroCities wants to provide support to Non-Mission Cities as they accelerate their transition by building on learnings and experiences of our work with Mission Cities
- Key reasons to engage with the Mission and NZC:
  - Learn from Mission Cities' frontrunner approaches.
  - Engage with Mission cities, national stakeholders and cities in different member states.

- Take part in city-to-city exchanges (P2P discussion groups, study visits, city twinnings).
- Access invaluable resources to build capability.
- Receive dedicated support and tailored learning pathways.



**Figure 2: Examples of visuals used in the first NMC engagement campaign**

**Dissemination efforts.** For this first campaign, cities that had expressed their interest in joining the Mission when the Cities Mission launched were specifically targeted and contacted.

To reach more cities, the first campaign tapped into city networks consortium members' respective membership bases. The campaign materials were designed to support the city network partners in sharing the survey efficiently to their members using their own communication channels, such as social media, newsletters, websites as well as via bilateral contacts.

Additionally, a list of related initiatives to rely on as communication multipliers was created, and these initiatives were contacted, both per email and on the occasion of bilateral meetings organised with the cities networks as part of the consortium. These multipliers were provided with a communication toolkit to facilitate the sharing of messages and enable the campaign to reach a broader range of cities.

This first campaign also used social media, with the publication of weekly posts for the whole duration of the survey period, to be followed by bi-weekly posts afterwards and until the publication of the survey results to keep momentum. Additionally, an online form has been created for all interested cities to join NetZeroCities mailing lists and be contacted directly about further opportunities.

**Results.** In total, 61 NMCs responded to the survey. But beyond survey respondents, the campaigns also allowed building awareness around the upcoming support for all cities by the Mission Platform, with 10 189 views of campaign materials in total and 1330 clicks.

#### 4.1.1.2 Future engagement campaigns

Additional engagement campaigns (3+) will be delivered by LGI in accordance to major milestones or calls to action. The campaigns will always seek to contribute to the work of WP1, to keep NMCs engaged and promote the services of the Mission Platform to a wide range of cities across Europe.

The future campaigns will seek to make the most out of the audience of City Networks within the project, and to rely on multipliers, ensuring outreach to a large range of cities.

The specific milestones and hooks associated with each campaign will be determined in collaboration with partners. At this stage, it is foreseen that these campaigns will be delivered respectively by M16, M28 and M40, with the possibility that this will be adapted to make the most out of opportunities in the project. Additional campaigns towards NMCs may be organised based on needs.

### 4.1.2 Adapting Communication Materials to appeal to all cities

Regular communications will be made to Non-Mission Cities (NMCs), including outside of the specific campaigns detailed in the previous section. The objective is to ensure that these cities are aware of the tools and services offered by the Mission Platform, the opportunities they represent, and that they are empowered to use them.

**Content created under the NetZeroCities Project and SGA-NZC** will also be repurposed and repackaged in ways that speak to NMCs to ensure the messages get across; the focus will be on 'Empowering all cities', including 'cities beyond the Mission'. To appeal to NMCs, it is envisaged, in collaboration with WP1, that a specific designation would apply to NMCs engaging with the Mission Platform. Currently envisaged designations include:

- Mission-minded cities
- Mission fellows (cities),
- Mission peer cities.
- (Mission) Relay Cities
- Mission Partner Cities
- Mission Network Cities
- Mission-Oriented Cities

**New, specific content will also be created specifically for the NMCs audience.** This includes, for instance, the creation of a flyer presenting the Mission Platform service offer and resources for NMCs, to be disseminated broadly via email, the website, social media, and using multipliers to broaden outreach. A 3-pager created in collaboration with WP1 in M4 will serve as a basis for this flyer.

In addition, several dissemination tools such as podcasts, infographics and videos will be created to diversify the media used to engage with both NMCs and Mission Cities.

## 4.2 Content creation

An editorial team regularly meets to coordinate the project's content creation strategy and ensure complementarity and alignment with content created under the NetZeroCities Project and SGA-NZC project. External outreach focuses on the role of cities in reaching climate neutrality, the role of the EU Cities Mission to support not only Mission Cities but also all other European Cities, and cities' achievements as they progress towards climate neutrality. A podcast series, videos, and infographics will be produced in addition to written content (articles, interviews) to address different target audiences and provide versatility.

### 4.2.1 Podcast

Under SGA2-NZC, we will create a **documentary style podcast** with strong storytelling, to appeal to all of our core audience types.

The podcast will seek a **wide, non-expert audience** with an interest in climate action and urban sustainability, to promote the work of cities and the Mission generally. It will be **relevant as well for city officials and climate neutrality practitioners**. By showcasing best practices, inspiring experiences and approaches, testimonials and return on experience addressing challenges, it is intended that the podcast will **inspire continuous engagement** from Mission Cities and inspire NMCs to follow suit, ultimately leading to a broader use of the Mission Platform services.

The podcast will **profile cities' journeys** towards climate neutrality and will feature both Mission Cities and Non-Mission Cities. Specific **benefits of climate action** are at the centre of each episode, with the aim to promote and highlight the positive impact of climate action, presented through the work of cities and the Cities Mission.

A **storytelling format**, led by a host, will be adopted. Each podcast episode will be featuring guests from cities and expert perspective to give input on substance related to the theme or to the city. Episodes will be 20 – 25 minutes long. **Topics envisaged** for the first podcast episodes include: health, democracy/citizen participation, private sector engagement, skills and jobs, mobility, energy, amongst



others. A total of at least 12 episodes will be created, with the first release before the first year of the project ends.

It is to be noted that a learning podcast, created under SGA-NZC, deep diving into the specifics of cities' climate approaches is also developed towards an expert audience. Both the SGA-NZC learning podcast and the SGA2-NZC podcast will come under a common banner of 'NetZeroCities Podcasts', with each being profiled as a different track, for different audiences.

## 4.2.2 Infographics

Our approach to enhancing editorial content on **finance and investment topics** involves the creation of at least **three infographics** that will simplify complex concepts and ideas, allowing for a stronger uptake of the tools and services available to cities in this area.

These infographics will be shared in emails to cities and integrated into our social media campaigns about finance and investment topics. By strategically incorporating them into our social media content, we aim to maximise their reach and impact to achieve at least 200 views per infographic. Additionally, we will continue creating visually compelling content to present other key concepts and milestones, ensuring our audience remains engaged.

## 4.2.3 Videos

**Videos are an integral part of content production** in SGA2-NZC. Two main focuses are foreseen: on the NetZeroCities Portal, and on insights from cities' work, particularly related to finance and investment.

**Seven videos about the Portal** and its tools and features will be produced. The first one will be an animated video introducing the Portal. This video is currently under production and is foreseen to be ready in M6; it will be used on the portal as an intro to be seen by all new registrants, but it will also be used for wider Portal promotion on various communication channels including social media. Six additional videos will be produced throughout the duration of the project to show how to use Portal features and navigate different sections of the content to ease access and use to all cities.

In addition, we will produce **six deep dive video interviews** featuring experts and cities sharing insights from their participation in the EU Cities Mission. These engaging videos filmed by ICLEI and edited by LGI, will focus on core areas of work, with a **particular focus on finance and investment**. Drawing from events and significant gatherings attended by city representatives, we will gather the material to craft compelling video content.

All videos, including both Portal presentations and expert interviews, will be strategically used across our social media channels as part of coordinated campaigns that aim to promote widespread engagement with the EU Cities Mission's objectives and resources.

## 4.2.4 Articles and additional editorial production

In addition to podcasts, infographics, and videos, editorial content production will also include **articles and interviews**, to be performed by ICLEI and CKIC. This will contribute to versatility in highlighting the work achieved in Mission Cities, NMCs, and the Mission Platform support offer to them. Specific attention to **success stories and concrete examples** will be sought, to reinforce an inspiring narrative around the Mission and the support provided by the Mission Platform.

## 4.3 Additional workstreams

In addition to the campaign work and content creation, significant efforts will be made to ensure appropriate levels of internal communication within the consortium. CKIC will lead internal communication within the consortium with the support of LGI. This is to ensure a high level of knowledge sharing across partners and facilitate work delivery.

Coordination with the HE Mission on Climate-neutral and smart cities will be continuously sought to implement the communication activities, aligning on key messages and actions.

CKIC will also ensure that a quality check of outputs is performed before dissemination.

## 5 Communication channels

The Communication and Dissemination channels established under the NetZeroCities Project and SGA-NZC will be employed to achieve maximum dissemination, specifically, to NMCs as well as Mission Cities, and other target audiences listed in section 2.3. Communication channels will be utilised to inform all aforementioned cities of the Mission Platform's available resources, tools, opportunities for Mission, non-Mission, and all cities, and services available to them. These channels will be used to raise awareness of the Cities Mission and Mission Platform, inform about key project findings, demonstrate value for city practitioners to engage in, and disseminate knowledge and awareness to the wider target audiences. This will complement and reinforce the work undertaken in the SGA-NZC WP9 and NetZeroCities Project's WP12 to further enhance and scale up communication and dissemination across platforms and with related projects.

### 5.1 Online channels

#### 5.1.1 Website

The website is the **primary information source** for the three projects (NetZeroCities, SGA-NZC, and SGA2-NZC) and is where most target audiences come to find out more about activities, news, resources, and project updates.

The website undergoes **regular updates** with news, events, communication items, project deliverables and results to maintain alignment with the project's communication and dissemination goals as well as keep frequent visitors engaged and up to date.

In SGA2-NZC emphasis will be placed on editorial content to effectively promote resources and services to NMCs, while also presenting the finance and investment dimensions of the EU Cities Mission. This strategic focus will be reflected on the website through the publication of news articles covering these topics. Additionally, we will develop new webpages to present the EU Cities Mission Platform offer specifically tailored to NMCs. This approach aims to actively engage these cities, ultimately contributing to the broader objective of the EU Cities Mission: all European cities reaching climate neutrality by 2050. A dedicated section on finance & investment is also being developed.

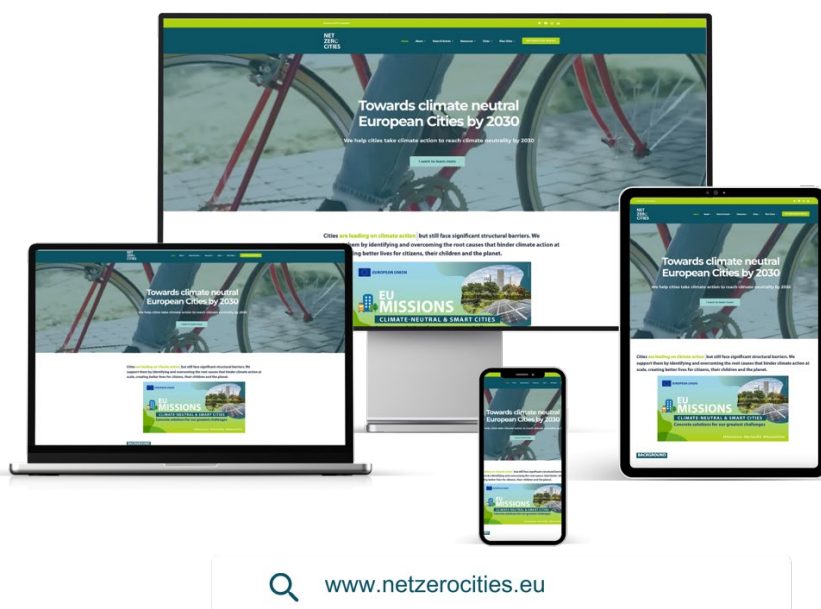


Figure 3: [www.netzerocities.eu](http://www.netzerocities.eu) website

#### 5.1.2 Social Media

Social media channels [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Youtube](#), created and developed under the NetZeroCities project's are also used by SGA-NZC. SGA2-NZC will also use these channels to



disseminate and promote the content created in the project, ensuring target audiences are informed about the project, its results, resources, and tools in an impactful and far-reaching way.

Under SGA2-NZC, we will implement a comprehensive campaign focusing on finance and investment topics across all our social media platforms. Additionally, we will roll out four distinct campaigns targeting NMCs to engage them in climate action.

To ensure seamless coordination and alignment, we use **a shared social media calendar** open to all consortium partners, as part of our editorial calendar. This tool enables us to plan our content in advance and maintain consistency across platforms.

The list of **hashtags** below is currently being used on social media channels on a regular basis. This list reflects hashtags and keywords that have been successfully used for targeted content to specific target audiences.

General	Specific
#EUMissions #HorizonEU	#MissionCities #PilotCities #TwinCities #ClimateNeutrality

Table 4: List of hashtags

### 5.1.3 Newsletters

The quarterly newsletters, an integral part of the NetZeroCities project will also be used as a dissemination channel for content produced in SGA2-NZC, such as finance and investment pieces, to build upon the existing subscribers' base. These newsletters overall aim to inform and engage the community on the latest achievements, progress, outcomes and relevant events, conferences, and workshops.

Newsletters contain different sections, including:

- **Editorial:** insights by the coordinator.
- **Highlights:** showcasing key activities.
- **Discover the Latest:** news items.
- **Join the NetZeroCities Portal:** recurrent item promoting the Portal as an essential platform for all cities working towards climate neutrality.
- **Snapshots from Cities:** showcasing inspiring activities taking place in cities.
- **Knowledge Hub:** gathering NetZeroCities publications for easy access.
- **Sector Spotlight/Spotlight on Opportunities:** presenting external news and funding opportunities for cities.
- **Media Buzz about the EU Cities Mission:** relevant media mentions.
- **Our Journey through Events:** A recap of events attended and upcoming events of interest.

A [newsletter subscription form](#) compliant with GDPR regulation is available on the NetZeroCities website to encourage visitors to subscribe to the newsletter in order to receive the latest project results and achievements.

### 5.1.4 Targeted emailing

Outreach to Mission Cities is also done using a dedicated **GDPR compliant distribution list**, to ensure cities representatives are informed of the opportunities and resources at their disposal. Already used in the NetZeroCities Project and SGA-NZC, this distribution list will also be used to disseminate SGA2-NZC related content to Mission Cities: this includes, for example, finance and investment related content, but also peer-to-peer opportunities for knowledge exchange with NMCs, as well as any relevant piece of information or opportunities.

Another GDPR compliant distribution list including representatives from cities that expressed interest in joining the Mission in 2021-2022 but were not selected is also used to contact this specific segment of NMCs. Noting that they have a specific interest in climate neutrality and Mission work, they are contacted on an ad hoc basis on NMCs-related opportunities, ensuring that they don't miss out on key information.

### 5.1.5 NetZeroCities Portal

The **Portal** is also used as one of the communication and dissemination channels in the project, in addition to traditional online tools. As a **one-stop-shop** for cities to interact with each other and with experts, as well as a space to find relevant content in their journey towards climate neutrality, the Portal is at the heart of the Mission Platform's offer. It is a key space to share information with cities and practitioners and it is therefore also used to disseminate content produced, announcements, and any relevant communication.

## 5.2 Initiatives and multipliers

The consortium is continuously compiling a **list of related initiatives**, including EU projects, national cities platforms, and other urban networks. These related initiatives are contacted when relevant and will serve as **multipliers**, amplifying the Mission Platform communication efforts.

Contacts have already been engaged at the occasion of the survey launch. This list of related initiatives will be updated and complemented all along the project duration.

Overview of projects and initiatives contacted to disseminate the first engagement campaign
European Committee of the Regions
Covenant of Mayors-Europe (also incl. ENC, ICLEI, EUR, FED, CEMR, CA)
POLIS
ACR+
Circular Cities and Regions Initiative
Civitas
CRAFT Cities - New European Bauhaus project
Urban Transitions Mission
Network Nature+
Driving Urban Transitions to a Sustainable Future (DUT)
CapaCITIES
Living-in.eu
European Urban Initiative
European Green Capital & Green City Accord
Intelligent Cities Challenge
Positive Energy Districts European Network
NEB Alliance
Climate Alliance
Smart Cities Marketplace & Scalable cities
European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and Environment.- FEDARENE

**Table 5: Overview of projects and initiatives contacted to disseminate the first engagement campaign**

**Cities Network** part of SGA2-NZC, such as Eurocities, ICLEI Europe, Energy Cities, Resilient Cities Network, and ERRIN have also been involved in multiplying the campaign.

Amongst the initiatives of interest for communication, dissemination and clustering activities also are other **Horizon projects**, in particular those under the Cities Mission, and **National platforms** supporting the implementation of the Mission at the National level.

Non-exhaustive list of relevant EU projects	Non-exhaustive list of relevant national platforms
<b>H2020 &amp; HE:</b> AGORA, ATELIER, CityLoops, CEforCe, Definitie CCRI, European City Facility, Food Trails, GoNaturePositive, HS Booster, JustNature, oPEN Lab, P2Green, UTMC, etc.	CitiES2030 (Spain), Viable Cities (Sweden), National Climate Neutral Cities Mission "Klimaneutrale Stadt" (Austria), M100 - Mirror Mission Cities Hub

<p><b>HE – Cities Mission</b> : AMIGOS, ASCEND, CapaCITIES, CLIMABOROUGH, CrAft, DESIRE, ELABORATOR, ExPEDite, GreenInCities, JUST STREETS, metaCCAZE, MOBILITIES FOR EU, NEUTRALPATH, Re-Value, REALLOCATE, ReGreenation, SPINE, SUN4Ukraine, TIPS4PED UP2030, UPPER, URBREATH</p> <p><b>Projects related to other Missions</b>: AGORA, Bin2Bin, CLIMAS, OPERANDUM, Pathways 2 Resilience, etc. MIP4ADAP.</p>	<p>Romania (Romania), National Cities Mission Network (Finland), National Mirror Group for Horizon Europe (France), etc.</p>
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**Table 6: Relevant projects and national platforms (not exhaustive)**

## 5.3 Events

Attending conferences and events creates the **opportunity to engage closely with stakeholders** and target audiences as well as promote the work undertaken by cities, and project results. In particular in the context of SGA2-NZC, outreach to NMCs is particularly important and **events are a good avenue to raise awareness of the support available** and to build connections.

The interest and readiness of the consortium is evaluated when determining whether to present at key events as well as how best to present (public intervention and/or hosting a booth). Booth participating is likely to become more and more important to **offer exposure and networking opportunities with NMCs**. The most relevant events taking place over a 12-month cycle are identified and event organisers are contacted to ensure the project is properly represented.

A **Communication and Dissemination Tracker** (described in section 3.3) was created under the NetZeroCities Project to track and monitor partner participation in international and national events conferences; it has been adapted to enable partners to indicate whether the activities they report have been performed as part of the NetZeroCities Project, SGA-NZC, or the SGA2-NZC project. A master document with a list of all the events identified is used to decide on participation and its format (also see section 3.3.)

Participation in the following annual/recurring events is particularly considered:

Event	Topic
ChangeNOW Summit	Sustainability
TRA – Transport Research Arena	Mobility
EURESFO	Climate adaptation & resilience
Urban Future	Urban sustainability
European Sustainable Energy Week	Energy
European Mobility Week	Mobility
Urban Mobility Days	Mobility
European Week of Regions and Cities	Urban sustainability
Smart City Expo World Congress	Smart Cities and Environment
Annual POLIS Conference	Mobility
European Research and Innovation Days	Innovation
Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum	Finance and investment in cities
Assises Européennes de la Transition Énergétique	Energy
ESCT European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns	Urban Sustainability

**Table 7: Events of Interest**

## 5.4 European dissemination channels

All official channels established by EU institutions will be used to disseminate the project's results. The following official EU dissemination channels will be targeted:

<b>Magazines</b>	Research+eu results magazine	<a href="http://www.cordis.europa.eu/research-eu/home_fr.html">www.cordis.europa.eu/research-eu/home_fr.html</a>
	Horizon – The EU Research and Innovation Magazine	<a href="https://horizon-magazine.eu/">https://horizon-magazine.eu/</a>
<b>Portals</b>	CORDIS	<a href="http://www.cordis.europa.eu/home_fr.html">www.cordis.europa.eu/home_fr.html</a>

Table 8: European dissemination channels

## 5.5 Scientific publications

Several scientific publications will be prepared by lead academic partners involved in the project. These publications will include the **main findings of the project's deliverables** and may be presented in some of the conferences listed in section 5.3 of this document.

SGA2-NZC will follow the **Horizon Europe open access policy** by providing online access to scientific information that is free of charge to the end-user and that is reusable. The Open Research Europe platform will be favoured, and platforms such as Zenodo, Open Science Repository may also be used. Partners' own repositories may also be used, noting that all information generated in SGA2-NZC will adhere to open access policies and all partners will refrain from holding any such information proprietary or trade-related.

In the context of this project, scientific information refers to **peer-reviewed scientific research articles, articles, conference papers and research data**. The SGA2-NZC project will combine different measures to foster open access to knowledge as much as possible. Scientific publications produced in SGA2-NZC will target the scientific community, and the community of urban practitioners and innovators, for example:

Journal	Interest for SGA2-NZC
Sustainable Cities and Society (SCS)	Smart cities governance; resilient environments; energy efficient, low/zero carbon, green buildings/communities; climate change mitigation and adaptation in urban environments.
disP – The Planning Review	Scientific journal addressing the topics in the areas of urban development, city and town planning, environmental planning, environmental economics, and transportation planning.
Urban Planning	International journal covering sustainable solutions for landscape planning and design.
European Public & Social Innovation Review	A fully peer reviewed and interdisciplinary biannual journal on theoretical and empirical articles, case studies and provocative papers to disseminate new knowledge, practices, and experiences in the social innovation field.
European Planning Studies	Spatial development processes and problems, and policy implementation in Europe (urban planning, service design and cities development).

Sustainability	International, cross-disciplinary, scholarly, peer-reviewed journal of environmental, cultural, economic, and social sustainability of human beings.
Journal of Cleaner Production	International, transdisciplinary journal focusing on cleaner production, environmental, and sustainability research and practices.
Climate	Scientific, peer-reviewed, open access journal of climate science published online monthly by MDPI.
Springer Briefs in Applied Sciences and Technology	Concise summaries of cutting-edge research and practical applications across a wide spectrum of fields.
IASDR: International Association of Societies of Design Research	International, non-governmental, non-profit-making, charitable organisation, focusing on design research.
Humanities and Social Sciences Communications	Fully open access journal publishing scholarship from across all areas of the humanities, social and behavioural sciences. The journal is published by Springer Nature.
Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews	International transdisciplinary journal focusing on critical thinking in renewable and sustainable energy, to support the transition to a low carbon future.

**Table 9: Scientific publications**

Project partners will be encouraged to regularly share information about their scientific publications when related to SGA2-NZC and urban climate issues via the online form described in section 3.3. Summaries of these publications will be disseminated on the project communication channels.

## 6 Exploitation

The exploitation activities in SGA2-NZC will work in close coordination with exploitation activities already undertaken in the NetZeroCities Project (WP3) and SGA-NZC, in particular, T9.7 focused on Exploitation.

Exploitation activities will assist in co-defining the most appropriate scenario for the scaling of the Mission Platform to serve Non-Mission Cities, in collaboration with WP1. Alignment with WP2 to maximise the exploitation of Finance and Investment outputs will also be sought.

### 6.1 Building on existing exploitation routes

#### 6.1.1 Four long-term platform business models

Exploitation routes are already being considered in NetZeroCities & SGA-NZC, particularly as part of deliverable NetZeroCities D3.7.

Four main business models were laid out with different characteristics:

- Digital platform including specialist advisory services.
- Portal including helpdesk support.
- Signposting & connecting.
- NetZeroCities Academy.

These models are not or mutually exclusive and can be modified and combined. Each of them presents different options for the long-term sustainability of the platform. For each scenario, the overall purpose, who delivers and what, the revenue potential, and what cities' needs it addresses were elaborated. Further work should be done to dig deeper each of the business model options (adding costs and revenues for each one) while also proposing our own prioritisation. These elements will be presented to the ExCom or the Strategic Management Committee for decision later this summer.

#### 6.1.2 General principles

At their best, **Platform stakeholders** create public value by themselves by bringing together collaborators, services, technologies, and data as a collaborative network – facilitating interaction among cities, citizens, and private partners to collectively frame problems and find solutions.

Moreover, the NetZeroCities Project, SGA-NZC and SGA2-NZC require considerations on how **private sector** solutions and services can feed the Platform, and how an open Community of Practice (SGA-NZC T8.8) of net-zero practitioners can operate. The SGA-NZC develops a Systemic Innovation Lab dedicated to Pilot cities and Mission Cities to leverage the opportunity of tested and emerging innovations, at the service of their climate-neutrality objectives. SGA2-NZC will build on these existing activities implemented as part of the NetZeroCities Project and SGA-NZC and will make sure lessons are learnt from the work ongoing in these WPs.

In particular, exploitation activities will always build on the Mission Platform's **service-level hierarchy** approach encompassing All Cities (Service Level 1), Mission Cities (Service Level 2a), Twin Cities (Service Level 2b) and Pilot Cities (Service Level 3). Therefore, the contributions of SGA2-NZC to the Mission Platform's business model will ensure that this business model is fully functioning to provide cities with primary support (Service levels 1, 2 & 3 established in the NetZeroCities Project and FPA-NZC) until 2030, and provide secondary support (Service level 1 & 2) until at least 2050. In doing so, partners will identify all relevant stakeholders in the exploitation value chain, and perform a risk analysis related to the exploitation of results.

Taking into account the long-term vision for the Platform also developed in the NetZeroCities Project and SGA-NZC, SGA2-NZC will bring in results related to support of **NMCs** as part of WP1, results related to finance and investment support provided via WP2, complementing existing exploitation activities across grant agreements.

The scope, budget and duration of the potential **SGA3** project will have to be taken into account in the elaboration and implementation of this strategy.

The strategy for exploitation will be further outlined in the next version of this deliverable: “Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan Version 2”, D13.4, due M24, and in the “Final Report of Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Activities”, D3.15, due M48.

## 6.2 Exploitation through open source and open ecosystems

**SGA2-NZC embraces an open approach.** All results and deliverables, unless explicitly stated otherwise, are made fully public and openly available on the project website. This includes the services, methodologies and capacity-building material, the web portal and its source code (and placed on a Github repository), the platform design, and recommendations from the project and its advisory boards.

The **Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 license** will be used: it allows to distribute, remix, adapt, and enhance the original work, as long as a credit is provided for it. This will foster collaboration and accelerate the transformation to socially innovative and carbon neutral cities by bringing actors to the platform, making available the project’s Key Exploitable Results (KERs), and enabling practitioners and innovators to reuse and co-improve. No Foreground Intellectual Property is expected to be patented or subject to other protection measures. The use of Background IP or existing know-how shall be made available free of charge to the Partners within the consortium for the achievement of the objectives.



## 7 Key performance indicators

A set of Key Performance Indicators has been set in the table below to **monitor progress of communication and dissemination activities** throughout the duration of the project (48 months). A column providing the numbers achieved in April 2024, a short time before the submission of this deliverable has been added to show the progress of communication and dissemination activities to date. It is important to note that many communication channels and associated KPIs are shared between the NetZeroCities project, SGA-NZC and SGA2-NZC projects, as activities are communicated under one and the same brand to stakeholders. This allows us to build on the existing community of followers and subscribers and to deliver a simple and consistent narrative.

Partners will monitor closely the following KPIs and implement any corrective measures needed. If targets are achieved before M48, **revised targets will be defined in future updates of this Communication and Dissemination Plan.**

Activity	Description	Numbers achieved in April 2024 (M4)	Target by M48
<b>Shared communication channels across grant agreements</b>			
<b>Public website</b>	Central communication hub for promoting NetZeroCities	Over 305 000 visitors.	400 000 visitors and 600 000 page views by M48.
<b>X (Twitter)</b>	Build online community to support engagement	2463 followers	At least 5000 followers by M48
<b>LinkedIn</b>	Build online community to support engagement	12721 followers	At least 18 000 followers by M48
<b>Instagram</b>	Build online community to support engagement	907 followers	At least 2000 followers by M48
<b>YouTube</b>	YouTube channel, for relevant project videos	306 subscribers and 20 400 views.	At least 500 subscribers and 40 000 views by M48
<b>E-newsletters</b>	E-newsletters	3662 subscribers	At least 5000 subscribers by M48.
<b>Specific SGA2-NZC tools and channels</b>			
<b>Engagement campaigns</b>	Four campaigns to build engagement from NMCs	First campaign kicked off in April 2024	Four campaigns targeting NMCs delivered by M4, M24, M36 & M46. At least 10,000 views of campaign materials per campaign.
<b>Podcast</b>	A podcast series to profile cities' journey towards climate neutrality	Work has started	At least 12 episodes produced with at least 200 plays per episode by M48
<b>Infographics</b>	Three infographics will be created to present the finance and investment aspect of the Cities Mission in an easy-to-understand way	N/A	At least three infographics published with at least 200 views per infographic by M48
<b>Deep dive videos</b>	Videos featuring interviews with experts and cities, focusing on financing and investment	N/A	At least 6 videos by M48 with over 200 views per video
<b>Portal videos</b>	Short videos presenting the Portal and its features	N/A	At least 7 videos by M48 with over 200 views per video
<b>Editorial work</b>	Including above mentioned videos, podcasts, infographics, and additional articles.	N/A	At least 15 pieces of work shared via the Portal and/or email by M24 and 30 by M48
<b>Flyer</b>	A flyer presenting the Mission Platform service offer and resources for NMCs	N/A	At least 400 views by M48
<b>Press relations</b>	Press releases and media mentions	N/A	At least 4 media pitches and/or press releases, and at least 20 media mentions per pitch/press release by M48.



<b>Cities Mission Conferences 2025 and 2026</b>	Two conferences (2025 & 2026)	N/A	Cities Mission Mid-Term Conference 2025 delivered by M18 with at least 700 participants. Cities Mission Conference organised in 2026 with over 400 participants.
<b>External events</b>	Policy/ practice Conferences: Present in conferences and events to disseminate the project's objectives and results.	N/A	At least 10 events attended to present SGA2-NZC outputs, services or results by M48.
<b>Publications</b>	Scientific and non-scientific publications	N/A	At least 10 publications by M48.

Table 10: KPIs

## Conclusion

This Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan provides a **detailed overview of the strategy and actions** that will be implemented to promote the SGA2-NZC activities and their results in an efficient yet impactful way.

**Two main focuses** are included in the communication strategy: **outreach to NMCs** to raise awareness on the Mission Platform's support and build engagement, and **promotion of the finance and investment work**, including towards Mission Cities.

**Cities – both within and beyond the Mission – remain the main target audiences**, but communication and dissemination content will also seek to appeal to a wider audience, including policy makers at different levels of government, investors, private companies, civil society, citizens and the media.

**The plan will be updated to include results collected and recommendations for the future.** These updates will be reflected in two deliverables: D3.14 – Communication, Dissemination, & Exploitation Plan Version 2 (M24) and D3.15 – Final Report on Communication, Dissemination, & Exploitation (M48).