Global
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for Cities

European Union
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URBACT
Driving change for
better cities

Module 4

Building an integrated action plan contributing to the SDGs

**Module 4:
Building an
integrated
action plan
contributing
to the SDGs**

Global GOALS for Cities

Localising the SDGs through action planning

One thing is to have a Vision – another thing is how this Vision will be achieved. This is where the URBACT method and toolbox come in, providing tools and guidance to help each step of the way: from analysing a problem, setting a vision, defining concrete goals and objectives, co-creating and delivering actions and monitoring progress (see the URBACT planning process to the right).

The URBACT integrated action planning steps go hand in hand with loca-lising the SDGs (recall the four steps of SDG localisation from Module 0: raising awareness, setting the local 2030 agenda, goal-based planning, and monitoring and reporting results on the SDGs). **In this Module, we focus on pursuing goal-based action planning using the SDGs as our results framework.**

In addition to the URBACT action planning process and toolbox, the Global Goals for Cities (GG4C) network took inspiration from a mission-oriented approach to innovation policy, widely researched by the University College London Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, among others. Missions help to create cross-cutting goals bringing together several SDGs and dimensions of sustainable development.

"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world"

Joel A. Barker

URBACT's action planning process

MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE PROGRESS MADE

ANALYSING A PROBLEM TO REACH A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS IN ACTIVE COLLABORATION

PLANNING AND IDENTIFYING A COHERENT SET OF ACTIONS

DELIVERING ACTIONS AND FORESEEN CHALLENGES

ENSURING ADEQUATE MEANS TO DELIVER A CONCRETE PLAN

URBACT toolbox and method

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Building the action plan

In this module, we go through the steps involved in creating an integrated action plan contributing to the SDGs. We move from the vision (in GG4C partners developed "SDG Stories", detailed in Module 3) to developing shared missions, setting specific objectives and defining integrated actions. The action planning steps are captured in three sections.

Section 1: Moving from Vision to Mission(s)

The SDGs are interconnected and should not be addressed as single policy objectives or "cherry picked". Therefore, when moving towards defining actions that will contribute to achieving the cities' visions, adding a "missions layer" helps to focus efforts while keeping the holistic nature of the SDG framework in mind. In the GG4C network, cities developed one or more missions together with local stakeholders. Section 1 of this module explains how and introduces the tools and methodology used to define missions.

Section 2: Defining locally adapted SDG targets

Developing a strong action plan involves defining a so-called "intervention logic", which explains how actions contribute to delivering concrete outputs and medium- to long-term results.

When working with the SDGs, the goals and targets are already provided by the SDG framework. The task for cities and other actors working on localising the SDGs is to translate those into the local context. As a result, locally adapted SDG targets provide the specific objectives that an action plan should aim to achieve.

This process of goal-based planning can be both challenging and complex, but is nonetheless essential in order to know whether actions will actually contribute to the SDGs. It is an effort well worth the investment!

URBACT provides several tools and guidance to help city practitioners understand and apply the intervention logic.

What is new with the method presented in the GG4C Learning Kit is how the process is linked to the SDGs every step of the way.

Section 3: co-creating actions

Local actors are often quick to propose actions that are thought to create positive change in cities. However, ideas for actions risk to become a mere "wish lists" unless guided by a clear results framework. By following the goal-based planning and intervention logic, impactful actions can be designed and clear targets set. In this Section we explain how.

The Integrated Action Plan Canvas

Putting the building blocks together

The Integrated Action Plan canvas – the "IAP Canvas" – puts the different building blocks of the SDG Action Planning process together, starting with the vision (explained in Module 2) all the way to defining actions. The canvas is a useful tool to bring along during the entire process to remind partners and stakeholders of how everything fits together.

The IAP canvas should be read from the upper right corner, starting with the vision, then moving down through more specific missions, locally adapted SDG targets and finally the actions on the left (the red part).

The grey line at the bottom indicates that actions we take "now" contribute to the SDG targets we want to achieve, the missions and the future vision (see Module 3 for a brief explanation of this Back-casting logic).

The Integrated Action Plan Canvas shows how the building blocks of the integrated action plan fit together
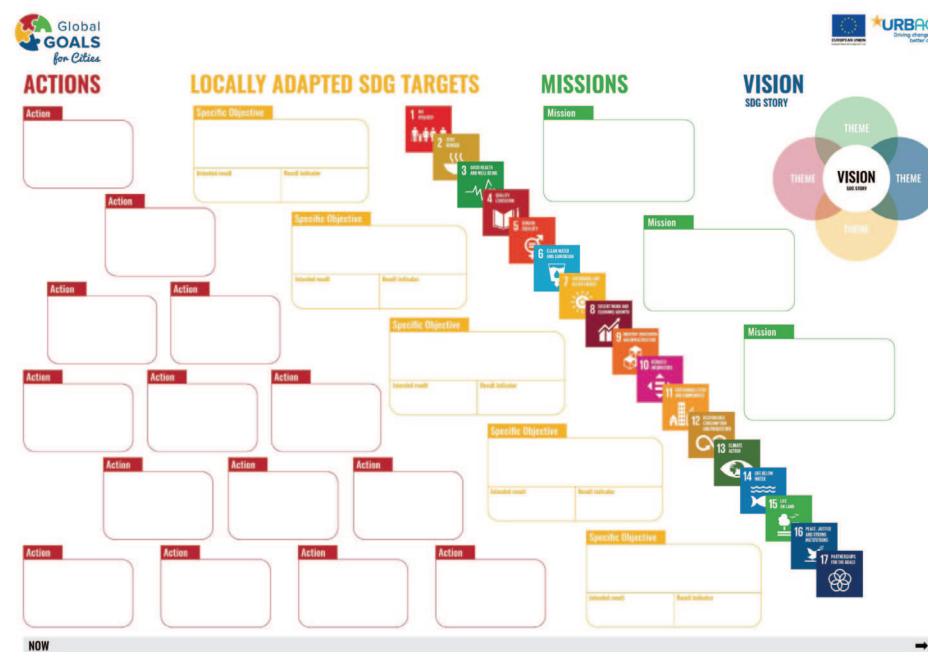
Full size Integrated Action Plan canvas

Photo credit: GG4C partner cities Braga (top and bottom right) and Veliki Preslav (bottom left).

Section 1: Moving from Vision to Mission(s)

Global **GOALS** *for Cities*

Defining missions to localise the SDGs in a participatory way

While a vision provides an overall picture of the desired future of a city, defining an action plan requires setting a clear direction and concrete goals to be achieved.

A mission-oriented approach helps to move from the vision to set a clear and shared direction, while keeping the interconnected nature of the SDGs in mind.

Missions can be defined as *"bold goals that catalyse investment and innovation from many different sectors and inspire new collaborations at the project level"* (Mazzucato, 2021).

Missions are more specific than a vision, yet cross-cutting enough to go beyond single policy objectives or SDGs. The main motivation for using missions in the action planning process is that it helps to tackle different inter-connected SDGs under one umbrella while giving a clear (and shared) direction.

What is a mission-oriented approach?

The economist Professor Mariana Mazzucato has been contributing to the mission-oriented concept, including in EU policy. In 2017-18, she produced a report on how to focus on missions in the next EU research and innovation framework programme (post-Horizon 2020), and in 2021 the EU adopted five EU missions: Adaptation to Climate Change; Beating Cancer; Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030; 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030, and; A Soil Deal for Europe.

In 2021, Mazzucato published the book *Mission Economy – A Moonshot Guide to Changing Capitalism*, popularising the approach. The book explains how the Moonshot mission in the US in the 1960s allowed for unprecedented collaboration and mobilisation of efforts across society that led to many positive outcomes beyond the successful moon landing in 1969 (see Acknowledgements and Credits for more details).

The idea behind missions is to ask: "what is the problem we want to solve?" and then define a mission that sets the shared direction towards solving it. Missions have been popular way to change how governments work, breaking policy silos and delivering public value. A growing number of "place-based missions" show how the approach can be useful for local and regional governments (see Acknowledgements and Credits for further resources and references on the approach).

The next sections outline the detailed methodology and tools developed for the Global Goals for Cities (GG4C) network to define missions and actions contributing to the SDGs in a participatory way.

The Vision Wheel: from vision to defining missions

For the GG4C network, we used the working definition of a mission as:

"An overarching societal goal that brings together multiple actors to focus on solving a cross-sectoral problem, within a given time frame".

To define the mission together with local stakeholders, the Vision Wheel is a tool that helps to map the existing links between the city's vision, the SDGs and existing initiatives and stakeholders in a collective intelligence exercise.

The process can be rather complex and messy – just like it is to work with the SDGs in the myriad of existing plans, strategies and initiatives that are happening in a city. In design thinking terms, we call this part of the process "divergent" – a maximum number of ideas are collected – while the next step, defining missions, is where stakeholders "converge" and agree on one or more shared missions.

Mapping out the existing landscape, identifying strategic connections and gaps, helps to understand better the complexity behind the vision, to be able to elaborate missions.

The 'Vision Wheel' exercise is done in five steps that are explained in this section.

Download a copy of the <u>Vision Wheel.</u>

Overview of the process:

Preparation: Put the vision in the centre

Step 1: Identify how the vision's themes link to different SDGs

Step 2: Pin-point the most relevant targets under those SDGs

Step 3: Identify the key stakeholders involved in delivering the vision

Step 4: Map existing initiatives linked to the vision and its themes

Step 5: Define cross-cutting missions by connecting the dots across vision, existing initiatives, key stakeholders, and SDGs

Global GOALS for Cities

The Vision Wheel step by step

Preparation: Listing the main themes of the vision

Start from naming some (or all) of the main themes of your vision. Describe your vision theme(s) briefly on post-its and put them in the spaces around the middle. Colour code them (this is needed for the next steps).
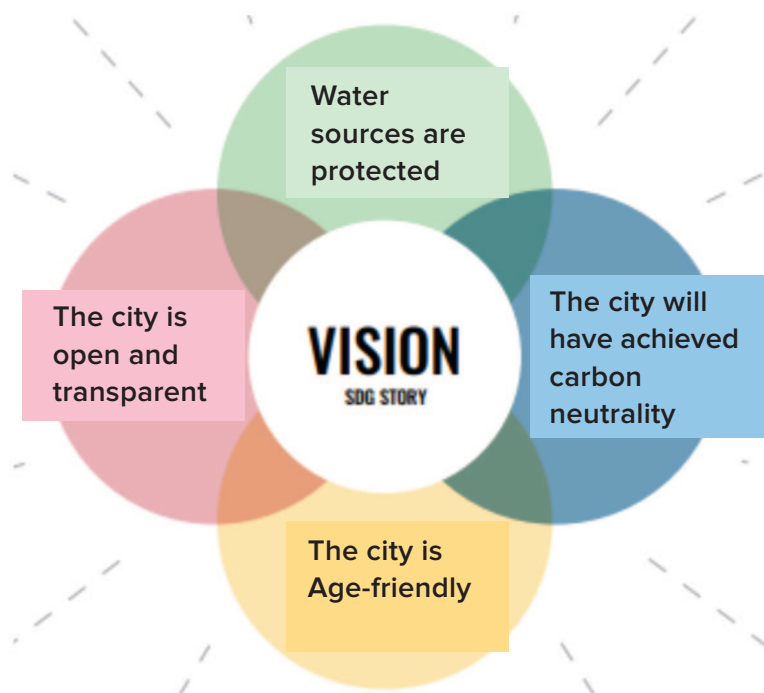
Step 1: How is your vision linked to the SDGs?

Begin from the external segment and – together with local stakeholders – analyse your vision's themes across the SDGs. In a few words, how does this theme relate to the SDGs in your city?

Write down some key words on post-its. See some examples in the wheel.

This is a great way to get participants familiar with the city vision, the SDGs and how they link to the existing initiatives in the city.

A printed list of goals and targets is useful for carrying out the exercise.

Step 2: Identifying relevant targets

Go to the next segment and identify the most relevant SDG targets linked to your Vision. Start from the SDG links you mapped in the previous step.

The targets help to understand more in detail how the vision links to SDGs.

For example the theme "The city will have achieved carbon neutrality" could link to:

- SDG 13, target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and plans

- SDG 7, target 7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency

- SDG 10, target 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all...

If this is too much detail for the group, the step can be skipped.

Step 3: Identifying the key stakeholders

Go to the next segment. Based on your mapping so far, who are the key stakeholders you (need to) collaborate with on this theme? Which departments of your city are needed to achieve the vision?

Write down your list of 'must have' collaborators on post-its.

Examples here

- The statistics unit

- The transport department

- Transport companies

- Energy companies

- Local NGOs and activists working on climate action

- University

- Senior people's council

This step can be carried out together with Step 4.

Step 4: Identifying existing initiatives

Now go to the inner segment and map key initiatives and actions already underway in your city that contribute towards the themes and targets you identified. Write them down on post-its.

Be careful to not let participants drift away to think about actions that would be nice to have in the future. This is part of the next steps of the action planning process.

The Vision Wheel exercise is about understanding what is already in place that can be leveraged to achieve the vision, and if there seem to be important gaps to be filled.

Examples could be:

- A passive house neighbourhood showcasing net zero carbon

- Free counselling to reduce energy consumption among vulnerable households

Photo credit: GG4C partner Veszprém

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Step 5: Defining missions

When the whole Vision Wheel is filled, the result should be a crowded and somewhat messy picture – reflecting the reality of a city.

Now is the time to hold a reflection together with workshop participants start identifying strategic connections between different parts of the vision and the initiatives mapped in the Vision Wheel.

- What connections do you see between the different parts?

- Are they already connected in your city's organisation?

- Are there gaps that could be filled between existing initiatives and stakeholders involved?

- Are any of the SDGs not covered? Why? Can we address this gap?

- What are the possible barriers to progress?

When discussing these questions with the group, try to single out some initiatives that seem to be "connectors" across different themes and actors. Can these become lever for change?

Try to create clusters of initiatives that seem to be strategically connected. These will help to define missions.

As an example, a cluster of initiatives that seem to link across themes of the vision may look something like the below:

Water sources are protected

The city is open and transparent

VISION
SDG STORY

The city will have achieved carbon neutrality

The city is Age-friendly

A cluster of existing initiatives related to a low carbon future

Air quality sensors pilot experiment	Participation in the EU Mission 100 climate neutral and smart cities	Design bureau contracted up to redesign the city's green spaces
A passive house neighbourhood showcasing net zero carbon	Free counselling to reduce energy consumption among vulnerable households	Inter-generational meet-ups between senior and youth groups to discuss climate change

![Global GOALS for Cities logo]

A mission check-list

Based on the strategic connections identified, participants should try to formulate a mission that resonates with the group.

Recalling the working definition of a mission as *An overarching societal goal that brings together multiple actors to focus on solving a cross-sectoral problem, within a given time frame*, the below check-list can help to make sure the mission has a strong formulation.

✔ Is it bold and ambitious, yet achievable within a set time frame (e.g. 2030)?

✔ Is it relevant to the lives of people living in the city?

✔ Can it foster citizen engagement and participation?

✔ Does it consider different dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and address several SDGs?

✔ Can the mission be achieved through bottom-up experiments, versus one single path?

✔ Can we ask ourselves in the end: did we achieve this or not?

Coming back to the example of a cluster of existing initiatives, below is an example of a place-based mission.

A cluster of existing initiatives related to a low carbon future

Air quality sensors pilot experiment	Participation in the EU Mission 100 climate neutral and smart cities	Design bureau contracted up to redesign the city's green spaces
A passive house neighbourhood showcasing net zero carbon	Free counselling to reduce energy consumption among vulnerable households	Inter-generational meet-ups between senior and youth groups to discuss climate change

Mission

Strong cross-sector and inter-generational partnerships with successful local demonstrator projects ensure that carbon neutrality is achieved by 2030, protecting the most vulnerable people and other life during the the transition.
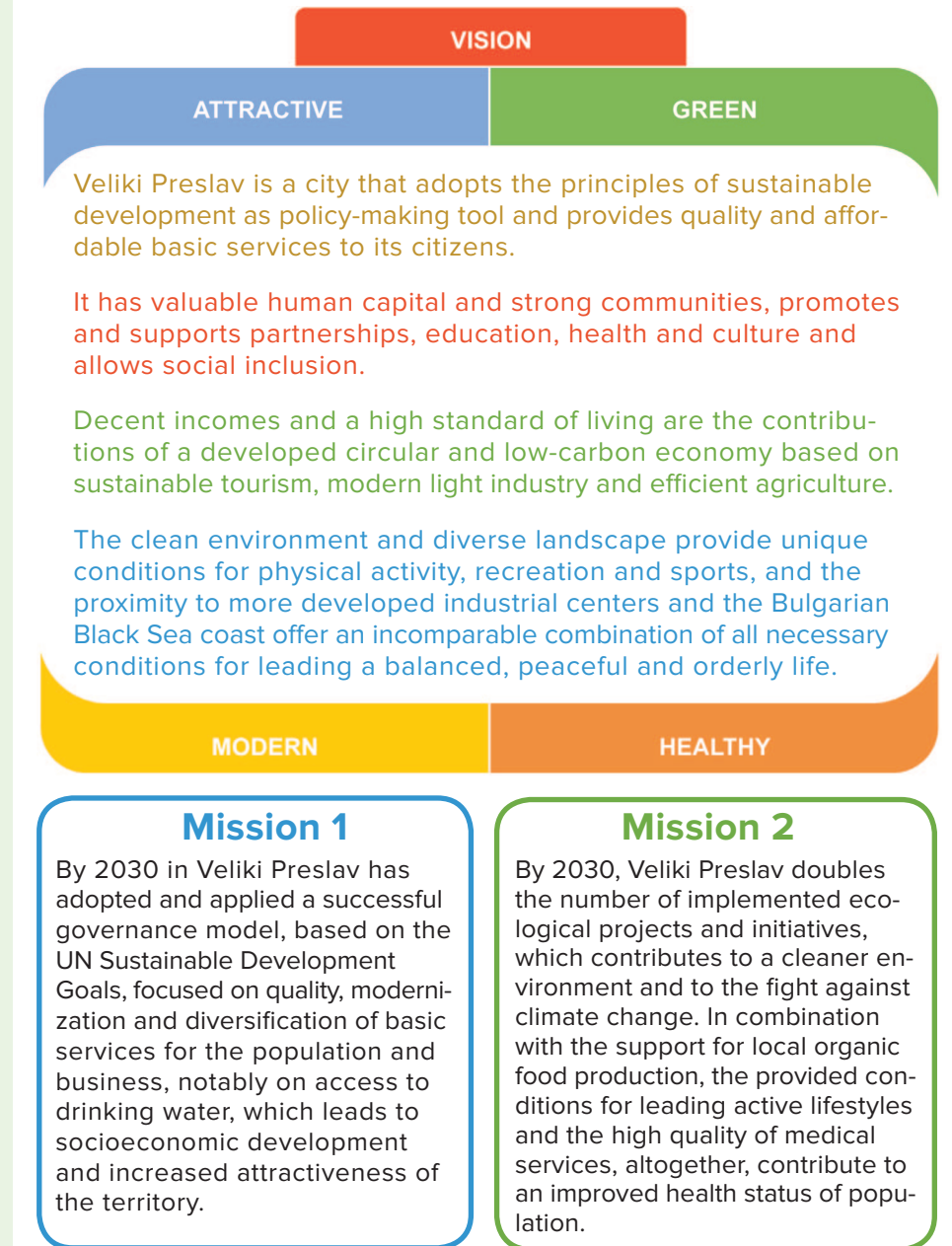
![SDG icons: 1 No Poverty, 3 Good Health and Well-Being, 7 Affordable and Clean Energy, 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, 13 Climate Action, 17 Partnerships for the Goals]

Global GOALS for Cities

Veliki Preslav's missions to become the most sustainable small city in Bulgaria

In Veliki Preslav (Bulgaria), the vision to become the most sustainable small city in Bulgaria was translated into two missions (see the figure on the right).

Photo credit: GG4C partner Veliki Preslav

VISION

ATTRACTIVE · **GREEN**

Veliki Preslav is a city that adopts the principles of sustainable development as policy-making tool and provides quality and affordable basic services to its citizens.

It has valuable human capital and strong communities, promotes and supports partnerships, education, health and culture and allows social inclusion.

Decent incomes and a high standard of living are the contributions of a developed circular and low-carbon economy based on sustainable tourism, modern light industry and efficient agriculture.

The clean environment and diverse landscape provide unique conditions for physical activity, recreation and sports, and the proximity to more developed industrial centers and the Bulgarian Black Sea coast offer an incomparable combination of all necessary conditions for leading a balanced, peaceful and orderly life.

MODERN · **HEALTHY**

Mission 1

By 2030 in Veliki Preslav has adopted and applied a successful governance model, based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, focused on quality, modernization and diversification of basic services for the population and business, notably on access to drinking water, which leads to socioeconomic development and increased attractiveness of the territory.

Mission 2

By 2030, Veliki Preslav doubles the number of implemented ecological projects and initiatives, which contributes to a cleaner environment and to the fight against climate change. In combination with the support for local organic food production, the provided conditions for leading active lifestyles and the high quality of medical services, altogether, contribute to an improved health status of population.

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Veszprém's cross-cutting mission to make a greener and more inclusive city

In Veszprém, the local stakeholder group involved in SDG localisation defined a cross-cutting mission combining some of the key challenges of the city's sustainable development and ways to improve community involvement in urban planning.

The result of carrying out this collective intelligence practice was a mission combining sustainable water management (SDG 6), multi-functional green spaces (SDG 15), natural and built heritage (SDG 11), health (SDG 3) and community involvement (SDGs 11 and 17).

Veszprém's mission was derived from their SDG story's four themes: sustainable mobility, sustainable water management, green spaces and community engagement.

Photo credit: GG4C partner city Veszprém

Mission

By 2030, Veszprém, while preserving its natural and built heritage, will significantly increase its water retention capacity and further improve the proportion, quality and functions of green spaces, involving urban communities in planning, decision-making, implementation and maintenance to improve the sense of belonging and quality of life of its inhabitants.

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Bratislava' 8 missions to deliver its long-term strategy

In Bratislava (Slovakia), the integrated action plan will contribute to implementing the city's long-term strategic plan *Bratislava 2030* through 8 missions. The city started working on localising the SDGs in 2019, when preparing the strategic plan. The SDGs provided the overarching framework for the strategy. This document was approved by the City Council in June 2022. The strategy is the first of its kind in Bratislava, and will help the city to have a more coherent way of planning and following up actions and projects. It is divided into three thematic areas, as depicted together with the respective missions.

Made for people

a city for everyone who chooses to live in it

By 2030, enhance social sustainability of the city by providing access to services and opportunities for dignified life for all, regardless of a personal circumstances or abilities.

By 2030, become an open and inclusive city for everyone by actively cooperating and involving the public in the planning and running of the city.

One city, many neighborhoods

a healthy and lively city with a scale

By 2030, implement the concept of 15-min. city, enhance accessibility of services, civic amenities and development of sustainable transport.

By 2030, develop and support the unique character of each neighbourhood and diverse local culture.

Photo credit: GG4C partner Bratislava Metropolitan Institute

By 2030, ensure conditions for healthy life and opportunities for recreation, sports and healthy lifestyle through the protection and development of green and blue infrastructure.

Preparing for the future

a proactively managed metropolis ready to face the challenges of the future

By 2030, become an economically and competently strong European metropolis that benefits from its position as the capital of Slovakia and an internationally recognized metropolis of the Central European region.

By 2030, develop efficient, transparent, and fully digitized management and operation system of the city.

By 2030, build resilience to climate change.

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Schiedam's mission to become a safe city

Some missions are focussed on solving concrete challenges identified together with local stakeholders.

This is the case in Schiedam (The Netherlands), where the local group of stakeholders helped to put SDG 16 and safety high on the local agenda.

The mission is directed at changing vulnerable neighbourhoods into strengthened communities and improving liveability in these places and, furthermore, the economic situation of these areas.

In this sense, the mission formulated by local stakeholders and partners is more specific and complementary to the policy of the municipality for a safe city. For instance, good public spaces and their functions are a pre-condition for the quality of life, liveability and therefore social cohesion.

The mission for a safe city in Schiedam is:

In 2030 citizens work together in a mutual understanding to keep every neighbourhood in Schiedam clean, intact and safe.

The mission will be carried forward both by the municipality and local stakeholders and will include a living lab approach to improving safety in targeted neighbourhoods.

Photo credit: GG4C partner city Schiedam

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Global GOALS for Cities

Governance missions for Gävle, La Rochelle Urban Community, Glasgow and Tallinn

Cities in the GG4C network who developed action plans to enable better governance by using the SDGs as a holistic and shared framework formulated missions to meet this ambition.

The four missions aimed at creating lasting change in urban governance are listed to the right. All of them are aligned with SDG 17, target 17.14: *enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.*

The advantage of formulating concrete missions even around more internal objectives is that it can help to clarify "why" we should be doing things like updating the city's sustainability indicators, training staff on the SDGs, align projects with SDGs, and raising awareness about the SDGs in the wider community.

Image credit: La Rochelle Urban Community's Integrated Action Plan. The picture shows how the SDGs help to align the strategy and priorities of the territory using the SDGs.

By 2030, **Gävle municipality** will achieve a holistic perspective on sustainable development by increasing knowledge and collaboration between municipal organizations, residents, associations and businesses'.

By 2025, **Tallinn's** vision – Green and Global – and its six strategic goals will be aligned with SDGs and all further strategic action will be applied and monitored within the SDG framework.

In 2030, the SDGs are the main definition and reference framework for sustainable development for all stakeholders of **La Rochelle Urban Community**.

By 2025, The UN Sustainable Development Goals are the main strategic framework for **Glasgow City Council** and its "Arms-Length External Organisation".

Photo credit: Patrik Vamosi, during the GG4C Transnational Meeting in Veszprém, Hungary, November 2022.

Photo credits: GG4C partner city Gävle (left) and GG4C partner city Reggio Emilia (right)

Section 2: Defining locally adapted SDG targets

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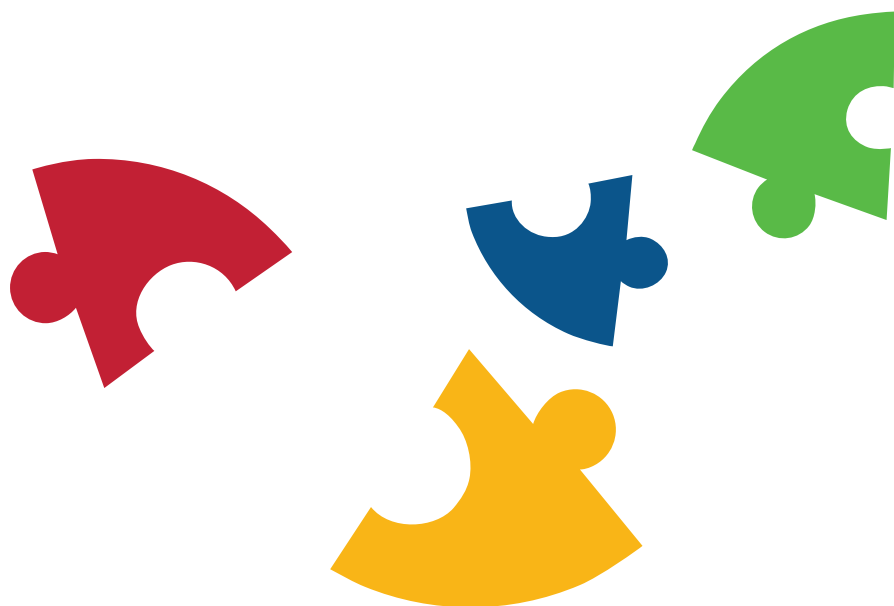
Applying the 'Intervention Logic' to action planning and SDG localisation

The URBACT method builds on so-called "intervention logic", part of the EU results framework, where specific objectives are defined together with intended results to be achieved through a set of actions. Specific Objectives should follow the "S.M.A.R.T" definition – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

Defining specific objectives and results fit well with the idea of goal-based planning to achieve the SDGs. The difference is that using the SDGs already provide the objectives to aim for. When localising the SDGs, we translate the SDG targets and indicators (results) to local realities, while staying coherent with the global framework. As such, the SDG targets can be turned into our SMART objectives.

Applying the intervention logic can be a time-consuming, complicated task, but is well worth the effort. Being serious about this step will help to understand if actions actually lead to positive change (and avoid the risk of "greenwashing"). Localising SDG targets further helps to avoid superficial SDG labelling: we are tying our actions to the SDG framework through measurable targets (more on monitoring and reporting in Module 5).

In the URBACT toolbox, the guide "Performance in Policy-Making" explains the intervention logic and the EU results framework to support city practitioners and stakeholders define measurable policy objectives as part of creating an action plan.

When working with localising the SDGs, the goals and targets already exist – what we need to do is to adapt the framework and prioritise and tailor the targets to the local context.

The image shows how the SDGs can be fitted into the standard results framework depicted in the URBACT guide.
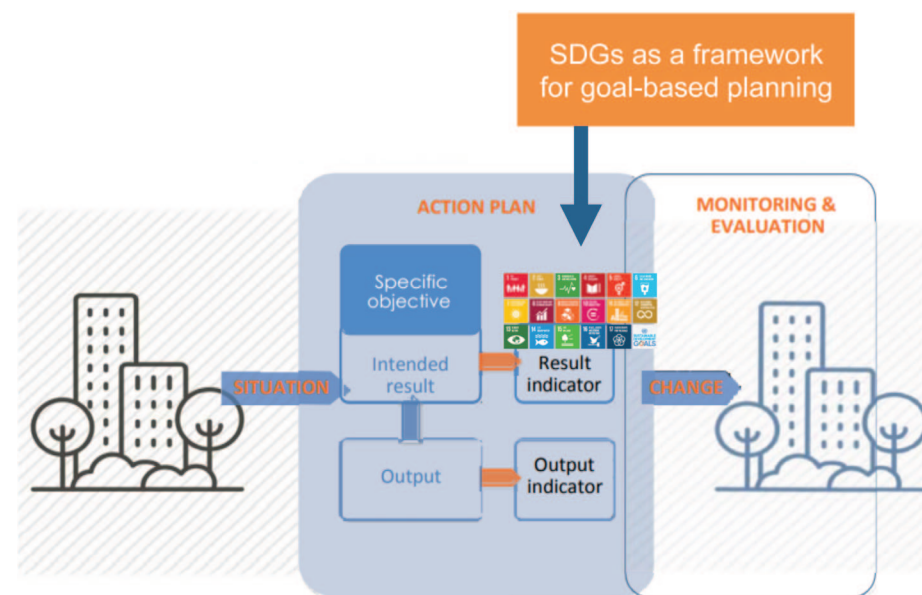
URBACT guidance on the Intervention Logic

Terminology

The terminology of results framework vary (and can trigger debates!), but tend to follow the same logic. In URBACT, the key terms used are:

- **Specific Objective:** Defines the change in a certain existing socio-economic situation that a project, programme or action plan intends to achieve.

Example: Increase the number of young people in jobs (or reduce the youth unemployment rate)

- **Intended result:** Specifies the ambition related to the Objective.

Example: Lower the youth unemployment rate to 5% by 2025

- **Result indicator:** Describes a specific aspect of a result, which can be measured, with targets to be achieved

Example: Youth unemployment rate
Baseline: 20% (2016)
Target: 5% (2025)

See: URBACT guidance on the Intervention Logic

Results Framework language and the SDGs

To translate this language into the SDGs is fairly straightforward. The below terms find their match in the SDG framework:

- **Specific Objective:** can be formulated in line with SDG targets.

- **Intended result:** measurable aspects of the SDG targets.

- **Result indicator:** SDG indicator (see Module 5 for details on this topic).

An example of SDG 1: *End poverty in all its forms everywhere*

- **SDG target 1.2 ("as" Specific Objective)**: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

- **SDG Indicator 1.2.2 ("as" Result Indicator)**: Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

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Localising SDG Targets

The SDGs were formulated for national governments. Therefore, their language reflect this. When identifying the targets we want to localise, this is where we might want to change some things.

Here follows an example of how to localise targets 13.2 and 7.3, using our results framework and intervention logic presented previously.

SDG 13, target 13.2 *Integrate climate change measures into **national** policies, strategies and plans*

SDG 7, target 7.3 By 2030, *double the **global rate** of improvement in energy efficiency*

> We need to re-formulate for the local level

SDG 13, target 13.2 *Integrate climate change measures into **local** policies, strategies and plans*

SDG 7, target 7.3 By 2030, *double the **local** rate of improvement in energy efficiency*

> These can be made SMART-er (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound)

Locally adapted SDG targets

SDG 13, target 13.2 ***Reduce the municipality's carbon footprint by integrating** climate change measures into local policies, strategies and plans*

SDG 7, target 7.3 By 2030, *double the **local** rate of improvement in energy efficiency **in all municipal buildings***

> Remember that working with results frameworks is never fully "black or white". You're likely to come across different opinions. Us them to engage in dialogue and improve.

Outputs vs. Intended Results

When doing action planning and working with results frameworks, there is an important distinction to be made between the intended results to be achieved, and the concrete outputs that are produced by carrying out an action – "what money buys".

Often, people think of results as "what has been done". This is incorrect in this context. The result is the change created, linked to the objectives (locally adapted targets) of the plan. The following example illustrates this logic for the localised SDG targets 13.2 and 7.3.

Locally adapted SDG targets

13.2 Reduce the municipality's carbon footprint by integrating climate change measures into local policies, strategies and plans

7.3 By 2030, double the local rate of improvement in energy efficiency in all municipal buildings

Intended results – link to the SDG targets

The CO_2 emissions directly produced by the municipality is reduced by 50% by 2025

100% increase in energy efficiency in all municipal buildings by 2030

Outputs and actions

Outputs refer to the stuff created, the physical products of implementing actions in the action plan, whereas the results are the changes outcome for society. Find more on this topic in Module 5.

Action: Revise local policies, strategies and plans to include at least one measure to reduce CO_2 emissions.

Action: Carry out energy efficiency measures for the municipal building stock.

Output: Number of local policies, strategies and plans revised.

Output: Number and square metres of municipal building that have been energy retrofitted.

Putting it together

Recalling the structure of the Integrated Action Plan canvas, this is how the different pieces presented in this module fit together.

LOCALLY ADAPTED SDG TARGETS
Example

SDG 13, target 13.2: *Integrate climate change measures into local policies, strategies and plans.*

Intended result: The CO_2 emissions directly produced by the municipality is reduced by 50% by 2025.

ACTIONS
Example

Action: Revise all local policies, strategies and plans to include at least one measure to reduce CO_2 emissions.

Output: Number of local policies, strategies and plans revised.

VISION
Example

Water sources are protected

The city is open and transparent

VISION SDG STORY

The city will have achieved carbon neutrality

The city is Age-friendly

MISSIONS
Example

Strong cross-sector and inter-generational partnerships with successful local demonstrator projects ensure that carbon neutrality is achieved by 2030, protecting the most vulnerable people during the transition.

Full size Integrated Action Plan canvas

Global **GOALS** *for Cities*

Trim's mission and actions for equitable access to public and community spaces

The image to the right shows the intervention logic developed for Trim (Ireland) related to their mission to ensure that by 2030 all citizens and residents of Trim will have equitable access to inclusive, biodiverse, public and community spaces.

The two complementary specific objectives are linked to multiple SDGs, highlighting their interconnected nature. At the same time, the objectives are formulated in a way to especially reflect targets 16.7 and 11.7, namely:

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

11.7 – By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities
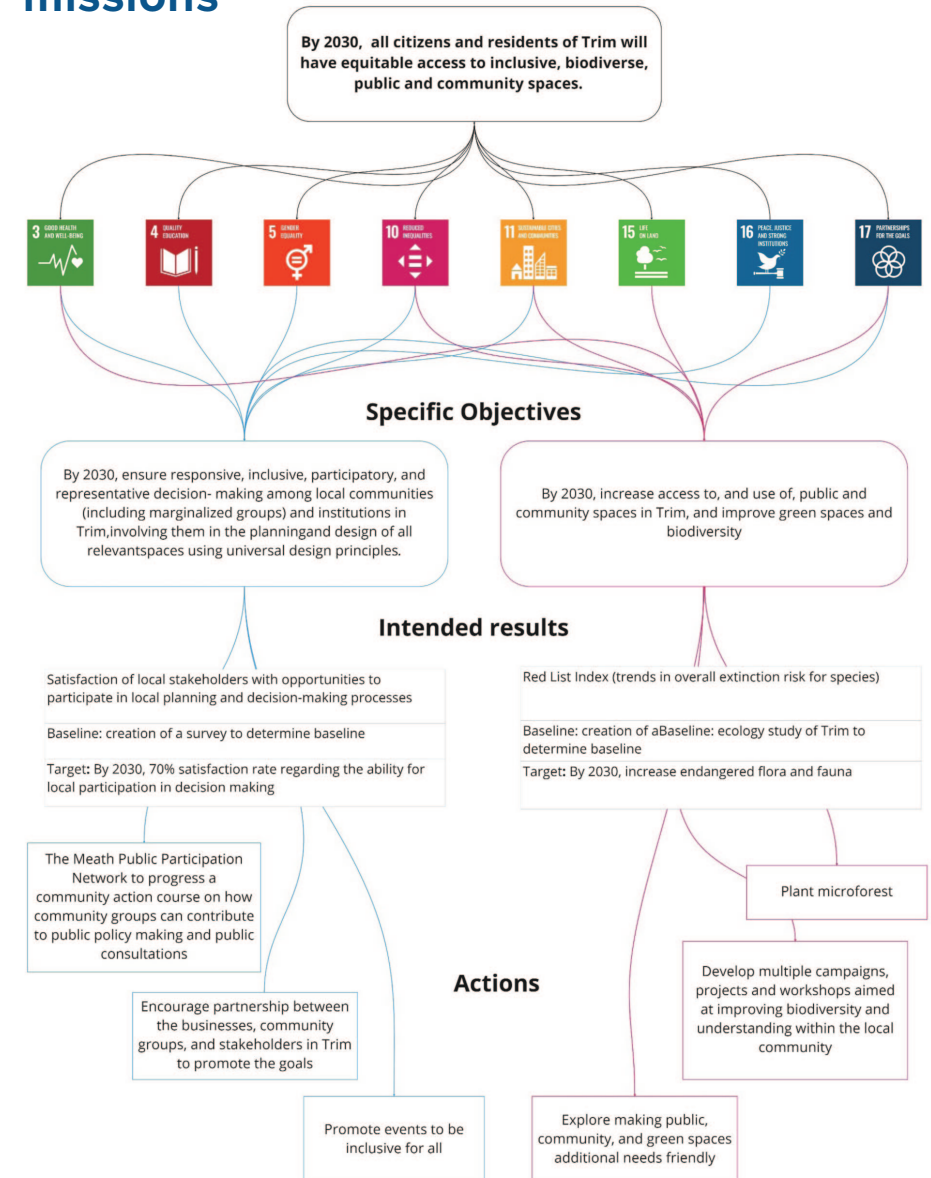
Intervention logic for one of Trim's missions

Photo credits: GG4C partner cities Reggio Emilia (top left), La Rochelle Urban Community (upper right), Veliki Preslav (bottom left) and Tallinn (lower left)

Section 3: co-creating actions

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Co-creating actions
Evaluate ongoing and past actions

To identify actions to fulfil the vision, missions and locally adapted SDG targets, it is useful to look back at what has already been done in the city previously, what has worked, what has not, and why.

The Vision Wheel exercise explained in Section 1 of this module already provides an initial mapping of existing initiatives to build on, and gaps to be filled.

In the next steps, starting with an inventory helps to gain more clarity of what actions have worked and not in the past:

What has been done in the last 5 years relevant to the missions(s)?	What have been the barriers?
What has worked well?	What has been missing?

Using an online software with "likes" and comment functions can also help to make the inventory participatory (e.g. Padlet.com)

Collect new ideas: Action Sheet

To collect new ideas for actions that could contribute to the mission(s), GG4C partner La Rochelle Urban Community prepared a simple Action Sheet (using canva.com) to gather inputs from local stakeholders.

MISSION CHOSEN:

Organisation (or municipal service):

Reference person:

Nature of the foreseen action:

What are the objectives of the foreseen action?

How do you plan to achieve the objectives of the foreseen action? (resources, means...)

Relevant SDGs and Targets

Which partners do you think should be involved in the implementation of the action? ?

The action sheet in PDF

Impact-Feasibility grid

To prioritise actions collectively, drawing up an impact-feasibility assessment grid can help to hold a dialogue about the potential impact and feasibility of an action.

The goal is to take actions forward that are both feasible and impactful (the "transformative potential" in the upper right), and perhaps consider eliminating action ideas that are estimated to have low feasibility and impact (lower left quadrant). This can help to be more strategic and avoid creating a long wish-list of actions.

The guiding questions and labels on each axis can be tailored to the local context. In the example to the right, which is designed to analyse potential actions for one mission at a time:

- The y-Axis depicts feasibility in relation to support from local actors, political momentum and likelihood of having adequate resources.

- The x-Axis evaluates systemic and cross-sectoral impact by considering whether an initiative considers multiple dimension of sustainability, generates co-benefits to different sectors and involves beneficiaries in the design and implementation of actions.

Impact-feasibility grid in PDF

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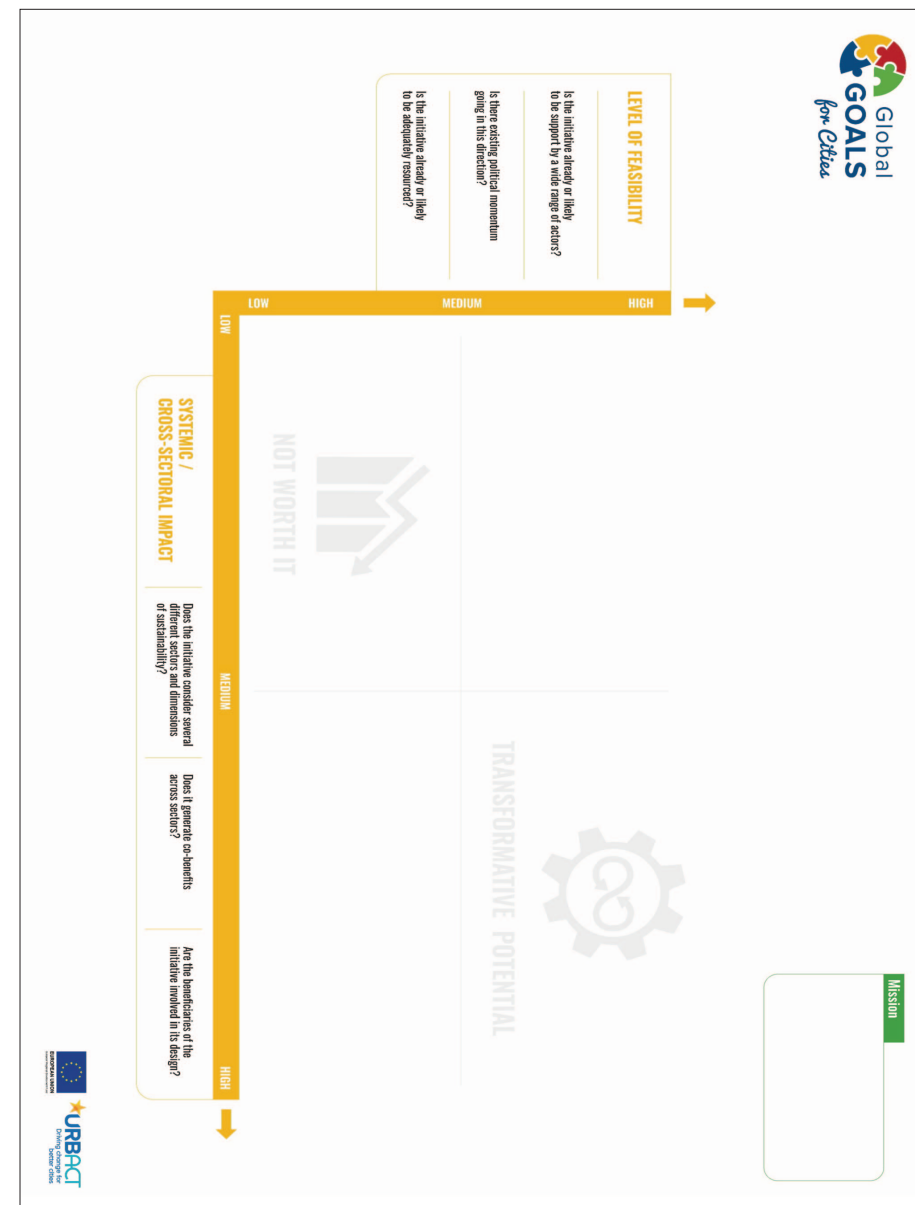
The Action Table

Once the action ideas have been prioritised and selected, it is time to work out the details of how they will be implemented.

The Action Tables in the URBACT toolbox provide helpful guidance on the aspects to consider in order to make actions implementation-ready. This includes considering the resources needed (financial and other), who will lead the action, partners that will be involved, activities that will be carried out to deliver the action, etc.

The Action table co-developed by the GG4C partners using the URBACT guidance is presented to the right. It includes many of the elements included in the intervention logic presented in Section 2 of this module.

Word version of the GG4C Action Table

URBACT Action Tables with instructions.

URBACT action table

URBACT refining an action table

Mission				
Specific Objective Locally adapted SDG target			**Intended Results** Indicators and Targets	
Action title	**Most impacted SDGs**	**Action Outputs** Indicators and Targets	**Link to other local objectives and KPIs**	**Monitoring**
Description	**Key stakeholders**	**Readiness and timescale**	**Resources and implementation**	
	Lead actor		**Funding sources**	
	Partners		**Financial resources**	
			Staff	
	Impacted stakeholders		**Other assets**	
Action type	**Link to other actions**	**Activities**		
• Strategic: direct link to city strategy		**Activities**	**Dates**	**Activity Outputs**
• Tactical: project plan/action plan				
• Operational: part of daily practice				
• Pilot experiment: small scale action				
• Other				

Integration Assessment Grid
A peer review or self-assessment tool

Once the action tables have been filled out, they provide a lot of information that can be analysed in order to see if different types of integration in the plan can be strengthened (see Module 2 for an explanation of the types of integration in the URBACT method).

To do this, the URBACT toolbox includes the Integration Assessment Grid, where the types of integration can be assessed and scored 1 to 5. To right is the integration assessment grid used for the GG4C network, adding the SDG impact and intervention logic elements to the assessment grid.

The way the tool is used is: go through the "description" of each type of integration, and consider whether the information presented in an action table (or action plan) under review is "strong" (5) or relatively weak (1).

GG4C version of the Integration
Assessment Grid

City: Action number:

Types of integration	Description	Strengths	Areas of improvement	Score (1-5)
Policy / Sector	- Integrate economic, social and environmental challenges. - Join up solutions and minimize the effects of negative externalities - NEW: consider cross-cutting areas like climate and gender equality			
Horizontal	- Develop partnerships at local level. - Bring together all of the main actors around a challenge.			
Vertical	- Align policies, interventions and funding upwards. - Vertical chain of governance - Ensure coherence and build scale			
Territorial	- Ensure cooperation takes places between adjacent municipalities in functional urban areas. - Minimise edge effects and displacement of problems			
Hard and soft investments	- Integrate physical investments with human resources in urban regeneration. - For instance, ERDF + ESF - Avoid silos			
Other aspects				
SDG Impact	- Identify most relevant SDG targets impacted by the action - SDGs are from across dimensions (5 Ps)			
Intervention logic	- The specific objective is aligned with at least one SDG target - Result indicators have been identified - The distinction between results and outputs is clear			FINAL SCORE:

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# Reggio Emilia's integrated actions shaping active mobility

One of Reggio Emilia's missions is: *By 2030, improving citizens participation and social relations by enhancing places and paths, with particular attention to environmental sustainability*.

The actions under this mission aim to:

- Expand the network of urban and peri-urban paths (pedestrian and bicycle) for sustainable mobility;

- Ensuring that people in Reggio Emilia have relevant information and awareness of sustainable development and lifestyles through cultural and educational activities.

The actions involve a wide range of stakeholders and balance social and environmental dimensions of sustainability well. It demonstrates an integrated approach to urban sustainable development (see the diagram to the right). The actions can also be linked to several SDGs and targets. For example, a multi-stakeholder working group is set up to identify the paths to be activated (SDG 11.3, SDG 16.7), expanding the connection on accessible routes between places in the city (SDG 11.6), with special attention to protect biodiversity (SDG 15.5) and tackle climate change (SDG 13.2).

Stakeholder involved in delivering new urban paths in Reggio Emilia mapped onto the URBACT framework for integrated sustainable urban development.
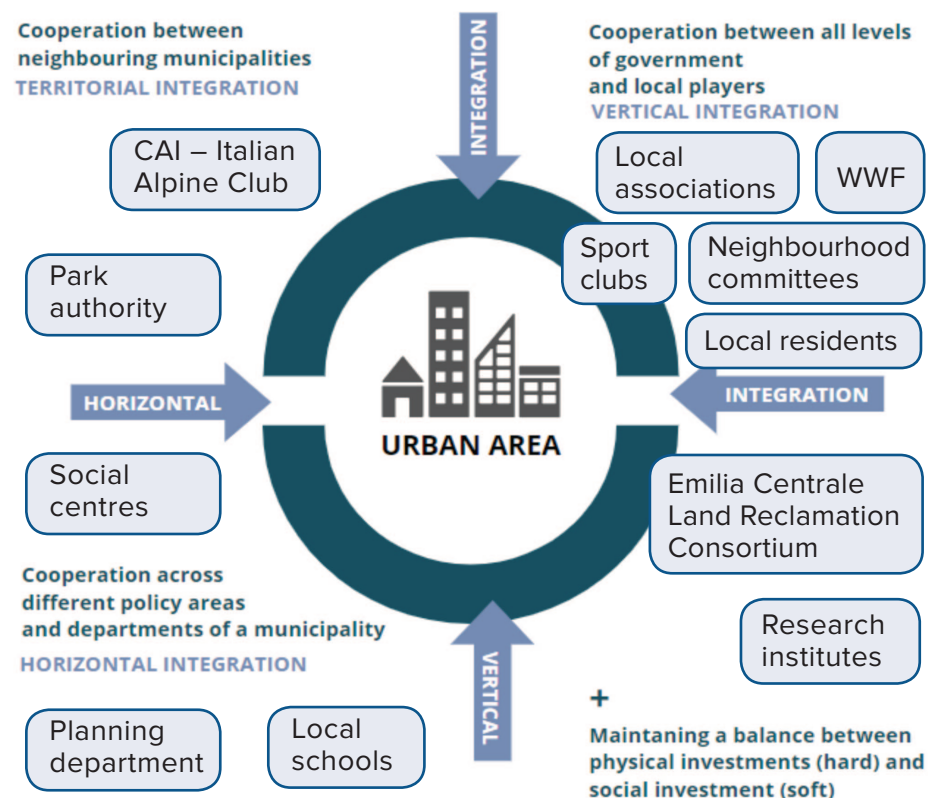
Four of the most impacted SDGs identified for the mission and actions for new urban paths.

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Solingen's actions to accelerate achievement of SDG 11

In Solingen (Germany), a Sustainability Strategy aligned with the SDGs was adopted in 2018, structured around 6 topics with strategic and operational goals guiding the city's sustainable development. Their next challenge after adopting the strategy was: how to deal with implementation and ensure impact?

Following the URBACT integrated action planning approach to localise the SDGs piloted by the GG4C network, Solingen identified opportunities to strengthen their strategy implementation by creating missions and actions aligned with SDG targets.

The example to the right shows how Solingen localises SDG target 11.1 and plans three actions to achieve it. The mission on top provides a shared direction, while the locally adapted target 11.1 makes the desired outcome clear. The intended results show measurable aspects of the target.

Following this approach helps to plan for "real" impact towards the SDGs, avoiding empty claims or SDG "labelling", since it follows the intervention logic.

Mission

Solingen is a barrier-free city in all respects in 2030
(refers to the topic "social participation" in the Sustainability Strategy)

Specific Objective – Locally adapted SDG target

By 2030, ensure access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing for everyone in Solingen.

SDG target 11.1. By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums

Intended results

A: Accelerate the provision of affordable housing to eligible persons.

B: Increase the percentage of residents who rate their housing situation (quality of housing, availability of services and amenities, etc.) as adequate.

C: Increase placements in rental housing stock of residents of homeless facilities.

Actions

A: Housing programme "More for Less"
B: "Living in old age" quality campaign
C: Action programme "Out of the shelter".

Together with the partners in the housing market (housing associations, private landlords, rental companies, interest groups of tenants as well as homeowners/landlords) and the participating municipal services, the supply of sufficient, appropriate and affordable housing is to be expanded continuously and significantly.

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La Rochelle Urban Community's action for responsible boating

La Rochelle's integrated action plan focuses on SDG challenges that have been identified together with key stakeholders. In La Rochelle Urban Community, there is a strong priority to achieve a climate neutral territory by 2040, through its zero carbon project. In this context, using the SDGs is considered both as a lever for climate action and a way to strengthen local partnerships and support the systemic changes necessary to achieve their ambition, leaving no one behind. Localising the SDGs has facilitated the local administration to engage with a broader set of stakeholders compared to those mainly interested in the zero carbon project.

The action table to the right depicts an action on responsible boating, where La Rochelle Marina and local NGOs working on education will put in resources to contribute to the sustainable future of the territory and contribute to SDG 14: Life Below Water.

The action table shows a clear distinction between the results aimed for – e.g. quality bathing water of the three beaches of La Rochelle city – and the outputs of what is going to be done: promoting responsible boating through events, meetings and support actions.

Mission

In 2040, La Rochelle Urban Community and its partners are taking significant action to protect and regenerate the territory's natural ecosystems and water resources, while meeting the essential needs of its inhabitants in terms of health, housing and living environment

Specific Objective

Prevent and reduce marine pollution (in particular from nautical activities)

Intended results

● Sanitary quality of bathing water (of the 3 beaches of La Rochelle City) **Target:** always obtain the 'excellent quality' classification of La Rochelle's bathing waters for four years in a row (2023-2026)	● Renewal of the French certification "clean harbours active in biodiversity" **Target:** Renewal of the French certification "clean harbours active in biodiversity" in 2023 and 2026

Most impacted SDGs

SDG 14.1, 14.2 (marine pollution, protection of coastal and maritime ecosystems) SDG 17.17 (multi-stakeholder partnership for sustainable development) SDG 6.4 (sustainable management of water resources)	SDG 8.7 (sustainable tourism) SDG 3.9 (environmental health) SDG 12.4 (ecological management of chemicals); 12.5 (waste reduction), 12.6 (CSR), 12.8 (training and environmental information).

Action: Supporting stakeholders for responsible boating

The action aims at going beyond the already existing awareness of the users and actors of the Marina on the environmental stakes linked to nautical activities. The objective is to accompany towards more respectful behaviours of the marine ecosystems and to train the actors of the nautical sector by relying on change management methodologies that have been tried and tested in other areas (food, mobility, biodiversity, etc.) and adapting them to the specific issues of responsible boating (pollution at sea, waste, health impacts, etc.).

Outputs

● Number of events and meetings during which support actions for the actors were provided **Target:** 1 event in 2023 for the test phase (Nautical Week); 2 to 3 events/ year in the following years	● Number of boaters and companies in the marina that benefited from these actions **Target:** Awareness-raising actions: 50 boaters. For change management support: 10-15 people.

Lead actor (action owner)	Partners	Impacted stakeholders
The La Rochelle Marina and the local NGOs *ECOLE de la Mer association ('SEA School')* / *P'tits Deb association*	Boaters' Association	Boaters, tourist, residents of La Rochelle City

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Heraklion's ambition to become a responsible tourist destination

In Heraklion (Crete, Greece), integrating prioritized SDGs into the planning processes and practices of the Municipality is expected to integrate environmental, social and economic sustainability within the development potential of the city, further supporting its effective boost.

In this context, the Municipality recognises the crucial role of local businesses in sustainable development, complementing the policies of a Municipality to achieve SDGs. The integration of SDGs by the Municipality of Heraklion is expected to highlight business opportunities both in the dynamic fields of the local economy (tourism, culture) and in emerging fields (waste management, combined travel, promotion of the Municipality, connection with inland, agri-food, etc.).

The example of an action table from Heraklion's Integrated Action Plan shown to the right highlights one way in which the Municipality plans to support local businesses to become more sustainable, directly contributing to SDG 12: *responsible consumption and production*. As captured in the mission statement, this is expected to strengthen its capacity for sustainable economic growth.

Mission

Strengthening the capacity for sustainable economic growth, by 2030

Specific Objective

By 2030, significantly reduce food waste from local restaurants and taverns.

Intended results

Reduced food waste in restaurants, taverns, etc.

- **Results indicator:** Food waste per firm. **Target**: under definition.

Most impacted SDGs

SDG 12.3: By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

Action: Supporting stakeholders for responsible boating

- Training programmes to professionals about waste prevention, waste separation and prevention of litter.
- Distribution of composters to professionals.

The action aims to engage relevant stakeholders towards (a) the planning and execution of training programmes for professionals about waste prevention, waste separation and prevention of litter; (b) procurement and distribution of home composters to professionals. Specific plans for execution of the two strands of activities under the action will be developed, which will help include the development of targets for the results and output indicators.

Outputs

Training programmes about waste prevention, waste separation and prevention of litter	Distributed of composters to professionals
Output indicator: Number of firms informed. **Target:** under definition	**Output indicator:** Composters distributed to professionals. **Target:** under definition

Link to other strategies and plans

The Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Heraklion
The Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Heraklion for the "Resilient City"
The Local Strategic Plan for Lifelong Learning "Heraklion – The Learning City"
The Sustainable Energy Action Plan of the Municipality of Heraklion, in the framework of the "Covenant of Mayors" for climate change
The Local Waste Management Plan of Heraklion

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Acknowledgements and Credits for Module 4

The majority of this Module is based on the URABCT method and toolbox for sustainable integrated urban development. In particular, Sections 2 and 3 on defining locally adapted targets has been built based on URBACT's Performance in Policy-Making guidance.

- See: https://urbact.eu/toolbox-home/performance-policy-making.

The Vision Wheel and the Integrated Action Plan Canvas and the related methodology for defining missions have been developed by Stina Heikkilä, Lead Expert for the URBACT Global Goals for Cities network and Raphaël Pouyé, URBACT Ad Hoc Expert and Country Director France for the organisation Democratic Society (DemSoc.org). It builds on previous work done under their joint initiative Saga Partners.

- The Vision Wheel and the Integrated Action Plan Canvas are available open source, under the license Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0). https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

- If the tools are used and updated, attribution shall be given to URBACT, Global Goals for Cities and the authors mentioned.

The definition of missions for the SDG Action Planning process has been inspired by the leading work by Mariana Mazzucato and UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose on mission-oriented approaches. In particular, the following resources have provided great inspiration to this module:

- Mazzucato, M. (2021). Mission economy: *A moonshot guide to changing capitalism*. Penguin UK.

- Conway, Rowan, et al. (2022). "Mission-oriented innovation in action: 2021 casebook". UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose with support from the Rockefeller Foundation.

- Miedzinski, M., Mazzucato, M., & Ekins, P. (2019). "A framework for mission-oriented innovation policy road-mapping for the SDGs: the case of plastic-free oceans". UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose Working Papers.

Examples from Global Goals for Cities partners are based on the results from their participation in the URBACT project. For a full list of names by city, please see the Acknowledgements in Module 0.

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