NET ZERO CITIES

EU MISSION PLATFORM | CLIMATE NEUTRAL AND SMART CITIES



EU CITIES MISSION

The Communication Playbook



A guide to help you communicate your work with the EU Cities Mission and with NetZeroCities

Funded by the European Union

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The Communication Playbook

A guide to help you communicate your work with the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities

NetZeroCities has received funding from the H2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement n°101036519.

Table of contents

1. Summary
2. Communicating Climate Action
    1. Tips and Best Practices to get your Messages Accross
    2. Additional Resources for Communicating Climate Action
3. Tools to Promote your Work
    1. How to communicate as a Mission City
    2. How to communicate as a Pilot or Enabling City Transformation project
    3. The Elevator Pitch
    4. The Pitching Slides Deck
    5. The Visual Bank
4. About the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities
    1. About the EU Cities Mission
    2. About NetZeroCities
5. Get your stories featured across NetZeroCities channels!
6. More to come!

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1. Summary

The work that you are doing with the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities is key to fighting climate change and its consequences at the local level. It requires involving many stakeholders in the process: including citizens, local companies, civil society representatives and all the urban stakeholders in your city. Their participation on the climate neutrality journey is critical for success.

Yet, communicating climate issues and the responses to address them can be challenging.

This playbook aims to provide you with the materials and guidance you need to communicate your work as part of the EU Cities Mission.

It is a tool for you to **create buy-in and enthusiasm both with municipality stakeholders** (politicians, senior decision-makers, civil servants including the multiple city departments, etc.), **with local stakeholders** (citizens, local businesses, local public organisations, groups and associations, local funders, etc.) **and external stakeholders** (other regional authorities, stakeholders at national level, potential non-local funders, etc.).

In this playbook, you will find communication materials and guidance to help you communicate your work in an effective and inspiring way.

The playbook provides you with an **elevator pitch**, that is to say a short description of what the Mission and NetZeroCities are about and how these help your city in reaching climate neutrality. The pitch comes with a series of **specific messages tailored for several audience types**, and an **editable slides deck** for you to present your work.

The playbook includes a **visual bank**, with graphics that explain the core features of NetZeroCities in a **simple and visual way** and customisable visuals for you to use across all communication channels. **Texts to describe the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities** in press releases and official communications are also provided.

The playbook is designed to evolve over time, matching the evolution of your needs throughout your climate neutrality journey. It will be updated on a regular basis to provide you with additional resources tailored to your communication goals.

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2. Communicating Climate Action

A few tips and recommendations to get started



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Communicating Climate Action

Tips and best practices to get your messages accross

- **Be honest and positive about change** – yes, addressing climate change at city level is challenging. Be honest that the process of change is not linear and demands patience and commitment. Yet, it is also an opportunity to change everyone's life positively in your city: make sure to let people know!

- **Focus on the local challenges and solutions…** – people tend to be more receptive to what is perceived as close to them and to what can concretely make a difference in their lives than to what is perceived as far-away problems. Use co-benefits to translate climate action at the local, and even personal level.

- **– but also link your local work to global issues at stake** to show how your actions fit into the bigger picture.

- **It is about people** – your city's actions to achieve climate neutrality are undertaken by people and benefit people. To make your actions relatable, showcasing human beings rather than abstract concepts and figures is key.

- **Use success stories and examples** – when people have examples of other places where something is working, they tend to be more open to change.

- **Use plain and simple language** – catchy phrases, humorous tone, and the simplest language as possible are the best ways to reach a wider audience and translate complex technical information.

- **Use images and stories** – attractive visuals and a good story are generally more effective to catch people's attention and inspire action compared to technical information and the display of complex data.



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Additional Resources for Communicating Climate Action

Communicating climate action in a clear, engaging, and actionable way is necessary but not always easy. Here you can find a selection of communication resources that you can use to best communicate on climate change-related issues:

Resources:

"*Communicating the Climate Crisis*", ClimateXChange. **Link**.

"*Climate Visuals: Seven Principles for Visual Climate Change Communication*", 2016, Climate Outreach. **Link**.

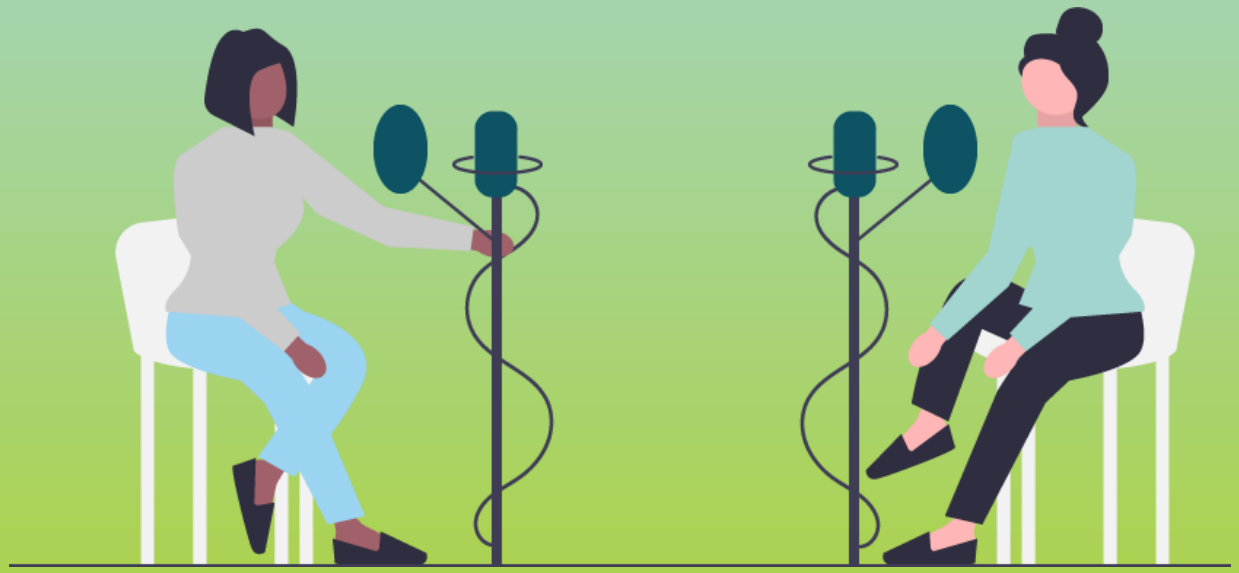
"12 Tools for Communicating Climate Change More Effectively", 2015, The Guardian. **Link**.

"*Principles for effective communication and public engagement on climate change - A Handbook for IPCC authors*", 2018, Climate Outreach. **Link**.

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3. Tools to Promote your Work

Communicate your climate neutrality journey as a Mission City



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You are communicating as a Mission City

Let your audience know that your city is one of 112 European cities committed to reaching climate neutrality by 2030

Use the visual in your :

- Social Media Posts
- Email headers
- Website pages and articles
- As an illustration in documents

You can customise the visual :

- With your city's name
- Modify the picture to showcase your city



Download the editable visual here

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You are communicating as a Mission City

Events are great opportunities to promote your work

You can print this editable banner and use it for a variety of purposes

Use the banner in your :

- Conferences and roundtables
- Fairs, expos and congresses
- EU Cities Mission related events

You can customise the visual :

- With your city's name
- Modify the picture to showcase your city



Download the editable visual here

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Flyer template for Mission cities

You can use this editable flyer template to showcase your work within the Mission

Use the flyer in your :

- Conferences and roundtables
- Fairs, expos and congresses
- EU Cities Mission related events

You can customise the document :

- With your city's name
- Information about your emissions
- With the projects you want to showcase
- Modify the pictures to showcase your city
- Modify the colours where indicated





Download the editable visual here

NetZeroCities has received funding from the H2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement n°101036519.

You are communicating as Pilot and Enabling City Transformation project

If your activity is funded through NetZeroCities, your visual materials should include:

- **The EU emblem and funding acknowledgement (download here)**
- **The logo of the activity**
- **The logo of NetZeroCities (without the tagline if there is not enough space)**



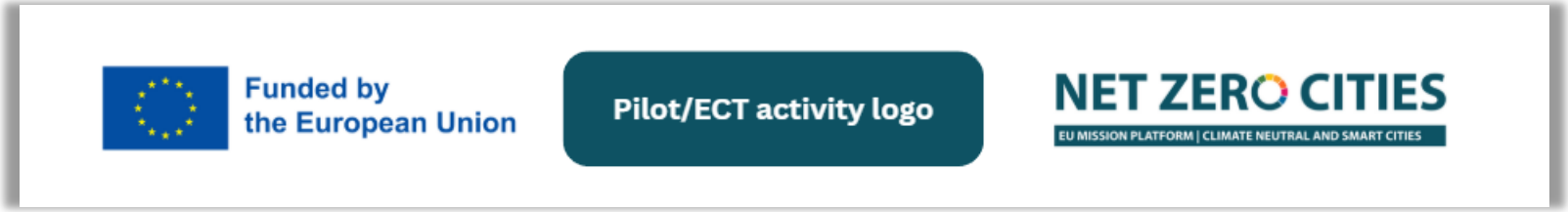
The NetZeroCities logo placement should never appear as if NetZeroCities is leading your pilot, nor as if you were speaking on behalf of NetZeroCities or the Mission.

For co-branding with external organisations logos, make sure all logos have equal and balanced visual weight and align them with each other horizontally.

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Communicating as Pilot and Enabling City Transformation project

Examples Funded by the EU



Logo placement horizontal version



Logo placement vertical version



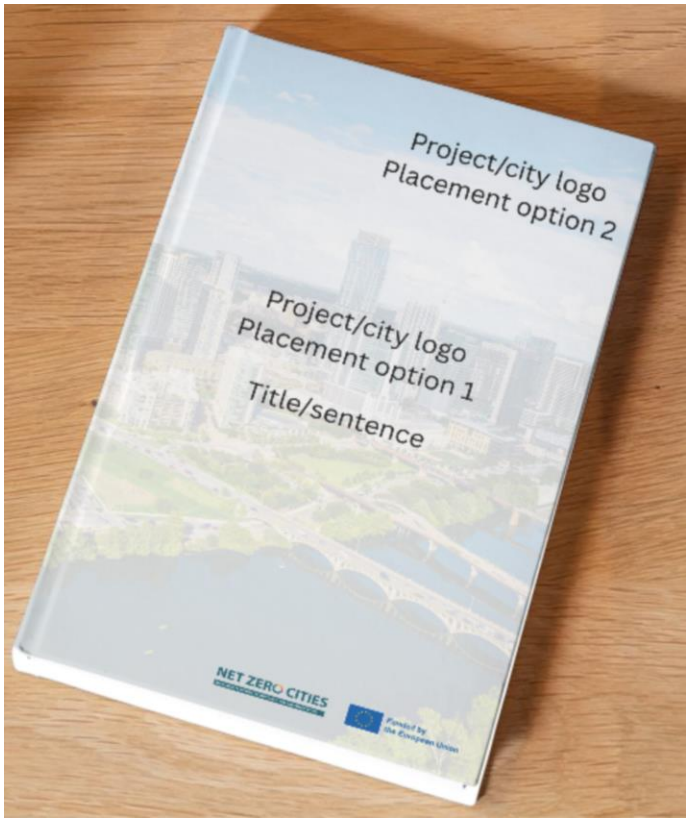
Title slide display example

- All the logos and disclaimer are available here
- EU emblem and funding acknowledgment

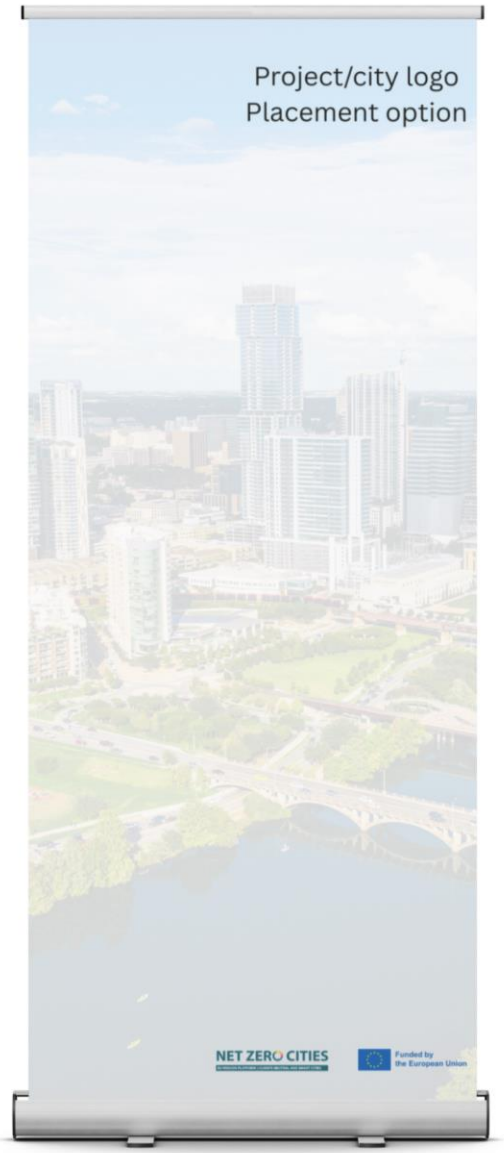
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A few inspirations

Brochure, totebag, roll-up







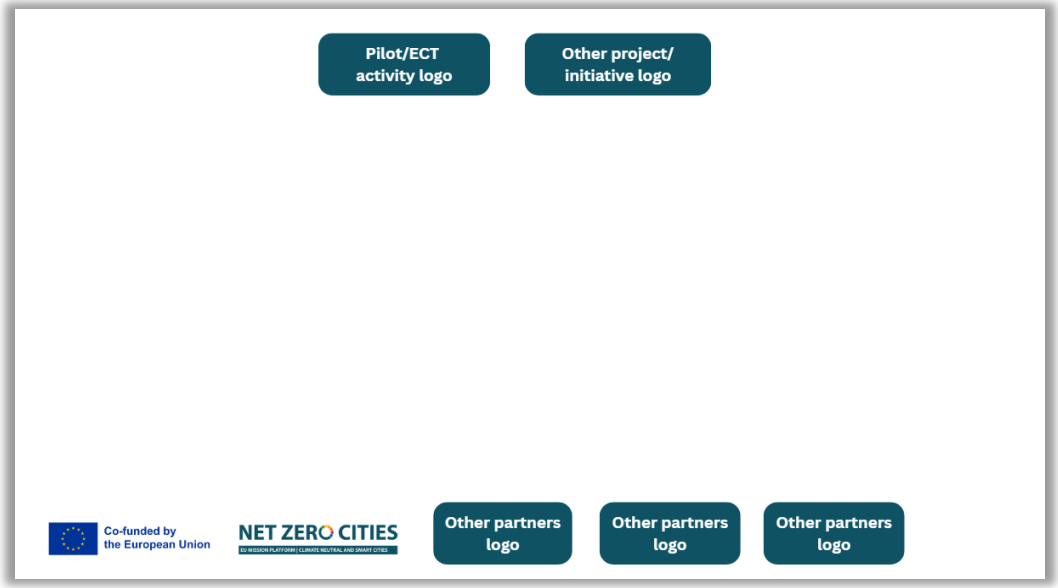
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Communicating as Pilot and Enabling City Transformation project

Examples co-funded by the EU/co-branding



Logo placement vertical version



Logo placement slide presentation

- All the logos and disclaimer are available here
- EU emblem and funding acknowledgment

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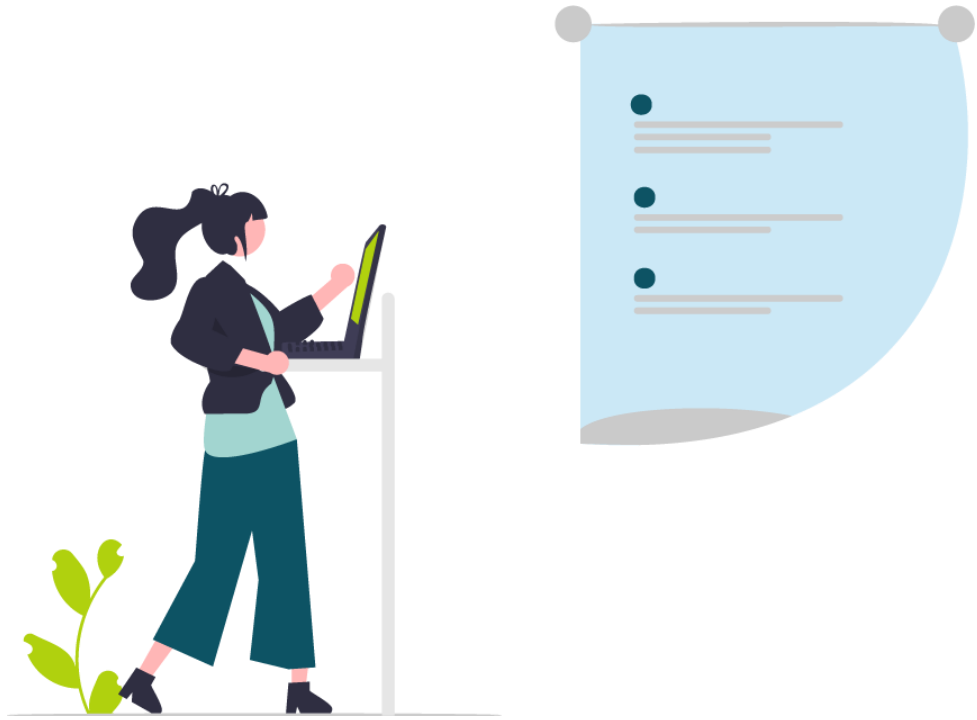
The Elevator Pitch

Present your work with the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities in a simple way

Have you ever wondered how to present something complex in just a few sentences?

The elevator pitch is a short and simple presentation of what being part of the EU Cities Mission and receiving support from NetZeroCities means for your city: why it matters, how it forms part of a global movement of more than 100 cities, and what your city is working on to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

The pitch comes with **additional keywords to present NetZeroCities to specific audiences**. This will enable you to easily tailor your presentation and wording depending on the type of person or group that you want to embark in your city's climate neutrality journey.



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The Elevator Pitch

Climate change is affecting all of us and change is inevitable. Staying passive and coping with consequences is not an option. We can drive the type of change to save us and create a secure and prosperous future for all.

We know technical innovations won't be enough. We need to transform the way we live and work. Only a collective effort will be up to the task. We will succeed by doing it all together, in unprecedented collaborations and collective efforts around the core challenges on the table.

By joining the EU Cities Mission, we are rallying with other ambitious European cities to become the first 100 cities to reach climate-neutrality by 2030. With the support of the Mission Platform managed by NetZeroCities, we are accelerating this transformation by testing new ways of working and funding our collective action, figuring out the tough questions together with experts and peers.

We are mobilising a strong cross-sectoral team to lead and champion this change, rethinking our role, radically reshaping the way we do finance, procurement and collaboration.

This collective undertaking helps us build a better future for all in our city. Beyond climate, it is also positively changing the way we live and work by improving transport, buildings, energy systems, our health, and more. To achieve this, we are partnering with businesses, citizens and local actors, multiplying the number of actors with us on this journey.



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The Elevator Pitch

Adapting your speech to several audience types

Citizens

Joining the EU Cities Mission is a chance for our city to be at the forefront of climate action. We want to transition to climate neutrality in an inclusive way, leaving no one behind. We are at work to build a better city and improve daily lives for all in terms of transport, energy, health, and more. You are needed to make this transition a success! Citizens are being consulted to integrate their needs and ideas at every step of the way.

Private Sector

Joining the EU Cities Mission is a chance for our city to be at the forefront of climate action. Be a frontrunner: you have the power to contribute to building the future of cities and open new business opportunities. To achieve climate neutrality by 2030, we need to align our goals and efforts, and to work together.

Elected Officials & Heads of Department within your city

Elected Officials

Joining the EU Cities Mission is the chance for our city to be at the forefront of climate action in Europe. We are part of an ambitous transformative movement of cities, showing the way forward towards an inclusive, thriving, climate resilient and sustainable future. This helps our city transition to climate neutrality in an integrated and inclusive way, reconnecting with citizens and engaging the private sector. Being part of the Mission is driving funding opportunities and investment, enabling a fair transition that benefits both the climate and social cohesion.

Heads of Departments

Joining the EU Cities Mission is the chance for our city to be at the forefront of climate action in Europe. With the support from NetZeroCities, we are getting access to expertise and tools to help us approach climate action in a systemic way. This helps breaking down silos and working across teams to accelerate our transition to climate neutrality. It is also the opportunity to learn from other cities, sharing knowledge and acting faster together.

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Pitching deck

Slides to present your work with the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities

We have prepared a **visual support to the elevator pitch** for you to present and mobilise resources and actors around the EU Cities Mission. From the need to accelerate climate action in your city to joining the EU Cities Mission and getting support from NetZeroCities, the **pitching deck** covers some of the key steps of your work as a Mission City.

The deck is editable and can be fully customised to best assist you in presenting your journey towards 2030 climate neutrality.



Download the editable slides **here**.



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How to use the Pitching Deck?

- This deck is the **first part of a visual kit**, along with a **visual bank** where you will find the graphic elements used in the deck. It is meant as an **editable presentation for you to reuse and modify as needed** to present your city's selection as a Mission City and what this means.
- **Text and figures can be directly edited** in the template to adapt them to your local context. If you need or want to **use our graphic elements directly in your own presentations**, then your visual designers might want to use the visual bank directly.
- Download the deck now! **Link**

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For all Language Translations of the Elevator Pitch Slides

- **Please find all translations at this link.**

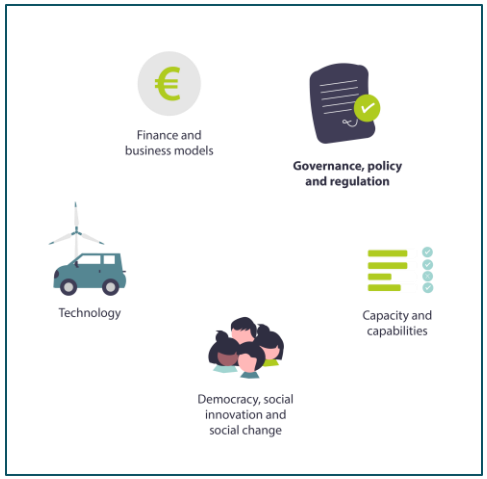
AL/Albanian
BG/Bulgarian
BO/Bosnian
CZ/Czech
DA/Danish
DE/German
ES/Spanish
ET/Estonian
FI/Finnish
FR/French
GK/Greek
HE/Hebrew
HR/Croatian
HU/Hungarian
IE/Irish
IS/Icelandic
IT/Italian
LT/Lithuanian
LV/Latvian
ME/Montenegro
MT/Maltese
NL/Dutch
NO/Norwegian
PL/Polish
PT/Portuguese
RO/Romanian
SV/Swedish
SK/Slovakian
SL/Slovenian
TK/Turkish

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The Visual Bank

Graphics and Pictures to illustrate your climate neutrality journey

In the visual bank , you can **find imagery for several types of purposes**: visuals to explain what NetZeroCities is about and how it works, and a selection of pictures for you to communicate visually on your city's ambition. The editable banners to promote your city being part of the Mission are also included.





- ### Infographics

These **visuals** have been created for you to **explain the core features the work** that you are undertaking with NetZeroCities to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

You can use all the graphic elements from the pitching deck directly in your own presentations, **editing figures and text, to adapt to the local language and context**.

- ### Pictures

These pictures can be used to illustrate what a climate neutral City might look like. They can be used in all communications as illustrations and are all free to use.

Uses can be as diverse as web article featured images, newsletter images, social media graphics, and more. **It is very much encouraged to use pictures from the actual work you are conducting in your city**.

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Using pictures from your city

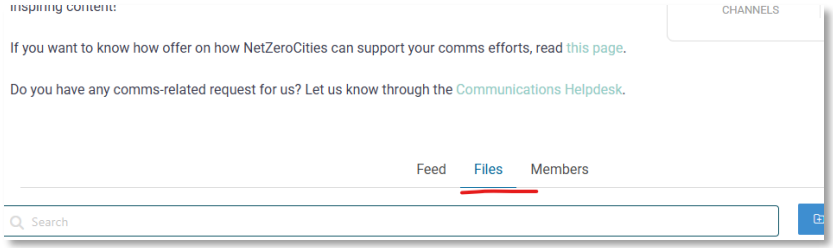
A few tips on how to choose pictures to illustrate your work as a Mission City:

- Pictures with **people** are great! Make sure to collect their consent first before publishing the images though.
- **Diversity** – both in terms of people featured in the pictures and solutions to achieve climate neutrality – is important to accurately represent the changes at work in your city and to offer versatility. Make sure to diversify the type of images you are using in your communications to keep catching the audience's interest.
- Unless you want to illustrate a problem or a before/after item, we recommend **focusing on solutions** and inspiring pictures.

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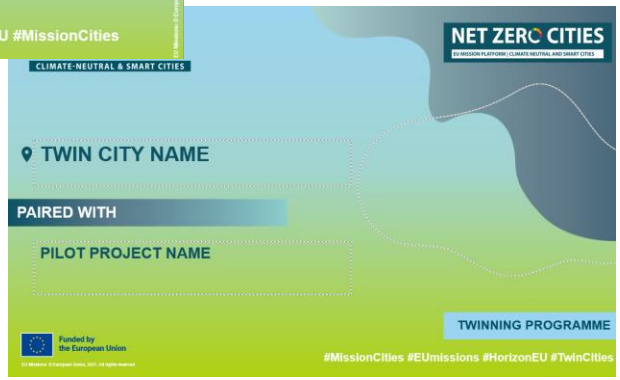
Communication resources for cities

You can fin all downloadable resources in the Climate Communications group on the NetZeroCities Portal, in the « Files » section.









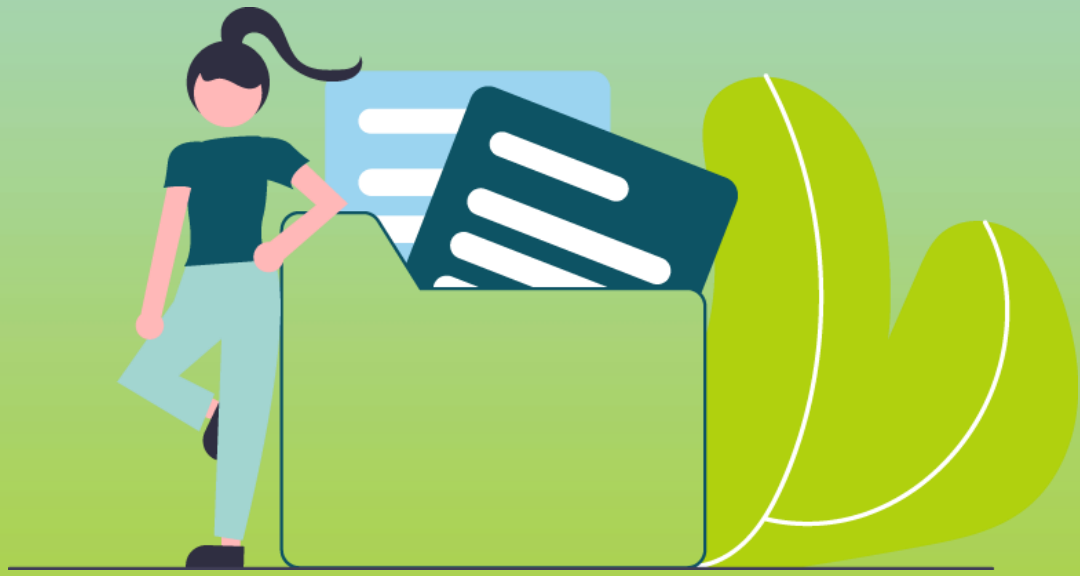
The files include:

- Branding and visual identity guidelines
- Communication toolkits for:
  - Mission Label
  - Climate City Contracts
  - Pilot cities
  - Twin cities

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4.
Referring to the EU Cities Mission and NetZeroCities

To feed into your press releases and official documents



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About the EU Cities Mission

100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030

EU Missions are a new way to bring **concrete solutions to some of our greatest challenges**. They have ambitious goals and will deliver tangible results by 2030, by putting research and innovation into a new role, combined with new forms of governance and collaboration, as well as by engaging citizens. EU Missions are a novelty of the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme for the years 2021-2027.

Since climate mitigation is heavily dependent on urban action, we need to support cities in accelerating their green and digital transformation. The **EU Cities Mission** involves local authorities, citizens, businesses, investors as well as regional and national authorities to:

1. **Deliver 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030**

2. **Ensure that these cities act as experimentation and innovation hubs to enable all European cities to follow suit by 2050**

The EU Cities Mission takes a cross-sectoral and demand-led approach, creating synergies between existing initiatives and basing its activities on the actual needs of cities.

How to use this text?

Use this text in your press releases and official documents if you need to present the EU Cities Mission!

Additional useful resources:

- Mission Cities Webpage
- Factsheet: EU Mission, climate-neutral and smart cities
- EU Cities Mission Video

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The EU Cities Mission in your language





Мисия „Неутрални по отношение на климата и интелигентни градове“



Klimaticky neutrální a inteligentní města



Målet om klimaneutrale og intelligente byer



Mission „Klimaneutrale und intelligente Städte“



Climate-Neutrali ja arukate linnade mission



Αποστολή κλιματικά ουδέτερες και έξυπνες πόλεις



Mission for climate-neutral and smart cities



Misión de ciudades inteligentes y climáticamente neutras



Ilmastoneutraaleja ja älykkäitä kaupunkeja koskeva missio



Mission « Villes intelligentes et climatiquement neutres »



Misean na gCathracha Aeráid-Uathracha agus Cliste



Misija za klimatski neutralne i pametne gradove - Poziv na iskaz interesa



Klímasemleges és intelligens városok Misszió



Missione Città intelligenti e a impatto climatico zero



Neutralaus poveikio klimatui ir pažangiųjų miestų misija



Klimata ziņā neitrālas un viedas pilsētas



Missjoni ta’ Bliet Intelliġenti u newtrali għall-klima



Missie voor klimaatneutrale en slimme steden



Misja na rzecz neutralnych klimatycznie i inteligentnych miast



Missão «Cidades Inteligentes e com impacto neutro no clima»



Misiunea „Orașe inteligente și neutre din punctul de vedere al impactului asupra climei”



Uppdrag för klimatneutrala och smarta städer



Misija za podnebno nevtralna in pametna mesta



Misia pre klimaticky neutrálne a inteligentné mestá



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About NetZeroCities

EU Mission Platform | Climate Neutral and Smart Cities

NetZeroCities is a consortium consisting of **34 partners from 27 European countries**, managing presently the EU Cities Mission "*100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030*" platform. It is coordinated by EIT Climate-KIC, Europe's largest public- private innovation partnership focused on climate innovation to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

NetZeroCities supports the 112 European cities selected by the European Commission to join the EU Cities Mission in drastically reducing their greenhouse gas emissions to achieve climate neutrality. It works as a service-oriented platform supported by world-class practitioners to help cities overcome the current structural, institutional and cultural barriers they face in order to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

NetZeroCities aims to enable European cities and citizens to show **the way forward towards an inclusive, thriving, climate resilient and sustainable future**. To do so, it tailors advanced capabilities related to systemic change, citizen engagement and democratic governance, capital and financial structuring, and social innovation, to ensure cities have access to the best expertise available anywhere in the world.

How to use this text?

Use this text in your press releases and official documents if you need to present NetZeroCities!

Additional useful resources:

- The NetZeroCities website
- NetZeroCities explainer video
- Press Release, 1st October 2021: City networks and research organisations team up to accelerate the transition to net zero emissions by 2030

NetZeroCities has received funding from the H2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement n°101036519.

For all Language Translations of Referring to the Mission & NetZeroCities

- **Please find all translations at this link.**

AL/Albanian
BG/Bulgarian
BO/Bosnian
CZ/Czech
DA/Danish
DE/German
ES/Spanish
ET/Estonian
FI/Finnish
FR/French
GK/Greek
HE/Hebrew
HR/Croatian
HU/Hungarian
IE/Irish
IS/Icelandic
IT/Italian
LT/Lithuanian
LV/Latvian
ME/Montenegro
MT/Maltese
NL/Dutch
NO/Norwegian
PL/Polish
PT/Portuguese
RO/Romanian
SV/Swedish
SK/Slovakian
SL/Slovenian
TK/Turkish

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5. Get your stories featured across NetZeroCities channels!

NetZeroCities as a platform for promotion



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How to spot and share your city stories with NetZeroCities

Celebrate your progress. Inspire your peers. Show what climate neutrality looks like in action.

Spot it
What makes a great story?

Any **action that shows progress in your city**. It could be pilot projects, workshops, citizen engagement actions, new policies, city interventions…

Look for **human moments:**

Why did your city choose this path?
What challenges did you overcome?
What did you learn?
What surprised you?
How did citizens react?

If your team or citizens felt proud, curious, or inspired — it's a story worth sharing.

Capture it
Bring it to life

Bring a human touch, collecting a short quote from your mayor or another politician, a project officer, or community member.

Note **one detail that shows change**:

What was the challenge?
What's different now?

Get a visual quest to illustrate the story, like some photos of people in action. You can also send us existing materials or resources you already have. Don't' forget to let us know who to credit for those!

Action and emotion connect better than procedures

Shape it
Highlight the value

Write **a couple of sentences** answering these questions:
What happened?
Why does it matter?

Connect it to the **bigger picture**: climate action, citizen benefits, Mission goals…

Think about **replication:**
What could other cities learn from this?

Don't overthink it!
The NetZeroCities team will refine and polish

Share it

Send us your story materials

We don't need much: a couple of photos, a short text, a quote or two…

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

We'll turn it into social media, blogs, or videos to showcase your work.

If posting yourself, tag **@NetZeroCitiesEU**.

Remember, one quote + one photo + two sentences = already a great story.

Funded by the European Union

Some examples and recommendations

Celebrate your progress. Inspire your peers. Show what climate neutrality looks like in action.

- Has your city launched **a new climate project** that's making a difference?
- Has your city reached a **big milestone** in becoming more sustainable?
- Is your city **testing a new way to improve transport, energy, or waste**?
- Has your city worked with **other cities or partners** to try something new for the environment?
- Have **local people or businesses noticed a positive change** from your climate efforts?
- Has your city adopted any **new policies or technologies** to help fight climate change?
- Has your city **overcome a tough challenge** in reaching sustainability goals?
- Do you have **data** showing that your climate actions are working?
- Has your city seen **social, environmental, or economic benefits from its climate projects**?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we want to hear more about your story!

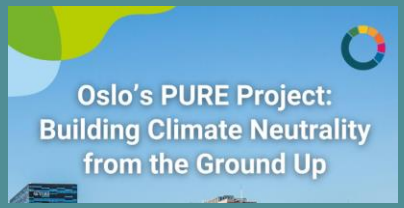
>> SUBMIT YOUR PITCH

EXAMPLE 1



Valencia launched the Sustainable Valencia forum to promote join efforts for climate neutrality and implement their CCC

EXAMPLE 2



Updates from pilots

EXAMPLE 3



Site visits

EXAMPLE 4



Porto organised walks in the city to explain their different climate interventions

Funded by the European Union

Be featured!

We can help your city shine by sharing your success stories with a wider audience across Europe

By sharing your city's stories with us, we can help you amplify your message!

Whether it's through our blog, social media channels, or articles, your story will reach a diverse audience of like-minded individuals and organisations, inspiring others to take action and driving collective progress towards a net-zero future!

We can promote your work through our channels:

- **Social media reshares**: Tag our accounts or use #MissionCities to amplify your posts.
- **EU-Level spotlights**: Showcase your projects in NetZeroCities articles, blogs, and newsletters, as these cities have already done:

Willing to have your recent achievements featured through our channels?

- Get in touch with us through the Communications Helpdesk



Blog: How Can Urban Strategies be simplified?



Story: Banking in Bristol

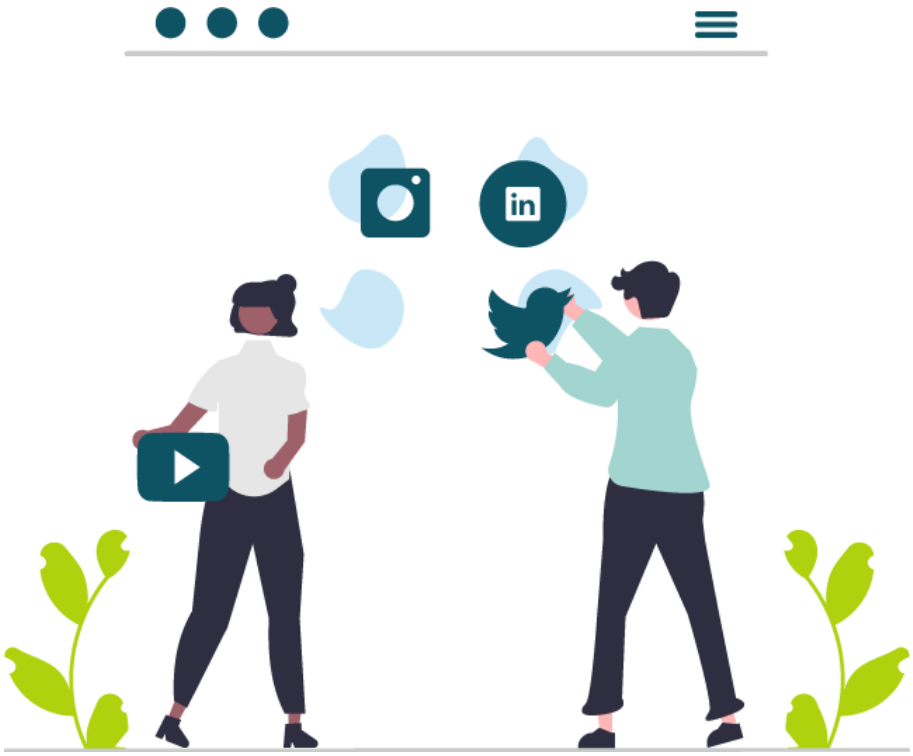


Spotlight: Stakeholder Engagement

NetZeroCities has received funding from the H2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement n°101036519.

On Social Media

Tags and hashtags



Hashtags to use

#MissionCities

#EUMissions

Accounts to tag – EU Cities Mission

@EUScienceInnov

@EU Science, Research and Innovation

@EUScienceInnovation

@EU Science

Accounts to tag – NetZeroCities

@NetZeroCitiesEU

@NetZeroCitiesEU

@NetZeroCities EU

@NetZeroCities

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On Social Media

Sample Post



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Get in touch with NetZeroCities!

@NetZeroCitiesEU

NetZeroCities

NetZeroCitiesEU

NetZeroCities EU

www.netzerocities.eu

hello@netzerocities.eu

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