

Sustainable Municipality Week

Getting local governments and their citizens moving on the SDGs

inspiration



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The city of Tienen organised an SDG flash mob during the first edition of the Sustainable Municipality Week.



Introduction

About the campaign

The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) organises the 'Sustainable Municipality Week' since 2018. It's a public campaign aimed firstly at raising awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, among the general public in Flanders, and secondly at providing Flemish local governments with practical tools for long-term sustainable and co-creative local policies. During the campaign week, participating municipalities will hoist an SDG flag at the city hall and celebrate their 'sustainable heroes'. These heroes are local citizens, schools, businesses and associations who contribute to one or more SDGs in their work or daily lives and therefore become the local faces of the 17 global goals.

At www.duurzamegemeente.be you will find a list of all participating municipalities by year, a presentation of all their sustainable heroes and an overview of local activities the municipalities undertook to highlight the SDGs and the heroes. On [VVSG's YouTube channel](#) you will find several videos with footage of past editions. Appendix 1 to this publication also contains the comprehensive campaign manual that participating municipalities receive upon registration.

More than half of all Flemish municipalities (172 out of 300) have already taken part in the campaign week. Around 100 local governments are involved each year. The enthusiasm for the campaign, both from local governments and in the local and regional press, points to the need for such a format in which local governments can communicate the local actions they are taking in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the active contribution they expect or want to encourage from their citizens in the process. The fact that the campaign makes the sometimes rather nebulous SDGs more tangible is also a major plus factor for participating municipalities. The campaign format allows the SDGs to be made more real while at the same time celebrating local heroes: talk about a win-win!

Why this publication?

VVSG wants to inspire umbrella associations of local governments worldwide, as well as other organisations and government bodies committed to achieving the SDGs, to set up similar campaigns in which both local governments and SDG ambassadors show in a creative and activating way how the 2030 Agenda can be implemented locally. In this publication, we therefore document our approach, strategies and lessons learned.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was signed on 25 September 2015. The Sustainable Municipality Week is being held annually from 18 to 25 September, and the same period is increasingly being used around the world to organise SDG initiatives¹. The latest editions of our Sustainable Municipality Week have already gained resonance abroad:

1 See the collection of SDG initiatives at <https://act4sdgs.org/>.

on 25 September, municipalities in the Netherlands also hoisted the SDG flag², and in 2022 Tarija, the Bolivian partner municipality of Brasschaat municipality, organised the very first Sustainable Municipality Week in the Global South. Why not dream of SDG flags at all city halls worldwide, and a platform for SDG heroes in every town and city?



² See the 'Flag Day' and 'Global Goals Municipalities' campaigns of the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG).



Process description

Start-up and partners

From March 2017 to the end of 2019, VVSG organised an SDG pilot project³ in which it worked with 20 Flemish municipalities to find ways to embed the SDGs in municipal policies. Together with these pilot municipalities, the VVSG decided to increase public support for the SDGs through a joint awareness campaign. In the wake of this **pilot project**, the first edition of the campaign week (2018) already had a reasonable chance of success. Not only was the commitment and motivation of the pilot municipalities able to serve as leverage for participation in the campaign, all at once the network of the various partners involved in the pilot project could be mobilised as well.. For example, the pilot project was guided by an advisory group that included NGOs, knowledge institutions, sister organisations and provincial and regional government agencies. They put their weight behind devising and publicising the campaign. As many VVSG departments as possible were also involved in promoting the campaign. Partners and VVSG services that were organising campaigns around the same time – e.g. the annual Sustainable Mobility Week in September and Fair Trade Week in October – were asked to create links in their communications with Sustainable Municipality Week (and vice versa).

Format

The campaign format requires a **commitment from participants**. Participating municipalities are themselves responsible for finding local heroes and distributing campaign materials, and are expected to communicate extensively about their heroes through all possible local communication channels, such as municipal information sheets, websites, social media, press, radio, street posters, events, and so on. Herein lies both the challenge and the success of the campaign. Only through the far-reaching commitment of the municipality and its collaboration with local heroes can the campaign reach a large number of citizens. After all, as the member association of Flemish cities and municipalities, VVSG does not address citizens directly but, with this campaign, it is offering its own members a format by which to reach those citizens. However, such a format creates the need for a comprehensive campaign manual and the necessary support from VVSG, both before and during the campaign week.

While the raising of the SDG flag and the designation of sustainable heroes remain the core of the format, since 2019 we have been adding a **different focus each year**, through which the campaign responds to current events and retains its urgency. In 2019⁴, for instance, the focus was on sustainable local policy planning, and we offered participating municipalities, among other things, free trainings on integrating the SDGs into the multi-annual strategic plan. In 2020, the focus was on heroes handling the corona epidemic, in 2021 the planet pillar of sustainable development was highlighted (climate heroes) and in 2022 we put the spotlight on heroes who contribute to the 'Leave no one behind' principle (local heroes for inclusion).

Finally, we also try to view the urgency of our campaign through the lenses of the **levels of government** around us. At all political levels, varying degrees of funding are being allocated to achieving the SDGs. What are their priorities or focuses, and how can our campaign respond

³ See [this note](#) for the approach and lessons learned from the SDG pilot project.

⁴ After the 2018 local elections, 2019 was the year for Flemish municipalities to write their new policy plans for the period 2020-2025.

to them? Thus, in 2018, VVSG applied for the title of ‘SDG Voice’; The SDG Voices⁵ are ambassadors appointed by the Belgian federal government to generate public enthusiasm for the SDGs. VVSG was chosen as one of six Voices, and was able to organise its first Sustainable Municipality Week with the corresponding funds. The 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 editions were made possible by alternating Flemish, federal and European funding. The network of local governments is broad and unique, which makes them an interesting partner for many other players on the road to the 2030 Agenda.

Communication strategy

The campaign is announced annually through the website www.duurzamegemeente.be, through mailings to all 300 Flemish cities and municipalities, through the VVSG’s communication channels (website, digital newsletter, monthly magazine and social media) and through partners’ newsletters. Before the campaign call is distributed, an (update of the) detailed campaign manual (see Appendix 1) is issued. The link to this digital manual is sent with the call so that interested municipalities can properly assess what their commitment involves. In addition to the general campaign call with practical information, the announcement is embellished annually with a number of videos and playful posts on social media, such as interviews with sustainable heroes, testimonials from municipalities that have already participated or photo compilations⁶.

During the campaign week, VVSG shares as many messages as possible from local governments about the campaign. We ask participants to use the same hashtags. We personally distribute a press release to regional and national media, and create content for social media⁷. If our annual budget allows, we occasionally engage professional vloggers or columnists for this purpose. We ensure that photos, videos and original activities of participating municipalities are disseminated nationally and internationally, including through newsletters from the European and international umbrella associations of local governments and by registering Sustainable Municipality Week with the annual UN SDG Action Campaign⁸. We motivate our own partners – including provincial, regional and national government agencies and the umbrella organisation of NGOs – to also hoist the SDG flag on 25 September and communicate to their constituencies about the important role of local governments in achieving the 2030 Agenda. We also inspire as many VVSG colleagues for the campaign as possible, for example by designating internal SDG heroes or encouraging colleagues to attend campaign activities in their hometowns.

Every year after the campaign week, we raffle off a prize package among participating municipalities. This encourages some (smaller) municipalities to join the campaign, and at the same time gives VVSG the opportunity to further contacts with the municipality in question.

5 See <https://sdgs.be/en/sdg-voices>.

6 See, for example, announcement videos for [2022](#), [2021](#) and [2020](#).

7 For example, [videos on some of the sustainable heroes of 2018](#).

8 <https://act4sdgs.org/>

Practical organisation

The campaign call and manual should ideally be launched about six months before the start of the campaign. This is because interested municipalities have a lot of practical and material preparations to make. Participation in the campaign must be approved by local political bodies; sustainable heroes must be identified, selected and informed; local campaign managers must launch a local communication strategy and set up any local activities. As organisers, we in turn need to allow sufficient time between the deadline for registration and the start of the campaign week, as the right numbers of campaign materials have to be ordered and shipped, and we assist participating municipalities wherever possible in their search for sustainable heroes and in developing creative local activities.

The campaign website www.duurzamegemeente.be is the practical hub of the campaign. Registration is via a web form on this site. Participating municipalities receive a login for the site. Logged-in participants can then on the website

- fill in a campaign material order form;
- upload the profiles of their sustainable heroes;
- fill in an activity calendar;
- upload photos of their activities;
- download and personalise digital campaign materials (see below).

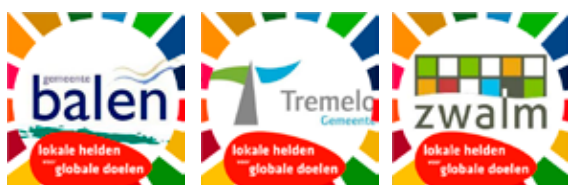
In 2018,
participating
municipalities
received SDG
info cards on
seed paper to
distribute to
their citizens.



Support for participants

Once registrations close (around two months before the start of the campaign), the contact persons of all participating municipalities will receive a regular mailing with **tips and good practices** on:

- the selection of sustainable heroes;
- communicating creatively about the campaign;
- organising original local activities with or about their heroes;
- putting the annual theme into practice (e.g. LNOB theme in 2022: How to engage locally on inclusion, participation, diversity, energy poverty, etc.);
- embedding the SDGs in long-term local policies;
- engaging local heroes as long-term SDG ambassadors.



Facebookframe designed by VVSG in 2020

In addition, we provide ready-to-use **communication materials** that municipalities can use to communicate about their participation in the campaign and about their sustainable heroes, such as digital banners with the campaign image, a Facebook frame for profile pictures, a guide to create a

presentation video of their own heroes, expressive SDG graphics/videos/cartoons for social media, a personalised video to announce participation on social media, formats for posters and banners that municipalities can print themselves, and so on.

We provide several forums where participating municipalities can **exchange** ideas about their approach to the campaign: a webinar, a closed Facebook group and an inspiration page on the campaign website where municipalities share, for example, hero calls, their own poster campaigns or formats for interviews with heroes.

We want to make use of the regular contact with such a large group of municipalities to get them excited about **the policy commitment to the SDGs** as well. Although the campaign is primarily an awareness-raising campaign, designed to make people more familiar with the SDGs, where possible we also provide participants with information and tools to make their policies structurally sustainable. For example, we encourage them to sign VVSG's SDG commitment statement⁹ or to invite VVSG for a presentation on how to integrate the SDGs into local policy plans. We also inform participating municipalities about VVSG's most accessible SDG policy tools, such as our set of local SDG indicators, our SDG circle exercise, or publications in which we list possible policy actions by SDG and by policy domain¹⁰.

⁹ See [SDG declaration of commitment in English](#).

¹⁰ See <https://www.vvsg.be/kennisitem/vvsg/sdg-documents-in-foreign-languages> for various SDG policy tools of VVSG.

Campaign material

Around two weeks before the start of the campaign week, VVSG sends a postal package with campaign materials to all participating municipalities. The packages consist, on the one hand, of materials for the local government – which they can display in their buildings or use during events – and, on the other hand, materials for the sustainable heroes – which they can use to inform their network or make themselves visible as heroes, or which simply serve as a thank-you gift. The following materials have been included – alternately – in recent years:

For local governments

- mast flag with summary logo of the 17 SDGs;
- window stickers with summary logo of the 17 SDGs;
- cotton SDG flagline;
- flyers on seed paper;
- SDG bingo cards for municipal staff;
- poster series featuring portraits of 17 sustainable heroes;
- a PowerPoint presentation with information about the 2030 Agenda and the role both local governments and citizens can play in it (to be used as communication material to heroes).



For the heroes¹¹

- SDG badges;
- window stickers 'I'm a sustainable hero';
- coffee mugs 'I'm a sustainable hero';
- laptop stickers 'I'm a sustainable hero';
- beer mats with sustainable DIY tips;
- cotton tote bags with summary logo of the 17 SDGs;
- SDG bingo cards for citizens;
- chocolate pralines with SDG logos.

In addition to the physical materials provided free of charge to participants, we also offer several digital campaign materials that municipalities can print themselves. The digital designs are available on the campaign website for participants with a login. They include customisable hero posters. Budgetary, practical or sustainability considerations may be a reason to offer only digital materials in the future.

It is obviously important to choose **sustainable campaign materials**. When selecting producers, the guarantees they can offer in this regard are considered. For example, we chose flags made of recycled PET, flaglines made of recycled cotton, 100% compostable beer mats and fair-trade chocolate. Municipalities that have participated in the campaign before are asked to reuse their mast flags and window stickers from the previous edition. From this perspective, it is also more sustainable to work with order forms (rather than standard packages) so that municipalities only receive the amount of materials they actually use. In the annual evaluation survey, we always ask participants about their satisfaction with the various campaign materials.



¹¹ Several municipalities add their own thank-you gifts to the package for their heroes, such as a regional product.



**IK BEN EEN
DUURZAME
HELD!**

#LaatNiemandAchter

Ontmoet alle helden op
duurzamegemeente.be

1 EERSTELING (Icon: Family)

2 GOED KOSTENDE ENERGIE (Icon: Lightbulb)

3 GOEDERKEERDE ZIEKTE (Icon: Heart with pulse)

4 HOOGKwaliteit ONDERWIJS (Icon: Open book)

5 GEGELIJKE GESLACHTEN (Icon: Gender symbols)

6 SCHON WATER EN SANITATIE (Icon: Water tap)

7 HOOGKwaliteit ENERGIE (Icon: Sun)

8 GELIJKE WERKGELEGENHEIDEN (Icon: Bar chart)

9 INDUSTRIË, INNOVATIE EN INFRASTRUCTUUR (Icon: Gear and factory)

10 MITIGEREN ONGELIJKHEIDEN (Icon: Scales)

11 VEILIGE, STABIELE EN DOELMATIGE WOI (Icon: Building)

12 VERANTWOORDE CONSUMPTIE EN PRODUCTIE (Icon: Infinity symbol)

13 KLIMAAT (Icon: Eye with globe)

14 LEVEN IN WATER (Icon: Fish)

15 LEVEN OP AARDE (Icon: Tree)

16 RECHT, MITIGEREN ONGELIJKHEIDEN EN JUSTITIE (Icon: Scales)

17 PARTNERSCAPEN VOOR DOELSTREVEN (Icon: Handshake)

vvs

Waardevol
Belgie

Commitment of participants

VVSG can provide attractive campaign materials, provide ready-to-use communication tools and distribute dozens of tips for selecting heroes and organising activities, but the success of the local hero campaign depends primarily on the commitment of and time invested by the participating municipalities. The campaign manual summarises the expectations placed on participants as follows:



As a participating municipality, what do you do?

- You designate (up to 17) sustainable heroes.
- You register your heroes at www.duurzamegemeente.be.
- You use VVSG's campaign materials to make the hero campaign visible in the city hall (or other municipal buildings) and online.
- You deliver VVSG's hero material to your heroes.
- You hoist the SDG flag throughout the campaign week, with an official event on 25 September.
- You keep VVSG informed about your local activities as part of the campaign week.
- You communicate about your sustainable heroes' activities through local communication channels: magazine, website, social media, email banners, and so on.

You take advantage of the campaign to further incorporate the SDGs into municipal policies and make them known among the population.

In particular, finding sustainable heroes and communicating with them requires an investment of time from the local campaign manager(s). In Chapter 4 of the campaign manual, we provide tips on how to approach this search. A 2019 evaluation survey shows that the vast majority of heroes (65%) were actively solicited by local government. 18% nominated themselves as a sustainable hero (following an open call) and 12% were nominated by a fellow citizen.

The sustainable heroes of Sint-Niklaas get a hero sticker and a personal portrait as a gift from the local government.



The city council of the Bolivian city of Tarija is honouring its first batch sustainable heroes with a certificate and an award.



Local organisation of the campaign: real-life examples



Broad communication about the campaign in **Leuven & Genk**

As part of Sustainable Municipality Week, the city of Leuven (>100,000) each year designates five sustainable heroes, one for each pillar of sustainable development (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership). Both residents and city staff can nominate candidates and cast a vote. An administrative working group, with expertise in sustainable development, diversity, equal opportunities and global policy, deliberates and makes its selection. At a grand press conference, the city announces the five new sustainable heroes each year. Their 'heroic deeds' will then be highlighted for a year through the city magazine, online media and collaborative channels. The sustainable heroes themselves commit to helping inspire Leuven residents to take local sustainable initiatives. The SDGs also serve as a framework for educational activities during Mundo Moves, Leuven's city festival for global solidarity. In 2022,



for example, an urban game tailored to children and (accompanying) adults was developed. Under the banner 'I'm setting solidarity in motion', participants could take two walks ('expeditions') in the city centre, which took them past 17 locations. At each location there was a poster with information about one of the SDGs and about an organisation taking on a role within that SDG. Each time, they were also presented with an associated riddle (a 'mission'). The solution could be entered online and winners of the competition received a sustainable surprise package. Mundo Moves is organised within Mundia, the network for global solidarity and justice initiated by Leuven city council with other local global actors.

The city of Genk (>60,000) also takes advantage of Sustainable Municipality Week to communicate widely on the SDGs, both to citizens and to its own employees. In 2022, for example, they headed to the weekly local vegetable market to have visitors consider how they themselves can be a sustainable hero in their daily lives through an SDG bingo game. Every city staff member (1,300 people!) also received an SDG bingo card. Services could submit a bingo card together for a chance to win a fairtrade breakfast. The city council and management team delved even deeper into the 2030 Agenda and played the '2030 SDGs game' (developed by Japan's Imacocollabo). The mayor testified that the game offered many new insights, especially around forging partnerships to achieve the SDGs locally.



Celebrating the sustainable heroes in Leuven.



The Genk city council is playing the 2030 SDGs game.

Students from Thomas More College are organising an awareness campaign for the general public.



A campaign with an impact in **Turnhout & Zwalm**

The city of Turnhout (>40,000) has already appointed a total of 89 sustainable heroes during the various editions of Sustainable Municipality Week. By involving different city services and citizens in the nomination, the city created greater diversity among the heroes and greater commitment to the SDG story. Both citizens and city services turned out to be surprised by the variety of local SDG engagement: ranging from individual citizens working on sustainable food, to businesses committed to a circular economy and small associations championing the most vulnerable within society. The contacts made during the campaign led to fruitful collaborations between local heroes themselves but equally between the heroes and the city administration. For example, a collaboration was set up with the teacher training college of Thomas More Turnhout: the college wants to train prospective teachers as world citizens and therefore set up the 'Streetwise Worldwide' project, in which students work together with local sustainable heroes and help put them in the spotlight within the city. Efforts are also being made to raise awareness of SDGs through cooperation with [M000V vzw](#) (world cinema). For the annual film festival, M000V and the city are developing a programme of films in line with the themes of the 2030 Agenda, and involving local sustainable heroes in communications about the festival.

The municipality of Zwalm (>8,000) is a loyal participant in Sustainable Municipality Week and sees the campaign primarily as a stepping stone towards a firm commitment to long-term sustainable local policies. In 2020 – as the world entered the final 10 years leading up to the 2030 Agenda– they were the first municipality in Flanders to write their own version of the SDG commitment statement, entitled 'Decade of Action'. The declaration was signed during the campaign week and was linked to an original local awareness campaign, 'Children of the Decade of Action', in which newborns and their parents are monitored by the municipal administration for 10 years with a questionnaire on their relationship to each SDG and their vision of a sustainable world. Zwalm also took the SDGs as a guide when drawing up its policy plan for 2020–2025. Within this context, local politicians and civil servants track a number of SDG milestones for their service at regular intervals.

The 'children of the decade of action' are invited every year by the Zwalm municipal council



Getting
started
yourself?

Lessons learned

After five consecutive editions of Sustainable Municipality Week, we can pass on some important lessons to sister organisations and other actors worldwide who want to launch an awareness-raising campaign about the 2030 Agenda, working with local governments on the one hand and SDG ambassadors from the wider population on the other.



- Link the campaign to **social reality**. With our annual themes, we were able to respond, for example, to the local policy cycle (drawing up local multi-annual strategic plans in 2019), to the need for recognition of local care initiatives (coronavirus crisis in 2020) and to the need for tools for local poverty and inclusion policy (energy crisis in 2022 – LNOB).
- Monitor the **low profile** of the campaign. For example, the VVSG asks participating municipalities to designate up to 17 heroes, but they could equally well participate with just the one. Participants are also provided with a lot of ready-to-use material. We recognise the efforts of municipalities that develop their own materials or activities on top of this, but regularly stress that this is not a requirement.
- **Disseminate the call in good time**. Participation in the campaign must be ratified by local governing bodies. In addition, the selection of heroes often has to be approved by the municipal administration. Local leaders of the campaign also need sufficient time to prepare the search for heroes, the communication strategy, the organisation of activities and the involvement of colleagues.
- **Create realistic expectations**. In an ideal world, participation in the campaign would ensure greater support and willingness to take action on the 2030 Agenda among colleagues, politicians and citizens alike. In practice, not all anticipated target groups are always reached, or the step from awareness to action cannot (yet) be taken.
- A successful campaign requires a considerable **investment of time from the umbrella association**. The practical organisation of the campaign, but especially communicating with and motivating participants, are time-consuming. Although project funds allow VVSG to free up staff time for the campaign (an average of 1 day per week), we find that it is still difficult to meet all the needs of the participants (e.g. municipalities are asking for stronger support in informing their heroes about the 2030 Agenda).
- Make sure the campaign does not depend on the **financial resources** you can allocate to it. In previous years, VVSG was able to offer free campaign materials and intensive participant support, but the campaign can also be a success with only digital materials and a solid campaign manual. The Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) organises a kind of 'light version' of Sustainable Municipality Week every year; a 'flag day' when local governments hoist the SDG flag and communicate about their contribution to the SDGs.

>

- **Engage participating municipalities as SDG ambassadors** for the long term. Invite them to testify at umbrella association study days or international conferences. For example, in 2020, VVSG invited the city of Herentals to testify about the impact of the campaign during the European Week of Regions and Cities¹². Municipalities participating in the campaign may also be interested in being involved in **SDG working groups or pilot projects** of the umbrella association.
- Although the campaign format allows for multiple consecutive editions, participating municipalities may grow tired of selecting sustainable heroes. From VVSG's perspective, we are considering adding a competition or other element to the campaign from 2023 onwards. Besides distributing an annual evaluation survey to participants, it is a good idea to regularly bring together a select group of participants (with different profiles) **to reflect together on the goals and format** of the campaign in the longer term.
- The campaign format is proving extremely suitable for **international partners to work together around the SDGs**¹³. Several Flemish municipalities motivate their twinning or partner municipality to also hoist the SDG flag at the city hall during the campaign week, or they carry out the same sustainable activity locally (e.g. both the city of Sint-Niklaas and its Senegalese partner Tambacounda organised a litter-clearing campaign during Sustainable Municipality Week 2022). In 2022, Tarija, the Bolivian partner of Brasschaat, was the first foreign municipality to organise its own Sustainable Municipality Week.

Local Heroes for Global Goals

Week of the Sustainable Municipalities



¹² See <https://europa.eu/regions-and-cities/programme/2020/sessions/1618>.

¹³ Check out VVSG's publication '[SDGs in international municipal cooperation](#)' for more inspiration regarding the SDGs as a framework for or complement to partnerships.



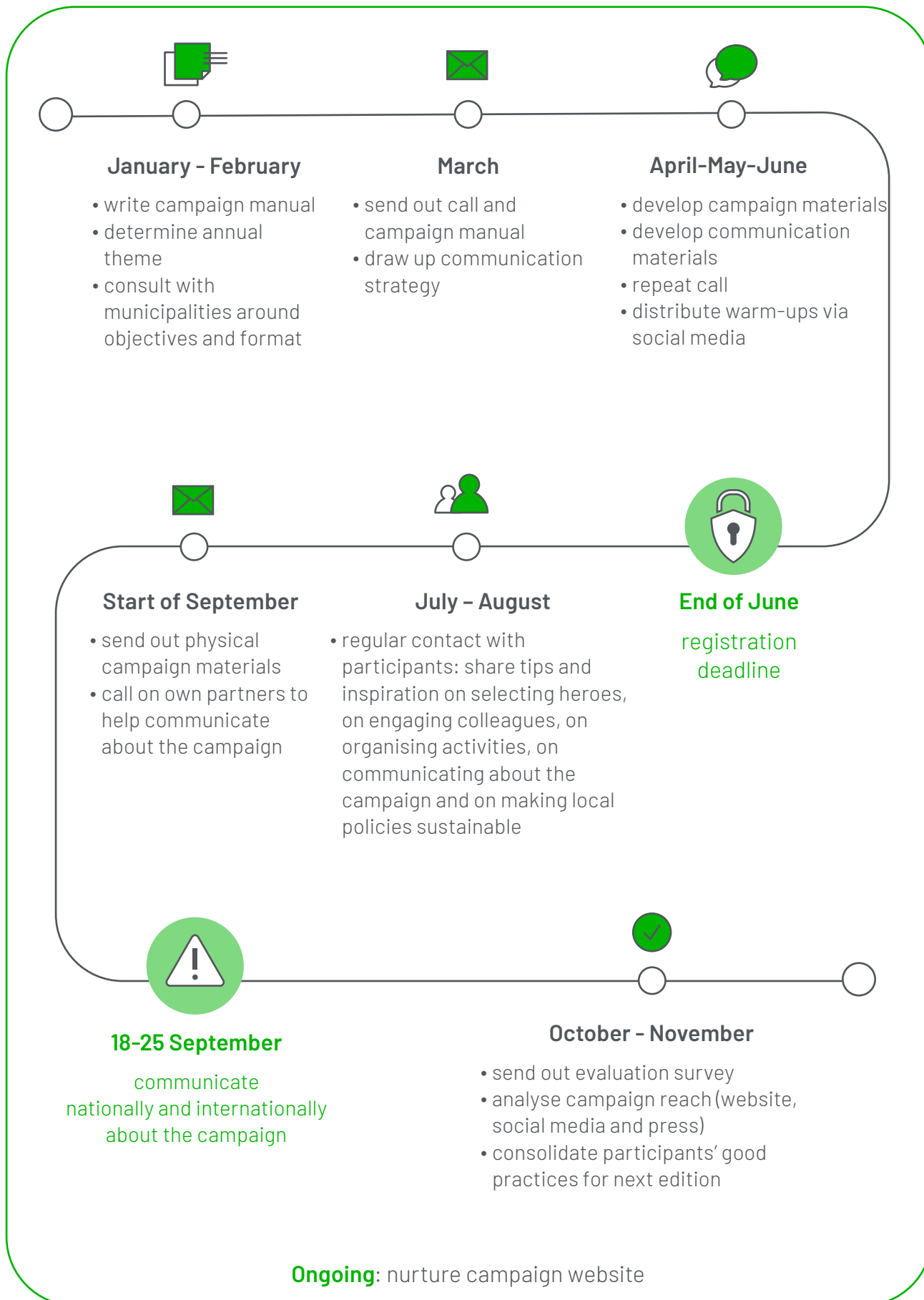
Town twinning partners Brasschaat and Tarija celebrate Sustainable Municipality Week together

The Bolivian city of Tarija (>200,000) maintains a city-to-city partnership with the Flemish municipality of Brasschaat. The two local governments have been working together since 2004 on issues such as forest firefighting, compost, sustainable mobility, road safety and water. The SDGs have long provided a framework for the development of the twinning programme. In 2022, Tarija decided to make its commitment to the 2030 Agenda better known locally by organising its own 'Sustainable Municipality Week'. A broad call for sustainable heroes was issued, after which more than 100 individuals and organisations were nominated. After rounds of voting by a jury of 30 people (consisting of the city council and local organisations working around the SDGs), 12 heroes were officially designated. The heroes were ceremoniously honoured in the city square. They received an SDG award, a municipal title and an SDG totebag with sustainable products. Together with the city council, they raised the SDG mast flag. Local artists recited a musical verse per SDG, and a poem for the heroes of Brasschaat and Tarija (the poem was published in Brasschaat in Dutch). Videos of the hero celebration were shared by SDG ambassadors, including the mayor, the president of the municipal council, local TV presenters and influencers. The celebrations were accompanied by a sustainable market and the presentation of an SDG literature prize (pupils from 7 schools could submit poems around the SDGs in advance in advance). Brasschaat and Tarija broadcast video footage of the raising of the SDG flag on social media, both at the same time.

The sustainable heroes of Tarija are festively honoured on the city square. Town twinning partner Brasschaat also communicated about the celebration.



Road map for campaign organiser



sustainable
movement,
unc



commitment
learning
expertise
policy
network



The city of Ghent nominated the sustainability office of the University of Ghent as one of its heroes.

Appendice: 2020 campaign manual

available at this [link](#) or on
the following pages of
this publication

LOKALE HELDEN VOOR GLOBALE DOELEN

Week van de duurzame gemeente



18 - 25
september
2020

CAMPAIGN MANUAL

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1 Why participate in the Week of the Sustainable Municipality?

On 25 September 2015, Belgium was one of 193 countries to sign the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which comprises [17 Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs for short). The SDGs unite a number of international agreements (poverty reduction, climate change, legal certainty, etc.) and call for an integrated approach. The Agenda 2030 is universal and calls on all countries and all stakeholders around the globe to accept their responsibility. As the first line of government, local authorities actually play a decisive role. They are essential in setting in motion local and bottom-up processes to enable a transition towards a more sustainable world.

Implementing international goals at a local level is not easy. Flemish cities and municipalities can count on the UCLG for support. The UCLG is organising the Week of the Sustainable Municipality for the third consecutive year. In 2018, 82 municipalities participated and in 2019, 95 took part. These municipalities highlight local sustainability heroes throughout the campaign week.

There are numerous local initiatives that contribute to one or more SDG(s). The Week of the Sustainable Municipality is a chance to make such initiatives – and first and foremost, the citizens who make them possible – more visible, both within and far beyond their own communities. It is an opportunity to connect local actions to a worldwide agenda; to assume a leading role in this global narrative together with many other local authorities, at a shared moment in time and with a shared sense of pride.

The Week of the Sustainable Municipality 2020 is an exceptional one. It will coincide with the international celebration of the fifth anniversary of Agenda 2030 on September 25. We have now arrived at a decade of action. In the next ten years, we need to truly realise a sustainable transition. The campaign week will also take place in an exceptional period. The coronavirus pandemic and its consequences have demonstrated the interdependence of sustainability's social, ecological and economic aspects and further emphasise the importance of international collaboration and solidarity. They have inspired new sustainability initiatives and celebrated heroes working in the healthcare sector.



2 What does the campaign involve?

2.1 Objective: Local heroes for global goals

The campaign is used to give sustainable development goals a local face in Flemish cities and municipalities. Participating municipalities appoint local sustainability heroes. These heroes can be citizens, organisations, clubs, schools, businesses, or other groups that act in a sustainable manner on a daily basis. They personify one or more SDGs within their municipality. In this way, municipalities can boost the general visibility of the SDGs and highlight existing sustainable initiatives.

The focus in 2020 is on 'Corona heroes': individuals, organisations, and services that made an exceptional effort during the pandemic and remain committed to a sustainable world in the future.

The year 2020 kicks off an international 'decade of action'. There is an urgent need for a greater ambition and a faster transition towards sustainability to be able to accomplish the goals within the next ten years. We want to use the Week of the Sustainable Municipality to further emphasise the element of action. In addition to current actions by municipalities and heroes, we are also focussing on where they are headed and what future actions they intend to undertake.

The UCLG will provide participating municipalities with the resources they need to make their heroes visible during the campaign week of 18 to 25 September, both in municipal buildings and online.

All participating Flemish municipalities will hoist the SDG flag by their town halls as part of the campaign week, with an official event on 25 September. Dutch authorities will hoist the flag on this day as well. If coronavirus measures permit, the municipalities should celebrate this as a festive occasion with municipal council members, staff, heroes and/or the media.

The campaign website, www.duurzamegemeente.be, is the backbone of the campaign. It contains pages that present the sustainability heroes, an overview of participating municipalities, ideas for the campaign week, pictures and videos of activities, and accessible information about the 17 sustainable development goals.

2.2 SDGs and the coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated our global interdependence and its consequences. Travel and encounters worldwide allowed the epidemic to spread across the globe. However, global digital connections have also allowed families and friends to remain in contact. Furthermore, global interconnectivity also facilitated collaboration between countries, with examples including the deployment of medical staff and the search for a vaccine.

Although the pandemic is primarily a healthcare crisis (SDG 3), it affects every aspect of our lives. It has reminded us of the importance of sustainability and revealed links and trade-offs between the social, ecological, and economic aspects of sustainable

development (People, Planet, and Prosperity, three of the five pillars of sustainable development).

- Population growth and economic activity are putting more pressure on our ecosystems. Wild animals are seeking out new habitats or are being moved out of their existing ones. This impacts interactions between people and animals and thus how viruses spread.
- Relationships between consumption and travel patterns and the climate have become clearer than ever, forcing us to reflect on how we will address this post-coronavirus.
- The COVID-19 crisis has a severe effect on the economy. In addition to the impact on economic growth, this also affects employers' and employees' income and well-being. The pandemic has revealed the intrinsic tensions between economic development and physical and mental well-being.

The epidemic has also shown that there are various vulnerable groups in society that must not be forgotten and how quickly social inequality can escalate (SDGs 1 and 10). Agenda 2030's guiding principle for sustainable development, 'to leave no one behind', is clearly vital. Although the virus does not distinguish between rich and poor, man and woman, we see that some already disadvantaged groups have a lower chance of survival at an international level. Individuals in vulnerable (domestic) circumstances are more heavily affected by the crisis. However, dealing with the epidemic has also shown that we are capable of committed, rapid action, for example, by suspending utility bills.

The crisis has also emphasised the great importance of peaceful, stable societies, of efficient government institutions, and of collaboration (Peace and Partnership, the two other sustainable development pillars). Conflict impedes the establishment of effective measures against COVID-19. People living in conflict areas and refugee camps are especially vulnerable to the epidemic. Moreover, clear communication, transparent measures, and continuous, flexible service are essential. We cannot overcome this crisis alone. We must show solidarity and collaborate with one another, both within and between municipalities and countries, and with companies, educational institutions, associations, and healthcare experts.

This crisis has demonstrated the close connection between local and global affairs. In our global community challenges and opportunities are not limited to the borders of a particular country or municipality, just like viruses. Now more than ever, it is important to show commitment to international justice and to support and acknowledge initiatives that promote international solidarity.

Initiatives to beat the COVID-19 crisis have popped up everywhere. Healthcare providers are doing their utmost to provide everyone with the care they need. Local authorities are creative and efficient in their approaches to the provision of services. This includes the use of volunteers and chat buddies to connect with older citizens, (online) challenges and packages for children and young people, and the introduction of digital platforms for local retailers. Local authorities have also shown their solidarity with other local councils worldwide. For example, Flemish authorities share resources with partner municipalities in the Global South and exchange ideas on approaches to

COVID-19. Citizens, associations, schools, and companies are making their own contributions as well, setting up sustainable and long-term initiatives. Examples include the Post-Corona Movement, greater opportunities to work from home, and more flexibility for a better work-life balance.

Professor Geert Bouckaert of the Public Governance Institute argues that COVID-19 is overshadowing the SDGs. If we had already achieved the 17 SDGs, however, both the chance of the COVID-19 crisis (and upcoming crises) occurring and the impact of such a blow would have been reduced greatly. We must assess policy solutions to this and other crises in terms of their sustainability at both a global and local level. We must ensure that the 5 Ps reinforce rather than detract from each other. We must find a healthy balance between social, economic, and environmental factors.¹

2.3 What is expected of you as a participating municipality?

- Appoint a maximum of 17 sustainable (corona) heroes.
(Also refer to Chapter 4.)
- Register your sustainability heroes at www.duurzamegemeente.be.
- Use the UCLG's campaign materials to promote the heroes campaign in your town hall or other municipal buildings and online.
(Also refer to: Chapter 5.)
- Provide your heroes with UCLG campaign materials.
(Also refer to: Chapter 5.)
- Display the SDG flag throughout the campaign week, with an official event on 25 September.
(Also refer to Chapter 5.)
- Inform the UCLG of local activities related to the campaign week.
(Also refer to: Chapter 6.)
- Communicate about your sustainability heroes' activities on local communication channels: municipal bulletins, website, social media, email banners, etc.
(Also refer to Chapter 6.)
- Use the campaign as a chance to further incorporate SDGs in municipal policy and improve residents' awareness.
(Also refer to: Chapter 7.)

3 How can you participate in the campaign?

Sign up as soon as possible and no later than 14 August 2020 at www.duurzamegemeente.be/inschrijven.

Keep in mind that local administrative bodies must approve participation in the campaign.

Any questions? Contact Hanne Albers or Heleen Voeten at UCLG's International department:

¹ Bouckaert Geert. Special State of Science series.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwGAKWYUvpE&feature=youtu.be>

- Hanne Albers: hanne.albers@vvsq.be or +32 (0)2 211 56 69
- Heleen Voeten (from 1 July): heleen.voeten@vvsq.be or +32 (0)496 73 55 49.

4 How do you identify sustainability heroes?

4.1 Criteria

A sustainability hero...

- Works toward a sustainable world on a daily basis.
- Is an individual, organisation, association, school, company, or group.
- May be a municipal service.
- Can preferably be linked to multiple SDGs.
- Is dynamic, communicative, and inspiring.
- Is visible within the community.

In 2020, the focus is on heroes whose actions contribute to sustainability during this era of corona. This preferably involves longer-term initiatives inspired by, but not limited to, the corona period. You may also appoint people or services within your council as heroes for their efforts and innovative solutions during the coronavirus pandemic.

Your municipality is also free to select heroes with no link to the coronavirus, of course.

The heroes must commit to actively promote the sustainable development goals during the campaign week from 18 to 25 September. They will wear the SDG pin, use the Facebook frame (see Chapter 5), reach out to their own networks with SDG campaign materials where possible, and participate in interviews, promotional videos, and other campaign-related media. They are presented through public profiles on the campaign website.

Look for people of different backgrounds and possibly from different sub-municipalities, with larger and smaller networks, professionals and private citizens, those active in business and social worlds, individuals, organisations, etc. Consider heroes with a commitment to sustainability within their own municipality, but also to those committed to international justice. At the end of this manual, we will present some possible heroes. To view the heroes of previous editions, visit www.duurzamegemeente.be/gemeenten.

It is fine to appoint multiple sustainability heroes who contribute to the same SDGs. Nor do you have to appoint a hero for every single SDG. Try to link your heroes to different SDGs, with a distribution across the **5 pillars of sustainable development: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership**. The link with COVID-19 offers additional opportunities to emphasise the social aspect of sustainability (People).



4.2 Where should you look for your heroes?

Participating municipalities are free to determine their own approach in finding and selecting sustainability heroes. Some ideas:

- Set up a working group with public officials and advisory council members and have them nominate possible heroes.
- Have every municipal service nominate a hero, or put out a call on internal communication channels.
- Set up a poll on the staff website.
- Have citizens nominate heroes, for example, by putting out a call on municipal channels (website, social media, magazine) or setting up a suggestion box where citizens can submit heroes' names.
- If you participated in previous campaigns, you can ask your 2018 or 2019 heroes to nominate new ones.

However you decide to conduct your search and selection process, we strongly recommend involving multiple services. Examples include municipal staff, Public Centres for Social Welfare, and the police and fire and rescue services. This will not only improve awareness of the SDGs, it also offers a more diverse picture of local sustainability heroes, both during and after the coronavirus pandemic. Moreover,

previous campaign weeks have shown that the majority of heroes were actively recruited by their local council. An open call to citizens has additional value, but may not produce the intended result.

Integrated collaboration is one of the basic principles of the Agenda 2030! To consistently commit to the SDGs, all municipal services will first need to reconsider their policies from a sustainability perspective.

INSPIRATION: To view examples of participating municipalities' calls for heroes in previous years, visit www.duurzamegemeente.be/kalender.

Municipalities that participated in the campaign in previous years may opt to work with (some of) the same heroes again. In that case, please update the hero pages at www.duurzamegemeente.be with new pictures and texts.

NOTE: The campaign week will take place at or near the same time period as the [Sustainable Mobility Week](#) organised by Netwerk Duurzame Mobiliteit (16 to 22 September), Mooimakers' [Enforcement Week](#) (5 to 11 October), and the [Fair Trade Week](#) (7 to 17 October). Though these campaigns target different audiences, they can still serve to reinforce each other within your municipality.

5 What campaign materials may you expect the UCLG to provide?

This year we will be paying special attention to digital tools to raise SDG awareness and highlight the heroes. This is based on the reasoning that it is harder to make the heroes and SDGs visible (or recognisable) at public events and activities. This means that the digital side of the campaign week has become more important.

All campaign materials are available free of charge. The materials supplied by the UCLG, such as the flag, window stickers, and hero kits, will be sent out in early September.

5.1 For the municipality

- 1 flag for flagpole (150 cm x 100 cm) with SDG colour wheel, to be hoisted by the town hall or on another clearly visible flagpole.
NOTE: **If you still have a serviceable flag from a previous campaign, let us know when you sign up.** This helps us make sustainable use of materials.
- 2 window stickers (90 cm x 60 cm) with SDG colour wheel, to be displayed in the town hall, library, or elsewhere.

- 5 posters (A2) with information about the campaign and the participating municipalities.
 - Digital templates for materials to create yourself:
 - Beach flag design (60 cm x 240 cm) with SDG colour wheel.
 - Roll-up banner design (100 cm x 205 cm) with SDG colour wheel and text “Wij doen mee aan de Week van de Duurzame Gemeente” (We take part in the Week of the Sustainable Municipality).
 - Beer mat designs with accessible tips per SDG.
 - SDG bingo card with actions for citizens to take per SDG.
- Note: These materials are only available for participating municipalities and no later than the end of June. To view the campaign materials, log on to your personal account.
- Facebook frame (for profile pictures), mainly for use during the campaign week.
 - Help with creating a hero video with Video Editor (Microsoft application): start and end screens + instructions on video creation.
 - SDG tote bag for municipal council with various SDG publications.
 - Video presentation for local authorities with basic details about SDGs and relevance to local authority.

ABOUT THE FLAG:

- Identify who must grant local permission to hoist a flag.
- It is best to hoist the flag at the start of the campaign week, but please organise the official event on September 25, the fifth anniversary of Agenda 2030. The flag will be raised on this day in the Netherlands as well. This will allow us to generate buzz and media attention throughout Europe.

5.2 For the heroes

- The hero kit consists of an SDG tote bag and SDG pin.
NOTE: You are free to add your own items to this kit to show your appreciation, e.g. local or fair trade products, a plant, a miniature insect hotel, etc.
- Customisable hero posters (A2) for municipalities to add their own heroes' pictures and quotes (to be printed by the municipality). Can be added to hero kit.
- An accessible presentation (PPT slideshow and/or video) for the heroes with information about SDGs. You can start by using our [video](#) with Flemish mayors explaining the SDGs in simple terms.
- Facebook frame, same as for the municipalities.

6 How will we be highlighting the sustainability heroes?

- The UCLG will promote the hero campaign through our website, newsletter, monthly bulletin, and social media.
- The UCLG will have several campaign videos created for municipalities to distribute through their own channels.

- Leading up to and during the campaign week, the UCLG will ask our press contacts to spread the news about the sustainable municipalities and heroes.
- Local authorities in the Netherlands (and possibly in other countries as well) will also raise the SDG flag on September 25. This joint action increases the chance of European and international attention.

Naturally, we also expect participating municipalities to make every effort to promote the SDGs and their sustainability heroes' heroic deeds. What communication channels can you use? Some ideas to inspire you:

- Highlight a different hero every week or month, e.g. through interviews in your municipal bulletin.
- Have one or more heroes take over your municipal Instagram or TikTok account.
- Invite heroes to be part of a local radio or TV programme.
- Make a video presenting your heroes (see Chapter 5, campaign materials) and distribute it through municipal communication channels, display it in your town hall or in other municipal buildings.
- Add the hero campaign banner to all municipal emails.
- On your municipal website and social media, place a link to the campaign website, www.duurzamegemeente.be.
- Configure the home page of the computers at the local library to temporarily display the campaign website.
- Put heroes in touch with the municipal press officer. That way your heroes can pass on their experiences, information, and news directly.
- Invite local or regional media to the hoisting of the SDG flag or to the presentation of your heroes.
- Promote the SDGs and your local heroes at local activities, either in physical or digital form (due to COVID-19). Various provinces have SDG awareness materials available on loan. Download the '[50 sensibiliserende praktijkvoorbeelden](#)' brochure for ideas.
- Arrange corona-proof activities with your heroes during other campaigns such as Enforcement Week or Fair Trade Week. Organise an initiative to clean up a park or go out plogging with your heroes.
- Visit the [campaign website](#) to explore ways in which past participants contributed to SDGs and highlighted their sustainability heroes.

The UCLG will create a shared calendar in the summer. We will ask participating municipalities to add any scheduled activities to this calendar.

7 How will we establish the link with tangible policy commitments?

Participation in the Week of the Sustainable Municipality does not just raise awareness of Agenda 2030, it also contributes to a better incorporation of SDGs in municipal policy. The campaign week helps to strengthen your municipality's commitment to the SDGs and/or gets your council and various services on board. Those who are more familiar with the SDGs are also more likely to take them into account when designing projects or actions. Previous campaign weeks have encouraged many participating municipalities to include the SDGs in their

environmental analysis and multi-annual policy plans. Additionally, the campaign week resulted in new collaborations with sustainability heroes for several municipalities.

The year 2020 will kick off a 'decade of action'. We will be paying special attention to the element of action. What actions does your municipality or a specific service intend to take to contribute more strongly to Agenda 2030? What are your heroes' future plans?

Include this information when you register your heroes. Do not simply offer descriptions of your heroes, but explain what changes each hero has seen or experienced since 2015 and what future actions they intend to take to further strengthen their sustainability commitment. Explain why your municipality is participating in the campaign week and what your future actions in the context of the 'decade of action' are².

Possible commitments or actions for your municipality to undertake during the campaign week (and outside it):

- Have the college of mayor and aldermen or the municipal council sign the [UCLG's declaration of commitment to the SDGs](#). If the previous council has already signed the declaration, renew this commitment during the Week of the Sustainable Municipality.
- Use the UCLG tools to embed the SDGs more firmly in your policies. For example, employ the [SDG circle exercise](#) when designing projects, conduct an [SDG impact analysis](#) for your municipality or a specific project, or use the SDGs as a framework for [citizen participation](#). Visit our [SDG website](#) for more information and tools.
- Appoint SDG ambassadors among the members of the local council.
- Distribute an interview or video with the mayor explaining why and how your municipality wants to contribute to the sustainable development goals during the next legislature.
- Include the SDGs in memos to the mayor and aldermen or the municipal council.
- Inform your advisory councils of the SDGs, looking for common ground and shared action points.
- Assemble a diverse working group for the selection and guidance of your sustainability heroes. This will improve awareness of the SDGs among the working group's members and increase support for inclusion of SDGs in their own services or activities, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable local policy. You can also convert your campaign working group into a permanent SDG working group at a later date.

The UCLG is happy to provide support for such initiatives. Do you need feedback, guidance, or materials? Let us know your plans!

Contact Hanne Albers or Heleen Voeten at UCLG's International department:

- Hanne Albers: hanne.albers@vvsq.be or +32 (0)2 211 56 69
- Heleen Voeten (from 1 July): heleen.voeten@vvsq.be or +32 (0)496 73 55 49.

² You may refer to your multi-annual policy plan.

8 Timeline: the campaign step by step

STEP	TIMING
Approval of campaign participation by local decision-making body	Before August 14
Sign up at www.duurzamegemeente.be	No later than August 14
Selecting sustainability heroes	June – July – August
Register your sustainability heroes at www.duurzamegemeente.be	No later than September 11
Receipt of campaign materials	Early September
<p>Week of the Sustainable Municipality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hoist the SDG flag, with an official event on September 25 - Exhibit campaign materials - Communicate about sustainability heroes - Communicate about commitment to sustainable local policy 	September 18-25
There's no need to stop the campaign on September 25. You can continue highlighting a hero each month, for example.	continued impact

9 Inspiration for the heroes

Do your municipality's sustainability heroes wish to learn more about the sustainable development goals?

- What are the SDGs?
<https://vvsg.be/kennisitem/vvsg/wat-zijn-de-duurzame-ontwikkelingsdoelstellingen>
- SDGs in a nutshell
<https://vvsg.be/kennisitem/vvsg/sdgs-in-een-notendop>
- Video of Flemish mayors explaining the SDGs
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2Mwm-nF2sq&t=2s>
- Federal government SDG website
<https://www.sdgs.be/nl/sdgs>
- United Nations SDG website
<https://unric.org/nl/duurzame-ontwikkelingsdoelstellingen/>
- Putting SDGs into practice
<https://www.goodlifegoals.org/>
<https://www.vvsg.be/kennisitem/vvsg/sdg-bierviltjes>

Participating municipalities will also receive an accessible presentation on the SDGs in July (PPT slideshow or video) with information about the SDGs and the role of the heroes during the Week of the Sustainable Municipality. You can have your heroes view the presentation together or provide it digitally.

The Week of the Sustainable Municipality is an initiative of the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities with support by the Flemish Government, the Belgian Federal Government's Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, the European Commission and Platforma.



10 APPENDIX: Possible Sustainability Heroes per SDG

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager of social grocer - Organisers of Fietsbib bike loan programme or Pamperbank nappy bank - UITpas promoter - Individuals or organisations involved in fighting poverty and increasing standards of living in the Global South (contributing to SDG 17) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local organic farmer or business (contributing to SDG 12) - Food depot staff (contributing to SDG 1) - Local vegetarian chef (contributing to SDG 3) - Food buying groups (contributing to SDG 1) - Short chain initiatives (contributing to SDG 12) - Individuals and chefs who prepared sustainable meals for care workers, for example, during the pandemic - School or business co-operating with local sustainable farmer (contributing to SDGs 8 and 12) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Social Welfare Centres or care home volunteers - Volunteers active in care or psychosocial support, e.g. during the coronavirus outbreak - Care workers especially committed to ensuring better (physical or mental) well-being, e.g. care home, home care, or hospital staff - Organisers of social activities (contributing to SDG 10) - Employer caring for mental well-being (contributing to SDG 8) - Local sports hero - Services/volunteers who call and support older people living alone - Services, organisations, or youth clubs that help children and young people stay active and exercise in creative ways during the coronavirus epidemic - Collaborating GPs, e.g. for improved distribution of protective equipment - Citizens who worked as care volunteers abroad during the coronavirus epidemic - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher involved in sustainable or social projects - Partner schools (contributing to SDG 17) - School involved in Bednet (contributing to SDG 9) - Teachers/schools that use social media to reach out to vulnerable groups (not everyone has a laptop, but they may have Instagram) - Company committed to lifelong learning - Homework helpers (contributing to SDG 1) - Individuals, companies, and the like who/which provide laptops for home schooling during and after COVID-19 (contributing to SDGs 1 and 10) - Trainee teachers who help(ed) re-open and re-arrange schools during the coronavirus outbreak - Services or organisations that provide supplementary and stimulating childcare during the coronavirus outbreak - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Female CEO (of sustainable company) - Employer or manager who works to accommodate breastfeeding and child care - Women's group organisers (contributing to SDG 10) - Marketing agency or public official promoting non-stereotyped images - Volunteers of organisations committed to providing support to fight domestic violence - Etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher or volunteer involved in water-efficiency efforts - Head of water-efficient school - Water-efficient sports club - Volunteers who fight water wastage on construction sites - Individuals, companies, or associations involved in ensuring clean water and sanitation in the Global South (contributing to SDG 17) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable growers (contributing to SDG 11) - Teacher or volunteer involved in renewable energy - Association with sustainable infrastructure - Organisations that use sustainable energy and energy recovery during events - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fair Trade shop volunteer group - Local tourism staff - Promoter or trader in local products - Social entrepreneur - Founder of platform for local retailers during the coronavirus outbreak - Companies that have pivoted their production due to COVID-19, while implementing safety measures for their own employees - Companies that invest part of their profits in sustainable projects and collaborations in the Global South (contributing to SDG 17) - Entrepreneurs who volunteer to guide SMEs in the Global South (contributing to SDG 17) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher or volunteer who teaches computer skills - Citizen with innovative ideas - Services that share their infrastructure - Local company with sustainable buildings or sites - Services that provide vulnerable citizens with tablets or free Internet vouchers (to stay connected during the coronavirus outbreak) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local volunteer buddies - Tutors of non-native speakers or people with a disability - Key members of local minority groups - Employer or manager who works to accommodate people with disabilities - Diaspora associations that work on sustainability with partners in their country of origin - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Car-sharing participants (contributing to SDG 13) - Citizens who practice co-housing or co-living (contributing to SDG 3) - Transition groups - Volunteers active in heritage protection - Organisations that make their premises available as homeless shelters (during the coronavirus epidemic) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restaurant manager who hands out leftovers or makes use of surplus food (contributing to SDG 2) - Repair Café or sharing shop organiser (contributing to SDG 1) - Youth club with reusable cups - School that uses eco-friendly cleaning products (contributing to SDGs 6 and 14) - Students or volunteers that support partners abroad in implementing a circular economy or with materials (development of new products)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Companies that are inspired to explore a more sustainable supply chain by COVID-19 (due to realisation of current dependency on raw materials from the Global South) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local environmental activists - Employer that encourages transport by bicycle (contributing to SDGs 3 and 11) - School that participates in 'Sweater Day' - Citizens or organisations that are reconsidering and reshaping their long-term mobility behaviour due to the coronavirus pandemic - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager of sustainable fishmongers (contributing to SDG 12) - Local chefs who opt for sustainable fish - Volunteers who clean up the beaches - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature conservation volunteers - Litter picking 'ploggers' - Local beekeepers - Citizens with wild gardens (possibly set up during the coronavirus outbreak) - Seed library organisers - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisers of citizen participation projects - Good examples of efficient or modern service provision - Municipal employees or citizens that have assumed a broader communicative role - Volunteers for peace-building initiatives - Services that provide their services in innovative and creative service ways in times of COVID-19 (see heroes for other SDGs for examples) - Etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local bridge builders - Immersion travel organisers - Fourth-pillar organisations with projects in the Global South - Schools that partner with other schools - Companies that support projects in the Global South - Municipal residents who work to fight the coronavirus pandemic abroad - Organisations that set up or pivot Global South projects related to international solidarity due to the coronavirus pandemic - Etc.

More info

For more information

www.vvsg.be

or contact a staff member team international at

internationaal@vvsg.be.

About VVSG

The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) supports, advocates for and is the umbrella movement of Flemish local governments. All 300 municipalities and OCMWs in Flanders are members, in addition to many police zones and intermunicipal partnerships. A house of trust that provides its members with advice and guidance, gives tailor-made information, provides training and education, organises meeting days and other support services. More than 10,000 politicians and civil servants attend a study day or training at VVSG every year.

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The visual material in this publication was provided to us by the city and municipal authorities involved, unless otherwise stated.

VVSG

