

re-value

Re-Value Impact dialogues with NetZeroCities 2

Re-Value Deliverable D7.7



Report information

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Executive Summary

This deliverable reports on the interaction and collaboration of Re-Value with NetZeroCities and summarises key activities from July 2024 to September 2025. A Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared to formalise the collaboration, which has been going on since the beginning of Re-Value.

In the past period, regular exchange of knowledge with the NetZeroCities Platform continued through the cluster meetings initiated by CINEA, with DG RTD, NetZeroCities, Re-Value, and its two sister projects UP2030 and CLIMABOROUGH funded under the same call. Confidential inception reports prepared for these meetings summarise the progress and updates in the Re-Value cities and the project in general. Next to these, additional meetings with the sister projects of the cluster have been co-organised and moderated by Re-Value, with the main focus on the organisation of events and joint contribution to the NetZeroCities Mission Conference in 2025. The organisation of the *Urban Planning and Design Cluster exhibition* and *World Café session* at the latter Conference, as described in this report, partially replaced the *Urban Planning in Transition(s) Forum*, which was included in the Grant Agreement but could not be fulfilled due to misalignment in the timelines and intended impacts of the sister projects.

The report further provides details of the involvement of Re-Value cities in the Cities Mission or other forms of national-level support facilities emerging to support cities towards climate neutrality. İzmir, the only Re-Value and Mission City, presented an overview of its journey since being awarded the Mission Label in March 2024. Additionally, details are given of the participation of Ålesund, Cascais, Constanța and Rimini in their national fora, platforms or programs aimed at bringing Mission Cities (or Mission-minded cities) together.

In the upcoming final stage of the project, Re-Value will strengthen its collaboration with NetZeroCities, focusing on joint efforts in outreach, communication, dissemination, and co-hosting of events. As project results will increasingly emerge, Re-Value will use them to contribute to the Portal's Knowledge Repository. In parallel, as national networks and platforms take shape, Re-Value partners will continue to leverage their role in NetZeroCities and similar initiatives to advocate for their cities' participation, while also sharing lessons learned from pilot activities to highlight obstacles and propose new pathways to climate neutrality. Lastly, Re-Value will continue to pursue exchange meetings with NetZeroCities to discuss updates and improvements to the Impact Model towards its final delivery.

A final account of the dialogues between Re-Value and NetZeroCities will be given at the end of the project, in deliverable D7.11: Re-Value Impact dialogues with NetZeroCities 3 (December 2026).

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1 Framing the Re-Value - NetZeroCities cooperation

In the Re-Value project, nine European waterfront cities demonstrate how climate neutrality and urban quality can be aligned, by re-valuing their connection to the waterfront, strengthening co-benefits and mitigating potential adverse impacts—in short, making their urban transition irresistible for local residents, professionals, and other stakeholders. All nine cities will work with long-term Territorial Transformation Plans combined with area-based Waterfront Pilots. Four Leading Cities (Ålesund, Bruges, Burgas, and Rimini) demonstrate full-scale how integrated urban planning and design can be optimally deployed to achieve climate neutrality and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Five Replication Cities (Cascais, Constanța, İzmir, Písek, and Rijeka) learn, replicate and develop their own participatory story-building, data-driven scenarios and financial and partnership models on integrated urban planning and design to accelerate their journeys to climate neutrality.

At regular intervals, Re-Value is sharing knowledge with the NetZeroCities Platform of the European Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities (hereafter, EU Cities Mission); this cooperation started on a semi-informal basis and was intended to be supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). For this, initial discussions about collaboration potential between Re-Value and its sister projects UP2030 and CLIMABOROUGH on the one hand, and the NetZeroCities Platform of the Cities Mission on the other hand were held in the beginning of the project. The resulting detailed memo, shared in the Annex of D6.1: Re-Value Capacity Development and Exchange Programme ¹, identified “points of entry” for the Cities Mission portfolio of Innovative Action projects—and specifically the cities engaged in those projects—to collaborate with NetZeroCities. These were also summarised in the previous version of this deliverable, in D7.4². As of September 2025, the MoU is still under development, with a first draft in preparation, expected to be jointly reviewed by both parties in October 2025.

While the formal MoU has not yet been finalised, Re-Value and NetZeroCities have already established a constructive and ongoing working relationship. Key interactions to date include:

- Creation of a shared private space in the NZC Portal to facilitate ongoing collaboration
- Monitoring the progress of national city networks linked to the Cities Mission and promoting the active participation of Re-Value cities in them
- Regular participation in Mission Platform cluster meetings organised by CINEA and DG RTD
- Additional cluster meetings with the sister projects, organised and moderated by Re-Value and UP2030 Communication Teams
- Joint contributions to the NetZeroCities Mission Conferences in 2024 and 2025
- Dedicated coordination calls to explore synergies between Re-Value’s Impact Model and NZC’s Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework

These ongoing exchanges provide a strong foundation for the formalisation of the partnership through the forthcoming MoU, and reflect a shared commitment to advancing climate-neutral urban transformation across Europe. Besides, other cooperation opportunities have already been identified, including the Re-Value Final Conference in 2026, participation in the UP2030 Final Conference in November 2025, and in the 2026 Cities Mission Conference, or the New European Bauhaus Festival in 2026. Furthermore, Re-Value

¹ D6.1: Re-Value Capacity Development and Exchange Programme, Version 1

² D7.4: Re-Value Impact dialogues with NetZeroCities 1

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has shared with the consortium NetZeroCities's invitation to participate in the EU Policy Lab organised in October-November 2025, with several of Re-Value cities expressing their interest.

The present deliverable provides more detailed information on the above-mentioned interactions, with a focus on progress made between July 2024 (M19) and September 2025 (M33).

2 The NetZeroCities Portal

Re-Value cities and other partners have access to several capacity building modules within the NetZeroCities Portal, i.e. the online component of the Mission Platform. The Portal is a space where cities can find resources and tools that are useful in their journey towards climate neutrality by 2030, including a Financial Guidance Tool. In addition, it is an online space for cities to interact and learn together, engaging in peer-to-peer collaboration. Re-Value created in M6 of the project a private group in the Portal called “Re-Value Cities”, giving group members a space to share, collaborate, and host events in the Portal environment. In addition, Re-Value partners who have a NZC Portal account can contribute to the Knowledge Repository (including Fact Sheets, Case Studies and Methods), and have access to the Social Media Feed and Events. However, despite successfully registering and on-boarding 55 Re-Value Community of Practice members to the NZC Portal to activate the private Re-Value Cities group, the platform is seldom visited or used to its full potential. Details on this use in the project are given in D6.1: Re-Value Capacity Building and Exchange Programme 1³, and in D6.2: Re-Value Capacity Building and Exchange Programme 2³.

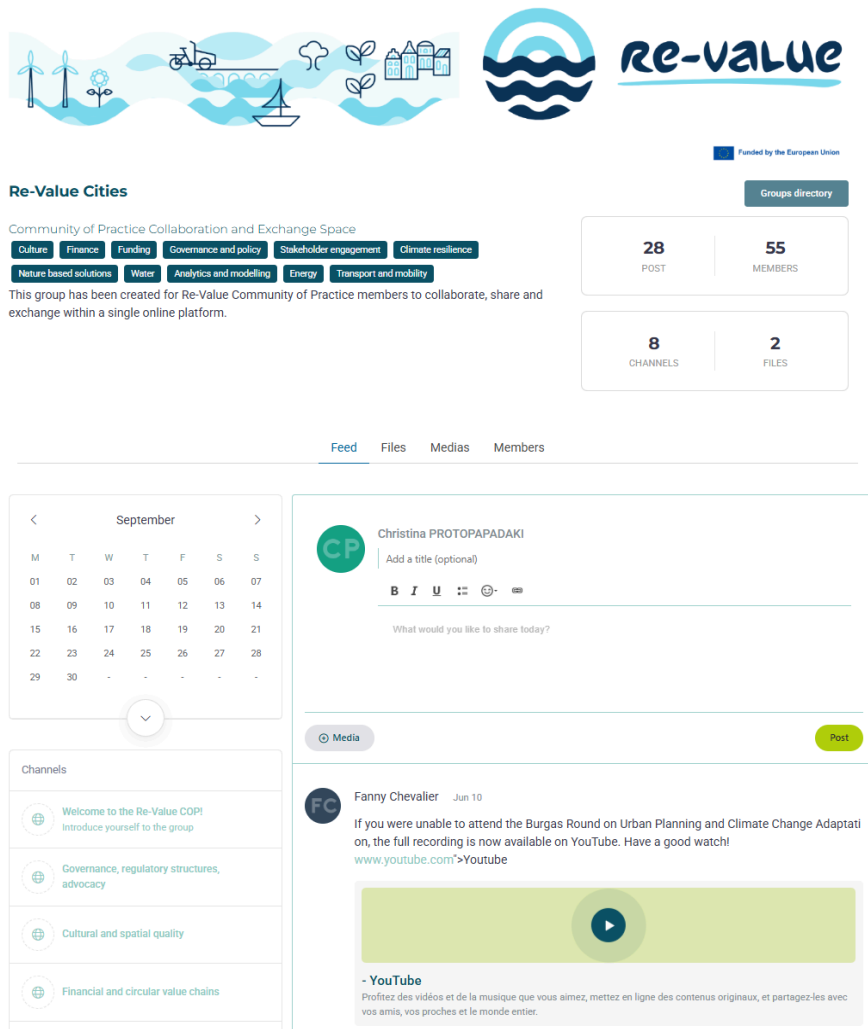


Figure 1: Screenshot of the Re-Value Cities private group on the NetZeroCities Portal

³ [D6.2: Re-Value Capacity Development and Exchange Programme, Version 2](#)

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Engagement with the NetZeroCities Portal highlighted both the potential and limitations of shared digital platforms for cross-project learning and capacity building. While access to the NZC Portal created opportunities for Re-Value Cities partners, overall uptake remained limited, revealing several key lessons.

First, the NZC Portal entered an already crowded landscape of platforms and initiatives. Project partners were simultaneously engaging with multiple EU Missions and related initiatives, each with their own tools and communication channels. In this context, the addition of another platform made it difficult for partners to prioritise engagement, and the intended role of the Portal as a central EU-level one-stop shop was not fully realised. This underscores the importance of streamlining digital offers and clearly demonstrating added value when introducing new platforms - particularly at the European level.

Second, alignment between the NZC Portal's target audience and the Re-Value Cities partners influenced engagement levels. The NZC Portal was primarily designed to support Mission Cities working towards climate neutrality, whereas Re-Value Cities participating municipalities were not part of the Mission Cities cohort (except Izmir) and often had different priorities. As climate neutrality was not always a core focus within the Re-Value project, the capacity-building and exchange opportunities offered through the Portal were not consistently perceived as directly relevant to their work on waterfronts.

Third, practical barriers also affected uptake. Access required authentication and, in many cases, the Portal was easier to navigate with guidance typically provided to Mission Cities through dedicated City Neutral City Advisors. Without this structured support from humans, some partners found it challenging to identify relevant resources or opportunities, which reduced sustained engagement.

Overall, the experience demonstrates that providing access to shared platforms alone is not sufficient to ensure meaningful participation. Effective uptake requires clear alignment with user needs, simplified access, and proactive facilitation. While the NZC Portal offered valuable opportunities for Re-Value Cities partners, the extent to which these were realised ultimately depended on individual partners' priorities, capacity, and ability to engage proactively.

3 İzmir as Re-Value and Mission City

İzmir received the Mission Label in March 2024, following approval of its Climate City Contract. A NetZeroCities City Advisor supports İzmir (as both a Re-Value city and a Mission City). İzmir’s mission team meets at least monthly with City Advisor Deniz Çelik for alignment and targeted guidance on innovation, governance, finance, and policy. A coordination meeting was held with İzmir’s mission team. During the meeting, İzmir’s climate strategies were presented and discussed to ensure a shared understanding of priorities. İzmir’s Mission team also attended the Re-Value consortium meetings on 8–10 April 2025. It delivered a comprehensive briefing on the methodology underpinning İzmir’s Mission process, the Urban Policy Notes, and the İzmir Mission City 2030 Camp Results Report. The İzmir Mission City 2030 Camp is a multi-stakeholder co-creation workshop convened by the mission team to align municipal departments and partners around Urban Policy priorities and early implementation steps. Its outputs were consolidated in a Results Report and are being used to inform CCC delivery. İzmir is part of the NZC Capital Hub process. The İNŞA platform (Turkish Climate Neutral Cities Network), hosted by the Marmara Municipalities Union, serves as the local arm of this pathway, providing a complementary interface for project preparation, matchmaking, and capacity building that helps connect the Climate City Contract project pipeline to finance. The Climate City Contract is integrated into the Waterfront Pilot Roadmap that İzmir is building as part of Re-Value.

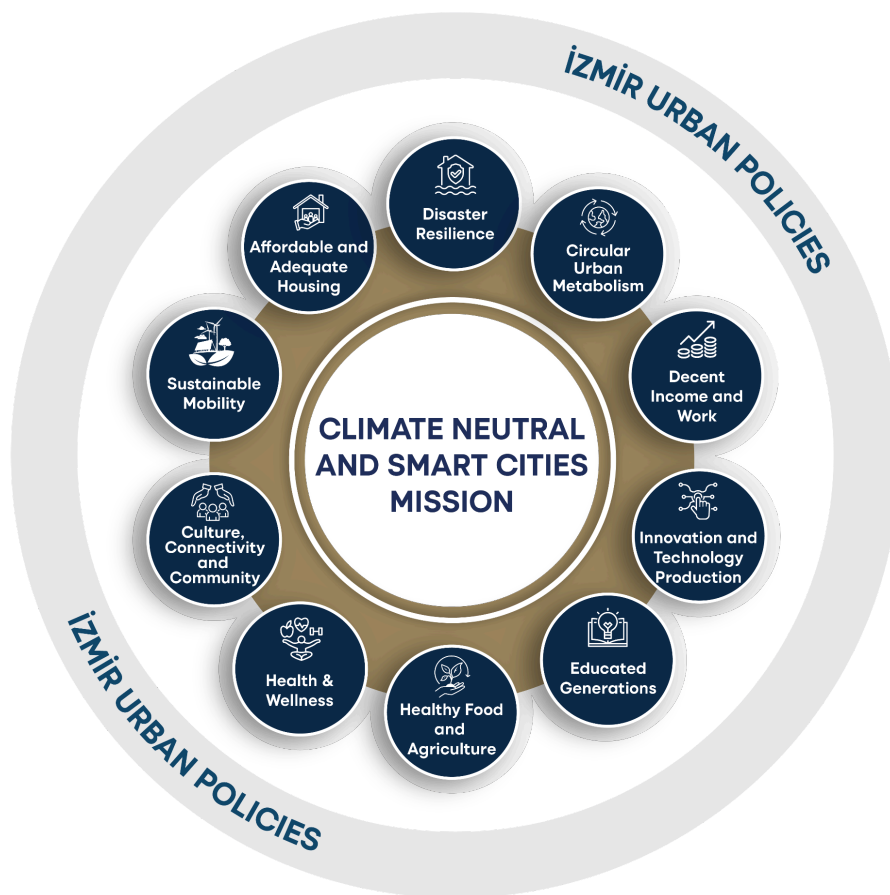


Figure 2: Overview of themes included in the focus of İzmir Mission City 2030 Camp.

4 Development of National Networks and Platforms

4.1 National Networks and Platforms

NetZeroCities is supporting the development of national networks and platforms that help cities collaborate with national ministries and other institutions to overcome policy and legislative barriers to achieving climate neutrality. The goal is to include not only the selected Mission Cities but also other cities with climate neutrality ambition in these collaborations.

As of September 2025, the following Re-Value countries have established some form of national-level support facility, while not all the cities are yet members:

- Belgium - Climate Network and Flemish Cities Knowledge Centre established by VVSG, the association of local authorities in Flanders
- Czech Republic - CapaCities (Ministry-led multi-stakeholder working groups)
- Portugal - Cities for Climate Network (cities initiative); Mission Hub Policy Group (initiative by the National Agency for Innovation)
- Norway - Norwegian Cities Mission Forum (organized by DORGA Design & Architecture) including the participation of Follower Cities
- Romania - Mirror Mission Cities Hub (M100); Romanian Municipalities Association
- Italy - Expert Working Group / Italian Mission Cities network "Let'sGOv Observatory of Follower cities"
- Türkiye - Ministry-level engagement led by TÜBİTAK, the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye, e.g., the kick-off of the Community of Practice for approx. 50 cities and networking event at the MARUF conference (1-3 October 2025)

Engagement with national networks aligned with the EU Cities Mission provided valuable insights into the opportunities and limitations of emerging multi-level governance structures for climate neutrality. A key learning from the Re-Value Cities experience is that while these national networks can offer important pathways for collaboration, their effectiveness depends largely on their maturity, continuity, openness, and alignment with local priorities.

National networks across participating countries were at different stages of development, ranging from well-structured and active platforms to more informal or project-based collaborations. Where networks were more established and supported by national institutions, Re-Value cities were able to engage more consistently, access strategic discussions, and benefit from structured exchanges. In contrast, in countries where networks were still emerging or reliant on short-term initiatives, engagement tended to be more limited or dependent on individual champions. This highlights the importance of sustained institutional support and continuity for national networks to deliver long-term value.

Engagement levels varied depending on how closely climate neutrality aligned with local priorities and governance structures. Re-Value cities that were already working toward climate neutrality, or that had dedicated Transition or Climate teams and political backing, were better positioned to engage actively and benefit from national-level initiatives. Conversely, where climate neutrality was not yet a central focus, participation was more sporadic and often limited to specific opportunities. This suggests that national

networks are most effective when they are connected to existing local governance structures and policy priorities.

Finally, participation in national networks created opportunities for Re-Value Cities to increase visibility, connect with national ministries and peer cities, and access emerging tools such as Climate City Contracts and collaborative governance models. However, as with other exchange mechanisms, access alone did not guarantee uptake. The extent to which cities benefited depended on their internal capacity, available resources, the openness of the national platform, and ability to engage proactively.

Overall, the experience demonstrates that national networks aligned with the EU Cities Mission can serve as valuable enablers for scaling climate neutrality efforts beyond Mission Cities. However, to maximise their impact, these networks require sustained coordination and funding, clear value propositions for participating cities, and stronger alignment with local priorities and capacities.

In the following sections, details are given about the involvement of some of the cities with their respective national networks.

4.2 Ålesund

Ålesund participated in the first major multi-actor meeting for Norwegian Mission and Mission-minded cities in May 2024, at the invitation of the Norwegian Agency for Design and Architecture (DOGA) that manages the national network, and together with the three Norwegian Mission cities Oslo, Stavanger, and Trondheim. This forum has been very active in 2024/2025 with bi-weekly check-in meetings with the Mission cities. Participants have received updates on the work on the cities' Climate City Contracts and information from national stakeholders, including the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and Innovation Norway. Ålesund participated in a physical workshop with this forum in Oslo in December 2024. Participants from Innovation Support, the Climate Department, and the regional sustainability coordinator attended from Ålesund. In addition, three workshops on the New European Bauhaus values were also arranged by DOGA in 2025. Ålesund municipality participated in a panel discussion in March 2025.

4.3 Cascais

Cascais municipality has not been explicitly active in the Cities for Climate Network activities since June 2024. However, Cascais Ambiente applied to and was accepted as a Twin City for the NetZeroCities [Twinning Learning Programme](#), a peer-learning initiative bringing together Twin Cities with Pilot and Mission Cities. This two year peer-learning initiative connects Twin Cities with Pilot and Mission Cities to foster mutual exchange, focusing on knowledge sharing, learning, and the replication of successful practices. The programme emphasizes a hands-on approach to implementing systemic transformation methodologies and innovative strategies on the path to climate neutrality. Cascais Ambiente is twinned with Aarhus, Denmark.

The first stage of the Twinning Learning Programme was completed in May 2025 with a technical visit, during which a delegation from Cascais traveled to Aarhus to exchange knowledge on sustainable urban solutions, including green spaces, light mobility, sustainable housing, and energy efficiency. Cascais will host

an Aarhus delegation in October 2025, showcasing the sustainable and decarbonization practices that the municipality has been implementing.

4.4 Constanța

Constanța Municipality together with Constanța Metropolitan Area, among other nine cities from Romania (Alba Iulia, Bistrița, Brașov, București, Buzău, Iași, Oradea, Reșița and Timișoara), were selected in October 2024 to join the [Mission Mirror Cities Hub Romania](#) (M100).

M100 is a national hub established in 2024 by The Ministry of Research, Innovation, and Digitalization that is mirroring the EU Mission 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, supporting Romanian cities to become climate neutral by 2035. The HUB is functioning as a platform to facilitate dialogue between central, regional, and local public authorities, universities and public research-innovation institutes, civil society, and citizens to aid Romania's cities in reaching the EU targets regarding climate neutrality by 2035/2050.

After its selection in M100, the local partnership started to draft the Climate City Contract (CCC) for Constanta Metropolitan Area. It was a participative process in which local public institutions, the academia environment, the private sector and all of the local public services operators were involved in the defining of the CCC vision, objectives and action plan, and of course in providing input data for the CO₂ measurements.

The approach was coordinated by Constanta Metropolitan Area and Municipality experts, and benefited from a consultancy of the World Bank experts, especially for the calculation of the CO₂ emission estimations. Besides these main stakeholders, in the CCC drafting were also actively involved representatives of Constanta Ovidius University, CT BUS S.A. (local transport operator company), Termoficare S.A. (the public heating transport company), Termocentrale Constanta (public heating energy producing company), and Confort Urban S.R.L. (roads, parking and public buildings management company).

After receiving the endorsement of more than 40 public and private entities, the CCC was also evaluated and reviewed at the M100 level by a commission composed of renowned experts at European and international level, receiving positive feedback regarding its design approach and its vision, objectives and action plan.

Constanta Net Zero Coalition was established for the implementation of the CCC, composed of 44 entities, as follows: public institutions (8), academia (4), businesses (14), professional organizations (4) and civil society (14 NGOs and associations).

Also for the facilitation of the CCC a digital platform for dialogue was also established (<https://constanta2035.ro/>), accessible for anyone who wants to obtain more knowledge about the topic of climate neutrality and how it is translated in local measures in Constanta, and also to get in touch and involve in the Coalition.

Several meetings were also organized at the City level in order to promote the concept of climate neutrality and the CCC, under the coordination of Constanta Mayor and with the participation of high representatives from the national government, like for example the meeting in 28th of August 2025 when the Ministry of Investments and European Projects and representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests,

the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration were present and actively involved in the Coalition works.

Having in mind that the Constanta CCC is a very ambitious plan looking to tackle seven fields of action in order to reduce with 80.55% the CO₂ emissions in 2035, compared with 2021, and with an action plan comprising investments of 2.6 billion euros, the main success factor is represented by the mobilization of the necessary funds to implement this strategy.

At the moment, Constanța is expecting feedback from the Climate KIC, where they sent their revised and updated CCC for review in order to associate their efforts with the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission.

4.5 Rimini

In Italy the environment around Net Zero Cities is highly fragmented. The nine Mission Cities developed a NetZeroCities pilot project called Let'sGov (Governing the Transition through Pilot Actions), with the aim of creating a national platform and connecting with the national government. Rimini joined the Italian Mission Cities Network "Let's GOv" in 2024 upon invitation of the Municipality of Bologna. As part of the project, the nine cities (of which Bologna is the lead partner), with the support of technical partners (Unibo, AESS and the Politecnico di Torino) have tested innovative governance actions to accelerate the path towards decarbonisation in three macro-areas, corresponding to challenges common to the nine cities: the area of stakeholder engagement, the area of data, and the area of financing. The project also involved a programme of mutual learning and sharing of knowledge and practices on energy transition (bench-learning) were extended to the participation, on a voluntary basis, of Follower cities as observers of the process (Let'sGOv Follower Cities Observatory).

Now that the pilot project has finished, there are no structured mechanisms through which the nine Mission Cities collaborate. Polimi (through Francesco Ripa) is coordinating the work of the Italian mission-minded cities, with the aim of achieving the second objective of the Cities Mission: scaling up the results from 100 cities to all cities in Europe. Francesco is trying to maintain collaboration between the nine Mission Cities in his position by, e.g., organising a knowledge-sharing breakfast with them once a month. Additionally, the nine Mission Cities will participate in an ICLEI-organised 'better funding dialogue' together with Italian financial institutions and the national government taking place at the end of this year.

5 Cluster meetings

Two times per year, CINEA hosts cluster meetings with Re-Value and its two sister projects [UP2030](#) and [CLIMABOROUGH](#) in the Urban Planning and Design Cluster (HORIZON-MISS-2021-CIT-02-01: Urban planning and design for just, sustainable, resilient and climate-neutral cities by 2030), as well as DG RTD (Cities Mission), NetZeroCities and other invited guests. Prior to each meeting, Re-Value and its sister projects prepare inception reports (see below) including progress in terms of achieving our Key Performance Indicators. During each of these meetings, one of the projects is asked to present a particular feature of their work as inspiration for the others.

In the last cluster meeting in February 2025, Re-Value presented, together with updates on the progress in Re-Value cities, also the structure and intended outcomes of Impact Workshops that were being organised within Re-Value in spring 2025, inviting sister projects to organise a similar process across the three cluster projects.

The inception reports that are prepared and presented by the three sister projects for each meeting include a status update of the Living Labs in each city, and serve as additional insights to the regular project reporting—for the European Commission as well as the three projects. The inception reports were introduced for the cluster meeting in June 2023. The content and structure of these confidential reports was defined together with CINEA and the three projects to ensure that it is at a level that is relevant, suitable, and that information is readily available. The structure includes data about:

- Pilots and cities
- Challenges and needs
- Approaches and processes
- Solutions and measures
- Short descriptions
- Data for geographical coverage
- Project external stakeholders
- How the transition and solutions are generated
- Barriers and drivers of the implementation
- Outputs and how these are measured

The reporting is prepared for each cluster meeting by NTNU (WP9) together with VITO (WP7) and city input from the Technical Board and other sources.

In addition to the official cluster meetings organised by CINEA, Re-Value and its two sister projects [UP2030](#) and [CLIMABOROUGH](#) have been meeting on a monthly basis since November 2024 to strengthen their collaboration, create new synergies and plan their participation to the 2025 [NetZeroCities Cities Mission Conference](#) that took place on 6-8 May 2025 in Vilnius, Lithuania. These additional cluster meetings have been organised and moderated by Re-Value and UP2030 Communication Teams.

6 Cities Mission Conference Collaboration

6.1 Urban Planning in Transition(s) Forum

Originally, Re-Value envisioned as a main outreach event to co-organise the *Re-Value Urban Planning in Transition(s) Forum* with sister projects and the Mission (as a stand-alone event, or in cooperation with the Cities Mission Conference), and to host the Final Re-Value Conference.

For logistical reasons, the plan needed to be revised. It still ensures strong Re-Value dissemination in an updated schedule of one large hosted event, a couple of significant presences at the Mission Conference or similar, and additional event participation.

The original plan was still followed at submission of the last CDE plan of December 2024 (D8.4 Re-Value Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan 2).⁴ This idea, however, proved difficult to materialise: the sister projects [UP2030](#) and [CLIMABOROUGH](#) (part of the Urban Planning and Design Cluster with Re-Value) are working on slightly different topics with different impact/ambition as Re-Value, the projects do not share the same delivery timelines, and the Mission Conference is an invitation-only event with limited ability for us to invite other important stakeholders from our cities. Re-Value with its sister projects still had a significant presence at the [NetZeroCities Cities Mission Conference](#) that took place on 6-8 May 2025 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

In detail, the *Forum* turned into the events listed below. Details about the 2025 Cities Mission Conference are given in the next sections.

- 1) Organisation of the Urban Planning and Design Cluster exhibition and World Café session at the May 2025 Cities Mission Conference** with UP2030 and CLIMABOROUGH. Re-Value led a collaboration process with the other two cluster projects, to successfully co-design and organise the Urban Planning and Design Cluster exhibition in lieu of a stand-alone event. The cluster also hosted a World Café session on “Urban Planning and Design for Climate Impact”. Over three days, the Urban Planning and Design exhibition became THE space for exchanging ideas, sharing tools, and starting meaningful conversations about how urban design and planning can accelerate progress towards climate neutrality, supported by high-quality materials, booklets, and short films. (fulfilled)
- 2) The Re-Value Final Conference** will be organised in Bruges in October 2026 as a large public event close to the European Commission (Brussels), including the Cities Mission and New European Bauhaus communities, before the 2026 European Week of Regions and Cities, to showcase Re-Value achievements, and hand over key results to national and European policymakers, to reach stakeholders outside of the Mission Conference;
- 3) Participation in the UP2030 Final Conference**, taking place in Barcelona on 3 November 2025, before the Smart City Expo (4-6 November 2025);
- 4) Still under development:** Potential participation in the 2026 Cities Mission Conference (Turin, May 2026), or in the New European Bauhaus Festival (Brussels, June 2026).

⁴ [D8.4: Re-Value Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan 2](#)

5) Re-Value has also organised a session at the European Week of Regions and Cities in 2024 and brought a speaker to Urban Future 2025; and the partners are present at other events.

6.2 The Urban Planning and Design Cluster Exhibition at the 2025 Mission Conference

With encouragement from Laura Helte (EC) at the Re-Value review meeting in September 2024, Re-Value led a collaboration process, together with UP2030 and CLIMABOROUGH, to successfully co-design and organise the **Urban Planning and Design Cluster Exhibition** and a World Cafe session at the Cities Mission Conference in lieu of a stand-alone event.



Figure 3: The Urban Planning and Design Cluster stand at the 2025 NetZeroCities Cities Mission Conference. Photo: ICLEI Europe.

Re-Value presented the [NEB Impact Model Dominoes game](#) as a practical way to approach collaboration on climate action. The game turns theory into action, encouraging players to explore co-benefits and identify conflicts of interest within their projects. More than 250 game kits were disseminated to city representatives who could bring this engaging, hands-on method back to their municipalities.



Figure 4: On the left, conference participants playing the NEB Impact Model Dominoes game to kick-off collaboration on climate action. On the right, the game box cover. Photo: ICLEI Europe.

Over three action-packed days, the Urban Planning and Design exhibition became THE space for exchanging ideas, sharing tools, and starting meaningful conversations about how urban design and planning can accelerate progress towards climate neutrality. A colourful **resource corner** drew participants in with interactive, QR-linked publication covers, an easy way to learn more about each project's key deliverables and outputs, and share feedback. Visitors also had the chance to watch **exclusive short films** featuring urban transformation stories from six Re-Value cities: Ålesund, Bruges, Burgas, Rimini, Constanța, and Rijeka. Each visitor could take home one of the **27 cluster cities' postcards** and step out of the traditional European urban circuit, into cities and spaces that hardly get the spotlight.



Figure 5: On the left, conference participants starting fruitful discussions after browsing our 3 projects' key resources. On the right, conference participants looking at the 27 cluster city postcards. Photo: ICLEI Europe.

6.3 The Urban Planning and Design Cluster Session at the 2025 Mission Conference

The cluster also hosted a **World Café session on “Urban Planning and Design for Climate Impact”**, offering a face-to-face exchange of ideas on how collaboration, imagination, and local action are key to building climate-neutral cities. As shared by a representative from the City of Riga, *"we should prioritise working with citizens to change their habits that have negative climate impacts."*

The three discussion tables touched upon the following objectives:

- **Table 1** lead by UP2030
 - Objective 1: Collecting insights, lessons learned, and actions on Thessaloniki’s challenges
 - Objective 2: Promote collaboration and knowledge exchange between participants.
- **Table 2** lead by CLIMABOROUGH
 - Objective: How to connect small scale experiments to city wide urban planning and design with the aim to prevent waste generation.
- **Table 3** lead by Re-Value
 - Objective 1: Explore how to reframe the role of water in urban planning by recognising its environmental, social, and infrastructural value beyond economic use.
 - Objective 2: Identify ways waterfronts can support climate-neutral strategies through nature-based solutions, public space regeneration, and sustainable mobility.



Figure 6: World Café session participants tackling the challenges of urban planning and design for climate action. Photo: NetZeroCitiesEU.

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Different outcomes emerged from the discussion tables. In **Table 1** guided by UP2030, discussions centred on how to accelerate climate neutrality in the Dioikitirion neighbourhood in Thessaloniki. Participants stressed the importance of prototyping even on a small scale, using tools such as VR to visualise change, and mapping all relevant stakeholders to ensure sustained collaboration. It was also highlighted that cities must join forces to influence sectors beyond their jurisdiction and motivate citizens to actively engage in climate action. **Table 2** guided by CLIMABOROUGH examined how to prevent textile waste. Outcomes pointed to the role of cities as enablers, involving large businesses to take responsibility, and reframing waste as a community resource without hiding the scale of the issue. Cities were encouraged to create central spaces for repair, reuse and entrepreneurship while testing small-scale solutions that can later be scaled up across the urban system. In **Table 3** guided by Re-Value, participants proposed a reframing of water from a purely economic asset to a driver of social, ecological and infrastructural transformation. Key outcomes included moving from pilot projects to integrated portfolios for long-term coastal strategies, replicating solutions in locally adapted ways, and ensuring stakeholders are fully involved throughout planning and implementation to build ownership and impact.



Figure 7: World Caf  breakout group rapporteurs sharing the discussion outcomes. Photo: ICLEI Europe.

6.4 Key Collaboration Takeaways

The Re-Value partners felt connected to other European and Mission cities, and gathered feedback and insights which will help them further guide the project. This consolidated presence at the Cities Mission flagship event—the largest and most well-attended to date—had the benefit of reaching an enormous group of cities seeking to become climate neutral, supporting the Mission’s ambition, and bringing Re-Value Cities to the big mission event for further inspiration, all while not adding another travel in a period of more-than-usual number of activities for the cities. The only drawback to participating in this event was the limited opportunities to have focused plenary discussions specifically addressing urban planning and design between city partners.



Figure 8: The Re-Value, UP2030 and CLIMABOROUGH stand team. Photo: ICLEI Europe.

The collaboration between Re-Value and the sister projects CLIMABOROUGH and UP2030 in preparing and delivering the Urban Planning and Design Cluster presence at the 2025 Cities Mission Conference was characterised by a flexible and largely informal working approach. Regular coordination meetings, often without rigid structure, proved particularly effective in enabling rapid alignment on shared objectives, joint messaging, and event organisation. This format allowed partners to provide open and honest feedback, adapt quickly to evolving constraints, and co-design a coherent joint presence despite differing project scopes, timelines, and priorities. The use of a shared visual identity, including combined branding across the three projects, further strengthened coherence and visibility.

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A key learning from this experience is that, in the absence of detailed predefined guidance for cross-project collaboration, informal but consistent exchange mechanisms can significantly enhance efficiency and trust-building between partners. At the same time, this approach required additional coordination effort from the involved teams, but resulted in a strong and well-received joint output, demonstrating the value of trust-based collaboration models in Horizon Europe cluster settings. Such practices could be replicated in future collaborations by ensuring regular check-ins, maintaining an open and solution-oriented tone, and allowing sufficient flexibility for co-creation across projects with different implementation logics.

7. Re-Value - NetZeroCities Dialogues regarding the Impact Model and Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Framework

Re-Value and NetZeroCities have been holding monthly meetings in the first phase of the project to align Re-Value's Impact Model with NetZeroCities' Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework. During these meetings, our overall approaches, Key Performance Indicators, as well as identification and documentation of co-benefits, impact pathways, and use cases were discussed and compared. This comparison has been extensively presented in the previous version of this deliverable⁵.

Regular exchanges started as of October 2022 in the framework of CrAft and continued through Re-Value. However, since September 2024, these meetings have stopped as VITO's invitations to organise further follow up remained unanswered. Furthermore, Re-Value's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework focuses on the project-level impacts, while the NetZeroCities' Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework is intended for city-level assessment. The two having a different scope, a comparison focusing on indicators and approaches at the level of the Re-Value NEB-inspired Impact Model (WP1)⁶ was deemed more useful. This work was already completed in the first period of the project.

As previously elaborated, NetZeroCities' MEL workstream for impact assessment includes:

- establishing a methodology for impact assessment,
- approving and reviewing the MEL approaches outlined in the Mission Cities' Climate City Contracts and Pilot actions,
- setting up learning and sensemaking events,
- organising peer-to-peer learning,
- providing indicators for monitoring and evaluation, and
- offering capacity building, feedback and recommendations for Mission Cities' MEL processes.

Re-Value works in a similar manner, through building a NEB-inspired Impact Model (developed and tested over three Horizon Europe-funded projects: [CrAft](#), [Re-Value](#) and [NEB-STAR](#)) in co-creation with cities (WP1) and through Monitoring & Documenting Impact (WP7). This work operates in three innovation cycles⁷:

- Aligning climate neutrality and urban quality, using participatory story-building to identify co-benefits;
- Co-creating data-driven transition scenarios, empowering cities to use better data / data better;
- De-risking investments, through value-based financial and partnership models.

The approaches of both projects are aligned and complementary in terms of impact assessment and indicators. Both have consideration for accounting of co-benefits, they work with impact pathways in a similar way, and both enable strategic learning, sensemaking processes and learning loops for cities, while feeding knowledge and insights of these into decision-making and orientation towards the Cities Mission. More details can be found in D7.4⁸.

⁵ [D7.4: Re-Value Impact dialogues with NetZeroCities 1](#)

⁶ [D1.1: Re-Value Impact Model \(initial version\)](#)

⁷ [D1.2: Re-Value Innovation Cycles experience-based report 1](#)

⁸ [D7.4: Re-Value Impact dialogues with NetZeroCities 1](#)

8. Conclusion and next steps

This deliverable has provided updates on the interaction of Re-Value with NetZeroCities, and the collaboration with it and the sister projects CLIMABOROUGH and UP2030 during the period from July 2024 until September 2025. While the Memorandum of Understanding between Re-Value and NetZeroCities has not yet been finalised, interactions and collaboration has taken place with, among others, the following key activities:

- Creation of a shared private space in the NZC Portal to facilitate ongoing collaboration
- Monitoring the progress of national city networks linked to the Cities Mission and promoting the active participation of Re-Value cities in them
- Regular participation in Mission Platform cluster meetings organised by CINEA and DG RTD
- Additional cluster meetings with the sister projects, organised and moderated by Re-Value and UP2030 Communication Teams
- Joint contributions to the NetZeroCities Mission Conferences in 2024 and 2025
- Dedicated coordination calls to explore synergies between Re-Value's Impact Model and NZC's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework

Engagement with the NetZeroCities Portal highlighted both the potential and limitations of shared digital platforms for cross-project learning and capacity building. While access to the NZC Portal created opportunities for Re-Value Cities partners, overall uptake remained limited, revealing several key lessons. The experience indicates that adding new platforms within an already saturated EU ecosystem can dilute engagement if their unique value is not immediately evident. It also shows that relevance is crucial, as the Portal is mainly geared towards Mission Cities and their climate neutrality objectives, while Re-Value cities focus primarily on their waterfronts, reducing the perceived applicability of the content. In addition, barriers related to access, usability, and the absence of dedicated guidance further constrained participation. Altogether, these insights suggest that successful use of shared platforms depends on clear relevance, user-friendly design, and active support mechanisms, rather than access alone.

The deliverable particularly highlighted work of Re-Value city Izmir since its designation as Mission City, and described the involvement of several other Re-Value cities in their respective national city networks. Engagement with these networks showed that they can provide useful spaces for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and connection to national and EU-level initiatives, but their impact varies significantly. Their effectiveness depends on factors such as the level of institutional support, continuity over time, and how well climate neutrality objectives align with local priorities and capacities. Overall, while these networks offer clear added value, meaningful benefits rely on their maturity, openness, and the ability of cities to actively engage within them.

An elaborate account was further provided regarding collaboration for the organisation the Urban Planning and Design Cluster Exhibition and World Café session at the 2025 Cities Mission Conference. This joint presence enabled Re-Value partners to connect with a wide range of European and Mission cities, gather valuable feedback, and increase the project's visibility. The collaboration further demonstrated that flexible and informal coordination across projects can effectively support alignment, co-creation, and a coherent joint presence, even in the absence of strict structures. It also suggests that such trust-based and adaptable approaches could be replicated in future collaborations to enhance efficiency, shared ownership, and overall impact.

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Collaboration with NetZeroCities will be maintained both through existing channels and direct engagement, focusing on joint efforts in outreach, communication, dissemination, and co-hosting of events. The Memorandum of Understanding is currently being prepared and is expected to be signed in the near future. Re-Value will also share its main findings—increasingly emerging from the final stages of co-creation of the Impact Model and the execution of its Innovation Cycles—on the NetZeroCities Portal Knowledge Repository. In parallel, as national networks and platforms take shape, Re-Value partners will continue to leverage their role in NetZeroCities and similar initiatives to advocate for their cities’ participation, while also sharing lessons learned from pilot activities to highlight obstacles and propose new pathways to climate neutrality. Lastly, Re-Value will continue to pursue exchange meetings with NetZeroCities to discuss updates and improvements to the Impact Model towards its final delivery.

The next and final version of this deliverable, D7.11: Re-Value Impact dialogues with NetZeroCities 3, is due M48 (December 2026).

Glossary of Terms

General Terms

CCC	Climate City Contract
CINEA	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
CrAft	Creating Actionable Futures (project)
EU	European Union
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEB	New European Bauhaus
NEB-STAR	New European Bauhaus Stavanger (project)
WP	Work Package

Partner names

AC	AugmentCity AS
AK	Ålesund Kommune
BRG	STAD Brugge
BUR	OBSHTINA BURGAS
CM	Municipiu Resedinta de Judet Constanta
ECOTEN	Ecoten urban comfort s.r.o.
EMAC	Empresa Municipal de Ambiente de Cascais Em Sa
GIB	Stiftung Global Infrastructure Basel
ICLEI	ICLEI EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT GmbH
IFLA	International Federation of Landscape Architects Europe
IMM	IZMIR BUYUKSEHIR BELEDIYESI
IZTECH	İzmir Institute of Technology
JAE	JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT EUROPE
LNEG	Laboratório Nacional de Energia e Geologia
MP	Město Písek / Městský úřad Písek
NTNU	Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet
RIJ	Grad Rijeka / City of Rijeka
RIM	Comune di Rimini
SP	Sladovna Czech cultural organisation
SU	Sofia University

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SUAS	Sørsida Utvikling AS
TV	Teatret vårt
UNG	Univerza v Novi Gorica
UNIBO	Università di Bologna
VITO	Vlaamse Instelling voor Technologisch Onderzoek N.V.
ZMC	Asociația de Dezvoltare Intercomunitara Zona Metropolitană Constanța

About Re-Value – Re-Valuing Urban Quality & Climate Neutrality in European Waterfront Cities

The Re-Value partnership consists of nine European waterfront cities and selected European organisations that work to make the urban transition irresistible for everyone. This is done by demonstrating how climate neutrality and urban quality can be aligned, by re-valuing the cities’ connection to their waterfronts, strengthening co-benefits and mitigating potential adverse impacts.

Ålesund (Norway), Bruges (Belgium), Burgas (Bulgaria), and Rimini (Italy) demonstrate how integrated urban planning and design can be optimally deployed to achieve climate neutrality and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. In addition, Cascais (Portugal), Constanța (Romania), İzmir (Türkiye), Písek (Czechia), and Rijeka (Croatia) learn, replicate and develop their own participatory story-building, data-driven scenarios, and financial and partnership models on integrated urban planning and design to accelerate their journeys to climate neutrality.

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Learn more about the partnership and the outcomes on re-value-cities.eu.

Partners



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