

SmartUrbanity

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Executive Summary

This deliverable provides a detailed overview of communication (both internal and external) and dissemination strategy to be developed and implemented throughout the SmartUrbanity project lifecycle. It outlines the project key messages, target audiences, communication and dissemination tools that will be used to raise awareness of SmartUrbanity, foster stakeholder engagement, and maximize the impact and visibility of its results, as well as responsibilities required to maintain transparency, engagement, and collaboration throughout all project phases.

The Communication and Dissemination Plan of SmartUrbanity project serves as a reference document and strategic framework detailing the approach and measures to be adopted to effectively achieve the project's outreach objectives. The goal is to coordinate clear, consistent, and inclusive communication both internally (within the consortium) and externally (toward public, strategic stakeholders, NGOs, educational institutions, and local influencers) during the project implementation.

As the project evolves, the strategy presented in this document will be continuously updated, enriched, and tailored to emerging needs and contexts. For this reason, the deliverable should be considered a living document, subject to at least two updates: the first in Month 18 (M18) with some additional features or edits, and a final revision in Month 30 (M30) of the project.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	8
2. Objectives	10
3. Target Audiences	13
3.1 Citizens and Communities	13
3.2 Municipalities, City Planners, and Policymakers	16
3.3 Research Institutions and Academia.....	17
3.4 Industry and SMEs	17
3.5 Media and Multipliers.....	19
4. Key Messages.....	19
4.1 Tailored Key Messages.....	21
5. Visual Identity and Branding.....	24
6. Communication Tools and Channels.....	27
6.1 Digital Channels.....	28
6.2 Events.....	29
6.3 Scientific and Policy Publications	29
6.4 Media Outreach.....	29
6.5 Promotional Materials.....	30
7. Engagement Strategy.....	35
7.1 Citizen Engagement App.....	35
7.2 Accessibility Analysis and Decision Support Platforms	36
7.3 Gamification Campaigns	36
7.4 Inclusivity Mechanisms	37
7.5 Stakeholder Forum and Advisory Board	38

7.6 Continuous Feedback Loops	38
7.7 Pilot-Specific Engagement Strategies	39
8. Roles and Responsibilities, and Internal Coordination	42
8.1 Project Coordinator (Sapienza University of Rome and CTLup)	43
8.2 Work Package (WP) Leaders	43
8.3 Consortium Partners	43
8.4 Pilot Leaders	44
8.5 Communication and Dissemination Task Force	44
8.6 Advisory Board and Stakeholder Forum	45
8.7 Internal Communication and Coordination Mechanisms	46
8.8 Language	47
9. Monitoring and KPIs	48
10. Timeline of Communication Activities	51
11. Ethics and Accessibility	53
11.1 Data Protection and GDPR Compliance	53
11.2 Application of the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) Principle	54
11.3 Accessibility of Communication Outputs	55
11.4 Inclusion of Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups	55
11.5 Ethical Oversight, Accountability, and Decision-Making	56
12. Acknowledgements	56
13. Conclusion	57

1. Introduction

SmartUrbanity aims to support European cities in becoming more inclusive, safe, and sustainable through participatory digital platforms and smart urban planning tools. The project goes beyond developing technological innovations: it seeks systemic change in how cities are planned, governed, and experienced, by placing citizens' needs and perceptions at the centre of decision-making.

Its core ambition is to bring the 15-Minute City concept to life by ensuring that every citizen, regardless of age, gender, income, ethnicity or physical ability, has fair and safe access to essential services within a short trip from their home. Inclusivity is pursued by actively involving marginalized or vulnerable groups and by translating their lived experiences into actionable evidence. Security is addressed both as physical safety (e.g., lighting, safe walking and cycling routes, reduction of traffic risks) and as digital trust, ensured through GDPR-compliant data handling and transparent communication. Sustainability is pursued by reducing car dependency and emissions, while strengthening social cohesion and local economic vitality.

Communication and engagement are essential cross-cutting activities in the project, ensuring transparency, collaboration, and wide adoption of results. Accordingly, SmartUrbanity's success is not defined only by the performance of its technical platforms but also by how effectively it is able to:

- **Raise awareness:** make the project visible and understandable to diverse audiences through clear, accessible, and inclusive communication.
- **Build trust:** ensure that citizens, policymakers, and industry actors perceive SmartUrbanity as transparent and reliable, with strong safeguards for privacy, data protection, and inclusivity.

- **Encourage participation:** actively invite citizens to co-create data, test digital tools, and contribute to shape urban interventions through gamification, community forums, and participatory features.
- **Facilitate policy uptake:** translate technical results and analytical outputs into actionable policy recommendations, guidelines, and evidence that can be adopted by local and regional authorities, transport agencies, and planning bodies to support the implementation of 15-Minute City principles across diverse territorial contexts.
- **Ensure legacy and scalability:** share knowledge widely, engage with external networks, and foster communities of practice, ensuring that SmartUrbanity's outcomes extend beyond the project's lifetime and can be replicated in diverse territorial contexts, including European and global cities as well as non-urban areas.

In short, SmartUrbanity's communication and engagement are not "supporting actions" but core instruments to align research, innovation, and society. They guarantee that the project's vision of inclusive, secure, and sustainable cities is not just demonstrated in pilots, but also understood, accepted, and adopted by the wider community.

SmartUrbanity adopts a **project-level, multi-channel communication and engagement strategy designed to support transparency, participation, policy uptake, and long-term impact** throughout the project lifecycle. The strategy provides a shared framework for all partners and pilots, defining common principles, target audiences, key messages, and communication channels, while allowing local adaptation in each pilot city. Pilots implement this strategy by applying the defined engagement approaches (such as digital communication, citizen engagement tools, workshops, and stakeholder forums) in ways that are consistent with local contexts, regulatory environments, and pilot maturity, while remaining aligned with the overall project vision and objectives.

Roles and responsibilities within this strategy are defined at a strategic level in this deliverable and operationalized through WP-level coordination and pilot implementation mechanisms defined in WP1. Concrete actions, timing, and performance targets are monitored and refined through the project's management, monitoring, and quality control frameworks. This ensures coherence across pilots without imposing rigid or premature operational prescriptions.

2. Objectives

The Communication and Engagement Strategy is designed as a cross-cutting instrument to ensure that SmartUrbanity's scientific, technological, and social innovations achieve maximum visibility, acceptance, and uptake. Building on the DUT framework, the objectives are structured as follows:

1. Increase awareness of SmartUrbanity's mission, digital toolkit, and pilot results.

Awareness-raising is the foundation for building recognition of SmartUrbanity within Europe and internationally. The project will develop a coherent identity and ensure that its mission and progress are consistently visible across all communication channels. This includes presenting the Citizen Engagement App, Accessibility Analysis Platform, and Decision Support System as innovative solutions for inclusive urban planning and actively disseminating pilot city results to demonstrate real-world impact. Awareness activities target both professional audiences (e.g., policymakers, academia, SMEs) and the wider public, highlighting the benefits of the 15-Minute City concept.

2. Foster inclusivity by engaging citizens, including vulnerable groups, in co-creation.

SmartUrbanity places citizens at the centre of its strategy. Engagement activities will be tailored to include underrepresented groups such as women, elderly people, migrants, youth, and people with disabilities. Co-creation will be enabled both digitally (via the

Citizen Engagement App, Accessibility Analysis Platform, online forums, and gamification features) and offline (through workshops, focus groups, and community outreach). This dual approach ensures that SmartUrbanity reflects diverse needs and reduces barriers to participation, making inclusivity not an add-on but a structural principle.

3. Promote collaboration among policymakers, academia, SMEs, and communities. The transition to 15-Minute Cities requires alignment across institutional, technical, entrepreneurial and social actors. SmartUrbanity's strategy therefore promotes structured collaboration between municipalities, academic experts, technology developers, and citizen groups. Stakeholder, Advisory Boards (composed of independent experts who provide strategic guidance and expert feedback throughout the project), and multi-actor workshops will provide platforms for dialogue and co-design, while cross-pilot knowledge exchange will enable learning across diverse urban contexts (Rome, Karlsruhe, İzmir, Lyon, Thurgau). This collaborative approach ensures mutual learning and strengthens trust between research and society.

4. Ensure knowledge transfer and impact through scientific, policy, and public dissemination. To achieve lasting influence, SmartUrbanity will adopt a multi-layered dissemination plan. Scientific outputs (journal articles, conference papers, open datasets) will secure recognition in research communities. Policy briefs, guidelines, and pilot recommendations will translate findings into practical solutions for decision-makers. Public-facing communication (websites, social media, videos, press releases) will widen the project's reach and demonstrate societal value. All outputs will be designed for accessibility, open access where possible, and compliance with ethical and legal requirements, ensuring transparency and trust.

5. Support adoption and scalability of SmartUrbanity solutions. The ultimate goal is to ensure that SmartUrbanity’s innovations do not remain confined to research pilots but are adopted and scaled across different territories. Communication will highlight the replicability and adaptability of the digital toolkit, including its accessibility indicators and gamification mechanisms. Engagement activities will create communities of practice, encouraging municipalities and industry actors to embed SmartUrbanity’s solutions into long-term strategies. Strategic alliances with European and international initiatives will further amplify the project’s reach and facilitate transferability.

The objectives defined above are pursued through a structured set of communication and engagement actions that are implemented across the project in close coordination with pilot activities. Awareness of SmartUrbanity’s mission, digital toolkit, and pilot results will be raised through a combination of digital communication (project website, social media, newsletters), participatory actions (citizen workshops, surveys, and engagement via the Citizen Engagement App), and targeted dissemination activities embedded in conferences, stakeholder events, and pilot demonstrations. Workshops and interactive sessions will be organized both at local level within pilot cities and in connection with national and international conferences, allowing municipalities, researchers, industry actors, and citizens to engage directly with project tools and interim results. Gamification mechanisms and serious-game elements, implemented primarily through the Citizen Engagement App and pilot-specific campaigns, will support sustained participation of citizens and community groups, while interviews, surveys, and feedback tools will capture qualitative insights from users and stakeholders.

Target groups are addressed through tailored formats, and success is monitored through the project’s evaluation framework, tracking participation levels, diversity of engagement, communication reach, feedback quality, and uptake signals. Results are

reviewed periodically and used to adapt activities as pilots mature and stakeholder needs evolve.

Implementation of these actions is shared across the consortium: pilot leaders and municipalities coordinate local engagement activities; WP leaders integrate communication and dissemination into technical work; and the Communication and Dissemination Task Force (section 8.), ensures coherence, visibility, and alignment at project level. Target groups are engaged through tailored formats, including digital tools and workshops for citizens, policy workshops and pilots for policymakers, academic dissemination, and applied industry events. Activities are supported by existing project resources, with success monitored through participation, engagement quality, and uptake indicators that inform ongoing adaptation.

3. Target Audiences

SmartUrbanity's success depends on engaging a broad set of stakeholders who play complementary roles in shaping, implementing, and benefiting from the 15-Minute City model. The communication and engagement strategy therefore distinguishes between different audience groups, tailoring both messages and tools to their specific needs and expectations.

3.1 Citizens and Communities

Citizens and local communities are selected as a primary target group because SmartUrbanity explicitly aims to support people-centred, inclusive, and evidence-based urban planning. The project builds on established evidence from the 15-Minute City literature, participatory planning research, and DUT priorities, which consistently show that urban accessibility, safety, and mobility outcomes are strongly influenced by lived

experience, everyday behaviour, and perceived barriers that are not fully captured through technical data alone. Engaging citizens therefore responds to a clearly identified need: ensuring that planning tools and policy recommendations reflect real patterns of use, behavioural diversity, and social inequalities within urban environments.

The term “citizens and communities” is understood broadly and includes residents of different ages, socio-economic profiles, mobility abilities, and levels of digital literacy. Rather than focusing on a single demographic group, SmartUrbanity adopts an inclusive approach that explicitly considers children and youth, working-age adults, elderly people, migrants, and other potentially vulnerable or underrepresented groups. This diversity is essential for the project’s analytical objectives, as citizen inputs are used to identify behavioural patterns, perceptions, and needs that support clustering and segmentation of users based on mobility behaviour, accessibility constraints, and safety perceptions. Such differentiation enables the project to avoid one-size-fits-all solutions and to support more equitable planning outcomes.

Recognising that diverse groups engage in diverse ways, SmartUrbanity applies differentiated engagement mechanisms. Digital tools, including the Citizen Engagement App, are used as the main interface for broad participation, particularly for working-age adults and digitally active users. At the same time, alternative and complementary procedures are foreseen for groups less likely to engage through digital surveys alone. For example, elderly participants or individuals with limited digital access are reached through interviews, facilitated workshops, or paper-based surveys, ensuring that their perspectives are not excluded from the data collection and co-creation process.

Citizen engagement follows a phased approach. In an initial phase, the focus is on building awareness and trust, ensuring that participants understand the project’s objectives, the relevance of their contributions, and how their data will be used. This

includes clear communication on privacy protection, ethical safeguards, and GDPR compliance, explaining which types of data are collected, for what purpose, and how anonymity is ensured. This trust-building phase is initiated through co-design workshops organised within pilot cities under WP2 (M12–M15). While these workshops primarily support the design and refinement of project applications, they also function as an entry point for introducing SmartUrbanity, its goals, and its participatory logic to local communities.

Recruitment and outreach for these initial workshops and subsequent engagement activities are coordinated at pilot-city level and rely on a combination of institutional and community-based channels. These include municipal communication platforms, local authority websites, and social media, complemented by targeted outreach through NGOs, neighbourhood associations, schools, and other trusted local organisations. This multi-channel approach is intentionally designed to reach diverse segments of the population and to lower barriers to participation, particularly for groups that may not respond to purely digital communication.

Following the initial workshops, citizen participation continues through a mix of digital and in-person mechanisms adapted to local contexts. The Citizen Engagement App serves as the primary digital channel for collecting information related to accessibility, safety, and everyday mobility behaviour. In parallel, pilot-specific engagement formats are used where appropriate. In the İzmir pilot, for example, citizen engagement is additionally supported through a Play-Game approach implemented in M24 as an experimental participation mechanism. This approach explores whether game-based interaction can enhance engagement and sustained participation and is evaluated based on participation levels, inclusivity, and user feedback. Its use is limited to İzmir, and no

automatic replication in other pilots is assumed; any further adoption would depend on demonstrated added value and feasibility assessed during WP4.

Citizen involvement is conceived as a continuous process throughout the project lifecycle rather than a one-off consultation. To maintain transparency and accountability, SmartUrbanity implements structured feedback mechanisms that allow participants to understand how their contributions are used. Citizens receive summaries of engagement outcomes and accessible visual outputs, and pilot cities communicate how citizen input has informed analyses, planning discussions, or decision-making processes, including any constraints affecting implementation. Through these feedback loops, citizen engagement is positioned as a meaningful, traceable, and trust-based process that strengthens the long-term relationship between communities and urban decision-making.

3.2 Municipalities, City Planners, and Policymakers

Municipalities, urban planners, and policymakers represent the primary actors responsible for translating SmartUrbanity outcomes into real planning and governance decisions. Their engagement is therefore designed to be continuous and closely connected to pilot implementation, rather than limited to dissemination at the end of the project.

Throughout the project lifecycle, these stakeholders will be engaged through a combination of targeted workshops starting from workshops of WP2 in M12-15, policy-oriented sessions embedded within conferences through the lifecycle of project, and direct interaction with pilot activities. Workshops organized alongside participating in scientific and professional conferences will serve as structured spaces for dialogue, allowing policymakers and planners to discuss preliminary results, exchange experiences across cities, and reflect on implementation challenges in a comparative European

context. In parallel, pilot cities will organize dedicated moments (such as open pilot days, demonstrations, or guided sessions) where municipal representatives and invited decision-makers can observe the tools in use, interact with project teams, and assess their applicability within their own institutional settings.

This approach ensures that policymakers are not only informed about SmartUrbanity results, but are actively exposed to how tools, platforms, and engagement mechanisms operate in practice. Engagement activities will emphasize actionable insights, alignment with the DUT framework, and relevance to local planning processes, supporting informed uptake and replication beyond the project pilots.

3.3 Research Institutions and Academia

Research institutions and academic stakeholders play a dual role in SmartUrbanity: they contribute to methodological development and act as multipliers for knowledge dissemination and long-term impact. Engagement with this group is therefore structured around active participation in research exchange and joint learning, rather than passive communication.

Academia will be involved through conference sessions, special workshops, and thematic panels where SmartUrbanity methods, data, and preliminary findings are presented and critically discussed. Whenever possible, these sessions will be organized in conjunction with international conferences and research events, allowing SmartUrbanity to reach wider scientific communities while embedding its work within ongoing academic debates on urban mobility, accessibility, and digital planning tools.

In addition to formal dissemination, researchers will be invited to engage with pilot activities through open demonstrations, collaborative workshops, and shared analytical exercises. This creates opportunities for peer feedback on methods, supports cross-disciplinary learning, and strengthens the scientific robustness of project outputs. Open-

access publications, shared datasets, and methodological documentation further ensure that SmartUrbanity results are reusable and can inform future research beyond the project duration.

3.4 Industry and SMEs

Industry stakeholders, including mobility service providers, ICT developers, data analytics companies, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are invited to SmartUrbanity because they play a critical role in transforming research outputs into operational, scalable, and transferable solutions. While municipalities and researchers define needs and develop methodologies, industry actors contribute practical expertise related to system implementation, interoperability, usability, and long-term deployment. Their involvement responds to a clearly identified need within the 15-Minute City transition: ensuring that digital planning tools and engagement platforms are technically feasible, compatible with existing systems, and capable of functioning beyond a research environment.

The added value of involving industry and SMEs lies primarily in three areas. First, their participation supports the operational validation of SmartUrbanity's digital toolkit by providing feedback on technical robustness, data integration, and real-world constraints encountered during pilot implementation. Second, industry engagement strengthens the scalability and transferability of project results by identifying conditions under which tools could be adapted, reused, or embedded in municipal or commercial services after the project ends. Third, interaction with SMEs allows the project to assess market relevance and innovation potential, without predefining commercialization pathways at an early stage.

SmartUrbanity does not aim to involve a large or fixed number of industry actors, nor to establish binding commitments during the strategy phase. Instead, the focus is on

engaging a limited but relevant set of stakeholders whose expertise aligns with the project's technical components and pilot needs.

Industry and SME stakeholders are primarily reached through targeted, implementation-oriented channels rather than mass communication. Engagement mechanisms include applied workshops and demonstration sessions organised in connection with conferences, pilot-related events where tools are presented in real urban contexts, and thematic workshops focusing on use cases, technical integration, and lessons learned. These activities allow industry actors to interact directly with project partners, observe tools in operation, and provide informed feedback. Complementary communication through the project website, professional networks, including existing cooperation links of project partners (e.g., Movesion and CTLup) with relevant SMEs, and partner institutional channels supports visibility, while scientific publications and policy-oriented outputs provide contextual understanding of the project's objectives and results. At project level, success of industry engagement is not measured by the quantity of companies involved, but by the quality and relevance of interaction. Indicators include participation of industry actors in workshops and demonstrations, qualitative feedback provided on tools and use cases, expressions of interest in further testing or adaptation, and references to SmartUrbanity outcomes in professional or applied contexts. These indicators are monitored through the project's KPI framework and reviewed periodically to assess whether industry engagement effectively supports implementation readiness, knowledge transfer, and long-term impact.

3.5 Media and Multipliers

To reach wider society, SmartUrbanity will actively engage with media outlets (online platforms, website) and multipliers such as professional associations, NGOs, and civil society organizations. These actors will amplify visibility, ensuring that SmartUrbanity's

messages reach audiences beyond direct project stakeholders. Communication with this group will focus on storytelling, impact narratives, and visually engaging materials such as infographics and videos. This should be done through the lifecycle of project.

4. Key Messages

SmartUrbanity's key messages are designed to translate complex technical and scientific work into clear, relevant, and actionable narratives for different target audiences. These messages are not communicated in isolation but are systematically embedded within the project's communication channels and engagement activities throughout the project lifecycle. Rather than relying on a single format, SmartUrbanity applies a multi-channel approach in which messages are conveyed repeatedly and consistently through digital platforms, events, publications, and pilot-related interactions.

At project level, key messages are primarily disseminated through the project website, social media channels, newsletters, workshops, conferences, and policy-oriented outputs. Public-facing messages targeting citizens and communities are mainly communicated via the Citizen Engagement App, local workshops, gamification campaigns, and pilot events, supported by social media and municipal communication channels. Messages addressing policymakers and institutional stakeholders are delivered through policy briefs, stakeholder forums, pilot demonstrations, and dedicated sessions embedded in conferences. Scientific and methodological messages are disseminated through peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and academic workshops, while industry-oriented messages are conveyed through applied workshops, demonstration events, and targeted professional communication.

The frequency and intensity of message delivery evolve over time, following the project's phased implementation. Awareness-oriented messages dominate the early phase of the

project, with regular online updates and introductory workshops in pilot cities. During the middle phase, communication increasingly focuses on interim results, co-creation processes, and pilot experiences, supported by conference participation and stakeholder events. In the final phase, key messages emphasize results, impact, transferability, and policy relevance, and are consolidated through final publications, policy outputs, and the project's concluding conference.

Quantitative performance targets associated with key message dissemination are defined at project level and monitored through the KPI framework described in Chapter 9. These include minimum targets for website visits, social media reach and engagement, number of events and workshops, participation levels, scientific outputs, and media mentions. Rather than assigning numerical targets to each individual message, SmartUrbanity assesses success by tracking whether key messages reach their intended audiences with sufficient frequency, diversity, and engagement, and whether they support measurable outcomes such as participation in pilots, stakeholder feedback, and interest in uptake or replication.

4.1 Tailored Key Messages

Key messages are tailored to the needs and roles of each target audience and delivered through channels that are appropriate to their level of engagement and decision-making capacity.

For citizens and communities, messages such as “SmartUrbanity delivers inclusive, participatory 15-Minute Cities” are primarily communicated through the Citizen Engagement App, gamification campaigns, local workshops, and pilot-related events, complemented by social media and municipal communication channels. These messages aim to motivate participation, explain why citizen input matters, and build trust in the project. Their effectiveness is measured through participation levels in the app,

workshops, and surveys, diversity of participants, and engagement metrics such as repeated use or feedback submissions.

For policymakers and municipal authorities, key messages focusing on data-driven decision support and scalability are delivered through policy briefs, stakeholder forums, pilot demonstrations, and targeted workshops, often embedded within conferences and professional events. These messages are reinforced through the project website and selected scientific or policy-oriented publications. Success is assessed through attendance at policy-oriented events, engagement in pilot demonstrations, production and dissemination of policy outputs, and expressions of interest in adopting or adapting SmartUrbanity solutions.

For research institutions and academia, messages highlighting methodological innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration are disseminated through scientific publications, conference presentations, academic workshops, and open-access repositories. These messages are delivered continuously throughout the project, with increased intensity during conference seasons and publication milestones. Performance is measured through the number of publications, conference contributions, citations, and engagement in research exchanges.

For industry and SMEs, messages related to operational feasibility, scalability, and innovation potential are communicated through applied workshops, demonstration events linked to pilots, and targeted professional exchanges, rather than mass media. These messages are supported by the project website and selected dissemination materials. Success is evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively through participation in workshops, feedback on tools, and indications of interest in further testing or uptake.

For media and multipliers, messages emphasizing societal impact, citizen stories, and alignment with EU priorities are conveyed through press releases, news articles, social

media content, visual storytelling materials, and collaboration with networks and NGOs. These messages aim to broaden visibility beyond direct project stakeholders. Their reach is monitored through media mentions, online engagement metrics, and amplification through partner and multiplier channels.

Across all audiences, key messages are repeated, adapted, and reinforced through multiple channels rather than delivered as one-off statements. This ensures coherence, visibility, and cumulative impact, while allowing flexibility to adjust tone, format, and emphasis as pilot results emerge and stakeholder needs evolve.

Communication focuses on real stories from citizens and pilot cities, turning abstract concepts into tangible narratives. The following table shows some examples of key tailored messages (in the form of a call to action) that may be used for each target audience:

Table 1: Target audience and key messages

Target audience	Key messages	Primary communication channels
Citizen and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>“Help shape your neighbourhood: share your mobility experience today.”</i> ● <i>“Report issues, suggest ideas, and see your contribution create real change.”</i> ● <i>“Join our challenges and make your voice count in the 15-Minute City.”</i> 	<i>Citizen Engagement App, gamification campaigns, participatory workshops, local events, project website</i>
Policymakers and Municipal Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>“Adopt and scale SmartUrbanity solutions in your local context.”</i> ● <i>“Explore the DSS platform and turn insights into strategic action.”</i> 	Policy briefs, stakeholder forums, pilot demonstrations, targeted workshops, project website

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Design fair and effective mobility policies using citizen-driven data.”</i> 	
Research and Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Discover our methods and bring new perspectives into your mobility research.”</i> • <i>“Explore our achievements to develop new data-driven approaches to sustainable mobility.”</i> • <i>“Share your ideas to push the boundaries of 15-Minute City science together.”</i> 	<p>Scientific publications, conferences, workshops, open-access repositories, project website</p>
Industry and SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Unlock business opportunities through our digital toolkit.”</i> • <i>“Test our digital solutions within real urban environments.”</i> • <i>“Collaborate with municipalities and researchers to accelerate new mobility services.”</i> 	<p>Demonstration events, thematic workshops, guidelines, pilot collaborations, project website</p>
Media and Multipliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Follow SmartUrbanity to stay updated on how innovation shapes everyday mobility.”</i> • <i>“Discover how citizens and cities co-create better mobility solutions.”</i> • <i>“Share stories from our pilot cities to inspire urban transformation.”</i> 	<p>Press releases, news articles, social media, partner websites, visual storytelling materials</p>

5. Visual Identity and Branding

Visual identity and branding in SmartUrbanity are treated as operational tools to ensure consistency, recognisability, and compliance across all communication and dissemination activities, rather than as purely aesthetic elements. A common visual framework supports coherence across pilots, partners, and outputs, while allowing adaptation to local contexts where necessary. Responsibility for branding coordination lies at project level, while implementation is distributed across partners according to their roles.

Overall coordination of visual identity and branding is ensured by the Project Coordination, supported by the Communication and Dissemination Task Force. Initial branding actions are implemented during the early project phase (Year 1), with periodic updates and refinements applied as new materials, pilots, and dissemination needs emerge. Reach and effectiveness of branding-related actions are monitored through website analytics, social media metrics, and visibility indicators defined in Chapter 9.

Logo and Colour Scheme. The SmartUrbanity logo and colour palette constitute the core elements of the project's visual identity. These elements are developed at project level under the responsibility of the Project Coordinator, in coordination with communication experts within the consortium. The logo is designed to reflect people-centred urban planning and digital accessibility, while the colour palette uses warm and inclusive tones aligned with sustainability and social cohesion. Branding guidelines defining logo usage, colour codes, typography, and layout rules are produced during the initial phase of the project and distributed to all partners. These guidelines are mandatory for all official project outputs, including digital tools, deliverables, presentations, websites, and event materials. Their purpose is to ensure visual consistency across different pilots and countries, while avoiding fragmented or inconsistent representation of the project.

Templates and Standard Materials. Standardised templates for deliverables, presentations, and meeting materials are developed and distributed to consortium partners during Year 1. These templates include the project logo, colour scheme, and EU funding acknowledgement in line with DUT visibility requirements. The use of templates is coordinated by the Project Coordinator and monitored through internal quality checks during deliverable submission and dissemination activities. A shared graphic identity package (including logos, templates, icons, and fonts) is made available to all partners to facilitate efficient and consistent production of communication materials. This approach reduces duplication of effort, ensures compliance with branding rules, and supports timely dissemination across pilots and work packages (Deliverable 6.1).

Website and Digital Identity. The project website serves as the central digital entry point for SmartUrbanity and is coordinated by ZHAW in collaboration with the Project Coordinator and content contributions from all partners. It provides structured access to project objectives, pilot activities, publications, news, and downloadable materials. The website is launched in the early project phase and updated regularly throughout the project lifecycle to reflect progress and results. Website performance is monitored through analytics, tracking visits, downloads, and user engagement. These indicators contribute directly to the monitoring of communication reach, with indicative targets defined at project level (e.g. cumulative website visits over the project lifetime).

Social Media Presence (LinkedIn). SmartUrbanity uses LinkedIn as its primary social media channel because it is well suited to reaching professional audiences, including policymakers, researchers, industry actors, and urban practitioners. A dedicated LinkedIn account is managed at project level by the Communication and Dissemination Task Force, with content inputs provided by WP leaders and pilot partners. Content published on LinkedIn includes project updates, pilot milestones, event announcements,

dissemination of publications, and selected citizen-facing stories translated into accessible narratives. Posting frequency is aligned with project activity, with an indicative target of regular posts throughout the year (as specified in the KPI framework), rather than daily communication. Partners are encouraged to amplify posts through their institutional accounts to extend reach beyond the project's direct network. The expected reach of LinkedIn activities is monitored through follower growth, impressions, and engagement rates, with indicative targets defined at project level. Limitations of social media communication (such as uneven reach across demographic groups or dependence on platform algorithms) are acknowledged and mitigated by combining LinkedIn activity with workshops, events, website content, and pilot-level communication.

Social Media Presence (WhatsApp Channels). SmartUrbanity uses WhatsApp channels as a pilot-level mobilisation tool to support direct, short-cycle communication with citizens and community groups during engagement phases. Pilot channels are managed locally by pilot leaders, with messages delivered in the local language. Content is practical and action-oriented (campaign invitations, reminders, onboarding instructions for the Citizen Engagement App, and brief pilot updates) and is activated mainly during campaigns and events to remain lightweight and non-intrusive. Effectiveness is assessed through participation signals (responses to calls for action, event attendance, and sustained app activity) and qualitative feedback from NGOs. To address limitations related to platform dependency or uneven access, WhatsApp use is combined with in-person engagement, printed materials, and alternative digital channels.

Slogans and Taglines. A core tagline ("SmartUrbanity – Cities closer to citizens") is used consistently across project materials to reinforce recognisability. Complementary slogans may be applied selectively to highlight specific dimensions such as inclusivity, sustainability, or citizen participation. Use of slogans is coordinated centrally to avoid

fragmentation or overuse and is primarily intended for high-visibility materials such as websites, presentations, and event banners.

Offline Visibility. Offline branding supports visibility in physical spaces where digital communication alone is insufficient. Printed materials such as flyers, posters, roll-up banners, and factsheets are produced primarily for use in workshops, conferences, exhibitions, and pilot events. Responsibility for producing and using these materials lies with pilot leaders and WP leaders, while compliance with branding guidelines is ensured by the Project Coordinator. Offline materials are used strategically rather than in large quantities, focusing on events where direct interaction with stakeholders occurs. Their effectiveness is assessed indirectly through event participation levels, stakeholder feedback, and qualitative visibility indicators rather than mass distribution metrics.

6. Communication Tools and Channels

SmartUrbanity adopts a structured, multi-channel communication approach to ensure effective outreach to all relevant stakeholder groups, including citizens, policymakers, researchers, industry actors, and civil society organizations. Communication tools and channels are selected to support project objectives at different stages of implementation, combining digital dissemination, in-person engagement, scientific communication, and media outreach. Responsibilities, target groups, timing, and expected outcomes are clearly defined to ensure accountability and measurability.

Table 2 provides a consolidated overview of this framework. Communication activities are coordinated through the Communication and Dissemination Task Force, in cooperation with CTLup. For each communication tool or channel, the table specifies:

- Who is responsible for implementation and coordination.
- Which target groups are addressed.

- When and where the action takes place.
- Why the tool is used (its strategic purpose).
- What is expected in terms of concrete outcomes and impact.

This structured approach ensures consistency across work packages and pilot cities, facilitates internal coordination, and supports effective monitoring through KPIs. It also enables pilots and partners to clearly understand how communication actions contribute to the project's overall objectives, including citizen engagement, policy uptake, scientific dissemination, and long-term visibility of results.

By adopting this table-based structure, SmartUrbanity moves from generic communication intentions to an implementation-level communication plan that can be directly followed, monitored, and adjusted throughout the project lifecycle.

The following sections describe the main communication tools and channels used in the project.

6.1 Digital Channels

- **Project Website:** Serves as the central hub for information, updates, and publications. It will include sections tailored to different audiences (citizens, policymakers, researchers, industry actors) and provide downloadable PDF resources and links to the project's tools. The website development will be coordinated by ZHAW, with content contributions from all project partners according to their expertise.
- **Social Media:**
 - *LinkedIn:* Professional networking and dissemination of policy-relevant insights, project milestones, and scientific results.
 - *WhatsApp Channels:* Pilot-specific communication (campaign announcements and updates), delivered in the local language to support accessibility and engagement.

- **Analytics tools:** Track reach, impressions, and engagement across all digital channels/platforms, feeding into KPI monitoring.

6.2 Events

Events are a central component of SmartUrbanity’s communication and engagement strategy, providing structured opportunities for coordination, co-creation, dissemination, and dialogue with key stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.

- **Project Meetings and General Assemblies:** Ensure alignment among partners and visibility of progress.
- **Pilot Workshops:** Local-level citizen engagement and co-creation activities to test and refine tools.
- **Stakeholder Forums:** Thematic events bringing together policymakers, academia, SMEs, and NGOs to discuss findings and scalability.
- **Participating in Conference:** High-level event to present results, guidelines, and policy recommendations to European and international audiences.

6.3 Scientific and Policy Publications

Scientific and policy publications are key instruments for ensuring the credibility, visibility, and long-term impact of SmartUrbanity’s results. They support knowledge transfer to research communities, policymakers, and practitioners, and translate pilot outcomes into actionable guidance.

- **Peer-reviewed Journal Articles:** Ensure academic credibility and dissemination across research communities in urban planning, mobility, ICT, and social sciences.
- **Policy Briefs:** Concise documents tailored to local, regional, and EU-level policymakers, providing actionable recommendations based on pilot results.
- **White Papers & Guidelines:** Document best practices, methodological innovations, and scalability pathways for 15-Minute City implementations.

6.4 Media Outreach

Media outreach supports the visibility of SmartUrbanity and the dissemination of its progress and results to wider audiences beyond the project consortium. It focuses on timely communication of key milestones, storytelling, and collaboration with established networks to amplify impact.

- **Project Announcements:** Released at key milestones (project launch, mid-term achievements, final results) through partners' institutional news sections and websites to increase visibility.
- **Blogs & News:** Regular short-form updates on project progress, success stories, and lessons learned.
- **Collaboration with multipliers:** Engagement with NGOs, professional associations, and networks (e.g., POLIS, UITP) to widen outreach and reach relevant practitioner communities.

6.5 Promotional Materials

Promotional materials support the visibility and recognizability of SmartUrbanity across events, pilot cities, and dissemination activities. They are designed to communicate key messages and results in clear, accessible, and visually engaging formats.

- **Flyers and Posters:** Summarise project goals and pilot activities; distributed at events and via local authorities.
- **Roll-up Banners and Exhibition Stands:** Used at conferences, public workshops, and dissemination events.
- **Infographics and Fact Sheets:** Highlighting key achievements and impacts in accessible formats for policymakers and citizens.

Table 2: communication tool or channel

Tool / Channel	Responsible Partner(s)	Target Group(s)	When	Where	Purpose (Why)	Expected Outcome
Project Website	ZHAW (technical development); (coordination); All partners (content)	Citizens, policymakers, researchers, industry actors, NGOs	From project start, continuously updated	Online	Central information hub for project activities, results, and deliverables	Increased transparency, centralized access to outputs, long-term visibility
Electronic Newsletters	Communication Lead; All partners (inputs)	Stakeholders, professional networks, local actors	Periodically (e.g. every 4-6 months)	Online	Maintain regular contact and highlight progress and events	Sustained stakeholder awareness and engagement
Social Media (LinkedIn)	Communication Lead; All partners (content)	Professionals, policymakers, research community	Throughout project lifecycle	Online (LinkedIn)	Disseminate updates, policy insights, and scientific results	Increased professional reach and project visibility
Social Media (WhatsApp Channels)	Communication Lead; Pilot partners	Citizens and local communities in pilot areas	During pilot campaigns	Online (WhatsApp, local language)	Mobilise participation and share campaign updates	Increased local reach and participation

Project Meetings & General Assemblies	Project Coordinator; WP Leaders	Consortium partners	According to project calendar	Online / in-person	Ensure coordination, alignment, and progress monitoring	Effective project management and shared understanding
Pilot Workshops	WP Leaders; Pilot partners	Citizens, local stakeholders	During pilot phases	Pilot cities	Co-creation and testing of tools and concepts	User-informed pilot refinement and local ownership
Stakeholder Forums	Project Coordinator; Pilot Leaders	Policymakers, NGOs, academia, SMEs	Mid-term and late project phases	Pilot cities / hybrid	Discuss findings, transferability, and scalability	Increased policy relevance and uptake potential
Final Conference	Project Coordinator; Communication Lead	European and international stakeholders	End of project	In-person / hybrid	Present results, guidelines, and policy recommendations	Wide dissemination and replication beyond pilots
Peer-reviewed Journal Articles	Research partners; WP Leaders (coordination)	Academic community	Throughout project	Scientific journals	Ensure scientific credibility and knowledge transfer	High-quality academic dissemination
Policy Briefs	WP Leaders	Local, national, EU policymakers	Mid-term and final phases	Online / print	Translate results into actionable recommendations	Improved policy uptake and decision support

White Papers & Guidelines	WP Leaders; Communication Lead Hungary	Cities, practitioners, policymakers	Late project phase	Online	Share best practices and scalability pathways	Practical guidance for implementation
Project Announcements	Communication Lead; All partners	General public, stakeholders	Key milestones	Partners' websites and channels	Increase visibility at strategic moments	Broader public awareness
Blogs & News Items	Communication Lead; Pilot partners	General public, stakeholders	Throughout project	Online	Share lessons learned and success stories	Enhanced engagement and accessibility
Multiplier Networks (e.g. POLIS, UITP)	Project Coordinator; Partners	Wider professional networks	Mid and late phases	Network channels	Amplify dissemination beyond consortium	Expanded outreach and cross-sector visibility
Flyers & Posters	Communication Lead; Pilot partners	Citizens, local stakeholders	During events and pilots	Pilot cities, events	Summarize project goals and activities	Increased local awareness
Roll-ups & Exhibition Materials	Communication Lead	Conference and event participants	As needed	Events	Support project branding and visibility	Professional project presence

Infographics & Fact Sheets	Communication Lead; WP Leaders	Policymakers, citizens	Mid and late phases	Online / print	Communicate key results clearly	Improved comprehension and impact
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7. Engagement Strategy

Engagement is at the heart of SmartUrbanity, as the project's vision of inclusive, secure, and sustainable 15-Minute Cities cannot be achieved without active involvement of citizens, policymakers, academia, SMEs, and communities. The engagement strategy therefore combines digital innovation, participatory governance, and inclusivity mechanisms to ensure that all voices are heard and integrated into the decision-making process.

Engagement of targeted stakeholders within SmartUrbanity follows a multi-channel and adaptive approach, combining digital, in-person, and institutional communication pathways. Citizens and local communities are primarily reached through the Citizen Engagement App, complemented by social media promotion, local events, and offline outreach facilitated by pilot partners and local organizations. Policymakers, planners, and institutional stakeholders are engaged through workshops, stakeholder forums, pilot demonstrations, and policy-oriented communication, while academia and industry are reached through scientific dissemination, thematic events, and pilot-related collaboration opportunities. The choice of channels is intentionally flexible and depends on pilot-specific contexts, stakeholder availability, and project maturity. At this strategy stage, the focus is on defining how stakeholders are approached in principle, rather than fixing numerical targets, participation thresholds, or recruitment quotas, which will be refined during pilot implementation and monitored through the project's dedicated monitoring and quality frameworks.

7.1 Citizen Engagement App

The Citizen Engagement App is the primary tool for collecting residents' perceptions, behaviours, and feedback on accessibility, safety, and everyday mobility. It allows users

to report local challenges, submit suggestions, and contribute through travel diaries and perception surveys, with the option of unregistered reporting to lower participation barriers.

All inputs are anonymized and processed in compliance with GDPR. Engagement is supported through call-to-actions, push notifications, and social media promotion to encourage participation and show how citizen contributions inform local decisions.

- The Citizen Engagement App is the primary tool for gathering perceptions, behaviours, and feedback from residents.
- It will allow users to report local challenges (e.g., poorly lit streets, lack of amenities, accessibility barriers) and contribute suggestions for improvement.
- The app incorporates features for travel diaries, perception surveys, and unregistered reporting to lower participation barriers.
- Citizens' input will be anonymized and processed in compliance with GDPR, ensuring trust and ethical handling of data.
- Engagement around the app will be strengthened through targeted call-to-actions, push notifications, and social media promotion, encouraging residents to submit reports, join challenges, and stay updated on how their contributions influence local decisions.

7.2 Accessibility Analysis and Decision Support Platforms

The Accessibility Analysis (AA) Platform and the Decision Support System (DSS) support evidence-based and participatory urban planning. The AA Platform provides visualizations of aggregated data, including heatmaps and demographic-specific accessibility indicators, while the DSS enables policymakers to test and compare interventions such as new bike paths or pedestrian zones.

- The Accessibility Analysis (AA) Platform will provide citizens and planners with visualizations of aggregated data, including heatmaps and demographic-specific accessibility indicators.
- The Decision Support System (DSS) will enable policymakers to test interventions (e.g., new bike paths, pedestrian zones).
- These platforms will act as co-creation spaces, where citizens and policymakers jointly evaluate scenarios and align interventions with real needs.
- Engagement around AA and DSS platforms will be supported through short insight updates, visual summaries, and co-creation moments (e.g., workshops) where citizens and policymakers interpret results together and evaluate potential interventions.

7.3 Gamification Campaigns

SmartUrbanity uses gamification (points, badges, and challenges) to motivate sustained citizen participation and link digital engagement with real-life community action.

- SmartUrbanity integrates gamification to motivate and sustain citizen participation.
- Users will earn Green Points for sharing sustainable travel data (e.g., walking, cycling, public transport use), redeemable for cultural or social rewards.
- Yellow Points will reward community-building activities, such as contributing to mapping sessions or supporting neighbourhood projects.
- Badges and recognition campaigns (e.g., “100 km cycled” or “Safe route reporter”) will celebrate achievements and strengthen collective ownership.
- Gamification will also be linked to real-life events, creating bridges between digital engagement and local community action.
- Engagement around gamification will be activated through periodic thematic campaigns, neighbourhood challenges, and recognition initiatives shared via app and social media, ensuring continuous participation and linking digital achievements with local community action.

At this stage of the project, gamification activities are concretely implemented and tested within the Rome pilot, where local conditions, stakeholder readiness, and technical integration enable structured experimentation. The inclusion of gamification mechanisms in other pilot cities will be assessed and defined during WP4, based on pilot-specific contexts, institutional capacities, and lessons learned from the Rome experience. Therefore, references to gamification in this strategy reflect a project-level engagement approach, rather than a commitment to uniform implementation across all pilots. Detailed definitions regarding pilot participation, responsible actors, target groups, recruitment mechanisms, and incentive structures will be developed and validated during pilot execution.

7.4 Inclusivity Mechanisms

Inclusive mechanisms are considered as follows:

- To ensure equity of participation, SmartUrbanity will complement digital tools with offline engagement mechanisms.
- Options include written surveys, and face-to-face events facilitated by local representatives.
- Partnerships with NGOs and associations representing vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled, migrants, low-income households) will guarantee accessibility of participation.
- This hybrid approach ensures that the project does not exclude those with limited digital access or skills.

7.5 Stakeholder Forum and Advisory Board

SmartUrbanity establishes a Stakeholder Forum and an Advisory Board to enable continuous multi-actor dialogue, provide strategic guidance, and ensure ethical, inclusive, and policy-aligned project implementation.

- The Stakeholder Forum will serve as a participatory arena, bringing together citizens, policymakers, industry actors, NGOs, and academia to discuss challenges, share insights, and validate solutions.
- The Advisory Board, composed of external experts and representatives of EU initiatives, will provide strategic guidance, monitor inclusivity and ethics, and ensure alignment with European priorities.
- Both bodies will meet regularly, creating a structured and continuous dialogue throughout the project lifecycle.

7.6 Continuous Feedback Loops

Citizen and partner feedback will be systematically collected and used to adapt communication content and outreach methods throughout the project lifecycle. Feedback collection is embedded within a continuous and iterative engagement cycle, rather than treated as a one-off activity. Event-specific feedback forms, tailored to the objectives and themes of individual workshops or public events, will be used to allow for more targeted and contextual input. Results from feedback activities will be analysed by the responsible Pilot leaders and teams and used to adjust engagement formats, communication messages, and pilot-level actions. Where feasible, citizens and stakeholders will be informed about how their contributions have influenced project decisions or refinements. This closing of the feedback loop is intended to strengthen transparency, build trust, and support sustained participation over time.

7.7 Pilot-Specific Engagement Strategies

While SmartUrbanity follows a shared engagement framework at project level, stakeholder engagement is implemented through pilot-specific strategies that reflect local contexts, institutional settings, stakeholder availability, and thematic focus. This

differentiated approach ensures relevance, feasibility, and meaningful participation, while remaining aligned with common ethical, inclusivity, and quality principles.

Rome Pilot

Focus: Sustainable mobility behaviour, safety perceptions, and gamified engagement

Key actors: Sapienza University of Rome, **Movesion**, CTLup, Municipio XII of Rome, Road Safety.... (local NGOs),

In the Rome pilot, citizen engagement is primarily driven through the Citizen Engagement App, with a strong emphasis on gamification mechanisms developed and implemented by Movesion in collaboration with Sapienza. The app is used to collect travel behaviour data, safety perceptions, and user feedback, while also incentivizing participation through point-based and recognition-based mechanisms.

Target groups include:

- Residents interested in active and public transport,
- Daily commuters,
- Cyclists and pedestrians,
- Digitally active citizens.

Awareness and recruitment channels include:

- App-based call-to-actions and push notifications,
- Social media campaigns coordinated with project partners,
- Collaboration with cycling NGOs and bike rider associations,
- Dissemination through municipal communication channels (websites, newsletters, local initiatives).

Gamification campaigns are complemented by local workshops and community events, ensuring that digital engagement is reinforced through face-to-face interaction. This combined approach aims to increase participation, sustain engagement over time, and strengthen the link between citizen input and local mobility decision-making.

Lyon Pilot

Focus: Usability, walkability, and bikeability assessment

Key actors: Local academic partners, social organizations, metropolitan authorities

The Lyon pilot focuses primarily on the evaluation of walkability and bikeability, with a strong emphasis on usability and user experience. Engagement activities are largely oriented toward university students, who represent a key user group for active mobility and provide a structured and accessible sample for testing and evaluation.

In parallel, the pilot explicitly addresses elderly citizens and specific vulnerable groups, particularly women, through collaboration with social organizations working on gender-sensitive mobility needs. The Metropolitan Authority (Métropole) contributes by leveraging existing participatory tools and citizen access mechanisms already in place at city level.

Engagement channels include:

- Targeted workshops and focus groups,
- Structured surveys and evaluation sessions,
- Institutional platforms operated by the Métropole,
- Collaboration with local associations for outreach to non-student populations.

This approach allows Lyon to balance methodological rigor with inclusivity, while focusing on concrete usability outcomes.

Karlsruhe Pilot

Focus: Community-based engagement and local accessibility challenges

Key actors: Local partners, NGOs, social organizations

In Karlsruhe, citizen engagement relies primarily on collaboration with NGOs and local social organizations, which act as trusted intermediaries between the project and local communities. These organizations support outreach, facilitate participation, and help ensure that engagement activities are accessible to diverse population groups.

Engagement methods include:

- NGO-facilitated workshops,

- Community meetings,
- Locally distributed surveys and feedback tools.

This strategy emphasizes trust-building and inclusivity, particularly for groups that may be less responsive to purely digital engagement methods.

Izmir Pilot

Focus: Playful engagement, awareness-building, and co-creation

Key actors: Municipality of Izmir, NGOs, local partners

The Izmir pilot combines workshops with play-based engagement mechanisms, notably the Play–Game activities, which are used as a complementary tool to encourage participation and raise awareness about sustainable and inclusive mobility.

Engagement is supported through:

Collaboration with local NGOs and civil society organizations,

Active involvement of the municipality, using its communication channels to reach residents,

Integration of Play–Game activities into workshops and public events.

This approach aims to lower participation barriers, attract diverse audiences, and connect digital and physical engagement in an accessible and motivating way.

Thurgau Pilot

Focus: Demand-responsive transport (DRT) users and service-based engagement

Key actors: Local partners, PostAuto, transport operators

In Thurgau, engagement activities primarily target users of demand-responsive transport (DRT) services. Outreach is conducted in close cooperation with PostAuto and other transport operators, leveraging existing user communication channels.

Engagement mechanisms include:

- Targeted communication to DRT users,
- Service-based feedback collection,

- Additional engagement actions that may be defined and implemented as the project progresses.

This pragmatic approach ensures direct access to relevant user groups while allowing flexibility to introduce further engagement tools during the project lifecycle.

This pilot-specific engagement design reflects SmartUrbanity's commitment to context-sensitive implementation. Rather than enforcing a uniform engagement model, the project applies a shared strategic framework while allowing each pilot to adapt engagement channels, target groups, and incentives to local conditions. Detailed definitions regarding participation targets, recruitment mechanisms, incentive structures, and operational responsibilities may be further refined in the next steps of the project, based on pilot readiness, stakeholder feedback, and lessons learned during early implementation phases.

8. Roles and Responsibilities, and Internal Coordination

Effective communication and engagement within SmartUrbanity require a clear allocation of responsibilities, defined coordination mechanisms, and transparent internal communication processes. This chapter clarifies who is responsible for what, how coordination is ensured, and how internal information flows support timely delivery and quality control.

8.1 Project Coordination(Sapienza University of Rome and CTLup)

The Project Coordinator holds overall responsibility for the coherence, quality, and compliance of all communication and engagement activities. Sapienza ensures alignment with DUT visibility requirements, oversees branding and messaging consistency, and validates major communication outputs before publication or dissemination. The Coordinator is also responsible for monitoring communication-related KPIs, ensuring

corrective actions where needed, and acting as the primary interface with DUT regarding visibility, reporting, and compliance matters.

In addition, the Coordinator oversees internal communication structures, ensuring that partners are informed of decisions, deadlines, and strategic updates in a timely manner.

8.2 Work Package (WP) Leaders

WP Leaders are responsible for integrating communication and engagement activities into their respective technical and pilot-related work packages. This includes identifying relevant outputs for dissemination, organizing stakeholder interactions linked to WP activities, and ensuring that engagement actions support WP objectives.

WP Leaders provide structured and timely inputs (content, data, visuals, results, milestones) to the Communication and Dissemination Task Force and report progress, risks, and delays to the Project Coordinator. They are accountable for ensuring that communication related to their WP is accurate, timely, and aligned with the overall strategy.

8.3 Consortium Partners

All consortium partners contribute actively to communication and engagement activities by disseminating project information and results through their institutional channels, networks, and professional communities. Partners support local outreach to citizens, NGOs, educational institutions, and professional stakeholders, particularly in pilot cities. Partners are also responsible for contributing to scientific publications, conference presentations, workshops, and joint dissemination activities, while ensuring compliance with ethical standards, GDPR requirements, accessibility principles, and agreed branding guidelines.

8.4 Pilot Leaders

Pilot leaders (MOVESION, KIT, EGE, ENTEPE, ZHAW) hold primary responsibility for local-level engagement. They coordinate citizen workshops, surveys, app testing, and public events within pilot cities, ensuring broad and inclusive participation. They also facilitate access to local communication channels, media outlets, and public networks. Pilot leaders play a key role in translating project results into locally relevant planning discussions and policy reflections, and in providing structured feedback from citizens and policymakers to support cross-pilot learning and replication.

8.5 Communication and Dissemination Task Force

A dedicated Communication and Dissemination Task Force is established to ensure operational coordination across partners and WPs. The Task Force is composed of representatives from the Project Coordinator, selected WP Leaders, and partners with communication expertise. The Task Force meets on a regular basis (at least quarterly) and is responsible for:

- coordinating communication campaigns and key messages,
- managing the project's digital presence (website and LinkedIn),
- monitoring communication KPIs,
- ensuring consistency across languages, countries, and target groups.

The Task Force reports to the Project Coordinator and acts as the operational backbone of the communication strategy.

8.6 Advisory Board and Stakeholder Forum

The Advisory Board and Stakeholder Forum provide external expertise and strategic guidance to strengthen the relevance, inclusivity, and impact of SmartUrbanity's communication and engagement activities.

The Advisory Board is expected to consist of a limited number of members (typically 5–8) representing complementary perspectives, such as urban planning authorities,

academic experts in mobility or participation, civil society organisations, and practitioners from relevant European initiatives. Members are selected by the Project Coordinator in consultation with WP leaders to ensure balance across sectors and geographies.

The Advisory Board is consulted at key moments of the project, such as the validation of engagement approaches, review of major dissemination outputs, and reflection on transferability and impact. Input is provided through structured feedback during dedicated meetings or written consultations. The Board has an advisory role only and does not hold decision-making authority.

The Stakeholder Forum is broader and more flexible in composition and includes representatives from municipalities, NGOs, industry, and other relevant networks engaged through workshops, conferences, and pilot events. Its role is to provide contextual feedback, share perspectives from practice, and support mutual learning rather than formal oversight.

8.7 Internal Communication and Coordination Mechanisms

Internal communication within SmartUrbanity supports coordination across work packages, timely alignment on progress, and efficient sharing of documents and decisions. It is designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and early identification of risks.

Objectives

Internal communication aims to:

- facilitate coordination between partners and WPs,
- ensure timely updates on progress, milestones, and risks,
- support efficient document sharing and collaborative work.

Tools

Internal communication relies on a defined set of tools:

- Email for official updates and formal decisions (coordinated by Sapienza and WP leaders),
- Microsoft Teams for day-to-day communication and rapid coordination,
- Shared repositories (Google Drive) for version-controlled storage and collaborative editing.

Internal meetings and information flows.

WP Leader Management Meetings are organized every three months by Sapienza and CTLup to address progress, risks, and coordination issues.

Within each Work Package, coordination meetings are organised on a needs-based basis and, where required, take place no more frequently than every two months. These meetings are convened and chaired by the respective WP Leader. WP Leaders are responsible for ensuring that all WP-related documents are kept up to date, while the Project Coordinator maintains overall coherence and provides strategic oversight across the project.

8.8 Language

For each target audience, a specific language has been identified and should be used to reach the external communication objectives:

- Citizens: A friendly, inclusive, and action-oriented language that emphasizes empowerment, simplicity, and local relevance.
- Urban planners/ Policymakers: A formal, evidence-based language focused on impact, scalability, and policy relevance.
- NGOs/Educational institutions/Local influencers: A collaborative and mission-aligned language highlighting shared goals, inclusion, and community engagement.
- Media and research community: A clear, concise, and technically credible language that underscores innovation, replicability, and research value.

The following table to summarise the planned languages is shown below, with an example for each target audience:

Table 3: Audience and language

Audience	Language	Example
Citizens	Informal, friendly, inclusive	“Your voice and experience can help shape a more liveable, accessible city. Join us!”
Urban planners/Policymakers	Formal, evidence-based	“SmartUrbanity provides actionable data and co-designed solutions to support inclusive urban planning and mobility policies.”
NGOs/Educational Institutions	Collaborative, engaging	“Partner with us to promote social equity and engage diverse communities in rethinking city mobility.”
Media/Researchers	Clear, concise, technical	“SmartUrbanity offers unique insights and real-world data to inform research and showcase urban innovation across Europe.”

9. Monitoring and KPIs

To ensure the effectiveness of communication and engagement activities, SmartUrbanity will adopt a structured monitoring framework based on KPIs. These KPIs will be tracked periodically, reported in project reviews, and used to adjust strategies when necessary.

Both quantitative metrics (measuring reach and output) and qualitative indicators (measuring quality, relevance, and satisfaction) will be applied.

Digital Communication Metrics

- Website traffic: number of visits and downloads of materials.
- Social media reach and engagement: impressions, likes, shares, comments, and follower growth across LinkedIn.

Citizen Engagement Metrics

- Number of citizens engaged via the Citizen Engagement App, workshops, and surveys.
- Diversity of participation: representation of youth, elderly, women, migrants, and persons with disabilities.
- Gamification engagement: number of users participating in campaigns, points earned, and rewards redeemed.

Events and Stakeholder Engagement Metrics

- Number of events and workshops organized (local pilot workshops, stakeholder forums, policy roundtables).
- Participation levels: number of attendees, geographical and sectoral diversity.
- Stakeholder Forum activity: number of members, meetings held, recommendations produced.

Dissemination Metrics

- Scientific outputs: number of peer-reviewed publications, conference papers, and open-access datasets produced.
- Policy outputs: number of policy briefs, guidelines, and uptake by municipal or EU actors.
- Media coverage: press articles, podcasts, interviews, and third-party mentions.

Impact and Quality Metrics

- Feedback and satisfaction surveys: citizen and stakeholder feedback on workshops, platforms, and gamification tools.
- Replication and transferability: evidence of other municipalities or organizations showing interest in adopting SmartUrbanity tools.
- Long-term visibility: citations of SmartUrbanity in academic, policy, or industry documents.

Monitoring Approach

- A KPI dashboard will be maintained and updated quarterly by the Communication and Dissemination Task Force.
- Results will be presented at General Assemblies and reported in periodic deliverables.
- Corrective measures will be applied where performance falls below targets (e.g., adjusting outreach campaigns or revising formats).

At this stage of the project, the following indicative KPI targets are defined to guide monitoring and self-assessment of communication and engagement performance. These values represent minimum expectations at project level and may be refined over time based on pilot progress, stakeholder feedback, and baseline measurements collected during implementation.

Table 4: KPI categories and indicative target

KPI category	Indicator	Indicative target (project level)
Digital communication	Website visits	≥ 1,000 cumulative visits over project lifetime
	Deliverable downloads	≥ 100 total downloads
	LinkedIn posts	≥ 12 posts per year
	LinkedIn followers	≥ 50 followers by project end
	Average engagement rate	≥ 3–5% per post

Citizen engagement	Citizens engaged (app, workshops, surveys)	≥ 250 participants across all pilots
	Diversity of participation	Evidence of participation from all key groups
	Gamification participants (Rome pilot)	≥ 20 active users
Events & stakeholders	Pilot workshops & forums	≥ 4 events across all pilots
	Participants in events	≥ 8 participants per event (average)
	Stakeholder Forum meetings	≥ 2 meetings per year
Dissemination outputs	Peer-reviewed publications	≥ 4 journal or conference papers
	Policy briefs / guidelines	≥ 2 policy-oriented outputs
	Media mentions	≥ 2 media or third-party mentions
Impact & quality	Satisfaction score	≥ 60% positive feedback
	External interest in uptake	Evidence of interest from ≥ 3 external cities / organizations

10. Timeline of Communication Activities

SmartUrbanity’s communication and engagement activities follow a phased approach aligned with the overall project implementation. Each year builds upon the previous one, ensuring continuity, gradual expansion of outreach, and preparation for long-term impact beyond the project’s duration.

Year 1 (Project Initiation and Awareness Building)

- Establish visual identity and branding (logo, templates, guidelines).
- Launch the project website and official social media accounts.
- Publish project announcements on partner institutional channels to raise initial awareness. Disseminate the first project newsletter, presenting objectives, consortium, and pilot cities.
- Begin citizen engagement activities: beta testing of the Citizen Engagement App in pilot cities.
- Organize kick-off dissemination events: local introductory workshops in each pilot city.

Year 2 (Expansion, Co-Creation, and Knowledge Sharing)

- Intensify citizen engagement through gamification campaigns, workshops, and online forums.
- Present first scientific papers at international conferences and submit journal articles.
- Host mid-term Stakeholder Forum to present interim results and gather multi-actor feedback.
- Launch targeted policy briefs based on preliminary DSS and Accessibility Analysis outputs.
- Strengthen media presence through interviews, features, and collaboration with multipliers.
- Update communication strategy if needed, based on KPI monitoring and mid-term review.

Year 3 (Impact, Policy Uptake, and Legacy Building)

- Publish final scientific and policy outputs (guidelines, white papers, best practice recommendations).
- Organize cross-pilot knowledge exchange events, comparing lessons from Rome, Karlsruhe, İzmir, Lyon, and Thurgau.

- Hold the Final Conference, inviting EU institutions, policymakers, NGOs, and international partners to present results and discuss scalability.
- Release a documentary-style video showcasing project achievements and citizen experiences.
- Disseminate a final newsletter summarizing impacts and future directions.

The following table shows in detail the timeline of project.

Table 5: Timeline of the project

Phase	Focus	Period
1. <u>Setup</u>	Launch of website, social media toolkit (with first descriptive content about project activities in pilot cities), and development of dissemination materials	M7-M10
2. <u>Awareness</u>	In-depth content regarding project activities, including data collection, design and development of app and AA/DSS platforms that will take place in the pilot cities	M13-M22
3. <u>Engagement</u>	For both citizens and policymakers/stakeholders	
3.1 Citizen Engagement	Citizen engagement activities (through App and events/campaigns), including feedback collection, gamification, co-branded events, and campaigns (with NGOs and local stakeholders) to create participation and involvement in each pilot city	M13–M36
3.2 Policy Engagement	Policy engagement and feedback loops (through AA and DSS Platforms) to guide local stakeholders in the development of roadmaps and guidelines and, so, in the adoption of interventions	M13–M36
4. <u>Closure</u>	Final dissemination and reporting (D7.2 - Final Report & Outcomes on DUT Knowledge Hub & SmartUrbanity), in the context of task T7.4 “Communication and Outreach”	M36

11. Ethics and Accessibility

Ethics and accessibility are core operational principles of SmartUrbanity and are embedded within the project’s governance, quality assurance, and monitoring structures. Rather than being treated as abstract values, ethical compliance and inclusive access are

implemented through clearly assigned responsibilities, defined procedures, and measurable monitoring mechanisms across all communication, engagement, and pilot-level activities.

11.1 Data Protection and GDPR Compliance

All personal data collected through the Citizen Engagement App, surveys, workshops, and pilot activities will be processed in full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and relevant national legislation.

Operational responsibility for data protection lies with the pilot leaders, who are directly responsible for data collection within their respective pilots. Where required, this process will be technically supported by Movesion and CTLup, particularly for digital tools and data-handling procedures. This structure ensures that data protection responsibilities are clearly assigned at implementation level, while remaining aligned with the project's overall quality control framework.

Concrete implementation measures include:

- Informed consent procedures, systematically applied prior to any data collection activity. Consent forms clearly describe the purpose, scope, storage, and use of the collected data.
- Data anonymization protocols, applied before analysis and dissemination, ensuring that no individual participant can be identified in datasets or outputs.
- Data minimization rules, ensuring that only data strictly necessary for achieving project objectives are collected and processed.
- Compliance with these principles will be verified through internal quality checks and documented in periodic monitoring reports, enabling corrective action where necessary.

11.2 Application of the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) Principle

The DNSH principle is applied operationally to all communication and engagement activities to ensure that project outputs do not generate environmental, social, or economic harm. Responsibility for DNSH compliance is shared between:

- WP Leaders, who ensure that pilot-specific activities and communication materials align with DNSH objectives at implementation level.
- Project Coordinator, who oversees coherence and consistency across the consortium.

In practice, this means that:

- Communication outputs actively promote sustainable behaviours (e.g. active mobility and public transport use). Content is reviewed to avoid reinforcing exclusion, discrimination, or unequal access. Project materials explicitly reference SmartUrbanity's contribution to EU climate neutrality goals and the 15-Minute City transition pathway.
- DNSH alignment is checked as part of the internal review process prior to publication or public dissemination.

11.3 Accessibility of Communication Outputs

Accessibility is addressed through an accessibility-by-design approach, integrated into the production of all digital and offline communication materials. Implementation responsibility lies with the Communication Lead, supported by WP Leaders for pilot-specific outputs, and supervised through the project's quality assurance framework.

Operational measures include:

- Full compatibility of digital outputs (website, Citizen Engagement App, newsletters) with screen readers.
- Mandatory use of alternative text (alt text) for images, charts, and graphics.
- Multilingual availability of key materials in pilot cities.
- Use of clear and simplified language versions for non-expert and low-literacy audiences.

To address digital exclusion, the project systematically complements online tools with offline engagement formats, including printed materials, in-person workshops, and collaboration with local NGOs, community centres, and civic associations.

11.4 Inclusion of Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups

The inclusion of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups is operationalized through targeted engagement strategies at pilot level. WP Leaders and local pilot partners are responsible for implementing inclusive engagement actions, while the Project Coordinator ensures cross-pilot consistency. Concrete measures include:

- Tailored engagement formats for elderly citizens, people with disabilities, migrants, and low-income households.
- Use of offline participation mechanisms (e.g. physical events, telephone-based interactions where relevant).
- Partnerships with NGOs, schools, and local associations to identify and mobilize underrepresented groups.
- Participation diversity is tracked through engagement KPIs, enabling corrective actions if specific groups are underrepresented.

11.5 Ethical Oversight, Accountability, and Decision-Making

Ethical oversight in SmartUrbanity is integrated into the project's governance and quality control structure, rather than treated as an external or advisory-only function.

The Quality and Ethics Manager (CTLup) is responsible for continuous monitoring of ethical and accessibility aspects across communication, engagement, and pilot activities.

The Project Coordinator holds final accountability and decision-making responsibility for ethical compliance at project level.

The Advisory Board provides strategic guidance on ethical matters, particularly for activities involving direct citizen participation or sensitive target groups.

Ethical compliance is reviewed as part of regular internal monitoring cycles and linked explicitly to KPI tracking (e.g. inclusivity, accessibility, participation diversity). Any ethical risks or deviations identified during implementation are documented in internal reports and addressed through corrective measures agreed within the project management structure.

This governance-based approach ensures that ethics and accessibility are not generic principles but operational, monitorable, and enforceable components of SmartUrbanity's implementation framework.

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13. Conclusion

The Communication and Engagement Strategy is a cornerstone of SmartUrbanity, ensuring that the project's vision of inclusive, secure, and sustainable 15-Minute Cities is not only developed in research and pilots but also embraced by citizens, policymakers, and communities across Europe. By combining a clear visual identity, multi-channel communication tools, structured engagement processes, and rigorous monitoring, the strategy guarantees both visibility and impact.

The approach is designed to be participatory and adaptive: citizens are engaged as co-creators, policymakers are supported with actionable tools, researchers and SMEs are integrated into collaborative networks, and the wider public is reached through accessible and inspiring communication. Ethical principles and accessibility

commitments further ensure that SmartUrbanity is transparent, responsible, and equitable in all of its outreach activities.

Looking ahead, the strategy will evolve throughout the project lifecycle, guided by KPIs, stakeholder feedback, and Advisory Board recommendations. This ensures that SmartUrbanity's outputs remain relevant, impactful, and transferable. Ultimately, this deliverable lays the foundation for a lasting legacy of knowledge, practices, and tools that can be scaled across Europe and globally, helping cities transition toward resilient, people-centred urban futures.