



INCLUSION PLAN

D7.4

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Inclusion Plan

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Statement of Originality

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Project Executive Summary

GreenInCities: Demonstrating Holistic Data-driven Co-Creative Approaches in Nature-Based Solutions towards climate Adaptation and Mitigation

In recent decades, new planning paradigms have reshaped cities. Urban regeneration has renovated public spaces, redeveloped city centres, and established innovation districts. Smart cities have implemented technological systems, such as transport management, water and contamination monitoring, and energy-efficient buildings. A new sustainable approach, including recycling, renaturalization, and recovery, has emerged in response to the demand for environmental sensitivity in urban planning. These strategies have mainly been applied to wealthy areas to attract tourism and companies, repositioning cities in the global economic framework. However, applying these regeneration strategies, smart systems, and renaturalization processes to deprived areas is crucial. These areas tend to face multiple urban problems, such as pollution, social and cultural issues, lack of services and low-quality built environments, and public spaces, leading to issues related to vitality, functionality, quality of life, social cohesiveness, and physical and mental health. Moreover, there is a growing need for climate change adaptation strategies, which has led to the implementation of Nature Based Solutions (NbS). However, a new pattern is emerging, which considers nature as a stakeholder in itself, beyond the ecosystem services it provides. Innovative technologies such as AI, machine learning, and immersive realities are also emerging, which can enhance the accuracy of information delivery and the engagement of people.

GreenInCities aims to develop methodologies and tools for collaborative climate mitigation and adaptation urban planning approaches, specifically for deprived areas, addressing three main challenges: improving societal readiness level and awareness of vulnerable groups, going beyond classical greening and renaturing interventions, and leveraging cutting edge technologies to enhance co-creation and maximise urban regeneration impacts.

Deliverable Executive Summary

Deliverable D7.4 – Inclusion Plan of the GreenInCities project is the product of Task 7.4: Inclusivity, sustainability, and long-term benefits. This deliverable outlines a comprehensive framework designed to ensure inclusion, with a focus on the more vulnerable social groups, promote gender equality, and achieve social and environmental sustainability, alongside long-term benefits throughout all phases of the GreenInCities project.

This is initially guided by an in-depth theoretical analysis of the terms "vulnerable groups" and "deprived areas" as defined within the GreenInCities project, providing precise definitions of these terms and using the Environmental Justice (EJ) framework to elucidate their interrelation. Additionally, D7.4 – Inclusion Plan examines urban processes traditionally associated with greening and renaturing, identifying historical and contemporary processes (e.g., green gentrification), which, when not designed with a focus on community, may entail the risk of socially and spatially excluding the more vulnerable social groups. Furthermore, it investigates alternative, more caring and inclusive approaches aligned with Challenge 2 and Objective 2 of the GreenInCities Grant Agreement (GRA), which enable the project to surpass conventional methods of re-greening by:

1. including non-humans as equal stakeholders (Challenge 2), and
2. fostering greater resilience, multifunctionality, vitality and cohesiveness of the urban space through the implementation of New European Bauhaus (NEB) principles and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) (Objective 2).

Based on these theoretical concepts, deliverable D7.4 – Inclusion Plan clearly and comprehensively develops criteria, guidelines, and engagement strategies to ensure the inclusion of all diverse stakeholders, gender equality, sustainability (social and environmental), and long-term benefits throughout all project phases. These are intended to be followed horizontally by all partners, Leader and Follower cities, thereby linking this deliverable to the task of effectively communicating these to all involved parties. To facilitate this, as described on the GRA, URBANA will organise internal training sessions with each city to foster a shared understanding of inclusivity and gender perspectives in urban planning, and to support partners in effectively incorporating the current Inclusion Plan (i.e. inclusion criteria, guidelines, etc) into their local intervention(s).

Furthermore, deliverable D7.4 introduces the GreenInCities inclusion indicators for co-evaluation at all phases of the project. These are indicative and will be collaboratively refined during the internal training sessions with the cities, tailored to their specific contexts to ensure that all intervention(s) are effective, sustainable, inclusive, and beneficial to the well-being of both human and non-human stakeholders at a local level. Consequently, D7.4 – Inclusion Plan is inextricably linked to WP7 and can serve as a complement to tasks T7.1, and T7.2 and its deliverables, D7.1 – Ex ante & Monitoring NBS Policy Support System and D7.2 – Ex post NbS Policy Support System, by providing valuable information on pre- and post-intervention monitoring aspects of the project in terms of inclusion.

Additionally, deliverable D7.4 intersects with Deliverable D3.1 – Toolbox and Methodologies for LLs towards Implementation and Twinning, as it introduces a methodology aimed at fostering a more inclusive and collaborative stakeholder mapping process during the Co-Analysis phase. Finally, D7.4 maintains a close connection with WP8, particularly with deliverables D8.1 – Dissemination and Communication and D8.2 – Dissemination and Communication Impact Report, as it provides guidelines to enhance the inclusivity of dissemination and communication strategies of the project.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Deliverable Structure

The deliverable has four main parts:

- **Introduction.** The introduction comprises concise sections detailing the structure and purpose of the deliverable, the intended target audience, main reference documents, and a list of abbreviations and acronyms.
- **Framework of Inclusion.** This section outlines the importance of the Inclusion Plan within the GreenInCities project by defining "vulnerable groups" and "deprived areas" and applying the Environmental Justice (EJ) framework to emphasise their interrelation. It also highlights urban processes that, if not centred on community development, could lead to the social and spatial exclusion of vulnerable populations. Furthermore, it proposes three alternative inclusive re-greening approaches, incorporating the principles of care, degrowth, and ecofeminism into urban planning.
- **Guidelines to be followed at all phases of the project.** This section outlines the criteria and guidelines to ensure inclusion, gender equality, sustainability (both social and environmental), and long-term benefits across all phases of the GreenInCities project (Co-Analysis, Co-Design, Implementation, and Co-Monitoring), with a specific focus on the participatory activities within each phase. It also introduces a more inclusive approach to stakeholder mapping, focusing on strategies to prevent mistrust and disinterest while ensuring meaningful participation and equitable engagement of all diverse stakeholders. Finally, it presents indicative indicators for co-evaluation and provides a practical proposal to support each city in effectively adapting and implementing the Inclusion Plan's criteria and guidelines within their local context.
- **Dissemination & Communication.** This section outlines guidelines for inclusive dissemination and communication, emphasising the importance of sharing the project's outcomes with the local community and reaching diverse stakeholders through the use of accessible and inclusive language.

1.2 Deliverable Purpose

In accordance with the GRA the D7.4 – Inclusion Plan serves the following purposes:

1. to define the criteria and guidelines to guarantee inclusion, gender equality, sustainability (social and environmental), and long-term benefits throughout all project phases;
2. to introduce the GreenInCities inclusion indicators for co-evaluation at all project phases; and
3. to report on the partners' adherence to these plans (M48) based on the established criteria.

1.3 Target Audience

According to the GreenInCities Grant Agreement (GRA), the dissemination level of D7.4 is classified as 'public' (PU). This indicates that the entire deliverable and its components are accessible to members of the consortium, the European Commission (EC), and its agency, CINEA - European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency, which serves as the project's Granting Authority, as well as external parties. The objective of this deliverable is to serve as a guide for all beneficiaries of GreenInCities, including the General Assembly (GA), the Technical Management Team (TMT), the Advisory Board (AB), the Leader and Follower Cities and their technical partners who will be involved in the implementation of the interventions.

1.4 Reference Documents

This D7.4 – Inclusion Plan has been developed in line with the GreenInCities Grant Agreement (GRA).

To analyse and develop the theoretical framework of inclusion (see Section 2), D7.4 – Inclusion Plan drew on a range of scientific documents and academic papers, as outlined in the References of this deliverable.

To develop the inclusive criteria and guidelines, as well as the co-evaluation indicators, D7.4 – Inclusion Plan was largely influenced by the EU Horizon Project No 101103772 ELABORATOR, particularly its deliverable D2.1 – Inclusion Plan, which provided inclusive criteria, guidelines, and self-evaluation indicators for inclusion. These were adapted and further developed to align with the specific objectives and outcomes of the GreenInCities project.

1.5 List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

The table below outlines the abbreviations and acronyms to be utilised throughout the document.

Table 1: Abbreviations and acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AB	Advisory Board
CINEA	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
EC	European Commission
EJ	Environmental Justice
GA	General Assembly
GRA	Grant Agreement
M	Month
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NEB	New European Bauhaus
PU	Public
SRL	Societal Readiness Level
TMT	Technical Management Team
UGS	Urban Green Spaces
WP	Work Package

2. Framework of Inclusion

2.1 Why is an Inclusion Plan needed?

In recent decades, new urban planning paradigms have significantly influenced city development, largely through urban regeneration processes. According to UN-Habitat (2024), "Urban regeneration is an integrated planning strategy focused on solving problems in distressed urban areas ... characterised by a multi-agent collaborative process for achieving long-term goals in physical, social, economic, climate and governance dimensions of a vulnerable urban area." While these strategies often lead to successful public space redevelopment, they sometimes risk lacking inclusion and failing to meet the needs of the local communities, particularly those that are most vulnerable, thereby carrying the risk of leading to the exclusion of less affluent populations (Schmid, 2012).

Moreover, failure to address the specific needs of the most vulnerable in urban regeneration processes exacerbates the challenges they already face. It is noteworthy that these communities suffer the most from climate change impacts, despite their minimal contribution to its causes. For instance, in 2019, "the super-rich 1% were responsible for as much carbon emissions as the poorest 66% of humanity (5 billion people)," (Khalfan et al., 2023). This disparity underscores the need to acknowledge the unequal distribution of climate impacts and to address the conditions that intensify the vulnerability of the most vulnerable communities.

GreenInCities aims to co-create innovative re-greening and renaturing solutions for the regeneration, repurposing, rehabilitation, and pollution abatement of deprived urban areas. According to the GRA, the project prioritises vulnerable groups, countering exclusionary urban planning and ensuring the inclusion of those historically excluded from city-making processes¹ (Challenge 1). Additionally, it seeks to broaden stakeholder engagement to equally consider the needs of non-humans (flora and fauna).

The GreenInCities Inclusion Plan is therefore a key document to provide project partners with a framework to support more inclusive re-greening processes in deprived areas in their local contexts. It aims to facilitate the co-creation of high quality urban green spaces (UGS) that benefit both human and non-human stakeholders, and promote inclusion and gender equality. Additionally, it will guide partners in creating participatory activities that engage and empower vulnerable groups and local communities, fostering

¹ City-making processes refer to any process conducted by local or state governments which dictate the organisation and make-up of city spaces.

an environment of togetherness. By ensuring equitable and effective re-greening interventions, the GreenInCities project will encourage community ownership of regeneration efforts, leading to long-lasting positive impacts.

2.1.1 Who is vulnerable?

Vulnerable groups are defined as groups of people whose needs are often disregarded and/or excluded from urban planning processes, and who therefore require additional support to ensure their inclusion and well-being (European Environment Agency, 2023). In the context of GreenInCities, the term has been expansively defined to encompass a broader spectrum of social and environmental factors that contribute to the creation and intensification of vulnerabilities. These factors most often intersect, creating complex and context-specific vulnerabilities that vary widely among different individuals and communities. From an intersectional perspective,² the Inclusion Plan of GreenInCities acknowledges how the interplay of multiple social factors shapes experiences and intensifies inequalities, thereby exacerbating vulnerability. Additionally, it acknowledges the vulnerability of non-humans (flora and fauna), as they are usually either excluded from urban planning processes or included in ways that are primarily driven by human needs (human-centric approach).

The following categorization of vulnerable human and non-human groups in the context of GreenInCities is indicative and serves as an initial framework of analysis, highlighting the factors (social and environmental) that contribute to the (re)production of vulnerabilities. It is therefore recommended that each partner further identifies any additional or different vulnerable groups specific to their local contexts.

Children

Children's vulnerability in urban green spaces is largely due to adult-centred urban planning processes, which often overlook their unique needs, views and experiences. To ensure that children are recognised as citizens now, rather than in the future, it is essential to consider their primary activity: play.³ Play cannot be restricted to fenced-in playgrounds alone, as these confined areas offer limited opportunities for children to

² The term "intersectionality" is used to describe the combination/intersection of various social and political categories, including gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, age and other personal characteristics or identities, and how the crossings of these categories contribute to unique experiences of discrimination and oppression (EIGE, 2019).

³ The right to resting and playing is enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and part of UNICEF's Child-Friendly Cities Initiative (UNICEF, n.d.).

engage freely with their environment (Chinchilla, 2021). Children naturally learn and grow (both socially and physically) through play in various urban settings. Urban green spaces in particular have the capacity to provide multisensory and culturally relevant environments that address children's broader needs for exploration, discovery, learning (about nature and our coexistence with other non-human species), and socialisation. Additionally, the integration of play stimuli in places frequented by adults can strengthen children's sense of co-responsibility towards others (family and other citizens) (Chinchilla, 2021).

To effectively incorporate children's perspectives into urban planning and re-greening projects, it is necessary to tailor participation practices to align with their developmental competencies and to examine their everyday interactions with their environments.⁴ This approach allows for a more meaningful inclusion of children's views, as opposed to restricting their participation to more formal, adult oriented institutional contexts (Varvantakis, 2018).

Additionally, it is imperative to acknowledge children's heightened vulnerability to extreme weather conditions which can diminish the health and social benefits associated with playing outdoors. Exposure to pollution, flooding, and other climate-related impacts are more likely to have long-term repercussions for children than adults, while extreme temperatures in general, are also shown to influence cognitive behaviour, increasing aggression and irritability (Vanos, 2015).

Youth

As young persons (girls, boys, trans and non-binary youth) develop, they increasingly seek independence, so access to safe and reliable spaces and infrastructure becomes essential. Alongside this, they need dedicated social spaces, such as parks and community centres; without these, they may be forced into unsafe, unsupervised areas. A lack of supportive environments can contribute to mental health concerns like anxiety and stress, which are already prevalent among adolescents (Aziz et al., 2024). Moreover, in poorly maintained public spaces, young people are at an increased risk of exposure to social dangers like crime and substance abuse, further underscoring the importance of accessible, well-maintained urban spaces.

Gender disparities further complicate youth vulnerability in urban settings. A 2023 study by Walker & Clark found that while young children use parks equally, as they grow older,

⁴ For example, in URBANA's "[PlaySquare](#)" project designed for primary school children, tools and methodologies were specifically adapted to meet the unique needs of young participants, which differ from those of adults. For instance, large, interactive maps of their neighbourhood were provided, allowing students to physically engage with them, and craft materials like modelling clay were used to help them brainstorm and express their ideas creatively. The workshop processes were also tailored to children, offering the flexibility to work either collaboratively in small groups with classmates or individually, depending on their preferences (URBANA, 2024b).

boys dominate, and girls use parks with less confidence. Additionally, studies from Belgium, Sweden, and the US show teenage boys are far more likely to play outside, with the gender gap widening over time. Girls feel less safe and use parks less frequently, believing they are not designed for them (Walker & Clark, 2023). In addition to this, based on a national survey conducted in the United States, 39% of students avoided gender segregated spaces due to feelings of discomfort or a lack of safety regarding their gender identity, and 60% of trans youth reported a lack of appropriate facilities that align with their gender identity (Weinhardt et al., 2017). Trans and non-binary youth are rarely included in studies and workshops regarding urban green spaces. Feelings of discomfort can be addressed through their active inclusion in the co-design of urban green spaces, solidifying their use and appropriation of urban green spaces.

To address the gap in feelings of safety and ownership, involving youth, especially girls, trans and non-binary youth, in co-designing inclusive urban green spaces is essential to meet their needs and promote outdoor activity.

Older people

When urban green spaces are not designed to accommodate the needs and abilities of older people, their capacity to inhabit these spaces autonomously diminishes. Inadequate physical accessibility, such as the presence of stairs and/or poorly maintained public infrastructure, diminishes the sense of comfort and exacerbates exclusion from outdoor spaces, leading to social isolation, poor mental and physical health, and safety concerns (Grigoriadou & Vlachaki, 2023). Moreover, as the use of technology in public and urban spaces continues to increase (e.g., digital information boards, totems, etc.), the digital literacy gap amongst older people has emerged as a significant concern. There is a need to involve older people in the co-design of urban solutions in order to overcome exclusion and social isolation and to promote digital accessibility (Kolotouchkina et al., 2023). During URBANA's workshops with older people in the ["Athens: a city for all ages"](#) project, which took place in Athens (2022), participants reported significant difficulties in living autonomously due to inadequate public space infrastructure, including a scarcity of benches, insufficient seating at bus stops, narrow sidewalks, and poorly maintained walkways, which increase the risk of falls that can lead to serious injuries (Grigoriadou & Vlachaki, 2023).

Disability / Diversability

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (n.d.) defines persons with disabilities as those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that, when combined with societal barriers, limit their full participation in society. Public spaces, often designed for able-bodied individuals, can cause stress for those with disabilities due to inaccessible features like stairs, kerbs and narrow paths. Poor infrastructure, such as inadequate lighting or inaccessible restrooms, further restricts

their use of these spaces. In addition to physical obstacles, individuals with cognitive disabilities are also impacted by limitations such as complex signage and maps, as well as the lack of alternative methods for providing wayfinding information. Involving people with disabilities in re-greening efforts is crucial to improve accessibility and support autonomous use of urban green spaces, thus enhancing their holistic health and well being (Selanon & Chuangchai, 2023).

Alongside highlighting the importance of recognising and valuing disabilities in the co-creation of public spaces, within the framework of the D7.4 Inclusion Plan, the term "diversability" is also introduced to recognise "the distinct characteristics and potentials of every individual, whether disabled or non-disabled" (Langtree, 2023). Diversability⁵ is an umbrella term that describes the different types of abilities and functionalities in an inclusive manner, highlighting the discrimination that people with impairments encounter in their daily lives, aiming to unify rather than divide people into those with impairments and those without (URBANA, 2024a). As a general guideline, in the context of GreenInCities project, it is essential to focus on the individual first rather than their disability, while also ensuring that barriers to their participation are addressed.

Women

Perceptions of safety and security can vary depending on gender. Women, in particular, may avoid visiting green spaces that appear neglected or unmanaged, due to fear for their personal safety. In URBANA's ["Ioannina: Bridges of Participation"](#) project which took place in Ioannina (2023), women who participated in exploratory walks reported feelings of unease when passing by neglected or abandoned public spaces, expressing concerns that no one would intervene in the event of a physical or verbal assault. The disrepair of public spaces intensifies women's feelings of insecurity, particularly when navigating such areas on foot, and when these spaces are surrounded by a high concentration of other abandoned or dilapidated facilities (Grigoriadou & Alexiou, 2023).

Fear of violence and/or harassment in public spaces further shapes women's sense of safety, with time of day playing a crucial role. This concern is often heightened in urban green spaces where the absence of adequate lighting infrastructure and/or spatial design, such as the presence of secluded areas or poor visibility within parks (e.g., hidden corners and/or dense, excessive vegetation), can deter women from utilising these spaces, particularly during off-peak hours, and may heighten feelings of insecurity. According to the UK's Office for National Statistics (2021), "four out of five women felt unsafe walking alone after dark in a park."

⁵ The term "diversability" has been used since 1999 and it originated as a bottom-up term from disabled associations and served as a critique of the term "disability," which often emphasises the differences between able-bodied individuals and those with impairments, fostering negative perceptions that impact the lives of those deemed disabled (Jones & Basser Marks, 1999, as cited in URBANA, 2024a).

Additionally, women's use of public spaces, such as parks, typically differs from that of men due to their caregiving responsibilities (e.g., childcare, care of older members of their family/community). Women's mobility patterns, which are often shaped by their daily caregiving tasks (mobility of care)⁶ tend to be more dispersed, shorter, and usually involve accompanying a child or another dependent family member (URBANA, 2024a). As a result, women are more likely to visit parks with children and/or older family members as part of their daily routines. Therefore, it is crucial to design interventions in urban green spaces that enhance safety, improve accessibility (physical, social, financial, digital), and ensure comfort through well-maintained infrastructure like restrooms, seating, and accessible pathways to support care-related activities.

When public spaces are co-created with the community, they better meet diverse needs, making them more attractive and functional throughout the day. A continuous presence of users (vitality⁷ of a space) fosters informal, community-based surveillance, enhancing safety and mutual support, especially for women and vulnerable groups. This informal monitoring is often more effective than technical methods like CCTV or police, which may miss non-physical threats (e.g., catcalling, stalking) and sometimes increase insecurity (Bassam, 2024).

Queer persons

The term "queer" is an umbrella term that encompasses the fluidity of sexualities and gender identities, describing individuals who do not subscribe to traditional binary notions of gender and sexuality. Queer persons often face harassment, discrimination, and violence in public spaces (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2024). Parks and urban green spaces, especially during off-peak hours or in areas with minimal vitality (and therefore low community-based surveillance) can become sites where individuals are more vulnerable to negative encounters and/or potential threats. This increased vulnerability can lead to greater social exclusion and negatively impact both mental and physical health of queer persons.

Additionally, these spaces may fail to represent or include queer persons adequately, due to insufficient infrastructure (e.g., absence of inclusive signage, restrooms that accommodate the needs of non-binary or transgender persons, etc).

⁶ "Mobility of care" refers to the mobility associated with daily caregiving tasks, such as supporting family members' needs, which is typically performed by women. Inés Sánchez de Madariaga (2018) introduced this term to create a framework for understanding gendered mobility patterns and behaviours, emphasising the gendered dimensions of mobility (URBANA, 2024a).

⁷ Vitality refers to the continuous presence of individuals from diverse social groups (e.g., children, older people, youth, of all genders, etc.) in a public space with concurrent activities taking place throughout the day and even at night. This is supported by appropriate infrastructure, mixed-use development and well-planned programming of the space (see Table 6). Vitality plays a crucial role in enhancing feelings of safety, as it encourages informal, community-based surveillance of a space.

Migrants / Refugees / Ethnic minorities

According to the WHO Regional Office for Europe (2016), migrants, refugees, and other ethnic minorities in Europe usually face socioeconomic deprivation and often reside in neighbourhoods with limited access to urban green spaces. The few urban green spaces that do exist in these deprived areas are usually of poorer quality, further intensifying the exclusion of these social groups from the physical and mental health benefits of such spaces. Additionally, they often experience heightened fear of crime in urban green spaces, a concern that, as Sreetheran and Van Den Bosch (2014) underline, is largely rooted in past experiences of racism and significantly shapes their sense of safety.

Migrants, refugees, and other ethnic minorities may also have culturally different perceptions or experiences of urban green spaces, compared to native or local populations. The different cultural appropriations of such spaces can sometimes lead to conflicts between social groups. However, urban green spaces have the potential to be leveraged as vital sites for cultural exchange, integration, and community building. By understanding, respecting, and incorporating the specific experiences of these communities, urban green spaces can be co-designed to feel more welcoming and safe for all.

Persons experiencing homelessness

Individuals experiencing homelessness are frequently excluded from considerations in the design of urban green spaces. This exclusion is intensified by their transient housing conditions, which pose significant challenges to their participation in city-making processes. Limited access to medical and psychosocial care may further diminish their ability or willingness to participate.

Additionally, individuals experiencing homelessness often encounter "hostile architecture" in urban green spaces, where designs are intentionally aimed at discouraging their presence, effectively excluding them.⁸ This exclusion is compounded by the stigma and discrimination they face from local residents, leading to heightened conflicts and feelings of unease, especially when homeless individuals seek refuge in spaces lacking basic sanitation. Addressing these social and spatial challenges through co-creation processes is crucial to resolving underlying tensions and fostering more inclusive urban environments (Sibley et al., 2022).

⁸ Examples include benches with armrests, a lack of comfortable seating options in parks, spikes on flat surfaces, or filling areas with rocks instead of grass (Nitrato Izzo, 2022).

Lower income persons

Research shows that individuals with lower socio-economic status, such as unemployed people or people working in precarious conditions, are more likely to live in neighbourhoods with poor air quality, limited access to quality urban green spaces, and inadequate public infrastructure to manage extreme temperatures (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016). Additionally, these individuals often lack the financial resources to access high quality urban green spaces in other parts of the city, especially if these spaces are not accessible by public transport or charge fees for entry or use.

In addition, even when urban green spaces are nearby, poor quality and maintenance can discourage use. As Gidlow and Ellis (2011) emphasise, proximity alone does not benefit physical and mental health if the spaces are in poor condition. To address these challenges, involving lower-income individuals in the co-design of urban green spaces is crucial to ensure that these spaces will meet their needs, improve their quality of life, and foster a sense of ownership.

Persons with lower educational attainment and/or limited digital skills

Individuals with lower educational attainment and/or limited digital skills may face challenges in engaging with city-making processes, particularly when information is presented in technical language or mainly through digital platforms. Additionally, social exclusion and power imbalances may deter their involvement, as they might feel overshadowed by more articulate participants in formal settings.

Actively involving this group in participatory activities aimed at re-greening urban green spaces can enhance social cohesion and foster a greater sense of ownership (Shackleton, 2021). To achieve this, the settings of the co-creation activities should be adapted accordingly, ensuring that participation is easy, accessible and inclusive.

Non-humans (flora and fauna)

Non-humans include plants and animals (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and other aquatic organisms) that contribute to shaping the urban green areas' ecosystem dynamics. In conventional discussions of climate change the impacts recognized are usually in regards to their impact on humans (e.g., flood damage, drought impact on agriculture, urban heat islands within cities, etc.). This human-centric perspective may fail to consider the adverse climate impacts that occur to non-humans, intensifying their vulnerability through a variety of means, including: higher temperatures, ocean acidification, melting ice and snow, warming water, out-of-sync lifestyle events, sea-level rise, and more abundant and severe storms or droughts (Almiron & Faria, 2019). The inclusion of non-humans in re-greening processes is essential for ensuring accessibility, improving human and non-human well-being and safety, and meeting the goals of the project. While non-humans may not be able to enforce their own will

socially they can be incorporated in stakeholder mapping and urban re-greening projects through observations and discussions with respective ecologists or environmental scientists, or the creation of non-human profiles.

2.1.2 What makes an area deprived?

As indicated in Section 2.1, current urban development and regeneration processes often risk placing a strong emphasis on economic gains, potentially overlooking the needs of local communities. Brenner, Marcuse, and Mayer (2012) suggest that these capital-driven processes of urbanisation may favour the commodification of essential social necessities, such as housing, water, transportation, public space, health care and education, while promoting private investment in selected areas within cities. This unequal distribution of resources can lead to the creation of deprived areas that are spatially (e.g., by highways) and symbolically segregated from wealthier parts of the city.

Deprived areas can be characterised as areas suffering from limited access to economic opportunities, disinvestment in adequate and high-quality public infrastructure (e.g., transportation, hospitals, schools, etc.), low-quality housing, inadequate access to essential social services (e.g., health, education, etc.) and public amenities (e.g., parks) which exacerbate the living conditions of the people residing there and (re)produce social inequalities. Furthermore, area deprivation has also been linked to the residualisation of public and social housing to the most vulnerable social groups, as illustrated by the case of Netherlands in the late 1980s, when declining state investment in social housing led to an increase in the spatial concentration of these groups (Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020).

Urban challenges within these areas may also compromise their liveability. In the social sciences, the concept of liveability refers to areas that are deemed desirable, “fit to live in” or “inhabitable” (Ruth & Franklin, 2014) and is based on people’s wants, needs, and perceptions about their living space. Van Gent (2009) details a number of features that can influence the liveability of economically accessible public housing estates, which “may include the quality of the housing stock, urban design, physical appearances, cleanliness, quality of public space, safety and perhaps some degree of social interaction between neighbours.” Failing to address daily community desires and insufficient investment in public infrastructure undermines liveability within deprived areas, further exacerbating the living conditions of the more vulnerable people residing there.

In the context of GreenInCities, the concept of deprived areas is expanded to encompass the environmental impacts on both humans and non-humans (flora and fauna) within these areas. The European Environment Agency (2023) found that

wealthier EU countries have lower pollution levels, while poorer countries face higher exposure, a trend also seen in urban areas where affluent neighbourhoods experience less environmental harm. Less wealthy areas often face higher pollution from sources like industrial zones or major roads (see Section 2.1.3). Furthermore, as stated by the European Environment Agency (n.d.), these areas may include environments where non-human species are exposed to threatening processes and are “likely to become endangered unless the threatening factors cease to operate.” This underscores the importance of considering non-humans as equal stakeholders in the project.

Figure 1: Vulnerability is exacerbated when living in a deprived area.



2.1.3 Using an Environmental Justice (EJ) framework

To gain a better understanding of the relationship between vulnerable groups and deprived areas, the application of an EJ framework is essential. As a framework, EJ seeks to expose how environmental risks and benefits are distributed across different socio-economic groups and geographic areas. It acknowledges that environmental harm affects individuals and communities differently and therefore, highlights how more vulnerable social groups (see Section 2.1.1) in deprived areas often face disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards and limited access to resources and amenities. The World Health Organization (2021) notes that disadvantaged groups, including migrants, are often concentrated in deprived neighbourhoods with limited opportunities and poor health outcomes. Applying the EJ framework within the GreenInCities project allows for the identification of environmental harms that may be linked to environmental injustice. This methodology not only addresses these disparities but also elucidates the socio-political factors that exacerbate them. As Byrne et al. (2017) state: “A key insight ... has been to show that the patterns of inequality that marked economic and social relations in industrialised nations carried forward an expression in environmental conditions as well.”

Vulnerability to environmental impacts is not inherent for any social group in particular, but rather it is socially produced and environmentally expressed. The conditions that create deprived areas, combined with the complex factors that (re)produce vulnerabilities make certain social groups more sensitive to climate impacts and less able to adapt.

2.2 Towards inclusive and caring re-greening practices

To better understand the challenges a project may encounter in re-greening deprived areas with the active involvement of more vulnerable groups, it is crucial to consider the political dimensions of re-greening alongside the holistic approach that the GreenInCities project seeks to adopt. This section further outlines issues in re-greening related to marginalisation and displacement, and introduces caring frameworks for approaching interventions within the GreenInCities project that can support the inclusion of more vulnerable stakeholders.

2.2.1 *The politics of re-greening and green gentrification*

The socio-political conditions that determine the distribution of environmental risks can be intensified by re-greening or open space planning projects around the world. As stated in Section 2.1.2, these projects may unintentionally reinforce the marginalisation of more vulnerable groups through the gentrification and/or touristification of places, especially in places that lack social protections for residents. While current urban planning paradigms seek to integrate green spaces within urban areas, especially deprived ones, they are still being conceptualised in more exclusionary ways. A recent study on urban greening projects in Amsterdam, Vienna, and Lyon also concluded that “urban greening—and green gentrification specifically—can create ‘compounded environmental racisms’ by worsening racial environmental injustices and further perpetrating green racialized displacement, re-segregation and exclusion,” (Lewartowska et al., 2024). Moreover urban planning trends, such as private green areas in upscale developments, destination parks, and green spaces with entry fees are emerging as places that cater primarily to wealthier residents, further marginalising low-income and vulnerable groups and contributing to green gentrification (Schmid, 2012).

According to the Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability, green gentrification may occur when environmental improvements are planned and executed with a focus on development rather than community-oriented urban green spaces, thereby increasing property values and displacing lower-income residents (BCNUEJ, n.d.). This process, driven by heightened urban environmental awareness, often leads to wealthier newcomers replacing the more economically vulnerable population, perpetuating environmental injustice by unevenly distributing environmental benefits and hazards. Green gentrification is tied to the exclusion of the more vulnerable groups, whose opinions, needs, and desires are thus overlooked. Given that these practices are increasingly prevalent in urban regeneration processes, it is imperative to assess both the immediate and long-term impacts on the daily lives of the affected individuals.

2.2.2 Ethics of care, degrowth and ecofeminism

In contrast to the aforementioned regeneration processes and their potential outcomes (e.g., green gentrification, displacement of the more vulnerable, etc.), and in line with Objective 2 of the GRA, the GreenInCities project seeks to enhance current greening and renaturing solutions and practices to foster greater resilience, multifunctionality, liveability and cohesiveness of the urban space while integrating New European Bauhaus principles of sustainability, aesthetics and inclusiveness (NbS and NEB). In accordance with the GRA, this will be achieved through the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). By combining NEB and NbS principles the project's final goal is to bring higher quality, attractive and inclusive urban green spaces to the intervention areas.

As per the GRA, to mainstream and accelerate NbS, a crucial shift is needed from "quick" profit-driven gains and human-centred approaches to adopting long-term ecosystem benefits, sustainability, social equity and community-driven decision-making. To complement and reinforce this shift, the Inclusion Plan incorporates ethical frameworks such as the ethics of care, degrowth, and ecofeminism, which emphasise environmental stewardship, self-sufficiency, community empowerment and social justice. The integration of these values into NbS provides a robust ethical foundation that prioritises care, inclusion and gender equality, offering a powerful pathway towards sustainable, equitable, and resilient societies.

Ethics of care seeks to promote activities that include "everything we do to maintain, contain, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. This world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment," (Tronto, 1998). The ethics of care is therefore a concept inextricably linked to the notion of interdependence,⁹ which acknowledges the mutual reliance between humans, animals, plants and the environment. According to Puig de la Bellacasa (2017), care is a vital, life-sustaining everyday practice that extends beyond the traditional notion of "care work" which involves caring for children, older people or other dependent family members, typically performed by women in domestic (unpaid) work, healthcare (e.g., nurses and/or other unpaid or low-paid care workers) and other affective activities. The concept of care therefore has an intrinsic ethical and political dimension aimed at the pursuit of a "good"

⁹ As explained in the GreenInCities Values and Ethics Handbook (D1.7), interdependency refers to the mutual reliance between humans, animals, plants and the environment, where each one depends on the others for support and survival. In this context, Zaida Muxi, forms a critique of the current economic system, which relies on exploitation and individualism and advocates for a shift towards a cooperative model that recognises and respects the interconnectedness and mutual dependence of all life forms and ecosystems (SCA Sociedad Central de Arquitectos, 2020).

life, in other words, a life aimed to be lived “as well as possible” in tune with animals, plants and the environment (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017).

From a gendered perspective, cities are often not conducive to the facilitation of care work activities due to several interrelated factors. As indicated in Section 2.1.1 these factors (e.g., lack of physical and/or psychological safety, vitality of a space, insufficient public infrastructure, etc.) make it extremely difficult for caregivers to navigate urban spaces, further marginalising their care work activities (URBANA, 2024a). This is especially relevant in more deprived areas where there is less access to social services, poor infrastructure maintenance and higher instances of exposure to environmental harms that worsen the quality of their living conditions.

Linking gender to ecological issues allows us to “adequately understand the ways in which systems of oppression (such as racism, colonialism, gender discrimination, and environmental degradation) are interconnected and mutually reinforcing” (Okpodu & Holmes, 2023). This connection —called **ecofeminism** (or ecological feminism)—highlights how patriarchal societies dominate both gender-minoritized people (i.e women, queer people) and nature. It advocates for a worldview that values the earth as sacred, recognizes humanity's dependence on nature, and embraces the intrinsic value of all life.

In this context, the concept of **degrowth** becomes more relevant as it critiques the idea that well-being is linked to constant and unlimited market-based consumption and the overexploitation of land and natural resources. According to Kallis (2017), degrowth is the intentional reduction of production and consumption to enhance human well-being and ecological balance. It envisions a future where communities prioritise simplicity, equality, and sustainability over endless economic growth, moving away from material accumulation towards sufficiency and convivial living. From an EJ perspective, degrowth has been characterised as a potential means to avoid resource depletion, by prioritising global redistributive justice, valuing vulnerability and interdependence over self-sufficiency, and fostering collective responsibility for sustaining “buen convivir” (“collectively living well”).¹⁰ The concept of degrowth still requires enhancement regarding its political and spatial applications, but can be a valuable theory to consider with regard to constructing more caring societies (Mocca, 2019).

¹⁰ “Buen convivir” is a concept rooted in indigenous Andean cultures, particularly from the Quechua phrase “sumak kawsay.” It emphasises living in harmony with oneself, others, and the natural world. This philosophy challenges western notions of progress and development, focusing instead on holistic well-being, community, and ecological balance (Pérez Orozco & Mason-Deese, 2022).

3. Guidelines to be followed at all phases of the project

Building on the analysis of factors affecting inclusion in urban re-greening in Section 2, the following section presents a framework to facilitate the active involvement of local communities in deprived areas. As highlighted in Section 2, it is essential that all relevant social groups, especially the more vulnerable, get involved in the co-creation processes as equal stakeholders. Therefore, the following section outlines criteria, guidelines and indicators to achieve more inclusive participatory processes throughout all phases of the methodology applied in the GreenInCities project (Co-Analysis, Co-Design and Implementation, and Co-Monitoring).

3.1 Co-Analysis

Before initiating any urban planning project, a comprehensive analysis of the intervention areas, local communities, and stakeholders is crucial. In GreenInCities, this will be accomplished during the Co-Analysis phase, where partners in collaboration with the local community will perform quantitative and qualitative assessments to identify risks, challenges, and needs of each intervention area. To ensure meaningful stakeholder participation and equitable engagement throughout this phase, this section delineates guidelines for conducting inclusive stakeholder mapping and strategies for addressing stakeholder mistrust and disinterest. Here, both aspects are critical, as stakeholder mapping facilitates the identification of key actors and their interests, while mitigating mistrust and disinterest is essential for fostering authentic collaboration and inclusivity.

3.1.1 Stakeholder mapping

A stakeholder is any individual or group with a vested interest in or who is affected by a project, decision or policy. Particularly, in the GreenInCities project this includes both humans and non-humans. Stakeholders encompass a wide range of entities, such as community members, businesses, non-governmental organisations, and governmental bodies, each with varying levels of involvement and influence (Freeman, 1984). Additionally, stakeholder mapping has been identified as a valuable strategic planning

tool, enabling the comprehension of the intricate network of stakeholder relationships and the varying degrees of influence and interest associated with them (Bryson, 2004). It may therefore be conceived of as a dynamic process to identify all local stakeholders, giving emphasis to those who are more vulnerable to exclusion, and to analyse their power dynamics, interests and potential conflicts. By delineating interests and power relations, it can also help to mitigate and manage potential conflicts from the outset.

The stakeholder mapping process can be summarised in the 3 following phases:

1. Identification of relevant stakeholders

Based on URBANA's previous experience through diverse types of participatory workshops in urban planning, stakeholders can be identified across 6 main domains, as outlined below (see Table 2: How to conduct a collaborative stakeholder mapping) (URBANA, 2024a).

2. Co-identification of stakeholders (collaborative stakeholder mapping)

Following (or in parallel with) the initial identification of relevant stakeholders by the local partners/researchers, this phase seeks the active contribution of the local community and/or key stakeholders to a more comprehensive collaborative stakeholder mapping, which can ultimately lead to more inclusive, transparent and effective co-creation processes. This allows the local community to identify anyone who may have been overlooked in the first phase, including individuals, groups, local businesses, etc.

3. Evaluating stakeholders' interactions and dynamics

This phase involves identifying each stakeholders' influence, interests, interrelations, and power dynamics at the local level. Acknowledging potential conflicts and/or power dynamics helps to better coordinate co-creation activities by ensuring a collaborative environment where everyone feels comfortable to share their views. In this phase, structural inequalities can be highlighted, ensuring that priority will be given to those at risk of exclusion.

Table 2: How to conduct a collaborative stakeholder mapping

Phase 1: Identification of relevant stakeholders from different domains	
6 Domains	Examples
Public sector	Local and national authorities, public services, public institutions, etc.
Private sector	Businesses (e.g., shops, companies, offices), trade unions, etc.
Communities, Individuals, Residents	NGOs, civil society associations (e.g., in the fields of sustainability, circular economy, social solidarity, human rights,

	animal rights, accessibility, gender equality, etc.), local collectives and clubs, activist organisations, community groups, neighbourhood assemblies, representatives of more vulnerable groups, such as women, older people, children, etc. (see Section 2.1.1), schools, pre-schools, kindergartens, communities/individuals with local/indigenous knowledge (e.g., people who cultivate land, local builders), etc.
Culture and Sports	Sports academies and/or clubs, cultural centres and associations, arts and crafts workshops/studios, museums, artists (individuals and/or collectives), youth and community centres, public libraries, festivals, etc.
Education and Research	Universities, research and educational centres/organisations, schools, pre-schools, kindergartens, students' associations, parents' associations, teachers' associations, etc.
Non-human stakeholders	While non-human stakeholders may lack "voice", organisations and experts dedicated to their welfare can provide the necessary information for their inclusion in the process. Such organisations could be NGOs for animal rights, animal welfare organisations, environmental NGOs, research institutes, wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centres, etc.
<i>The given domains and examples are indicative and serve as a starting point for identifying relevant stakeholders to ensure comprehensive and inclusive participation in the Co-Analysis phase. Therefore, it is recommended that each partner identifies any additional or different individuals or groups relevant to their specific local context.</i>	
Phase 2: Co-identification of stakeholders (collaborative stakeholder mapping)	
In this phase, the local community participates in the identification of other relevant stakeholders. This can be achieved through: • collaboration with local/public authorities and community leaders, • engagement with local stakeholders and community networks identified in the 1st phase. Indicatively, this could be achieved through: • semi-structured interviews to ask for recommendations on additional stakeholders, • questionnaires to gather input on additional stakeholders, • workshops to discuss who else should be involved, • social media platforms to invite suggestions from a wider audience.	
Phase 3: Evaluating stakeholders' interactions and dynamics	

In this phase, stakeholders' interrelations and dynamics are identified. This can be achieved through:

- determination of each stakeholder's **interests**,
- evaluation of their level of **influence and power** over the local community and the project per se (this could be high, medium or low),
- **mapping** of the **relationships** and **conflicts** between stakeholders (e.g., an influence diagram showing one's influence over others and potential conflicts).

Figure 2: Phase 3 - Evaluating stakeholders' interactions and dynamics (*indicative figure showing the inter-dynamics among different stakeholders*)

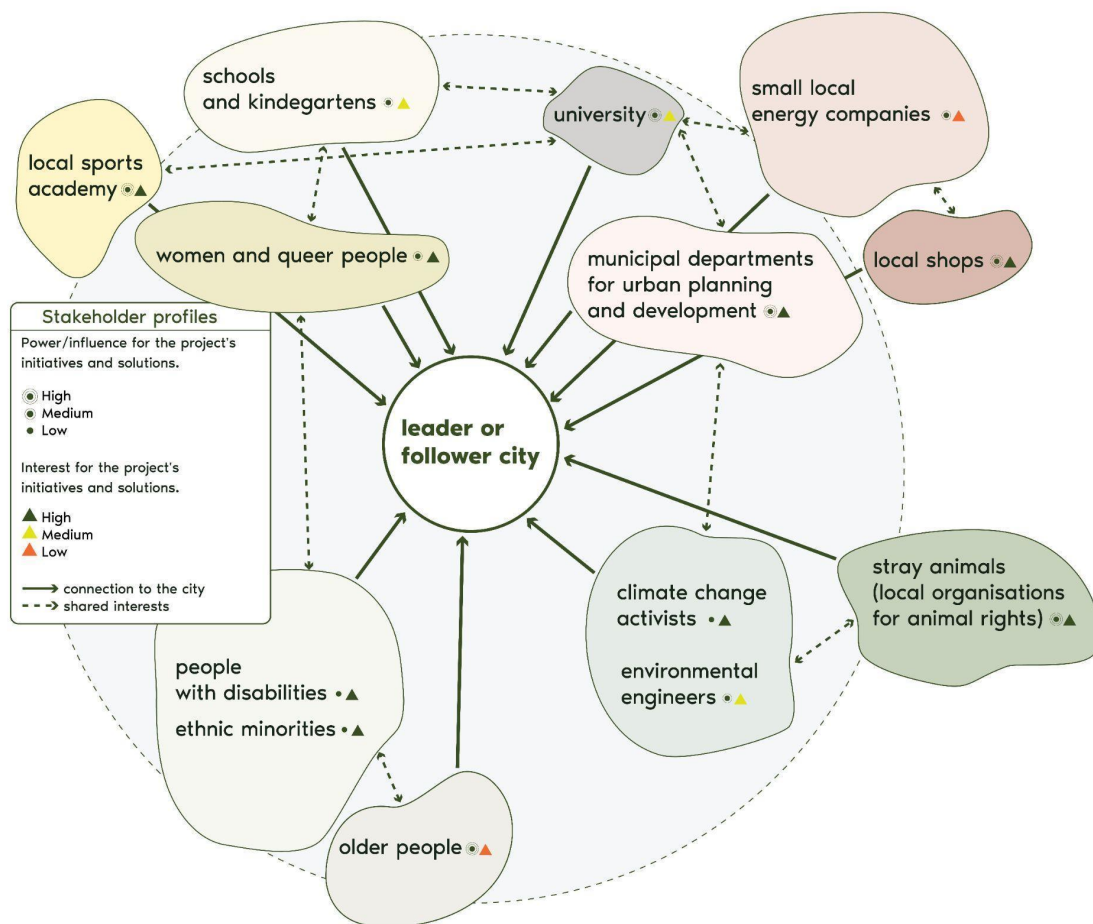


Table 3: Guidelines to guarantee inclusion in a stakeholder mapping process

Stakeholders	Guidelines for inclusion
Identification: <i>Is anyone left behind in this process?</i>	
Human	- Identify the most vulnerable groups in your local context (see Section 2.1.1). - Ensure that there is a high number of representatives or key informants from as many different social groups as possible.
Non-human	Identify the non-human stakeholders and their representatives (e.g., NGOs, research institutes, nature experts, etc.) at the local setting from the beginning of the process.
Dynamics and conflicts: <i>How do the diverse stakeholders interact?</i>	
Human	- Consider cultural and socio-economic differences among stakeholders (e.g., cultural differences) that could lead to discomfort or conflict in participating and sharing their perspectives with a wider group of people. - Consider any existing or potential conflicts that may emerge among different stakeholders (e.g., concern about gentrification and displacement of lower income groups). - Determine who may be affected the most during and after the intervention(s) and how.
Non-human	- Identify how different species interact with each other (<i>consult local experts</i>). - Examine the interactions and possible conflicts between humans and non-human species before, during and after the intervention(s).

After identifying the dynamics and potential conflicts, the stakeholder groups can be formed. This step is crucial for effectively using stakeholder mapping to align interests and strategies, ensuring effective group formation. Based on influence levels and power dynamics, groups can be either mixed or non-mixed.¹¹ When forming these groups, ensure that:

- The way they will be divided must ensure optimal participation from everyone, especially the more vulnerable. If necessary, consider organising separate workshops for groups with conflicting interests to avoid power imbalances.

¹¹ In various instances, individuals belonging to specific social groups (e.g., migrant women) may feel more at ease engaging in activities within non-mixed environments, where they are exclusively surrounded by others who share similar characteristics or experiences.

- If you end up having separate groups with conflicting interests, it is advisable to bring these groups together at a later, more “mature” stage of the project to exchange perspectives.

3.1.2 Reach out

Once the stakeholder group formation is complete, the reach out strategy can be implemented. This strategy is essential for engaging stakeholders effectively regarding upcoming participatory activities and ensures that relevant stakeholders are informed, understand the significance of the activities, and are motivated to actively participate. The following table presents guidelines for formulating an effective reach out strategy, designed to secure the involvement of all key stakeholders.

Table 4: How to effectively reach out

Guidelines for effective outreach	
Trusted community engagement	After identifying influential community members through stakeholder mapping, ask them to actively contribute to the outreach efforts. Depending on the context, they can assist by translating, explaining, or otherwise facilitating communication to ensure the message effectively resonates with the community. For example, • involve community leaders and/or organisations, • reach out to representatives of vulnerable groups or key informants (e.g., persons with disability, refugees, migrants, etc.) with whom they have already established a relationship of trust.
Diverse communication methods	• Use diverse forms of communication in inclusive and simple language. • Public invitations can be: - Digital (open calls through social media, online platforms e.g., municipality website/platforms, local organisations' and schools' websites, etc.). - Non-digital (e.g., posters placed in the neighbourhood, announcements in local newspapers, community newsletters and broadcasts on local radio, door-to-door distribution of printed information material, etc.).
Clarity / Adapted language style	• Adapt the language/communication depending on the local context and social groups (e.g., children, youth, older people, etc) and present all essential information clearly (e.g., event date, time, location etc.).

3.1.3 Overcoming stakeholders' mistrust and disinterest

It is important to note that even if the stakeholder mapping process and the reach out strategy have been carried out in the most inclusive way, there is still a significant possibility that the identified stakeholders may express **mistrust and/or disinterest** in engaging with the project's participatory activities. This might be partly due to:

(i) a lack of an established culture of participation

Many individuals may be unfamiliar with participatory processes and their dynamics, as they might not have previously engaged in such activities. Additionally, a historical reliance on authorities for solutions often fosters an entirely top-down decision-making approach. As a result, individuals may feel uncertain about their role and the value of their contributions, perceiving the process as outside their usual responsibilities.

This challenge can be addressed by:

- familiarising and educating stakeholders on participatory processes using clear, simple language and inclusive formats accessible to everyone involved,
- engaging with the local community well before the participatory activities, by attending local events and/or through preparatory meetings, to listen to their concerns and build trust.

(ii) dissatisfaction from prior participation

Individuals who have already been engaged in participatory processes in the past may have experienced discontent regarding both the processes and/or the results. This dissatisfaction often comes from unmet expectations, insufficient communication, or a lack of visible outcomes that reflect their contributions.

This barrier can be mitigated by:

- putting efforts to understand the specific reasons why previous processes were unsatisfactory (e.g., via informal discussions, questionnaires, etc),
- clearly communicate the purpose, objectives, potential outcomes and the long-term benefits of such processes,
- ensure transparency at all levels,
- provide continuous updates and solicit feedback (see Annex 4), allowing participants to witness tangible "quick wins" resulting from their participation. It is important to keep in mind that participatory design takes time, so frequent visible progress is necessary to maintain community trust and interest.

Additionally, Bastida et al. (2010) describe a set of measures in order to mitigate mistrust through participatory processes including: budget transparency (sharing project budget with participants at all stages); informed consent, always voluntary (in the context of GreenInCities an informed consent form has been created by FORTH in D1.4 – Data

Management Plan and in the case of children participating a special consent form will be used to ensure parental approval); equal voice and disclosure (participants should be given the same amount of time to share opinions and be acknowledged, and partners should acknowledge their own interests in the project). In the case that participants still feel mistrust towards the project and technical experts, it is important to re-apply mitigation measures. Reflecting on the process and how it may have created mistrust can help improve the engagement process and participatory activities to achieve project goals. Every participatory activity is an ongoing process, thus it should always be revised according to the local context.

In Arnstein's words (1969), true citizen participation equates to citizen power, achievable only through the redistribution of power to include those currently excluded. Arnstein introduced a metaphorical "ladder" of citizen engagement with eight "rungs," ranging from non-participation to full citizen power. The Inclusion Plan of the GreenInCities stresses the importance of avoiding the lower, illusory rungs and striving for the higher rungs that offer genuine power, ensuring equitable inclusion in decision-making and enabling social reforms that benefit all.

3.2 Co-Design and Implementation

D7.4 – Inclusion Plan considers the GreenInCities co-development methodologies and tools delineated in the GRA as essential components of the project's participatory activities, particularly when they require the engagement of local stakeholders. In line with this, this deliverable regards the Co-Analysis tools identified in the GRA (Participatory Analysis Systems and Citizen Science tools) as integral to these activities and accordingly proposes criteria and guidelines for their inclusivity in Tables 5 and 7. Table 5 provides guidelines for organising more inclusive participatory activities, supporting the inclusive co-analysis of local social and environmental conditions, while Table 7 outlines specific criteria for developing inclusive digital tools to be employed throughout the project's co-analysis and co-validation processes.

3.2.1 Step 1: How to organise inclusive participatory activities

As per the GRA, during the Co-Analysis and Co-Design phase all participants should engage in participatory activities that involve the co-identification and co-creation of intervention(s) using specified methodologies and tools. These activities can foster a collaborative environment where participants can actively engage in discussions, share their views, needs, and aspirations, and contribute to decision-making processes. By involving stakeholders in both Co-Analysis and Co-Design phases, the process benefits from diverse perspectives, leading to more comprehensive identification and prioritisation, ultimately resulting in more equitable, inclusive and sustainable

interventions that align with broader social and environmental values. This open engagement enhances the intervention's acceptance, mitigates the risks of gentrification, and aligns with EJ and degrowth principles by prioritising local needs over more speculative or profit-driven practices. The following table presents a series of guidelines for the implementation of more inclusive participatory activities.

Table 5: Guidelines to organise inclusive participatory activities *(to be adhered to also when conducting qualitative assessment through "Participatory Analysis Systems")*

BEFORE the participatory activity	Guidelines	
Accessibility (physical, social, financial, digital)	physical	• Select venues that are as much accessible as possible (equipped with ramps, elevators, restrooms, entrance, handrails etc.). • For participants with language barriers or hearing impairments arrange for language interpreters. • Prepare activity materials in appropriate formats to ensure accessibility for different literacy levels, language backgrounds and digital capabilities. • If the activity includes children, ensure appropriate facilities when possible, such as children's toilets.
	social	• Respect participants' vulnerabilities and seek to understand them without making assumptions or judgments. If necessary, organise a preparatory meeting, or arrange prior communication with specific groups (e.g., people with visual impairments) and ask them how they will feel more comfortable to participate in the upcoming activities. • Consider the diverse cultural norms of different social groups to ensure that everyone feels welcome and comfortable in the current setting. • Develop a supporting setting for caregiving participants, providing childcare and/or other necessary services to facilitate them to attend the participatory activities. • Schedule the activities on days/times that are convenient for most participants (see Annex 3). ◦ In the case of children participating, the activities will have to accommodate their school schedule. • Provide a diverse range of snacks and drinks to cater for all dietary needs (e.g., allergies, vegan/vegetarian options, etc.) so as to make everyone feel welcome and included.

	financial	Prefer venues that are accessible on foot or public transport. Otherwise, consider providing transport to and from the venues and/or cover travel costs.
	digital	- Prepare materials in various formats (digital and hardcopies) to include different digital literacy capabilities. - In the case of children participating, ensure that materials are adapted accordingly.
DURING the participatory activity	Guidelines	
Accessibility (physical, social, financial, digital)	physical	Ensure all activities are completely accessible. For instance, when organising a walk, it is essential to consider the varying physical abilities of participants, including differences in walking/wheeling speed, endurance, and/or capacity to navigate physical obstacles (see Annex 3).
	social	Confront biases and stereotypes when facilitating activities (e.g., by using inclusive language, see Annex 1) and encourage respectful communication among participants.
	financial	Ensure that the activity is free. Covering associated costs, such as materials, refreshments, or access to technology, can remove financial barriers and make the activity more inclusive.
	digital	Explain digital tools to participants (including children participants) who may not be familiar with how to use them. If necessary, organise training workshops, or tutorials for individuals unfamiliar with digital environments (such as applications, digital tools, and internet navigation) to facilitate their participation, especially for the Citizen Science tools (Co-Analysis phase).
Comfort and convenience		Consider starting your participatory activities with “ice breaking” activities¹² to support the creation of a friendly environment and help everyone feel comfortable.

¹² An “icebreaker” is an activity designed to help participants to know each other and ease into conversation or group interactions. It is usually used at the beginning of activities to reduce tension, and encourage a more comfortable and open atmosphere. “Icebreakers” can be games, questions, or short physical activities that promote interaction and build trust among participants.

	○ In the case of children participating, the “ice breaking” activities should be creative, dynamic, playful and physical. ● Set clear objectives and expectations. By clearly stating the purpose of each activity, participants will feel more comfortable about what to expect and will feel valued. ● Use inclusive, clear and simple language (see Annex 1) - in different formats if needed (oral, written, sign language, etc.) so that everyone understands and participates equally. ○ In the case of children participating, adapt the language to be simple and age-appropriate to ensure comprehension. ● Encourage engagement from all participants, ensuring that everyone feels comfortable to share their perspectives. In particular, try to encourage those belonging to the more vulnerable social groups that might not have previous experience in such activities. ○ In the case of children participating, consider adapting the tools employed to create a more playful and engaging atmosphere. For instance, incorporating board games can enhance engagement and ensure their attention in the activities while fostering a fun and interactive environment. ● Establish a “safe space” for the activities where all opinions are respected and valued. If necessary, adapt the processes so that everyone feels comfortable participating (e.g., women -or another particular social group- may feel more comfortable sharing their perspectives in a non-mixed setting, so in this case it is recommended to plan women-only sessions to get their authentic views). ○ In the case of children participating, it is especially important to maintain a non-mixed environment for them to feel more safe to express their views.
AFTER the participatory activity	Guidelines

Trust and long term engagement	• Keep participants informed about the progress of the process, potential challenges and delays (transparency). • Demonstrate results ("quick wins") to sustain participants' confidence in the process. This is particularly crucial for overcoming mistrust and disinterest (see Section 3.1.3). ◦ In the case of children participating, it is essential to keep them informed about the project's progress and potential "quick wins" through school communication channels to foster their trust in the process.
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3.2.2 Step 2: Prioritising and planning of actions

According to the GRA, at this stage, technical experts will refine and prioritise the draft plans generated through the co-design participatory activities, initially employing "Decision Making Support" tools. In line with the project's valuable tools, this process could involve narrowing down a broader set of planning actions, informed by participant input, to a prioritised list, incorporating local social and environmental assessments from the Co-Analysis phase, GreenInCities objectives, and possible "quick wins" that offer immediate, visible improvements to enhance participant trust and engagement. The refined plans will then be developed and tested using "Digital Twins and Simulators" leading to a consolidated version. Partners are encouraged to share these plans with participants and seek their feedback (see Annex 4) in order to ensure transparency in the process. This **"co-prioritisation"** approach will ensure that participants' perspectives are considered and their needs addressed, thereby maximising the impact on the local communities.

To effectively incorporate participant feedback and ensure sustainable, equitable, and resilient re-greening interventions, this section will outline essential criteria for all GreenInCities partners. These criteria are guided by principles for mainstreaming gender perspective and addressing the needs of more vulnerable groups in the design process, with a focus on solutions that enhance inclusion, sense of comfort and safety in green public spaces. Furthermore, they align with key NbS values, such as environmental stewardship, climate impact mitigation, and ecosystem sustainability (see Section 2.2.2). All of these criteria seek to promote wayfinding—the way people orient themselves and navigate space.¹³

¹³ Inclusive wayfinding includes pre-visit information, signage and architectural, auditory and visual cues that help people identify their destinations and ensure feelings of safety and security.

It is important to emphasise that these criteria are indicative, and GreenInCities partners are encouraged to reflect on them and adapt the tools to their specific local contexts and challenges. The criteria within Table 6 are largely influenced by the criteria used in D2.1 – Inclusion Plan for the Elaborator project (URBANA, 2024a).

Table 6: Criteria for more inclusive re-greening intervention(s)

Criteria	Application
Safety & Security (physical, psychological)	● Physical ○ Provide ramps, good quality pavements, handrails where appropriate, etc., in order to guarantee physical safety for all. ○ Reduce car speeds around urban green spaces to improve safety conditions (reduce possibility of car-pedestrian collisions). ○ Remove physical barriers that may harm non-human species (esp. animals). ○ In cases where animals may be adversely affected by human behaviour or interventions, consider creating separate zones for non-humans and humans (e.g., endangered species or those in their breeding season may require protected areas that are safely distanced from human activity). ○ Include the needs of target non-human species to increase biodiversity, wellbeing, and ability to thrive (e.g., habitat creation, lifecycle considerations, awareness raising). ● Psychological (sense of safety) ○ Visibility (<i>"to see and to be seen"</i>) ■ Provide appropriate lighting to avoid dark spots, ensuring excessive vegetation is not blocking it. Avoid the existence/creation of hidden corners (e.g., created by high walls and fences, excessive vegetation, underpasses and overpasses, etc.). ■ Promote unobstructed views through all sections/parts/levels etc., of the space. ○ Hearability (<i>"to hear and to be heard"</i>) ■ Ensure good hearability by considering noise levels in urban green spaces nearby noisy roads/urban areas, as these can reduce hearability and negatively impact the psychological sense of safety. ○ Signage ■ Provide inclusive signage in various formats (e.g., tactile, audible, visual, etc.) to ensure that all individuals, including those with different abilities,

	can navigate the space and stay aware of their surroundings. ■ Ensure signage uses inclusive fonts like Arial, with a clear structure and sufficient contrast levels between background and text (e.g., dark coloured text on a light background). Avoid green and red/pink, as these colours are difficult for those who have colour vision deficiencies (British Dyslexia Association, n.d.).
Accessibility	● Physical ○ Remove physical barriers to entry, exit, or throughout the urban green space to ensure accessibility for all. ○ Ensure the needs of more vulnerable persons are met regarding autonomous mobility, especially at road crossings (e.g., visually impaired people may benefit from audio beacons at crossings). ○ Provide physical signage in multiple languages depending on the neighbourhood, with a consistent design (appropriate fonts, colours etc., for people with visual or physical impairments). Where possible, include Braille or audio descriptions on signage. ○ Ensure access to urban green spaces during periods of extreme heat. ○ Remove or adjust physical barriers existing for non-humans and their access to habitats or shelters (e.g., fences around green areas or water features). ● Social ○ Ensure that urban green spaces are inclusive and welcoming to diverse social groups. In some cases, these spaces, such as public squares or parks, may become predominantly utilised by specific groups (often young men) which can create environments where others—particularly women and/or minority groups—may feel discomfort or exclusion, leading to their avoidance of these areas. This issue can be mitigated by incorporating a variety of functions and activities within the space that appeal to and attract a broader range of social groups. ● Financial ○ Ensure that urban green spaces are accessible to all income levels by eliminating entry fees. ○ If possible ensure that urban green spaces are accessible on foot or via public transportation, with well-connected routes and multiple transport options. ● Digital

	○ Provide information on accessibility and facilities in and around the urban green space, both digitally (on site and online) and physically. Having all the necessary information available in advance makes it easier for people who may need to pre-plan their visit (e.g., wheelchair users, caregivers, etc.). ○ Ensure an accessible interface design including (Henry, 2024): ■ Keyboard accessibility ■ Text alternatives for non-text content ■ Readable and adjustable text ■ Colour contrast and colour independence ■ Responsive and flexible design ■ Accessible forms ■ Navigating and structure ■ Accessible multimedia content
Vitality	● Encourage the use of the space by different social groups throughout the day (and even during night times) by providing the appropriate infrastructure, mixed uses and programming of the space (e.g., spaces for children to play, spaces for the youth to hang out, several seating areas, etc.). The vitality of the space (having people of diverse social groups using the space throughout the day) increases the sense of safety by providing informal community-based surveillance.
Equipment/ Urban infrastructure	● Provide urban infrastructure that will accommodate all the diverse needs of users of the space and facilitate care work (e.g., benches/seating amenities on properly shaded areas, public restrooms, taps with drinking water, child play elements, free wifi, information/help kiosks etc.). ● Ensure adequate shade infrastructure to reduce temperatures within the park and enhance the autonomous mobility of older and other people who need to rest often (e.g., pregnant women/persons). ● Consider the use of locally sourced materials, along with attention to maintenance practices and equipment life cycles, to ensure optimal long-term preservation and sustainability of the space.
Inclusive representations	● Provide inclusive signage and other public space representations (e.g., street or green space name, public art, statues and symbols that relate to representations of a diversity of people in the neighbourhood or city). ● Add signage identifying non-humans who contribute to the natural ecosystem of the space.

3.2.3 Step 3: Co-validation

The co-validation process is essential to ensure that the consolidated version of the plan(s) align with the needs and aspirations of participants. According to the GRA, in GreenInCities this will be facilitated through the use of "Project Visualization and Validation" tools. Engaging participants at this stage is crucial for fostering transparency and accountability in the project. As most tools used in this process will involve interactive digital models and Augmented Reality (AR) applications, the following criteria are provided to help partners ensure inclusivity throughout the process.

Table 7: Criteria for an inclusive co-validation process *(also applicable when using Citizen Science tools)*

Criteria	Organise inclusive co-validation processes
Gender equality	The tools used should incorporate a gendered perspective, within the project's 3D model data.
Simple presentations	When/If organising public presentations, use clear, straightforward language to ensure the process is easily understood by all participants. Tailor the presentation style to the audience, adjusting technical language to match their level of understanding.
Accessible formats	When using AR applications and digital models, ensure that the capacities of all participants, especially the more vulnerable ones are considered.
Simple navigation	Simplify navigation and instructions. Use clear, simple language and navigation to make tools easier to use for all, especially the more vulnerable people.
Encouragement of Feedback	Actively seek feedback (see Annex 4), fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts on the tools. Ensure that the tools are continually refined and improved.
Availability of Experts and Technicians	Ensure that experts/technicians are available to answer questions, clarify doubts, and provide additional explanations as needed. Organise training workshops and tutorials to help them effectively use these tools.
When using these tools remember that: 1. Older people, children, and individuals with lower educational attainment or limited digital skills might find it challenging to use an application that relies only/mainly on text-based navigation. 2. People with cognitive disabilities may struggle with complex interfaces. 3. People with motor impairments might find it difficult to interact with small touch targets or perform precise gestures.	

4. Individuals with visual impairments are often excluded from systems that lack voice functionality.
5. Deaf or hard of hearing people may also face challenges if an application relies heavily on audio cues without providing visual alternatives.

3.2.4 Step 4: Implementation phase (construction phase)

The implementation (construction) phase must consider that local residents will continue to live in the surrounding area during the construction period, and their daily lives should be minimally disrupted. Access to essential services and spaces must be ensured. The following table outlines key guidelines that cities should adhere to during this phase.

Table 8: Guidelines for an inclusive implementation phase (construction phase)

Organise inclusive implementation phase (construction phase)

- Ensure that the main pathways to navigate the neighbourhood remain clear and accessible for everyone, including older people, persons with disabilities and children.
- If necessary, implement temporary infrastructure, such as ramps and alternative routes, to maintain ease of movement and access to essential services.
- If necessary, provide clear signage indicating alternative routes and information about ongoing construction work or disruptions.
- Foster regular communication with local communities, offering timely updates on construction activities and potential disruptions.
- Ensure safety and security at construction sites.
 - Construction sites should be open and visible, avoiding tall fences or hidden corners that could create a sense of insecurity.
 - Construction sites must be properly secured to prevent accidents, including exposure to dangerous materials.

3.3 Co-Monitoring and Co-Evaluation

The Co-Monitoring phase will be deployed with technical partners, decision makers, local authorities and the local communities. In this phase, all the relevant stakeholders will assess the implementation of the project so far. Besides the quantitative data that will be collected through Local diagnostic systems and Citizen Science tools, it is essential to also highlight the significance of qualitative data in measuring the impact of the interventions on the daily lives of the communities, a consideration equally relevant to the co-evaluation process. Qualitative methods can provide a deeper understanding of human needs, social contexts and dynamics by capturing the diverse perspectives of the local community that quantitative findings might overlook. Raising the importance of

qualitative data can provide valuable insights for designing more equitable and inclusive spaces.

3.3.1 Co-evaluation indicators for inclusion

Given the overall aim of the GreenInCities project, which is to build a new collaborative approach for planning urban climate regeneration in deprived areas through the development and testing of innovative tools for people, technicians and decision makers, a selection of indicators for co-evaluation has been made to ensure inclusion during all phases of the project. The following co-evaluation indicators are largely influenced by the EU Horizon project No 101103772 ELABORATOR, particularly its deliverable D2.1 – Inclusion Plan, which provided self-evaluation indicators for inclusion that have been adapted to meet the specific objectives of the GreenInCities project (URBANA, 2024a).

The **indicators** as well as the **percentages of thresholds** proposed in this section are **indicative** and will be further refined during internal training sessions that will be organised by URBANA. Especially the thresholds should be adapted to the local context and priorities set during the co-prioritisation phase. The training sessions will be scheduled to accommodate the specific needs of each technical partner and city, with the timing tailored to their individual requirements. This approach aims to collaboratively identify the most contextually appropriate co-evaluation indicators for each city.

The following tables present both qualitative and quantitative indicators to assess GreenInCities' participatory activities (see Table 8) and contribute to the overall impact of the re-greening intervention(s) (see Table 9). This approach aims to ensure that the intervention(s) are effective, sustainable, inclusive, and beneficial to the well-being of both human and non-human stakeholders. The tables are organised into two columns where the first, "How to collect," outlines materials, tools, and methods (e.g., participant lists) that partners can use for data collection. In this step it is important to **pay particular attention to responses by participants from more vulnerable groups**. The second, "Threshold," specifies the minimum value an indicator must meet or exceed for the intervention to be considered inclusive.

Table 9: Co-evaluation indicators for **participatory activities**

INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION

Indicator no.1 (quantitative):

High attendance of participants from more vulnerable groups

e.g., children, youth, older people, people with disabilities, women, queer persons, migrants / refugees / ethnic minorities, people experiencing homelessness, lower income people, persons with lower educational attainment and/or limited digital skills, non-humans (flora and fauna) (see Section 2.1.1)

How to collect	Threshold
Participant lists (see Annex 2). During participatory activities, sensitive information (e.g., socio-economic status, gender/sexual identities, etc.) of participants may be brought up. In this case, ensure the privacy of the participant is maintained (see Section 6, pg. 37-39, of D1.7 - Values and Ethics Handbook).	> 50% of participants belong to vulnerable social groups (see Section 2.1.1).
Indicator no.2 (quantitative): High attendance of women and queer persons From an intersectional gender perspective, it is important to highlight additional layers of marginalisation faced specifically by women and queer people. Emphasise the inclusion of women and queer people with disabilities, who are older, from lower income households, who have migrant or ethnic backgrounds, and other intersecting identities which may further marginalise women and queer people (see Section 2.1.1)	
How to collect	Threshold
Participant lists (see Annex 2).	> 50% of participants identify as women or queer persons.
Indicator no.3 (qualitative): Quality of cooperation among stakeholders Quality of cooperation among stakeholders during participatory activities.	
How to collect	Threshold
- Participant surveys, rating the perception of cooperation among stakeholders on a 5-point scale, - Semi-structured interviews.	> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding the quality of cooperation.
Indicator no.4 (qualitative): (Sense of) Comfort and inclusivity during the activities Comfort and inclusivity during the activities based on participants' perception.	
How to collect	Threshold
- Participant surveys rating the sense of comfort and inclusivity they felt during the participatory activities on a 5-point scale, - Semi-structured interviews.	> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding the sense of comfort and inclusivity of the participation activities.
Indicator no.5 (qualitative): (Sense of) Digital accessibility during the activities Digital accessibility means ensuring that digital content, tools, and technologies are easily usable by everyone and that they do not exclude specific social groups, such as older adults, people with disabilities, children, or people with migrant backgrounds.	

How to collect	Threshold
- Participant surveys rating the level of comfort using digital tools on a 5-point scale, - Semi-structured interviews.	> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding their comfort using the digital tools.
SOCIETAL READINESS LEVEL (SRL) - TO BE MEASURED BEFORE & AFTER THE INTERVENTION	
Indicator no.6 (qualitative): Perceived control and influence over decision-making This indicator refers to participants' sense of their ability to affect or participate in decisions that impact them. It includes both their feeling of having authority or autonomy and their belief in their ability to contribute in the decision-making process. This perception can significantly influence engagement, satisfaction, and overall sense of agency. Additionally, this indicator focuses on Challenge 1 of the GRA regarding the improvement of societal readiness levels (SRL), which can empower communities in decision-making and their feelings of ownership towards the intervention.	
How to collect	Threshold
- Participant surveys rating perceived control and influence over decision-making on a 5-point scale, - Semi-structured interviews.	> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding their perceived control and influence over decision-making compared to the initial measurement.

Table 10: Co-evaluation indicators related to the **re-greening intervention(s)**

ACCEPTANCE / ENJOYMENT - TO BE MEASURED BEFORE & AFTER THE INTERVENTION	
Indicator no.1 (quantitative, qualitative): Community satisfaction with the re-greening intervention This indicator refers to the general satisfaction of the community members with the outcomes of the intervention. High satisfaction indicates that the intervention is well-received, encourages continued community engagement, and helps ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of future re-greening efforts.	
How to collect	Threshold
<u>Quantitative:</u> - Collect responses from community members quantifying how many community members respond positively regarding the space. <u>Qualitative:</u> - Community surveys rating satisfaction with the intervention on a 5-point scale, - Semi-structured interviews.	<u>Quantitative:</u> > 30% of community members respond positively compared to the initial measurement. <u>Qualitative:</u> > 50% of community members respond 4+ regarding their satisfaction with the re-greening intervention compared to the initial measurement.

Indicator no.2 (*qualitative*):

Perception level of safety and security

This indicator refers to how safe and secure people feel when using the specific urban green space. The perception of safety is affected by both the technical/design characteristics of the space and its social uses (see Table 6). Ensuring a high perception of safety and security, especially for groups considered vulnerable is essential for the long-term success and inclusion of the intervention.

How to collect

- Community surveys rating the perception of safety and security on a 5-point scale,
- Semi-structured interviews.

Threshold

> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding the perceived level of safety and security compared to the initial measurement.

Indicator no.3 (*qualitative*):

Perception level of physical accessibility

This indicator refers to how easily people of all abilities can access and navigate the space. If the space is perceived as physically accessible, more people will feel encouraged to use it.

How to collect

- Community surveys rating the perception of physical accessibility on a 5-point scale,
- Semi-structured interviews.

Threshold

> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding the level of physical accessibility compared to the initial measurement.

Indicator no.4 (*quantitative, qualitative*):

Level of vitality

This indicator refers to the continuous presence of individuals from diverse social groups (e.g., children, older people, youth, of all genders etc) in a public space with concurrent activities taking place throughout the day and even at night. This is supported by appropriate infrastructure, mixed-use development and well-planned programming of the space (see Table 6). Vitality plays a crucial role in enhancing feelings of safety, as it encourages informal, community-based surveillance of a space.

How to collect

Quantitative:

- Observations from technical partners on *who* is using the space, *for what purpose (uses of the space)* and *for how long*.

Qualitative:

- Observations from technical partners on the *diversity* of the people/users of the space.

Threshold

Quantitative:

> 20% increase in the number of people visiting the specific urban green space compared to the initial measurement.
> 20% increase in time spent at the urban green space compared to the initial measurement.
> 20% increase in the variety of observed uses in the urban green space compared to the initial measurement.

Qualitative:

> 15% increase in diversity (e.g., age, gender, ethnic background, socio-economic status, etc.) of people visiting the specific urban green space compared to the initial measurement.

Indicator no.5 (*quantitative, qualitative*):

Care work activities being performed

This indicator highlights the intervention's focus on caregiving activities, emphasising the support provided to caregivers, especially women, within the intervention space. This encompasses facilitating all aspects of care work, including childcare activities and accessibility for older individuals and others.

How to collect

Threshold

Quantitative:

- Observations from technical partners quantifying the number of community members (especially women) conducting care work activities in the space.

Quantitative:

> 20% increase in community members conducting care work activities compared to the initial measurement.

Qualitative:

- Community surveys rating how comfortable they feel conducting care work activities on a 5-point scale,
- Semi-structured interviews.

Qualitative:

> 50% of community members respond 4+ regarding the comfort they feel in conducting care work activities compared to the initial measurement.

Indicator no.6 (*quantitative, qualitative*): (MEASURED ONLY AFTER THE INTERVENTION)

Level of transparency, trust, liability, and ownership

This indicator refers to how openly and honestly information is shared, how accountable participants and organisers are for their actions, and the degree of confidence built between all participants involved. It also entails feelings of personal investment and responsibility that local community members have towards the intervention.

How to collect

Threshold

Quantitative:

- Key documents (e.g., progress reports, etc.) and/or progress reports made public.
- Individuals who downloaded the documents and/or attended the informational sessions regarding the progress of the intervention.

Quantitative:

- X documents made public,
- X downloads/access to public, documents,
- X participants on information sessions about the progress of the intervention.

Qualitative:

- Community surveys rating the transparency, trust, liability and ownership of the intervention on a 5-point scale,
- Semi-structured interviews.

Qualitative:

> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding the level of transparency, trust, liability and ownership of the intervention.

POSITIVE IMPACT ON NON-HUMANS (FLORA AND FAUNA) - TO BE MEASURED BEFORE & AFTER THE INTERVENTION

Indicator no.7 (*qualitative*):

Awareness of non-humans in the intervention area

This indicator refers to how well-informed people are about the various non-human species

and their roles within the local ecosystem of the intervention area. Increased awareness enhances the community's appreciation of non-humans and their complexity and value and ensures the space is managed in ways that promote a sustainable coexistence between people and nature.

How to collect

- Community member surveys rating the awareness of non-humans in the intervention area on a 5-point scale,
- Semi-structured interviews.

Threshold

> 50% of participants respond 4+ regarding their level of awareness of non-humans in the intervention area compared to the initial measurement.

**Indicator no.8 (quantitative, qualitative):
Improved coexistence with humans**

This indicator refers to enhancing the quality of life for both non-humans and people by creating environments where they can thrive together safely and comfortably, ensuring that the urban green space supports and increases biodiversity and greenery.

How to collect

Quantitative:

- Observations from technical partners (and/or local experts) to note changes in the population of various non-humans (see Section 2.1.1).

Qualitative:

- Community member surveys rating the quality of coexistence with non-humans on a 5-point scale,
- Semi-structured interviews.

It is recommended to consult local experts (see Table 3) to understand how to collect data on improved living conditions and coexistence with humans for non-humans.

Threshold

Quantitative:

> % increase in the number of non-humans in the urban green space.

Qualitative:

> 50% of community members respond 4+ regarding the quality of coexistence with non-humans compared to the initial measurement.

It is recommended to consult local experts (see Table 3) to set thresholds for the improvement or restoration of habitats.

3.3.2 Practical support for cities to implement the inclusion criteria and guidelines of the Inclusion Plan

In accordance with the GRA (Task 7.4), URBANA will organise **internal training sessions** with each city to promote a shared understanding of inclusivity and gender perspectives in urban planning, highlighting their importance for social sustainability and long-term benefits. Prior to these sessions, URBANA will engage in communications and conduct a comprehensive needs assessment for each city to tailor the training and schedule the sessions according to their needs and timing requirements. In addition to what is outlined in the GRA, and to enhance the effective adaptation and implementation of the

Inclusion Plan's criteria and guidelines within each city's context, URBANA can collaborate with each participating city to:

- introduce and elucidate the **indicative co-evaluation indicators** proposed in the Inclusion Plan (see 3.3.1) during these sessions, and collaborate with each city individually to identify the indicators that best align with their specific local context;
- assist the cities in developing **evaluation forms** based on the selected indicators, which can be distributed to participants or community members following the participatory activities (see Annex 4) and intervention(s). This process, depending on the specific indicator (e.g., evaluating social accessibility with community members before and after interventions), will enable the identification of challenges and difficulties within each city and could contribute to the evaluation guide of D7.1 and/or the policy-support system for ex-post evaluation of D7.2.;
- **compile interim reports** for each city based on their respective activities, that could contribute to the overall evaluation of the impact of the project. This aligns with tasks T7.1, and T7.2 and its deliverables, D7.1 – Ex ante & Monitoring NBS Policy Support System and D7.2 – Ex post NbS Policy Support System, by providing valuable quantitative and qualitative information (e.g., data about citizens satisfaction before and after the implementation) obtained from monitoring the deployment and operation of the re-greening intervention(s).

4. Dissemination & Communication

The dissemination and communication process that occurs throughout the duration of the project and continues upon its completion is crucial for ensuring that all relevant stakeholders inputs and outcomes are widely shared within the local community at every stage of the project. These activities must effectively reach diverse local stakeholders without alienating their social and cultural contexts and should employ simple, inclusive language to make the project's process and outcomes accessible to all. By prioritising accessibility, transparency, and engagement, dissemination and communication efforts can reinforce the inclusive values of the intervention, ensuring that all stakeholders and community members feel informed, valued, and empowered to participate in future urban development processes.

The following Table has been developed in collaboration with the dissemination partners of GreenInCities, Ideas For Change (IFC), who are the Work Package Leader (WPL) of WP8: Outreach, Dissemination and Exploitation and are responsible for D8.1 – Dissemination and Communication and D8.2 – Dissemination and Communication Impact Report deliverables. The following Table aims to provide guidelines for an effective and inclusive dissemination and communication strategy.

Table 11: Guidelines for inclusive dissemination and communication

Guidelines for a more inclusive dissemination and communication of research outputs

Translate communication and dissemination materials and presentations into multiple languages, based on the local context.

People who use urban green spaces are not always familiar with local languages (e.g., students from abroad, migrants or tourists). Using multilingual communication materials targeted at local diverse profiles is a best practice that helps meet the needs of a broader audience.

Translate learnings and findings into multiple languages.

People who can learn from the project insights are not necessarily fluent in English. They can be researchers, practitioners and/or students from abroad. Using multilingual communication and applying tools that allow instant translation for materials is a best practice that helps meet a global and diverse audience.

Ensure all communication and dissemination materials are accessible to individuals and specially those with disabilities.

Whenever possible, offer alternative formats for visual content such as ALT text, accessible fonts and colours, and websites compatible with screen readers. Many organisations for people with disabilities offer training to those interested in using alternative content formats in their communication channels. Whenever possible, take these trainings into consideration, and share the outcomes as guidelines with the rest of the consortium.

Ensure that all publications and research outcomes are reviewed for clarity, avoiding unnecessarily complex language. When feasible, request the creation of easy-to-read versions of documents to enhance accessibility and understanding for a broader audience.

Subtitles and Transcripts: For video or audio-based materials, ensure that subtitles and transcript plug-ins are provided. These can benefit individuals with hearing impairments and non-native language speakers.

Open Access Publications: partners must make sure to publish research outputs in open-access formats whenever possible. This helps ensure that all individuals, regardless of institutional affiliation or socio-economic status, can access the project's research and findings.

Prioritise publishing in journals or platforms that support open access or provide open access repositories for storing research. Ensure datasets and research tools are openly accessible, while ensuring compliance with ethical guidelines, including the anonymisation or pseudonymisation of sensitive data.

Create open feedback channels that monitor the impact of the dissemination activities on different social groups (e.g., women, minorities, persons with disabilities). This will help in adjusting strategies to improve reach and inclusivity throughout the project lifecycle.

Engage stakeholders directly in the evaluation process. This could involve setting up focus groups or participatory workshops, online surveys, forums, suggestion boxes at events, or comment sections on websites and social media platforms to assess the success of inclusive dissemination efforts and gather new ideas for improvement.

Use inclusive language, broader visual representation and highlight gender equity in "Urban Sustainability Stories" (presented in the project's social media).

All communication materials—whether reports, articles, newsletters, or social media posts—should be written in gender-inclusive language. This prevents the reinforcement of stereotypes and ensures that both women and men feel addressed.

Make sure that persons of all genders are equally represented in visual content such as photos, illustrations, and videos. This not only reflects gender diversity but also sends a message that the project values gender equality in urban sustainability.

Use dissemination channels such as the project website, social media, and newsletters to highlight stories of women (and minority genders) who are playing key roles in urban sustainability. By showcasing women as leaders, innovators, and participants in these efforts, the project can challenge traditional gender roles and inspire more women to engage in sustainability initiatives.

Free, Open, Inclusive and Community-focused Events

Organise community-focused events to present the final outputs of the project. These events should always be free, open to anyone interested, and should be accessible to a broad

audience, including people with disabilities, low-income residents, migrants, and non-native speakers. Whenever possible, these events can be online streamed to ensure a wider and diverse reach. Ensure that the presentations cater to diverse needs by including interpreters, offering translation tools whenever is possible, and ensuring physical accessibility.

Events should strive for gender balance among speakers, engaging women, men and minority genders from diverse backgrounds, challenging gender stereotypes, encouraging female participation in traditionally male-dominated fields.

Promote hosting mobile or pop-up exhibitions in public spaces such as parks, libraries, or community centres to showcase the final outputs. These exhibitions could feature interactive displays, videos, and easy-to-read panels summarising the project's findings and recommendations.

Incorporate storytelling methods that highlight personal stories from diverse groups impacted by the project's outcomes. This could include video documentaries, photo essays, or testimonials shared via social media, the project's website, or local media.

Encourage communities to contribute their own media (photos, videos, social media posts) that reflect how the project's findings or interventions have impacted their lives. This content can be integrated into the final dissemination phase to reflect the diverse experiences of the project's stakeholders.

Conclusions

Current re-greening and renaturing processes should be rethought

Through an extensive theoretical analysis of the terms “vulnerable groups” and “deprived areas”, Section 2 of this deliverable has shown that the (re)greening and renaturing planning processes when implemented without considering community needs, views and perspectives can lead to the social and spatial exclusion of the more vulnerable social groups. Therefore, D7.4 – Inclusion Plan in line with Objective 1 of the GRA highlights the importance of equal participation of all relevant stakeholders and provides the tools (inclusive criteria and guidelines) to enrich participatory activities for co-creation, implementation and co-monitoring of the (re)greening interventions. This ensures that these processes can lead to the empowerment of all participants, with a specific focus on those considered more vulnerable, and enhance their presence in city-making processes. Following Challenge 2 of the GRA, this deliverable also acknowledges the importance of including non-human life, emphasising the interdependence of our ecosystems which sustain life for both humans and non-humans and urging to extend beyond traditional planning practices that often are more human-centred.

A shift towards more inclusive re-greening processes is imperative

By looking at the principles of ethics of care, degrowth, and ecofeminist, D7.4 – Inclusion Plan in line with Objective 2 of the GRA, proposes the co-creation of more inclusive, equitable and sustainable urban green spaces that foster the well-being of all inhabitants, both human and non-human, while integrating NEB and NbS principles.

The inclusion of all stakeholders, especially of those considered more vulnerable, must be guaranteed at all phases of the GreenInCities project and should also be reflected in the Dissemination and Communication activities following the project's completion.

Sections 3 and 4 of this deliverable provide specific criteria and guidelines to guarantee inclusion, gender equality, social and environmental sustainability, and long-term benefits across all phases of the GreenInCities project. Additionally, they propose inclusive criteria for dissemination and communication activities, highlighting the importance of sharing the project's outcomes with the local community in the most inclusive manner possible. Moreover, D7.4 – Inclusion Plan introduces indicative co-evaluation indicators and proposes practical approaches to support each city in effectively implementing the Inclusion Plan's criteria and guidelines within their local context, ultimately contributing to the overall evaluation of the impact of their re-greening interventions.

Towards green spaces of care

In conclusion, the primary aim of D7.4 – Inclusion Plan is to suggest a framework for the co-creation of inclusive green spaces of care, where both human and non-human life can thrive together in harmony. By promoting everyday activities that support well-being and fostering collaboration, the plan ensures diverse perspectives are integrated. It emphasises the interdependence between people and nature, promoting spaces that support biodiversity, sustainable practices, and equitable participation, ultimately fostering a balanced and thriving coexistence for all beings.

Annex

Annex 1

Link to: [D2.1 - Inclusion Plan of the ELABORATOR project \(No 101103772\), Task Leader URBANA, Table of Inclusive Language \(URBANA, 2024a\).](#)

The following annex forms (Annex 2, Annex 3, Annex 4) are indicative, and it is recommended to revise them in accordance to the local context of each city. The format to collect information regarding participants or feedback on activities can vary and therefore these forms should be used as a guide on which categories to include. In accordance with Section 2 of GreenInCities D1.7 – Values and Ethics Handbook, it is important to anonymise or pseudonymise sensitive information, and minimise the information collected to maintain participants' privacy.

Annex 2

Indicative Participant List

Full Name:	According to the D1.7 - Values and Ethics Handbook (see Section 2.5.1, pg. 22-23) these data should either be anonymized or pseudonymized to protect privacy of the participants.
Gender:	• Woman • Man • Non-binary • Prefer not to say
Age:	• < 18* • 18-24 • 25-34 • 35-44 • 45-54 • 55-64 • > 65 *According to D1.7 – Values and Ethics Handbook (see Section 2.4.1 and Table 1) when engaging children and youth under 18 years old you must use specific forms to receive permission from parents for their inclusion in participatory activities. An informed consent form has been created by FORTH in D1.4 – Data Management Plan.

Contact Information [This information will be used to contact you about event updates]:	Email: _____ Phone number [optional]: _____ <i>According to the D1.7 – Values and Ethics Handbook (see Section 2.5.1, pg. 22-23) these data should either be anonymized or pseudonymized to protect privacy of the participants.</i>
Roles or characteristics that best describe you at this moment (e.g., student, teacher, parent, etc.):	Please specify: _____
Are you currently a caregiver for an older adult or a child? If so, please specify:	Yes / No If yes, please specify: _____
What ethnicity do you identify with:	• Self-describe: _____ • Prefer not to say
What is your connection to the intervention area?	• I live in this area • I work in the area • Other (please specify): _____
The participatory activities will be covered photographically. Do you consent to be featured in the photos?	• Yes • No <i>Please use the “Informed Consent Form for Video/Photo Shooting” created by FORTH in D1.4 – Data Management Plan.</i>
Is there anything else you would like to share with us?	Please specify: _____

Annex 3

Indicative Participant Preference Form

This form can be used before participation activities begin to understand what needs to be considered regarding each participants' ability to fully engage with the upcoming activities.

Questions: Preferred time/day slots: Option 1:
--

Annex 4

Indicative Participant Evaluation Form (Post-Activity)

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was structured?

Yes / No

If yes, please specify: _____

Is there anything more you would like to share about your experience with the activity?

Yes / No

If yes, please specify: _____

Thank you for your feedback!!

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Tables and Figures

Table 1: Abbreviations and acronyms

Table 2: How to conduct a collaborative stakeholder mapping

Table 3: Guidelines to guarantee inclusion in a stakeholder mapping process

Table 4: How to effectively reach out

Table 5: Guidelines to organise inclusive participatory activities (to be adhered to also when conducting qualitative assessment through "Participatory Analysis Systems")

Table 6: Criteria for inclusive re-greening interventions

Table 7: Criteria for an inclusive co-validation process (also applicable when using Citizen Science tools)

Table 8: Guidelines for an inclusive implementation phase (construction phase)

Table 9: Co-evaluation indicators for participatory activities

Table 10: Self-evaluation indicators related to the re-greening intervention(s)

Table 11: Guidelines for inclusive dissemination and communication

Figure 1: Vulnerability is exacerbated when living in a deprived area

Figure 2: Phase 3 - Evaluating stakeholders' interactions and dynamics (indicative figure showing the inter-dynamics among different stakeholders)