



Harnessing territorial CSR
to respond to urban needs

**Unlocking
opportunities,**



**improving
cities**



Integrated Action Plan

SOFIA MUNICIPALITY



JUNE 2022

SOFIA - GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE CITY. YOU ARE SOFIA.



List of Abbreviations

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
GDP	Gross domestic product
ULG	URBACT Local Group
ESG	Environmental, social and corporate governance
IAP	Integrated Action Plan
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility



INTRODUCTION

Sofia Municipality has been engaged in an international project called "Comprehensive municipal strategies to foster and stimulate corporate responsibility in urban areas" (CITIES4CSR). The project is funded under a European programme aimed at promoting sustainable integrated urban development in cities across Europe - "URBACT III". The URBACT III network is composed of 10 European cities including Milan (lead partner), Sofia, Vratsa, Kekava, Rijeka, Guimaraes, Molina de Segura, Budajors, Bratislava and Nantes.

The CITIES4CSR project aims to strengthen the partnership between municipalities, businesses and civil society to promote sustainable urban development and implement best practices for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The project is in line with the European CSR strategy, which aims to reinforce the positive impact of social corporate responsibility and the strategic role of public administration in supporting and encouraging local businesses to operate responsibly with a positive impact at local level.

A so-called URBACT Local Group was established at the beginning of the project in 2019. The Local Group has sought to increase collaboration between Sofia Municipality, local businesses and civil society to promote sustainable, inclusive and innovative urban change. The local group includes representatives from different areas of the urban business environment such as: experts, NGOs, private sector, business community, employers, associations, as well as knowledge and finance institutions.

The interactive meetings between the Sofia Municipality and the local group have helped foster dialogue between the local authorities and the private sector and NGOs, which in turn has led to the elaboration of the following "Integrated Action Plan to Support CSR" (IAP) in Sofia. The aim of the action plan is to help increase the role and added value of CSR activities of companies at the local level. Ultimately, the IAP below is a strategic document, which is fully in line with Bulgaria's National CSR strategy 2019-2023 and the related Plans for strategy execution.

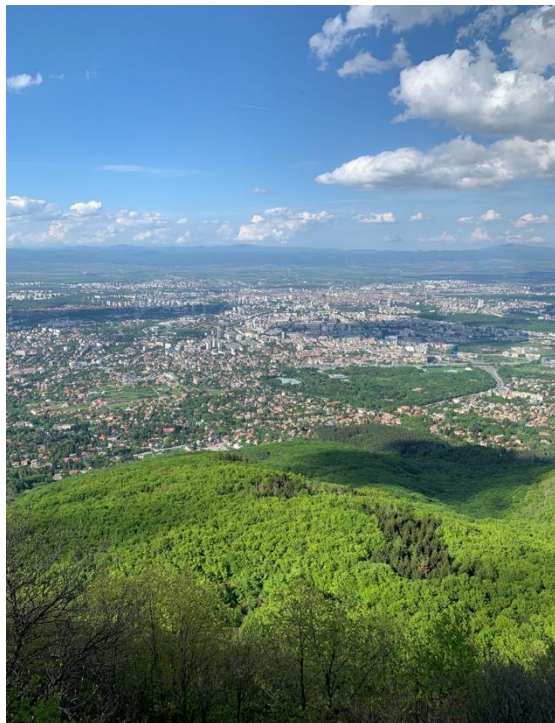


A - Part 1 - Presentation of context and process

Part 1a

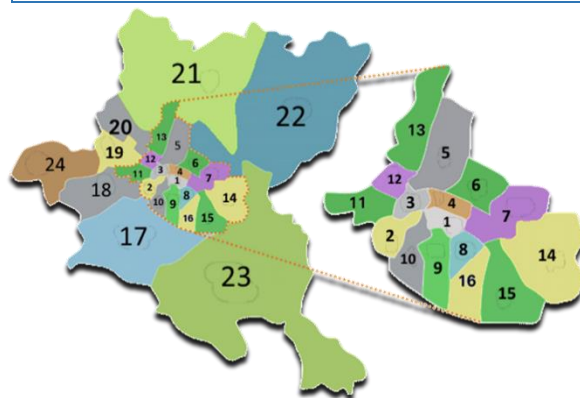


City Context and Definition of the initial Policy Challenge



Sofia:

24 districts
More than 1.3 mln. Inhabitants
About 40% of national GDP



Sofia is the Capital of Bulgaria and the largest political, administrative, cultural and educational centre in the country. According to the Law on the territorial division of Sofia Municipality and big cities, the territory of the municipality is divided into 24 administrative districts. Featuring strong agglomeration economics and innovative business development, the City of Sofia's economy accounts for over 42 % of national GDP. Like most large cities, Sofia faces environmental challenges and in this regard the following strategic documents have been developed and adopted:

- **“Vision for Sofia 2050”**¹ is a seminal strategic document adopted by the Municipal council in 2020. The key purpose of this initiative was to create a shared and long-term strategy for the development of the capital and suburban areas until 2050. The project has analyzed the current state of Sofia and proposed specific steps, measures and goals for the future sustainable

¹ One of the long-term guidance documents that was still being finalized at the time of elaborating the Baseline study has now been adopted



development of the city. Right from the start it was recognized that achieving this task is possible only with the combined efforts of citizens, business, science, NGOs and administration.

- **Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan 2021-2030 (SECAP)** - This is the main strategic document of the Sofia Municipality in the field of climate and energy, which sets the framework for achieving the ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030. As a cross-sectoral document, the SECAP requires serious communication and the involvement of all stakeholders, including academia, civil society and business. For this reason and in regard of the implementation of CITIES4CSR project, a special communication strategy has been developed for the SECAP.
- **Comprehensive program for improving air quality 2021-2026** - 6-year strategic document with an action plan to improve air quality.

Other recently adopted documents relevant to CSR policies and the sustainable development of Sofia Municipality include:

- National CSR Strategy 2019 – 2023;
- Short-term program for the promotion of the use of energy from renewable energy sources and biofuels of Sofia Municipality 2020 – 2022;
- Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan of Sofia Municipality 2019- 2035

Recognizing that Sofia does not have a dedicated CSR strategy and that the CSR policies of local businesses are practically not integrated with the municipal sustainability goals, the Baseline study indicated the Municipality is intent on making some of the necessary adjustments. One of the most palpable changes, felt over the past year and a half is that, in part due to the CITIES4CSR project, Sofia municipality has initiated and engaged in much more intensive CSR dialogue with local business actors. As a result, some of the participants in ULG, are now actively organizing coordinated activities.

Current state of play with regard to the theme tackled by the Integrated Action Plan

Sofia's Integrated Action Plan (IAP) relied primarily on expert knowledge to identify three key challenges to be addressed under URBACT. Practically, all of these challenges revolved around the issue of climate change adaption. The most notable of these challenges, considered in both the IAP and the Baseline study, had to do with confronting the urban heat island effect. Confronting the urban heat island effect was thus identified as the Initial Policy Challenge to be tackled by the Integrated Action Plan. However, as it emerged from the URBACT Local Group (ULG) meetings, problems and CSR activities related to climate change adaptation and mitigation were not a key concern for local stakeholders at first look. In an effort to find optimal common ground with members of the ULG it was decided that the key theme to be addressed by the project should reflect these companies' sustainability foci in a more direct and comprehensive way. Therefore, the better part of the CITIES4CSR meetings was explicitly dedicated to identifying, discussing and seeking common solutions to the visible as well the in-depth sustainability challenges faced by Sofia Municipality today².

Essentially, the initial key policy challenge, "Confronting the urban heat island effect", evolved significantly over the course of stakeholder discussions and was transformed into a deeper issue which could be tackled with the concerted efforts of Municipal authorities and local stakeholders. Ultimately, it was determined that Sofia's key challenge is that the city was not being developed in a fully sustainable way. In practice, this challenge consistently hovered in the background of stakeholder discussions, giving rise to

² This process is described in more detail in the section below.



the identification of specific and rather acute sustainability problems that had to be tackled. Thus, in short, the theme of the Integrated Action Plan has shifted towards establishing the prerequisites necessary for developing a more sustainable urban environment.

Presentation and analysis of problems and options for solutions

The Local Group had four online meetings in 2021: in April, June, October and November. Apart from introducing the project and building initial rapport, the key purpose of the first meeting was to tease out Sofia's most notable sustainability problems in the perceptions of invited stakeholders. Over the course of this webinar, participants were invited to fill in a survey in Mentimeter in order to help identify a range of thematic problems and thus build a foundation for further expert analysis and development of potential solutions.

With a view to establishing a common ground with municipal sustainability policies, participants were initially asked to fill in a questionnaire related to the CSR activities they had engaged in thus far. Interestingly, the implementation of company policies for environmental protection and sustainable development was a top priority for many of the participants (13 mentions). The main areas of sustainable development where local businesses undertook CSR activities included resource and energy efficiency, as well as municipal waste management. CSR initiatives related to different types of training were also strongly preferred by local businesses (11 mentions). Donations, mainly for social causes, were also well represented (8 mentions). Notably, it emerged that volunteering (4 mentions) and awareness-raising campaigns (2 mentions), did not seem to be preferred CSR tools. A high-level analysis of participant's answers pointed to the fact that local businesses seemed oriented towards CSR activities which were perceived as low hanging fruit, i.e. those with optimal investment and (PR) value ratio.

Subsequently, on the basis of answers collected from the survey of problems, a total of 13 key thematic challenges related to the sustainable urban development of Sofia Municipality were identified. Some of the identified problems, e.g. air quality, were reiterated by a large number of participants, while others, e.g. the need for additional public fountains, were not so widely recognized. The following table presents the full range of identified thematic challenges as well the number of participants that have raised each issue.

Identified Problem	Number of participants who have raised the issue
Insufficient green spaces in the city, incl. due to housing overdevelopment	12
Insufficient air quality	12
Insufficient public awareness of environmental protection and limited citizen participation in voluntary initiatives	7
Insufficiently adequate infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, especially outside the City Centre	7



Littering of public spaces	6
Public transport is not modern and "eco" enough	5
Public spaces are neglected	4
There is no working platform and procedure for local businesses to interact with SM, including at district level	4
There is no common vision and plan for sustainable development of the city	4
Insufficient sports and recreation grounds	3
No public infrastructure for optimal use of the water resources of the city, e.g. fountains in urban spaces and educational institutions	3
Limited scope of infrastructure for separate waste collection	3
Slow speed of Municipal administrative procedures	2

A specialized analytical tool, called “Problem Tree”, was used in attempt to get an overview of all identified problems and get to their root. As a first step, all problems identified by stakeholders were categorized as direct and indirect effects of the key problem at hand. In other words, these surface-level problems were visually presented as the branches of a tree. The focal problem (tree-trunk) was then defined on their basis. Finally, the root causes of the problem were discussed and determined. As a result of this process, the following Problem Tree emerged and was presented in Mural [\(document link here\)](#):



Figure 1 Problem Tree

Having thus determined all surface level and in-depth problems, as well the key challenge facing the sustainable development of Sofia municipality, another analytical tool was deployed in order to establish



possible solutions to the problems at hand. A Problems and Solutions table was devised and presented to stakeholders as part of the second stakeholder webinar held in 2021. The key visible and in-depth challenges, as well the focal challenge, were presented to stakeholders. Sample solutions proposed by experts were also provided in an attempt to ease the understanding of the task and spur greater engagement. As it emerged, stakeholders were eager to share best practices and offer reasonable solutions. Some of the more notable solutions included commitments to plant and potentially water saplings; to engage in joint public awareness campaigns with the municipality, regarding all sustainability issues; as well to support the set-up of a dedicated CSR platform to coordinate the plans and activities of businesses and the municipality. An exhaustive list of the proposed solutions can be seen in the table below:

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Problems and Solutions Table</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Supporting the analysis of the identified problems and suggestions for possible solutions</p>		
The key challenge	The urban environment of Sofia is not developing fully sustainably	
Visible challenges	Sample solutions proposed by experts	Stakeholder solutions
Insufficient green areas and afforestation leading to urban heat island effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carrying out joint initiatives between local businesses and the Municipality, related to the achievement of the goals of the Vision • clarification of areas of common interest • identifying a clear and open interaction procedure • establishing a website section on the municipality’s website, which will serve as an open space for dialogue on these topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a plan (map) to identify areas suitable for afforestation, which is provided to local companies so that they can assess whether and how they can get involved (e.g. via voluntary initiatives). The trees can be provided by the Municipality or by the company.
Limited scope of infrastructure for separate waste collection and treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delineation of infrastructure for separate collection of bio-waste • additional containers and organization for separate collection of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizing an event or series of events to promote separate collection



	<p>packaging, WEEE, hazardous, textile waste, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• an update of the existing map for separate collection of various waste fractions• assessment of where new containers should be located;• promotion of separate textile collection.• sharing of experience and the setting of good examples of separate waste collection, including the measures taken by companies in the area of hazardous substances
<p>Insufficient playgrounds for sports and recreation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• delineation of spaces for the purpose of the implementation of the Master Plan and enabling businesses to build similar sports facilities near their offices factories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• construction of different sports areas (existing in some parks and gardens), the opportunity for different companies to support the construction of such facilities, be it with their own resources, partnership with the municipality or with other companies. The idea is to encourage sports, especially during a pandemic and in the absence of separate outdoor sports venues.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the problem is not in the construction, but in the maintenance of these sites and paths. A significant resource is required for site maintenance. Some companies are willing to support that if they know how much it will cost per annum.
Challenges in depth	Sample solutions proposed by experts	Stakeholder Solutions
<p>Sense of lacking sufficient information about the vision and plan for sustainable development of the city</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more active communication of the "Vision for Sofia" plans, as well as plans and strategies for air quality, adaptation to climate change, waste management, etc. • linking all adopted municipal policies and decisions with the goals of the Vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share all relevant strategies and plans with participants • participants are willing to disseminate this type of information.
<p>Insufficient interaction between local businesses and Sofia Municipality in conducting CSR (including ESG) activities in support of sustainable urban development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carrying out of joint initiatives between businesses and the Municipality, related to the achievement of the goals of the Vision • clarification of areas of common interest • identifying a clear and open interaction procedure • establishing an open (digital) platform for dialogue on these topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a platform through which businesses have access to all initiatives in various areas of sustainable development of the city. Thus, in preparing their annual CSR plans, companies will have information about the priorities of the municipality and the initiatives taken so far.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participants face difficulties in selecting local CSR initiatives due to lack of necessary information. It is important for them to have information about Sofia's overall vision for improving the urban environment, so that it is easier to assess what initiatives should be invested in.
<p>Insufficient public awareness for environmental protection and limited participation in voluntary initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting more effective information and educational campaigns (together with business) on topics related to sustainable development • opportunities for voluntary involvement of local business employees in public benefit initiatives (planting gum, cleaning) 	

Table 1 Problems and Solutions Table

A brief explanation of how the problem has evolved since the start of the project

At the start of the CITIES4CSR project the level of trust and engagement among the Municipality and local business was not very high. Over the course of 2021 alone, these dynamics seem to have shifted significantly. On the basis of quite frequent and very open communication, related to the CITIES4CSR webinars, a clear behavioral change has been observed on both sides. On the one hand, local businesses have been much more proactive in seeking municipal support for their CSR activities while, on the other, the Municipality is investing a lot more energy into addressing any problems and concerns that have emerged in the process. The local group is living its life and partnerships between different participants are already a fact. For example, participants in the group were speakers at a seminar organized by the Sofia Municipality on the topic of the food chain and climate change. Arguably, this behavioral shift is one of the key prerequisites to design, build and organize the urban environment in Sofia in a more sustainable way as well as long term partnership between the ULG members.



Part 1b

IAP-Focus



Description of focus of Integrated Action Plan

As stated in Section 1a, confronting the urban heat island effect was thus identified as the Initial Policy Challenge to be tackled by the Integrated Action Plan. However, as it emerged from the URBACT Local Group (ULG) meetings, problems and CSR activities related to climate change adaptation and mitigation were not a key concern for local stakeholders. Therefore, the primary focus of the Integrated Action Plan has shifted to an investigation of the concrete measures that can be adopted in order to design, build and organize Sofia's urban environment in a more inclusive and sustainable way. Essentially, this investigation is currently being conducted on the basis of active engagement in the ULG as well as via research of best practices, especially from the URBACT network. In essence, designing Sofia's urban environment in a more inclusive and sustainable way is based on improved communication with local businesses and NGOs. In particular, digital solutions have been identified as a key avenue to explore when it comes to coordinating the initiatives of local stakeholders with those of Sofia Municipality.

Information on why this is a key priority

All participants in the ULG meetings, including Sofia Municipality, recognize that municipal plans and policies related to sustainable development have not been fully coordinated with local businesses and NGOs. On the one hand, this approach limits the evidence base used for making planning decisions and potentially produces suboptimal planning outcomes. On the other hand, the effective implementation of large-scale municipal sustainability policies is also negatively affected by the lack of coordinated support from potent local stakeholders. For instance, as things stand, practically all companies and NGOs in Sofia are planning and conducting their CSR campaigns, independent from the stated policies and plans of Sofia municipality. Evidently, this is primarily due to the fact that local stakeholders are unaware of Municipal plans and policies. Even those stakeholders who are aware of Municipal plans and initiatives and actively wish to contribute do not know how to approach Municipal officials. In short, this predicament is seen as a major missed opportunity to improve the effectiveness and scale of Sofia's sustainability and CSR policies.

Summary of main aspirations for the Integrated Action Plan (IAP)

The main aspiration of the IAP to address the identified challenges in-depth and thus has to do with developing a direct and robust line of communication between Sofia Municipality and various sustainability-oriented organizations based on its territory. In more practical terms, this could be achieved by creating a procedural basis for local stakeholders to participate in the planning and especially in the execution of municipal sustainability plans and policies. At this stage it is envisaged that the IAP would provide a blueprint for a web-based solution (e.g. a dedicated section on Sofia Municipality's website)



that could inform all interested stakeholders about Sofia Municipality's latest plans, strategies and initiatives. The purpose of this solution would be twofold. On the one hand, it would provide a modern means to coordinate Municipal sustainability plans and policies as they are being developed. On the other, it would allow local stakeholders to identify suitable CSR initiatives which can be conducted in support of already planned Municipal efforts.

In addition, the main types of visible sustainability challenges identified by ULG members Sofia Municipality will also be addressed in the IAP. These include insufficient public green areas and the development of less-than-sustainable public infrastructure. Objectives and planned activities in the IAP will be in line with the solutions proposed ULG members.

Summary of how it links to the URBACT network as a whole and if / how learning from transnational exchange has informed the choice of focus

Nantes Metropole, which is a CITIES4CSR project partner and a member of the URBACT network, was a very useful reference in the choice of IAP research focus and the identification of possible solutions. To be more specific, Nantes Metropole have recognized the importance of effective communication with sustainability-oriented organizations in their region and have developed a dedicated CSR platform to support that. Nantes' CSR platform seems now to have turned into a coordination hub collecting all CSR initiatives financed and supported by the Metropole and its partners. The main tool offered by the platform - a [CSR website](#), supports companies in the Nantes metropolitan area in learning more about sustainable development approaches and best practices. Notably, the CSR platform's so-called "Parcou'RSE" system explicitly aims to connect local sustainability-oriented organization with the responsible municipal actors, which strongly resonates with the stated needs of the ULG in Sofia.

Presentation of strategic vision and goal

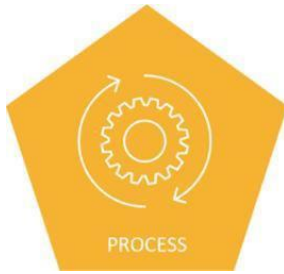
On the basis of the problems and solutions identified by the Local Group the following vision was formulated:

Local businesses, non-profits and Sofia Municipality are striving to co-develop and adopt a governance model of shared urban responsibility. On that basis, and with the help of a CSR dedicated administrative procedure as well as a special CSR section on the municipality's website, stakeholders will conduct coordinated, regular and comprehensive CSR initiatives, linked to the sustainable development of the city.

The key goal, therefore, is to build synergy by aligning the CSR planning and activities of all sustainability stakeholders in Sofia.



Part 1c



Description of the Process

Composition and role of URBACT Local Group and its role in the process of coproduction and co-implementation

The URBACT Local Group incorporates representatives of over 20 organizations, including commercial companies from various sectors of the economy, as well as NGOs, EPR organizations, universities and even trade missions of foreign countries.



It is mainly on the basis of input from ULG stakeholders that the key challenges and solutions have been identified. This happened over the course of Meetings 3 and 4 of of the URBACT Local Group (ULG). In that sense, ULG members have not only helped coproduce the analysis, vision, goals and objectives described above, but have also committed to co-implement any concrete actions adopted by Sofia Municipality.



№	ULG-Target Composition	Mobilised	Name Stakeholders/Organisations
1	Different departments within the local administration	O	Sofia Municipality
2	Elected people responsible for policies connected to challenge	X	Municipal Council
3	Different tiers of government in the relevant policy area	O	Executive Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
4	Beneficiaries of the policies	O	All ULG members
5	Private sector, business community, employers	O	Kufland Bg, Hilton Sofia, HPE, Sofiyska voda, Bosch; Telenor; METRO; Clean Tech; dm Bulgaria, Zagorka, EcoBulPack
6	Business associations, advocacy groups, unions	O	Bulgarian-Spanish Chamber of Commerce; Advantage Austria (Sofia)
7	Third sector, NGOs, social enterprises, foundations	O	Green Line Sofia; CSR Bulgaria; Bulgarian Network of the United Nations Global Compact, BCause foundation;
8	Knowledge/research centres, universities, education providers	O	New Bulgarian University; Sofia University
9	Media/Communication (traditional, social), Influencers	X	
10	Potential funders	O	Unicredit BulBank

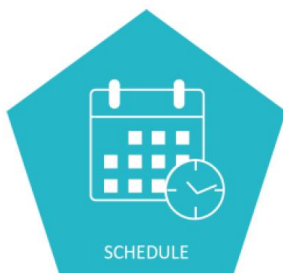
Composition of the URBACT Local Group

Role / impact of transnational exchange and learning (e.g. peer-review, possible transfer of good practice, bi-lateral exchanges, development of new common projects etc.)

As previously discussed, transnational learning has had a notable impact on the selection of the research focus area, the identification of the problem and especially in the consideration of possible solutions. In particular, the CSR webpage developed by Nantes Metropole is envisaged to serve as a basis for bi-lateral exchanges and even possible direct transfer of this good practice. In turn, Nantes Metropole could also benefit from the findings of Sofia’s ULG group and incorporate some of the solutions developed here.

B - Part 2 - Action Plan

Part 2a Objectives, Actions and Schedule



General

As indicated in the Summary of main aspirations for the Integrated Action Plan (IAP), Sofia Municipality generally seeks to establish better ways of engaging local businesses and NGOs and



ultimately to harness some of their resources in an effort to develop a more sustainable local urban environment.

Link Transformation - Objectives – Action

Co-created over the course several ULG meetings, Sofia’s Municipality has the overall transformation vision of co-developing a more sustainable urban environment. Three key objectives serve as the main pillars for this vision. The first objective has to do with the set up of a dedicated communication channel between Municipal authorities and local businesses and NGOs who are willing to actively contribute to the sustainable development of Sofia’s urban environment. In terms of specific actions, Sofia Municipality plans to set up of a CSR dedicated administrative procedure as well as a special CSR section on the municipality’s website The second objective is directly related to improving the urban environment and the green system as an initial priority. In particular, Sofia Municipality will directly seek the volunteer support of local businesses, universities and NGOs in its afforestation campaigns. The third objective, enhancing opportunities for environmental awareness and education, is aimed at ensuring that increasing numbers of rank-and-file Sofians are engaged with the city’s transition to sustainability. To this effect, specific environmental awareness activities are planned to be conducted in concert with non-municipal actors. These activities will start taking place as soon as 2022, however, they are expected to bear fruit mostly in the longer term.

List of key objectives —Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART)

Specific Objective	Result indicator				Output Indicators	
Description of the change we want to achieve in the existing situation: the intended result	A variable that describes a relevant aspect of our intended result, to measure the change in the situation				A variable that describes the outputs that our action plan will produce. Outputs are the direct products of our action plan.	
		Baseline	Milestone	Target	Source	
Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for sustainable development	Number of jointly conducted communication activities	0 in 2021	3 in 2023	5 in 2025	Sofia Municipality business engagement survey	Step-by-step guideline ,
Improving the green system and the urban environment	Annual number of planted trees	5000 trees planted in 2021	6000 in 2023	7000 in 2025	Green System, Ecology and Land Use Division	Nr. of green system and urban environment-oriented infrastructure activities within the initiative “The new forest of Sofia”, which are directly supported by non-municipal actors
Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	Number of engaged children and students	0 in 2021	200 in 2023	400 in 2025	Sofia Municipality citizen satisfaction survey	Nr. of sustainability-oriented awareness and educational initiatives directly supported by non-municipal actors



Key Envisaged Overall Transformation

No	Key Transformation Areas – What will URBACT specifically change in our city?
1. Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for sustainable development	It will create opportunities for the further implementation of the municipal plans for the sustainable development of the city by establishing a CSR dedicated administrative procedure as well as a special CSR section on the municipal website, where the business, NGOs and the other stakeholders can find systematic information in one place and better understand the goals and activities for sustainable urban development .
2. Improving the green system and the urban environment	The green system and the urban environment of the city will be improved by a variety of co-created and co-conducted activities such as: campaigns on tree planting, adoption of green spaces and others.
3. Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	A number of new sustainability-oriented awareness and educational initiatives will be directly supported by non-municipal actors.

Capacity Building – Urban CSR Eco-System

Key Transformation Areas	CAPACITY BUILDING – MUNICIPALITY Municipal CSR-Attitudes, Interfaces, Toolbox and Strategies	CAPACITY BUILDING – BUSINESSES and NON-PROFITS Local CSR-Sector, Activities, Initiatives, Campaigns....	CAPACITY BUILDING – CIVIL SOCIETY Citizens, Communities, Neighbourhoods, Networks, Associations, Movements...
1.Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for sustainable development	The Municipality will publish relevant materials and information in the special section of the project CITIES4CSR, on the municipal website	The business and non-profit stakeholders will have a close access to all initiatives proposed by the Municipality as well as all strategic documents of the municipality in one place.	Civil Society groups could participate in a co-creation process by observing and potentially joining the initiatives available on the Municipality's special section.
2. Improving the green system and the urban environment	The Municipality has developed and planned a number of green system and urban environment-oriented initiatives, such as the “The New Forest of Sofia”, which will be directly supported by non-municipal actors.	The business and non-profit stakeholders will be able to implement their green system and urban environment-oriented initiatives in concert with the ones planned by the Municipality.	Civil Society groups could take part in green system and urban environment-oriented initiatives.
3. Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	The Municipality developed and planned number of sustainability-oriented awareness and educational initiatives which will be directly supported by non-municipal actors.	The business and non-profit stakeholders will have the opportunity to actively participate in sustainability-oriented awareness and educational initiatives.	Civil Society groups would be encouraged to take active part in a number of awareness and educational initiatives related to sustainable urban management.



Changing the Status-Quo

(Describe in one sentence how – for each Key Transformation Area - the status-quo for each of the four outcome areas will change/improve because of the URBACT intervention (see also IAP-Roadmap (Section3))

	Key Transformation Areas	SOFT: Relationships	SOFT: Data, Information and Knowledge	HARD: Plans and Contracts	HARD: Institutions and Practices
1	Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for Sustainable development	The Municipality will establish a regular posting of relevant materials and information on the special section of the project CITIES4CSR on their website. There, stakeholders can get informed about the current news and initiatives related to CSR. This is expected to increase the level of trust between civil society, the Municipality and non-municipal local actors.	Sharing knowledge and information through the special project's section on the website will be essential for the further cooperation between local businesses and the municipality.	Regular sharing of information on the special CITIES4CSR section on the municipality's website .	Engaging with local business which are willing to volunteer their support for the sustainability initiatives of Sofia Municipality.
2	Improving the green system and the urban environment	Co-planning and co-implementing actions to improve the green system and the urban environment is expected to increase the level of trust between civil society, the Municipality and non-municipal local actors.	Co-planning and co-implementing actions to improve the green system and the urban environment is expected to increase the exchange of data, Information and knowledge among various stakeholders.	Plans to co-conduct certain afforestation and to co-develop sustainable urban infrastructure through initiatives such as "The New Forest of Sofia"	Plans to gather support from non-municipal authors via a dedicated section on the municipal website.
3	Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	Co-planning and co-implementing environmental awareness campaigns is expected to increase the level of trust between civil society, the Municipality and non-municipal local actors.	Co-planning and co-implementing environmental awareness campaigns is expected to increase the exchange of data, Information and knowledge among various stakeholders.	Plans to co-conduct certain awareness campaigns.	Plans to gather support from non-municipal authors via a dedicated webpage and procedure.



Breakdown of planned activities / actions / projects which will be developed and delivered to help meet these objectives and achieve the expected results

Specific objective	Planned activities	Expected results
Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for sustainable development	1. Joint activities according to the communication strategies of SECAP	Business understands and supports strategic goals and activities for sustainable development
Improving the green system and the urban environment	1. Tree Planting Campaigns	Planting of 500 new trees a year in two "campaigns" - spring and autumn
	2. Care for planted trees - watering, weeding, strengthening, etc.	Annually, companies in Sofia take care of 300 newly planted trees near their offices or sites
	3. Adoption of green spaces and playgrounds	Green areas are "adopted" (i.e. looked after) by at least 5 business organizations
Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	1. A series of seminars for students on the topic of CSR	3 CSR seminars for university students per year
	2. Students (e.g. from IT departments) create CSR themed movies for children from kindergartens	At least 5 short sustainable themed movies for children per year
	3. Students (e.g. from IT departments) create online CSR themed games for children	At least 1 online sustainable themed game per year
	4. Set up of eco corners in kindergartens/schools	Set up of "eco areas" for workshop purposes in 8 kindergartens/schools (2 eco areas per year)
	5. Workshops from the business and Sofia Municipality on the sustainable practices they implement	Conducting at least 2 workshops per year in kindergartens/schools with separate eco-corners
	6. Organizing a competition for a drawing, a mockup, a best garden etc. with small prizes for children	At least 1 environmental competition per year
	7. Conducting joint information campaigns, including on social media	Running of at least 1 joint information campaign per year



Information on when these activities will be delivered- start and end dates
 Gantt chart showing actions and timetable

Specific objective	Planned activities	Start and end dates	2022	2023	2024	2025
Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for sustainable development	1. Joint activities according to the communication strategies of SECAP	6.2022 - 6.2023				
Improving the green system and the urban environment	1. Three Planting Campaigns	3-4 & 10-11 2022/2023/2024/2025				
	2. Care for planted trees- watering, weeding, strengthening, etc.	4.2022 - 12.2025				
	3. Adoption of green spaces and playgrounds	3.2022 - 12.2025				
Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	1. A series of seminars for students on the topic of CSR	4.2022 - 12.2025				
	2. NBU students (from IT department) create CSR themed movies for children from kindergartens	4.2022 - 12.2025				
	3. NBU students (from IT department) create online CSR themed games for children	4.2022 - 12.2025				
	4. Set up of outdoor eco corners in kindergartens	7-8 2022/2023/2024/2025				
	5. Workshops from the business and Sofia Municipality on the sustainable practices they implement	9-10 2022/2023/2024/2025				
	6. Organizing a competition for a drawing, a mockup, a best garden etc. with small prizes for children	9-10 2022/2023/2024/2025				
	7. Conducting joint information campaigns, including on social media	4.2022 - 12.2025				



The linked expected results and indicators for each action

Specific objective	Planned activities	Result indicator	Output indicator
Improved business and NGO support for the implementation of municipal plans for sustainable development	1. The Municipality will publish relevant materials and information in the special section of the project CITIES4CSR, on the municipal website	Business and NGO engagement rate Baseline: 2/10 (2020) Target: 5/10 (2025)	Regural update of the information in the project's section, on the municipal website
Improving the green system and the urban environment	1. Tree Planting Campaigns	Citizen satisfaction with the urban environment	nr. of planted trees
	2. Care for planted trees - watering, weeding, strengthening, etc.	Citizen satisfaction with the urban environment	nr. of watered trees
	3. Adoption of green spaces and playgrounds	Citizen satisfaction with the urban environment	nr. of green spaces adopted
Enhanced opportunities for environmental awareness and education	1. A series of seminars for students on the topic of CSR	Share of citizens engaged in voluntary activities Baseline: 5% (2020) Target: 15% (2025)	nr. of seminars conducted
	2. Students (e.g. from IT department) create sustainable themed movies for children from kindergartens/school	Number of children affected by sustainability campaigns Baseline: 0 (2020) Target: 250 (2025)	nr. of cartoons developed
	3. Students (e.g. from IT department) create online sustainable themed games for children	Number of children affected by sustainability campaigns Baseline: 0 (2020) Target: 250 (2025)	nr. of games developed
	4. Set up of outdoor eco corners in kindergartens/schools	Number of children affected by sustainability campaigns Baseline: 0 (2020) Target: 20,000 (2025)	nr. of eco-areas built
	5. Workshops from the business and Sofia Municipality on the sustainable practices they implement	Number of children affected by sustainability campaigns Baseline: 0 (2020) Target: 250 (2025)	nr. of workshops conducted
	6. Organizing a competition for a drawing, a mockup, a best garden etc. with small prizes for children	Number of children affected by sustainability campaigns Baseline: 0 (2020) Target: 300 (2025)	nr. of competitions organized
	7. Conducting joint information campaigns, including on social media	Improving the awareness	nr. of joint campaigns organized



Part 2b Small Scale Actions (SSA)



SSA-Logic

A new measure to create a local eco-label, initially introduced in the “Action Plan for Sustainable Energy and Climate of Sofia Municipality 2021-2030”, is build upon and developed in the context of the CITIE4CSR and the European CSR Strategy by dedicating an award focused on green retail and commercial buildings. The creation of a local eco-label/certificate aims to:

- promote the use of renewable sources, the increase of energy efficiency and the reduction of GHG emissions;
- promote water consumption reduction and better internal water management;
- promote waste recycling and the creation of internal waste management systems to monitor waste streams;
- promote a healthy indoor environment (incl. air quality; heating; light and noise pollution solutions);
- promote design innovation;
- promote sustainable mobility;
- promote the organization of informational&educational campaigns and trainings for employees on the topics of sustainable urban development.

The concept for the award ceremony will be aimed at bringing together local experts, financial institutions and businesses to promote sustainable urban development among local stakeholders. The name of the award would be “Eco-label for sustainable commercial and retail buildings”, with an emphasis on the awarding of buildings of large shopping centers, universities and large retail food chains on the territory of Sofia Municipality, which have taken steps towards the implementation of more green solutions in the building construction, exploitation and environmental education of the staff. The expectations is that by nominating and awarding best practice, retail, universities and commercial building owners and tenants would be incentivized to innovate in greening their buildings. The measure



will also provide synergy with strategic municipal plans and programs for sustainable urban development, and will also support analysis and planning in the field of energy use.

An exemplary composition of the evaluation jury, could consist of five representatives from different organizations, all involved in the area of sustainable development and green architecture. Since the evaluation of the contestants will cover a wide range of criteria, the jury should represent experts from diverse organizations and great knowledge in the field of sustainability, such as for example from:

- Sofia Municipality - as the organizer, the Municipality should be present in the jury composition
- “Bulgarian Green Building Council” – a non-profit organization and a member of the World Green Building Council, which is a world-wide network of organizations, working together to build awareness in the public sector and to transform the built environment by changing the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated.
- CSR Bulgaria - a business network for corporate social responsibility, which aims to connect business and the non-profit sector, striving to build a favorable environment for the development of these relationships and the development of responsible business.
- denkstatt Bulgaria – the most experienced advisory in ESG, Decarbonisation, Impact Reporting and Circular Economy in Bulgaria.

In order to have a bigger reach and higher impact, the Municipality could invite representatives from medias, chambers and organizations related to the topic of the ceremony to partner up for the successful development and conduction of the ceremony. The exemplary partnerships could be as follows:

- Media partners – e.g. The City Media Group, which is the leading business2business media platform in the fields of building construction and architecture, urban projects, strategic infrastructure, investment and the real estate market.
- Chambers – e.g. The Bulgarian Construction Chamber official representative of the construction companies in Bulgaria, consisting of over 2 800 members, including construction companies, NGOs and educational institutions.
- Bulgarian Green Building Council – as mentioned above the organization is strongly involved in the transformation of the built environment by changing the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated.



Part 2e Monitoring

Monitoring Framework – Describe how to measure general progress of how actions change output and outcomes?

In order to ensure maximum transparency and well-substantiated evidence of action effectiveness, all output and outcome indicators are planned to be quantitative in nature. Progress will be measured on the basis of various surveys as well as data provided by Municipal authorities. Generally, for all indicators where data is already available, the baseline figure is set for 2020. The baseline for the remaining indicators will be based on information to be gathered over the course of specific research and studies to be conducted in 2022. Overall, the Integrated Roadmap is a mid-term planning document setting 2025 as the target year for both output and (initial) outcomes.

Evaluation of Monitoring – Describe Process

Monitoring reports will be prepared annually, which will be shared with stakeholders and the results will be communicated.

Part 2e Risk Analysis



Description of Type of Risk

The foremost risk is that, despite their initial enthusiasm, active participants in the ULG group may not follow through with their promises. In that case all planned actions will either have to be conducted by the Municipality alone, or they will not take place at all. The continuing restrictions and consequences of COVID-19 may hinder the implementation of some of the



activities, both in terms of their physical implementation and due to the need for budgetary constraints for some businesses. Last but not least, the changed geopolitical and socio-economic environment may negatively affect the activities planned for implementation.

Categorisation into Low, Medium or High Risk

Type of Risk	Low, Medium or High Risk	Probability
ULG participants do not follow through with their promises to cooperate with Sofia Municipality	High	Low
COVID-19	High	Medium
Political, Geopolitical and socio-economic environment	High	Medium

Risk Mitigation Strategies

1. In case certain ULG group participants do not follow through with their promises to cooperate, Municipal authorities will reach out to other participants with similar profiles. If this approach does not prove effective, Municipal authorities will hire the support of a well-established local consultancy to engage non-municipal actors as necessary.
2. In case continuing restrictions and consequences of COVID-19 hinder the implementation of some of the activities an alternative forms will be implemented, or the implementation will be postponed to the summer months when we have a higher chance to conduct them physically.
3. The document will be presented to the Municipal council for adoption in order to ensure the continuity of policies in the event of a change in the leadership of the municipality after the local elections next year.