

# **SDGs in Your Municipality**

Practical Awareness-Raising Examples



#### THE 17 SDGs



Cover image: Tienen participates in the SDG pilot project of VVSG

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50 Practical Awareness-Raising Examples





# Introduction

Sustainable what? That's still a common reaction when the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are mentioned.

On 25 September 2015, Belgium was one of 194 countries to ratify the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs), also known as the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs unite a number of international agreements (on poverty reduction, climate change, urbanisation, etc.) and call for an integrated approach. By 2030, the seventeen goals should contribute to sustainable development which is universal, inclusive and transformative. Universal: the 2030 Agenda commits Flanders and Belgium as well as the countries of the global South. Inclusive: sustainable development which includes everyone – the motto of the SDGs is "Leave no-one behind". And transformative: the SDGs function as a visionary compass, inviting us to approach global challenges differently. The SDGs are nicely summarised by the circular 5 Ps model, with People, Planet, Prosperity (important note, this P is not about Profit), Peace and Partnership inextricably linked.

The SDGs' universality means they also appeal to Flemish local authorities. As the first line of government, local authorities have a decisive role to play here. They are the key to setting in motion local

and bottom-up processes to stimulate the transition to a sustainable world. The SDGs must be implemented on a local (municipal) level to have a chance of success. Moreover, this sustainability agenda also has added value for cities, municipalities and Public Centres for Social Welfare. The SDGs form an ideal framework for local goals and initiatives, linking them to global challenges. They also generate opportunities for increasing citizens' involvement in policy. In short, the Sustainable Development Goals are a great opportunity for all municipalities, large or small, to work together with civil society, residents, businesses and organisations, civil services and politicians, towards a sustainable world, with more justice and equality.

Familiarising people with these global goals for sustainable development is a crucial first step towards taking action, but also in creating a support base for policy measures that contribute to the SDGs. Both in Flanders and around the world, local authorities and organisations are working hard to raise awareness on the SDGs, as in order to attain them, everyone must be on board.

The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) has assembled a number of practical examples to introduce the SDGs to a

wider audience, both within your municipal organisation, in external communications and during events From SDG stress balls to SDG chocolates or an SDG time capsule: this selection of awareness-raising practices offers a fine array of campaigns, initiatives and activities. Let yourselves be inspired and get started on making the SDGs known in your municipality!

The awareness-raising examples in this catalogue are wide-ranging, but the common theme is their low-threshold, often fun approach to introducing people to the SDGs. Achieving the SDGs benefits us all. Besides, we all have our bit to contribute, and many of us may already do so without even knowing it. However, additional effort is required to obtain a sustainable world. We must all be convinced of the relevance of the SDGs to our immediate living conditions.

Translating those international goals to a local level isn't easy, though. That's why Flemish cities and municipalities can count on the support of the VVSG. Through training courses, workshops, seminars and much more, the VVSG International department helps local civil servants and politicians get started with the SDGs in their municipalities. We work on three aspects: awareness-raising, politics and policy.

Are you wondering how to implement the SDGs within your municipal council? Or which initiatives various municipal services can

take to contribute to gender-, water- or climate-related goals? In the brochure 'Local support for global challenges', we provide hints on integrating the SDGs with municipal policy. Local authorities can also show they mean business concerning the SDGs by signing the VVSG statement of commitment for the SDGs. For politicians who want to incorporate the SDGs in their election campaigns, we have developed some concrete recommendations and suggestions. Or how about this "cheat sheet" with ways to convince colleagues of the importance of the SDGs?

To go even deeper, in early 2017 the VVSG started an <u>SDG pilot project</u>. With a group of twenty highly motivated local authorities, both large and small and from all over Flanders, we explore how to anchor the SDGs structurally and across departments for the entire policy planning process. In joint meetings, we test in practice methodologies for using the SDGs as a framework for the various policy stages: background analysis, formulation of policy goals and indicators for the Policy and Management Cycle (PMC). We combine these meetings with individual visits to provide customised advice and support. This pilot project will result in a series of recommendations for all 308 Flemish cities and municipalities. Our ultimate goal is for as many local authorities as possible to include the SDGs in their new policy plans after the municipal elections in October 2018. In 2019, all municipalities will create a new six-year municipal policy plan (2020-2025).



Our experience has been that the pilot project has generated a snowball effect in the participating municipalities, with the SDGs resonating more and more strongly with almost all major actors.. The VVSG recently received recognition for its efforts as well, being designated "SDG Voice 2018" by the Minister for Sustainable Development. Therefore, we are now launching a campaign together with our pilot municipalities. By showcasing their enthusiasm and commitment, we hope to improve support for the SDGs in the rest of Flanders as well.

You can tell there's a lot going on with the SDGs in Flanders. Do you want to be involved? Or would you like more practical information? If so, please contact us. Or are there SDG initiatives already in the pipeline for your city or municipality? If so, please make sure to tell us!

We wish you lots of sustainable inspiration!

Bert, Hanne, Heleen, Jules, Karlien and Saskia VVSG Team Internationaal



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# **SDGS FOR YOUR MUNICIPAL ORGANISATION**







#### 1. SDG badges

The colourful SDG badges are extremely popular, but beware. Wear one, and you're sure to be approached by colleagues and other interested individuals! That makes them perfect for both SDG ambassadors to spread the word and for interested parties to start a discussion about the SDGs.

More information: to order your SDG badges, fill out the form at www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs

# 2. SDG tote bag

Attendees at the Trefdag were offered an SDG tote bag by VVSG. The bag meets environmental and fair trade criteria and communicates the 17 sustainable development goals. The Trefdag is a biennial VVSG event which draws as many as 4000 visitors. This example is being followed by Flemish municipalities. For example, Sint-Niklaas provided its staff with an SDG tote. An SDG tote bag is an ideal goodie bag, which can be used for many things (welcome pack for new residents, staff events, etc.).

**More information**: download the design of the tote bag from www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs





#### 3. SDG stress balls

Relieve stress for your staff with the SDGs! In Hoogstraten, all staff members received an SDG stress ball during an information session about the 2030 Agenda. Staff members who weren't able to attend the session also received a stress ball, in addition to a brochure with more information about the SDGs.

More information: Municipality of Hoogstraten, Hilt.Rigouts@hoogstraten.be and Ingrid.Brosens@hoogstraten.be

#### 4. SDG seed mats

Allow the SDGs to flourish with this seed mat! After reading the main points about the SDGs written on the seed mat, plant it in your garden for lovely flowers in a fortnight. And it's good for the bees too!

More information: Province of Antwerp, Jo.Lambin@provincieantwerpen.be





The best conversations take place over a drink and a bite to eat That's why there's no better way to introduce the SDGs into the discussion - such as SDG 12 on responsible

> consumption and production - than these SDG placemats. The municipality of Balen first used their SDG placemats at their annual Fairtrade breakfast. Sint-Truiden city council hands out

the placemats to advisory committees and organisations, but also uses them at its own events.

More information: Municipality of Balen,

lut.de.saedeleer@balen.be Municipality of Sint-Truiden,

Evert.Bessemans@sint-truiden.be



#### SDG chocolates

These SDG chocolates are delicious, and sustainable too! The community employment scheme in the municipality of Balen that makes the chocolates already used fair trade chocolate. Now they display the SDG logo as well: doubly sustainable!

More information: www.twerk.be





#### 8. SDG intranet page

The intranet of the city of Ostend provides staff members with information about the SDGs. City staff can also enter local initiatives that contribute to specific SDGs. The VVSG animated movie and links to interesting online information may be found there as well.

More information: Municipality of Ostend, Charlotte.Logghe@oostende.be and Marijke.Mahieu@oostende.be



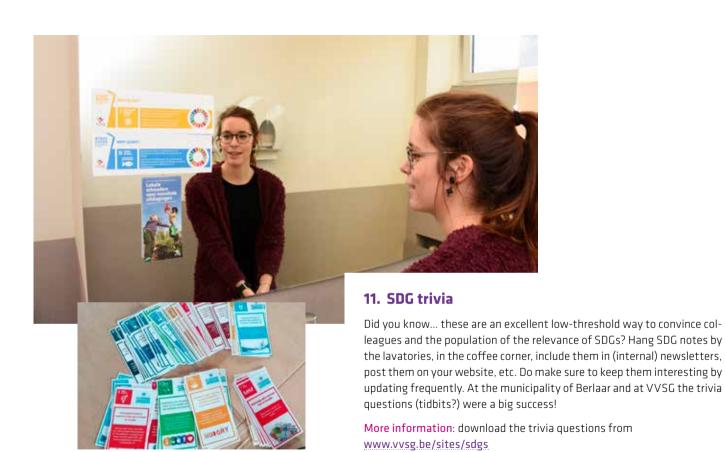


#### 9. SDG cheat sheet

This "SDG cheat sheet" contains all the information you need to inform your colleagues about the SDGs in only two minutes! The front displays the 17 goals, and the back shows their subdivision into 5 pillars of sustainable development: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. The 6 core messages summarising the 2030 Agenda vision are on there as well.

More information: download the cheat sheet from the VVSG website







# **SDGS IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS**

#### 12. Municipal SDG logo

No better way to show everyone your municipality is committed to the SDGs than with a municipal SDG logo, such as Balen and Sint-Truiden have. Balen put the logo on all its tenders. That way, interested suppliers know immediately that the municipality cares about sustainability.

More information: download the format from <a href="https://www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs">www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs</a> and customize it by putting your own municipality in the centre



#### 13. SDG email banner

Add an SDG banner to your emails and spread the SDG message daily! Various VVSG and municipal employees are doing this already, for example in Sint-Niklaas and Bornem.







#### 14. SDG icons

Add SDG icons to articles in your municipal bulletins, as Sint-Truiden does. That way, residents are made familiar with the SDGs and realize that there is a direct link with the municipality's activities. There are more options, of course. For example, speakers at the VVSG Trefdag 2017 linked corresponding SDG icons in their presentations.

**More information**: download the different icons in Dutch, English and French from <a href="https://www.sdgs.be/nl/bronnen/logos">https://www.sdgs.be/nl/bronnen/logos</a>



Groep Mechelen

#### 15. SDGs on your website

Inform your residents about the SDGs and what your municipality does to implement them through your municipal website, as Kortrijk does.







#### 16. SDG articles

The VVSG magazine 'Lokaal' puts the spotlight on a different SDGeach month. With concrete examples of municipal implementation per SDG on three levels (internally within the municipal organisation, locally towards the citizens of the municipality and internationally) the VVSG shows that the SDGs are locally relevant. Local authorities also inform residents about the SDGs through articles in municipal bulletins. The article on the left is from the Tielt municipal bulletin.



#### 17. SDG ambassadors

Around the world, countless SDG ambassadors are active. They raise awareness and commitment for the 2030 Agenda.

Queen Mathilde of Belgium acts as SDG ambassador for the United Nations. But locally too, there are plenty of SDG ambassadors talking about the SDGs, making speeches, having debates and stimulating action in their municipalities.

Since 2017, the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development selects a number of "SDG Voices" every year. They inform people about the SDGs, but also roll up their sleeves for all kinds of inspiring initiatives. All selected organisations have a solid record of past achievements relating to sustainable development and know the SDGs inside and out. They are the ideal ambassadors to translate the SDGs to concrete activities and initiatives. In 2017 the City of Ghent was one of the one SDG Voices, and in 2018. so is VVSG!

More information: discover all the SDG-Voices and their projects at https://www.sdgs.be/nl/sdg-voices.

De SDG voices 2018

















# **SDGS IN YOUR ACTIONS**

## 18. SDG information session and workshop

To improve knowledge of the SDGs, you can organise workshops and presentations. Make sure to show the links between the SDGs and local authorities clearly. You can also use VVSG's basic PowerPoint and circle exercises.

More information: download the basic PowerPoint from www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs

#### 19. SDG circle exercise

Use the VVSG circle exercises to interactively guide council members, civil servants, advisory committees and others in analysing how their own municipality already contributes, and how to contribute even more to the sustainable development goals. This is an ideal method to familiarise people with the SDGs. The exercise is also used by municipal administrations when writing municipal context analyses and proposals, by political parties when writing election platforms and by civil society organisations when formulating their recommendations and demands.

More information: download the circle exercise and accompanying manuals from www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs





#### 20. SDG chat box

A table, two chairs and cards with challenging questions about the SDGs. That's all you need to get residents pondering and discussing the SDGs. The city of Dilsen-Stokkem installs this 'SDG chat box' at neighbourhood parties, but why not at the local market, festivals or other events?

More information: Municipality of Dilsen-Stokkem, Dymphi.Savelkoul@dilsen-stokkem.be



#### 21. SDG grant programmes

Various municipalities have incorporated the SDGs into their grant programmes for international collaborations. Current examples include Aalst, Koksijde, Geel and Kortrijk. Organisations must demonstrate in their application that their project contributes to the SDGs. The SDGs are of course also perfectly suited for inclusion in other municipal grants, for example youth, cultural and sports programmes.

More information: contact VVSG International





# 22. Sustainability tips

Improve the world from your easy chair! In the 'Lazy person's guide to saving the world' the United Nations provide tips for small efforts that make big steps towards a sustainable world. Cities and municipalities can also provide their residents with handy sustainability tips through their newsletter, website and social media.

More information: discover the 'Lazy person's guide to saving the world' at www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction/

















# 23. SDG challenges

In 2017 the City of Ghent issued a challenge to five other cities, linked to the SDGs. With this campaign, the City of Ghent, designated as one of the eight Belgian "SDG Voices" of 2017, introduced the SDGs to the general public.

More information: www.ookmijn.stad.gent/sdguitdagingen

# 24.GPS game "Mission 2030"

Use this GPS game to explore the city's tangled streets from a sustainability perspective. Each team receives a tablet, battling against the others with questions and assignments relating to various locations in the city. Where can you find a no-packaging shop, where can you go to rent tools? Only with more sustainable development can we save the world. It's a race against the clock and each other! An absolute must for youth organisations, secondary schools and societies, but also great for staff outings, bachelor parties, team building or just a get-together with friends or family. This unique urban game was developed by 11.11.11 in collaboration with the Provinces of Antwerp, West Flanders and Limburg.

#### More information:

- · Duration: 3 hours
- Age range: at least 16 years of age
- Price: Limburg 40€ per group /
- West-Vlaanderen 50€ per group
- Max. 30 participants
- Reservations Limburg (Neerpelt, Bilzen, Genk, Hasselt, Sint-Truiden): www.laatjestrikkenvoordewereld.be
- Reservations West-Vlaanderen (Kortrijk, Oostende, Brugge): www.iedereenmondiaal.be/west-vlaanderen













# 25. SDG survey "My World 2030"

With the "My World 2030 Survey" the United Nations researches knowledge and awareness of the SDGs. The survey also asks which six of the 17 goals are of immediate concern and if these six situations have improved, stayed the same or worsened in the past twelve months.

More information: about.myworld2030.org



# 26. SDG bread bag initiative

Berlaar will roll out its SDG bread bag initiative somewhere in 2018. The concept is simple: residents receive a bread bag printed with an SDG at participating bakeries. The SDG bread bags can subsequently be traded in for a reward at the local Fair Trade shop.

More information: Municipality of Berlaar, Eva. Keirsmakers@Berlaar.be

# 27. SDG-app

Explore the latest SDG news and statistics and stay up-to-date on all events and initiatives with this SDG app! You can also add your own event and share it with friends and colleagues.

More information: download the app 'SDGs in Action' on your smartphone or from www.sdgsinaction.com





# SDGS VISUALISED IN YOUR MUNICIPALITY

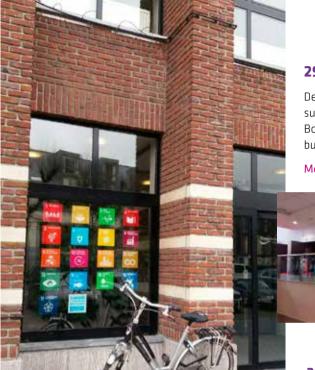
#### 28. SDG animated movie

The City of Hoogstraten loops the VVSG animated movie about the SDGs and the role of local authorities on their City Hall screens.

More information: watch the animation in English, Dutch, French or Spanish at <a href="https://www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs">www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs</a>







#### 29. SDG window stickers

Decorate your office windows with SDG window stickers and show everyone you support the SDGs! The cheerful colours immediately catch visitors' attention. Both the city of Hoogstraten and VVSG use the window stickers in their own buildings, and at events too.

More information: contact VVSG International



# 30. SDG laptop stickers

To remind yourself and others of the sustainable development goals every day, you can put SDG stickers on your laptop, as the students and personnel of the Hogeschool West-Vlaanderen (West Flanders university college) already do.

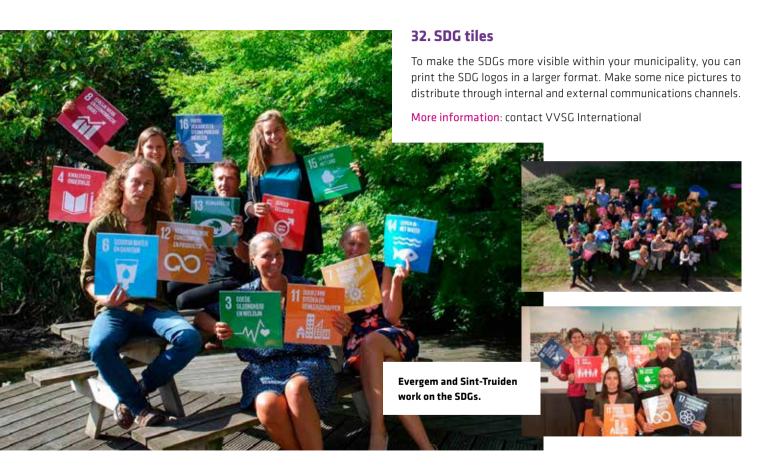




#### 31. SDG cubes

This stand with informational cubes, developed by the Province of Antwerp, uses text and images to raise awareness of the 17 goals. Each cube highlights an SDG. It displays the matching icon and a nice suitable photograph, but also explanations and tips on implementing the SDGs, for both citizens and municipalities.

More information: the Province of Antwerp lends the stand for temporary use at events. Contact jo.lambin@provincieantwerpen.be.



# 33. SDG posters

SDG posters in many sizes and colours are the ideal way to get colleagues and residents excited about the 17 SDGs. VVSG created 17 SDG posters and one poster with a general overview.

More information: download the posters from www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs

The Municipality of Etterbeek printed the posters on hard plastic sheets and is lends them to other local authorities. Contact internationalesolidariteit@etterbeek.be







More information: Municipality of Evergem,

Lize.Decorte@evergem.be



## 35. SDGs in virtual reality

Experience life in a Jordanian refugee camp, endure the devastation of an earthquake in Nepal or put yourself in the shoes of a young women in Liberia helping orphans in the middle of an Ebola epidemic. These virtual reality films developed by the United Nations provide deeper insight into the lives of people as they are confronted with the most complex of development challenges. At the same time, they show the urgent need for action in order to realise the SDGs and provide these people with a better future

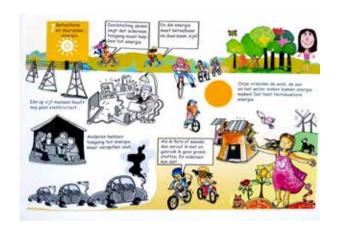
More information: www.unvr.sdgactioncampaign.org



## 36. SDG photo series

In July of 2017, UNDP Sweden launched a photo series to show how people contribute to the SDGs (Humans of MY World). The exhibition raises awareness, inspires and stimulates action. The stories were collected through direct contacts, but also through an appeal using social media.

More information: www.sdgactioncampaign.org





# 37. SDG comic strip

How can we make both our own municipality and the rest of the world a sustainable, solidary place? The comic strip "Wereldgem" invites its readers to ponder this question. The SDGs are a recurrent theme throughout the comic, which was created thanks to a collaboration between the municipality of Evergem and the Municipal Development Council. It was drawn by the Ecuadorian artist Pablo Sanaguano.

The comic "The planet and the 17 goals", drawn by Margreet de Heer and commissioned by Comics United Nations, also introduces young people to the SDGs with the help of clear drawings and simple explanations.

More information: Municipality of Evergem, Lize.Decorte@evergem.be.

Download 'The planet and the 17 goals' from www.margreetdeheer.com

### 38. SDG train (Belarus)

In October 2015, Belarus launched a special SDG train, the UN70 Belarus Express. Thousands of visitors of all ages along the multi-day route enjoyed lectures, workshops, concerts, flash mobs, cooking activities and more, both on and alongside the train. Moreover, the committee chairs for the districts along the route signed an SDG statement of commitment. The train could inspire a similar tram or bus to tour your municipality.

More information: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment





# **SDGS AT YOUR EVENTS**

# 39. World Party with SDG game

The Day of the Park in The Pinte was all about world citizenship. Naturally the SDGs had to be included. All exhibitors determined which SDGs matched their activities, added the logos for these SDGs to their booths and explained it all to their visitors. A play map featuring various tasks guided the children to the booths in a fun way. At the Damiaanactie booth, the children rolled SDG dice. If they managed to determine the connection between the rolled SDG and Damiaanactie's activities, they received a stamp on their map, which could later be exchanged for a drink.

More information: find information on the Day of the Park at www.depinte.be/dagvanhetpark.aspx.

The dice (and lots of other educational materials) can be borrowed from Kleur Bekennen: www.kleurbekennen.be





# **40.SDG** boxing machine

IK-BOKS is a fairground attraction for future do-gooders! Put on a boxing glove, hit the machine and the arrow selects a goal for you to achieve. The promise for sustainable development is sealed with a thumbprint. The boxing booth was developed by Rooftoptiger for 11.11.11 and first used at the free festival Sfinks Mixed in Boechout, July 2017.

More information: www.rooftoptiger.com





#### 42. SDG football goal

This installation will definitely attract the attention of visitors. The goal symbolizes the SDGs, the ball the world and the flame tells us that we should cherish that world. The SDG goal was used at the World Festival in Herent and is now exhibited in the city hall.

More information: Municipality of Herent, Bernard.Dumoulin@herent.be



### 43. SDG fishing game

Who doesn't like to fish for prizes at the local fair, festival or market? The residents of Herent were eager to try their luck. Catch anything? Quick, have a look at your SDG question to win a prize!

More information: Municipality of Herent, Bernard.Dumoulin@herent.be





# 44. SDG time capsule

The VNG (Association of Dutch Municipalities) tours the country with a 'Time Capsule' to collect personal wishes, dreams and ideas for the year 2030. The focus is on the following question: How do you want our world to look in fifteen years? The arrival of the Time Capsule is combined with an SDG-related event and sometimes schools are involved. Students are taught about the Global Goals and participate in a 'selfie campaign' by picking a goal they consider important and taking a selfie. Mayors and aldermen join students, residents, local organisations and entrepreneurs to place their wishes for 2030 in the Time Capsule. VNG supports the municipality in its communications about this unique photo and press event. After touring the country, the time capsule will be displayed in a visible location.

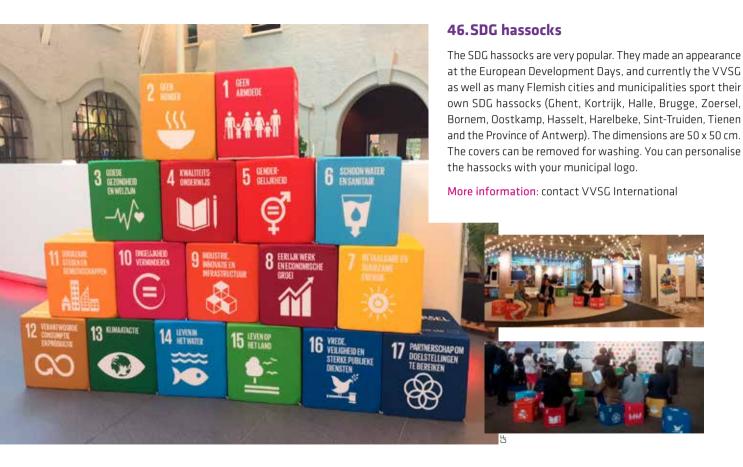
More information: www.vng-international.nl,

# 45. SDG flags

In Hoogstraten SDG flags bring colour to the streets and raise residents' interest too. Perfect to brighten up festivals, street parties, receptions, markets and other festivities. Or just hang them up in your town hall.

More information: Municipality of Hoogstraten, Hilt.Rigouts@hoogstraten.be







#### 47. SDG festival cushions

These unique SDG festival cushions raised festival-goers' awareness as they relaxed during or between acts. The organisers of the World Party in Herent printed the SDG logos on burlap sacks to use as cushion covers. Or how to use an original, inexpensive idea to raise people's interest in the SDGs.

More information: Municipality of Herent, Bernard.Dumoulin@herent.be

#### 48.SDG banners

Hang these banners in your municipality's reception area and display the SDGs to staff members and visitors.

More information: download the designs from <a href="https://www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs">www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs</a> and customize them with your own logo.





#### 49. Interactive banner 'I embrace the SDGs'

Embrace the SDGs! Stick your head and arms through the banner, take a picture and share it on social media. With the interactive photo banner VVSG created, you can literally show how you embrace the SDGs. And it's funny too!

More information: download the design from <a href="https://www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs">www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs</a> and customize it with your own logo.

#### 50. SDG wheel

The SDG wheel is the perfect excuse for a camera moment. Contributing to the SDGs together, that's what makes the world turn. Both the VVSG and municipalities in Flanders and abroad use the SDG wheel for events. At the New Year's reception of the City of Harelbeke, for example, the SDG wheel was a great success!

More information: download the design from www.vvsg.be/sites/sdgs



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